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DELHI EDITION

PM inaugurates Bharat Renewable Energy Summit & Expo 2026

NEW DELHI.AGENCY

Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi today inaugurated the Bharat Renewable Energy Summit & Expo 2026 at Bharat Mandapam in New Delhi. Addressing the gathering of industry leaders, investors, startup representatives, and senior officials from India and abroad, the Prime Minister noted that this year's summit takes place amid special circumstances dominated by global energy shocks that have underscored the vital importance of renewable energy in daily life and national development. He pointed out that the scope of this year's event is exceptionally broad as it coincides with the Ninth Assembly of the International Solar Alliance and includes delegates from the Fourth Conference on Green Hydrogen.

Observing that the global economy has weathered unprecedented disruptions ranging from the Corona pandemic to the ongoing West Asia crisis, the Prime Minister stated that 140 crore Indians take pride in how effectively the nation has managed the turmoil while maintaining high economic growth. He emphasized that ten years of sustained domestic investment and systemic reforms in clean energy shielded the country from severe external shocks. "If India had not invested in clean energy and created new systems for this over the past decade, then our crisis could have been much more severe than the rest of the world," noted PM Modi.

Stating that recent global disruptions have demonstrated the direct link between energy security and economic security, the Prime Minister warned that continued over-reliance on fossil fuels will repeatedly disrupt the world economy because fossil reserves are finite and concentrated in a few regions. He contrasted this vulnerability with the boundless, universally accessible potential of clean energy. "And we all know, the future of Energy Security lies in Clean Energy," asserted Shri Modi.

Describing India's 12-year clean energy journey as one defined by Promises, Passion, and Performance exemplified by its COP-26 commitment to achieve 500 Gigawatts of non-fossil capacity by 2030, the Prime Minister highlighted that the nation fulfilled its Paris pledge of sourcing half its installed power capacity from non-fossil sources in 2025, five years ahead of schedule. Noting that India now ranks among the top three nations in solar and renewable energy with over 50 percent non-fossil installed capacity and nearly 300 Gigawatts already achieved toward the 500-Gigawatt target, he announced an ambitious goal to add another 500 Gigawatts of new non-fossil capacity over the next 10 to 11 years. "This target is somewhat difficult, but I have faith in the capability of my country; therefore I say, We will do it!" affirmed PM Modi.

Emphasizing that India wishes to share the benefits of its innovations and experiences with all of humanity, the Prime Minister stated that the nation approaches green energy with the same cooperative spirit before presenting specific examples.



PM to Inaugurate Pune Metro Line 3, Built at a Cost of Over 8,300 Crore

Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi will inaugurate and lay the foundation stone of Pune Metro projects worth around 21,800 crore on today through video conferencing. He will also address the gathering on the occasion. Prime Minister will inaugurate Pune Metro Line 3, also known as the Pink Line, built at a cost of over 8,300 crore. The project represents an important step towards strengthening Pune's urban mobility infrastructure through technological innovation and modern transportation solutions. Spanning approximately 23 kilometres, the Pink Line connects Maan to District Court Metro station. The corridor will provide Metro connectivity between the Hinjewadi IT hub and Shivajinagar, improving access to one of Pune's major employment centres and facilitating the daily commute of thousands of IT professionals and other commuters.

PM condoles the loss of lives in mishap in Jhunjhunu, Rajasthan

NEW DELHI.AGENCY

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday expressed grief over the death of eight labourers who were electrocuted while working on a road construction project in Chapoli village of Rajasthan's Jhunjhunu district. He also announced an ex gratia of Rs 2 lakh from the Prime Minister's National Relief Fund (PMNRF) for the next of kin of each deceased. The Prime Minister's Office (PMO) conveyed condolences to the bereaved families and wished a speedy recovery to those injured in the incident through a post on X. "Saddened by the loss of lives due to a mishap in Jhunjhunu, Rajasthan. My condolences to the bereaved families.

May the injured recover at the earliest. An ex-gratia of Rs. 2 lakh from PMNRF would be given to the next of kin of each of those who lost their lives. The injured would be given Rs. 50,000," the PM quoted the Prime Minister as saying. According to police, the tragedy occurred when a machine being used to mix gravel during road construction came into contact with an overhead high-tension electricity line. The electric current spread through the machinery, striking the labourers working at the site. Eight labourers died in the incident, while several others sustained burn injuries. Udaipurwati Station House Officer (SHO) Rampal confirmed that the workers were electrocuted after the machine came into contact with the high-voltage power line. The injured were shifted for medical treatment. The incident triggered anger among local residents, who gathered at the site and staged a protest, demanding accountability from those responsible for ensuring safety at the construction site. Police and other authorities rushed to the spot following the accident. Further details regarding the identities of the deceased, the condition of the injured and the circumstances leading to the tragedy are awaited. Rajasthan Chief Minister Bhajanlal Sharma also expressed condolences over the loss of lives and said instructions had been issued to the concerned officials to ensure proper treatment for the injured, extend immediate assistance to the affected families and conduct an investigation into the incident. "The news of the untimely demise of labourers due to electrocution in the accident that occurred in Jhunjhunu is heartbreaking," he said, praying for peace for the departed souls, speedy recovery of the injured and strength for the bereaved families.



An ex-gratia of Rs. 2 lakh from PMNRF would be given to the next of kin of each of those who lost their lives. The injured would be given Rs. 50,000," the PM quoted the PM as saying

ECI begins early review of UP poll preparedness, senior officials meet in Meerut

NEW DELHI.AGENCY

The Election Commission of India has intensified its preparations for the 2027 Uttar Pradesh Assembly elections, undertaking a high-level review of election management, administrative readiness and security arrangements across 18 districts spread over four administrative divisions.

The review meeting was held in Meerut on Monday, under the chairmanship of Senior Deputy Election Commissioner Manish Garg. The meeting was attended by the Uttar Pradesh Chief Electoral Officer, senior officials of the EC and senior administrative and police officers from the Meerut, Saharanpur, Moradabad and Aligarh divisions.

Amit Shah terms Rahul Gandhi's Delhi rally 'Save Infiltrators' rally

NEW DELHI.AGENCY

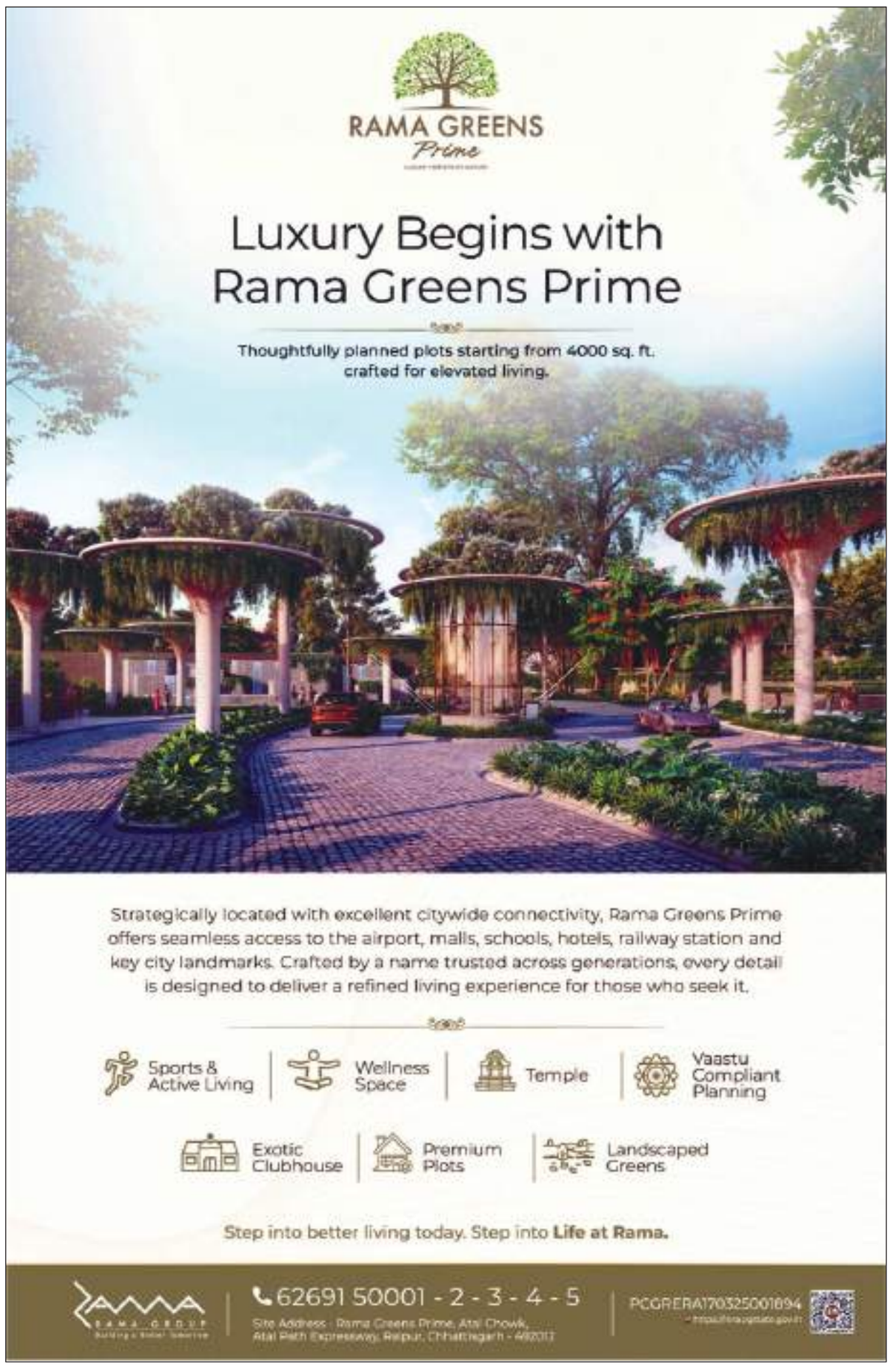
The BJP has begun mapping out its Uttar Pradesh assembly election campaign, and each of its top three leaders has been handed a separate battlefield. Sources told PM Modi, Amit Shah and BJP chief Nitin Nabin will run a coordinated push across the state through November and December. According to sources, the party has split the campaign into three levels. PM Modi is expected to address large regional rallies that cover every commissionerate in Uttar Pradesh.

Shah will concentrate on the districts, where he is likely to hold targeted rallies and keep a close watch on organisational micro management. Nitin Nabin, sources said, will take charge at the assembly constituency level, with frequent tours and sustained contact with voters. The thinking behind the plan is straightforward, sources said. The big rallies will set the tone for the campaign, while the steady work in districts and constituencies will make sure the message actually reaches people in every part of the state. For Uttar Pradesh, a key Hindi heartland state, the party appears keen to leave no region untouched.

Alongside the campaign led by its senior leaders, the BJP is also getting its organisational cells ready. Sources told that the party wants these cells to reach different sections of society and various occupational groups across Uttar Pradesh. The focus, they said, will be on taking the party's outreach beyond big rallies and into local networks, where communities and workers can be engaged directly. The exercise will be led by VD Sharma, former Madhya Pradesh BJP chief and national convenor of the party's Prakoshth-Sankul Cell. Sources said the cells are expected to play a key role in the party's election micro management and in understanding what local communities are worried about.



Home Minister Shah will concentrate on the districts, where he is likely to hold targeted rallies and keep a close watch on organisational micro management



Industrialists from Punjab Meet Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini

CHANDIGARH : OPEN SEARCH

A delegation of industrialists from Punjab met Haryana Chief Minister Sh. Nayab Singh Saini at Haryana Niwas on Monday. Welcoming the industrialists, the Chief Minister invited them to invest in Haryana and assured them that the state government would extend all possible support and provide the necessary facilities for setting up industries in the state. The Chief Minister said that the Haryana Govt is making continuous efforts to accelerate industrial development and create an investor-friendly environment in the state. To facilitate industrialists, the government is providing necessary approvals and facilities from various departments through the Single Window System. Besides, industrial land is also being made available as per the requirements of industries so that investors do not face any difficulty in setting up their businesses.

He said that the Haryana State Industrial and Infrastructure Development Corporation is continuously engaging with industrialists and inviting them to invest in the state. Investment opportunities in Haryana are steadily increasing, and investors from various sectors are showing keen interest in setting up industries in the state. The delegation that met the CM primarily comprised industrialists associated with the food processing industry. They discussed the industrial facilities available in Haryana and the investment opportunities with the Chief Minister. He said that besides food processing, industrialists from other sectors are also keen to invest in Haryana. The state government welcomes all such investors and is committed to providing a conducive environment and every possible assistance for setting up industries.

The CM urged the industrialists to take advantage of the opportunities available in Haryana and become partners in the state's industrial development.



Haryana's Progress and People's Prosperity Are Our Shared Goal : CM Nayab Singh Saini

VIJAY KUMAR.OPEN SEARCH





CHANDIGARH : Haryana Chief Minister Sh. Nayab Singh Saini said that public representatives may follow different political paths and ideologies, but Haryana's progress and the prosperity of its people remain their shared goal. What unites them is their identity as representatives of the people of Haryana. He said public representatives have a responsibility to understand the aspirations and needs of the people and contribute to the state's development.

The Chief Minister was addressing the inaugural session of the 'Janpratinidhi Sammelan', organised by the Haryana Vidhan Sabha at Panchkula today as part of the Samvidhan Pakhwada Programme. He said Haryana had completed 60 years of its formation. Congratulating the people of the state on its Diamond Jubilee, he said the conference provided an opportunity to draw inspiration from the state's glorious past and chart the course for its future. The Chief Minister said the presence of Lok Sabha Speaker Sh. Om Birla had added to the significance of the 'Janpratinidhi Sammelan'. His guidance on parliamentary procedures, the dignity of the House and the responsibilities of public representatives is valuable to all. He also recalled that President Smt. Droupadi Murmu had graced Haryana's Diamond Jubilee celebrations and bestowed her blessings upon the people of the state. The Chief Minister said Haryana's 60-year development journey is not merely a story of expanding roads, institutions and industries, but also reflects the hard work of farmers, labourers, women, youth and ordinary citizens.

From green fields to industrial achievements, from village pathways to modern expressways, and from traditional wrestling arenas to international sporting platforms, Haryana had written new chapters of progress through hard work, courage and determination. The foundation of the state's achievements had also been laid through discussions, decisions and legislation shaped by public representatives in the Vidhan Sabha.

The Chief Minister said Haryana came into existence on November 1, 1966, when the Legislative Assembly had 54 members. The number of Assembly seats increased to 81 in 1967 and subsequently to 90 in 1977. He said there is now a need to increase the number of Assembly seats to ensure wider public participation and make more facilities accessible to the people. The Chief Minister said Haryana is now carrying forward its democratic journey through the 15th Legislative Assembly. These figures reflected the expansion of representation and the growing aspirations of the people. He recalled that the first sitting of the Haryana Vidhan Sabha was held on December 6, 1966. Resources were limited at the time, and expanding basic facilities such as education, healthcare, drinking water, irrigation, electricity, roads and administrativsssssse infrastructure posed major challenges. He expressed gratitude to all public representatives who had worked under those circumstances to lay a strong foundation for Haryana's future. The Chief Minister said respect for the Constitution must be reflected in decisions and conduct. The Preamble embodies the ideals of justice, liberty, equality and fraternity, and public representatives have a responsibility to translate these ideals into governance.

He said constitutional values were strengthened when eligible citizens received their rights without discrimination, the concerns of vulnerable people were heard, and mutual respect increased in society. The Chief Minister said the Vidhan Sabha is an important forum for making laws, approving the use of public funds and holding the government accountable. A meaningful question raised in the House could help resolve a village's problem, while a constructive suggestion on a Bill could improve the lives of lakhs of citizens. Question Hour, Calling Attention motions, budget discussions and the work of legislative committees kept the parliamentary procedures, the dignity of the House and the responsibilities of public representatives is valuable to all. He also recalled that President Smt. Droupadi Murmu had graced Haryana's Diamond Jubilee celebrations and bestowed her blessings upon the people of the state. The Chief Minister said Haryana's 60-year development journey is not merely a story of expanding roads, institutions and industries, but also reflects the hard work of farmers, labourers, women, youth and ordinary citizens.

Differences of Opinion Must Not Undermine the Dignity of the House

The Chief Minister said accountability strengthened governance. Listening seriously to issues of public interest raised by the Opposition is a democratic responsibility. Similarly, offering practical suggestions alongside criticism is an important service in public life. He said debates in the House could be intense, but the dignity of language must always be maintained. Public representatives should challenge one another's views through reasoned arguments and strengthen public confidence in democracy and the Constitution through their conduct. Sh. Nayab Singh Saini said citizens could now instantly observe the words and conduct of public representatives through digital platforms.

Active Public Participation and an Aware Society are Essential for Building a Viksit Haryana : Harvinder Kalyan

CHANDIGARH : OPEN SEARCH

Haryana Vidhan Sabha Speaker Sh. Harvinder Kalyan said that the vision of a fully developed Haryana can be realised only through the active participation of society and by building an aware and conscious citizenry. Public representatives play an important role in society, as people listen to them and follow their conduct.

Therefore, every public representative should resolve to become a role model for society and strengthen constitutional values and public participation. Sh. Harvinder Kalyan was addressing the inaugural session of the Janpratinidhi Sammelan organised by the Haryana Vidhan Sabha under Samvidhan Pakhwada at Indradhanush Auditorium in Panchkula on Monday. He said that the day holds special significance in the history of Haryana, as present and former public representatives of the state have gathered at one platform. The conference provides an opportunity not only to recall Haryana's 60-year journey but also to determine their role in building a developed Haryana in the future. Lok Sabha Speaker Sh. Om Birla.

The Spirit of the Constitution Must Reach Every Section of Society : Mahipal Dhanda

CHANDIGARH : OPEN SEARCH



Haryana Parliamentary Affairs Minister Sh. Mahipal Dhanda said that the Constitution is not merely a legal document but the soul of our democracy and the foundation of the country's unity. It makes citizens aware of their rights as well as their duties. The spirit of the Constitution should not remain confined to the Legislative Assembly; rather, it is the responsibility of all of us to take it to villages, schools, colleges and every section of society.

He was addressing the Janpratinidhi Sammelan organised by the Haryana Vidhan Sabha under Samvidhan Pakhwada at Indradhanush Auditorium in Panchkula on Monday. He extended his greetings to Lok Sabha Speaker Sh. Om Birla, Chief Minister Sh. Nayab Singh Saini, Leader of Opposition Chaudhary Bhupinder Singh Hooda, Vidhan Sabha Speaker Sh. Harvinder Kalyan, Deputy Speaker Sh. Krishan Middha, Ministers, MLAs, former MLAs and officers.

The Parliamentary Affairs Minister said that on November 26, 1949, the Constituent Assembly adopted the Constitution of India, which came into effect on January 26, 1950. The makers of the Constitution and members of the Constituent Assembly envisioned an India where every citizen would enjoy the rights to equality, liberty and fraternity, and where everyone would have access to dignity and equal opportunities. He said that the Haryana Vidhan Sabha is an important platform for expressing democratic values and public aspirations. As Parliamentary Affairs Minister, he believes that upholding the dignity of the House, adhering to parliamentary conventions, and ensuring healthy discussions and meaningful dialogue on matters of public interest constitute the true strength of democracy.

Haryana Plans School-Based Mental Health Support for Students of Classes VI to XII

CHANDIGARH : OPEN SEARCH



122 Health Department Counsellors to Coordinate with 400 Trained Teachers Across 200 Government Schools

Haryana is planning to introduce a structured school-based mental health support system for students of Classes VI to XII under its proposed SAATH Project, aimed at the early identification of psychological difficulties, including examination stress, anxiety, depression, bullying, social isolation and excessive screen use. Additional Chief Secretary, Health and Family Welfare, Dr. Sumita Misra, on Monday shared details of the proposed initiative, which envisages a coordinated mechanism involving the Health and School Education departments, teachers, parents, student volunteers, counsellors, clinical psychologists and psychiatrists.

The proposed framework identifies 122 counsellors from the Health Department as part of the professional support system. It also envisages the involvement of psychology-qualified teachers and specialised mental health services to ensure that students requiring professional assistance receive timely support. The initiative will adopt separate approaches for students of Classes VI to VIII and Classes IX to XII, keeping in view their distinct developmental and psychological needs.

For students of Classes VI to VIII, the focus will be on emotional awareness, self-confidence, puberty-related changes, examination anxiety, bullying, peer rejection and communication difficulties with parents. Teachers will be sensitised to identify early warning signs such as persistent sadness, irritability, social withdrawal, loss of interest in routine activities, poor concentration, declining academic performance and reluctance to attend school.

The programme will also address concerns arising from excessive gaming, social media dependency, inappropriate online content, sleep deprivation and prolonged screen exposure. Family conflicts, parental pressure, comparison among siblings, bereavement and exposure to violence or neglect will also be covered as possible factors affecting children's mental well-being.

Governor addresses the valedictory session of the 'Janpratinidhi Sammelan' as the Chief Guest

CHANDIGARH : OPEN SEARCH



Haryana Governor Prof. Ashim Kumar Ghosh said that the constitution of India is not merely a legal document but a living covenant between the people of India and the State, founded on the principles of justice, liberty, equality and fraternity. The Governor was addressing the valedictory session of the Janpratinidhi Sammelan at Indradhanush Auditorium, Sector-5, Panchkula, today. On this occasion, the Governor personally visited the seats of the two senior-most former MLAs, Sh Ganpat Rai and Sh O.P. Bhardwaj, and honoured them. Sh Ganpat Rai was born in June 1935, while Sh O.P. Bhardwaj was born in July 1935. Describing legislators as the most visible custodians of the constitutional covenant, Prof. Ashim Kumar Ghosh said that by taking an oath, elected representatives pledge to uphold the Constitution, while through debates, questions and legislation, they translate this commitment into practice. He observed that the strength of parliamentary democracy depends on the quality of dialogue in legislative institutions.

Anil Vij Chairs Meeting of Officials Ahead of Nov 5 Inauguration of Azadi ki Pehli Ladai ka Shaheed Smarak

CHANDIGARH : OPEN SEARCH





The Ambala district administration is making preparations for the inauguration of the Azadi ki Pehli Ladai ka Shaheed Smarak, dedicated to the First War of Independence of 1857, in Ambala Cantonment on November 5 by Union Home and Cooperation Minister Sh. Amit Shah. As part of these preparations, a meeting was held today at the Martyrs' Memorial under the chairmanship of Haryana's Anil Vij. Commissioner and Secretary of the Department of Information, Public Relations and Languages, Haryana, Sh. K. Makrand Pandurang, along with officials from various departments, attended the meeting. During the visit, the officials also inspected the memorial and reviewed the arrangements.

During the meeting, Energy Minister Sh. Anil Vij reviewed the preparations for the programme and issued necessary directions to the officials. He also discussed various aspects of the program. Earlier, Commissioner and Secretary Sh. K. Makrand Pandurang inspected the preparations and arrangements for the inauguration of the Martyrs' Memorial and issued necessary instructions to the concerned officials. He directed the officials to ensure that all essential arrangements for the November 5 programme are completed well in advance so that visitors do not face any inconvenience. He also instructed officials of the concerned departments to work in close coordination and discharge their assigned responsibilities with utmost seriousness and within the stipulated time. Haryana's Energy, Transport and Labour Minister Sh. Anil Vij visited Gandhi Ground in Ambala Cantonment this morning to review the preparations for the proposed programme of Union Amit Shah on November 5. Deputy Commissioner Sachin Gupta was also present on the occasion. During the inspection, the Energy Minister carefully reviewed the arrangements for the main stage, seating, the stage for performers, the media gallery and parking facilities. He also took stock of arrangements for electricity, drinking water and other essential facilities, keeping in mind the convenience of the people attending the programme. He directed the concerned officials to complete all preparations well in advance.

Anil Vij said that on November 5, Union Home Minister Sh. Amit Shah will inaugurate the Azadi ki Pehli Ladai ka Shaheed Smarak –1857, built in Ambala Cantonment, and address a large public meeting at Gandhi Ground.

The Public Unity Sends Strong Message on Protecting Democracy and Constitution : Selja

CHANDIGARH : OPEN SEARCH



The Sirsa MP, Former Union Cabinet Minister, All India Congress Committee General Secretary and Congress Working Committee (CWC) member Kumari Selja said the large participation at the 'Vote Bachao, Desh Bachao' mega rally held at Ramlila Maidan in Delhi on November 1 sent a clear message that people across the country were vigilant about their voting rights, the Constitution and the dignity of democratic institutions.

She said the mega rally, organised under the leadership of Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge and Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi, highlighted the need to protect democratic values and ensure transparency in the electoral process. Kumari Selja said satisfactory answers to questions being raised about the impartiality of constitutional institutions such as the Election Commission were essential to maintaining public confidence in democracy. She reiterated the demand for accountability of the Chief Election Commissioner and his resignation on moral grounds. She said the Congress's struggle was not aimed at weakening any institution, but at safeguarding its independence, impartiality and credibility. Public trust, she added, was paramount in a democracy, and protecting every citizen's right to vote was a collective responsibility. Expressing gratitude to Congress workers, supporters and citizens who travelled from Haryana, Uttarakhand and other parts of the country to attend the rally, Selja said the Congress would continue to raise its voice peacefully and democratically, from the streets to Parliament, for the protection of the Constitution and democratic rights. "Our resolve is clear: democracy will remain strong only when the right to vote is protected," she said.

Briefs News

Janpratinidhi Sammelan organised under Samvidhan Pakhwada

CHANDIGARH : OPEN SEARCH. Lok Sabha Speaker Sh. Om Birla said that in a democracy, differences in opinions and perspectives are natural, and there can be both agreement and disagreement. However, dissent must also be respected. He said that dissent provides direction, offers a vision and inspires people to work. Despite differences of opinion, everyone must make collective efforts to take the country and the state forward. He added that running the government is a responsibility, but public service is an even greater responsibility. Sh. Om Birla was addressing the inaugural session of the Janpratinidhi Sammelan organised under the Samvidhan Pakhwada by the Haryana Vidhan Sabha at Indradhanush Auditorium in Panchkula on Monday. Haryana Chief Minister Sh. Nayab Singh Saini, Haryana Vidhan Sabha Speaker Sh. Harvinder Kalyan, Leader of Opposition Sh. Bhupinder Singh Hooda, Deputy Speaker of the Haryana Vidhan Sabha Dr. Krishan Middha, along with Ministers and MLAs, were present on the occasion. The Lok Sabha Speaker inaugurated the conference by lighting the ceremonial lamp. Addressing the gathering, Sh. Om Birla said that the land of Haryana has always been a land of action and hard work. The land of Lord Shri Krishna gave the message of karma through the Bhagavad Gita. Farmers, labourers, youth, entrepreneurs and sportspersons from this land have excelled in every field. He said that despite numerous challenges and difficulties during its 60-year journey, Haryana stands among the leading states in development, and this has been made possible by the Constitution.

Conference of public representatives deliberates on Haryana's 60-year development journey, achievements and future challenges

PANCHKULA : OPEN SEARCH. To mark the completion of 60 years since the formation of Haryana, a special fortnight-long initiative has been launched to deliberate on the state's glorious development journey, present and future challenges, and the roadmap for building a fully developed Haryana. As part of this initiative, a 'Conference of Public Representatives' was organised on Monday at the Indradhanush Auditorium, Sector 5, Panchkula, under the 'Constitution Fortnight' being observed by the Haryana Legislative Assembly. Addressing the concluding session of the conference, Haryana Legislative Assembly Speaker Sh Harvinder Kalyan said that the primary objective of the conference was to promote public participation, highlight the role of public representatives in building an aware society, and formulate a roadmap for transforming Haryana into a self-reliant and developed state He said that the inaugural session of the conference was graced by Lok Sabha Speaker Sh Om Birla as the Chief Guest, who guided the public representatives. On the occasion, around 21 public representatives, including Haryana Chief Minister Sh Nayab Singh Saini, shared their views and perspectives. The Assembly Speaker said that the conference witnessed detailed deliberations on Haryana's development journey over the past 60 years, the leadership and contributions of former Chief Ministers and public representatives, and the priorities of the present time. He emphasised that political ideologies may differ, but the ultimate objective of all public representatives should be the welfare of society, the state and the nation.

Chandigarh consumer panel directs PUDA to refund Rs 14.51 lakh, pay Rs 50,000 compensation for plot delay

CHANDIGARH : (AGENCY) The District Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission, Chandigarh, has directed Punjab Urban Planning and Development Authority (PUDA) to refund Rs 14,51,520 and pay Rs 50,000 as compensation to a city resident after it failed to hand over a plot in time in a housing project. Gurdeep Singh, a resident of Sector 37, Chandigarh, said that in 2014, PUDA launched a residential plots project named Gateway City situated in Sectors 118-119, SAS Nagar, Mohali, and assured timely completion of development works at the site. In 2015, he approached PUDA to purchase a plot and was informed by its representative that a plot measuring 268 sq yards was available in the project for resale. PUDA also assured that it would issue a fresh Letter of Intent (LoI) in his favour and would allot a plot number as it had not been allotted till then. Accordingly, he agreed to purchase the plot measuring 256 sq yards from one Aman Gupta for a total tentative cost of Rs 53,76,000. On July 27, 2015, he applied for transfer of the LoI and PUDA, vide its letter dated July 30, 2015, issued the same in his favour.

Delhi Gate-Kashmere Gate stretch of Netaji Subhash Marg to get heritage-themed makeover

AJEET KUMAR.OPEN SEARCH



The second section, between GPO Chowk and Brij Mohan Chowk, which leads towards Jama Masjid, has an average width of 45 metres

NEW DELHI. The Delhi Government plans to redevelop the 3.3-km stretch of Netaji Subhash Marg between Delhi Gate and Kashmere Gate, focusing on improved pedestrian facilities, traffic management and public spaces while preserving the historic character of Old Delhi. The project, being undertaken by the Indraprastha Virasat Punarvikas Nigam (IVPN), envisages transforming the busy road into an organised and attractive corridor connecting several historic monuments, parks and cultural landmarks. The proposal includes footpaths, dedicated bus lanes, motor vehicle lanes, parking spaces, pedestrian plazas and cycle tracks. Modern public toilets will also be constructed on both sides of the road, while existing bus stops will be upgraded.

The proposed corridor has been divided into three sections based on road width and traffic conditions. The first section, from Kashmere Gate to GPO Chowk, has a road width ranging from 12 to 24 metres. The second section, between GPO Chowk and Brij Mohan Chowk, which leads towards Jama Masjid, has an average width of 45 metres. The third section, from Brij Mohan Chowk to the Delhi Gate intersection, has a width ranging from 16.8 to 26 metres. The plan also seeks to integrate 12 prominent historic sites and green spaces along the stretch. These include the Red Fort, Jama Masjid, St James' Church, Lothian Cemetery, Subhash Park, Hindi Park, Agrasen Park, Sunehri Masjid Bagh, Ekta Sthal, Delhi Gate Chowk and the Chandni Chowk-Red Fort intersection. A Heritage Interpretation Park is also proposed near Delhi Gate. It will feature a statue, pavilion, landscaped green spaces, pedestrian access and parking facilities. The design will incorporate ornamental plants, trees and architectural elements reflecting the area's heritage. The beautification plan also includes trees and plants along both sides of the road, flower beds, green medians, decorative streetlights, organised seating areas and heritage-inspired design elements. Designated pedestrian crossings, traffic signals and improved junctions are proposed to ensure safer movement. The facilities will be developed in accordance with the design guidelines issued by the Public Works Department (PWD) for its streetscape project. Chief Minister Rekha Gupta, who is also the chairperson of IVPN, said the redevelopment aimed to connect Delhi's historic identity with modern urban amenities. "Delhi is not just the national capital but also a reflection of centuries of history, a glorious heritage, diverse cultures and vibrant traditions. The Old Delhi area is an important centre of this historic identity, with landmarks such as the Red Fort, Jama Masjid, Chandni Chowk, Subhash Park and Kashmere Gate telling the story of the city's rich heritage," she said.

She said the redevelopment of Netaji Subhash Marg was an important step towards providing the capital with modern urban amenities while preserving its historic identity. "Our vision is to ensure that development does not come at the cost of Delhi's historic soul and cultural identity.

Interstate cocaine supply network busted, four arrested

NEW DELHI (AGENCY)



The Delhi Police have busted an alleged interstate cocaine trafficking network operating in Delhi-NCR with the arrest of four persons, including a Ghanaian national, and the recovery of 136 grams of cocaine, officials said. The accused have been identified as Hukumuddin, Jabid Hussan, Mushtaq and Charles Owusu, alias Johnson, a Ghanaian national. The police said the network allegedly supplied cocaine to young people frequenting prominent pubs and bars in South Delhi and Gurugram. The case began on May 26, when the Crime Branch received information that Hukumuddin, a resident of Chhatarpur, was allegedly supplying cocaine in Delhi-NCR and would deliver a consignment in Dwarka. A team of the Western Range-II unit laid a trap near Dwarka, Sector 9, and apprehended him after he allegedly attempted to flee and resisted arrest.

A search led to the recovery of 106 grams of cocaine, which tested positive for the drug during preliminary examination by a Forensic Science Laboratory (FSL) team, the police said. An FIR was subsequently registered under Sections 8 and 21 of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act at the Crime Branch police station on May 27. During interrogation, Hukumuddin allegedly disclosed that he had procured the consignment from Jabid Hussan, a resident of Kharak village in Chhatarpur, who was supplying cocaine to him for further distribution. Jabid was arrested in Nuh, Haryana, on August 17. During questioning, he allegedly told investigators that he had obtained the drug from Mushtaq, also a resident of Kharak village. Mushtaq was arrested on August 18 and allegedly disclosed that he had procured cocaine from Charles Owusu, alias Johnson, who was living in Delhi.

Acting on the leads, the Crime Branch conducted a raid at Charles's rented accommodation in Devli Extension, Khanpur, on October 20. The police recovered 30 grams of cocaine during his personal search. Five mobile phones, including a keypad phone, small plastic pouches and a digital weighing machine, were also recovered during the investigation.

AISA chief shares stage with Rahul in Delhi, draws parallels between BJP, British rule

NEW DELHI (AGENCY)



At the INDIA bloc's rally at Ramlila Maidan here on Sunday, the Opposition's attack on the Centre moved from the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls to a wider challenge over citizenship, democratic protest and the conduct of elections. AISA president Neha Bora questioned the government's demand for citizens to prove their citizenship, alleging that the SIR was being used to target marginalised communities. She also accused the government of using arrests and police action against those protesting its policies.

This was not the first time Bora had shared a stage with Opposition leaders. During her hunger strike at Jantar Mantar, several leaders had visited her to enquire about her health. On July 25, the day former education minister Dharmendra Pradhan resigned, she met Rahul Gandhi after he reached out to her. This time, too, she shared the stage with Rahul Gandhi and launched a sharp attack on the Centre.

"Who are you to ask the people of India to prove their citizenship? You have adopted the very tactics that your forefathers, the Britishers, used to employ. Your forefathers made the freedom fighters sign peace bonds and sent them to jail. You are doing the same to people out on streets, protesting against your discriminatory policies.

Diwali melas: full stalls, thin margins

NEW DELHI (AGENCY)



For many Delhi families, Diwali is not complete without a visit to a mela. There are colourful stalls to browse, decorations to bargain for, festive snacks to savour and the occasional impulse purchase that was never on the shopping list. The crowds, lights and noise are part of the attraction, turning a shopping trip into a festival ritual. But while visitors carry home festive decorations and memories, the people behind the stalls have other priorities. For them, the mela is also a business opportunity, one that involves upfront investment, uncertain sales and a limited window to recover costs.

Markets such as Dilli Haat at INA to Dastkar's festive exhibitions at Nature Bazaar in Andheria Mor continue to attract visitors in a city where online shopping promises convenience and competitive prices. Their appeal lies in something that a screen cannot easily replicate: the chance to discover a product, meet its maker and spend an evening wandering without a fixed plan. "I have been coming to Diwali melas with my family for years. We can buy decorations online, but shopping at a mela has become part of our Diwali celebrations. We walk around without rushing, try different foods and usually end up buying something we had not planned to," said Neha Sharma, a teacher and regular visitor. For Sharma, the mela is as much about tradition as shopping. For others, it is the possibility of finding something different. "In a mall, you generally know what you are looking for. Here, you come across things you did not even know existed. I like discovering handmade jewellery and unusual gifts. It feels more personal than scrolling through hundreds of products online," said Aditi Mehra, a college student. For sellers, however, the same leisurely outing has a financial dimension. A visitor can spend hours browsing without making a purchase. A stall owner cannot afford to treat the season as a casual outing.

Long before the festive crowds arrive, sellers begin preparing their stock. Products have to be made or purchased, packed, transported and displayed. Participation in an exhibition also comes with expenses, which may include stall charges and, for those travelling from outside Delhi, accommodation. The investment is made before sales begin, leaving sellers dependent on how many visitors actually open their wallets. "We start preparing weeks before Diwali. There is a lot of money and hard work involved in bringing the stock here, so naturally, we hope for good sales.

Briefs News

Delhi : AQI enters 'very poor' category for first time this season at 312

NEW DELHI (AGENCY) Delhi's air quality slipped into the 'very poor' category for the first time this season on Monday, with the Air Quality Index (AQI) recording 312 at 9 am, while the minimum temperature at the Safdarjung weather station settled at 16.4 degrees Celsius, 1.1 notches above normal. The minimum temperatures at other weather stations were recorded at 16.4 degrees Celsius at Palam, 16.8 degrees at Lodhi Road, 17.2 degrees at the Ridge and 16.7 degrees at Ayanagar, according to the India Meteorological Department (IMD). No rainfall was recorded at any of the five weather stations during the 24 hours ending at 8.30 am on Monday. The AQI reading of 312 is the morning reading and not the day's average, which will be available at 4 pm, according to the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB). According to the CPCB, an AQI between zero and 50 is considered 'good', 51 and 100 'satisfactory', 101 and 200 'moderate', 201 and 300 'poor', 301 and 400 'very poor', and 401 and 500 'severe'. Graded Response Action Plan (GRAP) Stage 2 is applied in Delhi when the Air Quality Index (AQI) enters the "Very Poor" category, ranging between 301 and 400. The Sub-Committee for Operationalisation of the GRAP, ie, the Commission for Air Quality Management (CAQM) decides to invoke Stage 2 based on dynamic air quality and meteorological forecasts, include strict measures to curb air pollution.

ED registers money-laundering case against media baron Subhash Chandra

NEW DELHI (AGENCY) The Enforcement Directorate has registered a money-laundering case against media baron Subhash Chandra in connection with an alleged loan fraud that caused a Rs 1,322 crore loss to Life Insurance Corporation Housing Finance Limited (LICHFL), officials said on Monday. Chandra is alleged to have inflated his net worth to avail loans from LICHFL and then defaulted on them. The officials said the case has been filed under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), taking cognisance of a CBI FIR. Responding to the charges, a spokesperson for Zee Entertainment Enterprises Ltd (Z) said the ED filed the case against Chandra in his personal capacity and has no bearing on the company or its operations. "The company would like to state that the matters pertain to Dr Subhash Chandra and the promoter entities and have no bearing on 'Z' or its operations in any manner," the spokesperson said. The CBI had earlier filed a case on the complaint of LICHFL, based on which the ED registered the money laundering case. The LICHFL, in its complaint, which is part of the CBI FIR, alleged that Chandra submitted net-worth certificates used to secure the approval and disbursal of two loans totalling Rs 980 crore.

Three held for pro-Khalistan graffiti at Delhi Metro stations; police suspect link with banned outfit

NEW DELHI (AGENCY)



Three people, including a woman, have been arrested for allegedly defacing two Delhi Metro stations with pro-Khalistan graffiti on the directions of handlers linked with the banned Sikhs For Justice (SFJ) outfit, police said on Sunday. The accused were allegedly promised substantial financial rewards for writing separatist slogans at prominent metro locations, Deputy Commissioner of Police (Special Cell) Narra Chaitanya said in a statement. The arrestees have been identified as Sumeet alias Raftar (30), a resident of Panipat in Haryana, and Sumit Kumar alias Kaka (22) and Gurpreet (22), both residents of Punjab. Pro-Khalistan slogans were found near Gate No 1 of Jahangirpuri metro station on October 29. Similar graffiti was discovered on the inner wall of a staircase near Gate No 2 of Shastri Nagar metro station the following day, the officer said. The slogans referred to SFJ and pro-Khalistan ideology and also contained a message threatening retaliation against those described as traitors to the community. Police said the investigation led them to Sumeet. Further investigation revealed the involvement of two other accomplices based in Ludhiana, Punjab.

According to the DCP, Kumar was the alleged mastermind and had been radicalised by sympathisers of SFJ in Ludhiana and Gurdaspur. He was subsequently contacted by an associate who instructed him to download an encrypted messaging application to receive assignments. A key SFJ member allegedly shared specific templates for the graffiti through the platform and offered Kumar substantial financial compensation for executing the task at prominent metro stations in Delhi. Kumar then allegedly recruited Gurpreet and Sumeet to carry out the assignments.

"After arriving in Delhi, Sumeet allegedly went to Jahangirpuri metro station, painted the slogans, recorded a video of the act and sent it to his handlers. Kumar and Gurpreet allegedly carried out the second act of vandalism at Shastri Nagar metro station during the intervening night of October 28 and 29," the officer said. Police said Sumeet had come in contact with Kumar through online platforms. Around a week before the incident, he visited Ludhiana, from where the trio travelled to Delhi in a taxi and reached ISBT Kashmere Gate on October 29.

Cops hold protest in Delhi Police HQ over row with lawyers, demand rollback of ACP, SHO transfers

NEW DELHI (AGENCY)



Around 100 cops, including women officers, gathered outside the Delhi Police headquarters on Monday morning to protest against the transfer of two policemen following a confrontation between police and lawyers at the Shahdara police station. Holding placards and posters, the protesting police personnel demanded that Assistant Commissioner of Police (ACP) Manasvi Vashistha and Shahdara Station House Officer (SHO) Inspector Arun Kumar be reinstated to their previous postings. The controversy stems from a scuffle between police and lawyers in the police station in which an advocate was injured. After lawyers called an indefinite strike, the ACP and the inspector were transferred. The lawyers then called off their protest.

Speaking to reporters, ACP Vashistha, reacting to the protest call by police, said the demonstration was an "organic call" and that he was joining it. The protesting police personnel alleged misbehaviour and threats by lawyers.

Delhi's interstate border checks trigger massive traffic snarls amid BS-VI restrictions

NEW DELHI (AGENCY)



Heavy congestion was reported at several entry points, including the Delhi-Gurugram, Delhi-Noida, Delhi-Ghaziabad, Delhi-Sonipat and Delhi-Najafgarh borders

Intensified vehicle checks at Delhi's interstate borders to enforce pollution-control restrictions triggered massive traffic snarls on Monday, leaving commuters stranded for hours as long queues built up on roads connecting the national capital with neighbouring Haryana and Uttar Pradesh. Heavy congestion was reported at several entry points, including the Delhi-Gurugram, Delhi-Noida, Delhi-Ghaziabad, Delhi-Sonipat and Delhi-Najafgarh borders, as enforcement teams checked vehicles for compliance with the prescribed emission standards.

The Delhi-Gurugram border witnessed particularly heavy congestion, with traffic on NH-48 remaining backed up for several kilometres near the Sirhaul toll plaza. The snarls also affected the main carriageway and service roads. Similar traffic jams were reported near Noida and Ghaziabad, where vehicles were stopped during checks to ensure compliance with the restrictions. At the Aya Nagar border, Delhi Traffic Police and Transport Department enforcement teams intensified checking and turned back vehicles that did not meet the prescribed BS-VI emission standards.

Senior Delhi Traffic Police officers said that all borders, under different ranges, were following the pollution-control guidelines, adding that vehicles below the BS-VI standards were being sent back. They also mentioned that fines were being issued for violations and incomplete vehicle documentation. These restrictions became effective on November 1 as part of the winter pollution-control measures. Under the new arrangement, petrol and diesel vehicles registered outside Delhi that do not comply with BS-VI emission standards are barred from entering the national capital. Electric and CNG vehicles, along with BS-VI-compliant vehicles, are exempt from these restrictions.

The enforcement is being jointly carried out by the Delhi Environment and Transport Departments, along with the traffic police, at several entry points, including Rajokri on NH-48, DND Flyway, Ghazipur, Singhu, Tikri, and Badarpur.

These measures aim to reduce vehicular emissions during the winter months when air pollution levels in the national capital typically rise. The Northern range of the Delhi Traffic Police said in a statement, "The Northern Range Traffic Police has intensified checking at various Delhi border points. Special enforcement teams were deployed at the borders to ensure effective implementation of the prescribed restrictions."

Punjab AAP MLAs Harmeet Pathanmajra, Chetan Jouramajra, Vijay Pratap join BJP

NEW DELHI (AGENCY)



In the first set of poll-season defections in Punjab, three rebel Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) MLAs joined the BJP in New Delhi on Monday, turning their differences with the party into a collective political break ahead of the 2027 Punjab Assembly election. Harmeet Singh Pathanmajra from Sanaur, Chetan Singh Jouramajra from Samana and Kunwar Vijay Pratap Singh from Amritsar North joined the BJP at its headquarters in the presence of Punjab BJP in-charge Satish Poonia, co-incharge Virendra Sachdeva and state BJP chief Kewal Singh Dhillon. Pathanmajra and Jouramajra had resigned from the AAP's primary membership on Sunday. Kunwar Vijay Pratap Singh had been suspended by the AAP in June 2025 and also resigned as an MLA before joining the BJP. Speaking after joining the BJP, Kunwar Vijay Pratap Singh said Punjab was fighting for its existence. Referring to the lines "Punjab Sindh Gujarat Maratha", he said Punjab had been given priority, but was in a pathetic condition today. He also described his five years with the AAP as an "internship period". Pathanmajra attacked the AAP government's record, saying Punjab was now known as "Udta Punjab". He alleged that the government had taken around Rs 2.5 lakh crore in loans and "destroyed" the state. He said the AAP had initially offered an attractive vision, but those who raised their voices were sidelined. Jouramajra said Punjab was the "land of God", but its condition had deteriorated over the past five years. He alleged that there was a mining mafia and scams involving government schemes, and said the state needed a "double-engine" government to stabilise it.

"Punjab is the land of God, but over the past five years, it has become terrible. No one knows where a bullet will come from. There is a mining mafia, and scams are taking place in schemes. We need a double-engine government in Punjab, as the state needs a push to become a stable state," he said. Jouramajra also said the biggest reason for leaving the AAP and joining the BJP was that Prime Minister Narendra Modi had delivered on his promises.

Open Search

EDITORIAL

Railways to make Diwali Homecoming easier with special Trains

Diwali is one of the biggest and most significant festivals in India. On this occasion, people living across the country travel to their hometowns to celebrate the festival with their families and loved ones. As a result, railway stations witness a massive rush of passengers, while securing seats on regular trains becomes a major challenge. Keeping these difficulties in mind, Indian Railways operates special trains during the Diwali festival to make travel easier and ensure that passengers can reach their destinations conveniently.

This initiative by Indian Railways brings considerable relief to millions of passengers during the festive season. Special trains are operated to connect Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata, Chennai, Patna, Lucknow, Varanasi, Prayagraj, Gorakhpur, Jaipur and several other major cities across the country. These trains are planned according to passenger demand and the rush on busy railway routes. Additional trips are introduced on several important routes, while new special trains are also operated wherever required. During festivals, the primary objective of the Railways is not only to facilitate passengers but also to ensure effective crowd management. The operation of special trains helps reduce pressure on regular services. In addition, special arrangements are made at railway stations, including additional ticket counters, enhanced security, cleanliness, drinking water facilities and passenger assistance. The deployment of Railway Protection Force personnel and other staff is also increased at crowded stations to ensure smooth operations and passenger safety.

During Diwali, the number of passengers travelling towards states such as Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Jharkhand, West Bengal and Madhya Pradesh increases significantly. People living in other cities for employment, education and business purposes eagerly look forward to returning home to celebrate the festival with their families. In this situation, special trains prove extremely useful in meeting the growing travel demand.

However, the increasing number of passengers during the festive season also presents several challenges for the Railways. Ensuring the timely operation of trains, availability of tickets, crowd management on platforms and passenger safety are important responsibilities. The Railways should announce special train services well in advance so that passengers can plan their journeys accordingly. The online ticket booking system and official railway information services should also be made more effective to provide timely and accurate information. Passengers also have a responsibility to follow railway rules, avoid unnecessary overcrowding and comply with the guidelines issued by the authorities. Festivals are symbols of happiness, love and togetherness. Therefore, maintaining patience and extending cooperation during the journey are equally important.

Overall, the operation of special trains by Indian Railways during Diwali is not merely a transportation arrangement but also an important means of connecting millions of people with their families. This initiative not only adds to the festive spirit but also reflects the Railways' commitment to public service and passenger convenience. It is hoped that through better planning, additional train services and strengthened security arrangements, Indian Railways will make the festive journey smoother, safer and more comfortable for passengers this Diwali.

Curated message

CHANDAN SINHA

September was a remarkable month not only for newspaper headlines but also for the op-ed pages. While headlines continue to rock boats, large and small, it may have gone unnoticed that the holders of the three highest public offices in our country, President Droupadi Murmu, Vice-President C.P. Radhakrishnan and Prime Minister Narendra Modi, contributed articles to newspaper op-ed pages under their signature in the same month on the 5th, 17th and 28th of September, respectively. If Union ministers, parliamentarians and serving secretaries to the government were included, the number would swell further. This unfaltering proliferation of newspaper op-eds in the last decade by elected officials on the one hand and civil servants on the other deserves a closer look.

Newspaper articles have flown from the pens of the vice-president and the prime minister earlier, too, but this appears to be a first for the president. Of course, as an op-ed writer, the prime minister is in a different league. This year alone, one may find at least nine op-eds published under his signature. Modi began writing such pieces early; his debut op-ed featured in The Wall Street Journal on September 25, 2014, on the eve of his visit to the United States of America. Over the years, his output has increased phenomenally.

Of more than 42 identified articles published by Modi 2014 onwards, only nine were published until 2020 but a whopping 33 followed in the next six years. Tributes and commemorative pieces on birthdays, deaths, and death anniversaries to stalwarts from different fields comprise 18 of the 42 articles. Among those featured are Mohan Bhagwat, Sardar Patel, Mahatma Gandhi, Parkash Singh Badal, Ratan Tata, and Jyotiba Phule.

Fourteen of the prime minister's articles are on international relations, eight written with foreign leaders, four are on cultural subjects, such as the Mahakumbh and Somnath temple, and three are on governance and development. Idle cynics may ascribe political motives to the prime minister's salutations to Karpoori Thakur and Swami Smarananda on the eve of the general elections in 2024. But this sounds like a hollow charge. Nevertheless, we suspect that a volume on Indian greats and another on India's foreign policy bearing Modi's name are in the offing.

If the captain leads, can his team be far behind? Since 2014, over 100 op-eds by Union ministers and at least 55 by serving secretaries to government have appeared in various newspapers. Among ministers, with at least 19 articles to his name, Piyush Goyal seems to have left everyone behind, while Hardeep Puri and Bhupender Yadav, with 15 each, are in second place. A quick look shows that hardly any minister has focused on the subjects within his jurisdiction alone. Broadly, four kinds of op-eds may be discerned: self-gratulatory pieces explaining policies or programmes of their own ministry.

How US Midterms Could Give Trump A Very Different 2027

AKSHOBH GIRIDHARADAS

Ironically, the President's name isn't on the ballot, but the midterms may just be all about him, and votes would be cast vicariously for or against him through several races across all 50 states



Let's "check in" on the iconic Willard Hotel for a second. This grandiose establishment has hosted many American and foreign dignitaries. The list is exhaustive and impressive. From Abraham Lincoln to Mark Twain and Martin Luther King Jr, as well as visiting dignitaries, like Indian Prime Ministers Narendra Modi and the late Dr. Manmohan Singh, have called the Willard their temporary home. But one such other frequent visitor inadvertently codified a term. It's an apocryphal story that's often told in Washington, DC. Legend has it that the lobby of this famed hotel was how the words "lobbying" and "lobbyists" came to be. Long before President Donald Trump said, "location, location, location", back in the day, President Ulysses S Grant, the famed Civil War General who victoriously commanded the Union Army, leveraged the short hop from the White House and was often seen in the lobby of this hotel. Word got around of Grant's Willard visits, and people sought to approach him for favours.

Grant, who was miffed with the copious requests, supposedly referred to them as "lobbyists". Some say that's how 'lobbying' and 'lobbyists' got their name. Other linguists and historians disagree and say the word predates Grant. But the legend tells a bigger story - the Washington story. Everyone wants access to power. And with midterms just a day away, voters decide where that balance of power lies in this cycle. The midterms don't enjoy the fanfare of presidential elections. Yes, no new President will be elected. Yet, midterms are often seen as the verdict that can break or define a presidency.

The midterms, in some ways, serve as a referendum on the President and his policies, and it shows the mood of the electorate and their perception of where they see the country heading. Ironically, the President's name isn't on the ballot, but the midterms may just be all about him, and votes would be cast vicariously for or against him through several races across all 50 states. That matters because America's constitutional architecture bifurcates power into the holy trinity of Executive, Legislature, and Judiciary. The White House, as the Executive, advances an agenda and executes the laws; Congress, as the legislative wing, determines how much of that agenda becomes legislation and controls the federal purse strings; the courts interpret the law and enforce constitutional limits.

Winning the presidency makes the person the commander-in-chief. But constitutionally, it is not a license to govern unchecked. So, once in two years, or the halfway mark of the President's four-year term, the midterms determine just who controls Congress.

Here is the scenario at hand. All 435 seats in the House of Representatives and 35 Senate seats are being contested. These include two special Senate elections - one in the seat vacated by Vice President JD Vance in Ohio, and the other for the seat vacated by Secretary of State Marco Rubio in Florida. Those special elections will determine who serves the remainder of their terms, through January 2029. Republicans currently hold a majority with 53 Senate seats, against 45 in the Democratic caucus, including two independents - Bernie Sanders of Vermont and Angus King of Maine. Both caucus with the Democrats, bringing the Democratic caucus to 47. They can afford to lose two, or a net loss of three, and still retain control, since Vice President JD Vance serves as President of the Senate and possesses the constitutional authority to cast a deciding vote when the chamber is evenly divided in a 50-50 split.

So, Democrats need a net gain of four to take back control in the Senate. In the House, Republicans hold 218 seats and the Democrats 214, alongside one independent, who caucuses with the Republicans. There also are two vacancies. The goal is to get to 218. Thus, Democrats need four more seats than they currently hold, while Republicans must finish at or above that number to secure an outright majority. For Republicans, keeping both chambers means a clearer path to delivering President Trump's priorities and advancing his agenda till the end of 2028.

For Democrats, winning either chamber means more power to challenge his policies, and guardrails for some of the policies that they have umbrage with. In a nutshell, Donald Trump will remain President. But should either or both chambers flip, then the terms of his presidency could change as well. The road to a Senate majority runs through familiar battlegrounds, some tenuous for certain candidates and campaigns. In Michigan, Democrat Abdul El-Sayed faces Republican Mike Rogers for an open Democratic-held seat, as El-Sayed is vying to be the country's first Muslim Senator. Television debates serve as a barometer of just how heated this battle has been. In the Peach State of Georgia, Democrat Jon Ossoff must defend his seat against Republican Congressman Mike Collins. Texas offers Democrats the more elusive prize. The Lone Star state has a blue-chip asset in the Republican portfolio, and Democrats are hoping to turn the GoP blue-chip a bit bluer this November. The battle is between millennial James Talarico and the Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton. But turning the urban "blueberries" of Austin and Houston into a statewide blue victory requires a coalition that has eluded every Democratic Senate candidate since Lloyd Bentsen's victory in 1988. A year before Talarico was born - that's how long it has been since Texas elected a Democrat to the Senate.

Booster shot for satellite navigation

TV VENKATESWARAN

India needs more satellites to build a reliable, independent network



ON October 30, the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) successfully launched the navigation satellite NVS-03 from Sriharikota, Andhra Pradesh, on the GSLV-F18 (Geosynchronous Satellite Launch Vehicle). This is a significant boost for NavIC, India's regional navigation system. Once NVS-03 is in orbit and commissioned, the system will have four satellites in operation, the minimum number required to restore the basic positioning capability. It is not just for civil use; it's also crucial for national security. NavIC stands for Navigation with Indian Constellation. Like the US Global Positioning System (GPS), it is a satellite-based navigation system. Unlike GPS, which offers global coverage, NavIC is designed to serve India and the region extending roughly 1,500 km beyond its borders. To calculate your location, a mobile phone or a car's navigation device generally needs signals from at least four satellites. The receiver uses these signals to work out its three-dimensional position latitude, longitude, altitude and also corrects the error in its own clock.

Until now, NavIC has been operating on a thin margin. Since 2013, India has launched 11 navigation satellites, but many of the imported atomic clocks aboard them failed. Currently, only three, IRNSS-1B, IRNSS-1I and NVS-01, continue to operate. NVS-02, launched in January 2025, could not reach its intended final orbit. With only three satellites operational, NavIC can provide timing services but not positioning and navigation services. NVS-03 is the third satellite in the second generation of NavIC spacecraft. One may consider India's own GPS as a flagrant misuse of public money for national pride. The answer is strategic autonomy. GPS is controlled by the US military. During the Kargil war, the US withheld GPS support in the region, seriously affecting Indian military operations. Similar concerns arose during missile tests. The lesson was clear: India's security cannot depend entirely on a system whose signals or services may be restricted by another country. China has BeiDou, Russia has GLONASS and Europe has Galileo; each has developed its own satellite navigation system.

How does a navigation satellite tell you where you are? They are essentially lighthouses in the sky, continuously beaming radio signals. Each signal contains information about the satellite's position and the time at which the signal was transmitted. Radio waves travel at the speed of light. Your phone receives the signal and calculates how long it took to arrive, allowing it to determine the distance between the phone and the satellite. By taking distance measurements from several satellites, it can triangulate its position (this is known as trilateration). A fourth satellite is used to correct the timing error in the receiver's clock (which is nowhere near as accurate as the atomic clocks on the satellites).

Putting a satellite into its final orbit can be compared to crossing a river with a bicycle. First, you load the bicycle onto a boat and cross. Only then can you ride it. In much the same way, a rocket carries a satellite through the dense lower atmosphere. It places it in a Geosynchronous Transfer Orbit (GTO). That is the boat journey. The satellite's own Liquid Apogee Motor (LAM) then helps move it into its intended geosynchronous orbit, about 36,000 km above Earth. That is the bicycle ride. Another twist in the tale: picture riding a scooter down a slope, coasting with the engine off and only re-engaging when you get to level ground. That's the LAM in the satellite's case. It's off during launch. Once in GTO, it's used in a series of precisely planned burns to raise the orbit. The satellite will orbit Earth several times as the orbit is raised. A final burn gets it into the required circular orbit. NVS-02 was expected to bring NavIC back to the minimum number of satellites needed for positioning services. But a problem arose during orbit raising. A pyro-valve in the fuel line to the satellite's LAM failed to open, so the engine could not fire. Like a scooter that will not restart after a downhill stretch, the satellite could not reach its final orbit and remained in GTO. For NVS-03, ISRO adopted a different strategy to avoid a repeat of this problem: it kept the relevant valve open at launch, a calculated risk that paid off.

The failure of the imported atomic clocks was another blow to NavIC. ISRO has since developed indigenous rubidium atomic clocks, which are now being used on the NVS class of satellites. Each NVS satellite has three clocks. If one fails, the other two can continue providing the timing information the system needs. This also reduces dependence on imported hardware and moves toward greater self-reliance in this key technology.

NVS-03 also builds on NVS-01 (the previous satellite in the series). A key addition is support for the L1 frequency band, which is used by many consumer navigation devices. This could, in principle, allow compatible smartphones and smartwatches to receive NavIC signals directly and thus extend the utility of the system beyond just the defence domain. The practical benefit would, of course, depend on device compatibility and service availability.

The benefits for fishermen are potentially huge, especially along the Tamil Nadu and Bengal coasts. NavIC-enabled equipment could alert a fishing vessel as it approaches a neighbour's maritime boundary and thus help it avoid an inadvertent crossing. With the right equipment, it could also be used for distress alerting. Farmers would benefit from accurate positioning for land surveying and services that combine satellite navigation with weather information.

In aviation, it could be used to support operations in poor visibility with the appropriate systems and procedures. For the armed forces, an operational NavIC would reduce their reliance on GPS for navigation and guidance.

Still, NVS-03 alone will not deliver a fully robust navigation service. NavIC needs at least seven satellites (three in geostationary orbit and four in inclined geosynchronous orbits) to provide adequate coverage for independent positioning. For a dependable service with sufficient resilience, around 10 to 15 NavIC satellites will need to be operational.

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Defence Ministry signs Rs 53,866 crore contracts for Indian Navy's 8 corvettes

NEW DELHI (AGENCY)

The Ministry of Defence has signed contracts worth Rs 53,866.50 crore with Garden Reach Shipbuilders & Engineers Limited (GRSE) and Goa Shipyard Limited (GSL) for the construction of eight Next Generation Corvettes for the Indian Navy. The contracts were signed in the presence of Defence Secretary Rajesh Kumar Singh at Kartavya Bhawan-2 in New Delhi on Monday. Under the agreement, GRSE will construct five corvettes, while GSL will build the remaining three. The project marks an important step in India's indigenous warship design and construction capabilities, as the vessels will be designed by the Indian Navy and constructed by defence public sector undertakings (DPSUs) selected through a competitive process.



The Ministry of Defence said the project would strengthen India's domestic shipbuilding ecosystem by bringing together defence public sector companies, private shipyards and Indian industrial partners, including micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs). "The construction of these ships is expected to generate approximately 72 lakh person-days of employment in the shipyards and 460 lakh person-days in ancillary industries and MSMEs over the next ten years," the Ministry said in its statement. The project is expected to provide employment opportunities across shipyards and supporting industries over the next decade, while increasing the participation of Indian companies in defence manufacturing. The Next Generation Corvettes will be equipped with advanced missiles, weapons and sensor systems, allowing them to undertake operations across air, surface and subsurface domains. According to the Ministry, the induction of these ships will strengthen the Indian Navy's ability to safeguard maritime trade routes, conduct anti-surface and anti-submarine warfare operations, and improve coastal defence. The vessels will also support littoral combat operations, maritime presence and surveillance missions, enhancing the Navy's operational capabilities. The Ministry said the project would promote the use of Made-in-India materials and equipment, indigenous technologies and Indian skills and expertise.

It added that the programme represents a major step towards achieving self-reliance in defence manufacturing and strengthening the country's domestic industrial capabilities. The project is also expected to deepen collaboration between defence public sector undertakings, private shipyards and MSMEs, giving a boost to India's indigenous shipbuilding industry.

The Ministry said the contract was aligned with the government's commitment to Aatmanirbhar Bharat and Make in India in the defence sector.

Digital Adoption and Financial Discipline Key to MSME Growth

NEW DELHI (AGENCY)



Digital transformation, financial discipline and market-driven innovation are emerging as critical factors in strengthening India's micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs). Industry experts have emphasised that businesses must combine technology adoption with sound financial planning, customer understanding and operational efficiency to remain competitive and achieve sustainable growth.

These insights emerged during SIDBI MSME Samwad, an initiative of the Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI), featuring discussions with AI and quantum scientist Dr. Utpal Chakraborty and entrepreneurship mentor Suresh Mansharamani. Hosted by Amit Arora, the programme examined the challenges faced by existing MSMEs and aspiring entrepreneurs, alongside practical approaches to building resilient, technology-enabled enterprises. Dr. Utpal Chakraborty, founder of Gahna AI Lab, highlighted that digital transformation requires a fundamental shift in organisational culture rather than merely introducing new software or converting physical records into digital formats. He encouraged MSMEs to adopt technology gradually, beginning with essential functions such as accounting, billing, inventory management and customer relationship management. According to him, selecting scalable digital tools based on business priorities can help enterprises improve productivity without making substantial initial investments.

The discussion also explored how artificial intelligence, automation and digital public infrastructure, including UPI, Aadhaar and ONDC, can support business operations, market access and informed decision-making. Dr. Chakraborty highlighted the importance of cybersecurity awareness and data protection as businesses become increasingly dependent on digital systems.

Shyam Sundar Co. Jewelers Unveils 'Chomok Bhora Dhanteras 2026' with Spectacular Offers

NEW DELHI (AGENCY)

'Dhanteras' is a sacred festival dedicated to welcoming the Goddess of wealth and good fortune into households. The traditional celebration involves purchasing gold, diamond, and silver jewelry or artifacts. It is believed that the brilliant radiance emanating from these precious metals brings happiness, peace, and prosperity to families through the divine blessings of Goddess Dhanalakshmi, making this festival deeply significant.

'Chomok Bhora Dhanteras' is the flagship annual exhibition of gold, diamond, and silver jewelry hosted by Shyam Sundar Co. Jewelers to mark the Diwali season. Following its rich legacy, this year's edition promises to captivate customers with an exclusive, heartwarming jewellery collection paired with highly attractive festive offers.



The special collection features hand-crafted gold and diamond jewellery, including traditional and contemporary bridal designs designed to steal the spotlight. Key highlights include an exquisite yet budget-friendly diamond range, the company's signature designer diamond line 'Glitteria', the 9K gold jewellery collection 'Reflections', the designer silver jewellery line 'Silver Expressions', and an exclusive assortment of precious astrological gemstones. Additionally, customers can benefit from various services and special value schemes, including the popular 'Sonay Sohaga' (a unique discount scheme for purchasing jewellery) and an easy old-gold exchange facility. The showrooms will also feature 9K gold jewellery, silver coins, gold coins, silver utensils, and silver puja artifacts. Collectively, this campaign serves as a beautiful tribute to enhance the brilliance and joy of the Festival of Lights. As a highly trusted and beloved jewellery brand, Shyam Sundar Co. Jewelers aims to make this festive season unforgettable by showering its patrons with magnificent gifts and boundless goodwill.

An exclusive preview celebrating the 22nd edition of 'Chomok Bhora Dhanteras' was held today to welcome the 'Festival of Lights and Joy'. The spectacular new collection was officially unveiled by Arpita Saha and Rupak Saha, Directors of Shyam Sundar Co. Jewelers. Speaking on the occasion, Rupak Saha, Director, Shyam Sundar Co. Jewelers, said.

India, EU discuss free trade agreement implementation issues

NEW DELHI (AGENCY)

India and the European Union (EU) have discussed implementation issues of the free trade agreement (FTA), which is scheduled for signing in December, an official statement said on Monday. The issues were discussed during the visit of Commerce Secretary Rajesh Agarwal to Brussels last week. Agrawal met with Ditte Juul Jorgensen from the Directorate-General for Trade and Economic Security; Koen Doens from the Directorate-General for International Partnerships; and Gerassimos Thomas from the Directorate-General for Taxation and Customs Union, European Commission. The meetings, according to the commerce ministry, focused on customs cooperation, trade facilitation, and preparations for the implementation of the India-EU FTA. "Both sides recognised the importance of efficient, transparent, and digitally enabled customs procedures in supporting businesses, reducing transaction costs, and ensuring the smooth movement of legitimate trade," it said. The two sides announced on January 27 the conclusion of the negotiations for the agreement, which will allow duty-free access to Indian labour intensive sectors such as leather.



Briefs News

7th Tour de Sanawar MTB XCO Tests Grit in the High Himalayas

SANAWAR (AGENCY) The quiet pine forests of the Kasauli Hills echoed with the roar of cheering squads and the crunch of gravel as the 7th Edition of Tour de Sanawar MTB XCO concluded on Sunday, 1 November 2026. Hosted on the historic 179 year old campus of The Lawrence School, Sanawar, the premier Cross Country Olympic (XCO) race saw a record 180 student athletes and open category competitors tackle one of northern India's most unforgiving natural circuits. Jointly organised by The Lawrence School, Sanawar (established 1847) and The Old Sanawarian Society (established 1914), the championship was backed by Title Partner Hero Cycles, Powered by Partner Hartex, Community and Outdoors Partner Radkaat, Associate Sponsor Gopal Sweets, and Healthcare Partner Fortis Hospitals. The organizing committee featured key leadership from Major Sanjeev Sharma (OS), alongside Ashish Sood, prominent Indian cycling advocate, mountain biker, and a key organizational force behind HAST-PA. The energy on the trails carried deep historical resonance. Nearly five decades ago, in autumn 1977, nine Sanawar schoolboys rolled their single speed Hero steel bicycles out of Gaskel Hall and pedaled 3,000 kilometres across India to Kanyakumari on the legendary Mountains to the Ocean expedition. Today, the Tour de Sanawar translates that same raw endurance and the school's defining motto, Never Give In, into the high speed arena of modern mountain biking.

KRAFTON Develops Socially Intelligent AI that Help Robots Better Understand People

BENGALURU (AGENCY) KRAFTON Inc. is expanding its work in artificial intelligence (AI) into robotics through Ludo Robotics. The KRAFTON subsidiary develops AI for socially intelligent robots that can better understand, communicate and collaborate with people. Games have long served as testing grounds for AI. KRAFTON's virtual worlds bring together millions of players whose behaviour is unpredictable, social and constantly changing. Developing intelligent systems for these environments has led the company to invest in machine learning, reinforcement learning, large language models and multimodal AI. This work includes proprietary AI foundation models and Co-Playable Characters (CPCs), developed in collaboration with NVIDIA, which are designed to understand players and respond to them in real time. Ludo Robotics builds on this foundation to bring similar capabilities into the physical world. The company recently presented Ludi 0.2, the latest version of its robotic intelligence system, at the 2026 Bay Area Robotics Symposium (BARS) at UC Berkeley. "For nearly two decades, KRAFTON has built games and virtual worlds where people and intelligent systems interact in real time," said CH Kim, CEO of KRAFTON and Ludo Robotics. "Through Ludo Robotics, we're building on that experience to explore how AI can better understand people and interact with them naturally in the physical world." Ludo Robotics is developing general-purpose robotic intelligence systems designed to understand human intent, adapt to changing environments and collaborate naturally with people.

Galaxy S27 Pro may help Samsung boost premium smartphone sales amid rising costs

SEOUL (AGENCY) Samsung Electronics is looking to expand its premium smartphone range with a new Galaxy S27 Pro model, which could help the company attract buyers to higher-priced devices and improve profitability amid rising component costs, according to a news report by The Korea Herald. Samsung Display is reportedly preparing to begin production of advanced organic light-emitting diode (OLED) panels with built-in privacy technology for the upcoming model this month. Citing display industry researcher UBI Research, the report said the company is expected to produce around 7 lakh panels in November, ahead of the anticipated launch of the Galaxy S27 series early next year. The Pro model is expected to join the standard, Plus and Ultra versions, taking Samsung's flagship smartphone lineup to four models. According to the report, both the Pro and Ultra models will feature Samsung Display's latest M16 OLED materials and built-in privacy display technology, while the standard and variants are expected to use older M14 materials without the feature. The privacy technology, introduced with the Galaxy S26 Ultra, restricts screen visibility from side angles without requiring a separate privacy film.

Powergrid Q2 consolidated net profit rises 8% YoY to Rs 3,866 crore

NEW DELHI (AGENCY)

State-owned Power Grid Corporation of India Limited recorded an 8 per cent year-on-year (YoY) increase in consolidated profit after tax (PAT) at Rs 3,866 crore for the second quarter, which ended on September 30, 2026, according to financial results released by the company. The Maharatna central public sector enterprise under the Ministry of Power reported consolidated total income of Rs 12,055 crore for the July-September quarter of the financial year 2026-27, marking an expansion of 3 per cent compared to the corresponding period of the previous fiscal year. "For Q2FY2026-27, on a standalone basis, the Company posted Profit After Tax (PAT) and Total Income of 3,819 crore and 11,900 crore respectively," the company stated. "On Consolidated basis, Profit After Tax and Total Income stood at 3,866 crore and 12,055 crore respectively, registering a growth of 8% and 3% respectively over the same period of previous year," the company added. On the operational side, the utility incurred a consolidated capital expenditure of Rs 16,864 crore and capitalised assets valued at Rs 9,300 crore till September 30, 2026.

Titiksha Public School Celebrates Sporting Excellence and Perseverance

NEW DELHI (AGENCY)



Guided by the spirit of "Aviral" the continuous, unstoppable spirit Titiksha Public School celebrated its Annual Sports Meet 2026–27 throughout October, culminating in a grand felicitation ceremony on October 31. Bringing together students from Bal Vatika I to Grade XII, the month-long celebration highlighted athletic talent, perseverance, teamwork and the joy of participation, reflecting the school's enduring Virasat of promoting sports as an integral part of education and holistic development.

Recognising the vital role of sports in building character, confidence, discipline and resilience, Titiksha Public School continues to nurture a culture in which sporting excellence extends beyond victories and medals. The theme, Aviral, embodied the belief that true achievement lies in overcoming challenges, learning from experiences and moving forward with determination.

Throughout October, students across age groups participated in a thoughtfully curated series of sporting activities designed to enhance physical fitness, coordination, agility, balance and essential life skills. From track events and hurdle races to jumping, balancing, pyramid activities and skill-development challenges, each activity encouraged students to explore their abilities, overcome hesitation and experience the satisfaction of personal progress. The celebrations culminated in a grand felicitation ceremony on October 31, graced by Rajat Sood, an alumnus of Titiksha Public School and winner of India's Laughter Champion, as the Chief Guest. The occasion was attended by Ms Ritambhra Chauhan, Chairperson; Dr Arun Kumar Bhatia, Manager; Ms Radhika Pahwa, Head of School; Ms Rashmi Chhabra, Vice Principal; Ms Kavita Dudeja, Head of Administration; and Ms Indu Chawla, Head of the Sports Department, along with PTA members. Members of the school administration, teachers, students and parents joined the celebration, making it a memorable occasion that honoured the enthusiasm, commitment and achievements of the young participants. The programme commenced with a disciplined School Band performance and March Past, reflecting unity, coordination and team spirit.

CRIF Launches Ahmedabad Chapter of 'Credit Goes to HER' to Advance Women's Financial Empowerment

AHMEDABAD (AGENCY)

CRIF in collaboration with IIMA Ventures has unveiled the Ahmedabad chapter of 'Credit Goes to HER', its community dedicated to women in credit and credit for women. The launch brought together leaders from banking, business, entrepreneurship and research to discuss ways to strengthen women's financial empowerment and participation in the credit ecosystem. The launch featured a panel discussion on 'Building Pathways to Financial Empowerment', which explored perspectives on financial empowerment across credit, financial services, entrepreneurship and research.

The event commenced with a keynote address by Smruti Shah, CEO, Shri Mahila Sewa Sahakari Bank Ltd. The panel featured Ajaita S, Founder & CEO, Frontier Markets; Purvi Bhavsar, Co-founder & Managing Director, Pahal; and Supriya Sharma, Partner, IIMA Ventures. The discussion was moderated by Abirami B, Head, Research & Insights, CRIF.



The launch comes at a time when Gujarat's credit market is witnessing strong growth. The state's retail credit portfolio stands at ?13.0 lakh crore, registering 19.0% year-on-year growth. The women's credit portfolio stands at ?3.0 lakh crore, growing at 21.0% year-on-year, outpacing the growth of the overall retail credit portfolio in the state.

Credit growth has also been strong across key lending segments. Gold loans recorded 78.8% year-on-year growth, followed by CD loans at 43.8% and business lending at 25.1%. Meanwhile, portfolio quality has improved, with PAR 31–180 declining to 2.0%. The faster growth of women's credit, alongside expansion across key lending segments and improving portfolio quality, highlights the evolving credit landscape in Gujarat. These trends also provide an important context for conversations around women's access to credit, financial participation and economic empowerment.

Through the Ahmedabad chapter launch, 'Credit Goes to HER' seeks to bring together perspectives from across the financial ecosystem and encourage dialogue on creating stronger pathways for women's participation in credit. Through Credit Goes to HER, CRIF India continues its commitment to building stronger communities, promoting women's leadership, and creating greater opportunities for women to shape the future of credit in India.

SK Finance Reports Strong H1 FY27 Performance, PAT Grows 25% to 225 Crore

JAIPUR (AGENCY)

SK Finance Limited, one of India's leading NBFCs, today announced its financial results for the half year ended September 30, 2026, reporting a strong performance driven by sustained business momentum, disciplined risk management, robust customer demand, and continued investments in technology.

During H1 FY27, the Company reported a Profit After Tax (PAT) of ?225 crore, registering a 25% YoY growth. Assets Under Management (AUM) stood at ?16,682 crore as on September 30, 2026, marking a 16% YoY increase. The growth reflects the Company's continued focus on expanding its asset-backed lending portfolio across commercial vehicles, passenger vehicles, tractors, construction equipment and secured business loans. SK Finance continues to strengthen its market presence through a network of 700+ branches across 12 states and 2 Union Territories, supported by a team of over 13,000 employees. The Company also maintains a strong credit profile with long-term ratings of AA-/Stable from ICRA and CARE Ratings, AA-/Positive from India Ratings, and a short-term rating of A1.



The thrilling stunts performed by five Sarang helicopters enthralled the audience

RAIPUR. OPEN SEARCH



Governor Ramen Deka witnessed the amazing bravery, courage and skill of the Indian Air Force in the sky

On the glorious occasion of Chhattisgarh State Foundation Day, the skies of Naya Raipur witnessed the indomitable valor, courage, discipline, and amazing flying skills of the Indian Air Force. Governor Shri Ramen Deka attended the grand air show of the world-renowned Sarang Aerobatic Display Team of the Indian Air Force held at Sendh Lake. On this occasion, the brave warriors of the Akashganga Skydiving Team, Garuda Commandos, and Sarang Helicopter Display Team enthralled the gathering with their daring stunts, precise control, and excellent coordination. The impressive formation of five helicopters, amazing aerobatics, the mesmerizing display of the tricolor in the sky, and the echo of 'Vande Mataram' filled the atmosphere with a spirit of patriotism and national pride.

Governor Shri Ramen Deka, while praising the impressive performance of the Indian Air Force's bravehearts, said that this event by the prestigious Sarang Team on the occasion of Chhattisgarh State Foundation Day is a matter of pride and joy for all of us. The courage, discipline, confidence, and precise coordination with which the air warriors demonstrated their skills is inspiring to every citizen, especially the youth. This event is not just a display of thrilling aerial stunts, but a living demonstration of the Indian Air Force's excellent capabilities, rigorous training, dedication, and spirit of national service. He extended his heartfelt greetings and best wishes to the people of the state on Chhattisgarh State Foundation Day and prayed that Chhattisgarh continues to achieve new heights of development, progress, and prosperity. He said that amid the joyous celebrations of State Foundation Day, this amazing performance by the bravehearts of the Indian Air Force further enhances the enthusiasm and pride of the people of the state. Governor Shri Deka said that the word "Sarang" means peacock. Just as the peacock symbolizes our country's unique identity and beauty, the Sarang team symbolizes the dignity, excellent skill, and discipline of the Indian Air Force. He said that while the various formations and daring maneuvers of helicopters during the aerial display may appear effortless and beautiful, they involve detailed planning, constant practice, deep concentration, and extraordinary coordination. Each pilot must be fully aware of their role as well as the activities of their teammates. Unwavering trust and precise coordination in challenging situations make such amazing performances possible. He said that the Sarang team's performance sends an important message that even the most difficult goals can be achieved through discipline, dedication, collective effort, and mutual trust. This performance inspires young people to strive for excellence, remain dedicated to their duties, and achieve success through collective efforts. The Indian Air Force's renowned Akashganga Skydiving Team kicked off the air show with a thrilling start. Jumping from the open sky, the team's brave men displayed unparalleled courage, balance, and precision by skillfully controlling their parachutes.

'Income-Tax Payers Should Give Up Free Electricity': CM Samrat Choudhary

PATNA(AGENCY)



Bihar Chief Minister Samrat Choudhary on Sunday appealed to people who are financially well-off and paying income tax to voluntarily give up the benefit of 125 units of free electricity and contribute towards the state's development. Addressing the two-day 'Pataliputra National Youth Parliament-2.0' here, he said the state government was spending around Rs 23,000 crore annually on electricity subsidies, with an expenditure of Rs 8,000-10,000 per household.

The government was providing 125 units of free electricity to consumers across economic categories, Choudhary said, urging "financially well-off and income-tax-paying people to voluntarily give up the free electricity benefit and contribute towards Bihar's development". The chief minister also stressed the role of the youth in strengthening democracy and building a developed India. Bihar's historical association with democratic values made it imperative for the youth to take the lead in preserving and strengthening them.

"Youths have a crucial role to play in strengthening democracy, preserving the country's civilisation and cultural heritage, and building a developed India," the chief minister said. Choudhary said India had achieved Independence in 1947 through the sacrifices and struggles of freedom fighters. As the country approaches the completion of 80 years of Independence, there is a need to reaffirm the commitment to strengthening democratic values.

He asserted that Prime Minister Narendra Modi has been working towards the goal of making India a developed nation by 2047, while former Bihar chief minister Nitish Kumar had made significant contributions to the state's development. Recalling the 1974 movement, he said young people had played a significant role in it. The present generation, comprising Gen Z and Gen Alpha, must also contribute towards strengthening the democratic system.

He said quality education and acquisition of knowledge were the real foundations of success and prosperity, while calling for the annual organisation of the youth parliament to connect young people with democratic processes, constitutional values and nation-building.

Briefs News

Aga Ruhullah Mehdi's exit: How NC's star campaigner turned into party's fiercest critic

SRINAGAR (AGENCY) Srinagar MP Aga Syed Ruhullah Mehdi is set to resign from the Lok Sabha as well as the National Conference (NC) on Tuesday. He will announce his decision on the 26th death anniversary of his father, Aga Syed Mehdi, at an event in Central Kashmir's Budgam district. Ruhullah's relationship with the party began to deteriorate just months after the National Conference stormed to power in the 2024 Jammu and Kashmir Assembly elections. During the election campaign, Ruhullah, a three-time MLA from Budgam, was among the party's prominent campaigners. Several NC candidates invited him to their constituencies to canvass for them. He was particularly vocal about the restoration of J&K's special status and the release of political prisoners. However, barely two months after the NC formed the government, Ruhullah led a protest in Srinagar against the reservation policy introduced under Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha's administration. The protest also saw participation from leaders of the rival Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), a development that reportedly irked the NC leadership. In the months that followed, Ruhullah became increasingly critical of the party's position on several issues. A major confrontation took place during an NC working committee meeting in May 2025, when Ruhullah reportedly accused party leaders of betraying the people by abandoning the core promises made in the election manifesto.

7 States, Rs 20,000: How Women Were Lured Into Egg Donation Racket

HYDERABAD (AGENCY) Police have busted an inter-state egg donation racket, rescued 43 women after multiple raids in the Saroornagar area and also seized injections, medicines, tablets and documents among other incriminating materials. The rescued women were from multiple states -- West Bengal, Chhattisgarh, Delhi, Assam, Uttar Pradesh, Jharkhand and Odisha. The scam was unearthed after officials got information about the racket being operated from Shetty Working Women's Hostel in Venkateswara Colony, allegedly managed by Emirishetty Durga Prasad. "The network allegedly recruited, transported and accommodated women from different States for egg donation procedures at in vitro fertilisation (IVF) and fertility centres," police said. The probe then widened to cover several other areas including Prakash Nagar, Begumpet, Erragadda, Saroornagar and Gopalapuram and a total of 43 women were rescued in raids on October 30. Fifteen women from West Bengal, Chhattisgarh, Delhi, Assam, Uttar Pradesh, Jharkhand and Odisha facing financial hardship were offered Rs 20,000 to Rs 30,000 for each egg-donation cycle and brought to Hyderabad, police said.

Helicopter operators to suspend Char Dham services from Nov 2 over co-pilot rule

DEHRADUN (AGENCY)



Helicopter operators have threatened to suspend Char Dham charter services from Monday in protest against the Uttarakhand Civil Aviation Development Authority's (UCADA) co-pilot rule, a move likely to disrupt the final leg of the pilgrimage before the shrines close for winter. In a letter written to the UCADA on Sunday, the operators said they would stop the services on Monday unless the order is withdrawn.

On Saturday, the UCADA announced that a co-pilot will be mandatory for all choppers flying on the Char Dham yatra route. The decision was made following a chopper crash near Joshimath in Chamoli district on October 30, in which six people died.

The operators expressed their inability to accept the mandatory twin-pilot requirement "in its present form" and raised serious concerns and reservations regarding the mandatory requirement for charter services. They said mandating twin-pilot operations "without adequate consultation with the operators and assessment of its commercial and operational implications.

Darbar Move : Winter capital admin resumes functioning from Jammu as civil secretariat reopens

JAMMU (AGENCY)



Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah receives a Guard of Honour from UT's Police contingent as government offices reopened following the annual Darbar Move, at the Civil Secretariat in Jammu, Monday, November 2, 2026. PTI The administration of Jammu and Kashmir resumed functioning from the winter capital, Jammu, on Monday, with the Civil Secretariat and other government offices, including the Lok Bhawan, reopening here as part of the 154-year-old biannual Darbar Move practice, officials said. Chief Minister Omar Abdullah was accorded a ceremonial guard of honour upon his arrival at the Civil Secretariat, the seat of the Union Territory government, and took the salute as the offices resumed functioning, two days after closing in the summer capital Srinagar. Abdullah conducted a whirlwind tour of various offices at the Secretariat and interacted with officials. The reopening marks the resumption of the biannual administrative arrangement under which the government shifts its offices between Jammu and Srinagar, officials said. Security arrangements have been strengthened in Jammu, with police and paramilitary personnel deployed in key areas, particularly around the Secretariat. Security has also been stepped up along important roads and around vital installations, they said.

The Civil Secretariat, which houses the offices of the Chief Minister, ministers, chief secretary and other senior government functionaries, underwent renovation and facelift ahead of the reopening. Government buildings and residential accommodation for employees were also renovated. Introduced by the Dogra rulers in 1872, the Darbar Move was aimed at allowing the administration to escape the harsh winter conditions of the Kashmir Valley by shifting its base to Jammu during the colder months.

'Main kehra pandit han': Sukhbir Badal remains tight-lipped on SAD-BJP alliance talks

CHANDIGARH (AGENCY)



Refusing to give a timeline for a possible alliance between the Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD) and the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), SAD president Sukhbir Singh Badal said, "Main kaun sa Pandit hoon. You will get to know in a few days." Speculation about a possible alliance between the two parties gained momentum after BJP leaders were seen posing with Sukhbir Badal at the wedding reception of BJP national vice-president Manpreet Singh Badal's daughter in Chandigarh. The photographs went viral on social media, triggering fresh discussions about a possible reunion of the former allies.

However, differing statements by senior BJP leaders have reportedly added to the uncertainty within the SAD camp. While Union Home Minister Amit Shah has said the NDA will form the next government in Punjab, BJP state president Kewal Singh Dhillon has maintained that the party will contest all 117 Assembly seats on its own.

The SAD was part of the NDA before it snapped ties with the BJP in 2020 over the now-repealed farm laws during the farmers' agitation. Badal, who was addressing the media, was sharply critical of the Congress and the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP), holding both responsible for the alleged misgovernance in Punjab. He, however, made no mention of the BJP.

His remarks came after Harmeet Singh Kadian, president of the Bharti Kisan Union (Kadian), along with the union's district presidents, extended support to the SAD for the coming elections. Reacting to the exit of AAP MLAs Harmeet Singh Pathanmajra and Chetan Singh Jouramajra, along with former IPS officer and MLA Kunwar Vijay Pratap Singh, and their move towards the BJP, Badal claimed that several more leaders would leave the ruling party in the coming days. He also predicted that Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann would lose the upcoming Assembly election from Dhuri. Badal said his visits to different areas had shown that people were not merely disillusioned with the Mann-led government but had developed strong resentment against the Chief Minister and his leadership.

Toddler raped, strangled to death by neighbour in UP's Hamirpur

HAMIRPUR (AGENCY)



A three-year-old girl was allegedly raped and strangled to death after being lured away by a neighbour here, with angry villagers refusing to allow the body to be taken away and pelting stones at police vehicles, officials said on Monday. According to police, the toddler was playing outside her home when the 30-year-old neighbour allegedly lured her into a nearby field, where he raped her before strangling her to death with her own trousers. Later, when the family began searching for the girl, the accused allegedly pretended to assist them in the search. The girl's body was discovered in the field around 8 pm. Following the discovery, the family turned in the accused to the police.

Circle Officer (Rath) Rajkumar Pandey said while the police were taking the accused for questioning, he attempted to escape by firing at officers using a country-made pistol that he had concealed on his person. In the ensuing retaliatory fire, the accused was shot in the leg. He is currently undergoing treatment at the district hospital. When police attempted to take away the girl's body, angry villagers allegedly created a commotion and pelted stones at police vehicles, officials said.

Six vehicles including those belonging to the circle officer and the station house officers of Rath and Binwar police stations were damaged, they said. custody, officials said, adding that the body has been sent for post-mortem. A case has been registered against the accused under relevant provisions of Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita and the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act.

Agitators clash with security forces in Manipur's Kangpokpi after recovery of missing youths' bodies

IMPHAL (AGENCY)



Tension remains high in the district and additional security forces have been deployed on Monday morning," a district official said

Protesters clashed with security forces in Manipur's Kangpokpi district after mutilated bodies of two missing youths were found in adjoining Senapati, prompting the law enforcers to fire tear gas shells and baton-charge the agitators to disperse them, police said on Monday. Protests erupted in several parts of Kangpokpi district on Sunday night, as agitators burned tyres on many roads and blocked several stretches with logs of wood and boulders. Police have since managed to clear some of the roads.

Agitators also threw stones at security forces, prompting the law enforcers to fire tear gas shells and baton-charge the protesters to disperse them. A protester was injured on his head after being allegedly hit by a tear gas shell, and his condition is stable, they said. "Tension remains high in the district and additional security forces have been deployed on Monday morning," a district official said.

The mutilated bodies of two youths, who recently went missing, were found in a hilly stretch in Senapati district on Sunday morning, officials said. The bodies were found stuffed in gunny bags in a banana farm during an operation to trace the two youths, identified as T Chongloi (21) and Paoginlal Hangsing (20), who went missing from Taphou Kuki village on October 29, they said. Deputy Chief Ministers Nemcha Kipgen and Losii Dikho condemned the killings. In a statement, Kipgen said, "What began with hopes of safe return ended in tragedy." She demanded that "heinous crimes be thoroughly investigated", and the culprits be brought to justice. Dikho, in another statement, said, "Such senseless acts of violence and killing must be condemned unequivocally. The ongoing violence in our state is unacceptable. No grievances or disagreements can ever justify taking a human life." Meanwhile, Naga Peoples' Organisation has questioned the circumstances surrounding the recovery of the bodies in Senapati district. NPO president Kuba Peter told reporters, "We condemn any killing, but we also equally condemn any manipulation of evidence or deliberate attempt to inflame communal tensions. We demand an impartial, transparent and independent investigation to establish the truth, ensure accountability and prevent further communal tensions." Kangpokpi-based Committee on Tribal Unity (COTU) has demanded the resignation of Dikho over the incident. It also sought the transfer of Taphou Kuki Village from the jurisdiction of Senapati superintendent of police to the Kangpokpi SP. The committee said the bodies would not be taken to the village for final rites till the perpetrators were arrested.

Odisha govt evacuates people from vulnerable areas as Murasu intensifies into severe cyclonic storm

BHUBANESWAR (AGENCY)



The Odisha government on Monday expedited the evacuation of people from vulnerable areas after Murasu intensified into a severe cyclonic storm in the Bay of Bengal, officials said. Southern Odisha is likely to receive heavy rainfall under the impact of the storm, which is expected to make landfall in adjoining Andhra Pradesh. The India Meteorological Department (IMD), in its latest bulletin, said that severe cyclonic storm Murasu was moving at a speed of 25 kmph and lay centred around 200 km east-northeast of Chennai (Tamil Nadu), 210 km east-southeast of Nellore (Andhra Pradesh), 270 km south-southeast of Machilipatnam (Andhra Pradesh), 220 km east-southeast of Kavali (Andhra Pradesh), and 260 km southeast of Ongole (Andhra Pradesh).

"It is very likely to move northwestwards and cross the southern Andhra Pradesh coast as a severe cyclonic storm with wind speed of 100-110 kmph gusting to 120 kmph between Nellore and Narsapur close to Ongole between 11.30 pm on Monday and 4 am on Tuesday," it added. IMD sources said that several areas in Odisha have started experiencing light rainfall under the influence of the system and the intensity of the precipitation is likely to increase gradually. Following the warning, the state has prioritised evacuation from vulnerable areas and strengthened emergency response mechanisms, officials said. Odisha's Disaster Management Minister Suresh Pujari said though the storm is likely to make landfall along the Andhra Pradesh coast, it would impact several parts of Odisha, particularly the southern districts of Ganjam, Gajapati, Rayagada, Koraput and Malkangiri. He said all the district collectors have been put on alert and the southern districts on high alert.

Pujara backs Kohli over Rohit for New Zealand ODIs, predicts 2-2 series result

AUCKLAND (AGENCY)



Former India batter Cheteshwar Pujara believes Virat Kohli has a slightly better chance than Rohit Sharma of scoring a century in the upcoming New Zealand ODI series starting from November 4. He explained that Kohli's No. 3 position allows him to play an anchor role, while Rohit's aggressive powerplay responsibilities could change in New Zealand's conditions, potentially creating opportunities for both batters. "The way Rohit bats, he has a role of providing good starts in the powerplay. In New Zealand, maybe that role changes, so he could go for a century. But for Virat, the chances are slightly higher because he bats at number three. His game is more about playing the anchor role. So, for a batsman coming in at number three, scoring a century in the ODI format becomes a bit easier. The opener's role is also defined, but in New Zealand conditions, that changes a bit. So, I feel Virat has more chances of scoring a hundred in New Zealand than Rohit," Pujara said on JioHotstar.

In New Zealand, maybe that role changes, so he could go for a century. But for Virat, the chances are slightly higher because he bats at number three

Both Indian batting stalwarts head into the series in impressive form following their recent performances against the West Indies at home. Rohit Sharma amassed 225 runs in three innings at an average of 75.00 and a strike rate of over 115, registering a century and a half-century, with a highest score of 101. Virat Kohli, meanwhile, accumulated 168 runs across three innings, highlighted by a magnificent unbeaten 139 off just 88 deliveries in the opening match while chasing a target of 296. Pujara also predicted a 2-2 result in the upcoming India-New Zealand ODI series, citing changes in India's squad across the five matches as a potential advantage for the visitors.

While backing India to perform well in the first three ODIs, he expects the final two encounters to be more challenging. Pujara also suggested that rain could wash out one match in New Zealand. "Two-all. In the first three matches, one team is playing, and then, in the last two matches, another Indian team is going to play. So, I think New Zealand have a slight advantage because you aren't playing the same team in all five matches. I'm still backing the Indian team in the first three matches, as I feel they will do well. The last two matches could be a bit of a challenge, but it will be a hard-fought series. And it rains in New Zealand, so probably one match will be a washout," he added.

Kimi Antonelli makes F1 history, becomes youngest-ever World Champion

MEXICO (AGENCY)



Kimi Antonelli made Formula 1 history by becoming the youngest-ever World Champion after securing third place at the 2026 Mexico City Grand Prix, with the result enough to seal the title for the Mercedes driver. Max Verstappen claimed race victory, finishing ahead of Lewis Hamilton. The 20-year-old Italian headed into Sunday's 71-lap race at the Autódromo Hermanos Rodríguez needing only a ninth-place finish to secure his maiden F1 world title, irrespective of how his championship rivals Hamilton and Mercedes teammate George Russell performed, as per the Formula 1 website.

Starting fourth on the grid, Antonelli delivered a composed drive to finish third despite a race interrupted by multiple incidents. The Italian had to navigate a mid-race red flag following a heavy crash involving Valtteri Bottas, as well as a late Safety Car period triggered by an accident involving Arvid Lindblad. Meanwhile, Verstappen secured his third victory of the season after holding off a late challenge from Hamilton. Starting fifth, the Red Bull driver capitalised on an intense battle between the Ferrari drivers to move into contention for the lead. Verstappen had initially climbed to second on the opening lap before taking the lead after Charles Leclerc received a time penalty for cutting the track while battling polesitter Hamilton.

The Dutchman maintained his advantage through the standing restart and again held firm when the Safety Car was withdrawn with eight laps remaining, resisting Hamilton's persistent pressure to take the chequered flag.

Briefs News

Chapman, Ravindra ruled out of India ODIs, Nicholls, Seifert among 4 called in by NZ

AUCKLAND (AGENCY) Senior batters Mark Chapman and Rachin Ravindra have been ruled out of the five-match ODI series against India starting on Wednesday as they have failed to recuperate from their respective injuries, New Zealand Cricket said on Monday. Chapman is undergoing rehabilitation for his hamstring injury while Ravindra is yet to recover from his shoulder niggle. "A recent MRI showed Chapman's left hamstring requires another two weeks of rehabilitation before he is fully fit to return to the field, whilst Ravindra's right shoulder requires more recovery time before he's able to field at full capacity," NZC said in a statement. Tim Seifert, who was selected for the fourth and fifth ODIs, will now be in the squad for the full series, while Henry Nicholls will come in for the first three games. Dean Foxcroft has been pencilled in for the fourth and fifth match of the series. Matt Henry assembles with the squad today and will be assessed on his readiness to play, while Matt Fisher, who was selected for the fourth and fifth ODI, will remain with the squad for the full series as an additional bowling option. New Zealand head coach Rob Walter said it was disappointing that Chapman and Ravindra have been ruled out. "I caught up with Mark last week and although he's disappointed he's working hard to get back on the field. With Rachin, his shoulder hasn't quite recovered to a position where he could field comfortably in white-ball cricket, so with the Test series later this month we don't want to take any undue risks," Walter said.

Pakistan fined for slow over-rate in Lahore final after clinching ODI Tri-Series title

LAHORE (AGENCY) Pakistan have been fined five per cent of their match fee for maintaining a slow over-rate during the final of the ODI Tri-Series against Sri Lanka in Lahore on Saturday. The hosts were found to be one over short of the required rate after time allowances were taken into consideration by Jeff Crowe of the Emirates ICC Elite Panel of Match Referees, as per the ICC website. The offence falls under Article 2.22 of the ICC Code of Conduct for Players and Player Support Personnel, which deals with minimum over-rate violations. Under the provision, players are fined five per cent of their match fee for every over their team falls short within the allotted time. On-field umpires Ahsan Raza and Wayne Knights, third umpire Sharfuddoula Ibne Shahid and fourth umpire Rashid Riaz levelled the charge against Pakistan. Pakistan captain Shaheen Shah Afridi pleaded guilty to the offence and accepted the proposed sanction, thereby avoiding a formal hearing. Despite the penalty, Pakistan had plenty to celebrate as they chased down Sri Lanka's target of 326 runs, registering a thrilling three-wicket victory with nine balls to spare to clinch the tri-series title. Pakistan's batting unit delivered under pressure in front of their home crowd in Lahore, with experienced opener Fakhar Zaman leading the charge. The left-handed batter smashed his 12th ODI century, scoring a blistering 127 off 99 deliveries, including 11 fours and six sixes, to play a pivotal role in Pakistan's successful chase. The victory provided Pakistan with a significant confidence boost as they continue their preparations for next year's ICC Men's Cricket World Cup.

India A trail by 46 runs after New Zealand A take 78-run first-innings lead on Day 3

CHRISTCHURCH (AGENCY) India A ended Day 3 of the second unofficial Test against New Zealand A at 32/0 in their second innings, trailing by 46 runs after the hosts were bowled out for 424 at Hagley Oval in Christchurch on Monday. Matthew Boyle's century and Dean Foxcroft's 93 helped New Zealand A secure a 78-run first-innings lead despite a five-wicket haul from Mukesh Kumar. Resuming their innings to build a substantial total, New Zealand A were guided by Boyle, who produced an impressive 110 off 152 deliveries. Foxcroft provided valuable support with 93, narrowly missing out on a century as the hosts strengthened their position. The middle and lower order also made useful contributions, with Mitchell Hay scoring 31, Kristian Clarke adding 41 and Fraser Sheat contributing 40. For India A, Mukesh Kumar led the bowling attack with figures of 5/87, while Mohammed Siraj claimed four wickets for 118 runs. Washington Sundar picked up the remaining wicket as the hosts were eventually bowled out for 424. In their second innings, India A openers Yashasvi Jaiswal and Sai Sudharsan negotiated 11 overs without losing a wicket. Jaiswal remained unbeaten on 20, while Sudharsan was batting on 11 as the visitors reached 32/0 at stumps.

'You guys have set the tone for rest of the tour': Gambhir to T20 team

HAMILTON(AGENCY)



India head coach Gautam Gambhir says the Shreyas Iyer-led T20 team has set the tone for the upcoming ODI and Test assignments in the ongoing tour of New Zealand by triumphing in the shortest format despite a lack of practice leading up to the rubber.

India defeated the hosts 3-2 in the T20 series despite landing here just a couple of days before the lung-opener and having very little time to rest and recover in between games held at four different venues. "You can be extremely proud of the effort that you guys have given in this series. Winning the series especially when you got one day to prepare and playing against a quality team like New Zealand in their own backyard... you can be extremely proud and go back with your head held high.

Afghanistan reach all-time high of sixth in ICC Men's ODI Team Rankings, surpass Sri Lanka

SHARJAH (AGENCY)



Afghanistan have reached a historic milestone by climbing to sixth place in the ICC Men's ODI Team Rankings, overtaking Sri Lanka to achieve their highest-ever position in the format. Since making their ODI debut in 2009, Afghanistan have enjoyed a remarkable rise in international cricket, establishing themselves as a competitive force across formats, as per the ICC website. Their notable achievements include historic victories over Pakistan and Sri Lanka at the 2023 ICC Men's Cricket World Cup and a maiden semi-final appearance at the 2024 ICC Men's T20 World Cup. Afghanistan have won 96 of their 191 ODI matches, boasting an impressive win-loss ratio of 1.09, reflecting their steady progress in the 50-over format. Having already moved ahead of established cricketing nations such as Bangladesh, England and the West Indies, Afghanistan have now surpassed Sri Lanka to break into the top six of the ODI rankings for the first time.

Their latest rise has been fuelled by a series of impressive performances, including a 4-0 away series victory over Ireland and an unbeaten campaign in the recently concluded tri-series involving Zimbabwe and Bangladesh.

The Afghans have also carried their winning momentum into the shortest format, completing a 3-0 T20I series whitewash against Zimbabwe. Afghanistan completed a 3-0 clean sweep over Zimbabwe in the three-match T20I series after securing a convincing seven-wicket victory in the third and final match in Sharjah on Sunday.

Siraj gets 4, Mukesh takes 5 but India A concede 1st innings lead

CHRISTCHURCH (AGENCY)



Pacer Mohammed Siraj warmed up for the upcoming two-Test series with four wickets in 35 overs for India A but New Zealand A's lower order showed a lot of grit to earn a 78-run first innings lead on the penultimate day of the second unofficial 'Test' here. Replying to India A's first innings score of 346, New Zealand A, who were reduced to 338 for 8, finished their first innings at 424. The last two wickets yielded 86 runs to provide the hosts a handy lead.

Speedster Siraj took 4/118 in 35 overs while seamer Mukesh Kumar grabbed 5 for 87 in 29 overs to share the bulk of the spoils. At stumps, India A reached 32 for no loss in their second innings with Yashasvi Jaiswal (20 batting) and Sai Sudharsan (11 batting) negotiating the remaining 11 overs of the day safely. For the Indian senior team support staff, Siraj adding miles to his legs at a venue where the team will play the second Test against New Zealand is certainly a big positive. The Test series against the Black Caps begins on November 19. Bowling 35 overs is the kind of workout that head coach Gautam Gambhir and Morne Morkel would be pleased with before Siraj links up with the ODI squad at the end of this game.

He looked sharp even with the old ball and was incisive with the new one. His seam bowling partner Mukesh was good with both the first and second new ball but not so much when the Kookaburra became semi-new and subsequently old. It was the second over of the day and overnight centurion Matthew Boyle (110, 152 balls) got one that shaped away after pitching and Devdutt Padikkal dived full stretch to his left to snap it up. This was after adding 208 runs for the fourth wicket with Dean Foxcroft (93, 226 balls), who, on Monday, earned a call-up to national ODI squad for last two games against India.

Foxcroft's near six-hour vigil ended after India got the second new ball. Siraj got this third breakthrough with a sharp in-cutter that found the batter plumb in-front of the stumps. From 270 for 4, New Zealand A collapsed to 291 for 7 at tea with Mukesh once again showing his prowess with the new ball. An outswinger forced Mitch Hay (31) to nick one to Dhruv Jurel behind the stumps.

Siraj then got Brett Randell (5) with a beauty. He bowled a few away going deliveries followed by an in-cutter that went above the stumps beating him completely. The wily Siraj then bowled another in-cutter but pitched it further up. The ball cut back late as Randell saw his off-stump pegged back. However, in the post tea session, Kristian Clarke (41), Fraser Sheat (40), Jayden Lennox (32) and Jarrod McKay (33) played their part as New Zealand A got the lead. Akash Deep (0/59 in 23 overs) was ineffective while Mukesh was quite playable once the Kookaburra's shine wore off .

Arsenal end Anfield wait in gameweek 9, Spurs fire 34 shots



LONDON (AGENCY)

Gameweek 9 of the 2026/27 Premier League season delivered a long-awaited win and a string of historic firsts. Arsenal won at Anfield for the first time since 2012 to move to 24 points, Brighton beat Manchester City away from home for the first time, and Cole Palmer reached 50 Premier League goals for Chelsea, keeping Manchester United winless across all competitions for nine games. Here are some of the key numbers and stories from the ninth round of fixtures. Arsenal beat Liverpool 1-0 to win at Anfield for the first time in any competition since September 2012, ending a run of 16 visits without a victory. Their 24 points from nine games are the most by any team at this stage of a Premier League season since the Gunners themselves in 2022/23. Under Mikel Arteta, Arsenal have won 81.1 per cent of the league games in which they have scored first, a rate bettered only by Sir Alex Ferguson, Pep Guardiola and José Mourinho among managers whose sides have opened the scoring 100 or more times.

Kai Havertz's winner made him the highest-scoring German player in Premier League history with 46 goals, moving past Ilkay Gundogan (45). Both of his Premier League goals against Liverpool have put his side 1-0 up at Anfield, for Chelsea in August 2021 and for Arsenal last weekend. Brighton & Hove Albion beat Manchester City 1-0 at the Etihad Stadium, their first away win against City in any competition at the 18th attempt. City had 21 shots but failed to score in a home league game for the first time in 23 matches. Brighton have won five of their last six league games, all without conceding, and their six clean sheets are the most of any side this season. Tottenham Hotspur beat Crystal Palace 2-0 to win three successive Premier League games for the first time since February 2025. Spurs had 34 shots to Palace's two, their most in a Premier League game since February 2016. Only Virgil van Dijk (6) has scored more Premier League goals among centre backs since the start of last season than Jan Paul van Hecke (5). Cole Palmer scored his 50th Premier League goal for Chelsea in a 2-0 win over Manchester United. He got there in his 105th appearance, and only Jimmy Floyd Hasselbaink (84) and Diego Costa (85) reached the milestone faster for the Blues. United are winless in nine games in all competitions (D3 L6), and last went longer without a win in September 1984. Bournemouth beat Leeds United 2-0 to win three successive Premier League games without conceding for the first time. Evanilson has scored in four straight league games, his longest such run in the competition. He is also the first Brazilian to score in the Premier League on Halloween since Raphinha in 2021. Brentford beat Nottingham Forest 2-0 in their 100th Premier League home game, and have scored first in eight of their last nine league games.



Nora Fatehi gets fresh court summons in Sukesh Chandrasekhar's Rs 200-crore extortion case



A Delhi court has once again summoned actress Nora Fatehi as a witness for November 6 in the Rs 200-crore extortion case involving alleged conman Sukesh Chandrasekhar. Additional Sessions Judge Gagandeep Singh issued fresh summons to the actress, expressing displeasure over her absence. During the proceedings, Nora Fatehi's counsel sought an exemption from her personal appearance for Monday. "This cannot be taken lightly... As a witness, you should have appeared in court; your conduct is not proper, don't take the court for granted...," the judge said. The Delhi Police informed the court that they had received no confirmation regarding Nora Fatehi's attendance. They stated that the notice was served to her via email and WhatsApp on October 22, and phone calls were also made, but there was no response from her end. On October 16, the court said, "Issue summons to Nora Fatehi alias Naura Fatehi (Listed Witness or LW 3 in 3rd Supplementary chargesheet for the said date (of November 2)." Individual witnesses are initially numbered as LWs and become prosecution witnesses (PWs) after appearing in court. The case against Chandrasekhar is being investigated by the Delhi Police Special Cell. Earlier, a court had framed charges against Chandrasekhar, his wife Leena Paulose, and others under Indian Penal Code (IPC) sections 170 (personating a public servant), 384 (punishment for extortion), and 386 (extortion by putting a person in fear of death or grievous hurt). Charges were also framed under the provisions of MCOCA, or the Maharashtra Control of Organised Crime Act, 1999 a law enacted to combat organised crime syndicates and terrorism. The Act equips authorities with special powers to track, intercept, and penalise gang-related criminal activities that normal penal codes fail to deter. The matter is presently at the stage of the prosecution submitting its evidence. The police chargesheet had earlier mentioned recording the statements of several people, including Bollywood actresses Jacqueline Fernandez and Fatehi. Police allege that Chandrasekhar and his associates posed as government officials and took money from Fortis Healthcare promoter Shivinder Mohan Singh's wife, Aditi Singh. He was in jail in a money laundering case. **(AGENCY)**

Aishwarya Rai Bachchan at 53: Five recent looks that celebrate her timeless elegance

As the actress turns 53, we celebrate her timeless elegance and revisit some of her most striking looks at recent public appearances

Over the years, several Bollywood actresses, including Aishwarya Rai Bachchan, have faced relentless online trolling, with criticism often targeting their post-pregnancy appearances and ageing. Yet, Aishwarya has continued to command attention with her poise, confidence and inimitable sense of style. As the actress turns 53, we celebrate her timeless elegance and revisit some of her most striking looks at recent public appearances. Aishwarya Rai Bachchan brought her signature glamour to the runway at the L'Oréal Paris Le Défilé 2026 show during Paris Fashion Week on September 28. The actress wore a custom black velvet corset fishtail gown, paired with a dramatic, floor-sweeping cape embellished with crystals and pearls, by Syrian luxury label Yara Shoemaker. A diamond-encrusted, crown-like tiara added a regal touch to the ensemble. She completed the look with a striking deep burgundy-red hair colour and her signature red lipstick. Aishwarya Rai Bachchan has had several memorable moments at the Cannes Film Festival, from her debut appearance in a yellow sari paired with gold jewellery at the Devdas premiere in 2002 to the powder-blue Michael Cinco gown she wore in 2017. This year, the actress made another striking appearance in a silk gown embellished with pearls, paired with a dramatic cape by Lebanese couturier Tony Ward Couture. **(AGENCY)**



Mumbai mayor calls Dia Mirza 'anti Hindutva', defends removal of her Diwali campaign video



Mumbai Mayor Ritu Tawde on Monday defended the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation's decision to remove a video featuring actor Dia Mirza from its pollution-free Diwali campaign. She said Hindus did not need the actress to teach them how to celebrate the festival. Addressing a press conference at the civic headquarters, Tawde accused Mirza of consistently opposing Hindutva and alleged that she had spoken against the Narmada project in Gujarat, the Uniform Civil Code (UCC) and Prime Minister Narendra Modi. "We do not need Dia Mirza to teach how Hindus should celebrate Diwali. We know how to celebrate our Diwali. You (Mirza) are pursuing your own agenda, a selective agenda, and your overall stance is becoming very clear. It shows that you are against Hindutva. That is why we have strongly opposed the video," Tawde said. "If we look at Dia Mirza's entire profile, we can see that she has opposed the Narmada project and the Uniform Civil Code.

She has also spoken against environmental issues that we were working on and opposed statements made by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. We have consistently seen her opposition directed against Hindutva and those who work for it," the mayor further claimed. Tawde also reiterated that the BMC should not feature anyone in its campaigns without approval from the mayor's office. The BJP leader said Mirza was free to express her views through her personal social media accounts. Mirza's video, in which she urged people to avoid noise and air pollution during Diwali, was removed on Sunday after Mumbai BJP chief Ameet Satam objected to it in a post on X, tagging the civic body's official account. "We don't need lessons on how to celebrate #Diwali from @deespeak. Our traditions are deeply rooted in our culture," the BJP MLA wrote. However, campaign videos featuring actors Madhuri Dixit and Nishigandha Wad, as well as cricketer Ajinkya Rahane, continue to be available on the BMC's X and Instagram pages. **(AGENCY)**

'Rise and Fall' Season 2: Shezad Poonawalla becomes first contestant to get 'ticket to finale'



Political commentator Shehzad Poonawalla has emerged as the first contestant to win 'ticket to finale' on Rise and Fall Season 2. He also became the first Ruler to hold the title of Ultimate Ruler twice on the Prime Video reality show. The 'ticket to finale' challenge saw Shehzad face off against Karan Patel. While Karan had Jashwanth Bopanna helping him, Shehzad was supported by Rishabh Jaiswal.

Karan and Jashwanth completed the challenge in 35 minutes and 38 seconds, while Shehzad and Rishabh emerged victorious with an impressive time of 23 minutes and 46 seconds. In a twist, the Workers could see the Rulers, but the Rulers remained unaware of what was unfolding around them. With the Fall Ka Farmaan back, Shehzad was entrusted with the power to decide the fate of the Rulers, with not one but two Rulers set to lose their place in the Penthouse. The process unfolded in three stages, beginning with Shehzad getting the power to save one Ruler from the impending fall. In a surprising move, he chose Gautam Gulati over Swara Bhasker and Karan. Defending his decision, Shehzad said he had made a mistake earlier by saving Irina Rudakova and allowing Gautam to be sent to the Basement. Gautam was then asked to rank the remaining Rulers based on the strength of their opinions and decisions in the game. **(AGENCY)**

'Dhoom Machao Dhoom' actor Anuj Thakur dies at 33 after a seizure



Actor Anuj Thakur, who has featured in television shows such as 'Dhoom Machao Dhoom', 'Bandhan Saat Janmon Ka' and 'Mahisagar', among others, died after suffering a seizure during sleep. Rupesh Sonar, the casting director and his friend, shared the news with a post on Instagram handle on Saturday and said the late actor was like his brother. "Still can't believe that you are no longer with us. You were not just a friend but like a little brother to me. We had so many projects planned together, and I still remember witnessing your struggles during your initial days and seeing your journey," read the caption. "Life is truly unpredictable. It is heartbreaking to accept that you are gone so soon. This news feels unreal. You will always be remembered, brother. Rest in peace," he added. Sonar detailed the incident in an interview with The Times of India and said he got to know the actor in 2008. The director said he got the news on Saturday after meeting the actor's mother and brother. Thakur followed a routine and would get up at 4.30 every morning; however, on Tuesday, his alarm kept ringing until his mother entered the room, only to find him dead.

"I was shocked to hear that he had gone to sleep at night and never woke up. I met his family, including his mother and brother, on Saturday. That's when I was told that Anuj had suffered a seizure and passed away," he said. "Anuj was an early riser. He woke up early every day and followed his routine, which included fitness and jogging. However, that morning, he didn't get up. His alarm went off at 4.30 am, and when his mother went to his room to wake him, she found that he had died," he added. **(AGENCY)**

'Sense and Sensibility' review, Georgia Oakley gives Jane Austen's timeless romance an earthy makeover

Jane Austen classics have been adapted for the screen an ample number of times. Hence, revisiting an Austen novel is never an easy proposition, particularly when the story has already received an adaptation as beloved as Ang Lee's 1995 film Sense and Sensibility. Director Georgia Oakley, however, approaches the familiar tale with a distinct sensibility of her own, opting for a more introspective, earthy and emotionally restrained interpretation. Starring Daisy Edgar-Jones and Esmé Creed-Miles as the Dashwood sisters, the new adaptation is a thoughtful examination of sisterhood and social expectations. The story begins with a tragedy for the Dashwood women. Following the death of the patriarch of the family, Mrs Dashwood (Caitríona Balfe) and her three daughters, Elinor, Marianne and Margaret, lose their comfortable family home to John Dashwood (Tom Brooke), their late father's son from his first marriage. With the family estate passing to the male heir, the women are left financially vulnerable and forced to move to a modest cottage in Devon. Their predicament reflects the rigid inheritance laws and social conventions of the period, where a woman's financial security often depended on making a suitable marriage. It is against this backdrop that the contrasting personalities of Elinor and Marianne come into focus. The elder sister is practical, composed and reluctant to reveal the depth of her emotions. Marianne, meanwhile, is impulsive, outspoken and unapologetically romantic. Their differing approaches to love form the emotional foundation of the film, with Oakley finding an engaging balance between the sisters' individual journeys and their deep affection for each other. **(AGENCY)**



Lawrence Bishnoi's uncle asks Salman Khan to apologise at Mukam temple, assures safety



On the 542nd foundation day of Bishnoi Samaj, Ramesh Bishnoi, uncle of jailed gangster Lawrence Bishnoi, today again appealed to Bollywood actor Salman Khan to apologise at the Bishnoi community's Mukti Dham Mukam temple in Bikaner for the killing of two blackbucks, assuring him complete safety if he came to pay obeisance. Ramesh Bishnoi, younger brother of Lawrence's father, made it clear that he did not endorse violence in any form and had been telling Lawrence and others to shun it. "I do not support any killing or attack on Salman or anyone associated with him by the Lawrence group," he said. "I am just saying that anger remains in the community and it should be resolved." Talking to The Tribune over the phone, he said neither his nephew nor anyone else in the community had personal enmity with the actor, and the matter would have been settled long ago had Salman sought forgiveness at the temple. "There was anger among Bishnois and it could have been addressed long ago," he said. Reacting to fears expressed by Salman's father, Salim Khan, that the actor could be harmed if he went to the temple, Ramesh Bishnoi rejected the apprehension and said he personally guaranteed Salman's security. "The episode should end. An apology is enough. This has gone on too long," he said. The Bishnoi community follows 29 tenets laid down by Guru Jambheshwar in the 15th century, which place great emphasis on protecting trees and wildlife. Bishnoi villages are concentrated in Rajasthan, particularly in Bikaner, Jodhpur, Nagaur and Barmer districts, and the community is also settled in Haryana's Hisar, Fatehabad and Sirsa districts and in Punjab's Abohar-Fazilka belt. Salman Khan was accused of killing two blackbucks, an animal revered by the Bishnois, in Kankani village near Jodhpur in October 1998 during the shooting of a film. **(AGENCY)**

