



# CM Saini Interacts with Haryana's Diaspora Entrepreneurs in Gujarat

VIJAY KUMAR.OPEN SEARCHa

**CHANDIGARH :** Haryana Chief Minister Sh. Nayab Singh Saini, during his visit to Gujarat, interacted with diaspora entrepreneurs from Haryana and representatives of Gujarat's industrial sector at a Pravasi Milan Samaroh held in Surat on Tuesday. He said that Haryana's diaspora entrepreneurs, who have achieved success in Gujarat through their hard work, entrepreneurial spirit and vision, have not only established their own identities but have also made significant contributions towards strengthening economic and industrial cooperation between the two states. The Chief Minister said that the relationship between Haryana and Gujarat is not limited to business alone but is also rooted in the cultural heritage, industrious spirit and shared commitment to nation-building of both states. The story of Lord Sri Krishna, from Kurukshetra to Dwarka, conveys the message of action, duty and public welfare. He said that Haryana's diaspora entrepreneurs carry the values of Haryana

## Emphasises New Investment and Employment Opportunities

along with their experience of Gujarat's entrepreneurial ecosystem. By leveraging this experience, new opportunities for investment, technology, trade and employment can be developed between the two states. **Favourable Investment Climate and New Industrial Policies in Haryana**

The Chief Minister said that Haryana is rapidly expanding its capabilities in modern manufacturing, automobiles, electronics, IT, data centres, logistics, pharmaceuticals and food processing, alongside traditional industries. Gurugram is among the country's leading corporate and technology hubs, while the Gurugram-Manesar-Bawal region has a strong base of automobile and ancillary industries. Faridabad is also a major engineering and manufacturing hub.

He said that the Haryana Government has introduced nine sector-specific policies along with the 'Make in Haryana Industrial Policy-2026'. Through these policies, the state has set a target of attracting fresh



investments worth Rs. 5 lakh crore and generating 10 lakh employment opportunities over the next five years. Investment opportunities tailored to investors' needs are being offered in sectors such as electronics, IT and IT-enabled services (ITeS), artificial intelligence, emerging technologies, data centres, pharmaceuticals, medical devices, agribusiness and food processing.

He invited textile entrepreneurs to explore opportunities for setting up new production units and investing in technical textiles. He also urged entrepreneurs from the diamond and jew-

ellery sector to consider the possibilities of establishing a Gems and Jewellery Park in Haryana. He said that opportunities for collaboration could be explored to develop an integrated ecosystem encompassing lab-grown diamonds, jewellery manufacturing, design, finishing and exports.

The Chief Minister said that Maruti Suzuki's manufacturing network extends from Gurugram, Manesar and Kharkhoda in Haryana to Hansalpur in Gujarat. Following the commencement of production at the company's second unit in

Kharkhoda in May 2026, the combined annual production capacity of its facilities in Haryana and Gujarat has increased to 26.50 lakh vehicles. This demonstrates how industrial hubs in different states can strengthen one another through supply chains, technology and markets. He said that there is similarly significant potential for cooperation in auto components, machinery, textiles, chemicals, pharmaceuticals, electronics and logistics. Expanding businesses established in Gujarat into Haryana, setting up new production units, and developing warehouses and technical facilities could prove beneficial for both states.

## Invitation to Participate in the 'Happening Haryana Global Investors Summit'

The Chief Minister stated that Haryana's economy is growing rapidly. According to estimates for 2025-26, the state's economy has reached approximately Rs. 14 lakh crore, with the real growth rate estimated at 9.5 per cent. He said that this economic progress reflects

the growing potential for new investment, production and employment opportunities in the state. He said that during 'Happening Haryana 2.0', held in Mumbai, companies signed memoranda of understanding (MoUs) for proposed investments worth more than Rs. 66,000 crore. The proposed 'Happening Haryana Global Investors Summit' in April 2027 will be an important step in this direction. He called upon Gujarat's industrial fraternity and Haryana's diaspora entrepreneurs to participate actively in the summit and connect their associates, investors and supplier networks with investment opportunities in Haryana. **Emphasis on Ensuring Investment Benefits Reach Youth and Local Enterprises**

The Chief Minister said that the real benefits of investment would be widespread only when it creates opportunities for local youth in training, skill development and employment, while also enabling small and medium enterprises to become part of supply chains.

## Inspection of Preparations for CET Stage-II Examination Begins on the Directions of Himmat Singh

CHANDIGARH : OPEN SEARCH

Haryana Staff Selection Commission (HSSC) Chairman Sh. Himmat Singh said that preparations for the CET Stage-II examination for recruitment to approximately 14,000 posts have been expedited. In addition, an advertisement for around 8,000 new vacancies will be issued soon to provide fresh employment opportunities to the youth. He said that the Commission is proceeding with the recruitment and examination process in an organised and transparent manner, in accordance with the prescribed rules. As part of the preparations for conducting the CET Stage-II exami-

nation, inspection of examination centres has begun on the directions of Sh. Himmat Singh. In this regard, today, Commission member Sh. Subhash Chandra, along with his team, visited examination centres in the Kalka-Pinjore area of Panchkula district and reviewed the facilities available there and the necessary arrangements.

The Commission Chairman said that the objective of the inspection is to assess the facilities available at the examination centres and review the arrangements required for the smooth conduct of the examination, ensuring that candidates do not face any inconvenience during the examination.

## German delegation visits J.C. bose university to recruit skilled technicians

CHANDIGARH : OPEN SEARCH

A high-level international delegation from Coating Concepts, Germany, alongside representatives from International Talent Solutions (ITS) and Indo Euro Synchronization (IES), visited J.C. Bose University of Science and Technology, YMCA, Faridabad. The visit aimed to evaluate the University's skill training infrastructure and establish international employment pathways for Indian students.

The delegation comprised Ms. Janina Radovic (Managing Director), Mr. Andreas Faller (Head of Logistics and Work Preparation), Mr. David



Frank (Production Manager), and Mr. Sergius Steinmark (Production Manager) from Coating Concepts, Germany. The visit was facilitated by Mr. Albert Bacher (CEO, International Talent Solutions) along with Mr. Raj Vangapandu (President, IES Group) and Mr. Rajive Gulati (Director, IES Group).

The interaction was convened by Prof. Munish Vashishth, Dean (Institutions), and Prof. Sanjeev Goyal, Principal, Community College of Skill Development (CCSD), and presided over by Prof. Naresh Chauhan, Dean (Academic Affairs).

The formal session held in the Board Room com-

menced with a welcome address by Prof. Rajesh Ahuja, Dean, Faculty of Engineering & Technology (FET), who highlighted the University's rich legacy and deep-rooted historical ties with German institutions. A short documentary highlighting the University's journey and milestones was also showcased.

Presenting the institution's academic strengths and research framework, Dr. Rashmi Popli outlined key areas for potential industry-academia collaboration, noting that J.C. Bose University currently hosts 23 startups across seven emerging technology and sustainability sectors.

## HC asks investigating agency to examine social media posts linked to LPU campus unrest

CHANDIGARH : (AGENCY)

The Punjab and Haryana High Court has asked the investigating agency to examine social media posts allegedly containing incorrect reporting that led to unrest on the Lovely Professional University campus, after the petitioner's counsel pointed out that some posts remained online despite most offending content having been blocked. The Division Bench of Chief Justice Ashwani Kumar Mishra and Justice Rohit Kapoor passed the interim order on a public interest litigation filed by Ravi Raj against the Union of India and others. The Bench, during the course of



hearing was told that "most of the offending posts, which had incorrectly reported the facts and which led to unrest in the campus of the university, have been blocked". However, the senior counsel Gaurav Chopra - appearing before the Bench on the petitioner's behalf, placed before the court certain posts that continued to be accessible on social media platforms. Taking a note of the submissions, the Bench recorded in its order. "Senior counsel for the petitioner, however,

## Karva Chauth rush fills Chandigarh markets, but sales remain low

CHANDIGARH : (AGENCY)

Walk through the Chandigarh markets this festive week and the scene looks familiar. Women crowd mehendi stalls, couples stroll past brightly lit shops and market lanes buzz with the usual pre-Karva Chauth rush. Ask the people behind the counters, however, and the mood changes.

The crowds are back, but the festive cheer is yet to translate into sales. Traders say customers are visiting markets but spending less. Salons and spas are among the businesses faring relatively better, as many



women book appointments for festive grooming. "I find a lack of craze so far this festive season," said Sucheta, who runs a parlour and spa in Sector 22-C. She said bookings were at around 70 per cent of last year's level. Mehendi artists, meanwhile, were busy. Outside

Onkar Marketing in Sector 24, around 15 trained artists were offering free mehendi services. "Our job is getting much more fun these days. Women bring designs from Instagram, so we get to practise some very unique patterns, and customers leave happy too,"

said Poonam, a mehendi artist. In Sector 22, some artists said the number of mehendi providers had increased this year, leaving each with fewer customers. Event organisers appear to have taken a bigger hit. "In 20 years, I have never seen such bad conditions.

Gatherings are fewer and so are the budgets," said Dharambir, owner of Red Tag Caterers. "Last year, I had six to seven Karva Chauth events. This year, none," he added, attributing the slump to reduced purchasing power. Even customers who booked events were willing to spend less, he said.

## Amit Shah will inaugurate the martyrs' memorial dedicated to the first war of Independence on Nov 5 : Vij

CHANDIGARH : OPEN SEARCH

Haryana's Energy, Transport and Labour Minister, Sh. Anil Vij said that Union Home Minister Mr. Amit Shah is coming on November 5 to inaugurate the 'Aazadi Ki Pehli Ladaai ka Shaheed Smarak' built in Ambala Cantonment. The memorial will be inaugurated first, followed by a large workers' rally at Gandhi Ground. He said that it is significant for people to attend the rally because they will be participating in an event honouring a martyrs' memorial. After the inauguration on November 5, the Martyrs' Memorial will be opened to the public from November 6. He said the government has also



issued instructions for students from various schools and educational institutions in Haryana to be shown the memorial, so that young people learn that the freedom struggle began in Ambala before Meerut in 1857. He urged people to attend the rally at Gandhi Ground, Ambala Cantonment, in large numbers on November 5, as it will mark the inauguration

of a national-level memorial. Sh. Vij was addressing BJP office-bearers today at Ambala Club in Ambala, at a meeting chaired by BJP State President Dr. Archana Gupta, to review preparations for the Martyrs' Memorial programme scheduled for November 5. Earlier, welcoming BJP State President Dr. Archana Gupta, Energy Minister Anil Vij said that within a short

## The Energy Minister appealed to people to attend the rally to be held at Gandhi Ground in Ambala Cantt on the inauguration occasion in large numbers

time of assuming office, Dr. Gupta had filled party workers with electric enthusiasm. Based on his experience, he said, the BJP will make great progress under Dr. Archana Gupta's leadership, and the government will fully meet people's expectations.

Energy Minister Anil Vij said he had been working for the construction of the Martyrs' Memorial for the past 25-30 years. He said that books taught that the

Congress fought the independence struggle, but when he read further, he found that in 1857 before the Congress was even founded an armed struggle for independence was fought across India, and it began in Ambala.

He said documents show that in 1857, at 9 a.m., ten hours before the uprising in Meerut, the 60th and 5th Native Infantry regiments sounded the bugle of the freedom struggle at Ambala Cantonment. Yet history never remembered those heroes who were tied to trees and shot, or those upon whom oil mills were operated; the nation never paid tribute to those martyrs, which is painful.

## Briefs News

### Approval Granted for Six-Laning of Road at Cost of Rs. 43.35 Crore

**CHANDIGARH : OPEN SEARCH.** Haryana Public Works (Buildings and Roads) and Public Health Engineering Minister Sh. Ranbir Gangwa said the state government is continuously working to strengthen road infrastructure and provide better transportation facilities to the public. In this direction, administrative approval amounting to Rs. 43.35 crore has been granted for the six-laning of the Old Delhi Road from Chungi Chowk to Sirsa Chungi in Hisar city. He informed that under this project, the existing four-lane road on Old Delhi Road will be widened and strengthened. The six-laning of the road will improve traffic management in the area and make commuting more convenient for motorists. This road is an important route for Hisar city, and its upgradation will further strengthen the city's road connectivity. The Cabinet Minister said that under the leadership of Chief Minister Sh. Nayab Singh Saini, the state government is according priority to the construction, widening and repair of roads. The government's objective is not only to build new roads but also to improve the quality and durability of existing roads to ensure safe and smooth commuting for the public.

### Online Applications for Scheme Can Be Submitted till October 31

**CHANDIGARH : OPEN SEARCH.** Sugarcane farmers in Haryana are being provided the benefits of mechanisation and modern agricultural equipment under the Sugarcane Technology Mission during the financial year 2026-27. Farmers can submit their online applications for the scheme until October 31, 2026. A spokesperson for the Haryana Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare Department informed that under the scheme, farmers can avail themselves of modern agricultural machinery, including power-operated sugarcane sett treatment equipment with a capacity of 30-120 litres, engine-operated power weeders ranging from 5 to 7.5 BHP, sugarcane ratoon management equipment, wide-row ridgers, 4-foot rotavators, tractor-mounted sprayers, sub-soilers/chiselers, sugarcane cutters/strippers/planters and mini tractors. Farmers interested in availing themselves of these agricultural implements can submit their online applications on the department's official website, [www.agriharyana.gov.in](http://www.agriharyana.gov.in), by October 31, 2026. The spokesperson urged farmers to take maximum advantage of the scheme.

### Chandigarh MC House meeting : Congress, AAP councillors raise road re-carpeting delays

**CHANDIGARH : (AGENCY)** The general house meeting of the Chandigarh Municipal Corporation on Wednesday witnessed an uproar over the poor condition of roads, with AAP and Congress councillors raising the issue. As the meeting began, Congress councillor Taruna Mehta displayed posters of incomplete roads and questioned officials over the stoppage of re-carpeting work in her ward. Congress councillors also raised slogans and shouted in protest. The officials later assured the councillors that the pending road works would commence within three days. Congress councillor Munawar also claimed that re-carpeting work had not begun in his ward. AAP councillor Anju Katyal alleged that re-carpeting work had not started in her ward either, while councillor Dalip Sharma said the work had not been completed in his ward. As councillors demanded action against contractors for delays in re-carpeting work, Municipal Corporation Commissioner Amit Kumar directed all officers to submit details of pending road works by Thursday. Congress councillor Gurpreet Gabi also raised objections to the expenditure of crores of rupees on minor works. The commissioner assured him that he would look into the issue.

### High prices, leasehold terms deter buyers at Chandigarh Housing Board auction

**CHANDIGARH : (AGENCY)** The Chandigarh Housing Board (CHB) has once again failed to find buyers for its leasehold commercial properties, with none of the 79 units put up for auction attracting a bid. Experts have blamed high reserve prices and stiff terms for a poor response to the auction. The board had invited e-bids for 79 commercial properties on a leasehold basis and 12 residential properties on a freehold basis. The bids were opened today, but only two residential units could be sold. The CHB had also failed to attract buyers for its commercial properties in an auction held in August. The 79 commercial properties comprised 57 booths in Manimajra, five service booths in Sector 40-A, 16 bay shops in Kajhri, Sector 61, and a site designated for a restaurant in Manimajra.

## Kumari Selja Urges Government to Consider Regularisation of 12,000 Guest Teachers Serving for 21 Years

CHANDIGARH : OPEN SEARCH

The Sirsa MP, Former Union Minister, General Secretary of All India Congress Committee and Congress Working Committee member Kumari Selja has expressed concern over the future of guest teachers who have been working in Haryana for a long time. She said around 12,000 guest teachers had been serving in government schools for nearly 21 years, but their demand for regularisation remained unresolved. She urged the government to formulate a fair policy keeping in view their experience, contribution and future security. Kumari



Selja said guest teachers had played an important role in keeping the education system functioning smoothly, particularly in rural areas where schools faced a shortage of teachers. She said their demands needed to be considered sensitively after such a long period of service. According to available information,

around 29,866 teaching posts were reportedly vacant in government schools across the state. Many schools were functioning with limited teaching staff. Kumari Selja urged the government to make the actual position of vacant posts public and accelerate the regular recruitment process. She also expressed concern over the shortage of teachers and lack of basic facilities in higher education institutions. Kumari Selja said issues relating to job security and regularisation of contractual employees working in various departments should also be resolved in accordance with legal provisions.

## Delhi Food Safety Department Inspects Bakery Units and Retail Outlets Ahead of Festive Season

AJEET KUMAR, OPEN SEARCH

**NEW DELHI :** On the instructions of Hon'ble Health Minister Dr. Pankaj Kumar Singh, the Food Safety Department of the Delhi Government conducted a special inspection drive covering seven bakery manufacturing units and retail outlets across the national capital to assess hygiene standards and compliance with food safety requirements ahead of the festive season. With demand for bakery products increasing during the festive period for household consumption, celebrations and gifting, the drive focused on monitoring food safety practices, hygiene conditions and compliance with applicable regulatory requirements to safeguard public health.

The teams visited premises located in Greater Kailash II, Kailash Colony, Connaught Place,



Shakurbasti, Patparganj Industrial Area and Mayapuri. During the exercise, the department collected 10 food samples, comprising both legal and surveillance samples. The samples included cookies, biscuits, paneer, low-fat cream, dark compound, methi mathri and mahi sev. The sampling exercise was undertaken as part of the

department's efforts to assess food safety and monitor compliance among food business operators.

In addition to sample collection, the inspection teams conducted online inspections and assessed hygiene and sanitation practices in accordance with the prescribed requirements under food safety regulations. The

**10 Food Samples Collected, Improvement Notices Recommended for Two Premises Following Hygiene and Compliance Checks**

inspections focused on hygienic conditions at the premises, safe food-handling practices and adherence to applicable standards at manufacturing facilities and retail outlets. Based on the inspections, improvement notices were recommended for the Patparganj premises of Honey & Dough and Satguru Agencies in Mayapuri following the assessment of the respective premises.

Reiterating the importance of food safety during the festive period, Hon'ble Health Minister Dr. Pankaj Kumar Singh said, "Festivals are a time of celebration, when families purchase food products for consumption, gatherings and gifting.

It is essential that these products are prepared, stored and sold under proper hygienic conditions. The Delhi Government is committed to strengthening food safety monitoring and ensuring that food business operators fulfil their responsibilities towards consumers." The Food Safety Department will continue to focus on inspections, sampling and compliance assessments, particularly during periods of heightened consumer demand. These efforts aim to promote safe food practices and ensure that residents can purchase and consume food products with confidence. The Delhi Government urges all food business operators to maintain high standards of hygiene, follow prescribed food safety regulations and ensure that food products supplied to consumers meet applicable requirements.

## Top para athlete Neeraj Yadav dies by suicide

NEW DELHI (AGENCY)

Asian Para Games gold medallist Neeraj Yadav has allegedly died by suicide after consuming poison at his residence, with the accomplished para-athlete reportedly under emotional stress after a doping suspension ruled him out of the Aichi-Nagoya Asian Para Games earlier this month. His body was taken to a Delhi hospital for a postmortem examination on Wednesday. The circumstances surrounding his death are yet to be established.

S Satyanarayana, head coach of the Indian para-athletics team, confirmed the incident and said he had remained in touch with Yadav since the doping case came to light after the 2023 Hangzhou Asian Para Games. "Neeraj has died by suicide. It is very unfortunate that such a thing has



happened. I had a very close relationship with him. After his name came up in the doping case, I was constantly in touch with him," Satyanarayana told PTI. Yadav, who competed in the F55 category, was serving a four-year suspension after testing positive for a banned substance.

The ban also cost him the two gold medals he had won at the 2023 Hangzhou Asian Para Games, along with the associated government cash reward and a prospective government job. "He came under a lot of stress after the doping issue. He was serving a

four-year suspension. A couple of months ago, he spoke to me and asked if he could participate in the selection trials for the Aichi-Nagoya Asian Para Games.

"I told him it was not possible as he still had a few months of his suspension left," Satyanarayana said. The coach said the doping case had dealt a severe blow to Yadav's career and financial prospects, particularly after his success at the Hangzhou Games. "When he won two gold medals at the Hangzhou Asian Para Games, he was in line for a Class I government job in Uttar Pradesh, which would have improved his life. He was supposed to get more than Rs 3 crore and a Class I job. His peers had all got jobs," he said. Satyanarayana said Yadav had lost out on the cash award after the Asian Paralympic Committee stripped him of his Hangzhou gold medals following the doping proceedings.

## Eight Dance Performances Mesmerize Audiences at Civil Services Officers Institute Auditorium During Aahvan-2026

RAJU BOHRA : OPEN SEARCH

**NEW DELHI :** The two-day Indian Contemporary Dance Festival 'Aahvan-2026' concluded successfully on October 24 and 25 at the Civil Services Officers Institute (CSOI) Auditorium, Chanakyaपुरी, New Delhi. Organized by Space Performing Arts under the direction of renowned art director Raja Anand, the festival was based on the theme "Ritual Where Cultures Come Together."

The festival featured eight dance performances over two days, highlighting the blend of Indian cultural traditions and contemporary dance. Eminent personalities attending the event included Guru B. Jagadeesan, Guru Santosh Nair and Guru Kishore



Sharma. On the second day, Bharathi Kukkai, Anjina Rajagopal and Suman Doonga were also present. Manisha Swami, Joint Secretary, Ministry of External Affairs and Deputy Director General of the Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR), attended the festival. The event provided a platform for artists to celebrate cultural diversity and artistic expression through dance. It was organized in collaboration with CSOI and Arts Norway, and entry was free for audiences.

## Delhi Police denies withdrawing permission for INDIA bloc's Nov 1 rally at Ramlila Maidan

NEW DELHI (AGENCY)

Delhi Police on Tuesday clarified that it has not withdrawn permission for the INDIA bloc's November 1 rally at Ramlila Maidan, amid allegations by the Congress that authorities were stalling its programme against Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar. Delhi Police said an NOC has been granted from the law-and-order perspective, and it is preparing to deploy around 3,500 personnel and use more than 200 CCTV cameras for security at the designated protest site.

The clarification comes amid allegations by the Congress that authorities were stalling its programme against Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar. Police have divided the venue into 14 zones for



crowd management, called in 10 companies of reserve forces and planned surveillance through CCTV cameras, body-worn cameras and surveillance-equipped vehicles. According to an official communication addressed to Congress leader Manish Chatrath, in charge of the party headquarters, the NOC was granted subject to prior permission from the land-owning authority and compliance with specified conditions. The letter, dated October 17, pertains to the

Congress's request to book Ramlila Maidan from October 25 to November 3 for the rally scheduled on November 1 between 10 am and 5 pm.

The conditions include installing high-definition CCTV cameras at strategic points, setting up a control room with monitoring screens, deploying adequate volunteers, arranging drinking water and separate toilet facilities for women, and ensuring that the gathering concludes by 5 pm, followed by dispersal of participants.

No overnight stay at the venue will be permitted, the letter stated. The organisers have also been asked to ensure that vehicles are parked at locations designated by the traffic police, prevent unruly behaviour and speeches that could disturb communal harmony, and provide the police with a list of invitees and volunteers, a minute-to-minute programme and details of buses, including their registration numbers.

Any violation of the conditions could lead to legal action or revocation of permission, it said. A senior police officer said each of the 14 zones would be overseen by an Assistant Commissioner of Police-rank officer, while two zones would be monitored by officers of Additional Deputy Commissioner of Police rank.

## DSIIDC's online liquor booking app permitted by previous Delhi govt : Officials

NEW DELHI (AGENCY)

The permission for the online liquor booking app was granted by the previous government in 2024 to ensure transparency and stop brand pushing in retail sales, the Delhi State Industrial Infrastructure Development Corporation (DSIIDC) said on Wednesday. The 'Delhi Liquor Booking' app was launched by the DSIIDC after required trials, enabling customers to book liquor and pick it up from the vends of the corporation, officials said.

"In order to ensure transparency, digital governance and avoid brand pushing, the Delhi Liquor Booking app was rolled out by DSIIDC in November 2025. Earlier, approval was



granted for developing the app by DSIIDC Management in December 2024. A work order for developing the app was issued on January 2, 2025," a senior DSIIDC officer said.

Since the app was originally only compatible with Android, a QR-code-enabled micro-site was rolled out on September 6 to give iOS users access and ensure platform neutrality. In the first year of its launch, the app saw a total of 3,629 transactions of around Rs 13 lakh worth of liquor sold in the 2025-26 financial year.

## Kochi Police commissioner removed over mercedes hit-and-run case lapses

NEW DELHI (AGENCY)

Kochi police chief Kaliraj Mahesh has been removed from his post following a controversy over alleged mishandling of a road accident case involving the 17-year-old son of an additional district judge. The action against the Kochi City police commissioner comes amid mounting criticism over alleged police lapses in the case and demands for accountability. The minor son of the judge who drove a Mercedes-Benz had rammed a scooter, killing a 55-year-old man, Jayabalakrishnan. Jayabalakrishnan's family has alleged a conspiracy to sabotage the case. The teenager was a regular driver and had taken the car out late at night to shoot a social



media reel showing him driving at high speed, the police have said.

The judge allegedly got the footage deleted from his son's phone. Investigators have also recovered footage from his mobile phone showing the car travelling at high speed shortly before the accident. The damaged Mercedes which has been kept at a police station and the completely destroyed scooter that the street food



vendor drove indicated the impact speed would have been very high. The case has drawn intense attention after the victim's family alleged attempts by the teenager's influential father to weaken the case.

The Kochi case has parallels with another case involving a minor in Pune in May 2024 when a 17-year-old boy at the wheel of a speeding Porsche hit a bike, killing a man and a woman.

**The damaged Mercedes which has been kept at a police station and the completely destroyed scooter that the street food vendor drove indicated the impact speed would have been very high**

In that case too the minor was out on bail in just 15 hours. The son of a prominent Pune realtor, the teen was granted bail after he was made to write an essay on accidents and advised to take treatment for his drinking habit. Four other policemen were suspended yesterday after a senior officer went to the accident site, examined police records and met the victim's family.

## MCD to set up Mumbai-style 'Suvidha centre' in Delhi's slum clusters, 20 more planned

NEW DELHI (AGENCY)

Taking a cue from Mumbai's community hygiene centres, the Municipal Corporation of Delhi is setting up its first such facility in the capital and plans to build around 20 more centres across zones if the pilot project succeeds, officials said on Wednesday. The centre, coming up at Ekta Camp in south Delhi's RK Puram, will feature toilets, bathing facilities, washing machines, and filtered drinking water under one roof, offering residents of slum clusters access to these amenities at subsidised rates. A civic agency official said Hindustan Unilever Limited (HUL), under its corporate social responsibility (CSR) programme, is expected to



complete the facility within three months in collaboration with the civic body and the Central government. The centre will have 46 toilet stalls, four showers, eight washing machines, and a water ATM dispensing RO-filtered drinking water. "Spread across around 160 square metres, it is estimated to cost Rs 2.5 crore. Users will be charged Rs 3 per toilet use, Rs 70 for a full

laundry cycle, and Re 1 per litre of drinking water," the official said. He said officials will monitor the facility every four hours to ensure cleanliness and proper maintenance.

"We will assess its response before considering similar centres in other areas," he said. The centre will also have a sewage treatment plant to treat wastewater for reuse, along

**Spread across around 160 square metres, it is estimated to cost Rs 2.5 crore. Users will be charged Rs 3 per toilet use, Rs 70 for a full laundry cycle, and Re 1 per litre of drinking water," the official said**

with rainwater harvesting and solar energy systems. "The measures are aimed at reducing the discharge of untreated wastewater into drains from slum clusters, particularly in areas without sewer connections," the official said. Delhi already has community toilet facilities developed by the Delhi Urban Shelter Improvement Board

(DUSIB) in and around slum clusters. However, several such facilities have faced maintenance and hygiene issues over time. The Municipal Corporation of Delhi's pilot aims to test whether an integrated, regularly maintained facility can provide a broader range of basic services to residents who may lack adequate sanitation and washing facilities at home.

Mumbai's Suvidha centres, developed through public-private partnerships involving HUL, the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation, HSBC India and the JSW Foundation, combine sanitation, bathing and laundry services for low-income groups. Delhi's initiative comes amid a broader push to expand public sanitation infrastructure in the capital.

## Nitin nabin leads BJP's counter against INDIA bloc's 'vote theft' claims

NEW DELHI (AGENCY)

Nitin Nabin will take to the streets for the first time since becoming BJP chief, launching the party's counter-campaign against opposition allegations regarding the special Intensive Revision, or SIR, of electoral rolls. The BJP has mobilised to respond to the aggressive campaign led by the Congress and the broader opposition bloc INDIA regarding the SIR. Nitin Nabin has personally taken charge of this effort. This evening, in Delhi's Chandni Chowk, Nabin will kick off a padyatra (foot march) as part of the BJP's "Save Democracy, Remove Anarchy" (Loktantra Bachao, Arajakata Hatao) campaign, which began on October 22 and is being conducted nationwide until November 5. The primary objective of this campaign



is to expose the opposition's alleged political agenda and double standards concerning the SIR and the accuracy of electoral rolls, the credibility of democratic institutions, constitutional values, and electoral processes.

The BJP rally aims to strengthen public trust in India's democratic institutions and communicate the nation's journey of unity and development to the general public. While Congress chief Mallikarjun Kharge and Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha, Rahul Gandhi, have spearheaded the opposition's offensive regarding the SIR, Nitin Nabin will

lead the BJP counter. He has been engaging directly with the younger generation through 'Youth Dialogue' (Yuva Samvad) programs across various parts of the country, during which he has sharply criticised the Congress's campaign regarding the SIR. However, this marks the first time he will directly take to the streets to address these allegations through a padyatra.

Union Home Minister Amit Shah is also set to participate in similar padyatras. Shah will join such marches in Hyderabad on November 2 and in Karnal on November 5. Other senior ministers and several state chief ministers will also use these padyatras to counter the campaign launched by the 'INDIA' alliance, seeking the removal of Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar over alleged SIR irregularities.

## Open Search

## EDITORIAL

## The village will change, and only then will the Nation Change

The true picture of India's development can be seen in its villages. In a country where a large proportion of the population lives in rural areas, the vision of a developed nation remains incomplete without rural development. Today, instead of limiting villages to agriculture alone, there is a need to develop them as centres of education, healthcare, employment, technology, and good governance. In this context, the concept of the Pradhan Mantri Viksit Gram Swaraj Yojana is significant as an initiative that can give a new direction to the future of rural India.

The problems faced by villages are not limited to roads and electricity. Limited administrative capacity of panchayats, a lack of employment opportunities, inadequate awareness of government schemes, and insufficient public participation in development activities are also major challenges. The objective of any rural development scheme should be to provide lasting solutions to these problems. The Gram Panchayat is the lowest yet one of the most important, units of democracy.

If panchayats are empowered, villages can determine their development priorities according to their own needs. Decisions taken at the local level are often more practical because local people have a direct understanding of their problems and resources. The success of rural development cannot be assessed merely by the budget allocated or the number of schemes introduced. The real questions are: Are employment opportunities reaching rural youth? Is women's participation in decision-making increasing? Are farmers receiving better facilities? Is government assistance reaching poor families on time?

The answers to these questions will determine the actual success of any scheme. For this, panchayats must be provided with adequate resources, trained personnel, and modern technology. At the same time, Gram Sabhas should be made more active, giving citizens the opportunity and authority to monitor development activities. A lack of digital facilities, administrative apathy, and corruption can slow the pace of development in rural areas. Therefore, transparency, accountability, and regular evaluation must be made integral parts of the scheme. Ensuring that the benefits of development reach the last person in society is the responsibility of both the government and the local administration.

Along with this, rural youth skill development, local industries, women's self-help groups, and agriculture-based enterprises should be encouraged. This will create more employment opportunities in villages and help reduce distress-driven migration to cities. The broader significance of the Pradhan Mantri Viksit Gram Swaraj Yojana lies in its objective of empowering rural India and making local self-governance more effective. However, its actual achievements should be assessed on the basis of its official provisions and implementation on the ground.

## Repeated betrayals

SUSHANT SINGH

In 1972, at the height of unresolved tensions with China after the 1962 war, India converted the North-East Frontier Agency into the Union territory of Arunachal Pradesh. Three years later, it got a legislative assembly and became a full-fledged state in February 1987 at the peak of the Sumdorong Chu crisis with China. By that single step, India expanded democratic government on a contested frontier, cemented national sovereignty, and integrated the borderlands firmly into the constitutional fabric of the country. Nearly four decades later, no one can deny that statehood to Arunachal Pradesh has strengthened India's political claim over a region China also claims and reinforced national security. The same logic applies to Ladakh today.

But the Narendra Modi government treats the region as a security problem to be managed from Delhi rather than a loyal population entitled to democratic rights. Why should Ladakh be treated differently? Does its Buddhist and Shia Muslim demography make its people less deserving? Kargil remained outside the insurgency that engulfed Kashmir for decades and has supported the Indian army during all the wars with Pakistan. This unblemished record makes the suspicion surrounding their democratic demands particularly offensive. Why must citizens who helped defend India face questions about their patriotism when they seek an elected government?

The people of Ladakh would have never anticipated this fate when their region was made into a Union territory in 2019. Many of them even welcomed the harsh security measures taken by the Modi government in Kashmir during that period, including curfews, internet shutdowns and denial of religious rights. To be fair, the demand for separation from Jammu and Kashmir came principally from Leh where some leaders resented subordination to Srinagar and perceived discrimination against their region. Shia-majority Kargil had opposed the division and wanted to remain a part of J&K. However, the Modi government's uncaring actions have brought the two regions together in demanding democratic rights.

Those who welcomed separation expected greater control over their affairs. Instead, Ladakh lost its representation in the former J&K state legislature and received no legislature of its own. Hill councils are not the same as a government answerable to an elected assembly. The people of Ladakh may have escaped Srinagar's dominance and indifference, only to find the region being treated as an outpost controlled by unelected bureaucrats and a viceregal lieutenant-governor appointed by the Union home ministry. This top-down governance model tramples upon basic democratic rights and reduces proud citizens to helpless spectators in their own homeland. The people of Ladakh have also learnt lessons from what Kashmiris have gone through: democratically elected leaders have been disempowered by the Modi government using a convoluted set of rules in that former state. They thus want a governance structure with adequate constitutional safeguards wherein local voices would govern local affairs without external interference, something that cannot be amended at the whims and fancies of some bureaucrats.

After protests, which saw police firing leading to deaths on the streets of Leh, the Modi government resumed negotiations with a united forum of two groups, one from Leh and the other from Kargil.

## Will Israel 'dump' netanyahu? why his future hangs in the balance

Israel goes to the polls on October 27, in an election extensively framed as a referendum on Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. That assessment, however, limits a more crucial political contest to the fate of one leader; thereby missing a critical chapter of what Israeli politics looks like in the aftermath of the October 7 Hamas-led attack in 2023. The question that demands greater attention is whether the country's political center of gravity will shift if Netanyahu fails to secure an electoral mandate. Would a leadership change alter the country's strategic direction amid a heavily security-driven environment?

Before offering assessments of Israeli elections and their potential outcome, it remains important to understand the electoral process itself. Israeli citizens do not vote directly for the prime minister on the ballot; instead, they vote for parties to the 120-member Knesset, or the Israeli parliament, allocated through proportional representation. The country essentially functions as a single constituency, and any party surpassing the 3.25% threshold receives seats broadly proportional to its vote share. The result, therefore, remains less dependent on the number of seats each party secures and more on its ability to form a coalition to govern. The alliance is required to command the support of at least 61 lawmakers to win a parliamentary majority.

In comparison with Indian parliamentary elections, an Indian voter picks an individual member to be elected to the Lower House of the parliament, and the first one past the post generally gives the largest party or a coalition a clear mandate. Whereas, an Israeli citizen



izes votes for a party, instead of a candidate, and the order of candidates on that list remains predetermined. In simpler terms, a vote for the Likud party is not a vote for Netanyahu. A party can lead polls, yet fail to form a government. Meanwhile, a smaller party could win fewer votes but become indispensable in reaching a majority of 61 seats. The system, as such, is essentially rooted in coalition-building and less in ideological alignment of parties. The political polarization and trauma of the October 7 attack seem to be dominating the political plank, as demonstrated in the broader consensus on security-related issues. The key divisive issues are based primarily on two questions: who should govern and how the state should be governed.

The characteristics of Israeli politics are reflected in the parties contesting the polls, and a closer examination of these parties reveals how these entities hardly fit the conventional political

spectrum of right-wing and left-wing. The Netanyahu blocs can be understood as an alliance of distinct right and far-right-leaning parties and religious constituencies. For instance, Netanyahu's Likud party represents nationalist-conservative politics, with a focus on security-related issues, Jewish national identity, and a strong executive. The ultra-Orthodox parties, including Shas and United Torah Judaism, have prioritised religious education, welfare, and preserving the current religion-based status quo. The far-right parties, including Minister of National Security of Israel Itamar Ben-Gvir's Otzma Yehudit, take a hardline position on territory, Jewish settlements, and Palestinian statehood. While these parties have overlapping consensus on security and national identity, acute differences remain in how they view military services, the relationship between state and religion, judicial reform, and economic policy. They remain both strains

and allies for Netanyahu.

A similar lens can be applied to the opposition bloc, which does not represent a conventional left-wing or a drastic opposition to the Netanyahu camp. The political plank of Gadi Eisenkot known to be the biggest opponent in the ongoing polls, also rests on his security credentials as the former chief of staff of the Israel Defense Forces (IDF). He argues that Israel can remain security-centric without Netanyahu, while campaigning around issues of greater accountability, democratic institutions, and corruption concerns. Other key figures in the anti-government opposition bloc occupy distinct policy spaces - former Prime Ministers Naftali Bennett and Yair Lapid form a centrist-to-center-right alliance focused on security and governance reform, while Avigdor Liberman champions defense hawkishness alongside strict secularism. Meanwhile, the liberal-left, headed by Yair Golan, represents a smaller, distinct con-

stituency.

With that logic, the upcoming Israeli government, even if without Netanyahu, is unlikely to have a softened stance on the question of Palestine and regional security. Despite consensus on the security approach, the issue of military services has emerged more prominently in the discourse. Israel is a citizen army, with conscription closely tied to the country's social contract. Historically, the Haredi, ultra-orthodox community has been exempt from military service. However, heavy reserve mobilisation and exacerbated concerns of security have made this exclusion a central political debate. For secular and religious parties, this remains a matter of sharing an equal burden; meanwhile, Haredi parties regard this exclusion as a way of preserving their distinct religious lifestyle.

Predictably, the October 7 attack has disproportionately dominated electoral campaigns over other national issues. The incident produced two competing arguments - how the security breach occurred under Netanyahu's watch, and who Israelis can trust to protect them in the future. Therefore, any anti-Netanyahu vote or sentiment should not be misread as a desire for a different Palestinian policy, with neither bloc campaigning on the issue of a two-state solution or against the disproportionate use of force in Gaza in 2023, or increasing settlement-related violence in the West Bank. The election contest may not alter Israel's strategic or regional direction in the foreseeable future; however, a change of leadership can carry significant domestic consequences.

## Baruipur to gaighata, inside suvendu adhikari's zero-tolerance approach to crime

JAYANTA GHOSAL

*There is little doubt that, through this approach, Suvendu Adhikari is gaining considerable support among women in West Bengal, as well as among hard-line hindus*



criminals and insurgents. Suvendu Adhikari's approach places him within this broader political framework. Three decades ago, when Lal Krishna Advani was the Union Home Minister, I remember him proposing at the Home Ministers' Standing Committee that there should be no compromise when it came to rapists. He advocated a zero-tolerance policy and argued that rape should attract capital punishment. At the time, however, the chairman of the Home Ministers' Standing Committee was the communist leader Indrajit Gupta, who opposed the proposal. Gupta maintained that strong action should be taken against rapists, and there should be no leniency or political considerations in dealing with them. However, he did not believe that capital punishment was necessary to address the crisis. Several countries, after all, do not recognise the death penalty as a legal option. The world has long been divided between these

two approaches to punishment. Advani, therefore, could not implement his proposal, although it reflected the BJP's position under the Atal Bihari Vajpayee government. After Narendra Modi became Prime Minister, the BJP adopted a strong approach towards crime and law enforcement. Amit Shah, too, has supported a tough stance on encounters, particularly in situations involving the self-defence of police and paramilitary personnel. From this perspective, encounters have been presented as another option available to the security forces. In Uttar Pradesh, Yogi Adityanath has brought the activities of mafia groups and criminal strongmen under control, according to the BJP's assessment of his governance. During Mulayam Singh Yadav's tenure as Chief Minister, a perception had grown that the state was witnessing mafia raj, with allegations that sections of the political establishment, including Yadav

leaders, and the police were allowing criminals to escape punishment. This remains one of the BJP's principal allegations against its political opponents in Uttar Pradesh, including in the run-up to state elections. Yogi Adityanath has sought to counter that perception through strong action against criminal elements.

Suvendu Adhikari has now adopted a similar national political line in West Bengal. For the BJP's core constituency, this approach is likely to be particularly appealing. At the same time, the issue could also benefit the party by generating political debate and wider public discussion. Even if the response is controversial, the resulting attention may work in favour of both the BJP and Suvendu Adhikari. CPM leader Sujan Chakraborty has already said that his party is opposed to rape but does not believe that encounters are always necessary. He has also raised concerns that encounters can create a perception that

evidence is being tampered with. However, in the incident under discussion, the accused rapist was being transported in a police jeep when the police took action. The circumstances surrounding the incident have consequently become part of the wider debate over the government's approach to crime and punishment. First, he is receiving considerable support from sections of the West Bengal public. Although the issue has also become politically polarised and some sections of the opposition have criticised the approach, that opposition can itself contribute to the political polarisation surrounding the issue. For the BJP, the resulting public response may prove beneficial. Second, the BJP's central leadership in Delhi, particularly Union Home Minister Amit Shah, has pursued similar approaches in several states. Suvendu Adhikari's actions are therefore consistent with a political approach that the central leadership has previously endorsed.

Third, this issue has shifted attention away from other controversies surrounding Suvendu Adhikari. Questions that had previously occupied the political debate are now receiving less attention. With the Kolkata Municipal Corporation election expected in November, this approach has become politically significant. Suvendu Adhikari is increasingly projecting an image of a strong leader who is unwilling to compromise on crimes against women. For the BJP, that image could prove a considerable political advantage as the party prepares for the civic elections.

Mukesh Ambani fights back tears as his children take the wheel at Jiolisting after record IPO

MUMBAI (AGENCY)

Mukesh Ambani fought back tears as his three children took the stage at the stock market listing of Jio Platforms Ltd, the digital and technology business he built into a national connectivity giant, in an emotional moment that offered a glimpse of the next generation preparing to carry forward one of India's biggest corporate empires. The 69-year-old billionaire watched from the National Stock Exchange alongside his wife Nita Ambani, as Akash, Isha and Anant Ambani paid tribute to their father and grandfather Dhirubhai Ambani, and pledged to build on the family's legacy. He repeatedly wiped tears from his eyes as his children spoke of the sacrifices, ambitions and responsibilities underpinning Jio's journey. For much of the run-up to the



initial public offering, Ambani, chairman of Reliance Industries Ltd, had kept a relatively low profile at investor road-shows and meetings, leaving his eldest son Akash to take the lead. At Wednesday's listing ceremony, he again ceded the spotlight to the next generation. Yet his imprint was unmistakable. The IPO represents the culmination of a decade-long effort to

build a digital platform on a scale that has reshaped India's telecommunications market and diversified Reliance beyond its traditional oil-refining and energy businesses. Jio Platforms Managing Director Akash Ambani, Jio Platforms Limited Non-Executive Directors Nita Ambani, Mukesh Ambani, Anant Ambani and Isha Ambani during the bell-ringing ceremony on the

day of the listing of company in Mumbai on Wednesday. Image credit/PTI. Jio shares opened 21.4 per cent above their IPO price and rose as much as 23 per cent to Rs 1,375, valuing the company at more than Rs 12.5 lakh crore (USD 131 billion). The Rs 30,213 crore (\$3.1 billion) offering was India's largest IPO, and the debut made Jio the country's second-most valuable

listed company after Reliance Industries. The initial public offering (IPO) closed last week with bids for 22.19 times the shares on offer, as total demand across the public issue and anchor investor placement crossed Rs 7.4 lakh crore - the highest ever for an Indian IPO - and applications approached a world-beating 1.39 crore.

The rally in the shares on the opening day offered a rare bright spot for investors amid a bruising equity selloff, and a strong opening for a company whose scale, earnings and technological ambitions have made it central to the Ambani family's next chapter. The listing ceremony was more than just the market's verdict. It was also an occasion for the three siblings to articulate a shared vision for Jio while acknowledging the man whose ambition made it possible.

Bharat Soka Gakkai Honours Changemakers at 2026 Sustainability Awards

NEW DELHI.(AGENCY)

As rising air pollution and scanty rainfall underscore the impact of climate change, Bharat Soka Gakkai (BSG), an organization devoted to promoting Peace, Culture, Education and Sustainability, honored the efforts of individuals who are trying to make a difference through its second BSG Awards for Excellence in Sustainability in New Delhi. The awards spotlight initiatives that encourage meaningful action towards the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). At the heart of the awards is BSG's commitment to Sustainable Human Behaviour (SHB), rooted in the belief that lasting change begins with how we think, choose and act. By learning about sus-



tainability, reflecting on our choices, taking action and empowering others, each person can help protect the dignity of all life and build healthier communities. Mr Vinay Jain, Chairperson, BSG, said in his inaugural address: "Sustainability begins with respect for the dignity of all life. When this respect shapes our daily choices, each of us can become a force for change. These awards celebrate that potential and the courage to act on it." Chief Guest Mr Jalaj Ashwin Dani, Founder of Asiana Fund and Dani

Foundation, and Co-promoter of Asian Paints, highlighted the importance of inspiring others to act: "The real value of sustainability lies not only in the impact we create, but in our ability to inspire others to act. By recognizing those who are already making a difference, we can help their ideas travel further and create a larger impact." The second edition of the awards highlighted contributions across 14 categories, including circularity, biodiversity conservation, sustainable fashion and craftsmanship.

TELUS Digital India Volunteers Refurbish 78-year-old Shri Gandhi Inter College in Greater Noida

NEW DELHI.(AGENCY)

As part of TELUS Digital India's signature TELUS Days of Giving (TDOG) program, over 750 team member volunteers helped revitalize the 78-year-old government-aided Shri Gandhi Inter College in Greater Noida. The initiative featured classroom and hallway mural painting, whitewashing, and bench painting, alongside the launch of TELUS Wise, a volunteer-led program focused on helping young people stay safe, secure, and responsible online. The event took place during the United Nations' International Year of Volunteers for Sustainable Development, observed throughout 2026. The transformation made the school's learning spaces more vibrant, welcoming and better equipped to meet students' needs.



Volunteers brought colour to 25 classrooms and six hallways across six school buildings by painting murals and refurbishing 250 sitting benches. Ahead of the volunteer day, skilled professionals completed essential repairs and improvements, including painting, washroom renovations and waterproofing of nine classroom ceilings. Five science laboratories and the library were also repainted. To further

strengthen the school's infrastructure and resources, TELUS Digital India contributed to the installation of 10 KW off-grid solar system, and donated 30 laptops for the computer laboratories, new water cooler as well as sports equipment for the school's over 1,000 students. "A supportive learning environment plays an important role in shaping students' educational experiences and aspirations," said Rajiv M. Dhand, Senior

Vice President, Global Customer Experience and Trust & Safety Operations. "At Shri Gandhi Inter College, we wanted to help create spaces that inspire curiosity and give students access to resources that support their learning.

By bringing together practical improvements and essential educational resources, we hope to contribute to an environment where students feel encouraged to learn, explore and realise their potential." Alongside improvements to the school's physical environment, the initiative also addressed the importance of helping young people navigate an increasingly digital world. TELUS Digital India recently launched TELUS Wise in India, a volunteer-led program designed to build awareness of online safety, security and responsible digital behaviour.

BuzzBallz brings a taste of Diwali with limited-edition Rasmalai flavour

BENGALURU : OPEN SEARCH

BuzzBallz, the easy-to-drink flavored alcoholic beverage known for its brightly colored, ball-shaped packaging and bold 15% ABV with unique flavours, is adding a festive twist to its India line-up with the launch of BuzzBallz Rasmalai - the first Rasmalai-flavoured ready-to-drink alcoholic beverage in the market. Inspired by the beloved Indian dessert, this limited-edition release brings the warmth and spirit of Diwali to BuzzBallz's signature easy-to-drink format. Inspired by the richness of festive sweets and the joy of Diwali celebrations, BuzzBallz Rasmalai has a distinctive flavour of kesar, pistachio and cardamom with a smooth, indulgent taste. At 15%



ABV and best served chilled, it brings the signature POP. SIP. BUZZ. experience in a ball. "Diwali is a time for connectedness, catching up with friends and family, and sharing something sweet," said Jess Scheerhorn, President, BuzzBallz.

"Desserts are an integral part of these celebrations, and BuzzBallz Rasmalai takes inspiration from a well-known treat to offer adult consumers a fresh way to explore a familiar flavour. It reflects our approach to India: listening to local tastes and creating something distinctive that consumers can discover and enjoy."

Ai+ Smartphone Announces Price Hike of Across Select Models from November 15

MUMBAI : OPEN SEARCH

Ai+ Smartphone today announced a price hike across select models in its smartphone portfolio, effective November 15, 2026. As cost pressures persist, particularly in price-sensitive segments, Ai+ Smartphone has continued to evaluate their impact while working to maintain affordability for consumers. However, with input costs remaining elevated, the company has undertaken another measured pricing adjustment to maintain a sustainable balance between affordability and product experience. With prices set to increase by up to 73,000, now is the best time for consumers to purchase their preferred Ai+ smartphones at cur-



rent prices, before the revised pricing comes into effect. Under the revised pricing, select variants of the Ai+ Pulse 2 FE, Pulse 2, Nova 2 5G, Nova 2 Neo 5G, Nova 2 Power 5G, Nova 2 Pro 5G and Nova 2 Ultra 5G will see price increases ranging from 71,000 to 73,000. The Ai+ NovaFlip 5G will remain unchanged at 749,999. Despite the prevailing industry challenges, Ai+ Smartphone remains committed to delivering a strong price-to-experience proposition for Indian consumers.

I's Spotlight brings Punjab's Leading Agencies together at The Spotlight Circle - Chapter Punjab

MOHALI (AGENCY)

It's Spotlight, the AI-powered Digital Out-of-Home (DOOH) advertising network from Skuka Solutions Pvt. Ltd., hosted The Spotlight Circle - Chapter Punjab at Homeland Regalia, Mohali, on Wednesday evening. The event brought Punjab's leading advertising and media agencies under one roof to thank, connect with, and celebrate the company's agency partners this festive season. The evening opened with a press conference addressed by the company's Directors, Sanya Jindal and Virkaran Singh, and its Chief Financial Officer, Ashish Rana.

Sanya Jindal spoke about how It's Spotlight has scaled rapidly in a



short time in the new age of advertising. She highlighted that the company gives advertisers a real-time dashboard showing how their ads are performing, much like the analytics brands are used to getting from digital platforms such as Meta. "We have bridged the gap between the traditional way of advertising and the way today's customers actually engage, and brought interactive solutions to the outdoor

space," said Sanya Jindal. "It isn't just about digital screens and digital out-of-home. There are many interactive advertising opportunities ahead, which we will announce in due course."

Virkaran Singh, Director, shared the company's vision of bringing iconic screen culture to India. "New York has Times Square, London has Piccadilly Circus, and cities like Tokyo, Beijing and Los

Angeles all have screen billboards that are world famous. We want to bring that culture and that excitement to India. Why should Indian cities be left behind?"

He said that taking over the screens at Cinépolis has been a game changer for the company. "Blockbusters are like festivals in India, and through our cinema screens we help advertisers make the most of those moments," he said, adding, "Screen advertising is modern, but SpotX, our technology vertical, makes it futuristic." Reflecting on the company's journey, he noted that It's Spotlight installed its very first screen in Mohali, at CP67 Mall, and is now present in more than 20 states and union territories.

This festive season, Swiggy launches Multi Restaurant Ordering : Reinvents Food Court Experience for Homes



PANAJI : OPEN SEARCH

Swiggy (Swiggy Ltd, NSE: SWIGGY / BSE: 544285), India's pioneering on-demand convenience platform, announced the launch of the Multi Restaurant Ordering feature on its app. Food is a personal choice and preferences tend to vary in a specific household or group. Multi Restaurant Ordering is designed to ensure users can order what they love to eat with-

out any compromises. The feature allows the users to combine different cuisines, dishes and cravings from up to five restaurants and place an order at one go. In addition to a more seamless experience, Multi Restaurant Ordering feature also promises more savings for users as it eliminates the need for separate carts and checkouts, with multiple platform fees. Whether it is family get-together, Diwali parties or long weekends, everyone at the table has different choices and preferences for food. With the Multi Restaurant Ordering feature, consumers can place orders for their favourite starters, main course and desserts from different restaurants together.

Briefs News

SK hynix sells out AI memory chips through 2029 on record USD 74.64 billion revenue

SEOUL (AGENCY) South Korean semiconductor firm SK hynix saw its DRAM and high-bandwidth memory chips effectively sell out through 2029 on sustained artificial intelligence demand, as the firm registered historic quarterly earnings with revenue crossing 100 trillion won (Rs USD 74.64 billion) for the first time, according to a news report by The Korea Herald. The memory manufacturer also introduced further shareholder returns, lifting its planned dividends along with share repurchases and cancellations for the year to around 100 trillion won (Rs USD 74.64 billion). During the third-quarter earnings call, Chief Executive Officer Kwak Noh-jung addressed investors directly regarding the company's capital allocation framework. "Our principle has been to share most of the gains with shareholders when our strategic investments bear fruit," the news report quoted Kwak. "The gains would help replenish funds available for shareholder returns when investment in future growth temporarily constrains them," he added, noting that this approach allowed the enterprise to "continue investing boldly in sustainable growth while protecting shareholder interests." Operating profit rose 632.1 per cent year-on-year to 83.33 trillion won (Rs USD 62.22 billion) for the July-September period, exceeding market projections of 77 trillion won (Rs USD 57.47 billion), according to the news report. Revenue reached 104.62 trillion won (Rs USD 78.09 billion), marking a 327.9 per cent increase, while net profit touched 39.78 trillion won (Rs USD 29.69 billion).

Fios Genomics bioinformatics team and services move to Excelra

HYDERABAD (AGENCY) Excelra, a global scientific informatics company, today announced that the bioinformatics services of Fios Genomics Ltd, and the team behind them, have moved to Excelra with effect from 20 October 2026. Fios Genomics, based in Edinburgh, has spent nearly two decades turning complex omics data into impactful insights for pharma, biotech, and other life science researchers, with particular depth in multi-omics study analysis. The team joins Excelra's wider scientific consulting group and will continue to serve Fios clients with the same scientists and the same platform. "This is about continuity and making a larger impact for our clients," said Sarah Lynagh, CEO of Fios Genomics. "Fios has always been defined by the quality of its science and the care we take with each study. Excelra shares those values and brings the wider data science and scientific informatics capability to do more for the researchers we work with." "Fios is known for rigorous, study-level analysis delivered quickly and explained clearly, exactly what researchers need when a dataset lands," said Jannick Bendtsen, Vice President Bioinformatics, Excelra. "That way of working fits naturally with our focus on integrative multi-omics, translational insight, and scientific AI.

48 Amrita researchers feature in World's Top 2% Scientists list

NEW DELHI (AGENCY) Forty-eight researchers from Amrita Vishwa Vidyapeetham have featured in the 2026 update of a global database of top-cited scientists published in the Elsevier Data Repository, according to figures compiled by the university. Based on citation data from Scopus, the database is widely referred to as the "World's Top 2% Scientists" list. It assesses researchers' citation impact across scientific disciplines, with separate categories for career-long and single-year performance. Of the 48 Amrita researchers, 17 feature in the career-long category and 44 in the single-year category. Thirteen appear in both, taking the total number of individual researchers to 48. The researchers work across medicine, engineering, materials science, artificial intelligence, networking and telecommunications, energy and education. The 2026 edition assesses career-long citation impact up to the end of 2025, while the single-year category considers citations received during 2025.

# Sarang helicopter display team of Indian Air Force paid a courtesy call on CM Sai

RAIPUR. OPEN SEARCH

Members of the prestigious Sarang Helicopter Display Team of the Indian Air Force paid a courtesy call on Chief Minister Shri Vishnu Dev Sai today at his residence office in the capital Raipur. On this occasion, the team members felicitated Chief Minister Shri Sai by presenting him a memento. The Chief Minister extended a warm welcome to the team members on the sacred land of Chhattisgarh and described their participation in the Rajyotsav organized on the occasion of State Foundation Day as a matter of pride for the state.

Chief Minister Shri Sai said that the arrival of the world-renowned Sarang Helicopter Display Team of the Indian Air Force on the occasion of Chhattisgarh State Foundation Day is a matter of great joy and pride for the people of the state.



The Indian Air Force is respected worldwide for its indomitable courage, discipline, dedication, and outstanding professionalism. The Sarang Team's aerial display will provide a vivid introduction to these glorious traditions.

He said that this air show, organized on the occasion of the State Festival, will be an unforgettable experience for the people of Chhattisgarh, especially the youth and students. Chief Minister Shri Sai said that the valor and

valor of the Indian Armed Forces are a source of pride and inspiration for every citizen. The courage, precision, and coordination with which the Sarang Team pilots perform difficult aerobatics in the sky is a testament to their rigorous training, discipline, and excellent team spirit. This display will inspire young people to dream big, face challenges, and pursue their goals with determination.

Chief Minister Shri Sai said that under the leadership of Prime Minister Shri

**Chief Minister Sai extended a warm welcome to the Sarang team and said that this event will strengthen the resolve of patriotism and national service among the youth**

Narendra Modi, the country is steadily moving towards self-reliance in the defense and aviation sectors. The Sarang team's performance, using indigenously developed Dhruv helicopters, will also showcase India's technological capabilities, innovation, and resolve for a self-reliant India. He expressed confidence that this event will further strengthen the spirit of serving the nation among the state's youth by joining the Indian Air Force and other armed forces. It is noteworthy that on the

occasion of Chhattisgarh State Foundation Day, a grand air show will be presented by the Sarang Helicopter Display Team of the Indian Air Force at the Sindh Lake area in Nava Raipur Atal Nagar on November 2. In this special air show, which will begin at 11 am, five helicopters will demonstrate amazing coordination, precise flying, and daring stunts in the sky.

During the air show, spectators will have the opportunity to witness various impressive helicopter formations, coordinated flights, and thrilling aerial maneuvers. The Sarang team's signature skills include extremely close formations and precise helicopter maneuvering in designated formations. This display, organized to mark the State Festival, will be one of the highlights of the event.

# Tamil nadu launches security audit of jails after 2 escape incidents

CHENNAI (AGENCY)



The Tamil Nadu Prisons Department has launched a security audit across prisons in the state following the escape of undertrial prisoners from two jails in recent days. The exercise is expected to identify vulnerabilities and guide decisions on strengthening prison infrastructure, including the possible arming of watch-towers.

"Security audit is on for the last one week. Once audit reports are received by month-end, gap analysis will be done and a decision taken to further target hardening of prisons," a senior officer from the prisons department told. "Wherever required, depending on the situation, watchtowers will be armed as a preventive measure," the officer added. On Monday, 17 undertrial prisoners escaped from the Thekkampatti Sub-jail in Theni district in what police

suspect was a coordinated operation. One prisoner allegedly feigned a seizure, prompting jail staff to enter. The group then attacked the staff, overpowered others near the entrance, snatched the keys and escaped.

Nine jail staff have been suspended for alleged dereliction of duty. Thirteen of the escapees have been arrested, while a search is underway for the remaining four. "Considering the highly forested and mountainous terrain around the jail, the police initially sealed off all the exit routes with a strong cordon and initiated systematic combing opera-

tions. With daylight, three specialised drones were deployed along with 17 special teams to track the escaped prisoners.

The drone footage allowed police to cover large areas and get pinpoint locations, which enabled them to arrest them," South Zone Inspector General of Police Vijayendra Bidari told. The undertrials were facing serious charges, including attempt to murder and drug-related offences. The incident followed the escape of two undertrials from Puzhal prison, who were later apprehended.

## Briefs News

### Very severe cyclone Arnab crosses Andhra coast, weakens into severe cyclonic storm

**AMARAVATI (AGENCY)** Very severe cyclonic storm Arnab crossed the Andhra Pradesh and Yanam coasts on Wednesday morning before weakening into a severe cyclonic storm. According to the Indian Meteorological Department (IMD), the landfall process is complete with the weather system moving entirely over land. Peak wind speeds reached up to 135 kmph and gusts of up to 150 kmph. "The cyclone crossed the Andhra Pradesh & Yanam coasts to the Southwest of Yanam near latitude 16.450 N and 81.90 E, about 20 km east-northeast of Narsapur, 40 km southwest of Yanam and 60 km southwest of Kakinada," said the Met department in an official release. In its wake, Cyclone Arnab left a trail of destruction, uprooting several trees and power poles, leading to power outages in several areas.

### L-G Manoj Sinha reviews J&K security scenario at Unified Headquarters meeting

**SRINAGAR (AGENCY)** Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Tuesday chaired a meeting of the Unified Headquarters (UHQ) at Lok Bhavan in Srinagar to review the security situation in the Union Territory. The meeting was attended by General Officer Commanding-in-Chief (GOC-in-C), Northern Command, Lt Gen Pratik Sharma; Chief Secretary Atal Dulloo; Director General of Police Nalin Prabhat; GOC, Chinara Corps, Lt Gen Balbir Singh; and other senior officers. The Unified Headquarters coordinates security and intelligence operations in Jammu and Kashmir. The Lieutenant Governor congratulated the Army, Central Armed Police Forces (CAPFs), J&K Police and intelligence agencies for ensuring the peaceful conduct of the Amarnath Yatra. He emphasised that real-time coordination among security agencies was crucial to achieving security objectives. "A foolproof counter-strategy must be implemented to completely choke off logistical and financial support for terrorists, and we must step up measures to disrupt and counter infiltration.

### Chief Secretary calls for middle path, consensus on dry Ladakh demand

**LEH (AGENCY)** Amid public outcry over the rising number of wine shops and demands for a dry Ladakh, Chief Secretary Ashish Kundra on Tuesday called for wider consultations with religious and industry representatives to build consensus and find a middle path balancing public sentiment with the region's cultural and economic interests. The chief secretary assured that the administration was flexible in its approach to public policy and would be amenable to a middle path solution in the matter. Kundra was speaking at a meeting with women representatives of various religious organisations to discuss issues relating to excise policy.

### Former Bhopal newspaper owner gets 10 life terms for raping minor girls

BHOPAL (AGENCY)

A special POC SO court has sentenced Pyare Miyan, a septuagenarian and former newspaper owner in Bhopal, to 10 separate life imprisonments for the rape and sexual assault of five minor girls, a prosecution official said. The court also imposed a fine of Rs 77.64 lakh on him in its judgment pronounced on Tuesday, the official said.

The sentences pronounced under various sections of the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act and the Indian Penal Code (IPC) include eight terms of imprisonment for the remainder of his natural life and two terms of life imprisonment. All the sentences will run concurrently. The court also sentenced his accomplice, Rabia Bi, to



20 years in prison, the official said. According to the prosecution, Miyan (78) had been targeting girls since 2014. He would lure them with the promise of a job at his home for Rs 10,000 per month and would then sexually assault and rape them. Rabia Bi acted as a facilitator in his criminal activities, the official said.

The crime came to light on July 11, 2020, when during a counselling session, a victim revealed she was invited to a flat in Bhopal's Shahpura area on the pretext of celebrating a girl's birthday.

### BKU Ekta Ugrahan launches protests at 48 thanas across Punjab over forcible removal of body

CHANDIGARH (AGENCY)

The Bhartiya Kisan Union (Ekta Ugrahan), one of Punjab's largest farmer organisations, has launched state-wide protests outside police stations over the alleged forcible removal of Daljit Singh's body by the police. The protests are underway at 48 locations across the state, BKU leader Shingara Singh said, adding that a contingent of protesters was leaving Barnala to join the agitation.

Daljit Singh, a resident of Bhamme Kalan village in Sardulgarh, died under mysterious circumstances. His family and supporters were trying to take his body to the protest site near the Mansa Deputy Commissioner's residence, where an agitation is underway over the killing of anti-drug activist Parvinder Singh Jhota, when



the police allegedly took it away on Tuesday. The protests will be held from 11.30 am to 4 pm on Wednesday, senior union leader Jhanda Singh Jethuke said. He demanded that the body be handed over to the family without delay. The body of the deceased must be handed over to the family without any delay. It is their prerogative to decide how and when they want to cremate him. Why should the police interfere?" Jethuke said in a video mes-

### Nurpur : 17 lakh fish seeds to be released into Pong reservoir to boost production

NURPUR (AGENCY)

The Fisheries Department has launched a fish-stocking campaign in the Pong reservoir, also known as Maharana Pratap Sagar, with a target of releasing 17 lakh seeds to boost production and sustain the livelihoods of the families of around 3,600 fishermen dependent on the reservoir. More than 12.95 lakh fish seeds had been released till Monday. Under the campaign, the department plans to stock four species: 5 lakh Katka, one lakh Mori, 7.25 lakh Rohu and 3.75 lakh Grass Carp. The fish seeds being released measure more than 70 mm.

Assistant Director, Fisheries, Sandeep Kumar said that special attention was being paid to the quality of fish seeds and compliance with technical standards during the stocking



operation. A committee headed by Pawan Kumar, Joint Director, Fisheries, was monitoring the campaign. The departmental field staff and members and office-bearers of local fisheries cooperative societies are jointly carrying out the operation. "Sihal and Jambal Bassi, situated along the reservoir's banks, have been identified as stocking sites. The initiative is significant for the local fishing community, as the reservoir

supports thousands of families dependent on fishing for their livelihood.

However, the long-term benefits will depend on the survival and growth of the released fish, favorable environmental conditions and sustainable fishing practices," said Sandeep Kumar. Spread over around 24,000 hectares, the Pong reservoir is about 42-km long and 19-km wide. It is an important inland fishery resource in the lower hills of Kangra

district, supporting fishing activity and the local economy. Departmental figures, however, show a sharp reduction in fish stocking compared with the previous two years.

The department had released 65 lakh fish seeds in 2024 and 62.52 lakh in 2025, while the target for the current year is 17 lakh seeds. The significant decline raises questions about the factors behind the reduced stocking target and its possible implications for fish production and fishermen's earnings. The Fisheries Department's reduced budget and natural fish breeding during the two months' off season are considered the reasons for the reduction in fish stocking this year. The department has reportedly fixed 346.32 metric tonnes of fish production this year.

### Guwahati Hotel Shooting Accused Raises "Encounter" Fears, Court Sets Conditions

Guwahati (AGENCY)



A court in Guwahati has laid down conditions for the seven-day police custody of Ghanakanta Gogoi, accused of shooting dead five people and injuring another at a hotel in the city, after he raised "encounter" fears. Gogoi, who was arrested soon after the shooting at Hotel Bilas Inn on Monday night, was on Tuesday remanded to seven days of police custody. The court has issued directions on evidence recovery, security and medical examinations, while prohibiting custodial torture and directing police to provide basic necessities. Medical examinations must also be conducted every 24 hours, and a DSP-rank officer must accompany him during evidence-recovery operations, with additional

security arrangements required for operations conducted before sunrise or after sunset. Gogoi's advocate has also filed a general petition raising concerns over his safety in custody. According to police, the initial investigation indicated that the shooting stemmed from a dispute over the lease and management of Hotel Bilas Inn, owned by the Bharali family and leased to Gogoi. The family had entered into a five-year lease agreement with Gogoi on September 10, 2025, at a monthly rent of around Rs 1.8 lakh.

# Aldona MLA calls for review of AI camera system for traffic e-challans

PANAJI : OPEN SEARCH

Aldona MLA Adv Carlos Alvares Ferreira has demanded an immediate halt to the automated issuing of traffic challans across problematic stretches like the Bastora flyover and underpass, calling on the Transport Department and traffic police to review the AI camera system and address widespread grievances caused by erroneous fines for signal violations and line crossing.

"The government has announced the installation of AI-powered CCTV cameras at various locations. I personally welcome this move by the government to install AI cameras. This technology should not be



just about generating traffic fines. It should primarily serve as a tool to monitor public movement and enhance public security without compromising on the privacy of a private individual. The main concern for a large number of citizens revolves around these automated AI-generated traffic e-challans," he said. Ferreira said that some citizens have been fined for

**The government has announced the installation of AI-powered CCTV cameras at various locations. I personally welcome this move by the government to install AI cameras. This technology should not be just about generating traffic fines. It should primarily serve as a tool to monitor public movement and enhance public security without compromising on the privacy of a private individual**

using a phone while halted for a red signal to clear, and another for crossing a red light while waiting at the stop line at a red signal.

"Traffic lines at the signal below the Bastora flyover and at Mapusa near the KTC bus stand are very vague; these are rather speed breaker caution lines. I personally went to check these lines. And this has

been confirmed by PWD authorities, who said they were not asked to draw the stop lines. How are the authorities issuing challans in the absence of stop lines and clear indication of breakage of signal? It is time for the department to review the system and ensure fair treatment for every citizen on the road. The same should be fol-

lowed in other places where similar situations exist. Until a proper system is put in order, common people should not be made to suffer," he said.

He also said that it is fake news that electricity connections will be disconnected if traffic fines are not paid. He pointed out that in the SC order dated Sept 28, 2026, it was directed that in so far as the effective implementation of recovery of fines is concerned, the renewal of registration certificates and the issuance of duplicate registration certificates are to be barred by the authorities, and no requests for updating owner addresses are to be entertained.

### Vaishno Devi shrine board holds plantation drive to enhance green cover

JAMMU (AGENCY)



Continuing its initiatives aimed at promoting environmental conservation and enhancing green cover, the Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board (SMVDSB) today organised a plantation drive along an extensive stretch in Kakryal. During the drive, over 100 fruit-bearing saplings, including lemon, mango, mosambi, kinnow, apple, guava, jackfruit, litchi, chikoo and amla, were planted at identified locations. The initiative also involved extensive de-weeding and cleaning of the surrounding premises to improve the overall cleanliness, upkeep and aesthetic appeal of the area.

The plantation drive was formally launched by Sachin Kumar Vaishya, Chief Executive Officer, SMVDSB in the presence of

Alok Kumar Maurya, Additional Chief Executive Officer; Pawan Kumar Goswami, Deputy Chief Executive Officer; Dr Yashpal Sharma, Facility Director, Narayana Hospital and others. The Shrine Board has envisaged the plantation of 1,87,000 quality forestry seedlings in the shrine area. Of these, 1,25,000 seedlings have already been planted, while the remaining 62,000 are scheduled to be planted dur-

ing the forthcoming winter season. "The shrine board has undertaken several eco-friendly initiatives encompassing waste and water management, solar power generation and the use of drone technology for seed dispersal to preserve the natural grandeur of the shrine area. To promote environmental awareness and encourage greater public participation in enhancing green cover.

India hockey player nilakanta announces retirement, wishes to train kids back in Manipur

JALANDHAR (AGENCY)

After nine years and 163 international caps, 31-year-old Nilakanta Sharma announced his decision to hang his boots. His decision came after Indian team's 13-0 drubbing of Bangladesh in the Asian Champions Trophy (ACT) opener, at the Olympic Surjit Singh Hockey Stadium, on Tuesday evening. The Manipur midfielder announced that the ongoing ACT will be his last assignment with the Indian team. As a farewell gesture, the Indian hockey players tossed him into the air thrice to celebrate his achievements.

Sharma's call was expected, as he becomes the first of the four names in talks for the 'smooth transition' process, ahead of the 2028 Los Angeles Olympics



preparations. The other three names are of Mandeep Singh, Jarmanpreet Singh and Amit Rohidas, all of whom have played for India for a significant stretch. Sharma, a midfielder from Manipur, was part of India's bronze medal-winning squad at the Tokyo Olympics, and gold winning teams of 2022 and 2026 Asian Games. He rose from his village Kontha

Ahallup in the Imphal East district of Manipur, to represent the nation at the highest level. "I discussed (about taking retirement) with the coach during the recent Asian Games. I told him that I want to bid adieu in the next tournament, as I felt it's the right time for me. I told home (the coach) to give me a chance to say goodbye after the ACT in Punjab. He agreed on the

Sharma, a midfielder from Manipur, was part of India's bronze medal-winning squad at the Tokyo Olympics, and gold winning teams of 2022 and 2026 Asian Games

condition that we win gold in Nagoya and qualify for the 2028 Olympics. If we had not got gold there, I don't think I would have been playing here at all," smiled Sharma, who now wishes to train young kids back in Manipur. He was given a job in the Manipur Sports Department, after the Tokyo Olympics feat.

He first made his mark in junior hockey, winning the 2015 Junior Asia Cup before playing a key role in

India's triumph at the 2016 FIH Men's Junior World Cup in Lucknow. He went on to make his senior international debut against Belgium in 2017, and established himself as a strong midfielder. In 2018, he was a member of the Indian team that won the Asian Champions Trophy (where India shared the title with Pakistan), and the side that secured the FIH Men's Series Finals in Bhubaneswar in 2019.

In the 2020 Tokyo Olympic Games, he was part of the Indian team that won bronze to end the country's 41-year wait for an Olympic hockey medal. He also represented India at the 2018, 2023 and 2026 Men's Hockey World Cups and won silver at the Birmingham 2022 Commonwealth Games.

Col CK Nayudu Trophy U-23 : BCA President Harshvardhan inaugurates Bihar vs Baroda match

RAJGIR (AGENCY)

Bihar Cricket Association (BCA) President Harshvardhan inaugurated the four-day Elite Group match between Bihar U-23 and Baroda U-23 in the Col C.K. Nayudu Trophy at the Rajgir International Cricket Stadium. On the occasion, BCA President Harshvardhan felicitated the support staff of the Baroda team by presenting them with bouquets, shawls and mementoes from the Bihar Cricket Association, as per a press release. The occasion reflected the ongoing efforts to develop cricket in Bihar, provide better opportunities for young players and strengthen the state's cricket infrastructure. The event also witnessed a spirit of sportsmanship, mutual respect



and camaraderie between the two teams. Office-bearers and members of the Nalanda District Cricket Association, along with officials of the Bihar Cricket Association, were also present on the occasion. Hosting a match of this stature in Rajgir marks a significant step towards promoting cricketing activities in Bihar and further strengthening the state's identity on the

national cricket map. At the close of play on the first day, Baroda U-23 were all out for 175 runs in their first innings. For Baroda, Deep Patel top-scored with 48 runs, while Keyur Kale contributed 31 runs and Ayush scored 22 runs. For Bihar, Suman Kumar was the standout bowler, taking four wickets for 43 runs in 16 overs, including one maiden over.

Briefs News

When someone like Abhishek Sharma gets going, he is pretty hard to stop : Finn Allen

AUCKLAND (AGENCY) New Zealand batter Finn Allen admitted that India's explosive batting, particularly from Abhishek Sharma and Vaibhav Sooryavanshi, made it difficult for his side to defend their total in the third T20I. Abhishek and Sooryavanshi gave India a sensational start in the chase of 199, taking the team to 118 without loss in the Powerplay. Abhishek brought up his half-century off just 15 balls before reaching his hundred in 35 deliveries. Matthew Fisher dismissed Sooryavanshi for 45, while Kyle Jamieson removed Abhishek for 113. India eventually reached the target in 13.2 overs, with 40 balls to spare. While acknowledging that New Zealand had posted what they considered a competitive score, Allen said the defeat was frustrating for the entire team and stressed the importance of learning from the loss and moving on to the next match.

"With a game like that, you take a quick overview, learn what you can from it and move on. I think we put up what we felt was a competitive total with the bat, but conditions tend to get a little easier as the game progresses. When someone like Abhishek Sharma gets going, he is pretty hard to stop. It was just one of those things, and we have to move on to the next game," Allen told the reporters in Auckland on Wednesday. "As a group, it is always frustrating when things do not go your way. I would not single out the batters or the bowlers as being more frustrated than the others. When players like Abhishek and Vaibhav get going, they are difficult for any opposition to contain. They showed exactly why they are such good players," he added.

Mohit Chhillar backs franchise-based leagues to boost kabaddi growth in Gujarat

BHAVNAGAR (AGENCY) Veteran Indian kabaddi player and expert Mohit Chhillar has backed franchise-based leagues for their potential to boost kabaddi in Gujarat, create opportunities for emerging players and expand the sport's reach. His remarks come after sports management company Nxt Sports acquired Bhavnagar Bulls, a franchise in the Gujarat Kabaddi League (GKL), with plans to strengthen the team and explore opportunities for regional talent development, as per a press release. "The growth of franchise-based leagues is important for the future of kabaddi because it creates more competitive opportunities for players and helps the sport reach new audiences. The acquisition of Bhavnagar Bulls by Nxt Sports is an encouraging development for Gujarat kabaddi," Chhillar said. "With a clear vision, the right team structure and a focus on identifying talent, the franchise can contribute to the development of the sport and provide aspiring players with a platform to showcase their abilities," he added. The acquisition marks a new phase for Bhavnagar Bulls, with Nxt Sports looking to develop the franchise, strengthen its competitive prospects and explore opportunities in talent identification, fan engagement and commercial partnerships. The Gujarat Kabaddi League aims to promote regional representation through a franchise-based competition featuring teams representing different parts of the state. The format is intended to provide aspiring players with opportunities to compete in an organised environment and gain greater visibility. Regional leagues can also help strengthen Gujarat's kabaddi ecosystem by connecting players, coaches, franchises and sponsors while building local interest in the sport.

'No cause for concern': Pakistan coach Mike Smith backs Babar Azam ahead of Sri Lanka final

NEW DELHI (AGENCY) Pakistan batting coach Mike Smith has backed Babar Azam despite the batter's recent struggles for a big score, insisting there is no cause for concern as the team prepares for Saturday's tri-series final against Sri Lanka. Pakistan suffered their first defeat of the tournament on Tuesday, going down by eight wickets to Sri Lanka in Lahore. Babar top-scored with 29, but Pakistan's batting lineup collapsed for just 110 against their Asian rivals. Babar has yet to register a half-century in his four innings in the tri-series, accumulating 118 runs. Although the former Pakistan captain has made starts in each outing, he has been unable to convert them into substantial scores. However, Smith remains unconcerned about Babar's form, highlighting Pakistan's unbeaten run before Tuesday's defeat as evidence of the team's overall performance. "The hardest part of batting in cricket is getting established at the crease, and Babar is doing that effortlessly. Had he converted one of those solid starts into a substantial century, this would not even be a topic of discussion. That is the nature of elite international sport you cannot deliver a peak performance every single time.

Afghanistan beat Zimbabwe by 37 runs in 1st T20I as Ijaz Ahmadzai, Rashid Khan shine

SHARJAH [(AGENCY)]

Afghanistan opened their T20I series against Zimbabwe with a convincing 37-run victory in the first match in Sharjah at the Sharjah Cricket Stadium on Tuesday night. Afghanistan posted 177 before dismissing the visitors for 140 in 19.1 overs to seal the match by 37 runs. Ijaz Ahmadzai and Rashid Khan starred with the bat, helping Afghanistan recover from an early collapse to set a challenging target. Afghanistan endured a difficult start after losing three



wickets in the opening three overs. Rahmanullah Gurbaz scored 18 off 21 balls, while Ibrahim Zadran made five off six deliveries. Sediqullah Atal and Mohammad Akram also fell cheaply, leaving Afghanistan under pressure at 45/4. Shahidullah Kamal anchored the innings with a valuable 46 off 42 balls, striking two fours and three sixes.

WPL 2027 Auction : 146 players go under hammer as five teams look to fill 27 slots in Kochi

KOCHI (AGENCY)

The Women's Premier League (WPL) 2027 auction will take place in Kochi on Wednesday, starting at 5:30 PM, as all five franchises look to complete their squads ahead of the tournament's fifth edition. A total of 146 players will go under the hammer, with 27 slots available across the five teams. Among the players expected to attract interest are Indian cricketers G Kamalini, Sneha Rana and Sushma Verma, alongside Australian stars Grace Harris, Jess Jonassen and Sophie Molineux. UP



Warriorz (UPW), with eight slots to fill and a purse of Rs 3.75 crore to spend, will be the most active team in the auction. Mumbai Indians (MI) have six slots left to fill; however, they have just Rs 90 lakh left in the purse. Royal Challengers

Bengaluru (RCB), Delhi Capitals (DC) and Gujarat Giants (GG), the three teams that qualified for the play-offs last season, retained most of their core and need to fill only a few slots. Defending champions RCB will have their ace all-

rounder Ellyse Perry available for the season and, hence, will be on the lookout for local backups who can help them to a landmark third title.

Speaking on JioStar's 'Follow the Blues: The Dawn of Captain Smriti', Mandhana elaborated on the role of the WPL in identifying players for the future, "The WPL has been a huge benefit in that we have found quite a few players in the WPL, but now it's our responsibility to figure out how we take them forward and make them into bigger match-winners.

Asian Para Games gold medallist Neeraj Yadav dies by suicide

NEW DELHI (AGENCY)

Asian Para Games gold medallist Neeraj Yadav has allegedly died by suicide after consuming poison at his residence, with the accomplished para-athlete reportedly under emotional stress after a doping suspension ruled him out of the Aichi-Nagoya Asian Para Games earlier this month. His body was taken to a Delhi hospital for post-mortem on Wednesday. The circumstances surrounding his death are yet to be established. S Satyanarayana, head coach of the Indian para-athletics team, confirmed the incident and said

he had remained in touch with Yadav since the doping case came to light after the 2023 Hangzhou Asian Para Games. "Neeraj has died by suicide. It is very unfortunate that such a thing has happened. I had a very close relationship with him. After his name came up in the doping case, I was constantly in touch with him," Satyanarayana told PTI. Yadav, who competed in the F55 category, was serving a four-year suspension after testing positive for a banned substance. The ban also cost him the two gold medals (javelin and discus throw) he had won at the 2023 Hangzhou Asian Para



Games, along with the associated government cash reward and a prospective government job. "He came under a lot of stress after the doping issue. He was serv-

ing a four-year suspension. A couple of months ago, he spoke to me and asked if he could participate in the selection trials for the Aichi-Nagoya Asian Para Games.

"I told him it was not possible as he still had a few months of his suspension left," Satyanarayana said. The coach said the doping case had dealt a severe blow to Yadav's career and financial prospects, particularly after his success at the Hangzhou Games.

"When he won two gold medals at the Hangzhou Asian Para Games, he was in line for a Class I government job in Uttar Pradesh, which would have improved his life. He was supposed to get more than Rs 3 crore and a Class I job. His peers had all got jobs," he said. Satyanarayana said Yadav had lost out on the cash

award after the Asian Paralympic Committee stripped him of his Hangzhou gold medals following the doping proceedings. The suspension process, he said, began with the National Anti-Doping Agency (NADA), before the report was referred to the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) and the Asian Paralympic Committee took action. He added that the delay in the proceedings was linked to the appeal process. While expressing shock over Yadav's death, Satyanarayana said he did not know the exact circumstances that led to the incident.

PGTI, Business Today announce 27th season of BT Golf, expanding sport's appeal for India Inc



NEW DELHI (AGENCY)

Professional Golf Tour of India (PGTI) announced a partnership with Business Today at the Qutub Golf Course, New Delhi, highlighting a shared ambition to bridge corporate leadership and professional sport, bringing fresh energy and excitement to the game. The preview event featured cricketing icon and avid golfer Kapil Dev, President of PGTI, alongside professional golfers and senior editors, who gathered for a pitch-and-putt session to mark the return of the prestigious corporate golf property, as per a press release. The event underscored a commitment to shifting the visibility of golf, creating an increasingly vibrant, engaging, and competitive platform specifically tailored as the premier destination for golf for CXOs. The ongoing collaboration strategically merges Business Today's

deep-rooted connection with India's business ecosystem with DP World PGTI's professional tournament expertise. Together, the organisations aim to drive mainstream visibility, spark deeper engagement among business professionals, and bring the sport closer to a broader audience. As part of this growth strategy, the tournament will maintain its popular multi-city format across major corporate hubs, with plans already underway to add more locations in the future.

Kapil Dev, President, DP World PGTI said, "We aim to encourage India Inc to experience the discipline, patience, and sportsmanship that golf represents. It is encouraging to see Business Today and DP World PGTI working together to take the sport to a wider audience." Speaking about the partnership Dinesh Bhatia, Group CEO,

India Today Group said, "BT Golf has, over the years, created a distinctive platform at the intersection of sport and business. By strengthening our partnership with the DP World PGTI, we are committed to expanding the horizons of Indian golf, making it more visible and engaging for corporate leaders and sports enthusiasts alike." Sharing his perspective on the partnership, Amandeep Johl, CEO, DP World PGTI said, "Our partnership with Business Today brings together the worlds of professional golf and corporate India. BT Golf provides a wonderful platform to promote the sport and its values of integrity, discipline and sportsmanship. Importantly, this partnership will greatly benefit our professional golfers by providing them with a unique opportunity to interact and build meaningful relationships with some of India's leading business leaders.

# GYANLUXMI PRODUCTION

- Event
- Film
- Promotion
- Music video
- Wedding Photography
- Pre Wedding
- Cinematography
- Video Editing
- Portfolio Profile Shoot

D-7, Regal Connauth place, New Delhi-110001

## Radhika apte says zeenat aman inspired her look in netflix series 'akka'



Actress Radhika Apte said veteran star Zeenat Aman's on-screen persona served as a reference for styling her character in the upcoming Netflix series Akka. Set in a fictional world in South India, the period crime thriller revolves around Bhavani (Keerthy Suresh), who rules the region. Apte plays Rudra, a ruthless rebel who seeks to claim

Bhavani's land and legacy. "When I was doing costume and hair, I was looking at Zeenat Aman because of her hair, her fringe and all that. It is a character reference; it was just costume and hair," Apte told PTI. "The clothing references that they had, and the wig I'm wearing and all that, it sort of leaned into that time (referring to the 70s peri-

od). And she's (her character) also from Bombay, so just some of the references were like some of her roles on-screen," she added. Apte said she was immediately drawn to the matriarchal setting of Akka, which explores power, legacy, loyalty, family and revenge. "For me, it is a whole fictitious world. But he (Shetty) has worked really hard to make it very detailed.

So, on paper this was even a longer show, it was not five episodes. Like, he has gone into doing research and figuring out things. So, it feels quite real but it is not," she said. "It was a very stylised version of everything. I was quite fascinated by that. Also, just because it is about women, he has not compromised on the fact that it is a gangster story. It is about gangsters who have power and it is about their legacy, and what they do to protect their legacy and what that means," she further said.

Apte said she finds playing morally complex characters more interesting than portraying a nice person. "It's far more interesting than playing a very nice person. The fun part about this show is that Bhavani (Suresh) is a protagonist and she's going to do whatever it takes to protect her legacy. So, that doesn't make her goody-goody at all. And, Rudra is also somebody who has her own mission," the actress said. Produced by YRF Entertainment, Akka marks Dharmaraj Shetty's debut as a filmmaker. The gangster series is set to premiere on Netflix on October 30. (AGENCY)

## Ranbir Kapoor, Yash, Sai Pallavi pose at LA premiere of 'Ramayana: Part 1'

Director Nitesh Tiwari's much-anticipated cinematic epic, Ramayana: Part 1, starring Ranbir Kapoor, Sai Pallavi, and Yash, is currently being showcased at a grand premiere in Los Angeles. The star-studded event has brought together the film's leading cast and crew, alongside several renowned Hollywood dignitaries. The premiere is being held at the David Geffen Theatre inside the Academy Museum of Motion Pictures.

In several pictures shared by the film's team, Ranbir Kapoor, Yash, Sai Pallavi, director Nitesh Tiwari, and producer Namit Malhotra are seen posing for the shutterbugs, flashing cheerful smiles and exuding excitement at the grand



premiere. Ranbir looked dapper in a silver bandhgala suit paired with black trousers, while Sai Pallavi looked stunning in an elegant pink saree. Yash was accompanied by his wife. Check out their adorable pic here. 'Ramayana' features Ranbir Kapoor as Lord Rama, Sai Pallavi as Sita, Yash as Ravana, Sunny Deol as Hanuman and Ravi

Dubey as Lakshman. Directed by Tiwari and produced by Malhotra's Prime Focus Studios in collaboration with 8-time Oscar-winning DNEG and Yash's Monster Mind Creations, the film is envisioned as a two-part epic. Part 1 of the film will release worldwide on November 5 2026, followed by Part 2 in Diwali 2027. (AGENCY)

## Sarah snook to lead HBO limited series inspired by hitchcock's horror classic 'The Birds'

Emmy-winning actress Sarah Snook is set to headline HBO's limited series inspired by Alfred Hitchcock's iconic horror film The Birds based on Daphne du Maurier's novel of the same name. The official logline states, "Escaping a bitter custody battle, Myra Massey (Snook) returns home with her young daughter, secretly probing a childhood friend's suspicious disappearance.

With a killer on the loose and personal threats mounting, Myra fights to protect her daughter against a terrifying new menace: vicious, deadly bird attacks

**Escaping a bitter custody battle, Myra Massey (Snook) returns home with her young daughter, secretly probing a childhood friend's suspicious disappearance**

inexplicably tied to the crime." Tom Spezialy has written the pilot and will executive produce the series. David Heyman and Danny Samit will also serve as executive producers for Heyday Television, Variety reported.

Snook will executive produce in addition to playing the lead role, while

Jennifer Gabler Rawlings is also attached as an executive producer. HBO will co-produce the series with Universal Global Television. The rights to The Birds are controlled by Universal Pictures and the du Maurier estate. Du Maurier's original story was first published in 1952, before Hitchcock adapted it into the 1963 film starring Rod Taylor and Tippi Hedren. The project marks Snook's return to HBO, where she gained widespread acclaim for playing Shiv Roy in the network's hit drama Succession, which ran for four seasons. (AGENCY)



## 'Convenient rishte ke convenient end': Kamya Punjabi reacts to Scout nominating Love Gill after Bigg Boss' 'Weekend Ka Vaar'

Actress and former Bigg Boss contestant Kamya Punjabi is an avid follower of the reality show and frequently shares her opinions on X about the latest happenings, contestants, and their gameplay. In her latest tweet, Kamya took a dig at contestant Scout, who was recently grilled by Rohit Shetty and his girlfriend, Kaashvi, during Weekend Ka Vaar over his growing closeness to Love Gill and his habit of giving her massages. The latest episode of Bigg Boss 20 featured a nomination task in which Scout nominated Love Gill, whom he had apparently claimed to consider his sister. Love was visibly hurt by his decision, while the other contestants were left surprised, as they had not expected Scout to nominate her. Reacting to Love's nomination by Scout, Kamya Punjabi shared her take on the situation, remarking that these relationships are all a matter of convenience. "Behen maana tha na? Massage khatam toh rishta bhi khatam? Nomination aate hi 'tu kaun aur main kaun' ho gaya! Convenient rishte ka convenient end. Ek daant kya padi, saari family wali feeling gayab ho gayi," she posted on X. ANI-Scout Op's girlfriend, Kaashvi, recently appeared on the Bigg Boss 20 Weekend Ka Vaar episode, where she confronted her boyfriend, Tanmay, over his growing closeness with fellow contestant Love Gill. During her appearance on the stage, Kaashvi also had a brief interaction with Love and accused her of "trapping" Scout Op. While many viewers supported Kaashvi for confronting her boyfriend, her remarks against Love Gill did not go down well with a section of



social media users. Several netizens criticised Kaashvi for making what they considered defamatory remarks against Love, sparking a wave of backlash on social media. Amid the backlash, Kaashvi on Monday took to Instagram and penned a note, "apologising to everyone" she has hurt. "My intention was to address Scout, call out the mistakes I felt he had made, and hold him accountable for his actions." "However, in doing so, I realise that some of the words I used were insensitive towards other people involved. Regardless of what I was feeling at the time, it is not my place to pass judgements on someone else's intentions or character, and I could have expressed

myself better. I never intended to direct hate towards another woman or encourage anyone to target her," she posted. "I understand that my words carry weight, and I take responsibility for how they may have come across. Watching all the 'She knows what she's doing', 'its her strategy' content clouded my emotions but I should have known better. It's not my place to tell her anything. (AGENCY)

## Karwa Chauth 2026 : 7 designer festive looks to slay your sargi-to-chalni style

Karwa Chauth is the perfect occasion to embrace festive dressing and indulge in the timeless charm of traditional Indian wear. From rich jewel tones and intricate embroidery to statement-making suits, elegant sarees and swirl-worthy shararas, the festival offers every reason to dress up to the nines. Think luxurious fabrics, exquisite craftsmanship, dazzling embellishments and thoughtful styling details that strike the perfect balance between tradition and contemporary glamour. To help you put together a look that is as special as the occasion, we bring you a curated edit of designers' festive creations. Whether you gravitate towards understated elegance or prefer to make a head-turning statement, these looks offer plenty of inspiration to help you look your prettiest as you dress up for the day of the fast. (AGENCY)



## Saiyami Kher to be seen in Indo-Russian drama

Actor Saiyami Kher has been roped in for an Indo-Russian drama directed by Maksim Kuznetsov. Shot across Russia and India, the film is produced by Kartina Entertainment, White Night Films and Wish Media. Speaking about her experience, Saiyami Kher said, "This was a completely different and new experience for me, working with an entirely foreign crew. We shot in Russia, and it was my first time there. Moscow was beautiful, and the overall film experience was incredible. The working atmosphere was very different from what I'm used to, and I really enjoyed being part of this collaboration. I hope this is the first of many more international projects to follow." She added, "it's so much fun to work across borders and language barriers. Working across cultures gives you a different perspective



on storytelling and allows you to learn from people who approach cinema in their own unique ways. It was a wonderful opportunity to experience I'm grateful to have been part of it. While it's still too early to share details about the film, it is a drama with a very strong female lead at its heart." More details regarding the project are awaited. (AGENCY)

## Netaji's grandnephew writes to I&B minister seeking action against 'Fauzi' teaser

Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose's grandnephew Chandra Kumar Bose has written to Information and Broadcasting Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw, seeking strict action against the teaser of Prabhas-starrer Fauzi. Bose alleged that the teaser distorts history. He has demanded that the teaser be taken down, corrected and released again. He has also urged director Hanu Raghavapudi to understand the "seriousness" of the matter. On Tuesday, Bose shared his letter to the minister on X, pointing out that the teaser was released on October 23, which also marked the 83rd Balidan Diwas of revolutionary leader Bhagabati Charan Panigrahi, an associate of Netaji. Objecting to the portrayal of Netaji, whom he described as the Supreme Commander of the Indian National Army and the first Prime Minister of undivided India, Bose said the video shows him introducing a fictional character named Fauzi. "We take strong



offence to this trivialisation of Netaji. We also fail to understand as to how could the Censor Board clear such an objectionable content. You are requested to kindly look into this very serious concern and get it investigated.

It shall be the right service to the nation if you make sure that this teaser is pulled down and the responsible ones at the Censor Board are punished in an exemplary manner." Bose also tagged Prime Minister Narendra Modi in his post and reiterated his demand for changes to the

teaser. "The teaser of Fauzi ought to be pulled down, corrected and released again. Should our concern regarding Netaji be resolved (for the teaser as well as for the Movie), my best wishes go out for Prabhas and the entire team @FauziTheMovie. Hope @hanurpudi realises the seriousness." The makers unveiled the video, titled File No. 25, on October 23 to mark Prabhas' 47th birthday. Set in Berlin in 1942, the clip depicts Bose approaching Hitler for support in the struggle against British rule in India. (AGENCY)

Introducing New Venture By

**KG K G TRADING INCORPORATION**

(A Unit by Cozier Enterprises)

**cozier™ enterprises**

is now proudly performing in  
Retail & Wholesale Both



Cloth Market, Mahavir Bazar, Lateh Puri,  
Chandni Chowk, Delhi-110006.  
(011-41588896)