

CM Saini meets high-level russian delegation to explore india-russia joint ventures in advanced drone technology

Russian Technology Firms Discuss Investment Opportunities in Haryana's Drone and Aerospace Sector

VIJAY KUMAR.OPEN SEARCH

CHANDIGARH : In a significant step towards positioning Haryana as a global hub for drone manufacturing, aerospace and advanced technology, a high-level Russian delegation met Haryana Chief Minister Sh. Nayab Singh Saini at his residence Sant Kabir Kutir in Chandigarh to explore opportunities for investment, technology transfer, joint research and industrial collaboration in the state.

The discussions focused on two proposed India-Russia joint ventures at Drone City Haryana, established by AVPL International in Sisai, Hansi. The proposed projects envisage the manufacturing of advanced helicopter drones and the development of GPS/GNSS-independent drone navigation technology using Indian semiconductor chips.

The six-member delegation comprised four representatives from leading



Russian technology organisations and two senior Indian representatives. The Russian delegation included Mr. Leonid Artemov, Director, Skolkovo Foundation; Mr. Aleksandr Zaporozhskii, Project Manager, Skolkovo Foundation; Mr. Alexey Urbanskiy, CEO, Omnitech LLC; and Mr. Sergey Lebedev, CEO and Co-Founder, 4GNSS LLC / Orient Systems Group. The Indian representatives

were Lieutenant General Rakesh Kumar Anand, Director General, Drone Tech Multi-State Cooperative Society, and Sh. Deep Singh Sisai, Founder and Chairman, AVPL International (AITMC Ventures Limited). The delegation discussed opportunities for developing an advanced drone manufacturing ecosystem in Haryana through international technological cooperation and proposed joint



ventures. During the meeting, the delegation apprised the Chief Minister of the proposed collaboration between Russia's Omnitech LLC and AVPL International for establishing an advanced helicopter drone manufacturing facility at Drone City Haryana in Sisai. The proposed project envisages manufacturing, assembly, research, testing and technological development facilities for advanced unmanned helicopter plat-

forms. According to the proposal, the helicopter drone would have a flight range of up to 250 kilometres and a payload capacity of up to 200 kilograms. The project aims to promote technology transfer, indigenous manufacturing, research and industrial production in Haryana.

The proposed helicopter drones could be used for industrial logistics, disaster management, the delivery of essential supplies to remote

and inaccessible areas, and other civilian and industrial applications. If the joint venture is finalised, the project could create new opportunities for the development of a specialised helicopter drone manufacturing sector in Haryana, strengthening the state's position in advanced aerospace and unmanned aerial systems manufacturing.

The delegation also discussed a second proposed India-Russia joint venture

with 4GNSS LLC / Orient Systems Group for developing advanced drone navigation technology capable of operating without GPS/GNSS signals. The proposed technology aims to enable drones to complete their designated missions even when satellite navigation signals are unavailable. The project envisages exploring the use of Indian semiconductor chips, indigenous technological development and manufac-

turing in India. The initiative could contribute to the advancement of drone research, autonomous navigation and aerospace electronics while creating opportunities for domestic technology development.

Notably, the Haryana Government has already taken significant steps to promote drone and aerospace manufacturing in the state. At the 19th meeting of the Haryana Enterprise Promotion Board (HEPB), chaired by Chief Minister Sh. Nayab Singh Saini, a special incentive package of ₹758.51 crore was approved for AITMC Ventures Limited. The approval was granted under the Haryana Enterprises and Employment Policy, 2020, for developing a drone and drone-component manufacturing hub in Hisar district. The Chief Minister has also emphasised the need to establish Haryana as a leading destination for drone manufacturing, research and innovation.

PG Courses to Boost Ayurveda Education, Research and Innovation

CHANDIGARH : OPEN SEARCH

The scope of Ayurveda education and healthcare at the National Institute of Ayurveda (NIA), Panchkula, is set to expand, with the institute preparing to train specialist doctors and promote research, scientific studies and innovation. The National Commission for Indian System of Medicine (NCISM) has approved 70 seats across 14 postgraduate (PG) courses at NIA, Panchkula. Admissions to these courses will begin in the academic session 2026-27. The NCISM has issued a Letter of Permission (LoP) to NIA, Panchkula, for launching 14 PG courses with 70 seats. Operating as an off-campus



centre of the deemed-to-be university, the National Institute of Ayurveda, Jaipur, NIA, Panchkula, has opened new avenues for higher education in 14 disciplines of Ayurveda. At present, the institute has 100 seats for the Bachelor of Ayurvedic Medicine and Surgery (BAMS) programme. Its first batch commenced in the academic session 2024-25, followed by admissions for the 2025-26 batch.

Haryana brings mental health institutions under a six-category regulatory framework, registration

CHANDIGARH : OPEN SEARCH

Haryana has introduced a comprehensive regulatory framework covering six categories of mental health establishments, including standalone mental health establishments, psychiatric departments of medical colleges, psychiatric wards of multi-specialty hospitals, de-addiction centres, centres for psychosocial rehabilitation and other institutions. It brings their registration, staffing, patient safety, treatment records, and institutional accountability under prescribed standards.

Additional Chief Secretary, Health and Family Welfare, Dr. Sumita Misra, said here on Wednesday that the Mental Healthcare (State Mental Health Authority)



Regulations, 2026, notified by the state Health Department on October 9 under the Mental Healthcare Act, 2017, establish a framework for regulating mental healthcare institutions across the state. The regulations prescribe a Rs. 25,000 fee for permanent registration, require documentary evidence of compliance with minimum standards, and introduce provisions on professional

Rs. 25,000 permanent registration fee prescribed; de-addiction centres face mandatory patient reporting, safeguards against physical restraint and stricter oversight

qualifications, patients' rights, medical records, physical restraint, privacy, hygiene, fire safety, and accessibility. Dr. Misra said the regulations classify mental health establishments into six categories, A to F, based on their nature and services. Institutions must follow the applicable registration process under Section 65 of the Mental Healthcare Act. The framework extends beyond con-

ventional mental hospitals and de-addiction centres to psychiatric departments in medical colleges, psychiatric units in general hospitals, residential rehabilitation facilities and specified institutions providing treatment for substance use disorders. The regulations prescribe minimum standards for accommodation, sanitation, medical equipment, staffing, and emergency preparedness. They include provisions for adequate ventilation, separate beds, clean bedding, water supply, sanitation facilities for male and female patients, power backup, and safe biomedical waste disposal. The standards prohibit residents from sleeping on the floor and require institutions to maintain arrangements for privacy, personal dignity, and safety.

Target set to complete removal of remaining poles by Dec 31, 2026 : Vikram Singh

CHANDIGARH : OPEN SEARCH

The drive to remove unused electricity poles that have been standing along roadsides in Haryana for a long time has been intensified. Following the directions of the Chief Minister and under the guidance of the power distribution corporations, the Uttar Haryana Bijli Vitran Nigam (UHBVN) and Dakshin Haryana Bijli Vitran Nigam (DHBVN) are conducting a special campaign in this regard. A total of 6,443 unused electricity poles had been identified by the two corporations, of which 4,222 have been removed so far. The remaining 2,221 poles are targeted for removal within the stipulated deadline. Providing details, Managing Director

of the power distribution corporations, Vikram Singh, said that according to the action taken by the two corporations, DHBVN had identified 2,792 poles, of which 889 have been removed, while 1,903 remain to be removed. Similarly, UHBVN had identified 3,651 poles, of which 3,333 have been removed, leaving only 318 poles to be removed. He stated that, according to the UHBVN report, 35 unused poles in Jhajjar, 22 in Panipat, 25 in Sonapat and 57 in Kaithal remain to be removed. The work has been completed in the Ambala, Panchkula, Yamunanagar, Karnal and Kurukshetra circles. In the Rohtak circle, 112 poles of the 33 kV line are standing and may potentially be used in the industrial area in the future.

Officials Must Ensure Availability of Improved Fodder Seeds for Dairy Animals : Shyam Rana

Farmers to Be Encouraged to Set Up Indigenous Cow Dairies, Says Minister

CHANDIGARH : OPEN SEARCH

Haryana Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare and Animal Husbandry and Dairying Minister Sh. Shyam Singh Rana has directed officials to work towards ensuring the availability of improved fodder seeds for dairy animals in the state so that people can get good-quality milk. He also directed officials to explore the possibility of formulating a policy in this regard. Rana was chairing a meeting of senior officials of the Animal Husbandry and Dairying Department, LUVAS University, the Haryana Livestock Development Board and the Haryana Gau Seva Aayog at his office in Chandigarh.



The meeting was attended by Sh. Vijay Singh Dahiya, Principal Secretary, Animal Husbandry and Dairying Department; Dr. Prem Singh, Director; Dr. Vinod Kumar Verma, Vice-Chancellor of Lala Lajpat Rai University of Veterinary and Animal Sciences (LUVAS), Hisar; and other officials. The Animal Husbandry and Dairying



Minister said that dairy animals should be fed fodder grown without the use of chemical fertilisers and pesticides. He stated that the use of DAP, urea and other chemical fertilisers in fodder cultivation could make the fodder toxic, potentially allowing chemical residues to enter the human body through milk. He directed officials to encourage live-

stock farmers to grow fodder using organic and natural fertilisers and to ensure the availability of improved-quality seeds. He added that a policy could also be formulated if required.

Sh. Rana further directed officials to prepare a subsidy-related scheme to encourage farmers to establish dairies for indigenous cows. He said this would help conserve and improve indigenous cattle breeds. He added that Jeevamrit, prepared using cow urine, could also be used as a natural fertiliser in organic and natural farming. The Minister also directed officials to prepare a scheme for establishing "day-boarding animal hostels" on panchayat land for village cattle.

Haryana's MSMEs Can Strengthen Competitiveness by Adopting Indian Standards for Emerging Clean-Energy Technologies : Rajesh Nagara

CHANDIGARH : OPEN SEARCH

Haryana Minister of State for Food, Civil Supplies and Consumer Affairs, Sh. Rajesh Nagar on Wednesday said that standards are fundamental to ensuring product safety, consumer protection, industrial competitiveness and sustainable development. He said that standards must serve as instruments of quality, safety, sustainability and inclusive development, contributing to the achievement of Sustainable Development Goal 7 Affordable and Clean Energy and the broader Sustainable Development Goals. The Minister called for making quality a shared responsibility and standards a com-



mon pathway towards a more sustainable Haryana and a better India.

While addressing the celebration of World Standards Day 2026, organised by the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS), Northern Regional Office here in Chandigarh. He said that

standards may often appear to be technical documents, but their impact is directly felt in the everyday lives of citizens from the quality of food and essential commodities to the safety of electrical appliances and the accuracy of weighing and measuring instruments.

Standards Are Essential for Affordable Clean Energy, Consumer Safety and Sustainable Development : Food, Civil Supplies and Consumer Affairs Minister

Quality Must Not Be Compromised in the Pursuit of Affordability, Standards Build Consumer Confidence : Rajesh Nagar

He said that this year's theme, "Shared Vision for a Better World: Spotlight on SDG 7 Affordable and Clean Energy," highlights the importance of accessible, reliable and sustainable energy in achieving economic growth and improving quality of life. Sh. Rajesh Nagar said that affordable and clean energy is not merely an environmental objective; it is also essential for agriculture, food security,

industrial development and public services. He said that India's transition towards renewable energy, energy efficiency, electric mobility, energy storage and green hydrogen is opening new opportunities for citizens and industry.

However, these technologies must be safe, reliable, energy-efficient and fit for their intended purpose. Standards provide the technical foundation needed to

ensure that the clean-energy transition takes place safely and sustainably.

Emphasising the relevance of standards for Haryana, the Minister said that the state's strong agricultural base, expanding industrial sector, growing MSME ecosystem and developing urban centres all depend on reliable energy and quality infrastructure. He stressed that affordability must go hand in hand with quality, safety and performance. Highlighting the role of the Bureau of Indian Standards, Sh. Rajesh Nagar said that BIS plays a vital role in developing and promoting Indian Standards across sectors, including solar energy systems, wind energy, energy storage, electric mobility.

Briefs News

Haryana Government Establishes 141 'Safe Cradle Centres' Across the State to Protect Newborns

CHANDIGARH : OPEN SEARCH. The Haryana Government is fully committed to the protection and welfare of children. In this direction, the Women and Child Development Department, Haryana, has established 141 'Safe Cradle Centres' across the state to fulfil its commitment to "Empowered Women - Safe Childhood - Prosperous Haryana." Sharing this information, a government spokesperson appealed to the public not to abandon newborns or children on roads, in deserted places, under trees, in dustbins, outside hospitals or at any other unsafe location under any circumstances of helplessness or inability to provide care. One wrong step can put an innocent child's life at risk. If any parent or individual is unable to care for a child for any reason, they should hand over the child to these government-established safe cradle centres instead of abandoning them in bushes or other unsafe places. The spokesperson informed that these Safe Cradle Centres have been established at various locations across the state, including child care institutions, Primary Health Centres, civil hospitals and other designated institutions. The spokesperson clarified that if a Safe Cradle Centre is not available in a particular area, the child can also be safely handed over to the Child Welfare Committee constituted in every district. Assuring citizens, the spokesperson stated that the identity of any person coming forward to safely hand over a child will be kept strictly confidential. This will enable anyone to ensure the safety of an innocent child without fear or hesitation.

Haryana Govt Committed to Farmers' Welfare, Preparations for Crop Procurement in Mandis Complete: Rajesh Nagar

CHANDIGARH : OPEN SEARCH. Haryana Minister of State for Food, Civil Supplies and Consumer Affairs, Sh. Rajesh Nagar said that the state government is fully committed to ensuring smooth procurement of farmers' crops. Ministers and MLAs of the state government are regularly visiting mandis to review procurement arrangements. The Chief Minister has also issued clear instructions to the concerned officials to ensure that farmers do not face any inconvenience while selling their produce. Sh. Nagar was interacting with media persons today during the World Standards Day 2026 celebration program organised by the Northern Regional Office of the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) in Chandigarh. He informed that a meeting had been held with all District Food and Supplies Controllers (DFSCs) via video conference two days ago to review the arrival of crops in mandis across various districts and assess procurement arrangements. So far, he had not received any information regarding complaints related to the procurement process. He added that moisture-related issues had arisen at a few locations due to waterlogging in low-lying areas, but these had been resolved by allowing the affected areas to dry.

Election Commission of India Prescribes Limits on Form-7 Applications

CHANDIGARH : OPEN SEARCH. The Election Commission of India has prescribed limits on the number of Form-7 applications that can be submitted for raising objections to the inclusion of names in electoral rolls or seeking the deletion of names. The decision aims to curb the practice of filing large numbers of objections without valid grounds and to prevent unnecessary inconvenience to voters. According to the Commission's instructions, a voter can submit a maximum of 10 Form-7 applications during the claims and objections period. During the period of continuous updation of electoral rolls, a voter can submit a maximum of five Form-7 applications per month. These limits apply to applications submitted through both online and offline modes. The instructions clarify that, under Rule 13(2) of the Registration of Electors Rules, 1960, a Form-7 application can be submitted only by a person whose name is already included in the electoral roll of the concerned Assembly constituency.

Parvesh sahib singh inaugu- rates IC³ command centre

AJEET KUMAR.OPEN SEARCH

NEW DELHI. Strengthening Delhi's water infrastructure with technology, faster response and better monitoring, Delhi Water Minister Shri Parvesh Sahib Singh today inaugurated the Intelligent Command & Control Centre (IC³) and flagged off a dedicated Emergency Response Vehicle at JWIL Infra Limited's office on Shivaji Marg, New Delhi.

The initiatives are aimed at improving the monitoring of water supply networks, reducing water loss and ensuring quicker action whenever a leak or disruption affects residents. The IC³ facility will integrate network monitoring, maintenance, consumer complaints and field operations on a single digital platform,



while the specially equipped emergency vehicle will help teams respond to major pipeline leaks without losing valuable time arranging equipment.

Speaking on the occasion, Shri Parvesh Sahib Singh said, "For us, water management is not just about supplying water. It is equally important to prevent wastage, identify prob-

lems quickly and ensure that people do not have to suffer because of a pipeline leak or an avoidable disruption. Technology must translate into a visible improvement in the everyday lives of Delhi's residents." The IC³ platform brings together data from SCADA systems, Geographic Information Systems (GIS), smart meters, consumer

Technology-driven monitoring to help detect leaks faster, reduce water loss and ensure quicker response to complaints

complaints, maintenance systems and GPS-enabled field vehicles. It will allow officials to monitor the network, identify vulnerable locations, track repair teams and review the status of complaints through an integrated dashboard.

With the use of Artificial Intelligence and digital-twin technology, the system can also help anticipate pipeline bursts, identify low-pressure areas and assess demand patterns. This will enable a gradual shift from responding to problems

after they occur to identifying potential issues before they become major disruptions. Emphasising the need for accountability alongside technology, Shri Parvesh Sahib Singh said, "Our focus is clear: less water wastage, faster repairs and greater accountability. When a complaint comes in, the response should be quick and the action taken should be trackable. We want systems that help officials make better decisions on the ground and deliver better services to people."

JWIL is currently executing the Delhi Jal Board's Chandrawal Water Supply Project under Packages 2, 3 and 4, covering areas that together account for approximately 10 per cent of Delhi's population and geographical area, including important VIP areas.

IYC marches towards Jantar Mantar, asserts right to peaceful protest

NEW DELHI (AGENCY)

The Indian Youth Congress (IYC) on Wednesday marched towards Jantar Mantar to assert the right to peaceful protest, two days after Delhi Police denotified the site from the list of designated protest venues.

Led by IYC national president Uday Bhanu Chib, the protesters marched from Patel Chowk metro station, raising slogans and waving the national flag and the Congress' Swaraj flag, amid heavy police deployment, barricades and detention buses. Two days ago, Delhi Police removed Jantar Mantar from the list of designated protest sites, citing a Supreme Court directive on identifying alternative venues for demonstrations.

The move drew criticism from opposition leaders, INDIA bloc parties and several student- and youth-led organisations, which called for restoration of Jantar Mantar as a venue for



public protests. The IYC said the march was aimed at defending the constitutional right to peaceful assembly and dissent, arguing that citizens must be able to question those in power. "Our fight is not merely for permission to hold a protest at Jantar Mantar; it is for the protection of the democratic space in which every citizen can question those in power," an IYC member said. SignPetitions

Asserting that freedom of speech, peaceful assembly and dissent were constitutionally guaranteed rights, he urged the authorities to facilitate peaceful demonstrations in line with

constitutional principles. The march comes amid the ongoing protests by various outfits demanding the resignation of Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar over alleged irregularities in the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls. The Youth Congress has been questioning the Election Commission's handling of the revision exercise and alleging that the process threatens the integrity of electoral rolls. The IYC's earlier campaigns had included demonstrations targeting Kumar, with the organisation demanding accountability from the poll body over the SIR.

Delhi govt announces Rs 1,370 DBT for MCD school students to buy uniforms, bags

NEW DELHI (AGENCY)

Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta on Wednesday said Rs 1,370 had been transferred directly into the bank accounts of students in Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) schools to help them purchase uniforms, shoes, school bags and other essential items.

Speaking at a ceremony at an MCD primary school in Tagore Garden, Gupta said the direct benefit transfer (DBT) initiative would ensure transparency in the disbursement of funds and enable every eligible child to receive the amount. "This is a wonderful initiative that ensures every child receives the money they are entitled to, with complete transparency," she said. Congratulating the civic body for its work in the education sector, Gupta said the Delhi government and the MCD were working together to improve educa-



tional facilities in schools. BuyMaps Speaking to the media, she also highlighted the 'Science on Wheels' initiative, under which a mobile van equipped with 60 laptops will visit different schools to help students learn about science and technology. "Every child in Delhi should receive quality education, a better environment and opportunities for good development," she said. BuyMaps Gupta also said the Centre had extended significant support to the education sector under the National Education Policy. The ceremony was organised by the MCD's Education Department at its primary school in Tagore Garden.

IYC demands independent probe into alleged police action during protests against CEC

NEW DELHI (AGENCY)

The Indian Youth Congress sought an independent, time-bound inquiry into police action during the recent protests demanding Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar's resignation, alleging misconduct and unlawful detention of demonstrators since September 23.

In a memorandum submitted to the deputy commissioner of police (New Delhi district) on Tuesday, IYC president Uday Bhanu Chib sought details of arrests, FIRs and action taken against police personnel accused of misconduct.

"The right to peaceful protest is constitutionally guaranteed; those responsible for excessive force, unlawful detention and violence must be held accountable," Chib said in a statement.

The IYC alleged that protesters, including women and senior citizens,



had faced lathi-charges, water cannons and tear gas during demonstrations. It also raised concerns over the detention of Congress workers without being given any reasons.

The protests began on September 23 amid opposition demands for Kumar's resignation over questions raised about the functioning of the Election Commission and the revision of electoral rolls. Several political and students groups have since held demonstrations, with

protestors detained during attempts to march towards the poll panel's headquarters.

According to a statement by the Congress' youth wing, the organisation sought details of instructions received from the Union Home Ministry concerning protests and internet shutdowns, besides information on departmental inquiries, suspensions and criminal proceedings, wherever applicable, against police personnel facing complaints. It also

demanding that CCTV footage from protest sites, police wireless communication logs, body-camera footage and duty rosters of personnel deployed on the relevant dates be preserved for the inquiry. SignPetitions The memorandum sought a response within seven days, with the IYC warning that it could approach the courts if the information was not provided. Separately, several IYC workers were seen outside the party's office on Raisina Road removing barricades placed along its periphery. The workers shifted the barricades one by one and raised slogans as several police personnel gathered in the area to maintain law and order.

Barricades had been stationed around the office for several months, according to the IYC, which said the restrictions affected the movement of party workers and their ability to protest peacefully.

Cockroach Janta Party leaders Saurav Das, Ashutosh Ranka sent to five-day judicial custody

NEW DELHI (AGENCY)

Cockroach Janta Party (CJP) leaders Saurav Das and Ashutosh Ranka were sent to five-day judicial custody and lodged in Tihar Jail on Wednesday for allegedly violating their peace bonds and trespassing into Jantar Mantar, which has been denotified as a protest area, police said.

Their associate Ajinkya Shinde was bound down to maintain peace and good behaviour for six months and released on a personal bond and a surety of Rs 5,000, police said.

The CJP leaders were detained early Tuesday after they allegedly breached barricades and entered the Jantar Mantar area without authorisation, raised slogans demanding Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar's resigna-



tion, and erected a national flag there. They were booked on charges including trespassing, violation of prohibitory orders, breach of peace bond, and obstructing a public servant from discharging official duties, sources said. Das and Ranka had signed bonds to maintain peace for a year after they were detained on Saturday, they said. The action on CJP leaders comes amid heightened security in the national capital follow-

ing a series of protests by the youth-led outfit and other organisations demanding the resignation of Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar over alleged irregularities in the Special Intensive Revision of electoral rolls. BuyMaps Reacting to the development, CJP founder Abhijeet Dipke slammed the Central government for crushing dissent. In an X post, he said, "Ashu and Saurav have been

sent to five days' judicial custody. Their fault? Unfurling the Tricolour at Jantar Mantar."

He further said, "Show some guts, @narendramodi. If you're so determined to crush dissent, have the courage to officially declare an Emergency instead of hiding behind these cowardly tactics." In a statement, Delhi Police said that on the morning of October 13, Saurav Das, Ashutosh Ranka, Ajinkya Shinde and 11 other CJP members entered Jantar Mantar, which has been denotified as a designated protest site, by trespassing through a private premise. "Police personnel deployed at the spot intervened and attempted to stop them. However, the protesters allegedly obstructed police personnel in the discharge of their official duties.

Is waving national flag a crime : Kejriwal on CJP leaders' judicial custody

NEW DELHI (AGENCY)

Das and Ranka were sent to five-day judicial custody and sent to Tihar Jail on Wednesday for allegedly violating their peace bonds and trespassing at Jantar Mantar, which was denotified as a protest area, police said. Their associate Ajinkya Shinde was bound down to maintain peace and good behaviour for six months and released on a personal bond and a surety of Rs 5,000. Reacting to the news in a post on X, Kejriwal said, "Is waving our own flag in our own country a crime? This is absolutely ridiculous." Das, Ranka and Shinde, along with other Cockroach Janta Party (CJP) members, entered Jantar Mantar on Tuesday, defying prohibitory orders. They unfurled the



tricolour and raised slogans against Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar, whose resignation the group has been demanding over alleged irregularities in the Special Intensive Revision of electoral rolls. According to Delhi Police, the CJP leaders and 11 group members reached Jantar Mantar by allegedly trespassing on private premises. They were detained after allegedly obstructing police personnel from discharging their duties. Two FIRs were registered at Connaught Place and Parliament Street police stations.

Political resistance will continue & triumph : Rahul Gandhi after hosting INDIA bloc for high tea

NEW DELHI (AGENCY)

After hosting a high tea for INDIA bloc leaders, Opposition MPs, student organisations and civil society representatives at his Sunehri Bagh Road residence on Tuesday, Lok Sabha Leader of the Opposition Rahul Gandhi vowed to sustain the agitation against Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar, declaring that "no matter what happened, political resistance would continue and it would triumph". Accusing Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Home Minister Amit Shah and the CEC of undermining democratic institutions,



Rahul said the Opposition would fight until democracy was restored and those responsible were brought to justice. Addressing a press conference after the meeting, Rahul asserted that the Opposition was united and there were no parallel protests, but one movement with a common vision of democracy in

India. "Jantar Mantar had been one of the spaces where citizens could express democratic dissent, but the government has decided it could no longer be used for that purpose.

We are going to challenge that idea. The people who have done this—PM Modi, who is the main architect, Amit Shah, who is

Jantar Mantar had been one of the spaces where citizens could express democratic dissent, but the govt has decided it could no longer be used for that purpose

the implementer, Gyanesh Kumar and others—need to understand that the net is closing around them," Rahul said, thanking the people of Delhi and others across the country who had stood with the Opposition. Expressing respect for the Supreme Court, the Chief Justice of India and the judicial sys-

tem, Rahul said the judiciary had a role to play and the Opposition hoped it would discharge that responsibility.

Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge said the Opposition was preparing to expose the Modi government's "plan to facilitate vote chori". RJD leader Tejashwi Yadav accused Gyanesh Kumar of acting at the behest of Modi and Shah and crushing democracy. Describing the CEC as a "puppet", he said the Opposition would respond to the alleged actions and those responsible would face consequences. "The decision to denotify Jantar Mantar as protest site

reflects their fear," he said.

CPI leader D Raja said senior INDIA bloc leaders had discussed the prevailing political situation and the way forward for the agitation demanding the CEC's resignation. "Delhi is our city, but there are barricades everywhere. They say it is because of protests. Yes, protests will take place and you cannot suppress them," he said. NCP (SP) MP Supriya Sule said the INDIA bloc stood firmly together and would continue its agitation. Activist Prashant Bhushan said an agitation against alleged vote theft and Gyanesh Kumar had been underway in Delhi since October 2.

Briefs News SFI, DYFI activists try to march towards Jantar Mantar, stopped at barricades

NEW DELHI (AGENCY) Activists of the Students' Federation of India (SFI) and the Democratic Youth Federation of India (DYFI) on Wednesday attempted to march towards Jantar Mantar from Ferozeshah Road but were stopped at police barricades. During the joint march, the Left students raised slogans such as "Reclaim Jantar Mantar" and "Gyanesh Kumar must resign", reiterating their demands for restoration of Jantar Mantar as a designated protest site and for the resignation of Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar. Two days ago, Delhi Police had denotified Jantar Mantar as a designated protest site. Visuals circulating on social media showed SFI and DYFI activists being stopped at police barricades on Ferozeshah Road as they attempted to proceed towards Jantar Mantar. Reaffirming their resolve to continue the agitation, the student activists said Jantar Mantar "shall be reclaimed", asserting that the protest was gaining strength as more people were joining it. SignPetitions The organisations have called for reclaiming the space for public demonstrations, amid concerns over restrictions on the right to peaceful protest.

Ambedkar University alleges students damaged property, manhandled security staff

NEW DELHI (AGENCY) Dr B R Ambedkar University on Tuesday alleged that a group of protesting students damaged university property and engaged in physical altercations with security personnel on its Kashmere Gate campus. In a statement, the university said the incident happened around 7 pm, when the students, who were on a sit-in without prior permission, allegedly attempted to disrupt campus discipline. The university alleged that the protesters were involved in scuffles with male and female security personnel deployed on campus. SignPetitions Varsity officials faced abusive behaviour when they tried to initiate a dialogue with the students to defuse the situation, it said. The administration said it informed the police about the row for the safety and security of other students, the statement said. The university also maintained that all "genuine and permissible" demands raised by the protesting students have already been addressed by the administration. Describing the alleged acts of indiscipline and damage to property as "unfortunate and condemnable", the university said action would be taken under its rules and disciplinary provisions.

Man throws toddler out of first-floor window as fire erupts in northeast Delhi restaurant

NEW DELHI (AGENCY) A fire broke out in a restaurant in northeast Delhi's Maujpur area late on Tuesday evening, with dramatic visuals of the incident showing a panicked diner throwing a toddler out of the first-floor window in a desperate bid to save the child's life. The visuals showed people standing below catching the toddler and taking him to safety. A fire erupted at the Udham Fish Point near Jafrabad under Welcome police station limits, at around 10.34 pm on Tuesday. According to a fire department report, the blaze started in the restaurant's kitchen on the ground floor of the four-storeyed building. The restaurant staff managed to douse the fire before it could spread, while a fire tender also reached the spot. Visuals of the incident showed panicked people desperately trying to escape. Amid the commotion, a woman was seen jumping from the building to the terrace of a nearby structure. No injuries were reported in the incident, police said.

MCD rolls out 12 anti-smog gun vehicles to curb dust pollution

NEW DELHI (AGENCY) With Delhi heading towards winter, when air pollution typically worsens, the Municipal Corporation of Delhi on Tuesday rolled out 12 multi-purpose vehicles equipped with anti-smog guns and water sprinklers to strengthen road-cleaning operations, officials said. According to an official statement, each vehicle has a 7,000-litre water tank and is equipped with a jetting system to clear blockages in small covered drains and culverts, as well as washing guns for cleaning public toilets and other surfaces. Mayor Praveesh Wahi flagged off the vehicles at the MCD headquarters at Civic Centre. Each vehicle costs Rs 35.06 lakh, taking the total expenditure for the 12 vehicles to about Rs 4.21 crore.

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EDITORIAL

A serious challenge in the digital age

The present era is an age of science and technology. The internet, mobile phones, online banking, and social media have made human life easier and more convenient. Today, digital technology is being used in almost every field, including education, business, healthcare, and administration. However, along with technological development, the problem of cybercrime and cyber threats is also increasing rapidly, posing a serious challenge to the security of individuals, society, and the nation.

Cyber threats appear in many forms. Hacking, online fraud, phishing, identity theft, unauthorized withdrawals from bank accounts, misuse of private information, and cyberattacks on computer systems are some of the major examples. Cybercriminals often trap people through fake messages, fraudulent websites, and attractive offers. In particular, a lack of digital awareness and the habit of clicking on links without proper verification encourage such crimes. The impact of cyber threats is not limited to financial losses alone. They violate an individual's privacy, damage reputation, and cause mental stress. Cyberattacks on government institutions, banks, and essential services can affect national security and the economy. With the increasing use of artificial intelligence, the risk of misleading people through fake voices, images, and videos is also growing.

To tackle this problem, the government, security agencies, technical institutions, and ordinary citizens must work together. Using strong passwords, enabling two-factor authentication, updating software regularly, and keeping personal information confidential are essential measures. The authenticity of any suspicious link, phone call, or message should be verified before trusting it. Promoting cybersecurity education in schools and colleges is also the need of the hour. In addition, cybercrimes must be reported to the concerned authorities without delay. The government should ensure effective laws, modern technological resources, and trained experts to strengthen cybersecurity. Increasing digital literacy among citizens can help raise awareness about cyber-crime. In India, cybercrime complaints can be filed through the National Cyber Crime Reporting Portal. In cases of financial cyber fraud, contacting the helpline number 1930 promptly is also important.

Ultimately, digital progress can be meaningful only when it is accompanied by security and responsibility. Cyber threats are not merely a technological problem but also a matter of social and national concern. Therefore, we must create a secure digital environment through vigilance, awareness, and collective efforts.

Starlink, India, And Why Elon Musk Must Know His Billionaire Tantrums Won't Work

HARSH V PANT

Elon Musk's public tirade against India's regulatory establishment is a revealing demonstration of the entitlement that increasingly characterises the world's most powerful technology billionaires. Frustrated by the delay in securing final approvals for Starlink's commercial launch in India, Musk has chosen to portray a sovereign government's regulatory process as an obstacle to technological progress and consumer welfare. His intervention reveals less about the merits of Starlink's application than about his own understanding of power, privilege, and market access.

The underlying message is difficult to miss. Musk appears to believe that because Starlink possesses advanced technology, operates across much of the world, and promises to connect underserved populations, India should expedite its entry on his terms. When New Delhi does not oblige, the implication is that the regulatory system must be dysfunctional or obstructive. This is a familiar playbook: elevate a commercial dispute into a moral crusade, cast the entrepreneur as the champion of ordinary citizens, and portray the host government as an impediment to progress. It may generate headlines and rally supporters on social media. It is no substitute for engaging with the sovereign requirements of the Indian state.

India must reject this framing unequivocally. Its regulatory institutions do not derive their legitimacy from Elon Musk's approval, nor do they require validation from a foreign billionaire who mistakes global commercial influence for political authority. India is an independent country, not a market in which powerful technology executives can demand preferential treatment and publicly pressure the government when they encounter regulatory resistance. The Indian government's response has been appropriately firm. The Ministry of Communications has maintained that the satellite communications authorisation framework is fair and non-discriminatory. Starlink, Reliance Jio's satellite business, and Bharti-backed Eutelsat OneWeb are broadly at the same regulatory stage, with mandatory security assessments still to be completed before spectrum can be assigned. Communications Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia has reiterated that India does not permit monopolies and that commercial operations can begin only after the necessary security requirements are met and spectrum charges are finalised. This is not an unreasonable position.

It is the basic responsibility of any government that takes national security seriously. If Musk believes that Starlink has fulfilled every requirement, he should demonstrate as much through the appropriate institutional channels. What he cannot reasonably expect is that India will dilute its regulatory standards because his company has a powerful global brand or because he can mobilise public opinion against the government. The presumption that India must accommodate Musk is itself the problem. India's economic rise has been accompanied by a growing determination to exercise control over the terms of its engagement with global capital and technology. The days when access to the Indian market could be treated as a concession extracted through diplomatic pressure or corporate lobbying are over. India welcomes investment, innovation, and competition, but it does so on the basis of its own laws, security requirements, and strategic priorities. Market size is not an invitation to disregard these conditions.

MANJEET SEHGAL

The AAP's narrative spins around the tenets of Sikhism and Sikh shrines, which make it mandatory to cover one's head and remove shoes while entering a gurdwara

Bangla Sahib Gurdwara Becomes New Battleground Ahead Of Punjab Polls

Religion is expected to be a major poll plank in the 2027 Punjab elections as issues like sacrilege, the controversial Jaagat Jot Sri Guru Granth Sahib Satkar (Amendment) Act, 2026, and Panthic politics were already dominating the election scene. The debate between AAP and BJP over the Bangla Sahib Gurdwara episode clearly shows that both the parties were bent on outdoing each other on Sikhism and the sanctity of gurdwaras and Guru Granth Sahib. More so because Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann, the AAP's chief ministerial face again, has been declared Guru Dokhi and has been pulled up by the Shri Akal Takht over the shortcomings in the law being enacted to prevent sacrilege.

Gurdwara Bangla Sahib has become the newest arena where the BJP and AAP are trading charges, with both parties clearly eyeing the political fallout in Punjab. What began as a law-and-order response to protesters who entered the complex has quickly been framed as a test of who can better claim to protect Sikh interests - and who can be painted as the greater threat to them.

Fuming after the recent CBI and ED raids, the fight moves to New Delhi as Bhagwant Mann tries to rake up the alleged police action inside the gurdwara complex. The AAP's narrative spins around the tenets of Sikhism and Sikh shrines, which make it mandatory to cover one's head and remove shoes while entering a gurdwara. The target is not BJP but the Delhi Police, which is controlled by the Union Home Ministry and not by the Delhi chief minister, the prerogative which AAP chief Arvind Kejriwal wanted to enjoy while heading the Delhi government. That's why the AAP leaders, including Bhagwant Mann and other Punjab party leaders, were trying to paint BJP as anti-Sikh and anti-



Punjab.

Bhagwant Mann not only condemned the Delhi Police action in strong terms but also targeted Union Home Minister Amit Shah, asking why he was in a hurry to send police to the gurdwara. Interestingly, he also reminded that Sikhism did not differentiate people based on caste and religion and everyone was welcome to take shelter in a gurdwara. Bhagwant Mann invoked principles such as the oneness of humanity and "Ik Onkar" to argue that the entry, with officers bare-headed and wearing boots, trampled the dignity of the shrine. He insisted the Sikh community would not forget what he described as a shameful act by the BJP.

The timing is hard to miss. Mann is the same chief minister who earlier faced sharp criticism and was summoned by the Akal Takht over remarks about gurdwara golaks. That episode had drawn accusations from the SGPC and others that he had questioned offerings. Mann had, however, called his own video clips fake and clarified his position before the Akal Takht secretariat. He was also declared Guru Dokhi for disrespecting Sikh Gurus and was now positioning

himself, and AAP, as the defender of the same institutions.

The AAP has used the Bangla Sahib episode to argue that the Centre and Delhi Police showed scant regard for Sikh religious practice, turning the entry into both a violation of sanctity and proof of continuing high-handedness. BJP leaders counter that the party is simply using the controversy to paper over its own problems in Punjab.

After the CBI and ED raids on offices and the booking of senior aides of Mann, the state government has been under sustained pressure over governance and law-and-order questions. Casting the Delhi incident as an assault on Sikh sentiment lets AAP present itself as the protector of the panth while shifting attention away from those cases and from protests already underway inside the state.

AAP leaders have kept up the attack. Spokesperson Baltej Pannu has demanded Home Minister Amit Shah's resignation over the decision to send police inside the Guru's house and has repeated the charge that the BJP has long shown hostility toward Sikhs. He has urged Akal Takht Jathedar Kuldeep Singh Gargaj to take the matter up with the

Ministry of Home Affairs. AAP MLA Baljinder Kaur has also joined the chorus, claiming the police action violated the sanctity of the place, that brutality was used against the youth who sought refuge, and that the episode has reopened old wounds linked to Operation Blue Star. Manjit Singh GK has asked who authorised the police to enter Bangla Sahib.

BJP leaders and Sikh figures close to the party have rejected any charge of violation of Sikh temple rules by cops, accusing AAP of deliberately turning the gurdwara into a protest site. Senior advocate HS Phoolka targeted Arvind Kejriwal and the party for bringing the protesters to the Gurudwara complex. Viral videos also bear testimony to it, as the protesters were seen holding placards, some standing with shoes and uncovered heads. Phoolka has called the sequence a pre-planned attempt to divert public attention from AAP's troubles in Punjab and has labelled what happened inside an act of sacrilege. Phoolka also claims the protesters ignored sevadars (the volunteers) who tried to stop them while demanding registration of a criminal case against AAP. Accordingly, the

DSGMC General Secretary Harmeet Singh Kalka, parroting Phoolka, has also objected, saying the Guru's house is a centre of faith, not a platform for political self-interest. At the same time, some hardline Sikhs have defended allowing the protesters in, arguing that the tradition of open doors and sewa has always welcomed people regardless of background. That split is now being watched closely in Punjab: one side treats shelter as consistent with Sikh history, the other insists a gurudwara must stay free of political activity.

Delhi Sikh Gurdwara Management Committee leaders, close to BJP leader Manjinder Singh Sirsa, have filed a police complaint against Kejriwal and other AAP leaders, citing disruption of the gurdwara's sanctity and the circulation of misleading videos. DSGMC and Delhi Police have said the videos were put out to create a false impression and that security personnel stayed in common transit areas without entering the main sanctum.

In another development, the Shiromani Akali Dal, which is desperately seeking re-stitching of an alliance with BJP, has been left embarrassed after party leader and MP Harsimrat Kaur Badal condemned the alleged police action against protesters near Gurdwara Bangla Sahib in Delhi on social media but later deleted the post. Reports from the ground say the gurdwara management barred cops from the main premises, and police remained in the outer areas. Even so, the political use of the incident has already spread. In Punjab, both parties are now mobilising Sikh opinion, each trying to cast the other as the greater danger to religious dignity. The argument over whether a place of worship can also serve as a protest shelter is unlikely to fade quickly - especially when both sides see it as useful ground for the next election.

India must stay engaged with the US

C UDAY BHASKAR

Rubio's upcoming visit will be a reality check on the trajectory of the troubled relationship

THE India-US relationship is going through a turbulent phase, but this is not something new. The world's largest and oldest democracies have a history of bitter estrangement and prickly engagement over the decades. Currently, a number of contentious issues need to be addressed.

US Secretary of State Marco Rubio is scheduled to arrive in New Delhi on October 19; the visit is aimed at emphasising the strength of the partnership. US officials have described India as one of America's most important strategic partners/allies, citing President Donald Trump's relationship with Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

On the ground, the picture is more opaque. In Jodhpur last week, six US F-35As flew for the first time as part of Exercise Tarang Shakti 2026 with around 200 American personnel, the first such deployment. At the closing press conference, Air Chief Marshal AP Singh, when asked if Washington had offered the F-35, replied with a remark that made headlines: "Your people don't even let us go near the aircraft, and you are talking about selling it to us."

The IAF Chief clarified that no formal offer had been made, despite what President Trump had said earlier in the year, while the visiting US defence officer, Gen Kevin Schneider, indicated that current classification guides prevented closer cockpit access. This vignette captures the current India-US moment: high symbolism, low transfer. Three



tracks form the core of the bilateral and all of them are under stress. On the official Track 1, the language has moved from "strategic partner" to "indentured servants". On October 8, at a White House Task Force to Eliminate Fraud press meet, US Vice President JD Vance announced the suspension of eight firms from green card sponsorship under the Permanent Labour Certification (PERM) programme. TCS, Infosys, Wipro, HCLTech, Cognizant, Capgemini, Microsoft and Adobe. He disparagingly said the US could not lay off American workers and then replace them with foreign indentured servants.

The response of India's Ministry of External Affairs on October 9 was unusually sharp: "We believe that such descriptions are unwarranted and ignore

the fact that Indian professionals in the United States are highly educated and skilled contributors to its economy." It added, "Resorting to terminology that carries painful historical and colonial legacy connotations is deeply offensive." The semantic choice matters. Roughly 70 per cent of the recent H-1B visa approvals have gone to Indians who enter the US workforce as highly skilled human resources. Calling them "indentured" in 2026 reopens a historical chapter in a callous manner. Washington may say that India is among its strongest partners, but its Vice President is using the vocabulary of the plantation for the partnership that built Silicon Valley. The second strand is the statutory sword. On September 18, President Trump signed the

SRIA (Sanctioning Russia and Iran Act), which authorises tariffs up to 100% on top importers of Russian oil and gas. India, which bought roughly 2.1 million barrels per day from Russia in August, is squarely in the US crosshairs. On the sidelines of the UN General Assembly in New York last month, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar told Rubio precisely this: "Reiterated India's interests and concerns with regard to SRIA. Also discussed the Gulf and Ukraine situations." Rubio's readout omitted SRIA and spoke of "building on the US-India strategic partnership."

That asymmetry and the irony that the US has now concluded a diesel supply arrangement with Russia (with temporary sanctions relief) have compelled New Delhi to caution

Washington that the use of SRIA against India could affect bilateral ties. Yet this US law now hangs like the sword of Damocles not imposed, but usable at any moment to exert pressure on Delhi over energy. SRIA is bipartisan, backed by Congress, and it signals a structural shift in Washington from strategic altruism to economic nationalism.

With the Red Sea and Strait of Hormuz disruptions already squeezing Saudi supplies, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman admitted what the industry already knew: India-US trade talks have "reached a plateau." The third track is military hardware, which was seen as an indicator of the relationship's robustness, but is a case of high on joint exercise and low on critical technology transfer. Admiral Samuel Paparo, Commander of the US Indo-Pacific Command, recently concluded a six-day India visit, his second this year. He said military ties would remain insulated from trade friction, but the reality is that equipment and tech transfer remains sluggish.

The GE F-414 engine co-production for LCA Mk2/AMCA (advanced medium combat aircraft) is at the commercial/negotiations stage three years after the 2023 announcement. The MQ-9B, Stryker and P-8I procurement is progressing, but at a bureaucratic pace, even as China has reportedly discussed or offered around 40 J-35 stealth fighters to Pakistan.

IIFL Finance recognised as one of 'ET Edge Iconic Brands of India 2026'

MUMBAI (AGENCY)

IIFL Finance, one of India's leading non-banking financial companies, has been recognised among 'Iconic Brands of India 2026' by ET Edge. The honour recognises IIFL Finance's journey in building a household brand in financial services, anchored in trust, transparency and a deep connection with customers across India's towns and villages.

Founded by Mr Nirmal Jain, IIFL Finance, together with its subsidiaries IIFL Home Finance and IIFL Samasta Finance, offers gold loans, home loans, MSME and business loans, and microfinance to retail customers across India. As of 30 June 2026, its consolidated assets under management stood at ₹1,15,523 crore, up 38% year-on-year, with 96.7% of AUM in its core retail businesses. The



company has a wide network of over 4,900 branches and continues to expand deeper into semi-urban and rural India.

In non-banking finance, trust is the deciding factor. A customer pledging the family's gold, or a first-time homebuyer signing a loan agreement, is making a deeply personal decision. IIFL Finance has built its

brand around earning that trust, especially among small entrepreneurs, women borrowers and families in smaller towns who have historically had limited access to formal credit.

Speaking on the recognition, Mr Manav Verma, Chief Marketing Officer, IIFL Group said, "This honour belongs to our customers, the small entrepreneurs, homebuyers and families across India's towns and

IIFL Finance has built its brand around earning that trust, especially among small entrepreneurs, women borrowers and families in smaller towns who have historically had limited access to formal credit

every branch and on every platform. From clear loan terms to quick disbursements and respectful service, 'Seedhi Baat' has helped IIFL Finance become the lender of first choice for millions of unbanked and underbanked Indians.

Speaking on the recognition, Mr Manav Verma, Chief Marketing Officer, IIFL Group said, "This honour belongs to our customers, the small entrepreneurs, homebuyers and families across India's towns and

villages who trust us with their dreams every day. When a customer seeks a loan, it is an emotional decision, not just a transaction. Building an iconic brand in financial services means honouring that trust every single time. At IIFL Finance, 'Seedhi Baat' is not just a slogan. It is how we work: honest, simple and transparent, at every branch and on every platform. We are increasingly using AI to make every customer interaction faster, simpler and more personal, while keeping the human touch that our customers value." Mr Sourav Mishra, Head of Corporate Communications, IIFL Group added, "This recognition also belongs to our employees, whose straightforward, transparent and supportive approach makes IIFL Finance the lender of first choice for so many unbanked and underbanked Indians.

Achyuta Samanta Elected First President of Indian UniSport Federation

BHUBANESWAR (AGENCY)

Noted educationist, social reformer and Founder of KIIT and KISS, Dr. Achyuta Samanta (<https://achyuta-samanta.com/>), has been unanimously elected the first President of the Indian UniSport Federation (IUSF) at its inaugural Annual General Meeting here on Sunday. Addressing the members after his election, he called for collective efforts to prepare Indian athletes for the upcoming Commonwealth Games in India and urged all stakeholders to work together to realise the Prime Minister's vision for sports development in the country. Recognised by the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports, the Federation aims to strengthen university sports, promote transpar-



ent governance and create greater opportunities for young athletes across the country. His election recognises his significant contribution to university sports through KIIT where he has championed a model integrating education, sporting excellence and athlete welfare. Under his leadership, the institutions have developed a comprehensive sports ecosystem featuring more than 30 sports facilities, professional coaching, sports science, nutrition, medical care and rehabilitation support. As many as 24

KIIT and KISS athletes have represented India at the Olympic Games, Asian Games, Commonwealth Games and World University Games. KIIT has also served as India's nodal university for the World University Games since Napoli 2019. More recently, 54 students from KIIT and KISS represented India at the 20th Asian Games held in Aichi-Nagoya, Japan. The participation of such a large contingent from a single Indian university was a significant achievement.

Ekya Vana Early Years Opens in Haralur with Its Third Nature-Based Campus in Bengaluru

BENGALURU (AGENCY)

Ekya Vana Early Years, the nature-based preschool and daycare programme from Ekya Schools, will welcome its first cohort at its Haralur campus on October 21, 2026. Admissions are open for children aged 18 months to 6 years. Spread across 10,000 sq. ft., the campus features a mini-forest, a butterfly garden and indoor and outdoor spaces designed to bring nature into children's learning experiences. Haralur is the programme's third Bengaluru campus, following its centres in RMV Sanjay Nagar and Manyata Tech Park. The campus extends Ekya Vana Early Years' nature-based approach to early childhood education in south-east



Bengaluru.

The campus landscape includes mango, guava, chikoo, banana, coconut and pomegranate trees, alongside a butterfly garden where children can observe and engage with the natural environment. Spaces such as the mud kitchen, nature workshop, eco lab and indoor atelier support hands-on exploration, creative expression and learning through experience.

As part of its planned eco-initiatives, the campus will also introduce a biopond. Once developed, it will give children opportunities to observe fish and explore how aquatic life interacts with plants and other elements of an ecosystem, helping them understand how different living things depend on one another. At the heart of the programme is Earth Sense, an approach rooted in the belief that

children are part of the natural world. Through its People & Planet and Earth Care pathways, Ekya Vana Early Years encourages children to explore their relationship with nature. The programme aims to make sustainability tangible through observation, inquiry and hands-on experiences, helping children understand how living systems are connected and why care for the environment matters.

"At Ekya Vana Early Years, we want children to grow up seeing nature not as something outside their lives, but as part of the world they belong to. In the early years, even simple experiences of observing a butterfly, exploring soil or noticing how plants grow can shape the way children relate to their surroundings.

Companies shift to bank loans as bond costs rise, driving 81% share of fresh credit : Jefferies

NEW DELHI (AGENCY)

Indian companies are increasingly turning to banks for loans as borrowing through bonds becomes more expensive, with banks accounting for 81 per cent of fresh credit between November 2025 and August 2026, according to a Jefferies research report.

The shift towards bank financing has helped accelerate bank credit growth to 18 per cent year-on-year in August, compared with 10 per cent growth in non-bank credit, as companies increasingly rely on banks to meet their financing requirements. The report stated, "Banks have gained market share (73% share in stock of Nov & 81% of Nov-Aug flow), aiding growth uptick to 18% with 22%



growth in corporate credit led by NBFC, trade, power etc." Jefferies noted that companies are shifting towards bank loans as borrowing through corporate bonds, commercial paper and external sources becomes relatively more expensive. It said, "Corporate sectors with high working capital

and/or bond-market dependence turn to banks for credit needs."

According to the report, overall credit growth across banks and other financing sources improved to 16 per cent in August 2026, while non-bank credit growth slowed from 12 per cent in November 2025 to 10 per cent in August

2026. The shift was particularly visible in corporate borrowing, where bank credit growth accelerated from 11 per cent in November 2025 to 22 per cent in August 2026.

Corporate loans accounted for around 58 per cent of incremental bank lending between November 2025 and August 2026, compared with their 52 per cent share in outstanding bank loans at the beginning of the period. The report identified non-banking financial companies (NBFCs), wholesale trade, commercial real estate, power and chemicals among the sectors witnessing stronger demand for bank loans. Bank lending to NBFCs grew 37 per cent year-on-year in August, while credit to wholesale trade increased 26 per cent.

WPI inflation rises to 11.39% in September on rise in prices of food, fuel, manufactured items

NEW DELHI (AGENCY)

India's wholesale price-based inflation rose to 11.39 per cent in September, compared to 9.92 per cent in August, on rising prices of food, manufactured items, and fuel and power, government data showed on Wednesday. Inflation in the food index rose to 8.66 per cent in September from 7.05 per cent in August. In manufactured items, WPI inflation was at a series high of 9.76 per cent, higher than 8.37 per cent in August. In the fuel and power basket, Wholesale Price Index (WPI)-based inflation was 25.85 per cent in September, compared to 22.93 per cent in the previous month. Across groups, mineral oils (containing petroleum products), food



articles, crude petroleum & natural gas, coal and lignite, manufacture of basic metals, chemicals and chemical products, textiles, rubber and plastic products and electrical equipment have been drivers of WPI inflation in September 2026, the Commerce and Industry ministry said while releasing the WPI data. The WPI has been on an upward trajectory since the beginning of this fiscal year as the West Asia war and the resultant blockade of the Strait of Hormuz, through which the majority of crude oil is imported into India, pushed up global crude and fertiliser costs with a spillover effect on food and commodity prices.

Capt. Sumit Appointed Chairman of Foreign Affairs Committee of Paralympic Committee of India

NEW DELHI (AGENCY)

Capt. Sumit Yadav, an international relations professional, strategic affairs advisor and sports administration leader, has been appointed Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Paralympic Committee of India (PCI). His appointment is expected to support India's international engagement in para-sports by fostering global partnerships, strengthening institutional cooperation and creating new opportunities for Indian para-athletes.

With professional experience spanning international affairs, strategic consultancy, global institutional relations and sports administration, Capt. Yadav brings a multidisciplinary background to his new responsibility. His focus will be on developing meaningful relationships with international sports federations,



Paralympic institutions, diplomatic missions, corporations and development organisations to support the long-term growth of India's para-sports ecosystem. Capt. Yadav has developed an international professional network through diplomatic engagements, parliamentary interactions, global conferences and

institutional collaborations across Europe, Russia, the Gulf region, Africa and South Asia. A notable aspect of his international experience is his participation on four occasions in Youth Assembly events held at the United Nations Headquarters in New York, where he engaged with international delegates,

emerging global leaders and representatives of institutions from various countries. He also participated as an international observer during the Russian Parliamentary Elections in Moscow in September 2021. His involvement in international conferences, diplomatic forums and strategic initiatives has contributed to his exposure to multilateral dialogue, international policy discussions and cross-border cooperation. Throughout his professional journey, Capt. Yadav has held several international leadership and advisory positions, including Head of Diplomatic Relations at the Confederation of Young Leaders (CYL), Consultant to the BRICS Chamber of Commerce & Industry (BRICS CCI), Steering Committee Member of BRICS CCI Young Leaders, and Advisor to the Indian Institute of Governance and Leadership (IIGL).

NVIDIA to invest USD 250 million in UK AI safety research over five years

NEW DELHI (AGENCY)

NVIDIA has announced a USD 250 million investment over five years to strengthen artificial intelligence (AI) safety and security research in the United Kingdom, according to a statement by the company. Under the initiative, NVIDIA will provide USD 50 million annually in computing resources to support research on agentic AI safety and security across the UK. Most of the funding will support the wider AI research community, while a portion will be allocated to the British Open-Ended Learning and Discovery Lab (BOLD), the Science of Fundamental AI Research Lab (SOFAIR) and Imperial College London. The company said the computing resources would be dedicated to research aimed at improving the safety and security of agen-



tic AI systems, which can perform tasks and take actions with a degree of autonomy. "AI capability and safety must advance together," said Jensen Huang, founder and CEO of NVIDIA. He added that the UK has strong scientific expertise in AI research and that the investment would help researchers develop, test and improve safeguards for increasingly powerful AI systems. The initiative will bring together research institutions working on different aspects of AI safety and development. BOLD, led by the University of Oxford, is developing approaches to help AI systems learn, adapt and work alongside people.

Omaxe hosts sufi night at the forest spa, noida, celebrating its enduring bond with Residents

NEW DELHI (AGENCY)

Omaxe Ltd, one of India's leading real estate developers, recently organised a Sufi Night at The Forest Spa, Sector 93B, Noida, bringing together around 500 attendees for an evening of music and community engagement. Featuring a live performance by Aditi Sharma, the invite-only event celebrated the enduring relationship between Omaxe and the residents of The Forest Spa, reflecting a community bond that continues years after the project's delivery.



with its residents highlights how a development can evolve beyond a residential address into a community built on shared experiences and lasting relationships.

Commenting on the occasion, Mr. Mohit Goel, Managing Director, Omaxe Limited, said, "For us, delivering a project is only one

part of our relationship with the people who choose to make it their home. The real measure of a development lies in the community it nurtures and the relationships that endure over time. The Forest Spa holds a special place in Omaxe's journey, and it is heartening to see this bond with its resi-

dents remain strong years after delivery. We believe our responsibility extends beyond creating spaces to fostering communities that continue to connect, engage and grow together."

The Sufi Night reflected this philosophy by bringing residents together through a shared cultural experience. Such engagements form part of Omaxe's broader approach to nurturing meaningful relationships with its communities, reinforcing the belief that the value of a development extends beyond its physical infrastructure to the experiences and connections it enables over the years. Through initiatives such as these, Omaxe continues to recognise the importance of resident engagement and community building as enduring aspects of its relationship with homeowners.

FM Nirmala Sitharaman embarks on five-day visit to Bangkok for IMF-World Bank meetings from October 14 to 18

NEW DELHI (AGENCY)

Union Minister for Finance and Corporate Affairs Nirmala Sitharaman on Wednesday leaves for Bangkok, Thailand, on an official five-day tour to attend the annual meetings of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank Group.

According to the Ministry of Finance, the official engagements will run from October 14 to 18 and feature high-level discussions alongside meetings of the G20 and G7 Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors. During the visit, the Union Finance Minister will participate in an extensive series of multilateral



forums addressing pressing international financial developments. The sessions will center on "key global economic and financial issues, including current economic developments and financial sector issues," the ministry stated. The ministry noted that these deliberations serve a broader strategic purpose for par-

ticipating nations.

"These engagements will provide an opportunity to exchange perspectives on the global economic outlook, development priorities and international financial cooperation," the statement said. On the bilateral front, Sitharaman is scheduled to hold discussions with Thailand's Deputy Prime

Minister and Minister of Finance Eknit Nitthanprapas. Her diplomatic schedule also includes direct meetings with the finance ministers of Switzerland, Japan, Luxembourg, Bhutan, and Curaçao. In addition to ministerial dialogues, Sitharaman will also meet with IMF Managing Director Kristalina Georgieva and with the Governor of the Japan Bank for International Cooperation. Beyond inter-governmental and institutional dialogues, Sitharaman will take part in specialized stakeholder events involving international policymakers and financial institutions.

Cartoons not only make the society aware but also inspire them to think and introspect : CM

CM Sai participated in Cartoon Festival-2026, congratulated Cartoon Watch magazine on completing 30 years

RAIPUR: OPEN SEARCH

Cartoons are not just a medium of humor and entertainment, but a powerful mirror of democracy and society. They are an effective creative medium that easily conveys serious issues, social situations, and discrepancies to the public through humor and satire. Sometimes, what would be difficult to express in thousands of words, a powerful cartoon expresses with great simplicity and depth. Cartoons not only make people laugh but also inspire them to think, understand, and introspect. Chief Minister Shri Vishnudev Sai stated this while addressing the Cartoon Festival-2026 organized by Cartoon Watch magazine in the capital, Raipur.

Chief Minister Shri Vishnudev Sai said that art and literature are carriers of any society's consciousness. Cartoons are a unique art form, showcasing a wonderful combination of images,



ideas, humor, and satire. With their keen observation and creative vision, a cartoonist gives social events a form that remains in people's memory for a long time. In a democratic system, cartoons are also a powerful medium for expressing public sentiments, public expectations, and social concerns.

Referring to the rich tradition of Indian cartoon art, the Chief Minister recalled the contributions of the legendary cartoonist R.K. Laxman. He said that R.K. Laxman's famous

"Common Man" became not just a cartoon character, but also a symbol of the hopes, aspirations, curiosities, and concerns of the common citizen of the country. The powerful way in which he expressed the changing social conditions of India after independence is an invaluable legacy of Indian journalism and cartoon art.

Chief Minister Shri Vishnudev Sai commended the efforts to promote cartoon art in various regions of the state, including Bastar, and said that this is providing talents from remote

Young cartoonists should give new wings to their creativity and bring glory to Chhattisgarh at national and international level : Chief Minister sai

areas with the opportunity to showcase their creativity and connect with this art form. He congratulated and wished renowned cartoonist Shri Abhishek Tiwari of Jaipur on being honored with the Lifetime Achievement Award at the Cartoon Festival 2026.

The Chief Minister said that recognizing an artist's long-term dedication and creative contribution is a tribute to the entire art form and inspires the new generation to strive for excellence.

Chief Minister Shri Sai, while appealing to young cartoonists, said that the new generation has immense potential in terms

of talent, imagination, and technology. The expansion of digital media has provided new platforms for creative expression. Young artists should utilize these opportunities while maintaining their originality and creative vision and bring glory to Chhattisgarh at the national and international levels. Chief Minister Shri Sai said that Chhattisgarh is known for its rich art, culture, literature, and creative traditions. The state government is committed to preserving and promoting these traditions and encouraging artists and creators. Events like the Cartoon Festival strengthen the creative dialogue between art and society by bringing together the experience of established artists and the energy of young talent. During the event, a cartoon coffee table book based on the personality, leadership, and service journey of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi was also released under the Seva Sankalp Abhiyan.

Saligao waste plant suspends waste intake from 8 local bodies for 25 days

PANAJI : OPEN SEARCH

Goa Waste Management Corporation (GWMC) on Tuesday temporarily suspended the acceptance of municipal solid waste (MSW) from two municipal councils and six village panchayats at the Saligao solid waste management facility for 25 days due to maintenance work.

The facility will continue to process 100 tonnes per day (TPD), down from its usual capacity of 150 TPD. In a letter, GWMC informed Mapusa and Mormugao municipal councils and the village panchayats of Chimbél, Santa Cruz, Corlim, Curca, Old Goa and Mercês that waste from these local bodies would not be accepted during this period.

However, the facility will continue to accept waste from coastal village panchayats and those located around the plant.

"It is hereby informed that the Saligao SWMF is presently facing major maintenance requirements along with certain unforeseen operational condi-



tions, which have affected the normal functioning and processing capacity of the facility. In view of the prevailing circumstances, it has become necessary to temporarily regulate the receipt of waste at the facility to ensure safe and effective operation of the plant and to avoid any further operational complications or damage to the equipment," GWMC managing director Harish Adconkar said.

He said the corporation was constrained to suspend waste acceptance from the eight local bodies with immediate effect from Oct 10 for 25 days, during which maintenance work and cor-

rective measures would be undertaken to restore normal operations.

"You are therefore requested to make suitable alternative arrangements for the management and processing of the waste generated within your jurisdiction during this period, so as to ensure that there is no accumulation, uncontrolled disposal or littering of waste," Adconkar said. GWMC will issue further instructions on the resumption of waste acceptance at the facility after the maintenance work is completed and normal operations are restored, he said.

Bhattyat to get Rs 900 crore jal shakti projects: himachal speaker kuldeep singh pathania

DHARAMSALA (AGENCY)

Around Rs 900 crore will be spent on various Jal Shakti Department projects in the Bhattyat Assembly constituency by June 2027, Vidhan Sabha Speaker Kuldeep Singh Pathania said on Tuesday.

He was addressing a public meeting at Kaithli village after inaugurating a newly constructed drinking water scheme at Malunda gram panchayat. Pathania said the government was giving priority to strengthening essential infrastructure, including roads, drinking water, education, electricity, healthcare and social services. He said the proposed expenditure would cover drinking water supply, irrigation, sewerage, flood control and fire services. Of this, projects worth



Rs 175 crore had been completed in the past four years, while work on projects worth Rs 365 crore was in progress. Proposals for additional projects worth Rs 534 crore had also been approved, he added. The Speaker said efforts were being made to ensure that the benefits of government schemes reached remote areas and the most disadvantaged sections of society. Responding to the demands raised by the panchayat, he assured residents that their concerns would be considered sympathetically and addressed at the earliest.

Surveillance heightened along border in Kashmir after LoC mine blast, terror hideout busted

JAMMU (AGENCY)

Security forces have enhanced surveillance along the Line of Control (LoC) and the International Border (IB) in Jammu and Kashmir following the killing of four suspected infiltrators in a landmine blast in the Krishna Ghati sector of Poonch on Monday. Amid the heightened alert, security forces on Tuesday busted a terror hideout in the Surankote area of Poonch district and recovered a cache of arms, ammunition and other supplies. The hideout was unearthed during a joint operation by the Army and Jammu and Kashmir Police in the Satharban forest area following reports of suspicious movement. The recovered material included an AK-47 rifle, a magazine, 30 rounds of ammunition, six hand grenades and medical supplies. Police have launched an investigation to



ascertain the source of the arms and supplies. Security agencies suspect that Over Ground Workers (OGWs) may have facilitated the movement of essential items to Pakistani terrorists operating from remote forested areas in the Jammu region. Meanwhile, search operations were conducted in the higher reaches of Udhampur and Kathua districts following intelligence inputs about the presence of armed terrorists. Army, police and CRPF personnel

are participating in the operation. Security has also been stepped up along the border. While the Army has intensified surveillance along the LoC in Rajouri and Poonch districts, the BSF has sounded a high alert along the International Border in Jammu, Samba and Kathua districts. Officials said militants often attempt to infiltrate through lower-altitude routes as snowfall begins to close higher mountain passes in

Jammu and Kashmir.

As part of preventive security measures, Samba Police and the BSF conducted a joint road march in the Ghagwal area on Tuesday to assess preparedness and maintain a visible security presence in the border belt. "The joint exercise was undertaken to strengthen security arrangements, ensure effective surveillance of sensitive stretches along the border and review ground-level deployment of personnel," an official said.

Senior Superintendent of Police, Samba, Anuj Kumar said such coordinated exercises enhance operational synergy among security agencies, improve communication and ensure a swift response to emerging security challenges. He added that Samba Police was working in close coordination with other security forces to safeguard the border belt and ensure public safety.

Assam BJP wants SIR every 5 years, says state minister, explains why

GUWAHATI (AGENCY)

Assam Cabinet Minister Jayanta Malla Baruah has called for a Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls every five years, saying the exercise is necessary to ensure that no foreign national's name remains on the state's voter list while speaking exclusively.

Speaking at the Jan Jagaran Samdal rally in Nalbari, Assam on Tuesday, Baruah also targeted Congress leader Rahul Gandhi over the opposition's allegations concerning electronic voting machines (EVMs) and its demand for a return to ballot paper voting. "Everyone wants an SIR in Assam. Not a single foreigner's name should remain on Assam's voter list," Baruah said.



Referring to Assam's six-year-long agitation against illegal immigration, the minister argued that the state had particular reasons to scrutinise electoral rolls. Baruah also accused the Congress of blaming EVMs for its electoral defeats and referred to Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma's recent remarks challenging the opposition to contest elections using ballot papers.

"Congress never stands with the public, which is why they keep losing. And after losing, they blame EVMs, sometimes ballot

papers, or make other excuses," he said. The minister's remarks come amid an ongoing political debate over electoral integrity, voter lists and the Opposition's allegations against the election process.

The Nalbari rally, which organisers said drew more than 30,000 people, also saw young men and women expressing support for the BJP-led governments at the Centre and in Assam. Baruah claimed that young people and women were coming forward to support the government's position on national issues. He also criticised groups that had opposed the Citizenship (Amendment) Act (CAA), alleging that they were working against the country's interests.

Sikh bodies observe 'Lahnat Diwas' in Kotkapura, hand 'Sharam Patra' to Punjab Speaker Sandhwan

KOTKAPURA (AGENCY)

Eleven years after the 2015 sacrilege incidents and the police firing at Behbal Kalan and Kotkapura, Sikh organisations today observed a "Lahnat Diwas" (day of condemnation) at the main chowk here, accusing successive governments, including the present AAP dispensation, of failing to deliver justice.

The event was led by Bhai Harjinder Singh Majhi, head of Darbar-e-Khalsa and a Sikh preacher. Punjab Vidhan Sabha Speaker Kuldar Singh Sandhwan, Congress MLA Sukhpal Singh Khaira, Kotkapura Congress leader Ajaypal Singh Sandhu and representatives of various Sikh bodies attended. Majhi read



out a 10-page "Sharam Patra" (letter of shame), addressed to Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann, and handed a copy to Sandhwan for the government.

The letter, dated October 14, 2026, and signed by Majhi and Darbar-e-Khalsa chief spokesperson Harpinder Singh Kotkapura, says the organisation observes the day every year

to mark the October 14, 2015 police action at Kotkapura and Behbal Kalan. On the sacrilege cases, the letter accuses the Mann government of forgetting the issue after coming to power. It says retired IG Kunwar Vijay Pratap Singh, who investigated the cases under the previous government, was used as a "brand" to win power, and

Punjab Vidhan Sabha Speaker Kuldar Singh Sandhwan, Congress MLA Sukhpal Singh Khaira, Kotkapura Congress leader Ajaypal Singh Sandhu and representatives of various Sikh bodies attended

that he was later denied time to speak on the issue in the Assembly despite repeated requests. Citing the Justice Ranjit Singh Commission and the SIT led by RS Khatra, the letter claims the probe findings point to the involvement of the Dera Sacha Sauda. It alleges the government withheld sanction for two years to name the Dera

chief in the charge sheet. It also says approver Pradeep Kaler's statements named Gurmmeet Ram Rahim and Honeypreet, yet no action has followed. The government's inaction, it says, suggests either that someone close to it is involved or that it has struck a "deal" with the accused.

It further accuses the government of staying silent on the accused's plea to shift the district court cases out of Punjab, and says named accused Harsh Dhuri and Sandeep Bareta remain beyond the law's reach. It takes issue with the Speaker's earlier statement in the Assembly that the case was held up because the accused got bail, saying bail does not bar investigators from probing.

Analysis : Killing Of Anti-Drug Activists Highlights A Bigger Problem In Punjab

CHANDIGARH (AGENCY)

Recent attacks on anti-drug vigilantes and activists, besides the cops, have shone a spotlight on the loopholes in the AAP government's high-decibel 'Yudh Nasheyan Virudh' campaign. Those raising their voice against the free flow of drugs are not only being silenced by the deep-rooted drug mafia but also allegedly by the state police officials. This has cast a shadow over the government's much-publicised war on drugs.

The latest incident, which questions the widespread corruption in the state's health and police



departments and has shell-shocked the entire state, has been reported in Mansa. Drug addict turned anti-drug activist Parvinder Singh Jhota was shot dead in broad daylight not by the drug peddler of the mafia but by a pharmacy shop owner who was openly selling drugs. He is not the only pharmacist found selling illegal drugs; dozens of others were arrested on similar charges in the past. The

infamous Neha Shoree murder by a Mohali pharmacist in 2029 is still fresh as the family continues to fight the same in court. Parvinder Singh Jhota, just moments before he was killed, had gone live on social media, confronting the accused pharmacist over the alleged open sale of banned synthetic drugs. What followed was not just a heated argument, but a brutal execution. Bullets

tore through him, leaving him dead on the floor and injuring four others.

The victim Jhota was keeping an eye on the pharmacist and had paraded him publicly with a shoe garland in 2023 when he was found selling banned drugs. Surprisingly, it was n't local police or the health department officials but an activist who got an FIR registered against the accused. Punjab Finance Minister Harpal Singh Cheema, himself accused of silencing another activist, Gulzar, in his own constituency, condemned the incident but said it was 'personal rivalry' that led to the incident.

Provide jobs to eligible families displaced due to Nathpa & Baspa power projects : Himachal minister

SHIMLA (AGENCY)

Himachal Revenue Minister Jagat Singh Negi, who is also the Chairman of the Nathpa-Jhakri Hydroelectric Project and Baspa Project Displaced and Relief and Rehabilitation Committee, chaired a meeting at Reckong Peo in Kinnaur district on Tuesday regarding the rehabilitation and resettlement of the families displaced by both projects. He directed the project managements and officials concerned to ensure necessary action to provide employment to the eligible members of such families based on their qualifications. During the meeting,



discussions were held regarding various problems of the families of the areas affected by the projects and pending cases as well.

The minister said that it was essential to protect the interests of the project-affected families and ensure an effective implementation of provisions related to rehabilitation and resettlement. He directed the officials concerned to take necessary action in the cases of

the eligible families having less than five bighas under rehabilitation and resettlement, so that appropriate steps could be taken towards providing them with land to take them out of the category of the landless, as per the prescribed provisions.

He also directed the officials to release the remaining amount of Rs 1.50 crore for the Nathpa link road within a month. He asked

the SJVN to provide a complete breakdown of the employment provided to the families displaced by the project since 2004 within a week so that the actual situation could be assessed.

The minister expressed displeasure over the absence of competent officials at the meeting. He directed them to explain the reasons for their absence. He stated that the presence of the officials concerned was essential in meetings on important matters involving project-affected families, so that effective discussions could be held to address issues and timely action could be taken to resolve them.

Australia's Renshaw, Hazlewood rise in latest ICC Test rankings, Iyer reaches career-high 4th in T20

NEW DELHI (AGENCY)

Australia's Matthew Renshaw and Josh Hazlewood have made significant gains in the latest ICC Men's Test Player Rankings following their team's victory over South Africa in Durban, while India's Shreyas Iyer has climbed to a career-best fourth place in the T20I batting rankings. Renshaw scored 190 in the first innings of the Durban Test and followed it with 82 in the second, helping Australia take control of the match and lifting the left-hander from outside the top 100 to joint 49th in the Test batting rankings, according to the ICC website. Australia's Marnus Labuschagne also improved four places to 34th, while South Africa opener Aiden Markram moved up four spots to joint 10th.



Australian pacer Josh Hazlewood climbed two places to seventh in the Test bowling rankings after returning career-best figures of 6/49 on the final day. Teammate Mitchell Starc continues to lead the list of Test bowlers. South Africa's Anrich Nortje has returned to the Test bowling rankings at 34th following

his first red-ball appearance in more than three years. India's Ravindra Jadeja continues to lead the Test all-rounder rankings. South Africa's Wiaan Mulder rose one place to fourth, while Simon Harmer moved up five spots to joint 23rd. The one-off Test between Afghanistan and Bangladesh in Abu Dhabi,

T20I batting rankings. Renshaw scored 190 in the first innings of the Durban Test and followed it with 82 in the second, helping Australia take control of the match and lifting the left-hander from outside the top 100 to joint 49th in the Test batting rankings

which ended in a draw, also brought changes to the rankings. Afghanistan's Rahmat Shah climbed 13 places to 13th in the batting rankings, while Bangladesh's Litton Das rose three spots to joint 29th. Bangladesh pacer Hasan Mahmud moved up seven places to 38th in the bowling rankings after tak-

ing a hat-trick and claiming five wickets in the match. There was also movement in the latest ICC Men's T20I Player Rankings, with India's Shreyas Iyer reaching a career-high fourth place among batters after a strong start to the five-match home series against the West Indies.

Iyer scored his maiden T20I century in the series opener in Lucknow, moving up three places. His rise means India now have three players in the top four of the T20I batting rankings, with Ishan Kishan at the top and Abhishek Sharma second. Pakistan captain Sahibzada Farhan occupies third place after reaching a career-best rating following his performance against Sri Lanka. Other batters to improve their positions include Sri Lanka's Kusal Mendis, who rose three places to 23rd.

Shikhar Dhawan threatens legal action after being included in tournament without consent

NEW DELHI (AGENCY)

Former Indian cricketer Shikhar Dhawan on Wednesday said that the organisers of the World T20 Continent Cup had used his name as a participant without his permission, adding that his team would take appropriate legal steps to address the matter. In an X post on Tuesday, Dhawan alleged that the organisers had used his name without his knowledge or permission and said his team would take legal action, urging the media and fans not to rely on "unauthorised announcements." "I have come across my name as a participant in the World T20 Continent Cup. My name has been used by the organisers without my knowledge or permission,



and my team will be taking the appropriate legal steps to address this. I request the media and my fans to not report or rely on any unauthorised announcements. Thank you for your continued love and support." Dhawan said. I have come across my name as a participant in the World T20 Continent Cup. My name has been used by the organisers without my

knowledge or permission, and my team will be taking the appropriate legal steps to address this. I request the media and my fans to not report or rely on any unauthorised announcements. Thank you for your continued love and support. ?? In 167 ODI appearances, the southpaw produced some extraordinary performances and racked up 6,793 runs at an average of 44.1, including 17 centuries and 39 fifties. In the longest format of cricket, Dhawan garnered 2,315 runs in 34 matches at an average of 40.6.

His Test career was laced with seven tons and five half-centuries. In the T20I format, Dhawan made 68 appearances and scored 1,759 runs at an average of 27.9, including 11 fifties.

UEFA Champions League: 10-men United fall 2-0 to Atleti, Viking hold Bayern to 3-3 draw

MADRID (AGENCY)

Manchester United's 2026/27 season is turning out to be a disaster after the club showed promise following Michael Carrick taking the helm of the club in January, as it faced another loss on Tuesday (local time). In its first away fixture for this season's UEFA Champions League at the Estadio Metropolitano stadium, the Red Devils were handed a 2-0 defeat by Atletico Madrid, causing the club more misery as it also struggles domestically. Pablo Barrios scored inside the opening minute for Atletico



before substitute Ademola Lookman sealed the victory late in the second half. Barrios capitalised on an early lapse in Manchester United's defence to put Atletico ahead within the first 60 seconds of the match. Despite the initial

shock of conceding so early, United pushed for an equaliser, with Bryan Mbeumo leading the attack on most occasions without any significant result.

The hosts controlled much of the first half with their high-intensity press-

ing and possession. Alejandro Grimaldo came close to extending the lead with a free kick that struck the woodwork.

Manchester United looked to respond after the break but struggled to create any clear chances against Atletico's defence. Bruno Fernandes came close to equalising in the 70th minute, rattling the crossbar with an effort from distance. United's task became more difficult in the 74th minute when defender Leny Yoro received a red card over a reckless challenge on Jonathan David.

Would be unbelievable': Samit Patel on England batter's chances of surpassing Tendulkar's Test runs record

DUBAI (AGENCY)

Former England all-rounder Samit Patel said it would be an "unbelievable" achievement if Joe Root surpasses Sachin Tendulkar's record for the most runs in Test cricket, praising the England batter's hunger to score runs and remarkable longevity in the game. Speaking to ANI on the sidelines of the ongoing World Championship of Legends (WCL) 2026, Patel said Root's continued appetite for runs has been a defining feature of his career as he closes in on Tendulkar's all-time Test record. "If he can



do it, that would be an unbelievable effort. Sachin is probably my hero and idol growing up, and if someone does that, it would be unbelievable," Patel told ANI.

Tendulkar retired from Test cricket with 15,921 runs, the highest tally in the format's history. Root has crossed 14,278 Test runs as

of 2026 and remains within reach of the landmark, with 1,643 runs separating him from the Indian batting great's record.

Patel described Root as one of the finest players to have played the game, highlighting the determination that has sustained his career at the highest level

"Joe Root is one of the best players in my opinion, one of the best to play and still going. The thing that stands out about Root is the hunger to score runs. He's obviously so close to Sachin Tendulkar (in Test runs). I'm sure that's on his mind. It's great to see a batsman with this longevity," he said. Patel also spoke highly of England's all-format captain Harry Brook, describing the young batter as an exciting talent capable of playing a wide range of attacking shots. "Harry Brook is an unbelievable talent. Plays shots 360 (degrees); exciting to watch.

Briefs News
Martinez criticises United's hierarchy after defeat to Atleti

Madrid (AGENCY) Manchester United defender Lisandro Martinez criticised the club's hierarchy and said he expects more from the team's technical director following their 2-0 defeat to Atletico Madrid in the UEFA Champions League, calling for greater investment in the squad to compete with rival teams, according to Sky Sports. In a post-match interview, Martinez said he had expected the club's management to bring in more players during the summer transfer window, specifically expressing disappointment with technical director Jason Wilcox. "I have to control myself a lot, but sometimes it's a reflection of how our club is at the moment. We had a fantastic season last season, and now we expect more from the top, from upstairs, to bring in more players to compete because many teams have brought in many players as well," Martinez said while speaking to Amazon Prime, as quoted by Sky Sports. Martinez said he expected greater investment from the club's technical director, while acknowledging that players also needed to improve and stressing the importance of building a stronger squad. "Yes, 100 per cent. I expect more from our technical director. I have to be honest. And also, as a player, we have to do more. It's also important to build a strong squad to be ready for this kind of night," he said. The defender added that building a strong squad was essential to handle challenging matches, while suggesting that responsibility for the team's struggles should not rest solely with the manager or players.

'It's great competition': England Champions' Samit Patel praises WCL Season 3

DUBAI (AGENCY) Former England cricketer Samit Patel praised the World Championship of Legends (WCL) for bringing together some of the world's finest players, describing Season 3 as a great competition that lets former international stars relive their playing days. Patel said competing against former teammates and opponents, who continue to showcase their skills despite the passage of time, has made the tournament a special experience. "It's been great. Obviously, it's great to be playing against all the legends we played against back in our time. I think some are still playing. You can still see that AB (AB de Villiers) is still doing a great job, did a great job last year for South Africa. Ravi Bopara is in great form, and the bowlers also are. It's a great competition," Patel told ANI on the sidelines of the ongoing WCL Season 3. Highlighting what sets WCL apart from other cricket leagues, the former England cricketer said the tournament provides an opportunity to witness legendary players who made their mark during their international careers continue to compete at a high level. "Well, as I said, it's the World Championship of Legends. Legends from around the world who have played the game for so long, and so well. And I think it's great to be a part of. I think when you look back at your time playing with the legends, of how good they were in their prime and how good they are still now, playing," he added. Patel is part of England Champions in their final league-stage match on Wednesday, with a victory guaranteeing their place in the semi-finals.

Barcelona beat Galatasaray 4-1, Arsenal thrash Lille 3-0

ISTANBUL (AGENCY)

Barcelona came from behind to thrash Galatasaray 4-1, while Arsenal scored three second-half goals in seven minutes to beat Lille 3-0 in the UEFA Champions League phase on Tuesday, as both sides secured convincing victories on matchday two. Aleksey Batrakov gave Galatasaray the lead in the 28th minute, but Joao Cancelo equalised for Barcelona in the 43rd minute. Fermin Lopez put Barcelona ahead in the 50th minute with a header from a Lamine Yamal cross. Yamal then set up Anthony



Gordon three minutes later to extend the lead, before substitute Karim Adeyemi scored in the 65th minute to complete the rout. Meanwhile, Arsenal defeated French side LOSC Lille 3-0 in the UEFA Champions

League league phase on Tuesday, scoring three goals in seven minutes in the second half to maintain their perfect start to the competition. Jurrien Timber broke the deadlock in the 64th minute before Arsenal

Gautam Gambhir turns 45, former teammates Yuvraj, Raina wish Team India coach on his birthday



HYDERABAD (AGENCY)

Team India head coach Gautam Gambhir turned 45 on Wednesday, with former teammates Yuvraj Singh and Suresh Raina wishing him on his birthday.

Gambhir will spend his 45th birthday on duty as he looks to guide India to victory against West Indies in the fourth T20I in Hyderabad later today. With India leading the five-match series 2-1, a win would seal the series for the hosts. Gambhir, who took charge as head coach of the Indian men's cricket team in July 2024, has guided the side to titles in the 2025 ICC Champions Trophy, the 2025 ACC Men's Asia Cup and the 2026 ICC Men's T20 World Cup. Gambhir's former Team India team-

mate, Yuvraj Singh, wished him on his birthday, expressing his continued support and wishing him success.

In an Instagram post, Yuvraj said, "GG you know I've always got your back and wish you only go from strength to strength! Happy birthday brother always upwards and keep making us proud! Lots of love." Meanwhile, Suresh Raina also wished Gambhir on his birthday, calling him a "fighter on the field"

"Happy Birthday, Gauti bhai. A fighter on the field, a champion at heart, and a man who has always stood tall for Indian cricket. Wishing you good health, happiness, and many more milestones in your journey. Keep inspiring, keep leading," Raina said in his X

post. Happy Birthday, Gauti bhai. A fighter on the field, a champion at heart, and a man who has always stood tall for Indian cricket. Wishing you good health, happiness, and many more milestones in your journey. Keep inspiring, keep leading! The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) vice president Rajeev Shukla also extended his wishes to the Team India coach on his 45th birthday. "Heartiest birthday wishes to @GautamGambhir. Your passion for cricket, competitive spirit and unwavering commitment to Indian cricket continue to inspire. May you be blessed with good health, happiness and continued success as you contribute to the growth and glory of Indian cricket. Wishing you a wonderful year ahead," he said.

Heartiest birthday wishes to @GautamGambhir. Your passion for cricket, competitive spirit and unwavering commitment to Indian cricket continue to inspire. May you be blessed with good health, happiness and continued success as you contribute to the growth and glory of Indian cricket. Wishing you a wonderful year ahead. During his playing days, known for his memorable performances, especially in times of crisis, Gambhir served India as one of its most prolific opening batters.

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