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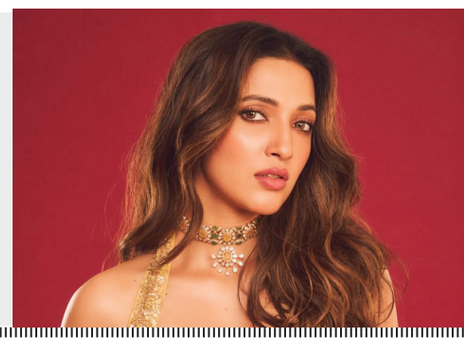
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Neha Shetty's Glam Reloaded

BOX-OFFICE 12



146 Players to Vie for 27 Slots at WPL Auction on Oct 28

NEW DELHI, OCT. 19



A total of 146 players will go under the hammer at the TATA Women's Premier League (WPL) 2027 auction in Kochi on October 28, with five franchises looking to fill 27 available slots. The auction pool includes 119 Indian players, comprising 22 capped and 97 uncapped cricketers, and 27 overseas players, including 14 capped and 13 uncapped players. Six overseas players represent Associate Nations. Of the 27 slots, 20 are reserved for Indian players and seven for overseas recruits. The auction will begin at 5.30 pm.

England batter Sophia Dunkley and Australia all-rounder Sophie Molineux have registered at the highest base price of ₹50 lakh. India's G Kamalini and Kiran Navgire, along with Australia's Heather Graham and Jess Jonassen, have set their base price at ₹40 lakh. Another 30 players are in the ₹30-lakh bracket. In a pre-auction trade, Mumbai Indians acquired USA left-arm pacer Tara Norris from UP Warriorz for her base price of ₹10 lakh. Norris previously represented Delhi Capitals in the inaugural WPL season in 2023, taking the tournament's first five-wicket haul with figures of 5/29 against Royal Challengers Bengaluru. Defending champions Royal Challengers Bengaluru and the other four franchises will look to strengthen their squads as they compete for the limited slots ahead of the 2027 season.

Cops Trace Motorcycle in Tiger Shroff Firing Case

MUMBAI, OCT 19

Mumbai Police are probing the purchase of a motorcycle in Andheri West on September 11 as a key lead in the firing incident targeting Bollywood actor Tiger Shroff in Juhu. Investigators are examining whether the vehicle was bought specifically for the attack or used earlier to conduct reconnaissance of the area. According to police, Hritik alias Roshan was allegedly riding the motorcycle, believed to be a Bajaj Pulsar 220, while Rehan and Phool Singh allegedly opened fire. Police are investigating who arranged the vehicle and whether others were involved in planning or executing the attack.

Deputy Commissioner of Police Raj Tilak Roushan said on Monday that all three accused were adults. One was 18 years old, while the other two were 22, contradicting earlier reports that one of them was a minor.

The three suspects — Hritik, from Begusarai in Bihar, and Rehan and Phool Singh,

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2 ➤

Global Summit Preparations Must Be on an International Standard

Speed up construction work at the Skills University

Complete preparations for the summit by the end of November

Chief Minister Revanth Reddy visits Future City



Future City , October 19: Chief Minister Revanth Reddy has directed officials to ensure that preparations for the Global Summit meet international standards. On Monday, the Chief Minister visited Bharat Future City and inspected the construction work at Young India Skills University. He instructed officials to speed up the construction work and ensure that it is completed as soon as possible. He also directed them to complete the work 15 days ahead of the scheduled deadline and said that the workforce should be increased if necessary.

The Chief Minister instructed officials to complete all arrangements for the Global Summit by the end of November. Chief Minister Revanth Reddy issued several key instructions to officials regarding preparations for the 'Invest Telangana Global Summit 2026', which will be held at Bharat Future City from December 7 to 9. As the summit will take place on the campus of Young India Skills University, under the theme "Your Investments, Our Assurance," the Chief Minister stressed the need to complete the university's construction work quickly and begin preparations for the summit without delay.

He instructed officials to ensure that the arrangements are of a high international standard and capable of attracting industrialists and investors from India and abroad. He also directed them to take the necessary steps to complete the work on the open-air venue by November 15. The Chief Minister stated that the 'Invest Telangana Global Summit 2026' is not merely a business conference but a historic platform

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2 ➤

All Parties Consulted on Delimitation: Rijiju



New Delhi, oct 19: Union Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju has stated that the Central Government has held consultations with various political parties on the issue of delimitation, amid objections raised by the Opposition. He revealed that discussions had been held with several parties, including the DMK, Samajwadi Party and Biju Janata Dal (BJD). Rijiju was responding to a letter written by Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, urging him to convene a meeting with all political parties to discuss delimitation.

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BJP Leaders Criticise Rahul Over Reported Foreign Visit

New Delhi, oct 19: Reports of Congress leader and Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi travelling abroad have sparked political reactions, with leaders of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) criticising the reported visit and questioning its purpose. In social media posts, BJP leaders mocked Rahul Gandhi as being in "holiday mode" and raised questions about whom he might meet during his overseas visit. They also asked whether he would meet individuals whom they accused of creating confusion. These remarks reflect the BJP leaders' criticism and do not independently establish the purpose or nature of Rahul Gandhi's visit. The BJP leaders' comments came amid significant political developments in the country and prompted discussion in political circles. They suggested that Rahul Gandhi was prioritising

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2 ➤

Transparent Revenue, Legal Land Rights

Restructuring the Revenue Department to achieve a permanent resolution of land disputes

Bhu Bharati to resolve long-standing land problems

12.40 lakh passbooks issued in 34 months

State Revenue, Housing, and Information and Public Relations Minister Ponguleti Srinivasa Reddy reviews progress at a meeting

HYDERABAD, OCT 19



State Revenue, Housing, and Information and Public Relations Minister Ponguleti Srinivasa Reddy stated that the government is restructuring the revenue administration to provide better and more transparent revenue services to the public, ensure legal land rights for farmers, and permanently resolve land disputes. He said that the negligence, mismanagement, and self-serving decisions of the previous government's leaders had completely disrupted the revenue administration over the past decade. After the people's government came to power, the revenue system was being strengthened and made more accessible to the public under the guidance and advice of Chief Minister Revanth Reddy.

On Monday, Minister Ponguleti Srinivasa Reddy held a review meeting with senior Revenue Department officials at Dr. B. R. Ambedkar Telangana State Secretariat. He conducted a detailed review of the implementation of the Bhu Bharati Act, distribution of pattadar passbooks to farmers, land resurvey

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Speed Up Utilisation of SC and ST Sub-Plan Funds

Special Focus on Financial Reforms, Resource Mobilisation and Debt Restructuring

Deputy Chief Minister Bhatti Vikramarka Reviews Fund Utilisation Progress Department-Wise



Hyderabad, October 19: Deputy Chief Minister Bhatti Vikramarka has directed officials to accelerate the utilisation of sub-plan funds allocated in the budget for the welfare and development of Scheduled Castes (SCs) and Scheduled Tribes (STs). He instructed departments to speed up expenditure in line with the allocated budgets and pay special attention to departments lagging behind in fund utilisation. At the same time, he emphasised the need to formulate a comprehensive action plan for financial reforms, mobilisation of revenue resources and debt restructuring to further strengthen the state's financial position.

During a review meeting with senior Finance Department officials at Dr. B. R. Ambedkar Telangana State Secretariat on Monday, Bhatti Vikramarka reviewed the implementation of the SC and ST Progress Sub-Plan, department-wise budget allocations, expenditure incurred so far, and various aspects of the state's financial management. He directed the concerned departments to act responsibly and ensure that the allocated funds were spent in accordance with their intended objectives.

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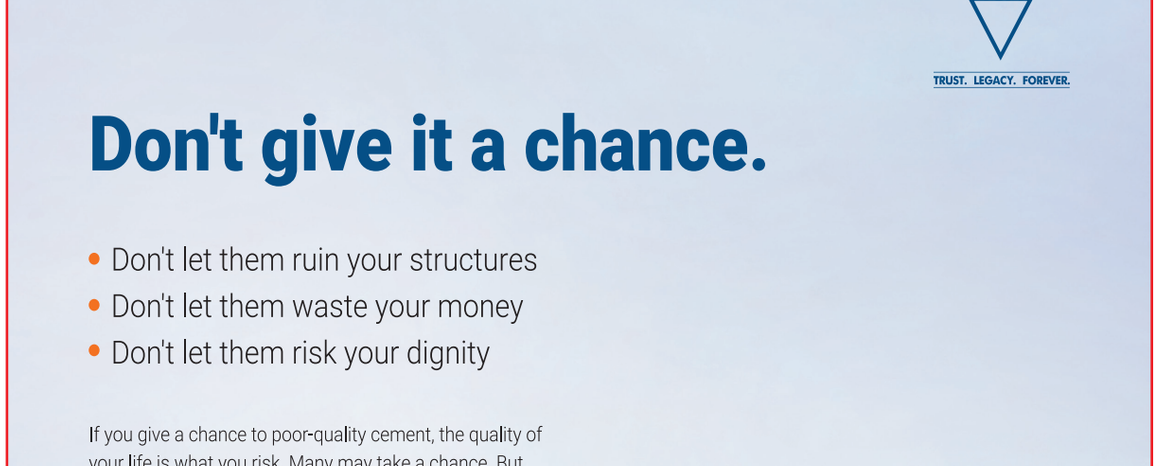
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GUV extends Vijayadashami greetings,

Hyderabad, Oct.19: Telangana Governor Shiv PratapShukla on Monday extended Vijayadashami greetings to the people of the State, urging them to uphold righteousness, integrity and mutual respect. The Governor said the festival symbolises the triumph of dharma over adharma, truth over falsehood and good over evil. He expressed hope that the occasion would inspire people to embrace courage, righteousness and a positive outlook.

Wishing prosperity, peace and harmony for Telangana, he said the blessings of Goddess Durga would bring happiness and success to people's lives.

The Governor also called upon citizens to contribute to the State's progress through unity, mutual respect and social responsibility.

YSRCP Approaches SC Over Local Body Elections

Party Seeks Extension of Nomination Deadline and Stay on Unopposed Elections; Writes to CJI Justice Surya Kant Seeking Urgent Hearing



New Delhi: The Yuvajana Sramika Rythu Congress Party (YSRCP) has approached the Supreme Court over the nomination process for local body elections in Andhra Pradesh. The party has filed a petition alleging that its candidates were prevented from filing nominations in municipal and urban local body elections. Challenging the Andhra Pradesh High Court's ruling in the matter, the YSRCP has sought directions to the State Election Commission to extend the deadline for filing nominations. The party has also submitted a letter to Chief Justice of India Justice Surya Kant, requesting an urgent hearing of the petition.

According to the party, the petition highlights incidents in which candidates were allegedly obstructed during the nomination process, as well as reports of violence during local body elections. The party has urged the authorities to ensure that every candidate gets an equal opportunity to contest the elections. The YSRCP has sought an extension of the nomination deadline and requested the establishment of additional and alternative centres for receiving nomination papers.

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Lighting Up Homes and Hearts

Kondapur Power Officials Take Dasara Wishes to Residents' Doorsteps.



Bringing festive cheer to 16,082 beneficiary families, Kondapur TGSPDCL officials turn a welfare initiative into a heartfelt celebration of community and public service.

Medchal-Malkajgiri, October 19: Dasara celebrations took on a personal meaning in Kondapur this year as officials from the Telangana State Southern Power Distribution Company Limited (TGSPDCL) stepped beyond their usual duties to share festive greetings directly with local families. The team from the Kondapur Division visited households across KPHB Colony 4th Phase, Ambedkar Nagar, Moosapet, Viveknagar and Balajinagar, offering warm Dasara wishes to residents benefiting from the Gruha Jyothi welfare scheme.

For many families, the visits transformed a government electricity initiative into a moment of genuine human connection. The Kondapur Division serves 16,082 beneficiary households under the scheme, which provides eligible domestic consumers with subsidised electricity support of up to 200 units per month.

The outreach was led by Division Engineer Shyamkumar, Assistant Divisional Engineer B. Manikyalu of KPHB and Assistant Engineer Bheema Lingappa of Balajinagar, along with field linemen and support staff. Their presence in neighbourhoods reflected a broader spirit of public service—one that extends beyond maintaining power lines and resolving technical issues. By meeting residents at their homes, the officials conveyed a message of care, respect and shared celebration.

As homes across Hyderabad glow with festive lights, the Kondapur TGSPDCL team's initiative offered a reminder that community spirit can shine through the simplest gestures: a kind word, a doorstep visit and heartfelt wishes for a joyful Dasara.

Every Eligible Poor Family Will Be Provided with an Indiramma House

Indiramma houses will be distributed to every eligible beneficiary, right up to the last person — this is the goal of the people's government.

Welfare schemes will continue despite financial difficulties.

Indiramma house construction is progressing continuously under the leadership of Chief Minister Revanth Reddy.

Minister Ponguleti Srinivasa Reddy launches the distribution of second-phase Indiramma house sanction letters at Kusumanchi in the Palair constituency.

Khammam, October 19: State Revenue, Housing, and Information and Public Relations Minister Ponguleti Srinivasa Reddy has affirmed that the prestigious Indiramma Housing Scheme, launched by the people's government under the leadership of Chief Minister Revanth Reddy to fulfil the dream of owning a home for every eligible poor family in Telangana, will continue uninterrupted. He stated that the government has taken responsibility for providing Indiramma houses to every eligible beneficiary, irrespective of caste, religion, or political affiliation. The process will continue until justice is ensured for the last eligible beneficiary.

On Monday, on the occasion of the Dasara festival, the minister distributed house sanction letters to beneficiaries of the second phase of the Indiramma Housing Scheme from Kusumanchi mandal at the Kusumanchi camp office in his home constituency of Palair. Speaking on the occasion, the minister said that the government led by Chief Minister Revanth Reddy was implementing the Indiramma Housing Scheme with the utmost commitment to making the dream of owning a home a reality for poor families. Unlike previous governments, which misled people with attractive announcements and impractical promises during elections, the present people's government is fulfilling its commitments one by one and bringing positive change to the lives of the poor, he said.

Government Launches Construction of Lakhs of Houses Across the State

The minister stated that the government had initiated the construction of 4.50 lakh houses in the first phase and sanctioned 2.50 lakh houses in the second phase across the state. In addition, steps had been taken to construct one lakh houses in Hyderabad. He also said that construction work on Indiramma Towers had commenced in the city. Eligible poor families living in rural areas, as well as in tribal hamlets (thandas), are also being sanctioned houses in phases, he explained.



The minister informed that approximately 2.30 lakh to 2.40 lakh Indiramma houses had already been completed across the state. Despite financial challenges, the government would not retreat from its commitment to the welfare of the poor, he asserted. He assured people that eligible families would also be sanctioned houses in the third and fourth phases, adding that the government was committed to fulfilling the dream of homeownership for poor families, regardless of how many phases were required. The minister stated that the selection of beneficiaries and the sanctioning of Indiramma houses were being carried out transparently, leaving no room for discrimination or favouritism. He said that houses were also being sanctioned to eligible beneficiaries in constituencies represented by opposition MLAs.

Eligibility is being determined on the basis of poverty, and measures are being taken to ensure that the benefits of government welfare schemes reach every last eligible person, he added.

People's Government Committed to Welfare

The minister explained that the government was implementing several welfare schemes to improve people's living standards. Through initiatives such as the distribution of fine-quality rice, issuance of new ration cards, free electricity for consumption of up to 200 units, Rythu Bharosa, farm loan waivers, and Rythu Bima, the government was extending support to poor families and farmers. On the occasion, the minister conveyed his Dasara festival greetings to all the people of Telangana. Additional Collector P. Srinivasa Reddy, Housing Project Director Bhukya Srinivas, Kusumanchi Mandal MPDO Jashwanth Kumar, Tahsildar Saidulu, the Housing Department's Deputy Executive Engineer, officials from various departments, public representatives, and others participated in the programme.

CONTINUATION FROM PAGE 1

Cops Trace Motorcycle in Tiger Shroff..

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both from Haryana — were arrested on Monday morning aboard the Pune-Jaipur Superfast Express at Kota railway station in Rajasthan. Kota Superintendent of Police Tejaswani Gautam said the suspects were travelling in the general coach when the train stopped at 10.17 am. The operation to intercept them was completed in about 15 minutes, following which Kota police handed them over to Mumbai Police. Mumbai Police formed around 20 special Crime Branch teams to investigate the case. DCP Roushan said investigators traced the motorcycle near Andheri West railway station and followed the suspects' movements towards northern Mumbai and Surat before establishing that they had boarded the train.

Bishnoi gang link under probe

Police said Rehan was in contact with Anil Pandit, an alleged associate of the Lawrence Bishnoi gang. A social media post claiming responsibility for the shooting has also surfaced, though its authenticity remains unverified.

Global Summit Preparations Must Be on an International Standard

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that will transform Telangana's political and economic landscape. He emphasized the need for a systematic and well-planned approach to the summit preparations from this point onward.

He further directed officials to form a committee to oversee the arrangements for the Global Summit and ensure regular monitoring of the progress. Chief Minister Inaugurates Future City Police Commissionerate Before visiting Bharat Future City, Chief Minister Revanth Reddy inaugurated the newly constructed Future City Police Commissionerate in Ibrahimpatnam.

He inaugurated the Commissioner of Police's office in the building and congratulated Tarun Joshi. Later, during his visit to Young India Skills University in Bharat Future City, the Chief Minister laid the foundation stone for the campus of the National Institute of Urban Management (NIUM) on the premises of the FCDA office. He also inspected the model of the proposed campus displayed at the venue. Legislative Council Chief Whip Patnam Mahender Reddy, MPs Vem Narender Reddy, Mallu Ravi and Chamala Kiran Kumar Reddy, MLAs Malreddy Rangareddy, Veerlapalli Shankar, Prakash Goud and Kale Yadaiah, chairpersons of various corporations, DGP C.V. Anand, and other senior officials participated in the programmes.

All Parties Consulted on Delimitation: Rijiju

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The Union Minister clarified that the government had already held discussions with various parties on the issue. He said the Centre was seeking to build a consensus through extensive discussions and consultations on the delimitation process.

However, Opposition parties have expressed concerns that redrawing Lok Sabha constituencies on the basis of population could politically disadvantage southern states. They have demanded safeguards to ensure that states which have performed better in population control do not lose their parliamentary representation.

The issue has assumed political significance because delimitation is linked to the implementation of reservations for women in legislative bodies. Against this backdrop, discussions and consultations between the Centre and the Opposition have become increasingly important. Clarity is still awaited on the delimitation framework, safeguards for the interests of southern states, and the implementation of women's reservation. Whether a consensus can be reached among all political parties on the issue has become a subject of considerable interest in political circles.

TG plans foodgrain buffer amid El Niño concerns

HYDERABAD, OCT.19

The Telangana government is planning to strengthen its foodgrain security buffer to protect 3.42 crore people dependent on the Public Distribution System (PDS) against potential drought, crop losses and rising food prices amid the anticipated impact of El Niño, Civil Supplies and Irrigation Minister N. Uttam Kumar Reddy said.

At a high-level review meeting held at his Secretariat chambers on Monday, the Minister directed officials to plan procurement and stock management well in advance to ensure uninterrupted supplies, even if deficient rainfall affects the coming agricultural seasons. Reviewing the State's rice stocks and procurement plans, Uttam Kumar Reddy stressed the need to prepare for adverse seasonal conditions rather than rely entirely on the success of the forthcoming paddy harvest. He said the objective was to maintain adequate stocks to meet the requirements of ration-card holders and other beneficiaries, irrespective of fluctuations in agricultural production or market prices.

The Minister said Telangana requires approximately 2.38 lakh metric tonnes of rice every month, translating into 28.56 lakh metric tonnes annually, to meet the combined requirements of the Central Pool Public Distribution System, Other Welfare Schemes (OWS) and the State Pool. These requirements include supplies for the Mid-Day Meal programme and other welfare initiatives.

BJP Leaders Criticise Rahul Over Reported Foreign Visit

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a holiday over domestic political issues.

However, the available information does not specify Rahul Gandhi's destination, the people he is scheduled to meet, or the purpose of his reported visit. No further details have been provided to substantiate the questions raised by BJP leaders. The remarks are part of the political exchanges between the BJP and the Congress. The Congress party's response to these specific criticisms, as well as any official clarification regarding Rahul Gandhi's travel plans, remains awaited.

Transparent Revenue, Legal Land Rights

➢FROM PAGE 1

operations across the state, resolution of land-related problems, and implementation of key decisions taken recently. He directed officials to work more effectively at the field level to ensure that revenue services were delivered to the public with greater transparency and speed.

Bhu Bharati Resolving Long-Standing Land Problems

The minister said the government had introduced the historic Bhu Bharati Act with the objective of creating a Telangana free from land disputes, as desired by the people. Since the Act came into force on April 14, 2025, a total of 568,858 passbooks had been issued, he said. In addition, 671,508 passbooks had been issued before the Act came into effect. Thus, a total of 1,240,366 passbooks (approximately 12.40 lakh) had been provided to farmers over the stated 34-month period, according to the minister.

He explained that land problems pending for decades were being resolved through resurvey operations as provided for under the Bhu Bharati Act. The minister said the government was supporting farmers who had cultivated land for decades but lacked recorded ownership rights and, as a result, were unable to access government welfare schemes. Through comprehensive surveys, actual cultivators were being identified and granted legal land rights.

Resurvey Operations Providing Legal Rights to Farmers

The minister stated that a resurvey had already been conducted in Narayanapuram revenue village of Kesamudram mandal in Mahabubabad district. The process helped resolve issues involving tribal and non-tribal communities, with 906 farmers receiving rights over more than 1,600 acres of land. Similarly, in 15 villages across Nuthankal and Maddirala mandals in Suryapet district, land titles had been issued to 2,400 farmers covering 3,450 acres through resurvey operations.

With pattadar passbooks, farmers are now able to access bank loans, Rythu Bharosa benefits, and other government welfare schemes, he said. The minister added that resurvey work was progressing rapidly in Mulukapalli mandal of Mulugu district, as well as in Palvancha, Aswaraopeta, and Dammapeta mandals of Bhadradri Kothagudem district and Sathupalli mandal of Khammam district. He said the government would resolve the problems that had persisted in these areas for decades and issue passbooks to the rightful landholders soon.

The minister directed officials to undertake surveys in other areas along similar lines and take stringent measures to grant legal land rights to people who had been waiting for decades to secure ownership of their land.

Effective Implementation of Government Decisions

The minister emphasised that policy decisions and government orders issued by the Revenue Department would benefit the public only when they were implemented effectively and rigorously at the field level. He urged officials to keep the public interest at the centre of their work. During the meeting, he also discussed the proposed establishment of a food park in Jangaon district with the district Collector. Revenue Department Secretary D. S. Lokesh Kumar, Inspector General of Stamps and Registration Rajiv Gandhi Hanumanthu, Jangaon District Collector Sandeep Kumar Jha, and other officials attended the meeting.

Speed Up Utilisation of SC and ST Sub-Plan Funds

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The Deputy Chief Minister stressed that there should be no delays in utilising funds earmarked for the welfare and social and economic empowerment of SC and ST communities. He instructed departments to effectively implement their expenditure plans to ensure that sub-plan funds allocated on a population basis were properly utilised for the welfare and development of these communities. He further directed officials to ensure full utilisation of funds earmarked under the special SC and ST budget heads, in accordance with statutory provisions and budget allocations, just as funds under general budget heads are utilised. He called for immediate measures to identify and bridge gaps in expenditure.

Finance Department officials were asked to conduct special reviews with departments that were lagging in fund utilisation and accelerate expenditure progress. In this regard, he directed officials to arrange meetings shortly with the secretaries of the departments showing the largest expenditure gaps. These include Agriculture, Medical and Health, Energy, Municipal Administration and Panchayat Raj, Social Welfare, Industries, and Tribal Welfare, followed by other departments.

He instructed officials to hold detailed discussions on the funds allocated to each department, expenditure incurred so far, and measures required to utilise the remaining funds, and to prepare a comprehensive report.

Increase Revenue Through Financial Reforms

The Deputy Chief Minister instructed officials to make effective use of available resources and identify additional revenue sources to strengthen the state's financial position. He advised them to consider ground realities while preparing the budget, giving priority to expenditure control, optimal utilisation of funds, and the availability of financial resources required for development programmes.

He held extensive discussions with officials on the reforms being implemented in the Finance Department, measures being undertaken to mobilise government revenue, and debt restructuring. He emphasised the need to formulate robust plans to ensure that the state's financial management serves its long-term interests. He also called for financial decisions to be made with due consideration for future requirements.

Better Financial Management with Expert Advice

The Deputy Chief Minister suggested engaging experienced consultants and financial experts to maintain the highest standards in financial management. He directed officials to incorporate expert advice and recommendations while preparing plans suited to future requirements. He also called for continuous monitoring to ensure coordination among budget allocations, expenditure, and the implementation of development programmes. He emphasised that effective financial management was essential both to ensure that welfare funds reached the eligible communities and to maintain the stability of the state's economy while achieving its development objectives. Finance and Planning Secretary Gaurav Uppal, Finance Special Secretary Sikta Patnaik, and other senior Finance Department officials attended the meeting.

YSRCP Approaches SC Over Local

➢FROM PAGE 1

It has also called for the entire nomination acceptance process to be videographed and requested adequate police protection for candidates and their proposers travelling to these centres. The petition further seeks directions to ensure that, during the extended nomination period, nomination papers are accepted from candidates who have already filed affidavits as well as eligible candidates who were unable to submit their nominations due to alleged obstructions. Additionally, the party has asked the Supreme Court to stay elections declared unopposed until the dispute over the nomination process is resolved. Citing allegations of irregularities and obstructions in the electoral process, the YSRCP has sought judicial intervention in the matter. Further details regarding the Supreme Court's subsequent action and the hearing of the petition are awaited.

SWARNA RATHOTSAVAM CELEBRATED WITH GRANDEUR

Tirumala, Oct.19: As a part of the ongoingNavaratriBrahmotsavams, the SwarnaRathotsavam was celebrated with religious fervour in Tirumala on Monday, the eighth day of the festival. Sri MalayappaSwamy, accompanied by Sri Devi and Bhu Devi, were taken in a procession on the golden chariot through the streets of Tirumada, giving devotees a divine darshan. Amid auspicious music and the chanting of "Govinda," a large number of devotees, especially women, participated with devotion in pulling the golden chariot.

Neredmet Turns into a Sea of Bathukamma Celebrations





Nearly 700 Women Participate in Festivities at Madhura Nagar Welfare Association Grounds

MEDCHAL–MALKAJGIRI

The Neredmet area of Medchal–Malkajgiri district was immersed in Bathukamma festivities, with nearly 700 women bringing beautifully decorated Saddula Bathukammas to the grounds of the Madhura Nagar Welfare Association.

The event was organised under the leadership of colony president Srinivasa Reddy. Neredmet Police Station Sub-Inspector Harender, Woman Constable Navya, and Geetha Murthy, former Telangana State President of the BJP Mahila Morcha (2020–2024) and currently a member of the party's National Council, attended the celebrations.

Addressing the gathering, Sub-Inspector Harender expressed concern over the growing use of narcotic substances, particularly among young people. He called on parents to instil good values and proper conduct in their children to help eradicate the problem. He also urged community elders to take responsibility and work towards curbing drug abuse in society.



Geetha Murthy Praises Malkajgiri Police Commissioner Sumathi

Speaking at the event, Geetha Murthy praised Malkajgiri Police Commissioner Sumathi for an act of courage she reportedly undertook on her first day in office, approximately two months ago.

Murthy said the Commissioner had gone out alone in plain clothes late at night in the Malkajgiri area. According to Murthy, some miscreants subjected her to lewd behaviour and harassment when they saw her. However, Sumathi confronted them courageously and, about an hour later, ensured that police personnel took appropriate action against them.

Murthy said the incident demonstrated the Commissioner's commitment to women's safety and conveyed reassurance that the police administration was working to protect women.

She also announced that special prizes would be presented at next year's celebrations to young women and women who attend in traditional attire.

Prizes Presented for the Best-Decorated Bathukammas

Three women who created the most beautifully decorated Bathukammas received prizes from Sub-Inspector Harender, a former Assistant Commissioner of Police (ACP), Geetha Murthy, and colony president Srinivasa Reddy.

The event was attended by Shobhana Giridhar Reddy, who had travelled specially from the United States, Revathi, who came from Australia, and other participants, including Vasantha, Lakshmi, local BJP leader Raji Reddy, and hundreds of women from the surrounding neighbourhoods.

The celebrations highlighted Telangana's cultural traditions and brought together women from the local community and beyond.

Chief Minister Revanth Reddy Extends Vijayadashami Greetings to People

HYDERABAD



Telangana Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy extended his greetings to the people of the state on the occasion of Vijayadashami, a festival symbolising the victory of good over evil and righteousness over unrighteousness. He said that Dasara holds a special place in Telangana's culture and traditions.

The Chief Minister stated that the festival of Dasara teaches us great values such as courage, righteousness, truth, unity and self-confidence. He said the festival conveys the message that everyone should strive to build a society founded on love, compassion, brotherhood and humanity by eliminating negative traits such as arrogance, jealousy, hatred and injustice within themselves.

"I sincerely wish that this Vijayadashami brings joy and happiness to every home, fills every family with peace and prosperity, and blesses everyone with good health, longevity, prosperity and success," he said.

Revanth Reddy noted that the festival reminds people of Goddess Durga's victory over the demon Mahishasura and Lord Rama's triumph over Ravana, symbolising the victory of good over evil.

He also highlighted a unique Dasara tradition in Telangana, in which people worship the Jammi tree and exchange its leaves, regarded symbolically as gold, with elders to seek their blessings. He said this tradition conveys the message of respecting nature and honouring elders.

KCR Extends Dasara Greetings to the People of Telangana

HYDERABAD



Telangana's first Chief Minister and Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) president K. Chandrashekar Rao (KCR) extended his Dasara greetings to the people of the state.

KCR said that Dasara holds a special place in Telangana's culture and traditional celebrations.

He stated that the festival upholds a rich cultural heritage through various traditions, including worshipping the Jammi tree as a symbol of victory, sighting the Indian roller bird as an auspicious sign, exchanging affection and goodwill through the traditional Alai Balai gathering, sharing sacred Jammi leaves as a symbolic form of gold, and bowing before elders to seek their blessings.

On the occasion, KCR recalled that the then BRS government had recognised the special significance of Dasara in the lives of the people of Telangana by declaring the Jammi tree as the state tree and the Indian roller as the state bird.

He said the spirit of Vijayadashami — the belief that righteousness ultimately triumphs despite all hardships — was reflected in both the Telangana statehood movement and the decade of development that followed the formation of the state. Expressing confidence in the future, KCR said the people would continue to draw inspiration from Dasara to overcome ongoing injustice and achieve victory over unrighteousness.

He emphasised that the true spirit of the festival could be realised only by empowering ordinary people and helping them succeed in every sphere of life.

KCR prayed that the Dasara festival would bring an end to the continuing hardships faced by the people of Telangana and usher in auspiciousness, peace, happiness and prosperity into their lives.

Hyderabad to lead top cities in housing launches with 30-33% growth in FY2027

HYDERABAD



Hyderabad is expected to record the highest growth in residential launches among India's top seven cities in financial year 2027 (FY2027), with a projected increase of 30–33%, according to ICRA.

New launches rose 10.5% to 133 million square feet (msf) in FY2026, recovering from a 33.6% decline in FY2025. Launch activity surged 76.7% year-on-year in Q1 FY2027, largely driven by projects in the Southwest region and spillover supply from the previous fiscal. Housing sales also remained firm, with area sold rising 4.1% to 118 msf in FY2026 and growing 17.3% in Q1 FY2027. ICRA expects sales to increase 11–14% in FY2027.

However, rising supply has pushed Hyderabad's unsold inventory to a multi-year high of 296 msf as of June 2026, accounting for nearly 30% of the combined inventory across the top seven cities. The inventory overhang has increased, with the years-to-sell (YTS) ratio rising to 2.4 years from 1.6 years in March 2024.

Luxury housing accounts for 45–50% of the inventory build-up, although increased mid-segment launches in Q1 FY2027 indicate a potentially more balanced supply mix ahead. ICRA expects inventory overhang to remain elevated, with YTS projected at 2.2–2.4 years by March 2027.

The western corridor continues to dominate Hyderabad's housing market, with the Northwest and Southwest regions accounting for 85–90% of sales and launches. Key markets include Kokapet, Neopolis, Tellapur and Khanapur.

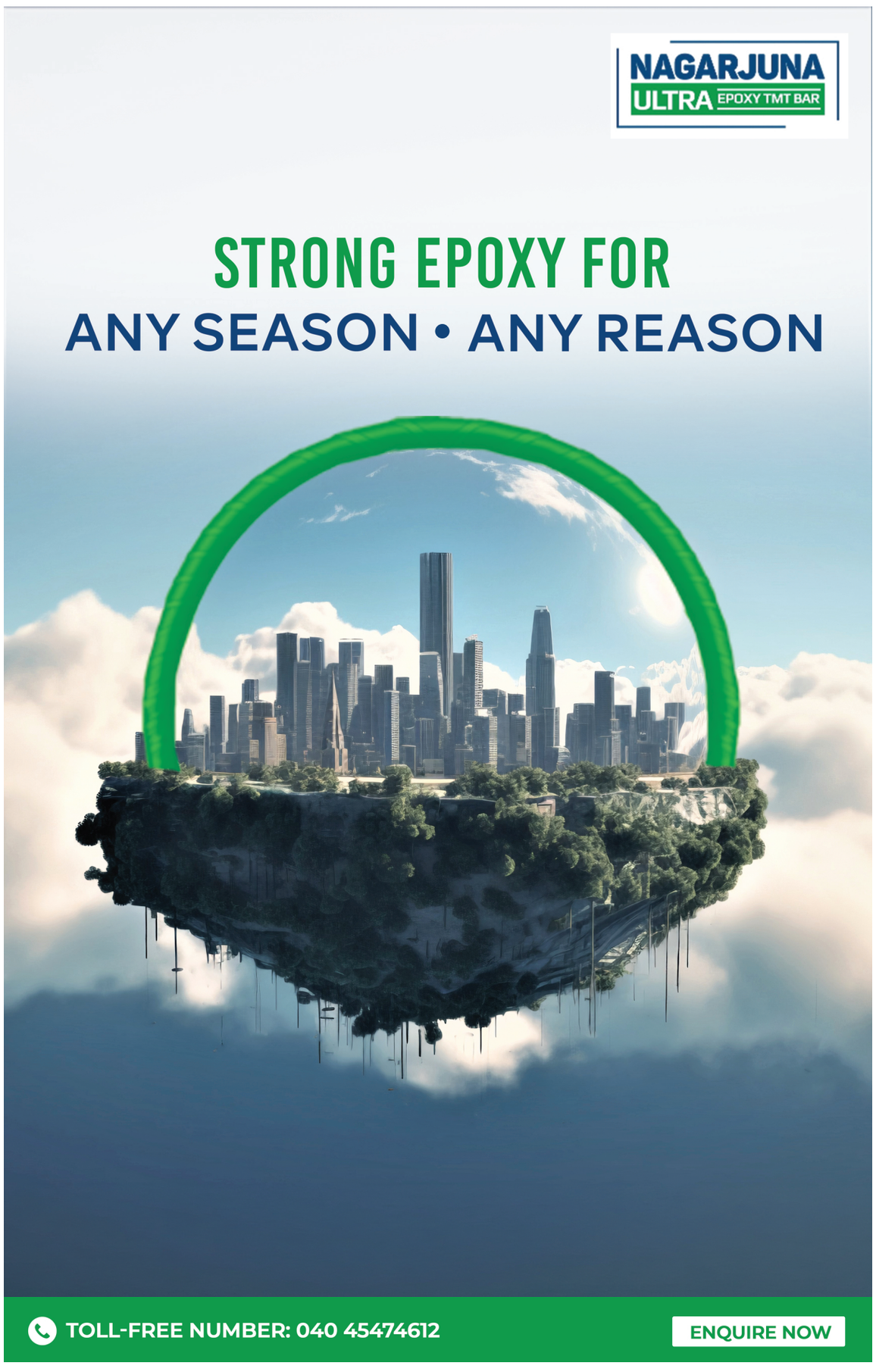


CM Revanth Reddy to Visit Native Village for Dasara

HYDERABAD

Chief Minister Revanth Reddy will visit his native village of Kondareddypalli in Vangoor mandal of Nagarkurnool district today afternoon on the occasion of the Dasara festival.

- **12:30 PM:** The Chief Minister will offer special prayers at the Anjaneya Swamy Temple in Kondareddypalli.
- **2:00 PM:** He will meet villagers, public representatives and officials.
- **Evening:** The Chief Minister will participate in the traditional Jammi (Shami tree worship) programme in Kondareddypalli.
- **Night:** He will return to Hyderabad from Kondareddypalli.



Strengthen Safety Across the Zone

General Manager, South Central Railway Stressed during the Safety Review Meeting

HYDERABAD



Sanjay Kumar Srivastava, General Manager, South Central Railway (SCR), conducted a comprehensive review meeting on the safety of train operations across the zone today i.e., 19th October, 2026 at Rail Nilayam, Secunderabad. Shri Satya Prakash, Additional General Manager, SCR, and Principal Heads of Departments attended the meeting. Divisional Railway Managers (DRMs) of Secunderabad, Hyderabad and Nanded divisions participated through video conferencing.

The General Manager reviewed various maintenance and safety action items and emphasized the need for strict adherence to established safety protocols. He instructed that, make it mandatory to wear reflector jackets by all the staff including supervisors and officers, while performing duties near therailway tracks during night hours to enhance visibility andsafety. While discussing the failure scenarios like communication & signal, the General Manager emphasized the importance of carrying out thorough investigations into all failure scenarios, with a focus on identifying underlying causes and implementing sustainable corrective measures to prevent recurrence. He underscored the need to identify the root causes of recurring issues, evolve effective solutions, and provide proper counselling and guidance to the staff involved wherever required. He also discussed the issue of waterlogging in Road Under Bridges (RUBs) and instructed concerned officials to expedite the remedial measures at the earliest.

Further, the General Manager reviewed the importance of leveraging technology to enhance field monitoring and improve safety. In this direction supply of GPS tracker for keymen and patrolling staff needs to be expedited to enhance safety and also to have meticulous monitoring.

Reiterating South Central Railway's commitment to the highest standards of safety, the General Manager called upon all departments to maintain close coordination, ensure timely implementation of safety measures, and continue working towards a safer and more efficient railway system.

SHORT TAKES

HarishRao distributes festival gifts to civic workers



HYDERABAD: *Former minister and BRS Deputy Floor Leader T. Harish Rao spent on Monday morning alongside Siddipet's municipal sanitation workers, joining them for breakfast and addressing their grievances individually. Marking the Dasara festival, Harish Rao personally funded and distributed sarees to female workers and shirt-and-trousers sets to male workers, emphasising that no municipal funds were used for the initiative. Reflecting on past governance, the BRS leader contrasted current conditions with the tenure of previous Congress administrations under K. Rosaiah and N. Kiran Kumar Reddy. He noted that sanitation workers frequently faced pay delays ranging from three to six months, often forced to stage protests outside revenue and municipal offices for their earned wages.*

He added that the outsourcing wage at the time was Rs.8,300, which was routinely delayed by third-party contractors. Attributing Siddipet's national Swachh Survekshan accolades to the workforce, Harish Rao commended the daily dedication of the town's sweepers.

Build a Coffer Dam and Divert Pranahita River Water: Kavitha

- **'If the Coffer Dam Is Not Built by the End of November, We Will Stage a Protest at the Kannapalli Pump House'**
- **Farmers Must Not Be Made to Suffer by Using Medigadda as a Pretext**
- **We Are Not Just Questioning and Protesting; We Are Also Offering Solutions to the Government**
- **Telangana Rakshana Sena Chief Kalvakuntla Kavitha Inspects Pranahita River Flow at Kannapalli Pump House Along with TRS Leaders**



KALESHWARAM

Telangana Rakshana Sena chief Kalvakuntla Kavitha has urged the state government to immediately construct a coffer dam at a height of 93 metres near the Kannapalli Pump House and divert water from the Pranahita River to help farmers and tackle drought conditions in the state. She said the dam could be completed within one-and-a-half months at a cost of just ₹25 crore.

On Monday, Kavitha visited the Kannapalli Pump House along with TRS party leaders. After inspecting the water flow, she explained through a PowerPoint presentation where the coffer dam could be constructed and what benefits it could provide. She stated that approximately two thousand million cubic feet (TMC) of water flows through the Pranahita River every day, even during severe drought conditions in the state. Proper utilisation of this water would be sufficient to provide relief, she said.

On behalf of farmers, Kavitha made an earnest appeal to the government to construct the coffer dam by November. She warned that if the government failed to heed the demand, her party knew how to exert pressure on it. She cautioned the government against using the Medigadda barrage issue as a pretext to cause losses to farmers, saying her party would not remain silent if farmers were made to suffer.

Kavitha said her party had conducted extensive studies and consulted experts to identify a practical solution to the state's drought conditions, concluding that the construction of a coffer dam was the way forward. She added that her party would also submit the relevant technical details to the government.

She urged the government to examine the proposal in consultation with experts and said her party would accept any modifications suggested on technical grounds. She emphasised that the primary objective was to ensure that farmers did not suffer losses.

She called on the government to begin the work immediately and take steps to help the state overcome the drought situation.

'We Will Not Just Question the Government; We Will Also Offer Solutions'

Kavitha said her party would not limit itself to questioning the government and organising protests but would also suggest solutions to resolve public problems.

She said her party had no intention of creating a brief political stir for a couple of days merely to appear on television, unlike other parties. The proposal for a coffer dam had been developed only after consultations with experts on ways to overcome the drought, she said.

She asserted that farmers must be provided with water and electricity at least until the end of November under all circumstances.

She recalled that her party had raised the demand several days earlier for free electricity to farmers until November, anticipating the drought conditions in advance. According to Kavitha, the Chief Minister responded to the issue only after her party raised the demand and stated that the government would request electricity from the Centre.

She said around 1.10 crore acres of agricultural land in the state currently required water and electricity. She urged the government to ensure the supply of both until the end of November to protect standing crops.

Kavitha said a responsible opposition should not only fight against the government but also propose solutions to public problems. She said her party was working under the slogan, "Question, Fight and Find Solutions."

She alleged that the Congress government was acting negligently despite having the capacity to provide water and electricity. She called on party workers to ensure that farmers across the state became aware of the issue. 'Even After Telangana's Formation, We Have Not Received Justice in Water Allocation'

Kavitha expressed concern that even 13 years after the formation of Telangana, the state was still unable to fully utilise its rightful share of water. She recalled that the Telangana movement had been driven by the demand for control over the state's rightful water resources, with the slogan, "Our water belongs to us." However, she said, Telangana was still unable to utilise its own water fully. She argued that if the state properly utilised the waters of its two major rivers, the Godavari and Krishna, it would not face such severe drought conditions.

Kavitha claimed that the previous BRS government had spent ₹1.80 lakh crore but had provided new irrigation water to only four to five lakh acres in the Krishna basin and one lakh acres in the Godavari basin. She said that although ₹93,000 crore had been spent on the Kaleshwaram project, the expenditure had primarily gone towards stabilising the existing ayacut and managing flood flows. She added that another ₹50,000 crore would be required to complete the Kaleshwaram canal network. According to Kavitha, the situation had deteriorated further after the Congress government came to power. She alleged that ₹26,000 crore had been spent without even moving a mound of earth.

She questioned the government's explanation that the expenditure had gone towards clearing old dues, asking why outstanding payments relating to schemes such as fee reimbursement and Dalit Bandhu had not also been cleared.

Reiterating her demand, Kavitha urged the government not to use the Medigadda issue as a pretext to deny farmers their due benefits and called for the immediate construction of the coffer dam. She also said the present period was an appropriate time to complete the remaining works on the Medigadda barrage and urged the government to take them up without delay.

She stated that 21,000 tanks across the state had already dried up, leaving farmers and members of the Mudiraj and Bestha communities distressed. Warning that conditions could become even more severe over the next ten months, she urged the government to seriously examine her party's proposals to address the situation.

'Complete the Chinna Kaleshwaram Project'

Kavitha demanded the immediate completion of the Chinna Kaleshwaram project in the Manthani constituency. She appealed to Minister Sridhar Babu to fulfil the commitment he had made to the people of the region. She also demanded appropriate compensation for families affected by submergence due to the project. Questioning why Sridhar Babu had not fulfilled his promises despite being in power for three years after spending a decade in the opposition, she urged him to honour his commitments to the people.

Former minister Boda Janardhan and senior party leaders Riyaz Ahmed, Ismail, Naveen Kumar, Ravichandra, Venkat, Naresh Neth and others participated in the programme.

Rajasthan Lorry Driver Held as Mastermind in Shamshabad ATM Heist

- **Police arrest Rashid after tracing him through technical analysis; four accomplices remain absconding in the 7.40-lakh Axis Bank cash deposit machine theft**



MEDCHAL-MALKAJGIRI

Hyderabad police, with assistance from Rajasthan police, have arrested 34-year-old lorry driver Rashid, also known as Kakoo, Yousuf and Kake, for his alleged role as the mastermind of an inter-state ATM theft in Shamshabad. Rashid, who is originally from Alwar, Rajasthan, was arrested at Gollapally X Roads after police traced him through technical analysis and call-detail records. He allegedly attempted to escape when officers approached but was eventually apprehended.2

The theft was reported in the early hours of October 6, 2026, after the Axis Bank Command Centre alerted the Satamrai branch to suspicious activity at its cash deposit machine. According to branch head Dommeti Anil, police and bank staff found that unidentified offenders had used a gas cutter to break open the machine, sprayed paint on the CCTV cameras and cut the hooter cable to disable the alarm. A subsequent reconciliation reportedly showed a cash shortage of ₹7,40,200, although earlier preliminary reports had estimated the stolen amount at more than ₹30 lakh.

Investigators said the gang had carefully planned the operation. About a month before the theft, Rashid and his associate Shamshuddin allegedly transported gas-cutting equipment and paint spray to Hyderabad in a truck and hid the material in bushes near Pahadishareef. Their alleged associates, Sohail, Faizan alias Ayaan and Rehan alias Zangi, later joined the operation. The group is accused of stealing a motorcycle and a Santro car, which were used to carry out the ATM theft.

According to the police account, the suspects first disabled the CCTV cameras and alarm system before cutting open the cash deposit machine. They then removed the cash trays, loaded them into the Santro car and fled towards Patancheruvu. The vehicle was later abandoned, after which the accused allegedly travelled through Zaheerabad, Nanded, Amaravati, Akola, Indore and Kota before dispersing in a sleeper bus.

Honey-trap racket busted in Hyd; accused extorted Rs.25.16 lakh

HYDERABAD



Saidabad police have arrested a 23-year-old man for allegedly running a honey-trap racket using fake social media profiles of women to blackmail victims and extort money.

The accused, Kondabhattula Pavan Kumar, allegedly created 13 fake Instagram and 14 Facebook accounts using women's identities. He befriended men online, engaged them in sexual conversations and persuaded them to exchange nude photographs and videos. He later threatened to circulate the material and extorted money by threatening legal action in the name of his fictitious "sister".

In his fake accounts he mostly uses photographs of a girl from Kolkata, under the name "Chandana". The police alerted her through her workplace and the local PS, in Kolkata.

Police said the accused had allegedly extorted Rs.18 lakh and cheated victims of another Rs.7.16 lakh, taking the total amount involved to Rs/25.16 lakh. In the case that led to his arrest, he allegedly extorted Rs/4 lakh from a former diploma classmate. He is also accused of cheating a software employee of Rs.7 lakh on the pretext of investment returns.

According to investigators, more than 1,000 people had chatted with the accused, while 82 victims had allegedly shared nude photographs or videos. The victims reportedly included doctors, businessmen, lecturers, private-sector employees, delivery personnel and gig workers. Police identified 24 victims from other Indian states and nine from other countries including Dubai, Turkey, Pakistan and Canada.

The accused allegedly used multiple mobile numbers and WhatsApp accounts to communicate with victims. Police seized three mobile phones, an HP laptop and a 16-GB pen drive during the investigation. Further cases are likely to be registered.

The investigation is being conducted under the supervision of Charminar Zone DCP Khare Kiran Prabhakar, Additional DCP Md. Majeed and Saidabad ACP Soma Venkat Reddy. Saidabad SHO B. Chandra Mohan is the investigating officer.

A case has been registered at Saidabad police station under relevant provisions of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita and the Information Technology Act.



Alai Balai 2026 to celebrate Telangana's cultural heritage on October 22

HYDERABAD

The 2026 edition of Alai Balai, the annual cultural gathering celebrating Telangana's traditions and heritage, will be held at the Exhibition Grounds here in Nampally on October 22 from 10.30 am. Organised by former Union Minister Bandaru Dattatraya, the event was launched in 2005 to promote camaraderie, harmony and brotherhood by bringing people together beyond political and social differences.

Union Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, Telangana Governor Shiv Pratap Shukla and Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy are among the dignitaries expected to attend the celebrations, along with Union and State ministers, MPs, public representatives and other prominent personalities.

The event will showcase Telangana's cultural traditions through Bathukamma, Bonalu, Dappu, Gussadi, Kolatam and other folk performances. Traditional Telangana cuisine will also be a major attraction. Distinguished personalities and achievers will be felicitated for their contributions to society.

In an invitation to the media fraternity, Dattatraya highlighted the media's role in documenting and preserving the State's cultural heritage for future generations. He urged media representatives to participate in the celebrations and help carry forward the spirit and traditions of Telangana.

Rs.52,000 crore worth infrastructure works underway in Hyderabad: Bhatti



- **State Plans up to 14 Months of Foodgrain Security Buffer Amid El Niño Threat: Uttam**
- **Essential commodities including wheat flour through the PDS under consideration**

HYDERABAD

State is planning to strengthen its foodgrain security buffer to protect 3.42 crore people dependent on the Public Distribution System (PDS) against possible drought, crop losses and rising food prices amid the anticipated El Niño impact, Minister for Civil Supplies and Irrigation N. Uttam Kumar Reddy said on Monday. He directed officials at a high level review meeting held in his Secretariat Chambers to plan procurement and stock management well in advance to ensure uninterrupted supplies, even if the next agricultural seasons are affected by deficient rainfall. Reviewing the State's rice stocks and procurement plans, the Minister stressed that Telangana should be prepared for adverse seasonal conditions rather than depend entirely on the success of the forthcoming paddy harvest. The Commissioner Civil Supplies, Stephen Ravindra and other senior officials took part in the review.

Uttam Kumar Reddy said Telangana requires approximately 2.38 lakh metric tonnes of rice every month, amounting to 28.56 lakh metric tonnes annually, to meet the combined requirements of the Central Pool Public Distribution System, Other Welfare Schemes (OWS) and the State Pool, including the Mid-Day Meal programme and other welfare requirements.

State comfortable with Stocks

The Civil Supplies Department's stock position as of October 16, 2026, showed 9.64 lakh metric tonnes of rice available in buffer godowns. This included 3.50 lakh metric tonnes under the Central Pool and OWS and 6.14 lakh metric tonnes under the State Pool. A further 18.39 lakh metric tonnes of rice was expected to be received through pending Custom Milled Rice (CMR) deliveries and other identified supplies.

How was 22A-prohibited land registered to a company owned by CM Revanth's own brother?

- **Government must answer and order a CBI inquiry: Manne Krishank**
- **Diversionary politics when people's issues are raised; no answers when questions are backed by evidence**

HYDERABAD



BRS Official Spokesperson Manne Krishank criticised the Congress government in Telangana for avoiding questions on public issues and attempting to divert attention by making allegations against Opposition leaders. He demanded that the government clarify matters concerning business entities and land transactions linked to Chief Minister Revanth Reddy's family, and called for a comprehensive, impartial inquiry into the 22A prohibited lands issue.

1. Clarify the Anumula family's business interests

Krishank said several questions had been raised concerning Maxbien Pharma, Medicover Hospitals, MindVault Corporate Schools, Tesseract Aerospace and Defence, Swachh Bio, Geetha Hyundai showrooms and other entities. He demanded that the Chief Minister clarify their ownership links, investments, business agreements and land allotments.

2. 22A land listings are causing hardship to ordinary people

Krishank said landowners across the state were facing difficulties because of the 22A prohibited lands list. He accused that while the government had failed to resolve ordinary people's land issues, it was facilitating the registration of prohibited land for the Chief Minister's own family.

3. Probe the registration of Survey No. 363/3 in Chandhanvelli village, Chevella

Krishank said serious questions had arisen over lands in Survey No. 363, in Chandanvelli village, Chevella Mandal. He demanded an explanation from the government on how approximately 4.2 acres in Survey No. 363/3 became eligible for registration as prohibited lands in the surrounding area continued to be classified as assigned lands.

He called for the registration documents, company details and land records connected with the transaction to be examined and the facts established. He also demanded an inquiry into allegations concerning the role of Anumula Krishna Reddy, the Chief Minister's brother and a director of the company, in transactions involving R9 Constructions.

4. Is the government ready for a CBI inquiry?

Krishank asked why the government was unwilling to support an independent investigation if it believed no irregularities had occurred in these land transactions. He called for the relevant official documents, company directors' and shareholders' details, and registration records to be examined. He demanded a CBI inquiry into the 22A prohibited lands issue and the related transactions facing allegations.

5. Do not divert attention from farmers' concerns

Krishank demanded that the government answer questions about advance planning for the effects of Super El Niño, appropriate farming advisories, irrigation water and drinking water. He criticised the government for bringing up former Chief Minister KCR's agricultural land, alleging that this was an attempt to divert public attention from farmers' concerns and people's land issues.

6. The Central Government must also respond

Krishank demanded that the BJP-led Central Government take appropriate steps to establish the facts concerning the land transactions and corruption allegations, rather than limiting itself to political statements. He called on the Centre to fulfil its responsibility by ensuring an impartial inquiry into the allegations.

Allahabad HC directs judicial training institute to prepare training modules for magistrates

PRAYAGRAJ: (OCT 19)

The Allahabad High Court has directed the Judicial Training and Research Institute (JTRI), Lucknow, to prepare and disseminate training modules for judicial magistrates after highlighting repeated instances of magistrates failing to properly scrutinise remand applications and routinely authorising remand. In a remand order, an accused person is kept in custody either in police lock-up (police custody) for interrogation or sent to jail (judicial custody). A division bench comprising Justice Atul Sreedharan and Justice Achal Sachdev observed that magistrates cannot take shelter behind an overload of judicial work when dealing with remand proceedings, which directly concern the fundamental rights guaranteed under Articles 21 (right to life and personal liberty) and Article 22 (right of arrested person) of the Constitution.

Cong MLC Satej Patil's panel wins Gokul milk cooperative poll in Maharashtra; setback for Mahayuti

KOLHAPUR: (OCT 19)

The panel backed by Congress MLC Satej Patil on Monday won election to a leading cooperative milk producers' union in Maharashtra, defeating the Mahayuti-supported group led by senior NCP minister Hasan Mushrif in a setback to the ruling alliance in the western region.

With its victory, the Patil-backed panel has wrested control of the board of the Kolhapur District Cooperative Milk Producers' Union, better known as Gokul Dairy.

The Rajarshi Shahu Shetkari Samavichari Aghadi, led by the Congress leader, won 13 seats, while the Mahayuti-backed Chhatrapati Shahu Shetkari Vikas Aghadi secured 12 seats, according to results.

TDP, YSRCP workers clash at Andhra nomination centre, police resort to lathicharge

TDP and YSRCP members clashed during nomination scrutiny in Kuppam, prompting a police lathicharge. The confrontation deepened tensions over alleged violence and interference in the local body election process.



Clashes broke out between Telugu Desam Party (TDP) and YSR Congress Party (YSRCP) members during the scrutiny of nomination papers in Kuppam in Andhra Pradesh's Chittoor district, prompting police to resort to a lathicharge to bring the situation under control. Several people were reportedly injured in the police action. Tensions flared at the nomination centre as members of the two parties clashed during the scrutiny process. Police intervened and used batons to disperse those involved in the confrontation. The incident comes amid allegations of violence, intimidation and interference in the local body election process, with both sides trading accusations over the conduct of the polls.

NAIDU ACCUSES YSRCP OF CREATING TENSIONS

The clashes in Kuppam come against the backdrop of Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu's allegations that the YSRCP was attempting to create disturbances during the election process. Speaking at a press meet in Undavalli, Naidu accused the opposition party of bringing gangs, rowdies and criminals from Punjab and other states to create trouble in areas including Punganur and Rayachoti. He also named Dharmavaram, Tirupati, Pulivendula and Darsi, alleging that the YSRCP was attempting to carry out its activities unchecked in these regions. Naidu further accused the YSRCP of approaching courts repeatedly to obstruct government decisions and electoral processes.

WHAT JAGAN ALLEGED A DAY EARLIER

A day earlier, YSRCP chief YS Jagan Mohan Reddy had accused the ruling TDP of using government officials, police personnel and party supporters to influence the election process, alleging that the coalition lacked confidence in the people's mandate. Jagan claimed that YSRCP candidates had their nomination papers snatched away and that party workers and their associates were attacked, kidnapped and intimidated. He also accused the ruling party of arson and filing false cases against opposition workers, allegedly with the knowledge of the police.

Jagan also alleged that YSRCP MPs and workers faced obstruction in Kadapa, Punganur and Tirupati, where nomination papers were allegedly seized or not accepted, vehicles were attacked and supporters assaulted. In Pulivendula, he accused police personnel of favouring the TDP, alleging that they pelted stones and fired in the air to intimidate candidates who had arrived to file their nominations. He described the alleged firing during the nomination process as unprecedented. He further alleged that TDP supporters were allowed to gather in groups while YSRCP workers were prevented from entering nomination centres, even when accompanied by the four persons permitted under the rules. Jagan claimed that YSRCP candidates were still unable to file their nominations in several places on the final day, including Tirupati, Kadapa, Kamalapuram, Rayachoti, Punganur, Darsi, Gurazala, Dachepalli, Piduguralla, Badvel and Rajampet. The clashes come amid heightened tensions between the TDP and YSRCP over allegations of violence and intimidation during the local body election process.

Karnataka Woman, Lover Held for Husband's Murder in Staged Accident



Vijayapura police arrested four people for allegedly killing Rajshekhar Biradar with an SUV. Investigators say his wife and her friend planned to disguise the murder as an accident. Four people, including a 30-year-old woman, her male friend and a minor, have been arrested for allegedly killing her husband by running him over with an SUV and attempting to pass it off as a road accident in Karnataka, police told news agency Press Trust of India on Monday. The arrested woman, Ashwini, and her 25-year-old friend, Anand Rautappa Kallur, allegedly conspired to kill her husband, 42-year-old Rajshekhar Biradar, police said. Rajshekhar and Ashwini had been married for 10 years and have six-year-old twin sons. The family lived in Ekata Nagar in Vijayapura. The case was initially registered as a road accident at the Vijayapura traffic police station on October 4 under Sections 281, relating to rash driving, and 106(1), relating to causing death by negligence, of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, along with relevant provisions of the Motor Vehicles Act. In her complaint, Ashwini claimed that Rajshekhar had gone for a walk between 5 am and 5.30 am on October 4 when an unidentified vehicle hit him, killing him on the spot. However, suspicions emerged during the investigation, Vijayapura Superintendent of Police Laxman Nimbargi told Press Trust of India. Police found that Rajshekhar and Ashwini had built a house about seven months earlier and hired Kallur to paint it. During his visits for the work, Kallur became acquainted with Ashwini and the two developed a friendship, the officer said. Ashwini allegedly discussed killing her husband with Kallur, who agreed to the proposal. The two then allegedly planned to murder Rajshekhar and make it appear to be a road accident. Four people, including the minor, allegedly worked together to carry out the plan, police said. According to the superintendent of police, Rajshekhar left home for his morning walk at around 5.30 am on October 4. When he reached a road near a car showroom on Jumanal Road in Vijayapura, Ashwini allegedly informed Kallur of his location. Kallur allegedly followed Rajshekhar on a motorcycle and passed his location to his accomplices. Acting on the information, Sachin and the minor allegedly arrived in a black SUV without a number plate and ran Rajshekhar over from behind, killing him, the officer said. Police arrested Ashwini, Kallur, Sachin and the minor after the investigation indicated that Rajshekhar's death was allegedly a planned murder staged as a road accident.

Odisha: Naveen Patnaik writes to CM Majhi over Andhra's poll announcement in Kotia

BHUBANESWAR, OCT 19

Leader of Opposition (LoP) and BJD president Naveen Patnaik on Monday wrote to Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi, expressing "grave concern" over Andhra Pradesh's announcement of elections in Kotia, which he described as an integral part of Odisha. In his letter, Patnaik said that during his tenure as Chief Minister, the then BJD-led government had fought to protect the state's territorial integrity. He recalled that BJP leaders had repeatedly asserted in the past that Kotia belongs to Odisha and had raised the slogan "Go Back Andhra". Targeting the ruling BJP, the LoP questioned, "Before the 2024 elections, the BJP promised in its manifesto that a Double Engine Government would resolve the Kotia issue once and for all, safeguard Odisha's territorial integrity, and restore Odia Swabhiman. What happened to these promises?" Patnaik said it was deeply concerning that Andhra Pradesh had gone ahead with the announcement even though Odisha now has a "so-called Double Engine Government". "What happened to



the BJP's assurances that Kotia belongs to Odisha?" asked the former Chief Minister. He also pointed to the role of the Telugu Desam Party, which governs Andhra Pradesh and is a crucial ally of the BJP-led NDA government at the Centre. "Is political dependence the reason for the Odisha BJP government's silence and its willingness to compromise Odisha's interests and territorial integrity?" he asked. The BJD supremo also sought to know the recommendations of the 16-member high-level Kotia Committee constituted in 2025 and the action taken to implement them. "The people of Odisha deserve clear answers and accountability on these commitments," Patnaik wrote. He asked whether the state government would stand firm in safeguarding Odisha's territorial integrity and constitutional rights, "or will it once again yield to pressure from the Centre?" Questioning whether the "Go Back Andhra" slogan was merely an election gimmick, like other commitments that remain unfulfilled, he urged the state government to act decisively and take all necessary steps to uphold Odisha's sovereignty over Kotia. "The State Government must act decisively and take all necessary steps to safeguard Odisha's territorial integrity and uphold its sovereignty over Kotia," Patnaik demanded.

Special Security Arrangements at BLW on Vijayadashami

All Entry Gates to Remain Closed from 2:00 PM Until Ravan Effigy Burning
Ramleela Performance and Ravan Effigy Burning to Be Held at the BLW Sports Ground
General Manager Shri Ashutosh Pant to Be the Chief Guest



Varanasi. Special security arrangements will be in place at Banaras Locomotive Works (BLW) on 20 October 2026 on the occasion of Vijayadashami. Accordingly, all entry gates of BLW—Kakarmatta Main Gate, FCI Gate, Nathupur Gate, Pahari Gate and Kandwa Gate—will remain closed from 2:00 PM until the burning of the Ravan effigy. During this period, railway employees will be permitted to enter the BLW premises only upon producing a valid identity card, while members of the general public will be required to show a valid entry pass for attending the Ramleela performance and Ravan effigy burning. This arrangement has been made to regulate crowds, ensure public safety and prevent any untoward incidents.It is noteworthy that this decision has been taken keeping in view crowd management, public safety and the prevention of untoward incidents. On a major festival like Vijayadashami, a large number of people gather within the BLW premises and in the surrounding areas. Therefore, maintaining adequate security arrangements is of utmost importance. Vijayadashami will be celebrated at BLW on 20 October with traditional enthusiasm, devotion and grandeur. On this occasion, a grand theatrical presentation of Ramleela will be held at the Central Sports Ground from 4:30 PM to 8:00 PM, followed by an impressive fireworks display and the burning of the effigies. The General Manager of BLW, Shri Ashutosh Pant, will be the Chief Guest at the event.

During the Ceremony, effigies of Ravan, Kumbhakarna and Meghnad, measuring 70 feet, 65 feet and 60 feet in height, respectively, will be burnt. The Ramleela performance and the burning of the effigies will convey the message of the triumph of good over evil and righteousness over unrighteousness.

The BLW Administration appeals to all railway employees and general public to follow the instructions issued by the district administration in view of the security arrangements, carry their prescribed entry passes and identity cards, and extend their cooperation in ensuring that the Vijayadashami celebrations are conducted safely, peacefully and joyfully.

YSRCP demands fresh nomination process in 22 urban local bodies

Vijayawada, Oct 19: YSR Congress Party has urged the State Election Commission to order fresh nominations or postponement of elections in 22 urban local bodies, where its candidates were allegedly prevented from filing nominations. A delegation of YSR Congress Party (YSRCP) leaders met State Election Commissioner Anil Chandra Punetha and submitted video evidence of attacks, intimidation and destroyed nomination papers. MLC and State General Secretary Lella Appi Reddy, accompanied by former MLA T. J. R. Sudhakar Babu, Narayana Murthy and other leaders, handed over evidence in a pen drive and three representations. Later, addressing the media, Appi Reddy said TDP workers tore nomination papers of the opposition out of fear of defeat, while police supported them and, in some places, police themselves snatched papers. The party's submission showed YSRCP candidates filed nominations in only 321 of 809 wards and divisions across the 22 local bodies, leaving 488 without nominations. Nominations for eight municipal chairpersons were also prevented. Citing the case of Mydukur, where elections were postponed by the State Election Commission after 19 nomination papers were destroyed, Appi Reddy demanded



that the same remedy be applied in 22 other urban local bodies. He brought attacks on MPs Mithun Reddy, Gurumoorthy and Avinash Reddy to the Commission's attention. The SEC was told that violence continued during scrutiny, with nomination papers torn inside centres in Atmakur and Kanigiri. YSRCP workers were attacked in Proddatur and Kuppam. Kuppam chairperson candidate Vijay Kumar was abducted, and his whereabouts remained unknown. He also sought immediate rescue of abducted candidates and protection for their families. Appi Reddy demanded compliance with High Court directions on CCTV cameras, police protection and transparent elections. Surveillance and webcasting arrangements remained absent in several centres despite repeated requests, he said. He demanded that recordings be preserved, TDP leaders responsible for violence be prosecuted, and complicit officials be removed from election duties. He urged the SEC to examine Tirupati mayoral candidate Vasu Yadav's BC certificates and decide his nomination strictly under the rules, without political pressure. Affected candidates must receive a fresh opportunity before any uncontested declaration. Meanwhile, YSRCP has condemned what it called statewide attacks, abductions and destruction of nomination papers during scrutiny of nominations for municipal elections. It claimed that in Kuppam, chairperson candidate Vijay Kumar was abducted, MLC Bharath's residence attacked, and candidates Jayashankar and Jayanth hospitalised with serious head injuries. In Tadipatri, Kotla Shafi's house and furniture were damaged, candidate Mohammed Jaffar was abducted, and intimidation prevented nominations in five wards. In Proddatur, Poreddy Narasimha Reddy's papers were snatched and torn.



Chandrababu Naidu targets Jagan Mohan Reddy over U-turn on CEC selection

Chandrababu Naidu accused Jagan Mohan Reddy of reversing his stand on the CEC selection process. The clash has sharpened debate over electoral trust and alleged political patronage of crime.

Chandrababu Naidu also criticised YS Jagan Mohan Reddy's recent comments that the arrest of CJP leaders would not solve anything. Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu on Monday accused YSRCP president YS Jagan Mohan Reddy of opposing the Chief Election Commissioner because the poll body did not act according to his wishes, news agency Press Trust of India reported. Naidu's remarks came a day after the former chief minister said he regretted supporting the 2023 legislation governing the selection of the Chief Election Commissioner when his party was in power in Andhra Pradesh.

Addressing a press conference at his residence in Undavalli, Naidu said, "Earlier you supported the CEC appointment procedure, but now, since the Election Commission does not do what you say, you oppose it. Now you are saying Gen Z... Gen Z." According to PTI, Naidu also criticised Reddy's recent comments that the arrest of CJP leaders would not solve anything and that "trust in the electoral process" must be restored. The chief minister said he did not understand the reasoning behind Reddy's approach. Naidu claimed that people with emotions and aspirations were being misled and described it as the "work of the YSRCP". "They will encourage a person to commit a crime, then secure his release and encourage him to commit a bigger crime. Over time, he will be turned into a big criminal. That is their sign," he alleged, referring to the YSRCP. Naidu called for "this culture to go away", saying it would become a problem when political parties supported such practices. "You have seen me for 45 years. I do not allow any rowdy to approach me or sit with me. I have character and practise values-based politics," Naidu said. Naidu's comments centred on Reddy's changed position on the Chief Election Commissioner's selection process, trust in elections and his allegations about the political patronage of crime.



17-year-old girl found dead in bushes in Jharkhand; cops suspect rape-murder

A 17-year-old Class 11 student was found dead in bushes near her village in Jharkhand's Ranchi district after she went out with her seven-year-old cousin on Maha Ashtami, triggering outrage and a police investigation into suspected rape and murder. The girl had left her home in Mardu village, under the Muri police outpost area, on Sunday, October 18, saying she had some work outside. She did not return. Her cousin was later found injured and reportedly told the family what had happened after regaining consciousness. The girl's body was recovered from bushes near the village late on Sunday night and sent to the Rajendra Institute of Medical Sciences (RIMS) in Ranchi for a post-mortem examination. Her mobile phone is also missing, and police are investigating the circumstances surrounding her death. The incident, which took place during the Navratri festival, has sparked anger in the area, with political leaders demanding swift action and the strictest punishment for those found guilty.

SEVEN-YEAR-OLD COUSIN FOUND INJURED

According to information provided by the family, the girl had gone out with her seven-year-old cousin on Sunday. When she failed to return, relatives began looking for her. The cousin was reportedly found outside the house after being assaulted and losing consciousness. After he regained consciousness, he returned home and told the family about the incident. The child had sustained injuries and was taken for treatment before being brought home. Police are questioning the girl's relatives, including the young cousin, as part of the investigation to establish the sequence of events. The girl's body was subsequently found in bushes near the village. Police suspect sexual assault and murder, but the circumstances and cause of death will have to be established through the investigation and post-mortem findings.

FORENSIC TEAM, SNIFFER DOGS JOIN PROBE

Police launched an investigation after receiving information about the incident. Given the seriousness of the case, a sniffer dog team was called from Ranchi, while forensic and technical investigation teams examined the scene. Investigators collected evidence and samples from the spot. The body was removed at around 12.30 am to 1 am on Monday and sent to RIMS in Ranchi for a post-mortem examination. The missing mobile phone is another key aspect of the investigation. Police are examining this lead alongside the evidence collected at the scene and statements from the family. There were reports that a person had been detained for questioning in connection with the case, but their alleged role had not been officially confirmed. Ranchi Police told Aaj Tak that investigators were close to establishing the facts of the case and asked for some time before further details were made public.

SUDESH MAHTO, DEVENDRA NATH MAHTO VISIT VILLAGE

AJSU Party president and former Jharkhand deputy chief minister Sudesh Kumar Mahto visited Mardu village after learning about the incident.

EDITORIAL

A Degree Must Lead to More Than a Certificate

India's expanding higher education system is a significant achievement, but the real measure of its success lies not in the number of graduates it produces, but in their ability to find meaningful employment and contribute to the economy. A degree should open doors to opportunity, not leave young people standing outside a competitive job market with qualifications that fail to meet industry expectations.

Every year, millions of students graduate from universities and colleges across the country. Yet, many struggle to secure jobs that match their educational qualifications. Employers frequently point to gaps in communication, problem-solving, critical thinking and practical knowledge. This disconnect between classroom learning and workplace requirements raises an important question: is higher education preparing students for the world they are about to enter?

The problem is not a lack of ambition among young people. Rather, it reflects shortcomings in an education system that often places greater emphasis on examinations, theoretical knowledge and certificates than on the application of learning. Outdated curricula, limited industry exposure, inadequate laboratory facilities and insufficient career guidance further widen the gap between education and employment.

The answer, however, is not to turn universities into training centres designed solely to meet the immediate demands of employers. Higher education must preserve its broader purpose of developing informed, independent and responsible citizens. But academic excellence and employability need not be competing objectives. A strong educational foundation should equip students with both specialised knowledge and the ability to adapt to changing professional environments.

Universities must regularly update their curricula in consultation with industry experts, researchers and professionals. Internships, apprenticeships, live projects and practical assessments should become integral parts of undergraduate education rather than optional additions. Communication skills, digital literacy, teamwork and analytical thinking deserve greater attention across disciplines.

Equally important is the need to strengthen vocational education and skill-based learning. Not every student must follow the same academic route, and society must move beyond the assumption that conventional university degrees are inherently superior to technical and vocational qualifications. Skilled technicians, healthcare workers, manufacturing professionals and other trained workers are essential to economic growth.

Industry, too, has a responsibility. Companies cannot expect colleges to produce fully trained employees without contributing to curriculum development, internships and practical training. Governments must support institutions with adequate funding, qualified faculty and transparent systems to assess educational outcomes.

Ultimately, employability cannot be measured by placement figures alone. The quality of jobs, wage levels, career progression and the ability to sustain employment also matter. Universities must be judged by what students learn and how effectively they apply that knowledge, not simply by enrolment numbers or graduation rates.

India's demographic advantage will become an economic dividend only when its young population possesses relevant skills, sound judgment and opportunities to use them. A degree must represent genuine learning and capability, not merely the completion of a course. The goal should be clear: education must prepare young people not just to earn certificates, but to build careers, solve problems and shape the nation's future.

BOW AND GARLAND

Systems now bring grief and strain
Who can truly bear the pain?
Peer through time's reflective glass,
And see the fools in every class.

Clerks and crooks in smart disguise,
Leaders trading truth for lies.
Politics now crude and loud,
Honor buried by the crowd.

Shall we kneel to men so vain?
Their rise has been the people's bane.
You dined with them, you drank their brew,
And slowly lost what once was true.

Like crocodiles with vicious bite,
They hide their wrongs in dead of night.
Do what's just, avoid the shame
Or burn within the guilt and flame.

This "darshan" hides a deep descent,
Where human souls by pride are rent.
No sacred vows? That's not your flaw
But live by truth the highest law.

You sip from bronze with pompous flair,
A silver spoon but do you care?
Is hollow pride now called success,
While virtue fades in fancied dress?

With minds like worms that crawl and creep,
We stumble blind, in dreams too deep.
A land that mocks the poor man's strife
Has lost all sense of honest life.

Each grain of food upon your plate
Was born of toil and bitter fate.
Did you ask who bore the loss?
A farmer nailed upon the cross.

He sows the soil yet sees no yield,
Just debts that haunt the withered field.
What little grows, he gives away
His hands are bare at end of day.

He ploughs the land with weary bone,
Like oxen yoked yet all alone.
Still justice shines upon his name,
And time shall sing his silent fame.

So take that garland off the throne
It's Rajanna who stands alone!
Bow not to power, pride, or gold
But to the farmer brave and bold.

..: Dr. Peruka Raju :..
National Poet
7810032847

Are the CBI's Performance and Investigation Satisfactory?

Established in 1963 through a resolution of the Government of India, the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) is one of the premier investigating agencies in the country, handling major and complex cases. Its origins trace back to the Delhi Special Police Establishment, formed in 1946. The primary responsibility of the CBI is to investigate corruption, economic offenses, major frauds, and serious crimes of national importance. The CBI also takes up various cases upon the directives or recommendations of the Central Government, High Courts, or the Supreme Court. The core objective of the organization is to uphold legality, integrity, and justice through impartial, professional, and evidence-based investigations. There are diverse opinions among the public and experts regarding the performance of the CBI. On one hand, the CBI plays a crucial role in investigating complex cases such as large-scale corruption, economic crimes, and fraud. On the other hand, criticisms and concerns are frequently raised regarding the agency's autonomy, political interference, and the selection of its leadership. It is utmost essential that investigations are completed in a timely manner without delays, proceed impartially, and are based on strong evidence. The judiciary has also drawn attention to these matters on several occasions. To further enhance public trust in the CBI, the agency requires adequate independence, modern technology, efficient human resources, and transparent working procedures.

Main Reasons for Pending CBI Cases

The investigative capacity of the Central Bureau of Statistics (CBI) is primarily affected by issues such as pending cases with the organization, staff shortages, and prolonged trials in courts. By 2020, 588 regular cases belonging to the CBI were pending in the investigation stage for over a year. However, this is a slight decrease compared to 711 cases in 2019. In 2022, while 692 corruption cases were pending with the CBI for investigation, 6,841 corruption cases whose investigations were completed by the CBI were pending trial in courts. By 2023, the number of corruption cases pending in the investigation stage reached 658. Among these, 48 cases have been pending for over five years. At the same time, 6,903 corruption cases were under trial in courts, of which 361 cases have been pending for over 20 years. By the end of 2023, the total number of cases under investigation with the CBI stood at 1,028. Of these, 956 were regular cases and 72 were preliminary inquiries. On the other hand, the Central Vigilance Commission (CVC) revealed that the number of cases under trial in CBI courts stood at 10,959. The CVC stated that out of the 7,295 sanctioned posts in the CBI in 2023, 1,610 posts were vacant. Despite this, in 2023 alone, the CBI registered 876 regular cases and preliminary inquiries, and completed the investigation of 873 cases. According to the latest CVC statistics released, over 7,200 corruption cases investigated by the CBI were pending trial in various courts as of December 31, 2025. Examining these statistics, it appears that the major cause of the large backlog of cases lies more in the trial process before the courts than in the CBI's investigation stage. Staff shortages, prolonged investigations, judicial procedures, delays in obtaining necessary approvals, difficulties in collecting evidence, and heavy workloads are the main reasons for the pending cases. In addition, bank fraud, corruption, financial crimes, and important cases recommended by constitutional courts are placing an increasing workload on the CBI. In particular, delays in obtaining the approvals required for prosecuting cases involving government employees also affect the progress of investigations and trials. Cases involving multiple states or foreign countries require coordination with other investigative agencies, state governments, and international organizations. Delays in this coordination further extend the time required to complete investigations. Moreover, forensic examinations, financial audits, digital forensic analyses, and technical reports often take considerable time, causing further delays in the disposal of cases.

CBI Performance and Autonomy

Political pressure on the functioning and autonomy of the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) continues to be a major concern. Since the agency depends on the central government for administrative matters, critics have described the CBI as a "caged parrot." The Supreme Court also used this expression during the investigation into the Coalgate case in 2013. Although allegations have been made regarding the registration, selection, and timing of investigations involving political leaders, these allegations should not be treated as established facts in every case. Staff vacancies, dependence on deputation, the need for state-government consent, prolonged judicial proceedings, and heavy workloads affect the CBI's performance. Despite these limitations, the CBI has achieved significant success in investigating complex cases involving corruption, organized crime, financial fraud, and murder. In the Indradev Singh murder case, a Lucknow Special CBI Court sentenced three accused persons to life imprisonment in July 2026 for the murder committed in 2002. The agency has also demonstrated its international investigative capabilities by bringing wanted accused persons based abroad back to India through Interpol and international cooperation. In sensitive cases such as the RG Kar Medical College case, the CBI took over the investigation following judicial intervention. As part of its anti-corruption activities, trapping and arresting government officials who demand or accept bribes is also an important aspect of the CBI's work. However, arrests and the filing of charge sheets alone are not sufficient measures of investigative success. Convictions in courts and the timely completion of trials are more important indicators of final judicial resolution. Over the years, the Central Bureau of Investigation has maintained a significant conviction rate in criminal cases. Its conviction rate was recorded at 69.83% in 2020, 67.56% in 2021, 74.59% in 2022, 71.47% in 2023, and 69.14% in 2024. The CBI's conviction rate of 71.71% in 2025 is a positive development.

How Can the CBI's Performance Be Improved?

To improve the CBI's performance, vacant positions in the investigation, forensic, legal, and technical divisions should be filled within a specified time frame. Modern technological capabilities, including digital forensics, financial intelligence, cyber investigations, and data analytics, should also be strengthened. To increase public confidence in impartial investigations, the CBI should be provided with greater operational autonomy and adequate protection from external interference. A centralized digital system with fixed timelines should be established to prevent delays in granting prosecution sanctions. For the speedy disposal of cases, Special CBI Courts should be strengthened with sufficient staff. The agency should also publicly release comprehensive annual statistics on registered, under-investigation, pending, and disposed cases, along with conviction rates. Multidisciplinary special teams should be created for complex cases. These teams should include investigating officers, forensic experts, accountants, cyber specialists, and prosecutors. Coordination with the Reserve Bank of India, the Securities and Exchange Board of India, the Enforcement Directorate, state police organizations, the Serious Fraud Investigation Office, and international agencies should be improved. This would make investigations, asset tracing, and recovery more effective. At the same time, clear and measurable performance targets should be set for investigation and prosecution while ensuring compliance with legal procedures. Although the CBI's commendable conviction rate in 2025 is a positive development, further institutional reforms are necessary to reduce the case backlog, improve the quality of investigations, and ensure the timely delivery of justice. These measures can further strengthen the CBI's efficiency, impartiality, and public credibility.



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A Nation United, A Nation Prepared

A nation's strength is not measured merely by the size of its armed forces or the power of its weapons. Its real strength lies in the courage of its people, the dedication of its soldiers and the willingness of every citizen to stand together during difficult times. While soldiers guard the frontiers, farmers cultivate the land, workers contribute to production, teachers shape young minds and writers inspire social awareness. Each person serves the country in a different way, yet all share a common responsibility towards its progress and security. This spirit of collective responsibility is the foundation of national solidarity, and it gives India the confidence to face challenges with unity and determination.

The history of independent India is marked by several challenges, including the consequences of Partition, economic difficulties, food shortages and disputes along its borders. Despite these hardships, the country continued to strengthen its democratic institutions and preserve its national identity. These experiences have shown that national security cannot be treated as the responsibility of the armed forces alone. Public awareness, social cooperation and a strong sense of citizenship are equally important. When people remain united during difficult circumstances, the nation becomes better prepared to overcome adversity and move forward with confidence.

On 20 October 1962, the India–China war began. The difficult geographical conditions of the Himalayan region, severe cold, limited transport facilities and communication challenges made military operations particularly demanding. The conflict exposed several difficulties in India's defence preparedness and highlighted the importance of strategic planning, infrastructure, training and effective communication. Looking back at this chapter of history is not merely an exercise in remembering the hardships of the past. It also helps us understand the need to learn from experience and strengthen our preparedness for the future. The lessons of history remain valuable whenever a nation seeks to safeguard its sovereignty and territorial integrity.

The events of 1962 also strengthened public awareness of the importance of national unity and collective responsibility. National Solidarity Day, observed on 20 October, recalls the need to protect the unity and integrity of the country. Its significance extends beyond remembering a historical conflict. India is home to people who speak different languages, follow diverse traditions and belong to varied cultural backgrounds. Yet, the Constitution, democratic values and a shared commitment to the nation provide a common bond. National unity should not be limited to occasional public celebrations; it must remain a living value reflected in the thoughts and actions of every generation. The life of a soldier demands extraordinary discipline, courage and dedication. Whether serving in snow-covered mountains, desert regions or remote border areas, soldiers perform their duties under challenging conditions, often remaining away from their families for long periods. Their service requires constant alertness, rigorous training and a strong sense of duty. Respecting their contribution means more than offering tributes during national occasions. It also involves understanding their responsibilities, recognising the sacrifices made by their families and supporting the welfare of veterans. Gratitude towards the armed forces should find a meaningful place in our everyday conduct and public life.

The families of soldiers who lose their lives in the line of duty face a loss that words can never fully express. Along with personal grief, they may have to deal with financial difficulties, family responsibilities and concerns about their children's future. Government assistance is important, but the support of society is equally meaningful. Helping families access education, employment opportunities and essential services can make a genuine difference in their lives. Paying tribute to fallen soldiers should therefore include practical concern for the people they leave behind. A society that values sacrifice must also demonstrate compassion towards those who carry its consequences. India's diversity is one of its most distinctive features. From the Himalayan ranges in the north to the coastal regions in the south, and from the deserts of the west to the hills and valleys of the east, the country presents a remarkable variety of landscapes and lifestyles. Languages, food habits, clothing, festivals, art forms and customs differ from region to region. However, this diversity does not prevent people from sharing a common national identity. Unity does not mean that everyone must live in the same way or think alike. It means respecting differences while remaining committed to common constitutional values and the welfare of the country.

Telangana offers several examples of how regional traditions and occupations contribute to India's larger identity. Bathukamma celebrates nature and brings women together through a distinctive cultural tradition. Bonalu reflects the religious and cultural heritage of the region. In Sircilla, generations of handloom and powerloom workers have contributed to the textile industry through their skill and hard work. Farmers, weavers, workers, traders and transporters depend on one another to keep economic activity moving. Their contributions may differ, but each plays a role in the wider development of society. Preserving regional culture while respecting the traditions of other communities strengthens the bond that connects Indians across the country.

National preparedness also depends on responsible citizenship. Respecting the law, protecting public property, conserving water, maintaining cleanliness and using public facilities responsibly are everyday duties that contribute to national progress. Patriotism need not always be expressed through grand speeches or public ceremonies. It can be seen in the honesty with which a person performs a job, the care shown towards public resources and the willingness to help others. When citizens recognise that their rights are accompanied by responsibilities, public institutions function more effectively and society becomes stronger. A nation advances when its people take ownership of their duties.

During natural disasters and other emergencies, the spirit of solidarity becomes especially visible. Floods, cyclones, earthquakes and fires can place entire communities at risk. During such situations, rescue personnel, healthcare workers, volunteers and local residents often work together to protect lives and provide essential assistance. Arranging food, drinking water, medicines, temporary shelter and blood donations can bring relief to affected families. These acts of service demonstrate that humanity can rise above differences of language, religion and region. At the same time, people must follow official safety instructions and avoid spreading unverified information. Effective cooperation requires both compassion and discipline.

In the modern world, national security involves challenges that extend beyond conventional military threats. Cybersecurity, the protection of communication networks, the safety of essential infrastructure and the stability of economic systems have become increasingly important. False messages, manipulated photographs and misleading online content can create confusion and unnecessary fear. Citizens should verify information before sharing it, particularly when it concerns defence matters or public safety. Responsible use of digital technology is now an important part of civic awareness. A well-informed public can help prevent rumours from spreading and contribute to a more secure social environment.

Preparedness should not begin only when a crisis arises. It requires continuous investment in training, research, transport, healthcare, communication systems and disaster management. Roads, tunnels and reliable communication facilities in border regions support military operations while also improving the lives of local communities. Access to education, healthcare, employment and other essential services enables people living in remote areas to participate more fully in national development. Their welfare is an important part of the country's overall strength. A well-prepared nation must therefore pay attention to both its security requirements and the everyday needs of its citizens.

Scientific research and domestic technological capabilities also contribute to national preparedness. Scientists, engineers, skilled workers and researchers play important roles in developing aircraft, naval systems, radar equipment, communication technologies and other defence-related resources. Their work depends on educational institutions, research laboratories, industries and technical training centres. Investment in science and innovation strengthens a country's ability to address emerging challenges. Encouraging students to develop scientific curiosity, practical skills and creative thinking can help build a generation capable of contributing to national progress. Defence strength and scientific advancement are closely connected with the quality of education and research available to society.

Educational institutions have a significant responsibility in nurturing national solidarity among young people. Students should learn about the freedom struggle, the Constitution, the contribution of soldiers and the efforts of social reformers. Debates, essay competitions, community service and cultural programmes can help them understand the importance of unity and public responsibility. Interacting with people from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds encourages mutual respect and broadens their outlook. Young citizens must learn to appreciate differences without allowing them to become barriers to friendship and cooperation. Their education should prepare them not only for employment but also for responsible participation in society.

Writers, poets, journalists and artists can also contribute to national unity through their work. Literature helps readers understand experiences beyond their immediate surroundings and develops empathy for others. Stories about soldiers, families living in border regions, disaster relief workers and ordinary citizens who serve their communities can bring important human experiences into public discussion. At the same time, creative expression should encourage understanding rather than deepen social divisions. Writers have the opportunity to question, reflect and inspire while respecting the dignity of individuals and communities. When words promote thoughtful discussion and mutual understanding, literature becomes a meaningful force for social harmony. National solidarity does not require everyone to hold identical opinions. Differences of view are a natural part of democracy, and citizens have the right to question policies, discuss public issues and express concerns through lawful means. What matters is the manner in which disagreements are addressed. Respectful dialogue, constitutional principles and consideration for the rights of others help preserve the strength of democratic society. People may disagree on particular issues while continuing to share a commitment to the country's welfare and integrity. Protecting democratic values is therefore not separate from national unity; it is one of the foundations on which lasting unity rests. History across the world shows that wars cause immense human suffering and lasting social and economic damage. A responsible approach to national security must therefore combine adequate defence preparedness with diplomatic engagement and peaceful dialogue. Border disputes and international disagreements require patience, negotiation and sustained efforts to build mutual understanding. Protecting a country's sovereignty and working towards international peace are not contradictory goals. A nation can remain vigilant about its security while supporting peaceful relations with other countries. In an interconnected world, responsible diplomacy and cultural exchanges can help create conditions for greater stability and cooperation.

National Solidarity Day also offers an opportunity to reflect on the contribution each citizen can make to the country. A student who studies sincerely, a farmer who produces food, a worker who performs a task with care, a doctor who treats patients, a teacher who guides children and an employee who works honestly all contribute to society in different ways. Public representatives and institutions, too, have responsibilities towards the people they serve. Every individual has different abilities and circumstances, but a sincere commitment to fulfilling one's duties can make a meaningful difference. National progress is built through countless acts of responsibility carried out across the country every day.

India's journey has been shaped by the struggles, sacrifices and aspirations of generations. Preserving that legacy requires us to respect the past while working towards a more secure, educated and compassionate future. The alertness of a soldier guarding the frontier, the courage of a volunteer helping disaster victims and the dedication of a teacher guiding young minds all reflect different expressions of service to the nation. Our love for India should be visible not only during national celebrations but also in the way we treat others, protect public resources and fulfil our responsibilities. When respect for diversity, commitment to duty and concern for fellow citizens become part of everyday life, national solidarity grows beyond a commemorative occasion and becomes a lasting strength of the Indian people.

CHITIKENA KIRAN KUMAR

DRI seizes 43.2 lakh smuggled foreign-origin cigarettes in Mizoram

NEW DELHI: (OCT 19)

The Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI) has seized 43.2 lakh sticks of foreign-origin cigarettes worth Rs 8.64 crore in Mizoram, dealing a blow to cross-border smuggling, according to an official statement. Acting on specific intelligence, officers of the Aizawl Regional Unit of the DRI -- that comes under the Union Ministry of Finance -- intercepted a truck at Tuirial village along the Champhai-Aizawl Road en route to the Mizoram capital, it said. A search of the vehicle led to the recovery of 432 cases containing 43.2 lakh sticks of 'Patron' brand cigarettes suspected to have been smuggled from neighbouring Myanmar, the ministry said in the statement.

SIT records Uttarakhand minister Rekha Arya's statement

DEHRADUN: (Oct 19) The SIT formed to investigate a case filed by Uttarakhand's Minister for Women Empowerment Rekha Arya, who accused her husband of physical assault and harassment, recorded her statement on Monday. An audio recording related to the case was also obtained from her, officials said. "The team has recorded the statement of Rekha Arya where she spoke in detail about the allegations levelled by her against her husband. An audio recording related to the case has also been obtained from her. These will be sent to a Forensic Science Laboratory for examination for further legal proceedings," said Jaya Baluni, Superintendent of Police (Rural), who is heading the SIT.

Chief Minister Chairs HPPC and High Power Works Purchase Committee Meetings

CHANDIGARH, OCTOBER 19


Haryana Chief Minister, Sh. Nayab Singh Saini presiding over the meeting of the High Powered Purchase Committee (HPPC) and High Powered Works Purchase Committee (HPWPC) at Chandigarh on October 19, 2026. Energy Minister Sh. Anil Vij, Education Minister Sh. Mahipal Dhanda, Cooperation Minister Dr. Arvind Sharma, and Agriculture and Farmers Welfare Minister, Sh. Shyam

Haryana Chief Minister Sh. Nayab Singh Saini on Monday chaired meetings of the High Powered Purchase Committee (HPPC) and the High Power Works Purchase Committee at Haryana Niwas in Chandigarh. During the meetings, proposals relating to procurement and development works across various departments were approved. The decisions are aimed at strengthening infrastructure and improving public services across the state. Transport Minister Sh. Anil Vij, Education Minister Sh. Mahipal Dhanda, Cooperation Minister Dr. Arvind Sharma, Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare Minister Sh. Shyam Singh Rana, Chief Principal Secretary to Chief Minister Sh. Rajesh Khullar, Additional Chief Secretary, Finance and Planning Department, Sh. Sudhir Rajpal, Deputy Principal Secretary to Chief Minister Dr. Yashpal, and senior officers of the departments concerned attended the meetings.

Major Proposals for Power, Water Supply, Roads and Other Infrastructure Projects Approved

The committees approved proposals from various departments, including Transport, Power, Education, Environment, Cooperation, Urban Development, Public Health Engineering, Public Works, and Irrigation and Water Resources. These covered the modernisation of power distribution systems, smart grid projects, water supply and sewerage facilities, stormwater drainage systems, road improvements, construction of educational institutions and enhancement of storage capacity. To strengthen the power distribution network, approval was granted for the upgradation and modernisation of 11 kV feeders in various areas, construction of new substations and implementation of advanced technologies such as SCADA and DMS/OMS. These measures are expected to enhance the reliability and efficiency of electricity supply. The committees also approved a proposal to establish air quality monitoring stations in Haryana's National Capital Region (NCR) districts as part of the state's efforts to strengthen environmental protection.

Chief Minister Calls for Strict Adherence to Quality Standards, Transparency and Financial Discipline

Chief Minister directed officers to ensure that all development projects are completed within the stipulated timelines while strictly adhering to prescribed quality standards. He emphasised the need for strict compliance with technical specifications in construction works and regular monitoring of project implementation. The Chief Minister further directed officers to undertake periodic reviews of project progress and fix accountability wherever negligence is found. Emphasising transparency and financial discipline, the Chief Minister said that all government procurement and construction works must be carried out through transparent procedures, with strict adherence to financial norms. He stressed that public funds must be utilised judiciously, with public welfare accorded the highest priority, and made it clear that no compromise on quality would be tolerated.

The Chief Minister also directed all departments to work in close coordination and ensure optimal utilisation of available resources.

New Lift at Jat Bhawan to Be Inaugurated on Haryana Day

MP Manish Tewari to Inaugurate the Facility

CHANDIGARH, OCTOBER 19

A meeting of the Executive Committee of the Jat Sabha Chandigarh/ Panchkula was held at Jat Bhawan in Sector 27, under the chairmanship of Sabha President Dr. Mahendra Singh Malik. At the beginning of the meeting, a two-minute silence was observed to pay tribute to the departed members of the Jat Sabha and their relatives, and to pray for peace for their souls.

Thereafter, various issues concerning the Sabha were discussed in a systematic manner. Detailed deliberations were also held on the progress of construction of the Chaudhary Chhotu Ram Pilgrim Guest House in Katra. Speaking to the media after the meeting, Jat Sabha President Dr. Malik informed that the newly constructed lift at Jat Bhawan, Chandigarh, funded through the Members of Parliament Local Area Development Scheme (MPLADS) fund of MP Manish Tewari, has been completed. He added that MP Manish Tewari himself will inaugurate the lift on November 1, 2026, on the occasion of Haryana Day.

During the same meeting, new office-bearers were unanimously appointed with the objective of further strengthening the organisation. Retired Chief Engineer Shri Ashok Kumar Sheokand was appointed as the new Vice-President of the organisation, retired Sub-Divisional Officer Shri Ramphal Nain was appointed as Finance Secretary, and Gaurav Sheoran, son of Shri R. R. Sheoran, was nominated as a member of the Executive Committee. The meeting was attended by several prominent office-bearers and members of the Sabha, including Vice-President Jaipal Punia, Secretary B. S. Gill, Joint Secretary M. S. Phogat, Shri S. S. Hooda, Public Relations Secretary J. S. Dhillon, and Editor Shri Manbir Sangwan.

UP govt provides Rs 25,000 under Kanya Sumangala scheme, Rs 1 Lakh for marriage

GORAKHPUR, OCT 19

Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Monday said the state government provides financial assistance of Rs 25,000 to families under the Chief Minister Kanya Sumangala Yojana, covering various stages from the birth of a girl child to her education. The government also provides Rs 1 lakh for her marriage when she reaches marriageable age. Speaking to reporters, CM Yogi said, "Under the Chief Minister Kanya Sumangala Yojana, the state government provides financial assistance of ₹25,000 to families from the birth of a girl child through different stages of her education. When a girl reaches marriageable age, the government provides assistance of ₹1 lakh for her marriage." CM Yogi further highlighted the government's initiatives for women's welfare, safety, dignity and empowerment, emphasising that these principles are reflected in its governance and administrative functioning. "Our rituals dedicated to Jagat Janani Maa Bhagwati are not limited to worship; they are also reflected in the practical functioning of governance and administration. Our Mission Shakti campaign is inspired by this very principle and is based on the themes of women's safety, respect and self-reliance," he said. The Chief Minister said the government had strengthened the initiative by establishing women's help desks at every police station in the state to address complaints and ensure women's safety. He also



highlighted the launch of the 1090 women's helpline and said every police station had a separate room to address women's safety concerns and related issues. Female beat police officers and women police officers of Sub-Inspector rank assist women in resolving their problems, he added. Speaking about the ongoing Sharadiya Navratri celebrations, CM Yogi said a large number of devotees had been visiting Maa Vindhyavasini Dham following the construction of a new corridor at the shrine. "Since the construction of the new corridor at Maa Vindhyavasini Dham, lakhs of devotees have been visiting the shrine. Yesterday, more than 25 lakh devotees offered prayers and performed rituals there. A huge crowd has gathered since early morning today as well. I believe that around 20 to 25 lakh devotees will visit Maa Vindhyavasini Dham today too," he said. CM Yogi also spoke about the religious significance of Navami, the ninth day of Sharadiya Navratri, and the tradition of worshipping young girls as an expression of reverence for the feminine divine. "Today is Navami, the ninth day of Sharadiya Navratri. The ninth manifestation of Jagat Janani Maa Bhagwati bestows all kinds of spiritual accomplishments. On this occasion, every follower of Sanatan Dharma expresses devotion to this tradition and festival while showing respect for women through the ritual of worshipping young girls," he said. The Chief Minister added that he felt fortunate to participate in the traditional rituals at Gorakhnath Temple on the auspicious occasion. "It is my good fortune that today, on the auspicious occasion of Navami during Sharadiya Navratri, I have had the opportunity to participate in the sacred tradition of Gorakhnath Temple by worshipping young girls and serving them a feast as part of the Bhandara," he said.

K'taka: Farmers, Dalit outfits call for statewide rallies on Oct 23 against SIR

Bengaluru, Oct 19: Farmers' and Dalit organisations in Karnataka have called for statewide protests on October 23 against the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls, alleging irregularities in the process and announcing plans to hold public rallies at district headquarters to protect democracy. The organisations made the announcement at a press conference in Bengaluru, declaring their support for the campaign against the SIR process and calling for demonstrations modelled on the protests held at Jantar Mantar in New Delhi. Actor and activist Prakash Raj, who addressed the press conference, said farmers' and Dalit organisations would join the movement against SIR, with rallies planned across Karnataka on October 23, a Friday. He condemned the alleged restrictions on protests in Delhi, claiming that Jantar Mantar had been effectively closed to demonstrators and that the national capital was being turned into a police city. He also alleged that young people and women journalists had faced police brutality during protests and accused the government of remaining silent despite the alleged mistreatment of young demonstrators.

Prakash Raj said young people across the country had taken to the streets to raise concerns over the education system and other issues, adding that the campaign against SIR had also gained momentum.

Suvendu Alleges Bangladesh-Like Unrest Plot Amid Bookstall Row

Suvendu Adhikari accused Left groups and protesters of seeking Bangladesh-like unrest amid claims of vandalised Puja bookstalls. The remarks sharpened political tensions over democratic space, religious identity and electoral-roll revisions.

West Bengal Chief Minister Suvendu Adhikari on Monday alleged that Communists and "cockroaches" were trying to create "Bangladesh-like unrest" in India and said their attempts must be resisted, news agency Press Trust of India reported.

His remarks came amid allegations by Left parties that their bookstalls near Durga Puja pandals had been vandalised at several places across West Bengal. Left leaders described the alleged vandalism as "an attack on democratic thought".

The CPI(M), SUCI and other Left parties said their bookstalls had been vandalised at locations ranging from Dinhata in Cooch Behar district to Haridevpur in south Kolkata.

Responding to the criticism, Adhikari said, "The



Communists, they do not offer prayers, refuse to tie the sacred thread on their wrists, and do not put tilak on their foreheads. Beware of them," according to PTI.

Speaking to reporters after offering prayers at a Durga Puja in Kanthi in Purba Medinipur, Adhikari said, "I prayed to Goddess Durga for the well-being of the people of the state and peaceful passage of the rest of the days of Durga Puja."

Referring to a stampede in Kolkata that left 19 people dead, he appealed for "everyone's cooperation in making the rest of this year's puja accident-free".

Pointing to the vermilion mark on his forehead and the sacred thread tied around his wrist, Adhikari said, "I am not a Communist, I am not an atheist, and I am not a Jamaati. I am a son of a Hindu, a proud Sanatani." He added, "As a Sanatani, worshipping the goddess is my duty."

Adhikari also targeted the Cockroach Janta Party, which has taken to the streets demanding the resignation of Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar over the SIR exercise involving electoral rolls. He said people should be wary of "cockroaches and bedbugs".

Claiming that such groups were trying to create unrest across India similar to that in Bangladesh, Adhikari said, "They must be resisted by any means." His comments came as Left parties continued to protest against the alleged attacks on their bookstalls during Durga Puja.

Tiger Shroff shooting: 2 arrested, juvenile detained from Rajasthan's Kota

The firing incident took place on Sunday evening in Mumbai's Juhu as Tiger Shroff was leaving after playing a football match. The Lawrence Bishnoi gang has claimed responsibility for the shooting and issued fresh threats against those working with Bollywood actor Salman Khan.



Two men have been arrested, and a juvenile detained in Rajasthan's Kota in connection with the firing at Bollywood actor Tiger Shroff's car in Mumbai. The accused have been identified as the 17-year-old minor and Rehan, both from Haryana; and Hrithik Kumar from Bihar.

A joint team of the Anti-Gangster Task Force (AGTF) Rajasthan and Kota City Police, acting on inputs from Mumbai Police, arrested the three men from the Railway Colony area. The accused arrived in Kota aboard the Pune-Jaipur Superfast Express at around 10.15 am. Two other people have also been detained in connection with the shooting, including one from the Maharashtra-Gujarat border today.Earlier in the day, the Mumbai Police had registered an attempt to-murder case against the three accused. The FIR was initially registered by Juhu Police but has now been transferred to the Mumbai Crime Branch. The case has been registered under Sections 109(1) (attempt to murder) and 3(5) (acts done by several persons in furtherance of a common intention) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, along with relevant provisions of the Arms Act. As the 36-year-old actor was leaving after playing a football match in the city's Juhu area on Sunday evening, the accused fired multiple shots at his BMW sedan. While Shroff escaped unhurt, his driver, Firdaus, and an autorickshaw driver, identified as Chauhan, were injured.The actor, who was seated on the side of the vehicle, shifted towards the driver's seat after the shooting. The Lawrence Bishnoi gang has claimed responsibility for the shooting and issued fresh threats against those working with Bollywood actor Salman Khan. The Bishnoi gang's hostility towards Salman Khan stems from allegations that the actor hunted and killed two blackbucks in Rajasthan in the late 1990s. The blackbuck is considered sacred by the Bishnoi community. Salman Khan was initially convicted by a court under the Wildlife Protection Act before being acquitted by the Rajasthan High Court. Just hours before the accused shooters were arrested, an image of two of them had surfaced. The photograph, reportedly taken near the spot of the incident, shows both men dressed in white shirts, with one wearing a black cap bearing the Puma logo. At the time, their identities remained unknown. Police have also seized a motorcycle used in the attack, which the accused abandoned at Andheri railway station before fleeing. Preliminary findings have suggested that the vehicle is registered in Mumbai, and investigators are examining its registration details, number plate and chassis and engine numbers to establish its history.

The firing was captured on CCTV footage, which shows one of the men firing multiple shots while the second appears to attempt to fire, though it remains unclear whether his weapon discharged. The third accused can be seen waiting on a motorcycle, seemingly ready to help his accomplices flee the scene. Addressing reporters earlier in the day, Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis described the attackers as "cowardly individuals", adding, "They attempt to strike from the shadows, but their efforts will be thwarted." Deputy Chief Minister Eknath Shinde visited Shroff at his residence shortly after the attack and revealed that the actor had suffered gunpowder burns on his right hand. Shinde had described the incident as serious and vowed strict action against those responsible, warning that no gang or individual would be allowed to revive gang wars in Mumbai.

Committed to Providing Pure and Clean Drinking Water to Passengers

North Eastern Railway

GORAKHPUR, OCTOBER 19, 2026



With the objective of providing clean and safe drinking water to railway passengers and employees, North Eastern Railway has accorded priority to the continuous monitoring and maintenance of water tanks, water coolers, taps, filters, distribution points, and pipelines at railway stations, offices, and residential colonies. Chief Health Inspectors and Health Inspectors of the Railways are regularly conducting residual chlorine tests, bacteriological tests, and chemical analyses to ensure the safety of drinking water. Providing pure drinking water to railway passengers and employees is one of the priorities of the Railway Administration, and this initiative will continue on a sustained basis. Under the joint guidance of Dr. Ramesh Chandra, Chief Medical Superintendent, Divisional Railway Hospital, Badshahnagar, and Shri Bhuvanesh Singh, Additional Divisional Railway Manager (Infrastructure), Lucknow Division, Chief Health Inspectors and Health Inspectors conducted a total of 156 residual chlorine tests and 9 bacteriological tests at 10 major stations. Following the examinations, all water samples were found to conform to the prescribed standards. Similarly, regular residual chlorine and bacteriological tests were conducted at major stations under the Izzatnagar Division. In the Varanasi Division, Chief Health Inspectors and Health Inspectors inspected water tanks, water coolers, water filters, pipelines, and pumping systems at railway stations, residential colonies, coaching depots, hospitals, health centres, running rooms, crew lobbies, and offices. This inspection campaign will continue across all stations, residential colonies, and offices of North Eastern Railway to ensure the availability of pure drinking water. Health Inspectors are conducting regular tests to ensure that passengers and employees receive clean drinking water that meets the prescribed standards. Providing clean drinking water to railway passengers and employees remains a priority for the Railway Administration, and the monitoring of water quality will continue uninterrupted.

North Korean leader's sister calls situation at southern border 'very unstable'

SEOUL

Kim Yo-jong, sister of North Korean leader Kim Jong-un, said Monday the situation at the southern border is "very unstable," noting the North is reviewing a possible resumption of loudspeaker broadcasts along the border.

The remarks came after Pyongyang has repeatedly denied responsibility for a land mine explosion last month that severely injured two South Korean soldiers and dismissed Seoul's findings that land mines deliberately planted by North Korea were the cause of the blast.

"Now the situation of the southern border is very unstable. A grave situation is prevailing along the southern border due to the reckless behavior of the ROK military gangsters," Kim said in an English-language statement carried by the Korean Central News Agency (KCNA).

Stretched on too many fronts, Pakistan cannot shore up Saudi security under Mecca Pact: Report

NEW DELHI



Pakistan, battling insurgencies at home and tensions along multiple borders, is too overstretched to offer meaningful military support to Saudi Arabia under the Mecca Pact, a report has highlighted.

According to The Cipher Brief, the deadly Houthi strikes on Riyadh's international airport on October 10 and 11, which killed 12 people and injured around 300, came just days after Saudi Arabia, Turkey and Pakistan activated the pact on October 5, underlining that it had done little to deter the Houthis.

"The pact's most acute capacity problem lies in Pakistan. Islamabad must contain the Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan insurgency in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Baloch separatist violence while guarding a contested frontier with Afghanistan and maintaining forces opposite India," the report stated as escalating Houthi attacks expose the limits of the new collective-defence arrangement.

It pointed to Pakistan's airstrikes inside Afghanistan on October 1 amid recurring border clashes, and the imposition of emergency rule in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on October 11, adding that the frontier with India remains a contingency Pakistani military planners cannot ignore.

"This threat landscape will create serious bandwidth issues for Pakistan's military in the immediate to near term, further limiting Islamabad's support for Riyadh," the report said.

Though Islamabad has denied Western media reports that its troops are deployed in government-held areas of Yemen, the death of a Pakistani driver in a Houthi drone strike in Marib has raised questions over whether Islamabad has taken on a direct combat role alongside Saudi-backed Yemeni forces, it noted.

"Neither country should be dismissed as a partner, and neither should be treated as an unlimited strategic reserve for a war with no clear end date," the report said, referring to Pakistan and Turkey.

Arguing that Ankara and Islamabad are unwilling and probably unable to hit Houthi infrastructure, the report urged Washington to step up military support to Riyadh and Yemen's internationally recognised government through targeting support, aerial refuelling, air and missile defence and counter-drone capabilities, without plunging into an open-ended bombing campaign. "The Mecca partners can share the burden, but they cannot yet carry it alone," it stated.



Yemen: 25 killed, 30 injured in missile attack on military camp

ADEN (YEMEN)

At least 25 soldiers were killed and more than 30 others injured on Monday after three missiles struck a government military training base in Yemen's southeastern province of Shabwa, a government military official and a local medical source told Xinhua.

The local military official, who requested anonymity, said the three missiles targeted Al-Alam military base, particularly a training camp within the facility in Jardan district, near Ataq, the provincial capital, blaming the attack on the Houthi group.

Footage circulating on social media showed numerous casualties at the scene. The local medical source said that the casualty figures remained preliminary and could rise, Xinhua News Agency reported. Emergency and medical teams continued evacuating the wounded to hospitals in Shabwa, while some of the bodies recovered from the camp were badly burned, complicating efforts to establish a final toll, the medical source said.

Al-Alam is a large military facility in Jardan district used by forces aligned with Yemen's internationally recognised government and supported by the Saudi Arabia-led coalition.

The Houthis had not claimed responsibility for the attack. The incident came amid intensified fighting and exchanges of attacks between the Houthis and government forces supported by the Saudi Arabia-led coalition across several fronts in Yemen.

On Sunday, fierce fighting erupted near Yemen's strategic Bab al-Mandeb Strait as government forces launched a fresh offensive against Houthi positions in the area, a government military official told Xinhua.

The official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said units from the Giants Brigades and Nation Shield Forces advanced from several directions to seize key Houthi-held positions overlooking approaches to the strait.

Heavy clashes were raging as Houthi fighters resisted the advance from fortified positions and trenches, the official said, adding that extensive minefields had complicated the government forces' push, Xinhua News Agency reported.

"The fighting is among the fiercest we have seen in the area," the official said. "The Houthis are heavily entrenched, and our forces are trying to break through their defensive lines."

The official said the Houthis is also deployed fibre-optic-guided first-person-view kamikaze drones known as "Shawaz" against the advancing government troops.

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh arrives in Tajikistan for SCO meeting

DUSHANBE



Defence Minister Rajnath Singh arrived in Tajikistan's Dushanbe Monday evening on a two-day official visit to represent India at the 25th Meeting of the Council of Heads of Government (CHG) of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO), scheduled to be held on Tuesday.

According to the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), the meeting will focus on strengthening multilateral cooperation among SCO Member States, particularly in the areas of trade, economy, investment, connectivity, innovation and cultural-humanitarian exchanges. The meeting is also expected to review the progress of ongoing cooperation initiatives and consider decisions relating to the Organisation's financial and institutional functioning.

"Leaving New Delhi for Dushanbe. Looking forward to representing India at the SCO Heads of Government (HoG) meeting in Tajikistan on 19-20 October 2026. The SCO HoGs meeting will focus on strengthening cooperation in culture, connectivity, economy, innovation, investment and people to people ties, besides reviewing progress in financial and institutional functioning," Defence Minister Singh posted on X before leaving New Delhi on Monday.

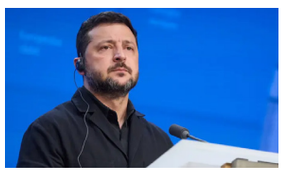
According to the MEA, India remains actively engaged in various SCO mechanisms and continues to contribute to regional cooperation through initiatives in areas such as startups and innovation, digital public infrastructure, and people-to-people exchanges.

"The meeting will provide an opportunity for India to exchange views with other SCO Member States on advancing practical and mutually beneficial cooperation within the Organisation. The previous CHG meeting was held in Moscow, Russia, on 18 November 2025, where India was represented by External Affairs Minister Dr. S. Jaishankar," the MEA stated.

The SCO comprises 10 member states -- India, Belarus, Iran, Kazakhstan, China, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, Russia, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. It has two observer states - Afghanistan and Mongolia and 15 dialogue partners.

Zelensky says ready to run in wartime elections

KYIV



Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky said he stands ready to run in presidential elections if a vote is held before the conflict with Russia ends, the Ukrinform news agency reported Monday.

"If it takes place during the war, of course, it is my duty, because I must defend my country from the beginning until the end of the war," Zelensky said.

Ukrainian law requires elections to be held at least six months after the end of hostilities, Zelensky said, noting that he was ready to explore ways for holding a vote during the conflict if Russia agreed to a 60-day ceasefire, Xinhua News Agency reported. Zelensky explained that the 60-day preparation period would allow Ukraine to amend its election legislation and arrange the necessary security infrastructure. Ukraine held the last presidential elections in 2019. In 2022, martial law was imposed in the country amid the conflict with Russia, prohibiting elections for security concerns. Earlier this month, US President Donald Trump called on Ukraine to hold a presidential election.

Earlier, Zelensky said that the United States temporarily suspended crucial intelligence sharing with Ukraine for three days, leaving its forces without American warnings of Russian ballistic missile attacks during that period.

Kenya Ebola outbreak: India hands over second consignment of medical assistance

NAIROBI



India on Monday handed over the second consignment of 11 tonnes of medical assistance to Kenya to support its Ebola preparedness and response.

India's High Commissioner to Kenya, Adarsh Swaika, handed over the second consignment of medical assistance to the Principal Secretary of Kenya's Public Health, Mary Muthoni Muriuki, on Monday.

"India hands over the second consignment of 11 tonnes of medical assistance to Kenya to strengthen Ebola preparedness and response," the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) posted on X.

The 11-tonne consignment includes PPE kits, powered air-purifying respirators, biosafety cabinets and cold-chain refrigerators to protect frontline healthcare personnel and strengthen laboratory safety and public-health capacity. The Indian High Commission in Kenya affirmed India's support to Kenya in its efforts to contain Ebola.

In a post on X, the Indian High Commission in Kenya stated, "High Commissioner handed over the second consignment of medical assistance to Principal Secretary of Public Health of Kenya Mary Muthoni Muriuki today to support its Ebola preparedness and response, in continuation of the assistance provided in July this year."

China trying to put entire western Pacific into its sphere of influence

TAIPEI



China wants to break away from the US-centered international system and establish a separate regional order in Asia anchored in Beijing with its activities in the Pacific suggesting that it means to bring the western half of the ocean under its hegemony, a report highlighted citing a Japanese specialist on China's maritime policy.

Taipei Times quoted Chisako Masuo, a Professor at Kyushu University's Graduate School of Social and Cultural Studies, as saying last week during an interview that China's efforts to expand its maritime activities in waters east of Taiwan are a "shared concern" for Taiwan, Japan and the Philippines.

According to Masuo, the three sides should cooperate to assess Beijing's intentions and protect their respective interests. "Masuo said Taiwan and Japan lack close cooperation, while concern in Japan over a contingency involving Taiwan has faded amid growing optimism that an armed invasion would not occur. Such views have spread following the removal of senior Chinese military officers from the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), she said. Attention to maritime issues has also slackened under Japanese Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi's government," the report said. "However, China's maritime 'law enforcement patrols' east of Taiwan could become more sophisticated and would 'absolutely not disappear', Masuo said. She added that Japan's and the Philippines' exclusive economic zones overlap in the same maritime area, connecting it to Japan's interests," it added.

The academic stated that the Taiwan issue is not an "isolated one" and could become a "flashpoint" for a future war between the US and China.

"In the event of a war in Taiwan, the Japanese Self-Defense Forces would have difficulty directly assisting Taiwan under Japanese domestic law. However, Masuo said that the continued functioning of the Japan-US alliance is also 'extremely important' to Taiwan in practice," the Taipei Times report mentioned.

Earlier this month, a media report detailed that Taiwan will never agree to trade its independence for China's embrace, as it is a reality rooted in democracy, identity, and hard-won freedom, with Tibet's experience showcasing what happens when nations trust Beijing's promises - autonomy becomes occupation, culture becomes propaganda, and freedom becomes repression.



Embassy advises Indian nationals in Italy to exercise caution amid protests

ROME

The Embassy of India in Italy on Monday issued an advisory for Indian nationals in the country, urging them to exercise caution and avoid crowded areas amid ongoing protests and demonstrations,

"There were protests and demonstrations last week in some Italian cities. We advise Indian nationals to exercise caution, avoid crowded areas and locations where protests are taking place and follow local news about such events," the Embassy stated on X.

Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni on Sunday said that law enforcement forces are facing violence from criminals who are exploiting demonstrations through organised groups.

"Once again, the women and men of the law enforcement forces have had to face the violence of criminals who, even through organised groups, exploit demonstrations to seek confrontation and sow chaos," Meloni stated on X.

"To all of them goes my full solidarity and sincere thanks. Because they were there to safeguard the safety of citizens, workers, merchants, and all the people who have the right to live their city without fear and without seeing it laid to waste and set ablaze by gangs of thugs. We stand with you," she added.

On Saturday, Meloni expressed respect towards protestors who demonstrated peacefully while calling on the opposition to condemn the acts of violence.

"I have great respect for the thousands of people who today demonstrated peacefully, including those who took part in the mobilisation called by the CGIL, which also saw the participation of left-wing leaders. Whatever the ideas for which one demonstrates, participation is the foundation of any healthy democracy," she said.

Meloni said that in Milan, stones were thrown at the law enforcement forces, and officers were injured. In Turin, She said people were stopped carrying cobblestones and window-breaking hammers and in Bologna, the disorders led to the precautionary closure of the railway station.

"Thugs who exploit demonstrations to sow chaos, attack those who ensure security, and hold entire cities hostage," she said. "Demonstrating is a right. Setting our cities ablaze is not," Meloni highlighted.

"I renew my request to the opposition: do not be ambiguous about this. Unequivocally condemn these acts of violence and issue a clear appeal for every mobilisation to be peaceful. In the face of scenes like these, the rejection must be unanimous. Any hesitation becomes justification. Silence is not acceptable," Meloni emphasised.

'Vijaya Dashami', the Victory of Good Over Evil

(On the auspicious occasion of "Vijaya Dashami-Dussehra Festival" on 20 October)

According to the Hindu calendar, on the tenth day of the Shukla Paksha of the Ashvayuja month, on 20 October 2026, the Hindu community all over the world celebrates Dussehra - Vijayadashami with great enthusiasm and devotion. The festival is celebrated not only as the auspicious day when Lord Shree Rama killed the demon Ravana, but also as the day when Goddess Durga defeated the demon Mahishasura. We know that Goddess Durga fought a nine-day battle with the demon Mahishasura and killed the demon on the tenth day. We also perform Shami Puja to remember the Pandavas who defeated the Kauravas after completing their incognito period, returned to worship the Jammi tree, took their weapons from it to defeated the Kauravas. We consider these tree leaves as gold and share them with our loved ones, praying that everyone is safe and sound. Vijayadashami marks the victory of good over evil, justice over injustice, and righteousness over wrong. This festival inspires us to sacrifice our weaknesses or bad habits and strengthen our strengths to achieve our life goals. The practice of performing Weapon Puja signifies the development of life skills in us for successful career.



Vijayadashami celebrations

In Andhra Pradesh, Sharanavaratri and in Telangana, Bathukamma festivals are celebrated as Shakti Swarupini replicas. Saddula Bathukamma celebrations are held on Durgashtami day. Vijayadashami celebrations are celebrated grandly after Maharnavami the next day. Shami Puja and Aparajita Puja are performed on this holy day. On the day when Lord Rama killed the ten-headed Ravana treated as a victory over evil, 'Ravana Vadha' or 'Ravana Dahanam' programs are also being organized to celebrate the death of Ravana. Thus, after nine days (Navratri) of worship, Vijayadashami celebrations are celebrated on the tenth day. On this day, idols of Durga, Saraswati, Lakshmi and Ganesh are immersed in nearby rivers or reservoirs across the country. It is customary to perform sacred rituals with great devotion, such as cleaning the vehicles, weapons, and customary to worship them by placing the weapons in red cloths, sprinkling them with the holy Ganges water to purify them, offering garlands of turmeric, saffron, and sandalwood, lighting lamps and burning incense, worshipping with jammi leaves, and offering sweets.

Vijayadashami celebrations teach us to set fire to the demonic thoughts within us, worship and invite good thoughts, and reach the shores of victory in our lives. Along with education, let us accumulate culture of necessary skills, and turn those skills into sharp weapons and make efforts to achieve our goals wholeheartedly. We are celebrating Vijayadashami - Dussehra as symbols of qualities like harmony, power, unity, sacrifice of evil thoughts, and invite good habits. Let us wish that good thoughts triumph over bad thoughts within us. We strongly believe that any work started on the auspicious day of Vijayadashami will be successful. Let us all pray to Goddess Durga and Lord Rama to make this Vijayadashami an auspicious beginning for new ideas.

- Dr. Burra Madhusudhan Reddy
9949700037.

SBC and V&V Group Announce Strategic Consolidation of Technology

14 tax-technology products and intellectual assets came together under a common AI-native integration layer, creating an integrated platform spanning transfer pricing, corporate tax, GST, e-invoicing, audit and suite of accounting products. Combined businesses served 1,500–2,000 clients, including over 350 multinational groups, and brought together nearly 500 professionals, with plans to expand into four to five jurisdictions within 24 months

HYDERABAD, 19 OCTOBER 2026

SBC, a Hyderabad-headqua rtered international tax, transfer pricing and tax-technology group, and V&V Group, a Bengaluru-based GST and audit-technology group, announced a strategic consolidation of their technology assets and artificial intelligence (AI) capabilities into a joint-venture technology platform. The initiative marks a significant step towards building an Indian-owned, AI-enabled technology enterprise that combines deep tax expertise, proprietary software and intelligent automation to serve businesses and professional services firms across global markets. The consolidation brings together 14 technology products and intellectual assets spanning transfer pricing, corporate taxation, GST, e-invoicing, audit, bookkeeping and regulatory compliance. Together, the two organisations serve approximately 1,500–2,000 clients, including more than 350 multinational groups, and brings together nearly 500 professionals, comprising 40–50 chartered accountants and 40–50 engineers. Their services businesses across India, the UAE, the United States and Europe are positioned to serve as the platform's first customers and international distribution channel. The combined portfolio includes SBC's TP Doc Gen AI (TAIGA), TaxMate, FixTag, SBC Track and ROC Data, alongside V&V Group's GSTZen, WeAudit, DeskAudit, Papilio and the Tidy suite. The common AI-native integration layer is designed to connect these products, streamline workflows and reduce duplication in technology development, data infrastructure and service delivery.

Commenting on the announcement, CA Mithilesh Reddy, Founder & Managing Partner, SBC, said, "Indian firms never lacked talent. We lacked scale and ownership of our tools. This combination

Also AI Capabilities into a Joint-Venture Platform





gave us both. By bringing together our domain expertise, proprietary technologies and AI capabilities, we took an important step towards building a globally competitive, Indian-owned technology enterprise. Our vision was to move beyond traditional consulting models and create a platform where every service engagement benefited from our own technology, enabling us to deliver greater efficiency, consistency and value to businesses worldwide."

The combined technology estate included 51 AI agents, of which 44 are operational. The proposed common AI layer brings together regulatory knowledge, tax laws, rulings, comparables and financial data to support automation across document preparation, data processing, reporting and audit-related workflows. The architecture is designed to integrate with client enterprise resource planning systems, India's GST and e-invoicing infrastructure, and relevant data providers. The platform follows a human-led decision-making model: AI executed repetitive and data-intensive tasks, while qualified professionals retained responsibility for interpretation, review and final decisions. This approach sought to combine the speed and scalability of automation with professional judgement, accountability and regulatory expertise. Vinay Thyagraj, Co-founder, V&V Group and GSTZen, said, "Our GST, e-invoicing and audit engines already supported Indian businesses in managing their everyday compliance requirements. Bringing these capabilities together with SBC's expertise in international taxation and transfer pricing created an opportunity to build a more comprehensive technology platform. With one AI layer and a wider global channel, we aimed to transform proven India-built solutions into scalable products that businesses and professional services firms across the world could use. Our focus remained on using technology to simplify complexity while keeping qualified professionals at the centre of decision-making."

The organisations outlined a four-phase integration roadmap spanning 24 months. The initial 90 days focused on establishing joint technology leadership, a common data infrastructure and an integrated product roadmap. The next phase envisaged cross-selling opportunities across the combined client base and the establishment of a shared delivery centre. Within 12 months, the technology joint venture planned to introduce new products, including UAE e-invoicing, WeAudit AI and TidyBooks AI. The final phase targeted operations across four to five jurisdictions within 24 months.

TidyBooks AI is envisioned as an integrated platform connecting invoicing, accounting, financial statements, audit files and transfer pricing documentation. The roadmap also includes expanding the technology portfolio into global VAT and e-invoicing requirements, with Dubai positioned as a regional hub for the Gulf Cooperation Council market. The consolidation is expected to generate operational efficiencies through a shared engineering team, common data stack, unified AI gateway, integrated delivery infrastructure and a single go-to-market strategy. The model followed a "build once, deploy everywhere" approach, allowing the organisations to scale technology across their combined client base without duplicating development efforts.

Beyond serving their own clients, the organisations envisage a white-label and subscription-based delivery model that enabled other professional and consulting firms to access the platform under their own brands. The approach was intended to help smaller and mid-sized firms adopt advanced technology without having to independently develop and maintain complex software infrastructure.

The initiative also seeks to strengthen India's position as a global hub for technology-enabled professional services. By combining its accounting expertise, engineering talent and cost-efficient delivery capabilities, the group aimed to export technology-led tax and compliance solutions to international markets while creating opportunities for professionals skilled in AI, taxation and regulatory technology.

TATA.CARS Announces Festive Service Camp

Offers complimentary 30-point vehicle health check-up and exclusive festive benefits for customers

MUMBAI, OCTOBER 19, 2026:

With the festive season bringing families together, TATA.CARS today announced its nationwide Festive Service Camp for Navratri and Diwali 2026. Now live across authorized TATA.CARS workshops nationwide, the camp will continue until November 14, 2026, offering customers a convenient way to get their vehicles ready for the festive season. As part of the initiative, customers can avail a complimentary 30-point vehicle health check-up, covering key areas such as air-conditioning, battery health, tyres and alignment, engine oil and coolant levels, electrical systems, CNG systems and EV-specific diagnostics. Adding to the festive cheer, customers can also avail a flat 10% discount on extended warranty, Tata Motors Genuine Accessories (TMGA), and Roadside Assistance (RSA) across the ICE and EV portfolio. Easy EMI options are also available on extended warranty and Annual Maintenance Contract (AMC) packages, offering customers greater convenience and flexibility. Through this Festive Service Camp, TATA.CARS aims to make vehicle maintenance more convenient and rewarding, helping customers prepare for the season's journeys with greater peace of mind.



Dasara Gift for Singareni Executives

Deputy Chief Minister Bhatti Vikramarka fulfils executives' request.. Singareni issues orders for pay revision on Coal India lines.. Around 1,800 executives in E-1 to E-7 cadres to benefit
Financial benefits applicable from September 25

HYDERABAD, OCTOBER 19

The long-standing request of Singareni executives has been fulfilled following a commitment by Telangana Deputy Chief Minister and Energy Minister Sri Bhatti Vikramarka. Singareni management has approved a pay revision on the lines of Coal India. Around 1,800 executives in E-1 to E-7 cadres will benefit. The revised basic pay will be notionally effective from January 1, 2017. Financial benefits will, however, be applicable from September 25, 2026, the date on which the Singareni Board approved the proposal. The revised pay will be paid from the October salary onwards. Company Director (Personnel) Sri Gowtham Potru issued the relevant orders on Monday evening.

The revised basic pay for executives is as follows:
Cadre Existing basic pay Revised basic pay

- E-1 ₹40,000 ₹60,000
- E-2 ₹50,000 ₹70,000
- E-3 ₹60,000 ₹80,000
- E-4 ₹70,000 ₹90,000
- E-5 ₹80,000 ₹1,00,000
- E-6 ₹90,000 ₹1,20,000
- E-7 ₹1,00,000 ₹1,20,000

Against the backdrop of pay disparities in Coal India, its executives had requested the implementation of the pay structure followed by Maharatna companies. The Union Ministry of Coal and Coal India management approved the proposal. Singareni executives subsequently appealed to the State Deputy Chief Minister to extend the same pay structure to them. Responding to their request, Sri Bhatti Vikramarka directed Singareni management in July this year to ensure that executives received good news before Dasara. Singareni management formed a committee to examine the matter. Based on the committee's report and with the Board's approval, the pay revision was approved. Leaders of the Singareni Executives' Association thanked the State Government, Chief Minister Sri A. Revanth Reddy, and Deputy Chief Minister and Energy Minister Sri Bhatti Vikramarka for considering their request and fulfilling the commitment. They expressed happiness over the decision and said they would work with greater dedication to meet the State's energy needs and contribute to its development.

₹596-crore bonus recently announced for workers

Recently, the State Government announced a bonus of ₹596 crore for nearly 39,000 Singareni workers and employees as a Dasara gift.

Audi India launches the all-new Audi Q3

MUMBAI, 19 OCTOBER 2026

Locally assembled at the SAVWIPL plant in Chhatrapati Sambhajinagar
2.0-litre TFSI petrol engine produces 150 kW and 320 Nm; 0–100 km/h in 7.1 seconds, paired with quattro all-wheel drive
Digital matrix LED headlights with four selectable DRL signatures and three advanced dynamic light sequencing; illuminated Audi rings at the rear
Digital stage panoramic display with 30.22 cm Audi virtual cockpit, 32.51 cm MMI touch display and head-up display
SONOS premium sound system with 12 high-performance speakers and 420-watt output.. Nine airbags and advanced driver-assistance systems tailored for India
Five exterior colours: Sage Green, Mythos Black, Glacier White, Navarra Blue and Tambora Grey
Two interior colours: Tamarind brown and Pergament Beige.. Available at an introductory price of INR 51,99,000 (ex-showroom)

Audi, the German luxury car manufacturer, today launched the all-new Audi Q3 in India, bringing together 150 kW of power, quattro all-wheel drive and a suite of digital, lighting and comfort technologies in its compact luxury SUV. The technology-rich cabin features a digital stage panoramic display, head-up display and SONOS premium sound system. Locally assembled at the SAVWIPL plant in Chhatrapati Sambhajinagar, the all-new Audi Q3 is available at an introductory price of INR 51,99,000 (ex-showroom). The all-new Audi Q3 features Digital Matrix LED headlights with micro-LED technology, four selectable daytime-running-light signatures and three advanced dynamic light sequencing while illuminated Audi rings add a distinctive lighting element at the rear. The new digital interface brings displays, controls and infotainment functions together around the driver, creating a more connected and intuitive experience. The all-





new Audi Q3 also introduces a new integrated switch module where the lever on the right selects the gear, while the one on the left controls the lighting functions, windshield wiper and cleaning functions. A head-up display projects key driving information directly into the driver's line of sight, complementing the digital cockpit and keeping essential information within easy view. Commenting on the launch, Viktoria Kaufmann-Reiger, Senior Director, Sales Overseas, AUDI AG, "Today, is such an important day for Audi India and I am happy to be a part of this occasion. The launch of the all-new Audi Q3 is an important milestone and it became even more special due to our new AUDI AG Board Member for Sales and Marketing Mr. Martin Sander joining us here in India. His presence underscores not just the importance of this brand-new model but also India's growing importance as an emerging market for AUDI AG. India's luxury landscape is evolving, and we will continue to offer products, technologies and experiences that reflect the aspirations of our customers and the distinctive character of our brand. Customer ambitions are growing, and so are their expectations, and at Audi we want to be well positioned to grow alongside them." Commenting on the occasion, Mr. Piyush Arora, MD & CEO, SAVWIPL, "The launch of the all-new Audi Q3 marks an important milestone for Audi India and reflects our commitment to meeting the evolving expectations of the next generation of luxury customers. Like its predecessor, the new Q3 is being produced here in India, at our state-of-the-art Chhatrapati Sambhajinagar facility. This is a strong demonstration of the capabilities we have built within SAVWIPL, reinforcing that India plays a dual role for us, not only as a major growth market, but as a key manufacturing and engineering hub."

Mr. Balbir Singh Dhillon, Brand Director, Audi India, said, "The Audi Q3 has long been an important gateway to the Audi brand in India, and we are delighted to introduce its most progressive iteration yet. The all-new Audi Q3 combines the confidence of quattro, strong performance and everyday versatility with a significantly more intuitive technological experience and a host of thoughtful comfort and safety features. Its local assembly is another important step in our commitment to the Indian market. We are confident that its distinctive character, advanced technology and effortless usability will resonate strongly with customers seeking a modern compact luxury SUV."

Justdial Q2 net profit falls 35 pc sequentially to Rs 107.8 crore

Mumbai, Oct 19: Online classifieds platform Justdial on Monday reported a nearly 10 per cent year-on-year (YoY) decline in net profit to Rs 107.8 crore in the September quarter of FY27, compared to Rs 119.4 crore in the corresponding quarter last financial year (Q2 FY26). Sequentially, the company's net profit plunged over 35 per cent from Rs 166.2 crore reported in the June quarter (Q1 FY27), according to its stock exchange filing. Despite the decline in profitability, Justdial's operating revenue registered healthy growth, rising 13 per cent year-on-year and 5 per cent quarter-on-quarter to Rs 342.8 crore during the quarter under review. Including other income of Rs 54.6 crore, the company's total income stood at Rs 397.4 crore in the September quarter. The company's expenses increased 15 per cent year-on-year to Rs 262.8 crore during the quarter, putting pressure on its profitability. Tax expenses stood at Rs 26.8 crore.

Jio Platforms IPO gets over 30 times anchor demand, draws Rs 2.5 lakh crore bid

Jio Platforms' Rs 8,110-crore anchor book received bids worth around Rs 2.5 lakh crore. The response signals strong institutional interest ahead of the public issue.

The demand exceeded 30 times the amount on offer, according to people familiar with the transaction, reported news agency PTI. The strong response comes ahead of the IPO opening for public subscription on October 21.

Global investment firms including BlackRock, Capital Group, Fidelity Investments, T. Rowe Price, Schroders, JPMorgan Asset Management, Franklin Templeton, Invesco and Janus Henderson were among those that placed offers for the anchor book, sources said. Sovereign wealth funds and public investment institutions, including Singapore's GIC, the Abu Dhabi Investment Authority, the Qatar Investment Authority and Norway's Norges Bank Investment Management, also participated. Indian institutions were represented by mutual fund houses such as SBI Mutual Fund, ICICI Prudential Mutual Fund, HDFC Mutual Fund, Aditya Birla Sun Life Mutual Fund, Nippon India Mutual Fund and Kotak Mahindra Asset Management Company. Insurers and pension investors, including Life Insurance Corporation of India, HDFC Life Insurance, SBI Life Insurance, SBI Pension Funds, HDFC Pension and ICICI Prudential, also made offers, according to the sources.

The anchor book allows institutional investors to receive an allocation of shares before the public subscription period. While demand in this segment can indicate institutional interest, it does



not guarantee the level of subscription in other investor categories or the stock's performance after listing.

JIO PLATFORMS IPO DETAILS

Jio Platforms is looking to raise Rs 30,213 crore through the IPO, which will open on October 21 and close on October 23. The price band has been fixed at Rs 1,065 to Rs 1,119 per share. The issue comprises a fresh issue of up to 27 crore shares, with no offer for sale. At the upper end of the price band, the company could be valued at around $108 billion, making it potentially India's largest IPO. The proceeds are intended to support debt repayment at its telecom subsidiary, Reliance Jio Infocomm, as well as general corporate purposes. Jio Platforms is controlled by Reliance Industries, led by billionaire Mukesh Ambani. The company has expanded beyond mobile connectivity into broadband, digital entertainment, gaming, cloud storage, smart home and AI-enabled services. Its enterprise offerings include cloud services, the Internet of Things, private 5G, cybersecurity and managed services. According to the IPO note by Religare Broking, Jio Platforms served more than 53.3 crore customers as of June 2026, including over 28.5 crore 5G users. Its network coverage extended to more than 99% of India's population. The note also highlighted the company's technology investments, including 7,220 patent applications filed as of June 2026 across areas such as 4G, 5G, 6G, cloud-native networks and AI-driven automation.

SHOULD YOU SUBSCRIBE TO THE JIO PLATFORMS IPO?

Religare Broking has assigned a 'Subscribe – Long Term' rating to the Jio Platform IPO, citing the company's growth prospects, subscriber base, profitability and opportunities in 5G and digital services. The brokerage said rising average revenue per user (ARPU), expanding margins, higher data consumption and customer retention could support future revenue growth. It also sees opportunities in enterprise digital services and the international monetisation of Jio's technology platforms. Jio Platforms' financial performance has improved over the past two years. Revenue from operations rose from Rs 1,09,558 crore in FY24 to Rs 1,46,885 crore in FY26. Earnings before interest, tax, depreciation and amortisation (EBITDA) increased from Rs 54,959 crore to Rs 76,255 crore during the same period, while profit after tax (PAT) rose from Rs 21,423 crore to Rs 30,049 crore. Its EBITDA margin stood at 51.9% in FY26, while the PAT margin reached 20.4%. Net leverage declined to 0.36 times, indicating a stronger balance sheet, according to the brokerage note. However, the note flagged risks linked to Jio's dependence on Reliance Jio Infocomm for a significant share of its revenue and profits. Regulatory dependence on telecom licences and spectrum, competition from satellite-based broadband services, concentration among infrastructure providers and possible changes in net neutrality rules are other risks investors need to consider.

The strong anchor book demand points to considerable institutional interest in the offering. However, investors should assess the IPO's valuation, business outlook and risks alongside the subscription figures before making an investment decision.



From Kashmir to Himachal

7 Places to Catch Early Snowfall This October and November

Gulmarg, Jammu nd Kashmir: A Winter Wonderland in the Making

Gulmarg is among India's most celebrated mountain destinations, attracting visitors with its vast meadows, forested slopes and magnificent views of the Pir Panjal range. Although it is particularly popular during the peak winter months, the destination begins to experience a noticeable change in weather during October and November. Temperatures fall, the air becomes sharper and the surrounding mountains may receive their first snowfall of the season. Located at a high altitude in Kashmir, Gulmarg offers a beautiful combination of natural scenery and outdoor experiences. During autumn, the meadows and surrounding forests display the last colours of the season, while the higher mountain slopes can begin to acquire a white covering. When fresh snow arrives, the contrast between the green-brown landscape and snow-covered peaks creates an especially striking view. The Gulmarg Gondola, one of the region's major attractions, provides visitors with access to higher elevations and panoramic views of the surrounding mountains. Depending on operating conditions and weather, travellers may be able to see snow at higher points even when the main settlement remains largely snow-free. Visitors can also explore the area's walking trails, enjoy the mountain scenery and spend time in the local market. However, activities available during early winter can change with snowfall and temperature conditions. Gulmarg is an excellent choice for travellers looking for a combination of scenic beauty, comfortable accommodation and the possibility of experiencing the first snow. Those planning a visit should check local forecasts before travelling, as early snowfall can be brief and may not cover the entire destination.

Zojila Pass, Ladakh: A Dramatic Himalayan Landscape

Zojila Pass is one of the most striking mountain routes connecting the Kashmir Valley with the Ladakh region. Situated at a high altitude, the pass is known for its rugged terrain, steep mountain slopes and rapidly changing weather. As winter approaches, temperatures can fall sharply, and snowfall may begin here earlier than in many lower-altitude destinations. The landscape around Zojila is naturally dramatic, with towering mountains, narrow stretches of road and vast rocky slopes. When fresh snow settles across the surrounding peaks, the region takes on an even more imposing appearance. The contrast between the rugged mountains and the white snow creates a memorable view for travellers crossing this Himalayan route. Unlike a conventional hill station, however, Zojila Pass is primarily a transport corridor rather than a destination designed for an extended holiday. Its appeal lies in the journey, the extraordinary scenery and the experience of travelling through a high mountain environment. Weather conditions can change rapidly at this altitude. Snowfall, poor visibility, strong winds and icy roads may interrupt traffic or result in temporary closures. Travellers should never assume that the pass will remain open throughout October and November simply because it was accessible earlier in the season. Anyone planning to travel through Zojila should check official road advisories and local weather reports before departure. It is also important to allow flexibility in travel schedules, as delays are possible during periods of adverse weather. For experienced travellers who appreciate dramatic landscapes, Zojila provides an opportunity to see the Himalayas as they begin their transition into winter. Safety, however, must remain the priority, and travel should be undertaken only when authorities confirm that conditions are suitable.

Sissu, Himachal Pradesh: Snowy Scenery in the Lahaul Valley

Located in Himachal Pradesh's Lahaul Valley, Sissu has become increasingly popular among travellers looking for spectacular mountain views away from the crowds of more established hill stations. Surrounded by high mountains and open landscapes, the village offers a distinctive Himalayan experience that changes considerably as winter approaches. October is often a period of transition in the region. Autumn colours begin to fade, temperatures drop and the higher mountain slopes may receive fresh snow. By November, winter conditions can become more pronounced, although the timing and extent of snowfall vary from year to year. When snow arrives, the mountains around Sissu provide a beautiful setting for photography and quiet sightseeing. The village's landscape, with its traditional surroundings and dramatic mountain backdrop, can feel particularly peaceful during the colder months. Sissu Waterfall and the surrounding valley are among the area's attractions, although the appearance and accessibility of individual sites depend on seasonal conditions. Visitors can also enjoy views of the Chandra River and the surrounding mountains, making the destination appealing even when snowfall has not reached the village itself. The journey to Sissu has become more accessible with the opening of the Atal Tunnel, which connects the Manali side with the Lahaul region. Nevertheless, winter travel still requires caution. Snow, ice and sudden changes in weather can affect road conditions, and local authorities may impose restrictions when necessary. Travellers should confirm the operational status of the route before leaving Manali and check whether accommodation, restaurants and other services are available during their intended dates. Sissu is an attractive option for those who prefer quieter surroundings and open mountain landscapes. Rather than relying solely on snowfall in the village, visitors can enjoy the broader beauty of the Lahaul Valley as it prepares for winter.

Kinnaur, Himachal Pradesh: Snow-Capped Peaks and Traditional Villages

Kinnaur, in the eastern part of Himachal Pradesh, is known for its dramatic mountain formations, traditional villages, orchards and striking views of the Himalayas. The region has a distinctive character, combining rugged high-altitude landscapes with settlements that reflect the area's rich cultural heritage. During October, Kinnaur often retains traces of autumn, particularly in its orchards and lower valleys. As November approaches, temperatures fall and higher elevations may begin receiving snowfall. Even when snow does not reach the villages, the sight of white mountain peaks above the surrounding landscape can make the region an appealing early-winter destination. Kalpa is one of Kinnaur's best-known places for mountain views, particularly its impressive outlook towards the Kinnaur Kailash range. On clear days, visitors can enjoy expansive views of the mountains, while colder weather adds a distinctly wintry atmosphere to the surroundings. Sangla Valley is another attractive area, known for its natural beauty, villages and mountain scenery. Depending on the season, visitors may see a combination of autumn colours, bare trees and snow-dusted peaks. The landscape can be especially photogenic as the region moves from autumn into winter. Kinnaur is also appealing to travellers interested in local culture. Traditional architecture, village life and regional food provide experiences beyond sightseeing. Visitors can spend time exploring settlements and appreciating the slower pace of life in the mountains. However, the region's high-altitude roads require careful planning, particularly during the colder months. Snowfall, landslides and icy conditions can affect travel, and journeys may take longer than expected. Visitors should check road updates, weather forecasts and local advice before setting out. For travellers who want a combination of mountain scenery, cultural experiences and the possibility of early snowfall, Kinnaur offers a memorable alternative to more crowded destinations.

Hemkund Sahib, Uttarakhand: A High-Altitude World of Snow and Silence

Hemkund Sahib is a revered Sikh pilgrimage site located in the Garhwal Himalayas of Uttarakhand. Situated beside a high-altitude glacial lake and surrounded by towering mountain peaks, it is known for its extraordinary natural setting and spiritual significance. As winter approaches, temperatures in the area fall sharply, and snowfall can transform the surrounding peaks and trekking routes. The region's high elevation makes it particularly vulnerable to severe weather, and snow can arrive while lower parts of Uttarakhand continue to experience relatively mild conditions. During the accessible pilgrimage season, the route towards Hemkund Sahib attracts visitors who undertake the challenging trek through mountain terrain. The journey offers views of forests, streams, alpine vegetation and rugged slopes. As the season advances, the landscape begins to change, with colder conditions signalling the arrival of winter. However, Hemkund Sahib is not a destination that travellers should approach casually during October and November. The pilgrimage season generally closes before the harshest winter weather, and access is governed by official schedules and local conditions. Visitors must not assume that the shrine or trekking route will remain open simply because snowfall is visible in the surrounding mountains. Those hoping to experience the area's early winter scenery should check the official pilgrimage status and local administration advisories before making any plans. Travelling beyond permitted dates or attempting a high-altitude trek during unsafe conditions can be dangerous. For visitors who travel during the authorised season, Hemkund Sahib offers a remarkable combination of spiritual atmosphere and Himalayan beauty. Its snow-covered peaks and pristine surroundings demonstrate the grandeur of Uttarakhand's high mountains, even as the arrival of winter makes the region increasingly inaccessible.

Sonamarg, Jammu and Kashmir: Where Mountain Peaks Turn White

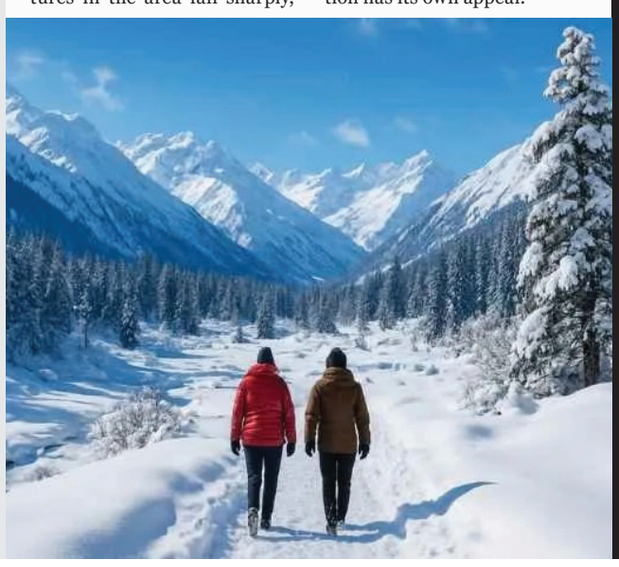
Sonamarg, whose name means 'Meadow of Gold', is known for its dramatic mountain scenery, expansive valleys and proximity to some of Kashmir's most impressive Himalayan landscapes. During the warmer months, the region attracts visitors with its green meadows and views of glaciers and high mountain peaks. As October progresses into November, falling temperatures signal the gradual arrival of winter. The surrounding mountains may receive snowfall before the lower valley does, offering travellers an opportunity to witness the early transformation of the landscape. Snow-covered summits, dark forests and the cold waters of mountain streams create a dramatic setting for photography and sightseeing. The drive towards Sonamarg is an attraction in itself. Winding roads pass through mountain valleys and settlements, providing changing views of the surrounding terrain. During autumn, the landscape can feature a mixture of fading vegetation, rocky slopes and snow-dusted peaks. Following fresh snowfall, the scenery can become even more striking. Sonamarg is also associated with routes towards the Thajiwas Glacier area, which is a popular attraction during the accessible season. However, access to particular locations, trails and nearby mountain routes can become restricted as winter conditions intensify. Travellers should pay particular attention to road conditions when planning a visit in October or November. Heavy snowfall, icy stretches and temporary road closures can affect transport, while accommodation and tourist services may operate differently from the summer season. For those seeking the beauty of Kashmir's early winter without necessarily waiting for December or January, Sonamarg offers an appealing combination of mountain views, fresh air and the possibility of witnessing the season's first snowfall.

Manali, Himachal Pradesh: Early Winter in a Popular Mountain Town

Manali is one of Himachal Pradesh's best-known tourist destinations, attracting visitors throughout the year with its mountain scenery, riverside settings, pine forests and lively town centre. During October and November, the region begins to experience colder mornings and evenings, marking the transition from autumn to winter. Although snowfall in Manali town itself is unpredictable during this period, higher elevations in the surrounding region may receive fresh snow. The mountain peaks gradually acquire a white covering, creating a beautiful backdrop for visitors exploring the valley. The journey to Manali offers plenty of scenic views, particularly when autumn colours remain visible along the roads and forested slopes. Visitors can explore local markets, enjoy cafés overlooking the mountains and visit nearby attractions, depending on accessibility and weather conditions. Solang Valley is another popular area for travellers staying in Manali. Known for its mountain views and outdoor activities, it can offer a different experience as temperatures drop. Whether snow is present depends on the elevation and weather at the time of the visit. Travellers should therefore avoid assuming that every attraction around Manali will be snow-covered in October or November. The Rohtang region and other higher mountain areas may experience more severe winter conditions. Access to these locations is subject to official permissions, road status and weather-related restrictions, making advance checks essential. Manali is particularly suitable for travellers who want a combination of sightseeing, accommodation options, restaurants and the possibility of seeing early snow in the surrounding mountains.

Welcome Winter in the Himalayas

October and November offer a fascinating glimpse of the Himalayas as they transition from autumn to winter. From Gulmarg's scenic meadows and Sonamarg's dramatic valleys to the rugged landscapes of Zojila, the popular mountain town of Manali, the peaceful surroundings of Sissu, the traditional villages of Kinnaur and the high-altitude setting of Hemkund Sahib, each destination has its own appeal.



Planning an Early Snowfall Trip: What Travellers Should Know

An early-snowfall holiday requires a little more planning than a conventional autumn getaway. The most important consideration is that snowfall cannot be guaranteed on fixed dates. Weather patterns differ from year to year, and a destination that receives snow in late October one season may remain largely snow-free until December in another. Altitude plays a significant role. High mountain passes and elevated slopes generally experience colder conditions than towns and valleys below them. As a result, visitors may see snow on surrounding peaks without finding any in the main tourist settlement. Travellers should decide whether their goal is to see snow-covered mountains or to experience fresh snowfall on the ground, as the two are not the same. Checking reliable weather forecasts shortly before departure is essential. Road conditions should also be verified through official traffic and local administration updates, especially when travelling to Zojila, Sissu, Sonamarg or other high-altitude locations. Heavy snow, ice and poor visibility can cause sudden closures or delays.Packing appropriate clothing is equally important. Thermal layers, insulated jackets, gloves, woollen socks, waterproof footwear and protection against wind can make a considerable difference in cold conditions. Travellers should also carry essential medicines, keep electronic devices charged and allow additional time for journeys through mountain terrain. It is advisable to book accommodation with flexible cancellation terms wherever possible. Some remote destinations experience reduced tourist services as winter approaches, so confirming room availability, heating arrangements and transport options in advance can help avoid last-minute difficulties. Finally, visitors should respect local restrictions and avoid venturing onto closed roads, unstable slopes or unmarked snowy trails. Fresh snow can conceal slippery surfaces and other hazards, while high-altitude weather can change rapidly.

SHORT NEWS

Badminton

An Se-young makes history with 47th title at Denmark Open



ODENSE (DENMARK): World No. 1 An Se-young of South Korea rallied from 5-11 down in the deciding game to beat Japan's Akane Yamaguchi 21-23, 21-14, 21-18 in the Denmark Open final on Sunday, claiming her 47th international title to become the most decorated women's singles player in badminton history. The 24-year-old South Korean ace moved one title clear of Indonesian legend Susi Susanti after prevailing in a 78-minute final. It was her ninth singles title of the season, improving her record this year to 61 wins and one defeat. "I want to make a lot of history and break records, but I focus on one match at a time," An said. "That is my motivation." The milestone was achieved in far from ideal circumstances. An suffered a slip during the second game and admitted she was still assessing the impact afterwards. “I’m not feeling great. The court conditions were difficult, and I slipped. I will check my condition and talk to my trainer. After that, I will decide what to do,” the Korean told BWF in an interview.

Age shouldn't matter if you're good enough, says Kartik on Bhuvi's recall

NEW DELHI

Former Indian left-arm spinner Murali Kartik on Monday welcomed Bhuvneshwar Kumar's recall to the national T20I side, saying age should never be a barrier to selection as long as a player is good enough and not a liability on the field.

Bhuvneshwar initially earned a recall for India’s five-match T20I series in New Zealand starting on October 22. But he was then drafted into the rained-out fifth T20I against the West Indies in Bengaluru – first as a cover for Arshdeep Singh, before replacing Mayank Yadav in the playing eleven. Bhuvneshwar had played a key role in the Royal Challengers Bengaluru achieving consecutive IPL wins in 2025 and 2026.

"100 percent. I am so happy that he has made his comeback. I have never been a huge believer (in age being a criterion for selection). If somebody is good, he should be picked. Somebody is 40, and he is good; as long as he can move and he is not a liability on the field, he should be picked. I have got no issues with that. I have never had. I have always maintained this belief in my life," Kartik told reporters in a select virtual interaction facilitated by Sony Sports Network on Monday.

"Someone like Bhuvneshwar Kumar, he has showcased it throughout his life. He has been a quiet and exceptional performer. He is not somebody who is beating his chest and saying, ' Notice me'. He has never done that. Even this year too, in that cauldron called IPL, which is a tough gig for any bowler, he literally was simply the best or, in fact, one of the best in all conditions across all phases.

"I suppose there is a huge case for him, and there was a national clamour, so to speak, that Bhuvneshwar should be picked primarily based on those performances. So, I am very happy that he is back and so should



be for anyone else," he added.

Kartik, however, cautioned that the comeback would put Bhuvneshwar under intense scrutiny, and that the outcome could shape how selectors view older players for future assignments. "I don't know if you want to use the word litmus. But anyone who is on this side of 30 and making a comeback, it is not going to be easy. The spotlight is always going to be on you. If you do well, people will say, he has continued his form. If he doesn't do well, then people are going to say, we always knew he was on this side.

“All those things are part of it. From a Bhuvneshwar Kumar point of view, I don't think he is going to be looking at it that way. It is a new lease of life. Anybody who comes to play this game wants to play it for the right reason, and that is to play for the country at any stage at any age. So I am pretty sure that Bhuvneshwar Kumar is taking it that way.

"But yes, the pressure is on him because if he doesn't do well, if it doesn't go well for him, then obviously, it is like how you are looked at. Say, imagine a 36- or 37-year-old does well. If there is a reason to bring another 36- or 37-year-old at some other stage, people might use this as an example and say, look, he did well, so he can also do well.

But if somebody doesn't do well, then there are always going to be doubts about bringing that guy as well. So I hope it goes well for Bhuvneshwar Kumar. But it is definitely going to be a stern test. I don't know whether it is a litmus test," he elaborated. On wrist spinner Varun Chakaravarthy's return, after a side strain led to him being ruled out after the first T20I against Afghanistan in New Delhi last month, Kartik said fitness would be the key.

"You just hope that Varun Chakaravarthy stays fit because he is also on the other side of 30 and he is not known for his exceptional fitness. So, he is basically a one-dimensional cricketer who has done exceedingly well with what he has got. That is exactly what Varun Chakravarthy is.

"That is an argument which you can use for other people as well. Someone like Kuldeep Yadav. How is it that Varun Chakaravarthy is solely a bowler? He is not a gazelle on the field, nor is he a Shai Hope with the bat. So, he is seen as a superb bowler because he has won. How is it that the same yardsticks are not used for someone else? So, I hope that really all goes well for India," he said.

He also expected spinners to play a big role in the T20Is in New Zealand despite the small grounds. "If he is fit, as I said again, in New Zealand, the grounds are small. But not so small that the spinners cannot operate. Most importantly, in T20 cricket, we have seen that it is the spinners who have got the better economy. So, spinners have a huge role.

"Also, most importantly, the format always demands that you are always thinking on your feet. You are light on your feet. You are thinking as the ball or game evolves. So, I suppose spinners have a huge role. So will the pacers. Again, you will not necessarily get good wickets during the T20s. You don't want extremely seaming wickets during the T20 games. It will be interesting to see how our spinners go because you have got some good ones."

Kartik also backed all-rounder Naman Dhir, who smashed an unbeaten 24 off six balls in the abandoned series decider against the West Indies in Bengaluru, to make a strong case for himself, especially after his handy off-spin fetched him five scalps. "When you look at what he has done, I think he is a good cricketer to have. He is a very handy three-dimensional cricketer to have. He might not give you four overs every time in a T20, but he will give you handy overs. As we have seen, he has picked up wickets and, more importantly, he has shown some heart, and that is the most important thing, especially in the T20 format," he said.



Rohit, Jaskaran and Chandermohan clinch bronze as India finish with six medals

LAS VEGAS

India’s freestyle wrestlers delivered a clean sweep in their medal bouts on the final day of the U23 World Wrestling Championships, with Rohit, Jaskaran and Chandermohan winning bronze to take the country’s overall tally to six medals in Las Vegas.

The trio ensured India ended the competition on a positive note, securing three victories after earlier semifinal setbacks. India finished the championships with two silver and four bronze medals across Greco-Roman, women’s wrestling and freestyle.

Jaskaran opened the final-day medal-winning run in the 65kg category, overcoming Belarus’ Magomedkhan Magamedkhanov 8-5 in a closely fought contest. Competing in his first major international tournament in four years, the Indian grappler displayed composure and tactical awareness to prevail in a physical encounter.

Chandermohan followed with an impressive performance in the 79kg bronze-medal bout, defeating Türkiye’s Ibrahim Metehan Yaprak 5-2. Yaprak had won silver at the previous edition of the U23 World Championships, making the Indian’s victory a notable result.

Chandermohan maintained a disciplined defensive approach and controlled the contest to secure his place on the podium. Rohit completed India’s sweep in the 57kg category, defeating Armenia’s Arman Harutyunyan 8-3. Having entered the medal contest through the repechage route, the Indian made the most of his second opportunity, producing an assured display to claim bronze.

The three victories provided a strong finish for India’s freestyle contingent after a challenging campaign, with the wrestlers responding effectively in their final bouts to ensure all three medal opportunities resulted in podium finishes.

India’s six-medal haul comprised two silver and four bronze medals. Vishvajit Ramchandra More secured silver in the Greco-Roman 55kg category, while Amruta earned silver in the women’s 72kg division. Komal added bronze in the women’s 59kg event. The remaining three medals came through the freestyle squad, with Rohit winning bronze at 57kg, Jaskaran at 65kg and Chandermohan at 79kg.



Mizoram's Chinmay Sutar becomes second Indian batter to hit quadruple ton

SOVIMA

Mizoram batter Chinmay Sutar on Monday has become only the second Indian batter to score a quadruple century in first-class cricket. Sutar achieved this landmark feat when he struck an unbeaten 400 against Nagaland in a Ranji Trophy Plate group match at the Nagaland Cricket Stadium in Sovima.

Playing in just his second first-class game, left-handed Sutar surpassed Prithvi Shaw's 379 to register the second-highest individual score in Ranji Trophy history. Only Bhausaheb Nimbalkar's unbeaten 443 for Maharashtra against Kathiawar in Pune in 1948/49 stands ahead of Sutar's effort in the competition's record books.

Sutar, who was on 392 at tea break, reached the 400-run landmark in the 155th over, after which Mizoram declared at 581/9. In all, he faced 517 balls and hit 46 fours and seven sixes. He was on 231 when the last man, Lalrempuia Chhakchhuak, walked out, and the pair went on to add an unbroken 190 for the tenth wicket.

Mizoram, who had ended the opening day on 331/5, slipped to 391/9 on day two before Sutar and Lalrempuia took the game away from Nagaland. It’s also a record for the third-highest last-wicket stand in Ranji Trophy history, 43 runs short of the record 233 put on by Ajay Sharma and Maninder Singh for Delhi against Mumbai in 1991/92.

Sutar became only the tenth batter to score 400 or more in a first-class innings, joining a list that includes batting greats such as Brian Lara and Don Bradman. Lara holds the record for the highest first-class score with his unbeaten 501 for Warwickshire against Durham in 1994, and also made 400 not out for the West Indies against England in a Test match in 2004.

Pakistan's Hanif Mohammed fell one short of 500, and made 499 for Karachi against Bahawalpur in 1959. Sutar had made his Ranji debut for Mizoram in last week's season opener against Manipur after securing a no-objection certificate from the Mumbai Cricket Association (MCA).

He scored 35 and 99, being run out one short of a hundred in the second innings, as Mizoram fought back from a 68-run first-innings deficit before losing narrowly by three wickets. Sutar had represented Mumbai in the Vijay Hazare Trophy in the previous domestic season on the back of strong performances in Mumbai's local leagues.

In June, he helped MSC Maratha Royals defend their Mumbai T20 League title and hit back-to-back half-centuries. He finished the season with 212 runs from six innings at a strike rate of nearly 120.

WPL 2027: Dunkley, Molineux at highest base price

NEW DELHI

England batter Sophia Dunkley and Australia captain Sophie Molineux have registered themselves at the highest base price of Rs 50 lakh for the player auction for the Women's Premier League (WPL) 2027 to be held in Kochi on October 28.

Indian wicketkeeper-batter G. Kamalini, who was released by two-time winners Mumbai Indians, and batter Kiran Navgire, let go by the UP Warriorz, along with Australian duo Heather Graham and Jess Jonassen, are in the next bracket with a base price of Rs 40 lakh. Another 30 players have registered at a base price of Rs 30 lakh.

In all, 146 players will go under the hammer for 27 available slots at the auction, which will begin at 5:30 pm at the Grand Hyatt hotel. The pool includes 119 Indians - 22 of them capped and 97 uncapped - competing for 20 slots.

The overseas contingent comprises 27 players -- 14 capped and 13 uncapped, vying for the remaining seven spots. Six players from Associate nations are also on the list. UP Warriorz will head into the auction with the biggest purse of Rs 3.65 crore and have seven slots to fill, including two for overseas players.

MI also have seven vacancies, one of them for an overseas player, but have the smallest purse of Rs 1 crore. Defending champions and two-time winners Royal Challengers Bengaluru have Rs 1.15 crore to fill five slots, including two overseas spots, while four-time runners-up Delhi Capitals have Rs 1.1 crore for five slots, one of which is for an overseas player. Gujarat Giants have the fewest slots to fill, with Rs 1.25 crore available for three players, including one for an overseas cricketer.



Australia have the largest overseas presence in the auction pool, with Grace Harris, Tayla Vlaeminck, Tess Flintoff, Charli Knott, Samantha Bates, Maitlan Brown, Maddie Penna and Milly Illingworth registering alongside Sophie, Heather and Jess, who have been a part of the WPL previously.

Sri Lanka captain Chamari Athapaththu and young pacer Mithali Ayodya are also in the pool, along with South Africa's quartet of Nonkululeko Mlaba, Annerie Dercksen, Kayla Reyneke and Chloe Tryon, and Ireland's seam-bowling all-rounder Orla Prendergast.

Scotland lead the Associate contingent, with sisters Sarah and Kathryn Bryce, who have played in the WPL previously, as well as Darcey Carter and Kirstie Gordon in the fray. Babette de Leede and Esha Oza, captains of the Netherlands and UAE respectively, complete the list. The fifth edition of the WPL will take place from January 14 to February 7, 2027, with the venues yet to be announced. The tournament will serve as a vital preparation platform for the inaugural 2027 ICC Women's Champions Trophy, to be hosted by Brabourne Stadium, Mumbai, and BCA Stadium in Vadodara, from February 14 to February 28, 2027.

President Murmu congratulates Mona Agarwal, Avani Lekhara on winning gold, silver medals

NEW DELHI

President Droupadi Murmu on Monday extended her wishes to shooters Mona Agarwal and Avani Lekhara for winning gold and silver medals, respectively, at the ongoing Asian Para Games 2026.

President Murmu congratulated Mona for winning the gold medal in the Women’s 10m Air Rifle Standing SH1 event with an Asian Para Games record of 250. "I extend my heartiest congratulations to Mona Agarwal on winning the Gold Medal in the Women’s 10m Air Rifle Standing SH1 event at the Asian Para Games 2026. By setting a new Asian Para Games record, you have made this victory even more special.

"Your achievement will inspire many to dream big and believe that with determination and hard work, even the most ambitious dreams can be realised," the President of India posted on X. She further congratulated Avani for winning back-to-back medals at the continental showpiece. Having won the gold in the Hangzhou Asian Para Games 2023, the Paris and Tokyo Paralympics gold medallist Avani won a silver for successive medals at the Asiad.

"My warmest congratulations to Avani Lekhara on winning the Silver Medal in the Women’s 10m Air Rifle Standing SH1 event at the



Asian Para Games 2026. May your sporting journey continue to bring you new opportunities to excel and fulfil your aspirations. I wish you the very best for the future," the President wrote in another post. Earlier, Prime Minister Narendra Modi had also congratulated both the shooters through a social media post.Mona and Avani were placed closely in the final. Mona shot an Asian Para Games record score of 250 to bag the gold, while Avani shot 249.6 to win the silver in what were India's first medals at the ongoing Games.

Mona, a Paris Paralympics bronze winner, made a brilliant comeback in the final after she was reeling in fifth place to storm into the podium positions before fending off the challenge from others to win the coveted gold. Behind Mona and Avani, South Korea's Yunri Lee won the bronze with a score of 227.9.

Mona broke her compatriot Avani's Asiad Para Games record of 249.6 that the shooter had set while winning the gold in the previous Games in Hangzhou. However, she missed out on the world record of 252 held by Slovakia's Iryna Shchetnik. With this performance, Avani has also secured a quota place for the 2028 Paralympic Games. Mona had secured her spot last month during the World Championships.

Ramesh Powar appointed to Men’s Selection Committee

MUMBAI

The Cricket Advisory Committee (CAC), comprising Mr. Ashok Malhotra and Mr. Jatin Paranjape, conducted a selection process for the appointment of a member of the Men’s Selection Committee. The CAC met at the BCCI HQ to screen and interview applicants and, following the process, unanimously recommended the appointment of Mr Ramesh Powar.

Powar represented India in 2 Tests and 31 ODIs during his international playing career. He has since held major coaching roles, including Head Coach of the India Women’s team, Mumbai and Gujarat, as well as Bowling Coach at the BCCI Centre of Excellence. During his stint with the India Women’s team, he guided them to an Asia Cup title as well as a Commonwealth Games silver medal.

The BCCI places on record its appreciation for Mr Ajit Agarkar for his commitment, conviction and contribution during his tenure as Chairman of the Men’s Selection Committee. Since his appointment in July 2023, Agarkar led the committee through a significant period for Indian cricket, with India winning three ICC trophies, two Asia Cup titles and back-to-back Asian Games gold medals. Based on seniority (most Tests), Mr Pragyan Ojha will chair the Committee.



Neha Shetty's Glam Reloaded

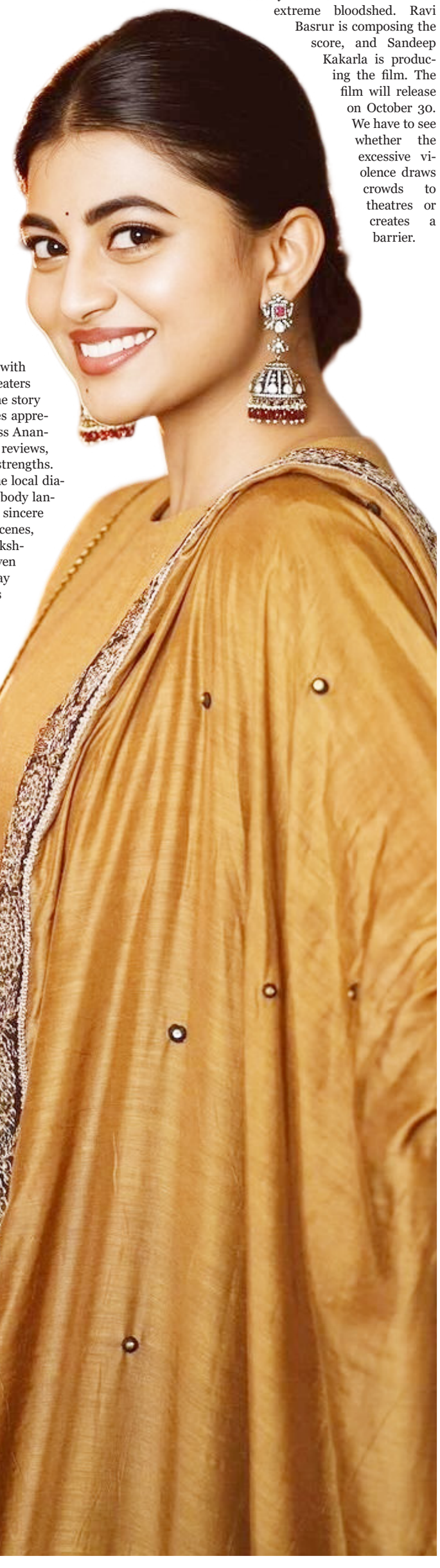
Neha Shetty won big popularity as Radhika in DJ Tillu and later featured in Bedurulanka 2012 and Gangs of Godavari. Neha shared new pictures in an off shoulder floral crop top with puffed sleeves. She paired it with a denim wrap mini skirt with button detail. Pearl hoop earrings, stacked bracelets and rings added a light touch, and her loose wavy hair kept the look easy. She posed against a red textured wall. Neha has no film announced at the moment, but she stays active online. With no modelling or ad shoots in the news either, Instagram has become her main stage, and her latest pictures keep fans talking until her next project is announced.

Cult: Will Extreme Violence Work?



Mass Ka Das Vishwak Sen is bringing his new film, Cult, to screens on October 30. Not just acting, Vishwaksen is also directing the film. Crazy expectations are building for the film based on the content released so far. Now, the makers have unveiled the full-fledged trailer, positioning the film as one of Indian cinema's unapologetic R-rated spectacles. While the earlier teaser only hinted at the premise, the trailer lays out the core conflict. The film centers on a deadly game, a sprawling narcotics web, and Vishwak's intricate ties to the dark underworld. As a cop, Vishwaksen looks sharp and delivers a commanding, aggressive screen presence. The high-octane action sequences have been designed on a heavy, relentless scale. For fans of raw, visceral violence, the trailer promises a visual feast. Vishwaksen appears ready to unleash mayhem on the silver screen. Nowadays, audiences complain about too much violence or gore in Tollywood films, regardless of genre. While they are familiar with those scenes in international films and series, they can't accept them on the big screen. However, the latest film is a big bet by Vishwak on Gen Z with extreme bloodshed. Ravi Basrur is composing the score, and Sandeep Kakarla is producing the film. The film will release on October 30. We have to see whether the excessive violence draws crowds to theatres or creates a barrier.

Anandhi: A Talent Yet to Be Recognised



Anandhi is finally receiving the recognition she deserves with her new release, Garividi Lakshmi. The film is out in theaters and is doing well, particularly in Uttarandhra, where the story has a strong regional connection. Director Gowri Naidu deserves appreciation for making a biopic and for roping in young Telugu actress Anandhi for such a crucial film. Though the film has opened to mixed reviews, Anandhi's performance has emerged as one of the film's biggest strengths. Though Anandhi is from Warangal, the way she has mouthed the local dialect and performed in this film has impressed many. Be it her body language or the way she performed, Anandhi gives a settled and sincere performance in the film. Her performance in the emotional scenes, especially in the climax, is one of the highlights of Garividi Lakshmi. The way she has taken the role of a folk singer and given it her own spin showcases the acting talent she has. The way Anandhi showcases the emotional turmoil her character goes through is the best part of the film. Over the years, Anandhi has worked in mostly Tamil films; she is yet to get stardom here in Telugu cinema. She was seen in films like Zombie Reddy and Bhairavam, but she is yet to settle as a seasoned actress. Anandhi is not new to the industry and debuted in Ee Rojullo and did hit films like Bus Stop in 2012 before breaking into Tamil cinema with Kayal in 2014. With Garividi Lakshmi, she has finally proved her ability to carry a challenging role. As word of mouth is slowly spreading, Anandhi's work is slowly being recognized by the media and general audience. For any actress, one film could change the game, and many feel that Garividi Lakshmi is that one film that has changed it for Anandhi. Now, the real test begins for her, as one needs to see how she chooses her script and makes the most of her comeback.

Dhurandhar Beauty Melts Hearts

Sara Arjun began as a child artist and impressed audiences in Tamil and Hindi films before turning lead actor. Her performance in Dhurandhar opposite Ranveer Singh became a big hit, and she carried that success into Dhurandhar The Revenge. Her latest look is a powder blue strapless gown covered in ivory thread embroidery and beadwork. The scalloped neckline sits neatly above a fitted bodice, while a peplum waist adds shape. A pearl-studded belt panel defines the waist. She keeps the styling light with gold earrings, a statement ring, soft glam and loose waves, and her wide smile completes the picture. Apart from Dhurandhar The Revenge, she has not appeared in any other film recently. Her Telugu debut came with Euphoria, and fans now wait for her next big project announcement.

Maala's Vibrant Presence In AK47



The makers of Victory Venkatesh and Trivikram Srinivas' upcoming entertainer Aadarsha Kutumbam House No: 47 (AK47) have released the film's second single, 'Maala'. Composed by Thaman S, the upbeat track features energetic rhythms, colourful visuals and lively choreography. Venkatesh and Nivetha Pethuraj impress with their energetic dance moves and charming screen presence. The song features vocals by Thaman S, Dhanunjay Seepana and Ranina Reddy, with lyrics by Ramajogayya Sastry and choreography by Bhanu Master. Produced by S. Radha Krishna under Haarika & Hassine Creations, the film features an ensemble cast and is directed by Trivikram Srinivas.

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