

OPEN SEARCH

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PM Modi unveils Rs 3,350-cr development package for Ladakh

NEW DELHI.AGENCY

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday inaugurated and dedicated to the nation five major development projects worth around Rs 3,350 crore in Ladakh, aimed at strengthening connectivity, improving power infrastructure, conserving ancient cultural heritage and enhancing water security in the strategically important Himalayan region.

Calling it "a big day for Ladakh", Modi said the projects would accelerate development and improve the quality of life of the people. "These projects will make travel easier, improve electricity facilities, increase water availability and give a new impetus to the conservation of our ancient heritage," he said.

Emphasising opportunities for the younger generation, the Prime Minister said the government was working to ensure that Ladakh's youth could access quality education and learn new technologies without having to travel to other cities. A Centre of Excellence is being established in Leh to advance these objectives. He also highlighted a new

Boosts connectivity and water security



sports policy aimed at providing young people with better training and facilities to compete successfully at national and international levels. A key component of the package is the new passenger terminal building at Kushok Bakula Rimpochee Airport in Leh, built at a cost of Rs 640 crore. Spread over 23,800 square metres, the terminal is designed to handle 35 lakh passengers annually. Incorporating elements of Ladakh's cultural heritage alongside modern passenger amenities, the facility is expected to improve air connectivity and passenger convenience. Its use of geothermal energy is intended to enhance energy efficiency

A key component of the package is the new passenger terminal building at Kushok Bakula Rimpochee Airport in Leh, built at a cost of Rs 640 crore

and reduce its carbon footprint in the ecologically fragile Himalayan region.

Modi also dedicated the 298-km Nimmu-Padum-Darcha Road, constructed by the Border Roads Organisation, providing an alternative route to Ladakh alongside the Srinagar-Leh and Manali-Leh highways. Connecting Nimmu in Leh with Darcha in Himachal

Pradesh through the remote Zaskar Valley, the road traverses challenging Himalayan terrain, including the high-altitude Shinkun La Pass. Besides strengthening strategic mobility and logistical support for the Armed Forces, it is expected to improve residents' access to healthcare, education, markets and other essential services in a region long affected by geographical isolation.

The energy infrastructure package includes the 9 MW Hanu Small Hydroelectric Project and the 66 kV double-circuit Dah-Hanu-Khalti transmission line. The projects are intended to harness Ladakh's hydropower

potential, strengthen electricity transmission and improve the reliability of the region's power network. In a significant step towards protecting the region's archaeological wealth, the Prime Minister also inaugurated India's first Petroglyph Conservation Park at Sindh Ghat in Leh. Ladakh is home to hundreds of prehistoric rock-art sites featuring carvings of wildlife, human figures and symbolic representations that offer insights into the history and cultural evolution of communities inhabiting the region over thousands of years. The park is intended to protect these vulnerable remains, raise public awareness of their historical significance and promote responsible heritage tourism.

Water security received a major boost with the inauguration of 40 water bodies developed across 40 villages under Project Him Sarovar. The initiative seeks to address Ladakh's distinctive geographical and climatic challenges by conserving water and improving its availability for agriculture, in line with the objectives of Mission Amrit Sarovar.

Happiness and prosperity of farmers is the top priority of our govt : CM

Nuakhai is a festival of our agricultural culture, hard work of the farmers and gratitude towards nature : CM Vishnu Dev Sai

RAIPUR. OPEN SEARCH

Chief Minister Vishnu Dev Sai stated that the well-being and prosperity of farmers is the state government's top priority. Our farmers are at the core of Chhattisgarh's economy and culture. The state government is continuously working to increase farmers' income, expand irrigation facilities, and make farming more profitable. Our endeavor is to ensure that, through good governance and public service, the benefits of development schemes reach the last person in society, and that every family in Chhattisgarh participates in the state's development journey. Chief Minister Shri Sai was addressing the Nuakhai Bhetghat and Pratibha Samman ceremony of the Kolta community, held at the Shaheed Colonel Viplav Tripathi Stadium in Raigarh today. The community members warmly welcomed Chief Minister Shri Sai by presenting him with a traditional Gajmala (water garland). The Chief Minister



A community hall will be constructed at Chandi Dongri in village Kotarliya at a cost of Rs 30 lakh and at Nagar Panchayat Pusaur at a cost of Rs 50 lakh

performed a ceremonial puja of Maa Raneshwari Ramchandi and prayed for the well-being, prosperity, and well-being of the people of the state.

On this occasion, Chief Minister Shri Sai, keeping in mind the needs of the community, announced a grant of Rs. 30 lakh for the construction of a fully equipped community hall in Chandi Dongri village of Kotarliya and Rs. 50 lakh for the construction of a Mangal Bhawan for the Kolta com-

munity in the Nagar Panchayat Pusaur. He also announced the construction of a boundary wall.

Chief Minister Shri Vishnudev Sai, while extending his greetings to the Kolta community and all the residents of the state on the occasion of Nuakhai festival, said that Nuakhai is an important festival linked to our rich agricultural culture. It is a celebration to welcome the new harvest, honor the hard work of the farmers, and express gratitude to nature. Such festivals keep our traditions alive and connect the new generation to their culture and roots.

He said that Chhattisgarh is an agricultural state, and our government is committed to strengthening the economic condition of farmers. The government is continuously working with the vision of ensuring that farmers receive fair returns for their hard work, reduce farming costs, increase irrigation facilities, and bring prosperity to families through agriculture.

Ex-Vice Prez dhankhar, israeli diplomat invited to RSS vijayadashmi event

NAGPUR.AGENCY

Former Vice President of India Jagdeep Dhankhar and Yaniv Revach, Israel's Consul General for Midwest India, have been invited to attend the Rashtriya Swamsevaka Sangh's (RSS) annual Vijayadashmi celebrations in Nagpur on October 20, the organisation said. RSS chief Mohan Bhagwat will deliver the keynote address at the event, scheduled to be held at Reshimbagh, while Dainik Jagran Editor-in-Chief Sanjay Gupta will attend as the chief guest, according to an RSS release. The RSS said the programme would mark the culmination of its centenary year. Dhankhar resigned as Vice President and Chairman of the Rajya Sabha in July 2025, citing medical reasons.

Op sindoor, balakot airstrike & surgical strike reflect

India's shift from diplomatic condemnation to proactive action to eliminate terrorism at its source : Raksha Mantri

NEW DELHI.AGENCY

'Operation Sindoor, Balakot Airstrikes weren't just military operations; they symbolised a decisive shift in the nation's approach, moving from diplomatic condemnation to proactive action aimed at rooting out terrorism by reaching its very source,' said Raksha Mantri Shri Rajnath Singh at a Defence Conclave in New Delhi on October 15, 2026.

Reiterating India's stand on cross-border terrorism, he asserted that any further terrorist acts originating from Pakistan would invite an even stronger response. He emphasised that while India's cultural ethos favoured dialogue, coexistence and peaceful resolu-



'Any terror act originating from Pakistan would invite an even stronger response : Raksha Mantri Rajnath Singh

tion of disputes, its commitment to peace should not be mistaken for weakness. He added that since 2014, the 'shelf life' of most terrorists had fallen to less than a year, with security forces neutralising them within a year of their taking

up arms against India. Raksha Mantri termed strength and capability as essential to maintaining peace, and underlined that India hopes for peace, but remains prepared for war that sometimes becomes necessary to protect the nation.

"Our commitment to peace remains steadfast yet we are fully prepared to confront any challenge. Our goal is to build an India that, while advocating for peace, remains vigilant when it comes to security and is fully capable of safeguarding its sovereignty, integrity, and national interests," he said. On the evolving security landscape, Shri Rajnath Singh underscored the need for heightened vigilance and preparedness in an era of hybrid, high-tech and hyper warfare.

CM Nayab Singh Saini Invites Investors to Attend Happening Haryana Next Year



CHANDIGARH : OPEN SEARCH

Haryana Chief Minister Sh. Nayab Singh Saini held a roundtable meeting with representatives of Swedish companies and invited them to invest in Haryana. Cabinet Minister Sh. Vipul Goel was also present at the meeting. The Chief Minister said that joint efforts under the Make in India and Made with Sweden initiatives would be further strengthened. He said that Prime Minister Sh. Narendra Modi's visit to Sweden in May 2026 had given a new

Chief Minister Holds Roundtable Meeting with Swedish Business Representatives, Invites Investment in Haryana

dimension to the strategic partnership between the two countries. The joint five-year action plan has provided a clear roadmap for cooperation, with both countries setting a target of doubling economic exchanges, including trade and investment, over the

next five years. India is Sweden's third-largest trading partner in Asia.

Highlighting Haryana's investment potential, Sh. Nayab Singh Saini said that its skilled workforce, strong industrial base and excellent connectivity to major markets across the country make it a preferred investment destination. Haryana also serves as an important gateway to the major markets of northern India. He said that the state government had further strengthened the Invest Haryana Single Window System,

making the investment process simpler and faster.

Citing existing Swedish investments in Haryana as examples of investor confidence, the Chief Minister said that Swedish company IKEA's Rs 3,500-crore integrated project in Gurugram reflected its confidence in the state. Swedish company Saab is establishing a Carl-Gustaf manufacturing facility at MET City in Jhajjar.

The manufacturing unit of Swedish-Swiss group ABB in Faridabad, which began operations in 1951, is a major production centre for modern electric motors. He also noted that Swedish educational institution Kunskaapsskolan opened its first school in India in Gurugram in 2013. The Chief Minister said that Haryana was fully prepared to engage in discussions with any Swedish company considering entering the Indian market.



डीडीए

आवास निवेश योजना 2026

सोपल फ्लैट्स उपलब्ध

25% की छूट

रेडी-टू-मूव-इन फ्लैट्स
खुले बाल्कनी, खुले पार्किंग के अवसर

पूरातः ऑनलाइन योजना

आपका भविष्य एक समझदार निवेश का हकदार है

उभरते उपनगर नरेला में

2,516 फ्लैट्स उपलब्ध

1-बीएचके फ्लैट्स (सेक्टर G2-G6)

पॉकेट-3

उपलब्ध फ्लैट्स 1020

अनुमानित क्षेत्रफल 49.90 वर्ग मीटर

@ ₹ 15.01 लाख*

पॉकेट-6

उपलब्ध फ्लैट्स 1496

अनुमानित क्षेत्रफल 49.90 वर्ग मीटर

@ ₹ 14.95 लाख*

* (25% की छूट के बाद कीमत)

पंजीकरण प्रारंभ

14 अक्टूबर, दोपहर 12 बजे

बुकिंग प्रारंभ

20 अक्टूबर, दोपहर 12 बजे

प्रमुख विशेषताएँ - नरेला ही क्यों

आगामी मल्टी मेट्रो स्टेशन (दिलाला - नरेला - कुंडली मेट्रो कॉरिडोर) लगभग 2 कि.मी. दूर

दुवर्गामी आवागमन हेतु प्रस्तावित आर्टआर्टीएल कनेक्टिविटी

कई विश्वविद्यालयों को आसपास भूमि सहित उभरते शिक्षा केन्द्र

सेक्टर A-7 में नरेला स्पोर्ट्स कॉम्प्लेक्स। प्रस्तावित मल्टी-स्पोर्ट्स इंडीपेंडेंट स्टेडियम और खेल परिसर

यूआईएट-1 (लगभग 1.5 कि.मी.), यूआईएट-2 (लगभग 4 कि.मी.) तथा जीटी कर्दनाल रोड (लगभग 5 कि.मी.) के ताबते पर उत्कृष्ट सड़क संपर्क मार्ग

हरित स्थलों, खुले स्थानों और नानाधिक सुविधाओं से युक्त योजनाकृत आवासीय परिवेश

बुकिंग एवं पंजीकरण के लिए वेबसाइट: www.dda.gov.in या <https://eservices.dda.org.in> देखें

सहायता के लिए कॉल करें: **1800110332**

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हमें यहाँ फॉलो करें

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CM Nayab Singh Saini Attends India-Sweden Innovation Day 2026 in Sweden as Chief Guest

VIJAY KUMAR.OPEN SEARCH

CHANDIGARH : Haryana Chief Minister Sh. Nayab Singh Saini attended the India-Sweden Innovation Day 2026, held in Sweden, as the Chief Guest. At this important event, the Chief Minister emphasised strengthening innovation, trade and industrial cooperation between India and Sweden.

Addressing the gathering, Chief Minister Sh. Nayab Singh Saini said that being present among everyone at Indo-Sweden Innovation Day was a matter of honour and pleasure for him. He said that the event was an important opportunity to advance the shared commitment to innovation for a competitive future under the India-Sweden 2035 vision. He also expressed his gratitude for making Haryana a State Partner in this year's programme. The Chief Minister stated that in May 2026, Prime Minister Sh. Narendra Modi elevated India's relations with Sweden to the level of a

CM Holds Key Meeting with Swedish Minister for International Development Cooperation and Foreign Trade Benjamin Dousa



CHANDIGARH : Haryana Chief Minister Mr. Nayab Singh Saini on Thursday held an important meeting with Sweden's Minister for International Development Cooperation and Foreign Trade, Mr.

Benjamin Dousa. The two leaders discussed ways to further strengthen India-Sweden bilateral relations and explore new avenues of cooperation with Haryana. Haryana Urban Local Bodies Minister Sh. Vipul Goel was also present on the occasion.

The Chief Minister said that Haryana aims to build on the engagements with Sweden undertaken by Union Minister Sh. Piyush Goyal under the leadership of Prime Minister Sh. Narendra

Modi. He said that India and Sweden had elevated their relations to a strategic partnership in May 2025, with both countries setting a target of doubling bilateral trade and investment over the next five years.

USD 7.75 billion in 2025, reflecting the growing strength of bilateral relations. Highlighting investments by Swedish companies in Haryana, the Chief Minister said that IKEA's integrated project worth ₹3,500 crore in Gurugram was a clear example of the company's confidence in Haryana. Similarly, a Swedish company is establishing its Carl-Gustaf manufacturing facility at MET City in Jhajjar. The manufacturing unit of Swedish-Swiss group ABB in Faridabad, operational since 1951, has become a major production centre for modern electric motors. In addition, the first Indian school of the Swedish educational institution Kunskaapsskolan was opened in Gurugram in 2013.

Sh. Saini said that all these projects reflected the shared efforts of 'Make in India' and 'Made with Sweden'. He invited all the dignitaries present at the event to the 'Happening Haryana Global Investors Summit 2027', to be held in Haryana.

Agriculture and farmers' welfare minister distributes insurance policies to Farmers

CHANDIGARH : OPEN SEARCH

Haryana Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare Minister Sh. Shyam Singh Rana said that Prime Minister Sh. Narendra Modi envisions a system in which farmers receive their crop insurance policies directly and transparently. The 'Meri Policy Mere Haath' campaign has been launched with this objective. The Central and State Governments have launched a month-long special drive across India from October 15 to November 15, under which every eligible farmer will receive a copy of their crop insurance policy. The initiative aims to ensure that farmers are aware of their crop insurance coverage, premi-



um amount and the procedure for obtaining claims.

The Cabinet Minister was addressing a state-level function organised by the Haryana Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare Department under the Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana as part of the 'Meri Policy Mere Haath' campaign at Shahabad in Kurukshetra district on Thursday. He attended the programme as the chief guest and distributed crop insurance policies to farmers.

Sant Rajinder Singh Ji Maharaj offers blueprint for finding peace at Gurugram Event

GURUGRAM: OPEN SEARCH

Internationally recognised Spiritual Master, author and meditation teacher, SantRajinder Singh JiMaharaj addressed a packed audience at the GNH Convention Centre in Gurugram on Wednesday. In a special talk titled 'Find Peace in a Hyperconnected World', the head of Science of Spirituality, outlined a blueprint for attaining lasting peace and bliss amid the constant buzz of an increasingly connected world. The programme commenced with a traditional lamp-lighting ceremony followed by a warm welcome to the Spiritual Master. In his address, SantRajinder Singh JiMaharaj reflected on how we have more information,



more convenience and more ways to connect than ever before in today's digital world. The boundaries of space and time have shrunk significantly with the advent of modern technology and digital tools. But has any of it brought us closer to inner peace?

"It gives me great joy to be here in Gurugram, a city of technology and innovation. As we get connected to

The programme commenced with a traditional lamp-lighting ceremony followed by a warm welcome to the Spiritual Master

more technologies, we wonder if all the connections we have with our gadgets are bringing us peace which we all need," SantRajinder Singh JiMaharaj said.

"Despite the presence of all the outer resources, we are all in search for peace and contentment. Just as a musk deer runs in all directions in search of the sweet fragrance emanating from its own body, we too are only focused on the outer world. In reality, all the

peace and fulfillment lies within us. As we go through a rough period, we recognise the presence of the Higher Power and turn our attention towards it. Our connection with the gadgets and technology is getting strong, but unfortunately, our connection with God is not strengthened yet." Dwelling on the paradox of the modern world, where communication never stops, the Spiritual Master explained that peace begins when we learn to listen to ourselves. Technology has connected us to people, news and information, yet we feel lonely, stressed and mentally exhausted. As we sit in silence and connect with the Light of God within, we can experience lasting peace and bliss, unlike anything that the outer world can offer.

Haryana Govt strengthening road network in rural areas : Ranbir Gangwa

CHANDIGARH : OPEN SEARCH

Haryana Public Works Minister Sh. Ranbir Gangwa said that the state government is continuously working to strengthen the road network in rural areas and provide better connectivity to villages. As part of these efforts, a new road will be constructed along the left bank of the Western Yamuna Canal from Picholia Head to Jani village in Karnal district at a cost of Rs 10,38,52,000. The road will improve connectivity between nearby villages and make travel more convenient for residents. Sh. Ranbir Gangwa said that the proposed road will be 1.20 km long and 5.50 metres wide. Its construction will benefit

residents of Picholia, Jani and Budhanpur villages. The road is being constructed under an announcement made by the Chief Minister, and the No Objection Certificate (NOC) from the Irrigation Department has already been obtained. The Minister said that better road infrastructure in rural areas is closely linked to the daily needs of residents. Expansion of the road network makes travel between villages easier and enables people to commute more conveniently for essential work. He said that the state government is making sustained efforts to strengthen basic infrastructure in villages and improve connectivity across rural areas.

Briefs News

Scrap Old Diesel and Petrol Vehicles to Help Reduce Pollution

CHANDIGARH : OPEN SEARCH. The Haryana Government has launched a special initiative to make the National Capital Region (NCR) cleaner, safer and pollution-free. According to a government spokesperson, it is time for owners of diesel vehicles that are over 10 years old and petrol vehicles that are over 15 years old to get their vehicles scrapped. Older vehicles not only contribute significantly to air pollution but are also more expensive to maintain and may pose safety risks. The government has appealed to vehicle owners to contribute to a cleaner NCR and a greener future by taking their diesel vehicles over 10 years old and petrol vehicles over 15 years old to the nearest Registered Vehicle Scrapping Facility (RVSF) for scrapping and switching to cleaner, newer vehicles. Registered Vehicle Scrapping Facilities provide arrangements for the safe and systematic scrapping of old vehicles. This process can help reduce pollution, improve road safety and facilitate the recycling of reusable vehicle materials. The spokesperson further stated that vehicle owners who fail to get their old vehicles scrapped at RVSF centres at the earliest may face strict legal action in accordance with the applicable rules. To realise the vision of a cleaner NCR and a greener future, the government has urged citizens to responsibly scrap their old vehicles and actively cooperate with this initiative.

Haryana commission for protection of child rights issues statutory advisory to prevent misuse of CCTV systems in child care institutions

CHANDIGARH : OPEN SEARCH. The Haryana State Commission for Protection of Child Rights has issued an important statutory advisory to safeguard the privacy, dignity and security of children residing in Child Care Institutions (CCIs) across the state. The advisory has been issued by Commission Chairperson Ms. Tripti Sheoran under Section 13(1)(a) of the Commissions for Protection of Child Rights (CPCR) Act, 2005. During its visits to various institutions, the Commission observed that CCTV systems in several institutions had been connected to personal mobile phones and laptops. This created a significant security risk, as live footage could potentially be accessed remotely, downloaded or circulated without authorisation. According to the guidelines issued, control over CCTV systems, footage and passwords must remain exclusively with the institution's in-charge. The use of shared passwords has been strictly prohibited. Connecting cameras to any personal mobile phone or laptop is also prohibited, and remote access must remain disabled by default. Furthermore, photographing CCTV monitors, recording their screens, or downloading, copying or circulating footage through WhatsApp, social media or any other medium has been prohibited. The Chairperson stated that, keeping children's privacy in mind, installing cameras inside toilets, bathrooms and changing areas is strictly prohibited under the Juvenile Justice Model Rules, 2016.

Haryana's Paddy procurement crosses 15.52 lakh tonnes, Rs 1,221 crore disbursed to farmers

CHANDIGARH : OPEN SEARCH. Haryana's Kharif procurement operations have made significant progress, with government agencies purchasing 15.52 Lakh Metric Tonnes (LMT) of paddy and disbursing Rs 1,221 crore to farmers, reflecting the state's continued emphasis on assured procurement, transparent transactions and farmer welfare. Chief Secretary Sh. Anurag Rastogi reviewed the ongoing procurement operations today, assessing the progress of paddy arrivals, purchases, lifting, farmer payments and technology-driven initiatives aimed at making the procurement system more efficient, transparent and farmer-friendly. The review highlighted the importance of seamless coordination among district administrations, procurement agencies, mandi authorities, transporters and rice millers to ensure smooth procurement operations throughout the harvesting season. Principal Secretary, Food, Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs, Amneet P Kumar informed that 21.27 LMT of paddy had arrived in Haryana's mandis up to October 15, of which 15.52 LMT had been purchased and 7.69 LMT lifted. Against the 58 LMT procurement target fixed by the Government of India for the Kharif Marketing Season 2026-27, the state has already achieved approximately 27 per cent of its target.

Special drive to enrol new and previously unregistered eligible voters in haryana's electoral rolls

CHANDIGARH : OPEN SEARCH. The Office of the Chief Electoral Officer, Haryana, and the Election Commission of India are committed to ensuring that every eligible citizen in the state is enrolled in the electoral rolls. To achieve this objective, a special drive will be conducted across all Assembly constituencies in Haryana to enrol new voters and eligible citizens whose names have not yet been included in the electoral rolls. The primary objective of the drive is to ensure that no eligible citizen is left out of the electoral rolls. The Election Department is actively working towards this goal and will raise awareness among eligible voters while providing them with the necessary assistance to facilitate their enrolment. To ensure effective implementation of the drive across the state, 22 District Election Officers, 90 Electoral Registration Officers (EROs), 1,778 Assistant Electoral Registration Officers (AEROs), 2,244 BLO Supervisors and 20,864 Booth Level Officers (BLOs) are working towards achieving this objective. The Election Department will also continue its awareness and public outreach campaigns to encourage eligible citizens to enrol in the electoral rolls. All concerned officers have been tasked with making coordinated efforts to ensure that no eligible voter is deprived of the opportunity to exercise their voting rights.

Haryana Government to Honour Women for Outstanding Contributions : Shruti Choudhry

CHANDIGARH : OPEN SEARCH

Haryana Women and Child Development Minister Smt. Shruti Choudhry said the State Government is committed to the welfare and empowerment of women. Several schemes are being implemented by the government in this regard. As part of these efforts, the State-Level Women Awards for 2026-27 will be conferred to encourage and recognise women who have made outstanding contributions in various fields. Online applications have been invited from eligible women for these awards by November 5, 2026.

Smt. Shruti Choudhry said that many women have achieved remarkable success in social service, women's empowerment,



administration, entrepreneurship, sports, Panchayati Raj and other fields. The State Government aims to recognise their contributions, encourage their achievements and inspire other women to move forward. She informed that a cash award of ₹5 lakh will be given under the Sushma Swaraj Award, ₹1.5 lakh under the Indira Gandhi Mahila Shakti Award, and ₹1 lakh each under the Kalpana

As part of these efforts, the State-Level Women Awards for 2026-27 will be conferred to encourage and recognise women who have made outstanding contributions in various fields

Chawla Shaurya Award and the Behan Shanno Devi Panchayati Raj Award. In addition, ₹51,000 will be awarded under the Lifetime Achievers Award, while women who have achieved excellence in their respective fields will receive ₹21,000 under the Outstanding Achievement category. All selected women will be honoured with cash awards and certificates of appreciation. The Women and Child

Development Minister stated that the Sushma Swaraj Award will be presented to women who have made significant contributions in various fields at the national and international levels. The Indira Gandhi Mahila Shakti Award is intended for women who have done outstanding work in the fields of women's welfare, protection and rehabilitation. The Kalpana Chawla Shaurya Award will be conferred on women who inspire others through acts of courage and exemplary service. Similarly, the Behan Shanno Devi Panchayati Raj Award will be presented to women representatives of Panchayati Raj Institutions and Urban Local Bodies who have made remarkable contributions to women's empowerment.

Anil Vij questions opposition march against Supreme court, asks : who Is the force bringing all parties together

CHANDIGARH : OPEN SEARCH

Haryana Energy, Transport and Labour Minister Sh. Anil Vij said that protesting is a democratic right of every political party. However, the coming together of all parties under the leadership of a person with no established political background raises serious questions. He expressed apprehension that some other force seeking to create instability in the country could be behind these developments. Sh. Vij was responding to questions from media persons here today regarding the opposition's march against the Supreme Court. He said that the Supreme Court and



the country's courts are completely impartial. He added that this was the first time in independent India that the opposition had taken out a march against the Supreme Court. He said the matter could amount to contempt of court, as the Supreme Court had taken suo motu cognisance of it.

However, what action the court would take was entirely for the court to decide. He added that the situation had now turned into a spectacle in the country.

Questioning the opposition, Sh. Vij raised a question before the people of the country. He said that "I want to ask the people a question.

Opposition's unity at the call of a person with no established political background raises serious questions : Anil Vij

Opposition march against supreme court unfortunate, public must seek answers on the force behind it : Anil Vij

A party called CJP issued a call on October 10 for a protest in Delhi. Rahul Gandhi arrived there with members of his party. Akhilesh Yadav brought members of his party, Mamata Banerjee also arrived with her party members, and the Communists brought their party workers as well. Who exactly is this CJP? It is still unclear whether it is a political party or a group of

social activists. There is no established background, yet so many political parties have come together at its call. "This gives the impression that some other force is bringing all these parties together. The question is: who is that force? Is it seeking to destabilise the country, and are these parties acting as its tools? People should seek an answer to who is orchestrating these developments." He further

said that "The right to protest in the country, and every political party has that right. We, too, have staged protests on several occasions. But who is bringing all these parties together? Why are all these parties bowing before one person when that individual has neither an established background nor a political history? This suggests that another force, hostile to the country, may be working to create instability." Responding to a question about a social activist who lost his life while opposing drug abuse in Punjab, Sh. Vij questioned the Bhagwant Mann-led government over the drug peddling in the state.

Delhi Govt. to Strengthen Advanced Healthcare at Lok Nayak Hospital

Advanced Diagnostic Machines to Enhance Emergency, Cardiac, Oncology, Neurology and Specialised Imaging Services

AJEET KUMAR.OPEN SEARCH

NEW DELHI. The Delhi Government is all set to strengthen diagnostic facilities at Lok Nayak Hospital, New Delhi, with the installation of state-of-the-art third-generation Dual Source CT Scanner and an advanced 3-Tesla MRI System. These facilities will enhance diagnostic capabilities and improve access to advanced imaging services for patients.

The third-generation Dual Source CT Scanner is equipped with two Vectron X-ray tubes, 2 × 120 kW generator power and Stellar Infinity Detectors, enabling high-precision imaging with slices as thin as 0.5 mm. A complete chest scan can be performed in less than one second, making the system



particularly useful for emergency, trauma and critical care patients.

The scanner features AI-enabled dose-optimisation technologies, including CARE kV, CARE and Adaptive Dose Shield, which help minimise radiation exposure. It also enables the assessment of kidney stone composition and detection of uric acid crystal deposits associated with



'These advanced diagnostic facilities will strengthen timely and accurate diagnosis, improve patient care and expand access to modern healthcare services in Delhi's government hospitals,' said Hon'ble Health Minister Dr. Pankaj Kumar Singh.

gout without additional radiation exposure. The 3-Tesla MRI System features BioMatrix Technology, a 70 cm wide-bore design, a fully digital Tim 4G platform, DirectRF Technology and high-performance gradients. These features support high-quality imaging, faster examinations and improved patient comfort. The system will strengthen diagnostic services across

neurology, angiography, cardiac imaging, oncology, breast imaging, urology, orthopaedics and paediatric care. It will also facilitate the early and accurate diagnosis of conditions such as stroke, cancer, cardiac diseases and musculoskeletal disorders.

Hon'ble Health Minister Dr. Pankaj Kumar Singh said, "The installation of these advanced diagnostic

systems will significantly strengthen the healthcare infrastructure at Lok Nayak Hospital.

The high-speed CT scanner and advanced 3-Tesla MRI system will support faster and more precise diagnosis, particularly in emergencies and complex medical cases. These facilities will improve access to advanced diagnostic services, enhance patient care and support the training of medical students and doctors, along with high-quality clinical research. Under the leadership of Hon'ble Chief Minister Smt. Rekha Gupta, the Delhi Government remains committed to strengthening public healthcare institutions with modern medical infrastructure and ensuring quality healthcare services for the people of Delhi."

Delhi poll body sets up help desks across 13 districts to assist voters with SIR-related queries

NEW DELHI (AGENCY)

The Delhi poll body has set up help desks across all 13 districts to help people check their names in the draft electoral roll and apply for inclusion during the ongoing Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of the voter list, officials said. The help desks have been set up at the offices of district election officers at the district level and electoral registration officers at the Assembly constituency level. People can also call the 1950 helpline for assistance with electoral roll-related issues and filing Form 6, according to a statement issued by the office of the Delhi chief electoral officer (CEO). The CEO's office has deployed 14,947 booth-level officers (BLOs), 1,313 BLO supervisors, 902 assistant electoral registration officers, 70 electoral registration officers and 13 district election officers for the exercise. It has also



announced special camps on October 18 and October 25, where BLOs will help people with SIR-related cases. Since the publication of the draft electoral roll for Delhi's 70 Assembly constituencies on August 31, a total of 2,24,073 people have filed Form 6 to get themselves registered as voters.

The draft roll excluded more than 47 lakh names from an electorate of around 1.45 crore. The exclusions included cases involving discrepancies in names, ages and other voter details, as well as people who did not furnish details of the 2002 electoral rolls. The claims and objections window will remain open until October 30.

After odisha new governor's remarks on working for party, naveen patnaik's jab

NEW DELHI (AGENCY)

A comment made by Odisha's newly appointed Governor Braj Mohan Ram even before he has taken oath has now raised a huge political controversy. Ram, a Dalit leader from Jharkhand, has said he would strengthen the party organisation among the Scheduled Castes (SC) community in Odisha and also work towards ensuring that the BJP gets as many votes as possible. Opposition parties have questioned him over the remarks that they said placed a huge doubt on the impartiality and constitutional role of the governor's office. A video of the governor-designate's comments have been shared widely on social media.

Odisha Congress chief Bhakta Charan Das led the Opposition's offensive against Ram over his controversial comments. "The constitutional duty of the governor is to impartially



Opposition parties have questioned him over the remarks that they said placed a huge doubt on the impartiality and constitutional role of the governor's office. A video of the governor-designate's comments have been shared widely on social media

uphold the Constitution, not to advance the electoral interests of any political party," Das said. He also shared the video on social media and pointed out that "constitutional offices must remain above partisan politics." Former chief minister Naveen Patnaik, who heads the Biju Janata Dal, joined in condemning Ram over his

remarks and took a swipe at him. Patnaik said the people of Odisha can clearly see how eager the Governor-designate is to fulfill his "party obligations."

Patnaik, at the same time, also expressed hope that the new governor would respect constitutional values and serve the people of Odisha with impar-

Delhi protests: Union home secretary tenders unconditional apology to SC in contempt case

NEW DELHI (AGENCY)

Union Home Secretary Govind Mohan has tendered an unconditional and unqualified apology to the Supreme Court in a contempt case over alleged violation of the apex court's direction to ensure no "complete prohibition" on Metro and train services in Delhi in the wake of the October 10 protest called by the Cockroach Janta Party. In an affidavit filed in the top court, Mohan said a request was received from Delhi Police to suspend cellular internet services for one day, until 10 pm on October 10. "The request was duly processed and considered in accordance with law and was found to be a proportionate measure, having regard to the magnitude of the situation and the need to prevent any disturbance of public order



in the national capital," Mohan said. The home secretary said that cellular internet services were suspended from 10 pm on October 9 until 10 pm on October 10 within a radius of 4 km of Raisina Hill. He clarified that the suspension was confined to cellular internet services, and did not extend to non-cellular internet services or telecommunication services such as Wi-Fi or broadband. "I state and submit that the suspension of internet services for a limited period and within a defined geographical area, subject to the applicable statutory safe-

guards, is a recognised measure that may be considered for maintaining public order in appropriate circumstances," he said. "I therefore respectfully pray that this court may be pleased to modify its order dated October 11 to the extent necessary to permit the suspension of internet services in situations of necessity, strictly in accordance with law and subject to the applicable statutory requirements and safeguards," he said. A bench of Chief Justice Surya Kant and Justice Joymalya Bagchi is scheduled to hear the matter on Thursday. On October 11, the apex court said that contempt petitioners, who have alleged violations of the court's direction to ensure no complete prohibition on Metro and train services in Delhi due to the protest, have made out a 'prima facie' case.

Briefs News Heavy rain brings traffic to a crawl across Delhi, commuters stranded

NEW DELHI (AGENCY) Heavy rain threw traffic out of gear across several parts of Delhi on Thursday, with junctions packed with vehicles and chaos on several roads due to waterlogging. From India Gate and ITO to Mandi House and south Delhi, commuters flagged long queues of cars, buses and three-wheelers, with several stretches witnessing little to no movement. Complaints poured in on social media, with motorists seeking traffic police intervention as the rain worsened congestion on already busy roads. Rain swept across Delhi on Thursday, with the skies appearing gloomy and overcast with dark clouds. At Mandi House Circle, visuals showed vehicles packed tightly together. Commuters claimed that no traffic personnel were present to regulate the flow of traffic. Heavy congestion was also reported at the India Gate circle, where a commuter said on social media that traffic had been stuck for nearly 30 minutes. Around ITO, commuters reported congestion on the Vikas Marg-ITO stretch and on roads connecting ITO to the Supreme Court and Bharat Mandapam. Heavy traffic was seen near the Supreme Court as well. In south Delhi, vehicles queued up from the Chirag Delhi red light towards IIT Delhi and Hauz Khas. Commuters also flagged heavy traffic near the Ashram flyover exit towards Sarai Kale Khan and Sunlight Colony, while congestion near Okhla Phase 1 was allegedly worsened by encroachments and construction materials stored on footpaths. Heavy congestion during end-of-school hours in Model Town was worsened by waterlogging. Responding to a complaint, the traffic police said the matter had been forwarded to the concerned traffic circle for action.

Heavy security in Delhi ahead of CJP's 'Lehra do Tiranga' protest on

NEW DELHI (AGENCY) Heavy security will be in place in and around Connaught Place and Jantar Mantar ahead of the CJP's proposed protest on October 16, with several companies of paramilitary forces already stationed in the national capital, police sources said on Thursday. The protest, titled "Lehra do Tiranga", has been called by Cockroach Janta Party (CJP) founder Abhijeet Dipke at Central Park in Connaught Place at 5 pm on Friday. Police will deploy personnel at strategic locations, erect barricades and regulate the movement of protesters and commuters to maintain law and order and prevent any untoward incident, a source said. A senior police officer said Connaught Place is not a designated protest site. "Jantar Mantar has been denotified as a designated protest site. Protesters can hold demonstrations at Ramlika Maidan, Burari Ground or CBD Ground after obtaining the requisite permission," the officer said. The proposed demonstration was announced after CJP leaders Saurav Das and Ashutosh Ranka were arrested after reaching Jantar Mantar and remanded to five days of judicial custody by a Special Executive Magistrate. In a statement, Dipke urged citizens to join the demonstration, asserting that waving the national flag was a democratic right.

Dead fish found along Yamuna banks in Delhi's Burari, cause yet to be ascertained

NEW DELHI (AGENCY) Hundreds, possibly thousands, of dead fish were found along the banks of the Yamuna near Burari in north Delhi, raising fresh concerns over the river's water quality and the health of its aquatic ecosystem, the New Delhi Nature Society said on Thursday. The society, which describes itself as a "A collective of individuals. Spreading awareness..." on its X profile, shared photographs and videos showing dead fish along the riverbank on Wednesday evening. "Specific cause not established. Locals allege chemical waste discharged from Haryana through canals. Could it be related to the acid rain on Oct 12th?" it said in a post on X. Fish deaths can indicate ecological stress, including deteriorating water quality, low dissolved oxygen levels and the presence of toxic substances, the society said. The images come amid continuing concerns over pollution in the Yamuna, which faces pollution-related challenges despite repeated efforts to clean the river. At the time, visuals showed thousands of dead fish floating in the river, with locals attributing the deaths to chemical waste allegedly discharged from Haryana. Reports had also pointed to high pollution levels. In May this year, hundreds of fish died at Sanjay Lake in east Delhi amid a heatwave and receding water levels.

'Objective Is Regime Change': BJP On Neha Bora's 'Bangladesh Showed Way' Video

NEW DELHI (AGENCY)

The BJP, it believes, has proof now. More so, its national spokesperson Pradeep Bhandari who has latched onto student leader Neha Bora's "Bangladesh showed us the way" comment, claiming this is an "open admission of regime change".

The 29-year-old student leader, who studied at Delhi University before beginning a doctorate at Jawaharlal Nehru University's School of Arts and Aesthetics, in an undated interview is heard saying that the Gen Z movement that India is witnessing first began in Bangladesh, New Delhi's strategic partner and a close ally crucial to its border security, particularly in the north-eastern states.

"The Gen Z movement we are seeing everywhere



in this country first started in Bangladesh and congratulations to you for showing us the way and extending solidarity to the young people of this country," she is heard saying in the clip shared by the BJP leader.

Bangladesh prime minister Sheikh Hasina's dramatic ouster on 5 August 2024 followed weeks of student-led protests which spiralled into deadly, nationwide unrest. Bora highlight-

ed that India, like Bangladesh, is fighting for restoration of "democratic and voter rights" in India as it protests against Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar over alleged electoral malpractices. "We know that the movement that began in Bangladesh was for democratic and voter rights. Today the movement that the young people are participating in and leading is also

a movement for democratic and voting rights," she said.

"We know that the fight that you fight against religious fundamentalism in your country is also the fight that Gen Z and the young people of this country are fighting today," she added. The BJP spokesperson's assessment stems from this very clip, concluding that this an "open admission for regime change".

"Rahul Gandhi and his entire ecosystem do not wish to offer mere political resistance; they aim for regime change. In an interview, Neha Bora stated that she is inspired by the Gen Z-led movement in Bangladesh, and they intend to replicate in India what took place in Bangladesh," Bhandari, who is aggressively shouting in the video, claimed.

Room to protest : Jantar Mantar denotified, alternatives costly-distant

NEW DELHI (AGENCY)

Delhi Police Commissioner Anurag Kumar, after a discussion with a Home Ministry committee, denotified Jantar Mantar as a recognised protest site on the morning of October 12. The standing order essentially removed a space that has seen multiple protests for decades, ever since the original protest site was shifted from the Boat Club. In place of the centrally located Jantar Mantar, barely a stone's throw from Lutyens' Zone, where multiple national institutions, including Parliament, stand, three other spaces have been offered for future protests: Ramlika Maidan in Central Delhi, CBD Ground in Shahdara and Burari Ground in North West



Delhi. The closest to Jantar Mantar Ramlika Maidan has witnessed demonstrations and political upheavals for decades. Spanning 12 acres, the space can hold 50,000 people at full capacity, a massive jump from the 1,000 allowed at Jantar Mantar. According to a PTI report, Ramlika Maidan has been booked for almost the entire year, with only three

booking dates remaining unblocked. The report states that officials said only December 29, 30 and 31 are available for booking in 2026.

Moreover, the Municipal Corporation of Delhi-managed park allows booking only through payment. The report states that the booking rate for the ground is Rs 50,000 per day,

Spanning 12 acres, the space can hold 50,000 people at full capacity, a massive jump from the 1,000 allowed at Jantar Mantar

plus a refundable Rs 55,000 security deposit. The initial outlay, including taxes, comes to Rs 1.21 lakh for a day's booking. The CBD Ground at Shahdara, around 14 km from Jantar Mantar, faces a similar problem. Because the venue is famous for multiple religious and cultural events, including weddings, protests struggle to secure a slot during the peak festive season. An official said Ramlika gathering for Navratri have blocked much

of the venue. "Future bookings have not yet been intimated, but we will have to talk to the appropriate authorities regarding how protests will be handled here," he said. cShahdara DCP, Rajendra Prasad Meena also stressed upon the high congestion prevailing in the area that would require more specific checks and balances.

"The CBD ground falls under the jurisdiction of the Anand Vihar police station. This location is highly congested, surrounded by various malls and heavy traffic movement. Regarding protests or programs, a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) is currently being formulated in accordance with directives from Police Headquarters (PHQ), and necessary

approvals or No Objection Certificates (NOCs) will be required. Anyone wishing to stage a protest must take formal permission from the police station and strictly follow the established SOP," he said. The ground sits in the middle of a busy commercial district, and residents and commuters are concerned about how protests will affect their daily lives. It is surrounded by a five-star hotel and two shopping malls. "This will cause a lot of issues for all of us, especially for the ones who stay here. Daily commuting will become a pressing issue," said Rajesh Sharma, a resident. Burari Ground, also known as Nirankari Ground, is located about 20 km from Jantar Mantar and spans around 50 acres.

Open Search

EDITORIAL

The street-corner goons

In every city and every neighbourhood, there seems to be a local goon who gathers a group of people around him and extorts money from shopkeepers and wealthy residents. Intimidating and threatening ordinary people becomes his way of life. Gradually, he turns into a ‘hero’ in the eyes of certain sections of society. His influence spreads from his own neighbourhood to other localities, and he accumulates enormous amounts of ill-gotten wealth.

With this money, he makes donations to political parties, giving more generously to whichever party is in power. Eventually, he purchases a party ticket, contests an election and even wins. One day, he may go on to become a minister in the government! The party knows that he possesses both financial resources and a network of supporters capable of mobilising votes.

After becoming a minister, he begins extorting money from traders and industrialists. He donates ten per cent of the money collected through extortion and presents himself as a great philanthropist. Unfortunately, all these practices are part of a section of our society. They have continued for centuries and, sadly, may continue in the future as well. But what happens when a person of this kind becomes the leader of a country? He begins threatening other nations and assumes that he alone possesses wisdom and intelligence. Armed with power, he says whatever he pleases and attempts to intimidate others. Leaders of weaker countries may bow before him, but some have the courage to stand up to the lion and confront him. If these observations fit any world leader particularly well today, the name that comes to mind is US President Donald Trump.

After winning a second term, Trump began threatening both neighbouring countries and nations far away. Some countries, including India, were unable to stand up to him effectively. He sought to get his way and, according to the argument presented here, pressured some countries into purchasing what the writer describes as obsolete warships. He imposed tariffs on neighbouring countries such as Mexico and Canada. He even went so far as to suggest that Canada should become the 51st state of the United States. Trump seemed to forget that while Mexico and Canada import various goods from the United States, America also imports a wide range of goods from these countries. Canada and Mexico responded by imposing retaliatory tariffs on American imports, demonstrating to Trump that they, too, were capable of standing their ground. The courage displayed by Canada and Mexico in confronting the United States was, in the writer’s view, lacking in India. India reduced import duties on electric vehicles and alcoholic beverages imported from the United States. Moreover, in the presence of India’s Prime Minister, the BRICS organisation was declared ‘dead’. It is worth remembering that India is one of the founding members of this organisation.

India has rarely faced such a public humiliation. According to the writer, the insult inflicted by Trump has tarnished India’s standing and reputation on the international stage.

Storm signals

AMITABH MATTOO

In 1992, the cerebral diplomat-historian, Dennis Kux, described India and the United States of America as “Estranged Democracies” in his chronicle of bilateral relations during the Cold War. Values matched, he concluded, but strategic differences drew them apart. Today, India and the US have never had greater reasons to be friends: there is an unprecedented convergence of both values and interests. And yet, we are witnessing what may be the lowest point in New Delhi’s engagement with Washington since the end of the Cold War. Consider these announcements from Donald Trump’s White House last week. On October 9, the US president claimed to have struck a “diesel deal” with Vladimir Putin over the phone, promising that sanctions on Moscow would be lifted before the call had gone cold. Yet he has threatened India with up to 100% tariffs for buying the same Russian energy; the Lindsey Graham Act of 2026 sanctioning Russia and Iran could come into effect on October 18. The day before, on October 8, Washington shut Infosys, TCS, Wipro and HCLTech out of America’s green-card pipeline, charging them with abusing the visa system. Indian talent was the one export America always seemed to want. That certainty is gone. The fundamental convergence of interests is not in dispute. We are both large, argumentative democracies and neither of us wants a totalitarian China to dominate Asia. We have a defence relationship that would have been unthinkable a quarter of a century ago. Our economies are bound together by technology and capital flows. Our diaspora is on American campuses, on American boards and, more recently, in the mainstream of American politics. The architecture of a deep and consequential partnership is firmly in place, the strategic logic is irresistible, and the social foundations are robust.

Yet President Trump seems determined to test, strain and, indeed, undermine every pillar on which this relationship rests. The White House has embraced Pakistan’s military establishment and has repeatedly claimed that Trump mediated between India and Pakistan during Operation Sindoor. From punitive measures for buying Russian oil to seemingly endless negotiations over a trade agreement, from tariff threats to an increasingly inhospitable immigration policy (a new H-1B visa petition now carries a \$100,000 fee), Trump has torn a gaping hole through the relationship. The irony is striking. The US needs India more than ever as a partner in shaping the Asian balance of power. Almost every serious-minded analyst knows that the idea of a G-2 is a chimera. And yet the president often behaves as if India were an adversary to be disciplined rather than a partner to be cultivated.

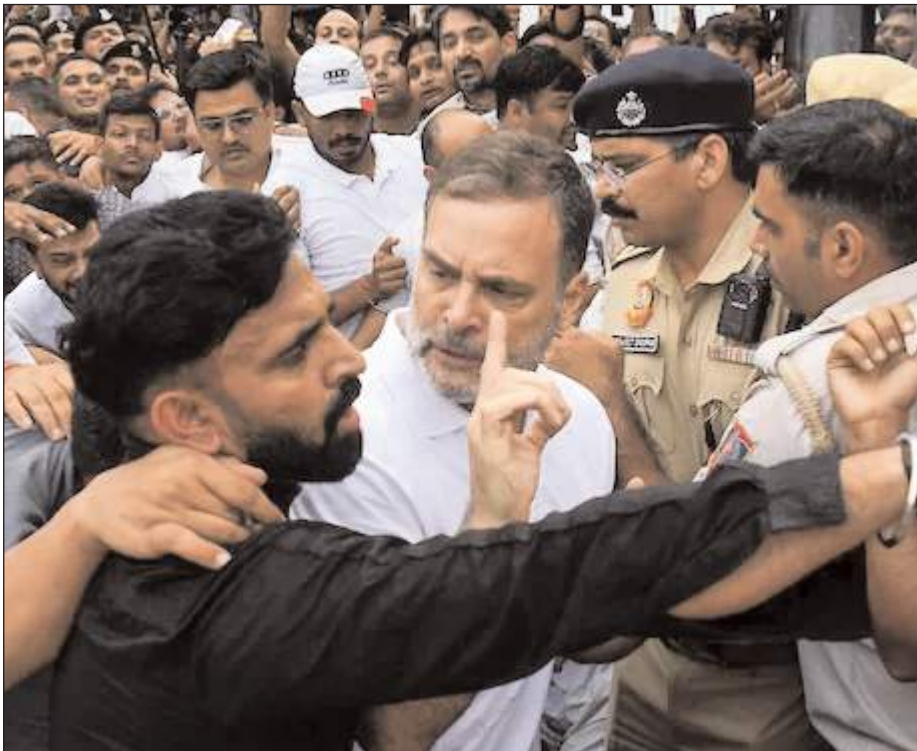
Admittedly, the relationship has been on a roller-coaster before. There have been four earlier episodes of severe stress. The first came in the 1950s, when Dwight Eisenhower and John Dulles armed Pakistan and contemptuously described India’s non-alignment as immoral. The second came in 1971, when Richard Nixon and Henry Kissinger backed Pakistan’s generals during the Bangladesh war and sent an aircraft carrier into the Bay of Bengal as a warning to India. The third came in 1993, when the then assistant-secretary of state, Robin Raphel, questioned the accession of Jammu and Kashmir to India.

BHARTI MISHRA NATH

The INDIA bloc's campaign against the Election Commission's SIR of electoral rolls is rooted in concerns about voter deletions and the integrity of electoral processes

Indian politics has never been short of theatrics. The recent INDIA bloc protest march to the Supreme Court against Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar and SIR (Special Intensive Revision) was full of such spectacles. Congress leaders and siblings Rahul Gandhi and Priyanka Gandhi Vadra have been at the centre of demonstrations in which confrontation with the police, dramatic roadside protests, and emotionally charged gestures have attracted considerable public attention. Footage showing Rahul Gandhi apparently elbowing a fellow protester and pulling back the ‘kurta’ of his own party chief minister - Karnataka Chief Minister DK Shivakumar - has added another layer to the controversy.

The opposition alliance had come together to condemn the police crackdown on October 10-11 protesters - organised independently by youth and student movements - the CJP (Cockroach Janta Party) led by Abhijeet Dipke and left-wing students like AISA (All India Students' Association). When political protest increasingly revolves around physical jostling, confrontational gestures, viral videos, and carefully captured moments of defiance, an uncomfortable question arises - is the Opposition communicating a political message, or is the spectacle becoming the message itself? Secondly, isn't the CJP - the propagator of the recent Gen Z agitation - being sidelined by the INDIA bloc? Rahul Gandhi has made the protection of constitutional institutions, electoral integrity, and democratic accountability central to his political messaging. The INDIA bloc's campaign against the Election Commission's SIR of elec-



toral rolls is rooted in concerns about voter deletions and the integrity of electoral processes. These are serious issues that deserve examination through evidence, parliamentary scrutiny, and judicial review.

However, the public's attention shifted rapidly from the substance of the protest to the behaviour of its participants. When television screens and social media feeds focus on who pushed whom, who was pulled back, and who stood guard over whom, the original political demand risks becoming secondary. The controversy surrounding Rahul Gandhi and Shivakumar illustrates this dilemma. Shivakumar is not merely another party worker in a crowd - he is the elected chief minister of Karnataka. Any footage appearing to show him being physically pulled back by a senior colleague naturally invites questions about personal space, leadership conduct, and the

treatment of fellow party members. Of course, Shivakumar on Tuesday denied being pushed by Rahul Gandhi during a protest march to the Supreme Court. But visuals speak louder. As Leader of Opposition, demanding accountability from powerful institutions, Rahul Gandhi must understand that his own conduct will be scrutinised just as closely. Another Gandhi family member, Priyanka Gandhi Vadra's participation, has added an intensely personal dimension to the demonstrations. During the Delhi protest, she lay on the road holding a copy of the Constitution while Rahul Gandhi stood nearby and challenged police personnel attempting to move the protesters. His reported declaration - 'This is my sister' - became one of the defining moments of the confrontation. For supporters, the scene represented solidarity between siblings standing against the use of state power. However, for

many, it turned a political demonstration into a family-centred spectacle. Both interpretations point to a larger problem. When the Gandhi siblings become the principal characters in every protest, the movement's institutional demands can become inseparable from their personal political image. The public may remember the dramatic exchange between a brother and sister more readily than the details of electoral-roll revision. That is a communications challenge for the Congress. The party must explain why its campaign matters to ordinary citizens who may be less interested in the political fortunes of individual leaders than in whether their own names remain on electoral rolls and whether the election process is transparent.

The emergence of the youth-led CJP movement has introduced a distinctive form of political satire into the debate. Its protests and symbolic performances

have attracted attention through humour, irreverence, and unconventional messaging. The CJP's opposition to the Election Commission has also intersected with the broader campaign against SIR. The comparison becomes particularly relevant when established parties like Congress and the INDIA bloc adopt similar forms of theatrical protest but hesitate to give credit to the CJP. In fact, on social media, some Congress supporters are openly discrediting the CJP and see it as a plot to undermine Rahul Gandhi's youth base. The CJP leaders' absence from Rahul Gandhi's tea party, thrown for all protesters (including the INDIA bloc members and AISA leaders) the same evening, has brought much glee for the government.

Ultimately, the Gandhi siblings and the INDIA bloc face a question that extends well beyond a protest or controversial video - can they make institutional accountability the centre of their politics without allowing confrontation to overshadow it? For a political leader who aspires to challenge Prime Minister Narendra Modi, every public gesture carries significance. Rahul Gandhi can't afford the grand image of an 'entitled prince' running on the street just because he happens to be a fifth-generational political dynast. Today, in a few seconds' time, people can make out the intentions of politicians. Gandhi siblings are enjoying the adrenaline that comes with street protests - but they just don't belong to that genre. India needs an Opposition that can challenge authority fearlessly and scrutinise institutions rigorously. The CJP, which has successfully challenged the until now invincible NDA government, can't be left in the cold by opposition parties.

Chinese duplicity to the fore



ment that also need deeper analysis. It said, “China has never recognised the so-called ‘Union Territory of Ladakh’ unilaterally and illegally established by India.”

The immediate questions that arise from this comment are: Does Beijing have a say in any reconfiguration of the administrative set-up of India? Isn't that a matter for India alone to decide? Did Beijing object when the state of Telangana was created from the erstwhile Andhra Pradesh in 2014? Clearly not. Then how come Beijing feels it had a say when India created the Union Territories of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh in 2019? How can China object to the abrogation of Article 370, which was a domestic administrative arrangement of India? When Article 370 was abrogated, Delhi had very clearly

conveyed to Beijing that this development was India's internal matter with no implications for the India-China boundary question. Disputes about the boundary would need to be discussed and negotiated between the two countries. Even then, possibly at Pakistan's prodding, Beijing had taken exception to the creation of the two Union Territories. China has never conveyed to India why it is opposed to the termination of the special arrangement under Article 370. Perhaps it is time for Beijing to be upfront about this matter and tell India what its objections are. It is likely that the Chinese don't want to do so as their position on what is a domestic Indian matter may get exposed.

Of course, we must keep in mind that when India converted Arunachal

Pradesh from a Union Territory into a state in 1987, China had objected to that move also. Even today, Beijing strenuously objects whenever Indian leaders pay visits to that state of India. It is clear that those objections emanate from the fact that China lays claim to the entire state, whereas the reality is that India has actual control of almost the whole territory — in most places right up to the McMahon Line. Is it this principle that is being applied to Ladakh? Is China arguing that until the boundary is delineated and demarcated, it will have a veto over what India does in what is ostensibly its own territory and which is not even being disputed by China? This is a far-fetched argument, and even Beijing must see how hollow it rings. This brings us to the

third aspect of the Chinese Foreign Ministry's statement, which states, “... does not change the fact that the western sector of the India-China boundary belongs to China.” This is exactly the point. India disputes what China believes is its territory. Conversely, China disagrees with what India thinks is its own territory. That is why there is a boundary question or a boundary dispute.

Now, China appears to be unilaterally saying that what the two countries have broadly defined as the western sector of the boundary is Chinese territory. This may be a methodology to reiterate one's position on the issue, but it is rather childish. The way to proceed on these issues is to sit across the table and have a frank talk about them. However, since China made its military moves in eastern Ladakh in 2020, even such talking has become very difficult, time-consuming and protracted.

Beijing will be a real superpower in the making if it were to practically, realistically and candidly discuss such issues with India rather than indulging in name-calling, innuendo and diplomatese. Rather than flexing its muscles and attempting to exhibit its comprehensive national power, China should adopt a practical, solution-finding approach. This may not lead to a resolution of the boundary dispute between India and China, but it may lay the foundation for a more straightforward, direct and simpler relationship between the two neighbours.

India's Next Growth Story is Being Built in Bharat Sankalp Bharat Returns to Lucknow

LUCKNOW (AGENCY)

India's next generation of entrepreneurs is emerging from its smaller cities, towns and villages, building businesses that solve local problems and serve national markets. Bringing this ecosystem together, Aavishkaar Foundation and Intelcap will host the third edition of Sankalp Bharat on October 28 at Clarks Avadh, Lucknow. Themed "The Bharat Story: Climate, Culture & Compute", the summit will convene over 600 founders, investors, institutions and policymakers to explore the opportunities shaping India's next growth story.

The summit opens with Manu Nair, founder of reusable-rocket company EtherealX. Bharat Bol, the founder series, will feature Surya Prakash Yadav (UnORG, Lucknow), Tanutejas Saraswat



(ShopKirana, Indore, acquired by Udaan), Divya Hegde (Baeru, Udupi), Prof. Nagaraja Prakasam (Nativelead, Madurai), Mausmi Ambastha (Shifu Foundation, Patna) and Tushar Suhalka (Regrip, Jaipur/Gurugram).

Vineet Rai, Founder and Vice Chairman, Aavishkaar Group, said, "The people closest to a problem are building India's best solutions, in climate, space tech, AI and livelihoods alike. Our job is to bring them the capital, markets and institutions to turn a good idea from a

small town into a national company." Aavishkaar Foundation's programmes across 25 districts of Eastern Uttar Pradesh have reached 30,000+ students in 500+ government schools and colleges. Its Entrepreneur Investment Programme has backed 40 first-generation entrepreneurs, 80% women, including Pravidhaan Farmer Producer Company in Gorakhpur, supporting 2,000 farmers, and Shiksha Saathi in Varanasi, connecting 237+ schools and 6,700+ learners. At Sankalp

Bharat, the EIP's young entrepreneurs will also present their ideas before a jury of investors, policymakers and established founders.

Lisa Rodricks, CEO, Aavishkaar Foundation, said, "What is exciting is the problems these entrepreneurs are choosing to solve. They are building businesses around real needs in manufacturing, agriculture, skilling and livelihoods. Sankalp Bharat gives us a chance to put these stories and their potential on a larger stage as we create the

next phase of India's entrepreneurial growth." Sessions spanning impact investing, venture capital, capital markets and CSR will examine how appropriate financing can reach underserved enterprises, particularly women-led businesses.

The programme includes an angel investing primer for Uttar Pradesh, an NSE-led Social Stock Exchange masterclass, Ajay Sharma of Edelweiss Public Alternatives speaking on "The Two Indias: Which One Are You Building?", and a UN Women ARISE workshop helping women SME owners access finance. Climate: GIZ and Intelcap will convene government and financial institutions for a closed-door roundtable on Financing Climate Adaptation, identifying opportunities for GIZ's i-Adapt.

In largest FDI deal, Fairfax to buy 60.72% in IDBI for Rs 53,000 crore

NEW DELHI (AGENCY)

The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) on Wednesday approved the long-awaited strategic restructuring of IDBI Bank, clearing the way for Canada's Fairfax Financial Holdings to acquire a 60.72 per cent stake in the lender for about Rs 53,000 crore. The government described the transaction as the largest foreign direct investment (FDI) deal in India's banking sector. The Cabinet approved Fairfax subsidiary M/s 10955230 Canada Inc as the strategic buyer for the government's 30.48 per cent stake, valued at about Rs 26,620 crore, and LIC's 30.24 per cent stake worth around Rs 26,440 crore. Fairfax will acquire the shares at Rs 81 apiece, above the benchmark fair value of Rs 75.99 determined by two independent valuers.

Following the transaction, the government will



retain a 15 per cent stake while LIC will hold 19 per cent, taking their combined shareholding in the restructured entity to 34 per cent. The Centre has termed the transaction a "strategic restructuring" rather than a complete privatisation, as both shareholders will continue to retain a significant minority stake.

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman described the deal as a milestone, saying that after supporting IDBI Bank's recovery, the government was enabling its next phase of growth through foreign investment while retaining a minority holding. The government said the restructuring would bring fresh growth capital into the banking system, support economic expansion and

improve credit access for micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs).

As part of the approved framework, CSB Bank, in which Fairfax currently owns nearly 40 per cent, will either be merged with IDBI Bank within two years or Fairfax will have to exit the Kerala-based lender to comply with regulatory requirements. The restructuring will be implemented in accordance with RBI, Sebi and other applicable norms. The transaction will still require regulatory approvals, including clearance from the Reserve Bank of India, which will conduct a "fit and proper" assessment of the new promoter, as well as approvals from the Competition Commission of India and other statutory authorities. Fairfax will also be required to make an open offer to public shareholders unless exempted by Sebi. Under RBI norms, promoter shareholding in a bank cannot exceed 26 per cent.

MAHE nature conference on infectious diseases inaugurated in manipal

MANIPAL (AGENCY)

The MAHE Nature Conference on "Meeting the Challenge of Infectious Diseases in a Changing World" was inaugurated in Manipal, Karnataka, on October 14, 2026. Hosted by the Manipal Academy of Higher Education (MAHE), an Institution of Eminence Deemed to be University, and held for the first time in India, the three-day conference is organised in partnership with Nature Medicine, Nature Microbiology, Nature Health and Nature Communications, and will continue until October 16.

The conference brings together researchers, clinicians, public health experts, policymakers, and industry



representatives from 20 countries to share scientific findings, examine emerging research, and strengthen collaboration on the prevention and control of infectious diseases. The conference addresses critical global health priorities, including emerging and re-emerging pathogens, antimicrobial resistance (AMR), pandemic pre-

paredness, disease surveillance, diagnostics, therapeutics, vaccination strategies, and the One Health approach.

Addressing the inaugural session, Dr Sharath K. Rao, Vice Chancellor, MAHE, stressed the importance of strengthening global health security in the face of emerging infectious disease threats. "Human beings

have become increasingly adept at crossing borders, but pathogens have become even more adept. They do not need passports or visas, reminding us that infectious diseases are a global challenge that transcends geographical and disciplinary boundaries. The COVID-19 pandemic demonstrated that health security is inseparable from human security and underscored the need for stronger surveillance, preparedness, and equitable access to healthcare," he emphasised. Dr Rao further noted that addressing infectious disease challenges requires collaboration across medicine, pharmacy, engineering, data science, behavioural sciences and public health policy.

India, southeast asia lead APAC office expansion as firms prioritise portfolio resilience

NEW DELHI (AGENCY)

India and Southeast Asia stand out as the most growth-orientated cluster across the Asia Pacific region, with occupiers prioritising portfolio resilience, talent acquisition, and future-ready facilities. The shift comes as corporate workplace models broadly stabilise into office-centric structures.

According to the 2027 Colliers Asia Pacific Workplace Insights report, 82 per cent of surveyed organisations across the region now operate office-centric models. Furthermore, 80 per cent of occupiers project no meaningful changes to their established workplace policies over the coming 12



months. Corporate real estate strategies reflect a sustained demand for physical offices primarily driven by productivity and business performance, followed by collaboration and innovation. Within the regional landscape, occupiers across India and Southeast Asia demonstrate an active commitment to business development despite broader geopolitical risks. Approximately 34 per cent

of organisations within this specific cluster actively pursue growth and expand operations, guided primarily by cost efficiency and the availability of skilled personnel. "India remains a high-growth office market in the APAC region, underpinned by a resilient economy and sustained occupier expansion," said Arpit Mehrotra, Managing Director, Office Services, Colliers India. "Beyond

strong demand prospects, occupiers increasingly view the office as a strategic enabler of business performance, talent attraction and collaboration," Mehrotra added. "This shift is reflected in the APAC survey, where 21% of occupiers in India and Southeast Asia prioritise upgrading to higher-quality office spaces with the same proportion focused on reconfiguring their offices."

The broader survey also counters assumptions that artificial intelligence leads directly to real estate downsizing. All surveyed respondents indicate that artificial intelligence creates specialised roles requiring distinct technical skill sets and modified collaborative models.

IMF backs India's updated GDP methodology, calls revision 'welcome development'

WASHINGTON (AGENCY)

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) on Thursday said India's updated GDP calculation methodology aligns with best practices and is entirely consistent with IMF's advice. Calling India's GDP base revision a "welcome development," Krishna Srinivasan, Director of the IMF's Asia and Pacific Department, told reporters in Bangkok that the updated methodology completely matches the advice provided by the IMF's statistics department.

"These revisions to the methodology are entirely consistent with what the advice we've been giving them, including from our statistics department," Srinivasan said. He said India had also issued a note to explain the revisions to the GDP methodology. "In terms of GDP numbers, what they have done is con-



sistent with good practices. I would say there's always room for improvement, but let's recognise the good work done by MOSPI for improving GDP statistics," he said. The IMF official said India faced the energy shock with strong fundamentals and has responded well to it, and that pressure on its exchange rate should not be read as a sign of economic failure.

The exchange rate is "a function of global interest rates, investor risk appetite, and oil prices", he said, adding that the pressure on the exchange rate does not point to a real disconnect with growth.

BPTP Unveils 'The boulevard at green oaks', a high-street retail destination in gurugram's Sector 70A

GURUGRAM (AGENCY)

BPTP, one of the established real estate developers in the National Capital Region, has announced the launch of The Boulevard at Green Oaks, a high-street retail destination located in Sector 70A, Gurugram, adjacent to the 100-acre Astaire Gardens ecosystem. Designed around the evolving needs of modern neighbourhoods, the development brings together everyday retail, food and beverage, wellness and lifestyle experiences within a pedestrian-friendly commercial environment.

The Boulevard at Green Oaks forms part of the wider Astaire Gardens ecosystem, with immediate residential communities including BPTP Visionnaire, BPTP Fortuna, BPTP Green Oaks and BPTP Pedestal creating an established and growing residential base. Strategically located in



Sector 70A, Gurugram, The Boulevard at Green Oaks enjoys prominent frontage on a 24-metre-wide road, with convenient access to Sectors 68-72, the Southern Peripheral Road (SPR), and Golf Course Extension Road, connecting the development to established residential communities across the area.

Conceptualised as a neighbourhood-centric retail destination, The Boulevard at Green Oaks comprises 52 units ranging

from 612 sq. ft. to 1,217 sq. ft., with opportunities for cafes and restaurants, grocery, beauty and wellness, pharmacy and neighbourhood services. The project has been planned around the idea that contemporary retail is increasingly about convenience, accessibility and experience. With landscaped walkways, open retail spaces and a modern facade, it is envisioned as a vibrant community destination where residents can shop, dine, socialise and

unwind in a well-integrated setting. The development has been designed with a focus on premium aesthetics, functionality and sustainability.

Its clad facade with glass railings offers an elegant and durable architectural finish, while the building is IGBC registered, reflecting an emphasis on enhanced sustainability and environmental performance. The project also features high-capacity premium lifts with a metal finish, designed to offer durability and an enhanced user experience. Surface parking has been provided to ensure convenient and hassle-free access for visitors and occupants. Commenting on the launch, Amaan Chawla, President, BPTP, said, "The Boulevard at Green Oaks reflects our approach to creating commercial destinations that respond to how urban communities live and engage today.

India's private capex likely to remain sluggish in FY27 despite strong economic growth

NEW DELHI (AGENCY)

Private capital expenditure in India is likely to remain subdued in FY27 despite strong economic growth, leaving government spending and sectors such as energy transition and automation to drive investment, as per a report by Systematix Institutional Equities. The report highlighted that private investment has failed to sustain its post-pandemic recovery despite several government measures aimed at encouraging companies to expand production capacity and increase spending.

However, "After peaking at Rs 2.6 billion per enterprise in FY23, private capex has fallen 38% to a provisional Rs 1.6 billion in FY26, with intended spending for FY27 showing no improvement," the report said. According to a capital expenditure (capex) survey



conducted by Systematix, "Overall, private capex per enterprise across 17 industries declined from Rs 1.8 billion in FY22 to Rs 1.6 billion in FY25 and remained unchanged in FY26." The report noted that private investment witnessed a strong recovery after the pandemic, but provisional spending for FY26 and planned investment for FY27 stand at Rs 1.6 billion each, significantly below the levels recorded during the recovery period. "The post-pandemic surge in private investment now appears less a durable capex upcycle and more a cyclical rebound from the extraordinary contraction of the pandemic years," it said.

RGIPT and bureau of Indian standards sign MoU to advance research

AMETHI (AGENCY)

The Rajiv Gandhi Institute of Petroleum Technology (RGIPT), an Institution of National Importance under the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas, Government of India, signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) at its Jais campus in Amethi, Uttar Pradesh, on 13 October 2026. The MoU was signed by Prof. Harish Hirani, Director, RGIPT, and Ms. Sneha Lata, Scientist-G and Deputy Director General (Central), BIS, in the presence of RGIPT's Deans, Heads of Departments and Assistant Deans. The BIS delegation also included Shri Piyush Mahadeorao Wasekar, Scientist-E/Director and Head,



Lucknow Branch Office; Shri Ritwik Anand, Scientist-E and Director; and Shri Jaisankar Mishra, Consultant (Standardization Activity). The MoU establishes a framework for cooperation in standardization, research and development, conformity assessment, technical capacity building and academic engagement. It is intended to strengthen the connection between scientific research, technological innovation, and the development and implementation of standards. Under the agreement, the two institu-

tions will explore collaborative R&D projects related to standardization and conformity assessment participation in national and international technical committees; and joint seminars, conferences, workshops, symposia, lectures and training programmes. The MoU also provides for the exchange of technical publications, research information and educational resources.

An important area of collaboration is the integration of standardization and conformity assessment concepts into RGIPT's academic programmes. BIS will provide inputs for the development of teaching modules to help students and researchers understand the role of standards in product quality, safety, reliability, testing and technological development.

HSBC India commits INR 200 crore to advance financial literacy

MUMBAI (AGENCY)

HSBC India today announced an INR 200 crore, four-year flagship philanthropy programme to strengthen financial literacy across India. The initiative will help communities move from access to active and informed participation in the formal financial system. The programme will build the knowledge, confidence and practical skills people need to use formal and digital financial services safely, make informed decisions, protect themselves from fraud and strengthen their livelihoods and financial resilience. The programme was inaugurated by Pam Kaur, Group Chief Financial Officer, HSBC Holding plc

together with Jo Miyake, Head-Banking, Asia and the Middle East, HSBC; Julian Wentzel, Group Chief Sustainability Officer, HSBC; Hitendra Dave, CEO, HSBC India; and Aloka Majumdar, MD, Head of Sustainability, HSBC India. The programme, from 2026 to 2030, will be delivered nationwide through non-profit, academic and research partners. It will focus particularly on women, youth, migrant workers, persons with disabilities, low-income households and first-time users of formal financial services. An Advisory Group of eminent professionals and sector experts will provide independent guidance, helping translate the programme's ambition into practical, scalable and measurable outcomes.

Artificial intelligence may create more jobs than it replaces in India : Goyal



NEW DELHI (AGENCY)

Union Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal on Thursday said artificial intelligence (AI) may create more jobs than it replaces in India, even as the technology changes the nature of existing employment and requires workers to develop new skills. Addressing students at Shri Ram College of Commerce (SRCC) during an event on "Pathways to Viksit Bharat", Goyal said India should embrace emerging technologies rather than fear their impact on

employment. "I think artificial intelligence will not reduce jobs. It may actually increase the number of jobs available for our young Indian brothers and sisters," he said. His remarks come amid growing concerns over the impact of AI on employment, particularly in technology and services, which are major sources of jobs in India. Goyal

acknowledged that the transition to AI-driven workplaces could bring short-term uncertainty as existing roles change and workers need to acquire new skills. "There may be uncertainty for a short period of time as jobs get redesigned, as we train and skill young India to become developers of agents, to become masters of cybersecurity.

NORTHERN RAILWAY NOTICE INVITING TENDER	
Name of work and its location	107-SRDEE-G-DL-2026-27 Provision of ABC/Insulated Single core conductor/ UG Cable for Railway colonies in the jurisdiction of SSE/PS/PNP & SSE/PS/KDE section (Phase-I).
Approx. cost of the works in	Rs. 36509341.00/-
Address of the office	Sr. Div. Elect. Engineer/General, DRM Office, Delhi Division, Northern Railway, State Entry Road, New Delhi, 110055
Earnest Money	Rs. 730200.00/-
Last Date & time of submission of tender	06/11/2026, 13.00 Hrs.
Opening of tender	06/11/2026, 13.00 Hrs.
Website & notice board	www.ireps.gov.in & Sr. Div. Elect. Engineer/General, New Delhi.
SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE 3599/26	

Tourism Minister Rajesh agarwal arrived to wish assembly speaker Dr. Raman singh on his birthday

Gave a heartfelt visit to Shankar Nagar residence and wished him a happy birthday, good health and long life

RAIPUR: OPEN SEARCH

Chhattisgarh Tourism and Culture Minister Shri Rajesh Agrawal today paid a hearty visit to Chhattisgarh Assembly Speaker and former Chief Minister Dr. Raman Singh at his residence in Shankar Nagar, Raipur, and extended heartfelt birthday greetings and best wishes. On this occasion, Minister Shri Agrawal wished Dr. Raman Singh good health, long life, happiness, prosperity, and a happy life.

Tourism Minister Shri Rajesh Agrawal, while wishing Dr. Raman Singh a happy birthday with the Sanskrit verse "Jivet Sharadah Shatam," said that may God grant him a healthy, long, and successful life. May he continue to work tirelessly for public service, social welfare, and the progress of Chhattisgarh, and may we all continue to receive his love, blessings, and guidance. Minister Shri Agarwal



said that Dr. Raman Singh's extensive political and administrative experience is an important asset for Chhattisgarh. In his public life, he has always prioritized public service, good governance, and the state's overall development.

During his long tenure as Chief Minister, the state's development took a new direction, and efforts were made to bring positive changes to the lives of ordinary citizens through various public welfare initiatives.

Mr. Agrawal said that Dr. Raman Singh's simple, easygoing, and friendly personality and his commitment to public welfare are inspiring to all those working in public life. His experience, vision, and guidance have played a vital

role in advancing the state's development journey. Currently, as Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, he is making a significant contribution to strengthening democratic traditions, parliamentary decorum, and constitutional values.

Tourism Minister Mr. Agarwal said that the experience and guidance of senior public representatives inspires the new generation of public representatives to work with even greater dedication and commitment to public service. Dr. Raman Singh's affection and guidance have always been a source of inspiration.

Mr. Agrawal prayed to God that Dr. Raman Singh's life would always be filled with happiness, peace, prosperity, and well-being. May he continue to serve the people of Chhattisgarh in good health and long life, and may the state continue to benefit from his experience and guidance.

Goy rakhon yatra puts congress on the front food, but 'parivartan' still a road

MARNGAO: OPEN SEARACH

On turf the BJP long considered its own, Congress's Goy Rakhon Yatra has whipped up euphoria among party workers and seized the early momentum ahead of the 2027 assembly polls. Voter outreach through constituency tours has been the hallmark of BJP's election campaigns. In 1999, North Goa MP Shripad Naik led the "Sampark yatra", which took the party's tally from four seats to 10. Manohar Parrikar immortalised the exercise by staying at karyakartas' homes during his Jan Sampark Abhiyan of 2011, with 'parivartan' (change) as its slogan. It endeared him, and in effect his party, to the grassroots, and fetched BJP an absolute majority for the first time in 2012 21 seats, up from 14.

Congress is now determined to beat BJP at its own game, and BJP has responded with its 'Sarkar Tumchea Dari' initiative to counter



the Opposition's campaign over illegal land conversion, corruption, unemployment and drugs. Whether Congress can sustain the momentum against BJP's blitzkrieg is anybody's guess.

Political observers agree the yatra has changed the Opposition's fortunes, but differ on how long the gains will last. "Congress needed something like this," said academican and political observer Manoj Kamat. "The voters were fragmented and there was no movement for four and a half years. The instrument was right. The question is whether the timing was right, and it was not," Kamat

said the party is "not a united house" with 2-3 ticket aspirants emerging in every constituency. "Unless you decide on a particular leader for a constituency, you are telling everybody they will get the ticket. That is not how it works," he said. He also said Congress sent the wrong signal to potential allies. While GFP's Vijai Sardesai kept calling for a grand alliance, Congress appeared uninterested, and AAP is still averse to having any truck with Congress. "The first question people ask is why the grand alliance isn't happening," Kamat said, and Congress has no convincing answers.

17-year-old to be tried as adult in minor's rape-murder case in assam

DISPUR (AGENCY)

A Juvenile Justice Board in Assam's Hailakandi district has ordered that a 17-year-old accused in the alleged rape and murder of a 16-year-old girl face trial as an adult. The order comes more than two months after the girl was found dead at her home in the Aloichora area on the night of August 1. The case had triggered protests across the Barak Valley, with demonstrators blocking National Highway 6 and demanding stringent punishment for those responsible. Police said the accused was 17 years and five months old at the time of the incident. He was detained during the first week of August as investigators pursued the case. The board's principal magistrate considered a psychological assessment, a preliminary assessment report



from Silchar Medical College and Hospital, and a report submitted by the investigating officer before passing the order. A case was registered under provisions of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, including Section 65(1), relating to rape of a girl under 16, and Section 103(1), relating to murder. Relevant provisions of the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act were also invoked. A Special Investigation Team (SIT) was constituted to investigate the case. Police subsequently filed a chargesheet against five accused in September, including the juvenile, after examining forensic and medico-legal evidence.

Assam man, 2 sons found dead inside iocked house, cops suspect murder-suicide

DIBRUGARH (AGENCY)

The bodies of a 42-year-old man and his two minor children were recovered from a locked house at Kakawani Block village in Tingkhong in the Dibrugarh district on Wednesday in a suspected case of murder-suicide. Those who died have been identified as Bablu Kairi and his two children, Ujjwal Kairi and Priyanshi Kairi, aged six and eight years.

The incident came to light after police received information about the deaths and rushed to the spot along with senior officers. According to a police official, both doors of the house were locked from inside. After following the required videography procedures, police broke open the doors and entered the house, where they found



the three bodies. "One of the children's bodies was found lying on the floor, while the bodies of the other child and the father were found hanging. We have initiated an investigation to ascertain the circumstances leading to the deaths," a police official said.

During the inspection, police found several damaged items inside the house, including a mobile phone, a metal milk container and some kitchen utensils. Investigators are examining these findings as part of the probe. According to statements from neighbours and other witnesses, Kairi's

wife had left home around one-and-a-half months ago to work outside the state. Police were informed that she had gone to Chennai for employment. The circumstances surrounding the deaths remain unclear. While a suspected murder-suicide angle is being investigated, police have not yet established the sequence of events or the precise cause of death. A forensic team examined the scene and collected evidence.

The bodies have been sent for post-mortem examination to determine the cause and approximate time of death. Police said the investigation was continuing and that statements from neighbours and other witnesses were being examined to establish what transpired inside the house.

'Difficult': Chennai Auto Drivers On Chief Minister Vijay's Free Bus Scheme

CHENNAI (AGENCY)

For an hour, ten auto-rickshaw drivers waiting at a stand in Chennai's Ashok Pillar area did not get a single passenger. They blame the expansion of free bus travel for women by Chief Minister C Joseph Vijay's government, saying more commuters are opting for buses, leaving them with fewer rides and dwindling earnings. A Pakkiri, a worried auto driver said that there many like him in Chennai who have seen their business drop by 50 percent. "I used to get 10 to 15 trips daily. Now I get 5 to 6 trips only".

"The expansion means women have more connectivity and even those working women who can afford earning fifty thousand or above avoid the auto and take the bus," he added. N Babu, another auto driver shared the impact is being



felt at home also as dwindling earnings make it harder to meet household expenses, provide for their children and repay vehicle loans. "One driver even recently committed suicide recently unable to manage", he claimed. P Nagoor Gani said he was dependent mainly on street pick ups and not on Ola or Uber. "It's getting difficult."

The complaints come as the TVK government recently expanded a popular welfare scheme of the previous DMK government. The MK

Stalin-government had introduced free bus travel for women on ordinary government buses in 2021. Vijay's government has extended the benefit to additional services, including express and rural buses, fulfilling a key poll promise.

While the scheme offers women savings on daily commutes, auto operators say the shift towards free public transport is hurting their livelihoods. Their claim of a 50 percent fall in rides could not be independently verified, and the

Dismiss himachal Govt for not fulfilling poll vows, BJP urges governor

SOLAN (AGENCY)

The BJP today attacked the Congress for failing to honour its election promises four years after All-India Congress Committee (AICC) general secretary Priyanka Vadra announced Rs 1,500 per month to women and one lakh jobs in the first Cabinet meeting at an election rally held here. The BJP requested the Governor to consider dismissing the government for failing to fulfil its poll promises, as these were not mere election slogans but promises made to the people of the state. Referring to the available district-wise data, the BJP leaders claimed that merely 35,687 women in the state with barely 309



women in Solan district have received this assistance, which was only marginally higher than the beneficiaries of Kinnaur. They questioned the local MLA and Minister for Health and Family Welfare as well as Social Justice and Empowerment DR Shandil for failing to protect the interest of women in Solan. As per the details of beneficiaries furnished by the BJP, 7,280 women from Una, 5,249 from Shimla, 4,283 from Kullu, 4,128 from Sirmour, 3,279 from Chamba, 3,254 from Bilaspur, 3,187 from Mandi, 2,233 from Kangra.

3 Indians killed in germany building fire, romanian resident held on arson suspicion

LONDON (AGENCY)

Three Indian nationals were killed in a fire at a residential building in the German city of Bochum, local media reported on Wednesday. The victims were two women aged 25 and 27, and a 26-year-old man, all Indian nationals, German public broadcaster WDR (Westdeutscher Rundfunk) reported, citing details released by Bochum police. Five other persons were also injured in the incident that occurred early on Tuesday. Their nationalities and other details were not specified in the media reports. Police have arrested a 41-year-old resident of the building on suspicion of murder. He is a Romanian national, German news channel n-tv reported, citing



the German Press Agency Deutsche Presse-Agentur (DPA). A Bochum police spokesperson told WDR that there were initial grounds for suspicion of murder against the man, who had been questioned by officers from the homicide squad. Investigators have ruled out a technical defect as the cause of the fire and suspect arson, but whether the fire was deliberately set or started accidentally remains under investigation. The fire broke out early on Tuesday in a

multi-family residential building in Bochum's Hofstede district. Emergency services were alerted around 4.15 am local time. Firefighters found the three victims dead in an apartment on the second floor. The five injured people suffered smoke inhalation and were taken to hospitals in Bochum. The firefighting operation was particularly difficult because the flames had spread upwards through the stairwell, preventing firefighters from using it to reach residents on the upper floors, WDR reported. Firefighters rescued two people using a turntable ladder, two using portable ladders and another person with a safety cushion, according to the DPA report carried.

Actor imran khan asked to ieaave india over anti-CEC protest, cops invoke Foreigners Act

MUMBAI (AGENCY)

The Mumbai Police have issued a notice to Bollywood actor Imran Khan, an American national, directing him to leave India by October 28 for allegedly violating provisions of the Immigration and Foreigners Act, officials said on Thursday.

The action follows the actor's participation in an agitation at Mumbai's August Kranti Maidan on October 10, where protesters demanded the resignation of Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar. Former BJP MP Kirit Somaiya, who had sought action against Imran



Khan after he participated in the protest, welcomed the police notice against him. "Imran Khan holds foreign citizenship and is not an Indian national. Under relevant provisions of the Foreigners/Immigration Act, foreign nationals are prohibited from participating in political protests or political activities on Indian

soil," a police official said. A formal notice directing the actor to leave the country by October 28 has been served on him, and he has received a copy of it, the police said. Further administrative procedures are underway, they added. He has acted in several films, including 'I Hate Luv Storys' (2010) and 'Mere Brother Ki Dulhan'

(2011). He recently had a cameo appearance in 'Happy Patel: Khatarnak Jasoo', a Bollywood film backed by Aamir Khan. Following the agitation last week, a video surfaced showing the actor responding to a reporter's query about his participation in the protest as he was being escorted to a police vehicle. "I have no demands. I am not part of any organisation," he said. Somaiya had urged Mumbai police to act against Imran Khan for joining a protest here in support of the Cockroach Janta Party despite being a "foreign citizen", and sought clarity on whether he can participate in such agitations.

All-weather access to Spiti in focus as himachal CM sukhu announces kunzum tunnel survey

SHIMLA (AGENCY)

A survey will be conducted for the construction of a tunnel under the Kunzum Pass to provide better road connectivity throughout the year to local residents and tourists, said Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu during a two-day visit to the Spiti valley on Wednesday. The Chief Minister, while addressing a public meeting at Kaza, said that the state government would spend Rs 500 crore on the development of Spiti in the coming years. He inaugurated and laid the foundation stone of development projects worth Rs 116.28 crore in remote Lahaul-Spiti district. He announced that the



Spiti valley would be declared a natural farming area and a survey would be conducted for the construction of a heliport at Kaza. He inaugurated the first 2 MW solar power project of the state with a battery storage facility at Rongtong in Kaza of the Spiti valley. Constructed at a cost of Rs 4.42 crore, the plant is expected to generate around 36 lakh units of electricity annually. Sukhu said that when he had first visit-

ed Kaza on April 15, 2023, to celebrate Himachal Day, local residents raised the issue of electricity shortage. "The Rs 350 crore Sumdo-Kaza transmission line is targeted for completion within three years, which will address this problem," he added. The Chief Minister said that the state government was continuously working for the welfare of its employees and would consider releasing Dearness Allowance (DA) on the

occasion of Diwali. "As promised, the Old Pension Scheme (OPS) has been restored to provide employees with social security. The government is now considering bringing more employees under its coverage," he added.

"The Central Government has withheld the release of Rs 1,600 crore to Himachal because the state has implemented the OPS," he alleged. Sukhu accused the BJP of horse-trading and said that an attempt had been made to topple the state government as nine MLAs joined the BJP but with the blessings of God, the state's deities and people, the government was still functioning successfully.

The image features the Gyanluxmi Production logo at the top left, which consists of a stylized camera lens icon next to the company name. Below the logo is a list of services offered, each preceded by a plus sign. The background is a grayscale photograph of film production equipment, including a director's chair with a 'DIRECTOR' sign, a clapperboard, a studio light, and a megaphone.

Matiechem Fest 5.0 to attract tourists with live music and Goan culinary on October 18

ROXANNE D'SILVA
OPEN SEARCH

PILERNE, GOA: Goa's traditional kitchen will take centre stage at the fifth edition of Matiechem Fest, as Pilerne prepares to celebrate the state's culinary heritage, indigenous cooking practices and cultural traditions on October 18, 2026. Organised by St. John the Baptist Church, Pilerne, in association with the Pilerne Art Socio-Cultural Association (PASCA), the festival will begin at 4 p.m. at the church grounds.

This year's theme, 'Randche-Kuddintlem Daiz: Treasures of the Goan Traditional Kitchen', aims to revive memories of traditional utensils, forgotten recipes, indigenous cooking techniques and age-old fuel practices that once defined everyday Goan households.

Explaining the inspiration behind the theme, Edmer Barreto, President of PASCA, said, "Matiechem Fest has always been a pioneer in celebrating themes that reflect Goa's rich heritage, culture, and traditions. Over the past editions, we have celebrated our ghumat, millets, fields, lakes, salt pans and mountains. This year, we sat across the table and decided to bring the heart of every Goan home into the spotlight - our traditional kitchen!"

'Randche-Kuddintlem Daiz' is a celebration of the traditional utensils, age-old cooking methods, forgotten recipes, and the stories that once filled our kitchens with warmth and flavour.

Today, in the name of convenience, sustainability, and quicker alternatives, many households have gradually shifted towards modern methods of cooking. While progress is welcome, we must ensure that our roots are not forgotten. We do not want this generation to be the last to know that Goa had its own unique ways of cooking, preserving, and celebrating food long before modernisation took over.

With the hope of reviving these beautiful traditions, Matiechem Fest 5.0 seeks to



bring our traditional kitchen back to life. Preserving our culinary heritage is not just about keeping recipes alive; it is about keeping our memories, identity, and Goan way of life alive for generations to come."

The festival will open with Pilernechi Passoi, a heritage procession from Sankov (Culvert) towards the church, featuring community groups and five thematic floats showcasing traditional kitchen utensils, equipment, cooking methods, forgotten dishes and traditional fuels.

From 6 p.m., visitors can explore demonstrations and displays of traditional kitchen activities, alongside music, dance, theatre and community performances. Highlights include a Ghumat dance circle, a harvest festival dance, a brass band, a traditional recipe demonstration and a live performance by SquareHeads Band. For PASCA, engaging younger generations remains central to the festival's mission. Barreto said, "Our primary aim has always been to connect the younger generation

with the beauty, richness, and uniqueness of Goan culture and traditions. We want our young people to realise that Goa's identity extends far beyond its beaches. Goa's Identity lives in our customs, crafts, music, food, and the everyday traditions passed down through generations.

At Matiechem Fest, we believe that the best way to preserve a tradition is to let the younger generation experience it firsthand. Our Ghumatcho Nach circle encourages youngsters to own their ghumat, par-

ticipate enthusiastically, and learn to play this traditional Goan percussion instrument. Through our Mollam (coconut palm-leaf weaving) initiative, we also hope to introduce them to a beautiful traditional craft that many may never have experienced before.

This year, through 'Randche-Kuddintlem Daiz', we invite the younger generation to discover the forgotten flavours, traditional cooking methods, and kitchen practices that once formed an integral part of every

Goan household.

The invite goes out to all the young people and people from all walks of life to join in on 18 October 2026, from 4:00 p.m. onwards at Pilerne, and experience the richness and beauty of Goan heritage. Adding to the festive spirit, the SquareHeads Band will keep the celebrations alive with some of the biggest and most loved Konkani hits.

Come for the food, stay for the culture, and leave with a little more of Goa in your heart!"

Organised in collaboration

with the Directorate of Art and Culture, Government of Goa, the Goa Tourism Development Corporation and the villagers of Pilerne, Matiechem Fest continues to champion community-led heritage preservation.

As the festival returns for its fifth edition, it invites residents and visitors to rediscover the traditions that make Goa unique. At its heart, the celebration is a reminder that preserving the past is essential to keeping cultural identity alive for future generations.

Ranbir Kapoor's Ram prepares to take on Yash's Ravana in new 'Ramayana

International fans go gaga over new Ramayana trailer featuring Ranbir Kapoor and Yash's grand face off as Lord Rama and Ravana : 'Avatar-level movie'

The international trailer of Ramayana: Rise of a Legend is finally here, giving audiences their spectacular new glimpse of Nitesh Tiwari's ambitious take on one of India's most celebrated epics. Starring Ranbir Kapoor as Lord Rama, Sai Pallavi as Sita and Yash as Ravana, the film brings together a celebrated cast, large-scale visuals and music by A.R. Rahman and Hans Zimmer.

Ramayana international trailer gives a fresh glimpse of Ranbir Kapoor and Yash's face-off, fans can't keep calm.

The trailer introduces a world of gods, demons, duty and sacrifice, setting up the battle between Rama and Ravana. With sweeping landscapes and dramatic moments, the film aims to bring the timeless story to life for a new generation of moviegoers while retaining the epic's central conflict between good and evil. The 2-minute 36-second trailer shows new footage and more moments featuring Ram and Ravana. The trailer opens with a voice describing a time when the



world lived in harmony, saying, "Before history was written... men walked among gods... and the world existed in perfect order." It finally shows Kunal Kapoor playing the role of Lord Indra. That peace is soon threatened by Ravana, whose rise to power changes the course of the world. The narration continues, "But from the darkness rose an evil force... Ravana. Born from fire and fury, he bent the gods to his will and made the world his throne." Played by Yash, the King of

Lanka makes his intentions clear with the chilling declaration, "Before me, every head will bow..." As Ravana's power grows, the story turns to Rama, presented as the one person who can stand against him. The voice explains, "In this time of peril, humanity had one hope. Not a god, but a man, chosen by destiny: Ram." Ranbir Kapoor's Rama is shown grappling with the responsibility that comes with his destiny. Determined to stop Ravana, he says, "If this is my fate... I will not hesitate to

destroy him. If I don't stop him... the world will fall." The trailer closes on a foreboding note, with Ravana warning, "This is just... the beginning."

The trailer received an enthusiastic response from viewers on X, with many praising its visuals, scale and music. One user was particularly impressed by the score heard towards the end, writing, "That shyama shyama score in the end. Mann, Hans Zimmer you are the GOAT fr." Another declared, "Bow down to INDIAN CINEMA." A third wrote, "Words are less to define what they have made? Can't wait to experience this!!" Comparing the film's scale to other major cinematic spectacles, another user said, "People were comparing the Ramayana with the Odyssey but I'm telling you, it's looking like Avatar level movie. This will rock in box office."

International audiences reacting to the trailer on X were impressed by its scale and visuals. One user wrote, "This looks spectacular. This is supposed to be the first part.

Dhanush heaps praise on Rajinikanth-starrer 'Jailer 2'

Directed by Nelson Dilipkumar and backed by Kalanithi Maran under the Sun Pictures banner, the sequel to the 2023 blockbuster hit theatres Thursday

Actor Dhanush is all praise for the Rajinikanth-starrer Jailer 2, calling it a "must must must watch." Directed by Nelson Dilipkumar and backed by Kalanithi Maran under the Sun Pictures banner, Jailer 2 hit theatres on Thursday.

Calling the film a feast for every Thalaivar fan, Dhanush wrote on X, "JAILER 2 is a MUST MUST MUST watch. BLOCKBUSTER A FEAST for every Thalaivar fan." Jailer 2 is the sequel to Rajinikanth's



2023 blockbuster Jailer. Jailer 2 sees Rajinikanth return as Tiger Muthuvel

Pandian, alongside Ramya Krishnan, Yogi Babu and Mirnaa. Vidya Balan and Suraj Venjaramoodu also star in the film.

Shiva Rajkumar reprises his role as Narasimha in an extended cameo in Jailer 2. While Shah Rukh Khan and Nandamuri Balakrishna were rumoured to appear in the sequel, Hrithik Roshan makes a special appearance in the film.

Nelson Dilipkumar returns as the writer and director for the sequel.

The film also features Ramya Krishnan, S J Suryah, Mohanlal, Vidya Balan, Suraj Venjaramoodu and Mithun Chakraborty, among others.

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