

GST Bachat Utsav

FARM EQUIPMENTS NOW MORE AFFORDABLE FOR KISAN

FESTIVAL OF SAVINGS, SEASON OF JOY

COMBINE HARVESTER THRESHER CHEAPER BY UPTO ₹1.25 LAKH

TRACTOR CHEAPER BY NEARLY ₹40,000

PM Narendra Modi

CBC 15502/13/0028/2526

Ladakh talks come a cropper

MOHIT KANDHARI ■ Jammu

Efforts made by the Union Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) to kick-start dialogue in Ladakh, in the wake of violence on September 24, were stalled by representatives of the Leh Apex Body (LAB).

On Monday, the organisation announced its decision to stay away from talks till the time normalcy is fully restored in the region. LAB leaders also demanded judicial enquiry into the death of four people killed in the violence.

A high-powered committee of the MHA had invited a Ladakh MP, along with representatives of the LAB and the Kargil Democratic Alliance (KDA) to 'break the ice' in New Delhi on September 30.

A three-member delegation of the KDA left for New Delhi on Monday to attend the meeting, but representatives of LAB stayed back in Leh to attend the last rites of those killed in the protests.

LAB Chairman Chupstan Chhewang made the announcement shortly after the fourth victim of the violence — a former soldier — was cremated in Leh.

"We have unanimously agreed that the situation that is prevailing in Ladakh, keeping that in view, as long as peace is not restored and



Leh Apex Body co-chairman Chering Dorjy addressing a press conference in Leh on Monday PTI

a conducive atmosphere is not created, we will not participate in any talks," said Chhewang, a former two-time MP.

"We will urge the Home Ministry, UT administration to take steps to address the atmosphere of fear, grief and anger that is there," he said.

Curfew was relaxed for two hours at 4 pm in the region. During the relaxation, no untoward incident was reported.

Meanwhile, the MHA said

the Union Government has always been open to dialogues on Ladakh matters with the LAB and KDA at any time. "We would continue to welcome the discussion with ABL and KDA through the HPC on Ladakh or any such platform," the MHA said.

Earlier, the Union Government had fixed October 6 to hold parleys with representatives of the LAB and KDA in New Delhi over the issue of granting Statehood and extending the

sixth schedule status to the region.

Four people were killed and scores of others were injured in clashes between protesters and security personnel, while over 50 people were taken into custody for their alleged involvement in rioting on September 24. Activist Sonam Wangchuk, the main face of the agitation, was also detained under the draconian NSA and later shifted to a Jodhpur jail in Rajasthan.

India-Bhutan rail link soon

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ New Delhi

THE KOKRAJHAR-GELEPHU LINK IS EXPECTED OPENING MASSIVE LOGISTICAL AND TRADE BENEFITS

70 km of new track, Bhutan gains access to 1,50,000 km of India's railway network. This demonstrates the significant advantage of the network effect," Vaishnav added.

The total length of the new rail lines is approximately 90 km. Of this, 89 km will be new railway infrastructure constructed specifically for this initiative.

The Banarhat-Samtse line, spanning 16 km, will directly link West Bengal to Bhutan's Samtse region.

India will fully finance the construction of these two railway lines, making this not just an infrastructure project but also a powerful gesture of friendship and trust.

Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri emphasized the deep-rooted nature of India-Bhutan ties, stating, "India and Bhutan share a relationship of exceptional trust, mutual respect and understanding."

In a historic move aimed at deepening strategic and economic cooperation, India has announced plans to connect Bhutan by rail for the first time. The landmark project will link the Bhutanese cities of Gelephu and Samtse with India's railway network, at a total outlay of ₹4,033 crore.

Union Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnav and Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri made the announcement, highlighting the significance of this connectivity for both countries. "The India-Bhutan Railway Project aims to connect two important Bhutanese cities — Gelephu, which is being developed as a mindfulness city, and Samtse, an industrial hub," said Vaishnav. These new rail lines will connect to India at Kokrajhar in Assam and Banbarhat in West Bengal, respectively.

The Kokrajhar-Gelephu link will connect Bhutan with Bongaigaon, a major industrial area in India, opening massive logistical and trade benefits. "By constructing approximately

PM Modi bats on front foot: Yadav

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ New Delhi

Hailing Prime Minister (PM) Narendra Modi's congratulatory note, cricket captain Suryakumar Yadav on Monday said PM, "bats on front foot." He also said it felt like Modi himself took the strike and scored runs.

Suryakumar's remarks came after PM Modi said in his social media post "Operation Sindoos" on the games field. Outcome is the same — India wins! Congrats to our cricketers."

"It feels good when the country's leader himself bats on the front foot; it felt like he took the strike and scored runs. It was great to see, and when the sir is standing in front, then definitely the players will play freely," India's T-20 captain said.

He also said the entire nation is celebrating the victory adding the team will feel even more inspired when it goes back home, to India. "The most important thing is that the whole country is celebrating. When we go back (to India), it will feel good, and we will get more inspiration and motivation to do well," he added.

"I have decided to donate



Team India celebrating after winning the Asia Cup cricket final at Dubai International Cricket Stadium PTI

my match fees from this tournament to support our Armed Forces and the families of the victims who suffered from the Pahalgam terror attack. You always remain in my thoughts. Jai Hind," the 35-year-old posted on social media after the high-voltage win.

India players are entitled to ₹4 lakh per match in the T20 format, which means that Suryakumar would be donating a total of ₹28 lakh for the seven games played in the continental event.

The Indian team steadfast-

ly refused to exchange pleasantries with the Pakistani side during the entire tournament, where it ended up beating Salman Ali Agha's men on three consecutive Sundays. Suryakumar had taken the lead in snubbing Pakistan at every opportunity during the tournament.

He also paid tribute to the Pahalgam attack victims and the Indian armed forces after his team beat the arch foes in a group match on September 14. A furious Pakistan had accused him of making

political statements and sought a ban on him in its complaint to the International Cricket Council (ICC).

The world body had then asked him to refrain from making any statement that might be construed politically, besides imposing a 30 per cent fine on his match fee of that day. The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) has challenged the fine on him after Suryakumar pleaded not guilty during the ICC hearing last week.

Pictures from various areas in PoK showed large crowds raising slogans against the Pakistani army and the local administration. The protests had erupted over long-standing unresolved issues, with demonstrators demanding their rights and an end to discriminatory policies, including the controversial refugee seat privilege.

According to a report by Samaa TV, all markets, shops and business centres were closed across the region as people responded to a call for shutdown from the Joint Action Committee. The strike was led by the Neelum Valley Public Action Committee, headed by Shaukat Nawaz Mir, who had announced a complete halt of commercial activities to push for public demands.

Pictures from various areas in PoK showed large crowds raising slogans against the Pakistani army and the local administration. The protests reflected growing anger among the Kashmiri population. The Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) unit in PoK also supported the protests and criticised the Anwarul Haq-led Government for its poor governance and repression.

PTI claimed that peaceful protesters were attacked by members of the Muslim Conference, referring to them as thugs acting under State protection. They alleged that at least four people were seriously injured in the firing.

As the protests intensified, internet and mobile phone services were suspended for the second day across PoK. Telephone services were also cut off, isolating residents and raising concerns about the humanitarian impact of the blackout.

The demonstrations spread to other areas including Dadyal, Bhimber, and Kotli.

Final showdown: India held its ground, Naqvi the trophy

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE/AGENCIES ■ Dubai/New Delhi

Politics on Monday dominated conversations after thrilling game between arch rivals India and Pakistan in the Asia Cup on Sunday.

Suryakumar Yadav and his men held their nerves to win the nail-biting final by five wickets to complete a ninth title-winning campaign, remaining unbeaten through the past fortnight.

But that wasn't the accomplishment which dictated the discourse. The point of discussion, however, was the politics of it all as Asian Cricket Council (ACC) chief Mohsin Naqvi, also the Pakistan Cricket Board

boss and the Interior Minister of his country, walked away with the winner's trophy after the Indians refused to accept it from him.

The reason. His well-documented anti-India comments and the heightening political tensions between the two countries after 26 Indians were gunned down by Pakistan-backed terrorists in Pahalgam earlier this year.

India retaliated with Operation Sindoos. Naqvi was among those who mocked the Indian team for following a 'No Handshake Policy' towards them during the entire tournament.

"I think this is one thing which I have never seen since I started playing and following

cricket that a champion team is denied a trophy. I mean that too a hard-earned one. It's not like it happened easily. It was a hard-earned tournament win," said Suryakumar, reflecting on how it felt being denied the biggest prize after winning seven consecutive games at the continental showpiece.

Suryakumar couldn't be faulted for being at a loss of

words. He had been at the centre of about 90 minutes of pure drama at the Dubai International Cricket Stadium.

His wife Devisha, head coach Gautam Gambhir's wife and daughters were all on the ground after the triumph to celebrate with the trophy.

The team, however, was unwilling to head to the dais to collect it from Naqvi, who was waiting to exercise his right to hand over the winner's trophy as ACC chair. He waited and so did the Indians, about 25 yards from him.

It is learnt that the BCCI had informed their ACC points-person that the team won't take the award from Naqvi, who had posted cryptic videos of Cristiano Ronaldo's plane

crash goal celebration alluding to the Pakistani claims that six Indian jets were downed during 'Operation Sindoos'.

"No one told us to do this," said Suryakumar, insisting later that the call to boycott Naqvi was taken at the ground. As Naqvi got down from the podium due to India's refusal and strode towards the exit gate, the ACC event staff, to everyone's surprise, followed him with the trophy leaving the Indian camp flummoxed. It is learnt that the prized silverware is at the ACC headquarters here.

Saikia said that the Indian Board would be lodging a "very strong protest" against Naqvi during the upcoming ICC meeting in November.





Classifieds

BEDKHALI NOTICE

I, Jaswinder Singh S/o Karam Singh R/o House No. 651, Sector 46-A, Chandigarh inform that my son Harpreet Singh out of my control. I disown him from my all moveable and immovable properties. Anybody who deals with him will do at their own Risk.

I, Karamvir, S/o late Sh. Amar Singh R/o, House no. 163, Charan Singh colony, Mouli Jagran, Chandigarh declare that I disown my son Ravinder, (Ravi) his wife Anchal, and their from all my moveable/ immovable properties. Anyone dealing with them will deal at their own risk. Neither I nor my family shall bear any responsibility for their actions.

We, Nathu Ram S/o Gian Chand and Paramjit W/o Nathu Ram Resident of Village Talwandi, Tehsil Dinanagar, District Gurdaspur hereby inform that my son Son Kulever Kumar is out of our control. We hereby disinherit him from our moveable and immovable property. The person who deals with him will be responsible for this.

We, Naib Singh, S/o Late Shri Mukand Lal and Gurjeet Devi W/o Shri Naib Singh, R/o H.No. 2096, Sushant City, Sector 32, Kurukshetra, hereby declare that our son Puneet Kashyap is out of our control and he make court marriage without our family's consent with a girl named Kajal, which we do not accept. Therefore, we are disowned our son and his wife from all our moveable and immovable assets. From today onwards, we and our family will not be responsible for any good or bad incident that happens to both of them.

I, Vijay Pal S/o Sh. Ragbir Singh R/o Vill. Rolad Latifpur, Sonipat have disowned my son Vireet & his wife Komal from my all moveable-immovable property as they are out of my control. In future, if anybody deals with them, he/she will do at their own risk.

We, Maninderjit Singh S/O Harbhajan Singh And Tejinder Kaur W/O Maninderjit Singh R/O #969, Sector 78, SAS Nagar Mohali Declare That Our Son Jasmeet Singh Madaan Is Out Of Our Control. So We Disown Him From All Our Moveable And Immovable Properties. Anybody Dealing With Him Will Do That At Their Own Risk.

I Ram Pal S/o Bhagat Ram R/o House No. 2147/1 Pipliwala town Manimajra Chandigarh inform that my son Nitin Mittal and his wife Ambika are out of my control. I disown them from my moveable and immovable properties. Anybody deal with them will do at their own Risk.

We Jujhar Singh S/o Sh. Mohinder Singh and Sukhinder Kaur W/o Sh. Jujhar Singh R/o House No. 2024/5, Vasishth Colony, Near Mohan Nagar, Kurukshetra declare that our son Gurpreet Singh and his wife Bhupinder Kaur are out of our control. We disown them from our Moveable, Immovable properties. They will be responsible for their transactions, good-bad, legal and illegal activities.

I, Bhagwan Singh S/o Gurdev Singh, Village Mavi Kalan, Tehsil Samana, District Patiala, declare that my daughter Sarabjeet Kaur has become a victim of the bad company which is beyond my control. I completely disassociate her from all my moveable and immovable properties and relationships. Anyone who does any kind of transaction with my said daughter will be responsible for his own profit and loss. I or my family will not be responsible for any loss or damage.

I, Gurmeet Kaur W/o Gurjeet Singh R/o Vill. Kabulpur Reh Rajpura Distt Patiala declare that my son Buta Singh and his wife Jasvir Kaur are out of my control so I evict them all my moveable immovable property anyone dealing with them at their own risk.

I, Mewa Singh S/o Gian Singh R/o Vill. Pilkhanji Teh Rajpura Distt Patiala declare that my son Gulzar Singh and his wife Paramjeet Kaur are out of my control so I evict them all my moveable immovable property anyone dealing with them at their own risk.

PUBLIC NOTICE

I Karamjeet Kaur wife Binder Singh resident of Mirpur Kalan Tehsil Sardulgarh (Mansa) hereby inform that my husband's name is Binder Singh in Aadhar card, PAN card, bank pass whereas in voter card my husband's name is Bal Binder Singh which is wrong. I wish to be known as Karamjeet Kaur wife Binder Singh.

I, Surinder Kaur W/o No. 4481271F Rank Hav, name Gurpreet Singh presently residing at Vill. Rajanwan, Po. Kadarwala, Tehsil Dharmkot, Distt. Moga, Punjab declare that in my husband army service record my name wrongly entered Sulinder Kaur and also my DOB wrongly entered 12 May 1984. But my correct name is Surinder Kaur and my correct DOB is 01 Jan 1984. So amended my name and my DOB in my husband army service record.

I Muskan D/o Anish Qureshi R/o House No. 98, Chirayakot, District Mau, Uttar Pradesh have changed my religion from Muslim to Hindu Religion voluntarily at my own will.

I, Budhram, son of Govind Ram, resident of Mandi Dabwali, District Sirsa, declare that my minor daughter Khushi, a student of Class 10 at Golden Era Millennium School, Malot Road, Kiliwanli (Malout), has recorded her mother's name as Suman in the school records due to a technical error, whereas her correct name as per the Aadhaar card and other government documents is Veena.

I, Babli Devi W/o No. 15615185N Ex L'Naik Late Sh. Rajesh Kumar R/o Vill. & P.O. Ghuillor Kalan, Teh. & Distt. Rohtak (Haryana) declare that my name Babli and my DOB 10.05.1983 are wrongly mentioned in my husband Army record. But my correct & actual name is Babli Devi and my correct DOB is 09.07.1982. vide affidavit dated 27.09.2025 before Notary Public Rohtak.

I, Mulakh Raj, son of Surjan Singh, resident of Ward No. 2, Shiyupuri Colony, Derabassi Tehsil, Derabassi District Mohali, state that in the educational certificates of my son Abhishek Singh, his name Abhishek and date of birth 05.02.2007 are wrongly recorded. His correct name is Abhishek Singh and date of birth 08.11.2007.

I Smt Swarn Kaur legally wedded spouse of No 626487H Rank Ex SGT Baldev Singh s/o Late Mehar Singh R/o VPO Sudhar, Tehsil Raikot, District Ludhiana, Punjab, 141104 hereby declare that in service record of my husband my name entered as Swarn Kaur is incorrect, my correct name is Swarn Kaur.

I, Amarjit Kaur wife of Ex-serviceman NK Sukhvinder Singh, Army No 1484620H R/O Village- Dholowal, PO- Argowal, Tehsil- Dasuya, Distt. - Hoshiarpur, Punjab-144207 declare that in service record of my husband my name entered as Amarjeet Kaur and date of birth from 10 Nov 1974 to 18 Aug 1965 due to variation in my father's service documents. Concern notes.

I, Mohinder Raj Arora S/o Visakha Ram Arora R/O H.No. 1801, M.L.A Road, Rajpura, Distt. Patiala Have Changed My Name From Mohinder Raj To Mohinder Raj Arora.

I, Mohd Aarif Raza S/o Kurban Ansari R/o 152, Bharat Sewak Nagar, Tehsil Jagadhri, Distt. Yamunanagar have changed my name from Mohammad Aarif Raza to Mohd Aarif Raza.

I, Smt. Suman Devi widow daughter of No. 1235531W Ex-Hav Late Sh. Surinder Kumar residence of Village and PO Bassi Bazid Tehsil & Distt. Hoshiarpur (PB) has changed my name from Suman to Suman Devi. Concern Note.

I, Parash Chandna S/o Sh. Joginder Chandna, R/o H.No.1118, Sector 12, Phase 2, Near Shiv Mandir, Huda, Panipat that I have changed my name from Parash S/o Sh. Joginder Kumar to Parash Chandna S/o Sh. Joginder Chandna, for all future purposes.

I, Rashpal Chand S/o Sheeda Ram R/o H.No. 92, Wazir Singh R/o House No. 152-B, Mandi Adampur, Tehsil Adampur, Distt. Hisar, Haryana declare that I have changed my name from Rashpal Chand & Rachpal Chand both names are of the one & same person.i.e. myself. Concerned Note.

I, Saini Reena Surendrapal W/o Munish Saini R/o H.No. 99, New Colony Gatra, PO Sujanpur, Tehsil Gurdaspur declare that in the birth certificate of my son Hanish Saini my name has been inadvertently mentioned as Reena Saini, but my correct name is Saini Reena Surendrapal according to my Aadhar card, Voter Card and all my educational documents.

I, Darshna Devi W/o Mangat Ram R/o Near Dahega Factory, Ward No. 13, VPO Tanda, Urmal Distt. Hoshiarpur Punjab have changed my name from Darshna Devi to Darshna Rani. Concerned note.

I, Seema Thakur, wife of Manoj kumar, resident of 1024 1st floor 38-B Chandigarh, have changed my Minor son name from Ridhaan Patyal to Ridhaan Thakur.

I, Aditya Bhardwaj S/o Preet Kumar Bhardwaj R/o House No. 416, Amravati Enclave, Panchkula, Haryana, have changed my name from Aditya Bhardwaj to Aditya Kumar Bhardwaj.

I, Jasbir S/o Gurumukh Singh R/o Village Bahampur PO Sapabup, Tehsil Jagadhri, Distt. Yamuna Nagar have changed my name from Jasbir Singh to Jasbir Singh.

I, VAISH son of MASROOF, resident of Daulatpur (144), Yamuna Nagar, Haryana - 135001; have changed my name to UVESH for all purposes.

I, Santosh W/O Sarjit R/O Vill-Sarola(244), Chhappar, Distt-Jhajjar, Haryana-124108 have changed my name from Santosh Devi.

I, Prince S/o Gurdev Singh R/o Vill. Saido Patti, PO Bassi Kalan (Hoshiarpur) declare that I have changed my name from Prince to Prince Toora. Concerned note.

I, Darshna Devi W/o Mangat Ram R/o Near Dahega Factory, Ward No. 13, VPO Tanda, Urmal Distt. Hoshiarpur Punjab have changed my name from Darshna Devi to Darshna Rani. Concerned note.

I, Chhinder Kaur W/o Late Gurmukh Singh R/o Village Basaulan, Tehsil Kalak, Distt. Panchkula have changed my name from Chhinder Kaur to Surinder Kaur.

I, VAISH son of MASROOF, resident of Daulatpur (144), Yamuna Nagar, Haryana - 135001; have changed my name to UVESH for all purposes.

I, Santosh W/O Sarjit R/O Vill-Sarola(244), Chhappar, Distt-Jhajjar, Haryana-124108 have changed my name from Jasbir Singh to Jasbir Singh.

I, Gurmee Kaur W/o Gurjeet Singh R/o Vill. Kabulpur Reh Rajpura Distt Patiala declare that my son Buta Singh and his wife Jasvir Kaur are out of my control so I evict them all my moveable immovable property anyone dealing with them at their own risk.

I, Karamjeet Kaur wife Binder Singh resident of Mirpur Kalan Tehsil Sardulgarh (Mansa) hereby inform that my husband's name is Binder Singh in Aadhar card, PAN card, bank pass whereas in voter card my husband's name is Bal Binder Singh which is wrong. I wish to be known as Karamjeet Kaur wife Binder Singh.

I, Sunny S/o Rajinder Kumar, R/o House No. 1110, Sector 25-D, Chandigarh have changed my name from Sunny to Sunny Kumar.

I, Himanshi D/o Yogesh Gulati R/o House no. 2127-B, CHB Flat, Block-10, Sector 63 Chandigarh have changed my name from Himanshi to Himanshi Gulati.

I, Ram Chander And Ram Chand Madan Is The Same Person. Residing At #297, Sector-7, Urban Estate, Karnal, Haryana, 132001. Sh. Lalit Kumar Madan Is My Son Residing At #354, Sector 7, Urban Estate, Karnal, Haryana, 132001.

I, Subhas Chand Saini S/o Daulat Ram R/o VPO Karera Khurd, Distt Yamuna Nagar have changed my name from Subhas Chand Saini to Subhash Chand.

I, Riddhi Sawhney W/o Gaurav Mahna R/o EB 41, Maya Enclave, Hari Nagar, South West Delhi have changed my name from Riddhi Sawhney to Riddhi Mahna.

I, Ranveer Singh S/o Om Parkash R/o Village Bana Tehsil Balachaur Distt. SBS Nagar Punjab have changed my name from Ranveer Singh to Ranveer Singh Kushan

I, Hazur Singh s/o Pardhan Singh R/o #5092, Bhi Kartar Singh Street, Sri Muktsar Sahib, Have changed my name to Hazoor Singh. All concerned note it

I, Mamta w/o Munish Kumar R/o HNO 1291, Bura Gujjar Road, Sri Muktsar Sahib Have My Name Form Mamta Rani to Mamta.

I, Subhash Chander Saluja S/o Sh. Dyal Dass R/o HNO. 7/11, Civil Lines, Near Railway Road, Subhash Marg, Karnal I have changed my name from Subhash Chander Saluja to Subhash Chander. In future I should be known as Subhash Chander.

I, Jasbir Kaur wife of tarlok Singh residence of khilchian tahsil mukerian district Hoshiarpur have change my name from Jasvir Kaur to Jasbir Kaur

I, Amarjit Kaur wife of Ex-serviceman NK Sukhvinder Singh, Army No 1484620H R/O Village- Dholowal, PO- Argowal, Tehsil- Dasuya, Distt. - Hoshiarpur, Punjab-144207 declare that in service record of my husband my name entered as Amarjeet Kaur and date of birth from 10 Nov 1974 to 18 Aug 1965 due to variation in my father's service documents. Concern notes.

I, Mohinder Raj Arora S/o Visakha Ram Arora R/O H.No. 1801, M.L.A Road, Rajpura, Distt. Patiala Have Changed My Name From Mohinder Raj To Mohinder Raj Arora.

I, Navjot Sohal and Navjot Singh S/o Bikramjeet Singh R/o Patti Wassan Ki, VPO Vallah Distt. Amritsar have declare that above both names are mine one and same person.

I, Lalit Trikha S/o Harish Chander R/o Kothi No.110 White Enclave 30 Feet Road Majithia Road Amritsar have changed my name to Lalit Kumar Trikha

I, Manjit Singh W/o Gursahib Singh R/o Vpo Kad Gill, Tarn Taran have change my name from Manjit Singh to Manjit Kaur

I, Nikhita W/o Sh. Jitinder Jagota Resident of House No. 1304, Mohala Ram Nagar, Near Railway Road, Jagraon, PO: Jagraon, Distt. Ludhiana-142026. I have changed after marriage my name from Nikhita to Nikhita Jagota. All concerned please note.

I, Rakhi W/o Rajan Soni R/o Flat No.3, Mahan Singh Gate, Jagat Jyoti School, Amritsar. I have changed my name after marriage from Rakhi to Rakhi Soni all concerned please note.

I, Deepak S/o Jagdish Chander R/o House No. 941, Sector 13, Hisar, Haryana declare that I have changed my name from Deepak to Deepak Sharma for all future purposes.

I, Surender Kaur W/o Chaman Lal R/o Village Garhi Langot Distt Kurukshetra have changed my name from Surender Kaur to Sinder.

I, Shree Birbal S/o Bhana Ram R/o Vill.Mangna, Kurukshetra have changed my name Birbal

I, Nidhi W/o Surender Kumar R/o Ward No.10, Bhai Ji Wali Gali, Pehowa, Kurukshetra have changed my name Nidhi Chopra

I, Sish Pal S/o Hirda Ram village Jajanpur sub tehsil Dhand district Kaithal, I have changed my name to Shishpal.

I, Ashok Verma S/o Jai Bhagwan R/o B-3 Block 6, Sector 6 Upmohal Parwanu Distt. Solan, HP have changed my name Ashok Kumar to Ashok Verma. All concerned please note.

I, Priyanka W/o Sh. Anuj Goyal R/o House No. 152-B, Mandi Adampur, Tehsil Adampur, Distt. Hisar, Haryana declare that I have changed my name from Priyanka to Goyal for all future purpose.

I, Surender Hooda S/o Wazir Singh R/o H. No. 92, PO Petwar, Tehsil Narnaula, Haryana declare that I have changed my name from Surender to Surender Hooda for all future purposes.

I, Priyanka W/o Sh. Anuj Goyal R/o House No. 152-B, Mandi Adampur, Tehsil Adampur, Distt. Hisar, Haryana declare that I have changed my name from Priyanka to Goyal for all future purpose.

I, Mohan Lal S/o Jiwa Ram R/o H.No. 34/32A, Kachha Thakur Dwara Ambala city have changed my name from Mohan Singh to Mohan Lal.

I, Rashad Kaur W/o Sh. Gurdaspur, Tehsil Gurdaspur have changed my name to Rashad Kaur.

I, Sumitra Mann W/o Ranbir Singh r/o # 3136 Sector 46-C Chandigarh have changed my name to Sumitra Singh.

I, Davinder Pal Bhatia S/o Kishan Chand R/o Ward No. 5 Talwandi Bhai Distt. Ferozepur Have Changed My Name Davinder Pal Bhatia To Davinder Pal.

I, Manjit Singh Ghatora S/O Pal Singh R/O Vpo. Kapure Patti Bhaya Distt. Moga Have Changed My Name To Nirmal Singh.

I, Darshan Singh Doad S/O Charan Singh R/O Vill. Dandian P.O. Baddon District Hoshiarpur Punjab Have Changed My Name To Darshan Singh.

I, Jagdish Kumar S/O Raghu Ram R/O Vpo. Hardo Khanpur, Hoshiarpur, Punjab Declare That My Given Name As Jagdish And Surname As Kumar.

I, NIRMALA DEVI is legally mother of No: 8039241N, Rank: LNK (GD), Name: VIRENDER KUMAR resident of Vill: Sunari Kalan, PO: Sunari Kalan, Teh: Rohtak, Dist: Ferozepur, State: Haryana, PIN: 124001. I have changed my Name from NIRMALA DEVI to NIRMALA DEVI.

I, Surbhi D/o Sarvan Singh R/o Vpo- Ghot Poker. Tehsil/Distt- Gurdaspur. Punjab - 143530. Have Changed My Name From Surbhi To Surbhi Kaur.

I, Hukam Kaur W/O Dhanpat R/O Vill-Karawara P.O. Manakpur, Karawara Manakpur (253), Palhawas, Rewari, Haryana-123035 have changed my name to Hukamwati.

I, SH Bhagwant Singh S/O Gulzar Singh Toor R/O # 4858, Block-B, Puncum Society, Sector-68, SAS Nagar (Mohali), Punjab-160062 have changed my name to Bhagwant Singh Toor.

I, Virender S/O Shanker Dev Singh R/O 35, 2, Arman Nagar, Village Dakoha, Tehsil-District-Jalandhar, Punjab-144023 have changed my name to Virender Kumar.

I, Jit Ram S/O Sh. Hans Raj R/O H. No. 204, Block-A Sector-6, Eco City-1, New Chandigarh Mullanpur, Distt. SAS Nagar (Mohali) Punjab-140901 Do Hereby Solemn



Punjab to begin flood payouts from Oct 15; Mann to meet Shah today on SDRF issue

MONIKA MALIK ■ CHANDIGARH



Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann on Monday announced that the state will begin distribution of flood-relief compensation cheques from October 15, weeks before Diwali, and that teams of Ministers will personally carry out the exercise across affected districts. Mann, winding up the discussion on the resolution against the Centre, said that the decision follows a time-bound assessment (girdawari) of losses and signals a shift from rescue to large-scale rehabilitation.

The package announced on the concluding day of the special session of the Vidhan Sabha substantially raises crop and rehabilitation payouts. Farmers who have suffered crop loss between 26 to 33 percent will now be eligible for Rs 10,000 per acre; while those with losses between 33 to 75 percent will also receive Rs 10,000 per acre – an increase from the earlier rate of Rs 6,800. For farmers who have lost 75 to 100 percent of their crop, the compensation has been doubled to Rs 20,000 per acre, with the Punjab Government itself contributing Rs 14,900 of this amount – the highest state share across India.

In addition, the government has announced Rs 7,200 per acre under the specially designed 'Jisda Khet, Ossi Ret' scheme, enabling farmers to desilt and restore their fields by removing sand and silt left behind by the floods, which they are also allowed to sell if they wish. Describing desilting scheme as a "healing touch" for flood victims, Mann said that desilting and repairs are being

prioritized so fields can be readied for the coming wheat crop.

For farmers whose land has been washed away, the government will provide Rs 18,800 per acre (Rs 47,500 per hectare) to help them rehabilitate.

Beyond crop compensation, Mann announced enhanced payouts for housing and other losses – Rs 12.0 lakh for fully damaged houses and an increase in assistance for partially damaged houses from Rs 6,500 to Rs 35,100. The government has already released Rs 4.50 crore for water-logged areas. A special, time-bound girdawari to assess losses is already underway and will form the basis for fast disbursement.

Mann criticized the Centre for extending what he termed "step-motherly treatment" to Punjab while announcing larger packages in other poll-bound states. He pointed out that the Centre's recently declared Rs 1,600 crore package was misleading, as it also included the Rs 240 crore already due to Punjab under the SDRF. The Chief Minister vowed to raise these issues directly with the Union Home Minister, arguing that elected representatives of Punjab must be heard in New Delhi at this critical hour.

Mann to Meet Shah Today

Alongside the state's own relief package, Mann informed the House that he will personally meet Union Home Minister Amit Shah on

Tuesday (September 30) to push for a substantial increase in the financial support Punjab receives under the State Disaster Response Fund (SDRF). The state has formally sought a revision of flood relief norms to allow Rs 50,000 per acre compensation for crop damage, citing the unprecedented scale of destruction. "Governor, a political appointee, has met the Prime Minister but an elected representative has not been given time to meet him...Punjab has turned into an 'undeclared UT,'" he said. Coming down heavily on the Leader of Opposition Partap Singh Bajwa's appeal for not donating money in Punjab Government created 'Rangla Punjab Fund', Mann said: "On one hand, Centre is not giving us any money; and on the other, Bajwa is asking people not to give money in Rangla Punjab Fund...where are we heading?" He urged the opposition to set aside partisan politics during rehabilitation and repeated that the state would continue to press New Delhi for a fairer and larger SDRF allocation.

Punjab Assembly Unanimously Demands Rs 20,000-cr Central Package for Flood Relief

PNS ■ CHANDIGARH

Punjab Vidhan Sabha on Monday unanimously passed the "Rehabilitation of Unimously" resolution in the absence of two BJP MLAs, demanding a special financial package of Rs 20,000 crore from the BJP-led Union Government to provide relief to flood-hit farmers, rebuild damaged infrastructure, and restore livelihoods across the state. The resolution also urged the immediate release of Rs 1,600 crore previously announced by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, calling the Centre's response "grossly inadequate" for the scale of the disaster.

Introduced by Water Resources Minister Barinder Kumar Goyal on Friday, the first day of the special session, the resolution was adopted after two days of detailed discussion. Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann, Cabinet Ministers, and several MLAs from both the treasury and opposition benches actively contributed. The passed resolution will now be formally sent to the Central Government, urging swift and

compassionate action.

The resolution criticized the Centre's handling of the disaster, describing the Prime Minister's relief announcement as "grossly inadequate" in the face of unprecedented floods. It records the state's initial assessment of losses at Rs 13,900 crore, affecting more than 20 lakh people, destroying crops on nearly five lakh acres, decimating livestock, and damaging public and private infrastructure.

Historical comparisons highlighted this deluge as the most destructive since the 1988 floods, surpassing earlier major floods of 1955 and 1978.

The resolution slammed the Centre for refusing him an audience with the Prime Minister to present the full scale of the disaster, accusing the PMO of "insulting" the people of Punjab by allowing time only with the Governor.

Mann, however, confirmed that he will meet Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Tuesday, September 30, to press for a substantive State Disaster Response Fund (SDRF) hike and broader support.

Cheema, Bajwa Trade Corruption Barbs; House Adjourned Amid Uproar

MONIKA MALIK ■ CHANDIGARH

Punjab Vidhan Sabha on Monday turned into a battleground as Finance Minister Harpal Singh Cheema and the Leader of Opposition (LoP) Partap Singh Bajwa clashed in a fierce war of words, levelling grave corruption charges against each other.

The heated exchange, marked by sharp accusations and personal counterattacks, brought the House proceedings to a halt, forcing Speaker Kultar Singh Sandhu to adjourn the session for ten minutes.

Launching a scathing attack, Cheema alleged that Bajwa had purchased land on the banks of the Beas River within the Dhussi Bandh, aiming to benefit from sand deposits after floods.

Cheema presented details of a July 15, 2025, transaction in which Bajwa, in his wife's name, acquired 16.10 marlas of land in Phullran village, Gurdaspur, from a farmer for Rs 5.45 lakh.

"The land lies inside the Dhussi Bandh, a flood-prone zone. Bajwa knew sand

would collect there and could be mined. He is not only buying from poor farmers but also using state resources for personal benefit," Cheema alleged.

Cheema further alleged that Bajwa had purchased 10 acres of land in Paswal village under similar circumstances, which the previous Congress Government spent Rs 1.18 crore to protect through stone studs in 2017 and 2019. "The land Bajwa declared at just Rs 25 lakh in his returns cost the state more than Rs one crore for its putting up stones around it for its protection.

WAR OF WORDS

Public money is being spent on safeguarding his private property," Cheema said.

Responding with equal ferocity, Bajwa dismissed the allegations as politically motivated and insisted that his land transactions were legal and transparent.

"I bought land from private owners and paid full stamp duty. If there is wrongdoing, file a case. Don't mislead the House," he retorted.

Turning the spotlight on

the AAP Government, Bajwa accused Cheema and the ruling dispensation of being complicit in a massive liquor revenue scam.

"Your Excise Department has siphoned off Rs 12,000 crore. Every distillery pays you Rs 1.25 crore monthly. In total, you collect Rs 35 to 40 crore per month. Why don't you explain that to the people?" Bajwa fired back.

Bajwa also accused Cheema of enjoying immunity in the excise scandal because of alleged links with the BJP.

"Your leaders were jailed in the Delhi excise case, but you remain untouched. This shows your secret understanding with the BJP," Bajwa alleged.

House in Chaos, Adjourned for 10 Minutes

As the arguments escalated, tempers flared. Cheema demanded Bajwa admit whether he owned land in Phullran, while Bajwa accused the Finance Minister of breaching House decorum.

Congress MLAs, including Avtar Singh Henry Junior, charged the Speaker with

and Thapar University, Patiala. Mann said that Thapar will launch its own meteorological satellite as part of an advanced forecasting mechanism to avert and minimize damage from such natural tragedies. He also thanked volunteers, civic groups and the Army and NDRF for their rescue and relief efforts, and noted that philanthropists and out-of-state volunteers had stepped forward to "adopt villages" during rehabilitation.

Undeclared President Rule in Punjab

In a wide-ranging floor speech, the Chief Minister criticized both national parties and used the occasion to press his political case while seeking support for relief work. He accused the Centre of turning Punjab's crisis into "disaster tourism" and alleged "undeclared President's Rule" by sidelining elected representatives.

"Governor, a political appointee, has met the Prime Minister but an elected representative has not been given time to meet him...Punjab has turned into an 'undeclared UT,'" he said.

Coming down heavily on the Leader of Opposition Partap Singh Bajwa's appeal for not donating money in Punjab Government created 'Rangla Punjab Fund', Mann said: "On one hand, Centre is not giving us any money; and on the other, Bajwa is asking people not to give money in Rangla Punjab Fund...where are we heading?" He urged the opposition to set aside partisan politics during rehabilitation and repeated that the state would continue to press New Delhi for a fairer and larger SDRF allocation.

He highlighted that the Digital Haryana Programme is designed to empower even the last person standing in the queue. The four initiatives launched are not just technological upgrades; they signal a new era of good governance, transparency, and citizen convenience, he said, adding that the Revenue and Disaster Management Department plays a crucial

Land registry work in Haryana will now be fully digital, says CM Saini

PNS ■ KURUKSHETRA

After launching the four key digital initiatives of the Revenue Department, including the paperless registration, demarcation portal, WhatsApp Chatbot, and revenue court case management system at Ladwa, Kurukshetra, Haryana Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini on Monday said that the introduction of paperless registration marks a decisive step towards eliminating corruption in the revenue department.

By minimizing human intervention, opportunities for malpractice will be virtually eliminated. Registry work will now be fully digital, a living example of the government's 'Minimum Government - Maximum Governance' policy. The initiative will also help conserve the environment by reducing paper use, he said.

Speaking at a state-level function, Saini also released an information booklet and witnessed the first paperless registry and demarcation process at Babain Tehsil. Earlier, he planted a sapling in the tehsil premises.

He highlighted that the Digital Haryana Programme is designed to empower even the last person standing in the queue. The four initiatives launched are not just technological upgrades; they signal a new era of good governance, transparency, and citizen convenience, he said, adding that the Revenue and Disaster Management Department plays a crucial

role in both revenue administration and disaster response, directly impacting people's lives. Over time, the department has adopted new technologies to make its functioning simpler, more transparent, and citizen-centric. These new initiatives mark another important step in that journey, he said.

The CM said that the Paperless Registration initiative will end decades of complex registry procedures and citizens will no longer face unnecessary delays or multiple office visits. They will only need to visit the tehsil once for signatures and photographs.

Describing farmers as the backbone of Haryana's economy, Saini said that land disputes are a common rural issue. The Demarcation Portal provides a permanent, technology-based solution.

Farmers can now apply online for demarcation, which will be carried out using rover and advanced GPS technology, ensuring speed, accuracy, and impartiality. Recognizing that almost everyone now uses smartphones and WhatsApp, the government has leveraged this platform to provide easy access to information. The WhatsApp chatbot will offer round-the-clock details on departmental services, status updates, and required documents.

Citizens will no longer need to visit offices for minor queries; they can get instant and accurate information on their phones. This will especially benefit people in



rural areas.

Saini noted that long-pending cases in revenue courts have been a major hurdle in delivering timely justice. Delay in justice is equivalent to denial of justice, he remarked. With the Revenue Court Case Management System, all cases in revenue courts will now be digitally monitored.

Details of case status, dates, and orders will be available online. This will help eliminate years of delay in smaller cases, making the judicial process more efficient and transparent. All revenue court cases will be brought onto a digital platform, enhancing judicial transparency and enabling faster resolution of pending matters.

He stated that earlier, the powers to grant licences and Change of Land Use (CLU) permissions for commercial and residential projects were vested with the Chief Minister's Office. This arrangement has now been changed; these powers have been delegated to the Director, Town and Country Planning Department. The entire CLU application process has been made online. Applicants can track their file movement at every stage. All CLU permissions are now processed online within 30 days.

Saini said that to fully digitize land records, the Integrated Haryana Land Records Information System has been implemented in all tehsils. Through this system, landowners can access information about their properties and land records online, anytime and from anywhere.

Additional Chief Secretary & Financial Commissioner, Revenue & Disaster Management Department, Sumitra Misra said that from the small tehsil of Babain, the government launched the schemes that will benefit every farmer and citizen across Haryana.

BRIEFS

1.87 crore metric tonnes of paddy procured so far in Haryana mandis: Saini

Kurukshetra: During the ongoing Kharif procurement season-2025, Haryana Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini on Monday said that a total of 1.87 crore metric tonnes of paddy has been procured in various mandis of the state. Out of this, 25,000 metric tonnes has already been lifted from mandis/purchase centres. A spokesperson of the Department of Food, Civil Supplies and Consumer Affairs said paddy has been procured from about 20,147 farmers across the state so far.

Shimla citizens demand concrete policy to address rising dog monkey menace

Shimla: The Shimla Nagrik Sabha on Monday held a protest against the growing menace of stray dogs and monkeys here, demanding that the municipal corporation frame an effective and concrete policy to address the issues. The Sabha members called for the capture and sheltering of dangerous and ferocious stray dogs and the gradual reduction of the monkey population through scientific culling.

3 MONTH FINANCIAL INCLUSION SATURATION CAMPAIGN (1st July 2025- 30th September 2025)

Rao Narender Singh is new Hry Cong President; Hooda CLP leader

PNS ■ CHANDIGARH

The Congress on Monday appointed Rao Narender Singh as the new president of its Haryana unit and former Chief Minister Bhupinder Singh Hooda as the CLP leader in the state. Rao Narender Singh replaces Udai Bhan, who was appointed president of the state unit in April 2022. He is the former Health Minister of Haryana and hails from Narnaul.

Opening of PMJDY account with zero balance, no charges and free Debit card with accident insurance of ₹2 lakh

Enrollment in PM Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana for life insurance cover of ₹2 lakh at a premium of only ₹436 per annum (eligibility: 18-50 years)

Enrollment in PM Suraksha Bima Yojana for accident insurance cover of ₹2 lakh at a premium of only ₹20 per annum (eligibility: 18-70 years)

Subscription to Atal Pension Yojana for guaranteed pension ranging from ₹1000 to ₹5000 per month (eligibility: 18-40 years)

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Get information on how to save your self from digital frauds & how to claim the money transferred to RBI unclaimed deposit

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AVAIL THE BENEFITS



States Focus



INTERNET SHUTDOWN IN BAREILLY DISRUPTS LIFE

The suspension of internet services in Bareilly over the last three days has severely disrupted business operations, banking services and healthcare systems. Traders estimate losses to the tune of several hundred crores of rupees. Business activities – from those of small-scale retailers to large wholesalers – have come to a near standstill. Shopping malls have witnessed a significantly reduced footfall. On Friday, police and locals clashed in Bareilly over denial of permission for a demonstration in support of the ongoing 'I Love Muhammad' campaign. Police have filed 10 cases on rioting and other charges against 180 named individuals and 2,500 unnamed people.



NIT DEVELOPS AI MODEL FOR ENHANCED ROAD SAFETY

National Institute of Technology (NIT) researchers have developed an AI model that aims to improve how vehicles communicate with each other in vehicular ad-hoc networks (VANETs), according to officials. The patented model, called 'Adaptive Contention Window Optimisation in VANETs using Multi-Agent Deep Reinforcement Learning for Enhanced Performance Model', focuses on addressing a key challenge in vehicular communication systems.

Nadda forms eight-member NDA MP team to probe Karur tragedy

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

■ New Delhi

BJP president JP Nadda has formed a delegation of National Democratic Alliance (NDA) MPs to visit Karur in Tamil Nadu to probe the circumstances leading to a stampede that has left 41 people dead and submit a report.

The BJP generally sends its own leaders to the sites of tragic incidents for an inquiry but this time, the party has included MPs from its allies – Shiv Sena and Telugu Desam Party (TDP) – in the eight-member committee, in an apparent messaging about the importance it attaches to its partners.



Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) MP from Mathura and actor Hema Malini, who is a Tamil, is the convenor of the delegation, and its members include Shiv Sena's Shrikant Shinde and TDP's Putta

Mahesh Kumar. The other members are Arurag Thakur, Tejasvi Surya, former IPS officer Brij Lal, Aparajita Sarangi and Rekha Sharma, all from the BJP.

President urges youth to embrace tech skills

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

■ New Delhi

President Droupadi Murmu on Monday said it is imperative that youth embrace and adapt to advanced technological skills as India advances on the path of technology-driven growth.

Addressing the probationers of the Indian Skill Development Service (ISDS), who had called on her at the Rashtrapati Bhavan here, she said skill and knowledge are the true engines of economic growth and social progress for any nation.

"Countries that develop a highly skilled workforce are better equipped to respond to global challenges and seize emerging opportunities in various areas of development. As India advances on its path of technology-driven growth, it is imperative that our youth embrace and adapt to the advanced technological skills," President Murmu said.

The President said the probationers would play an important role in shaping a robust, future-ready workforce. "Your role in making India the Skill Capital of the World will be significant," she said.

Besides the ISDS, the probationers of the Indian Statistical Service and Central Engineering Service had also called on the President.

Addressing the probationers of the Indian Statistical Service, she said the importance of measurable and quantifiable indicators in effective governance cannot be overemphasised.

"Sound policy formulation and implementation depend on accurate statistical analysis. In today's data-driven world, the relevance of statistics has grown immensely," she said.

The President said India has entered a new era of socio-economic and digital transformation.

"The growing adoption of emerging technologies has significantly enhanced transparency and efficiency



The President of India, Droupadi Murmu addressing the probationers of the Indian Statistical Service, Indian Skill Development Service and Central Engineering Service at Rashtrapati Bhavan in New Delhi

in governance.

These technological initiatives generate a continuous flow of data which enables the government to make more informed and effective decisions,"

Murmu said.

While interacting with the probationers of Central Engineering Service, she said engineers play an instrumental role in advancing a nation's tech-

strong focus on large-scale infrastructure development, the engineering sector is set for significant growth," the President said, insisting that "it is also crucial to ensure that development is sustainable".

She urged the probationers of all three services to always work with the aim of ensuring progress of the most disadvantaged sections of society.

The choices you make, the values you uphold and the dedication you bring to your work will influence the lives of the people, she said.

"By serving with passion and integrity, you can contribute in the making of a nation that is more prosperous, resilient, and inclusive.

"Through your sincere efforts, you can ensure that India stands as a model of strength and progress before the world. I am confident that you will work with commitment and enthusiasm for an inclusive and developed India," the President said.

Threat to Rahul shows BJP's mindset: Gehlot

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

■ Jaipur

Former Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot on Monday condemned a BJP spokesperson's alleged threat that Rahul Gandhi will be "shot" as a dangerous reflection of the mindset of the ruling party.

In a video message, Gehlot said, "The country has seen that Mahatma Gandhi and former Prime Minister Indira Gandhi were shot dead. They were committed to keep the nation united. Now a BJP spokesperson has commented about Rahul Gandhi that he will be shot in the chest."



Gehlot expressed his concern over the silence of BJP national president JP Nadda on the issue. "If a spokesperson can openly say this in a TV debate and the party president does not react, it raises serious questions. The

country should be worried," he said. He also questioned the security implications of Rahul Gandhi's public travel information being shared in the media. "When Rahul Gandhi travels across India and abroad, even his location

is made public. Is that not a breach of security?" Gehlot asked.

The Congress demanded the BJP apologise to the nation and hold accountable the Kerala BJP spokesperson who allegedly made the remark. "Rahul Gandhi talks about inflation, unemployment and vote chori. He is making it an issue in the country. The BJP president should apologise to the nation. He should assure the public that the matter has come to his attention and the perpetrators will be expelled from the party and that the Home Ministry will take action," he said.

Haryana launches digital registry

PARVESH SHARMA

■ Gurugram

Union Minister of State Rao Inderjeet Singh said that Haryana's latest digital initiatives will now enable citizens to access Government services in an easier, transparent and time-bound manner.

He was speaking at the launch of four new initiatives of the Revenue Department – a paperless registry system, paperless land demarcation, a WhatsApp chatbot, and a digital monitoring system for revenue courts.

He said that with these measures, people will no longer need to wait in long queues at Government offices or make repeated visits, making services more convenient and effective.

The minister added that through digital monitoring and paperless systems, all land and revenue-related work will become fully transparent for farmers and the general public.

Citizens can now apply for land registration and measurement directly through their mobile phones or computers, which will speed up documentation processes and make them more user-friendly.

Singh also emphasised that these systems will ensure accountability among Government officials. Through digital services, details of ongoing court cases will now be

directly accessible on mobile devices, sparing citizens the need to make frequent office visits.

Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini inaugurated all these initiatives via video conferencing from the Babain Tehsil in Kurukshetra. On this occasion, the live rollout of these digital services began simultaneously across all districts of Haryana.

Citizens will now be able to apply for registry, land measurement, and other revenue services from the comfort of their homes using their mobile phones.

Gurugram MLA Mukesh Sharma said the initiative marks a significant step toward transparency in governance and greater convenience for citizens.

He particularly highlighted the benefits for farmers, who will no longer need to run from office to office. According to him, the system will save time and reduce hardships for the people.

Meanwhile, MLA Tejpal Tanwar stated that the introduction of digital services will bring more transparency to administrative processes and curb corruption.

He described the initiative as a major step toward making Haryana a modern, smart state and urged citizens to make maximum use of the digital platforms to avail government services in a simple and effective manner.

J-K LG calls for crackdown on encroachments along water bodies

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

■ Jammu

Asserting that climate change is a reality that people should realise, Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Monday called for a crackdown on encroachments along water bodies in the Union Territory and urged people and the administration to create a movement for it. The LG termed the recent floods in Jammu as a major catastrophe in the region unseen in the past, and said that losses have also been enormous with more than 4,000 houses damaged, over 3,237 kilometres of roads affected and more than 70 major bridges destroyed.

"We exhort the officials to

crack down on encroachments along the water bodies. Citizens must report encroachments on natural resources in their respective areas to the authorities. Let us unite to rebuild a stronger, more secure future," the LG further said.

Addressing the 'Swachhata Vijayotsav' organised by the Department of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj under 'Sewa Parv' here, the LG said, "Along with the administration, I also appeal to the citizens of Jammu and Kashmir that it is their moral responsibility to prevent illegal construction and encroachment around river banks and water bodies."

He said such encroachments may provide temporary relief to some people but

in the process, "we end up losing our own people" during flood-like situations.

"I also expect the officials to keep a strict watch on this issue. Beyond the administration, the people themselves must take responsibility to stop rampant encroachments on natural resources and ecologically fragile places. For this, we must build an environment and a movement," Sinha said.

He said that when the administration tries to remove encroachments, many people take to the streets. "But the devastation we have witnessed gives us an opportunity for self-reflection – we must think about how to create a safe and sustainable system," the LG added.

Marathwada floods: Dairy farmers loses livelihood

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

■ Chhatrapati Sambhajinagar

For Shriram Datkhile, a dairy farmer in Dharavshir district, the floods in Marathwada have cost him his home and livelihood, leaving him with nothing.

Datkhile (55) and eight members of his family live in a dairy in Telgaon Pimpalgao village of Bhumi tehsil, earning ₹3.5 lakh per month selling milk.

However, the heavy rainfall and the subsequent floods in the district on September 23 changed the family's fortunes overnight.

Datkhile lost 37 cows and 20 goats in the floods last week. "On the night of

September 23, we were asleep when suddenly water from the Banganga River entered the village. We hardly got seven to eight minutes to save ourselves. We lost everything within minutes," Datkhile's son Pravin claimed.

He said that the family had started their business with just a handful of cattle and

104 DEATHS SINCE JUNE 1

Chhatrapati Sambhajinagar:

A total of 104 persons have died in monsoon-related incidents since June 1 in Maharashtra's Marathwada region, officials said on Monday. Excess rainfall has impacted 3050 villages in the region, which comprises Chhatrapati Sambhajinagar, Jalna, Parbhani, Nanded, Dharavshir, Hingoli, Latur and Beed districts, causing crop damage and losses to farmers, as per a report from the divisional commissioner office. "Of the 104 deaths recorded in Marathwada between June 1 and September 29, seven took place in floods since

gradually got 40 cows and 20 goats. "Each cow in our dairy was worth around ₹1.25 lakh. We have incurred a loss of ₹60 lakh, including the goats and shed. My family sold milk worth ₹3.5 lakh a month with a profit margin of nearly 40 per cent," the 26-year-old said.

The family is now living in an onion shed built on the farm of an acquaintance, he said. The family's guava

orchard was also damaged in the floods, he said.

"The crop and cattle loss surveys are completed. However, as per the NDRF norms, the compensation can only be given for up to three animals and that too ₹37,500 per cattle," Pravin claimed. Meanwhile, an NGO working for farmers claimed its helpline, Shivaar, is flooded with distress calls

from flood-hit agriculturists, particularly from the rain-battered Marathwada region. A common refrain among farmers is that government aid will be inadequate to cover their losses, Helpline founder Vinayak Hegana said. "The helpline received 274 calls on the inaugural day last week. Among the callers, 83 farmers had suicidal thoughts," he claimed.

Hegana said that 5.5 acres of a farmer's land in Latur were submerged, and fertiliser bags became wet. He said that a private moneylender is demanding ₹40 lakh from the farmer, including ₹20 lakh that his father had availed. "The farmer told us that he was contemplating suicide and demanded that the Government waive crop loans immediately," he said.

Digvijay protest splits MP Congress

GIRISH SHARMA

■ Bhopal

A fresh controversy has erupted within the Madhya Pradesh Congress after former Chief Minister Digvijay Singh staged a protest in Indore's Shitlamata Market in support of Muslim traders, deepening fault lines between senior leaders and the party's local unit.

Singh, who visited the market on Saturday amid heightened tensions over the employment of Muslim workers, was stopped by police from entering the premises.

He then walked to the police station and submitted a memorandum seeking action against those accused of fomenting communal discord. During the protest, he was also seen engaging in a heated exchange with police officials. However, his intervention has not gone down well with the city Congress leadership. At a district coordination meeting held on Sunday, Indore Congress president Chintu Chouksey

expressed disapproval of senior leaders bypassing the local unit. Without directly naming Singh, he said, "If any leader comes to Indore and wants to take a stand on an issue, it must be decided in advance. We know the local circumstances best. From now on, no programme will be allowed without the city president's permission."

Former PCC chief and Union minister Arun Yadav also appeared to criticise Singh indirectly. In a social media post, Yadav argued that 'ideological and grassroots struggle' was essential to counter divisive politics, adding that unity and collective effort were necessary if Congress hoped to regain power in Madhya Pradesh. "The courage and honesty with which Rahul Gandhi is fighting – if even a fraction of that is reflected here, our path will become easier," he wrote.

The episode carries a personal backdrop as well. On Friday night, Singh had rebuked Raju Badauria, a close aide of Chouksey, for backing the removal of a Muslim stall at a Garba event, calling such conduct indiscipline and contrary to Congress's secular ethos. Despite being advised by close associates, including Raghu Parmar, not to proceed with the market visit, Singh reportedly insisted, "Are you going to decide what I should do? If you cannot take to the streets with courage, then why are you in politics?" While local leaders chose to remain silent during the meeting, Singh drew support from senior quarters. Leader of Opposition in Madhya Pradesh Umang Singh defected him, stating, "Digvijay Singh is a committed Congress leader. He has always stood by the party's ideology of secularism and harmony. His courage to speak against injustice should be respected, not criticised."

The developments underline the sharp divide within the Indore Congress – between those seeking to avoid confrontation in a politically sensitive city, and those, like Singh, who favour taking assertive positions on communal issues.





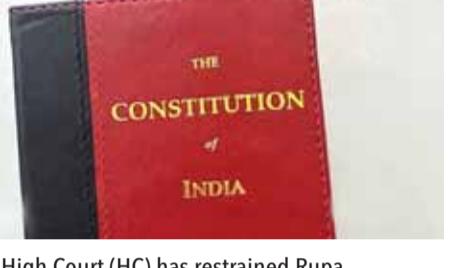
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Order Order

HC restrains Rupa from publishing, selling red-and-black edition of Constitution



The Delhi High Court (HC) has restrained Rupa Publications India Pvt Ltd from publishing or selling its red-and-black coat-pocket edition of the Constitution of India, after finding it "prima facie" similar to the same book published by Eastern Book Company. Justice Manmeet Pritam Singh Arora passed the interim injunction on a suit filed by Eastern Book Company (EBC), saying both publications makes it "prima facie evident" that the Rupa's trade dress or design was "deceptively similar" to the one adopted by the EBC.

"The defendant (Rupa) has adopted a similar colour scheme, text and font, gilt edging, book postene and embossed gold detailing. Considering, that the plaintiffs and the defendant operate in the same line of business, utilize identical trade channels and cater to the same class of customers, there exists a strong likelihood of confusion," the court said on September 25. He said a tabular comparison presented by the EBC showed Rupa had entirely copied the layout of its product without any independent creativity.

The judge restrained Rupa from manufacturing, publishing, marketing, selling or advertising its red-and-black coat-pocket edition of the Constitution by itself or by franchisees, dealers, distributors or agents.

The Judge further directed Rupa to remove and recall all its unsold inventory of the edition from the market and also remove its listings from all e-commerce platforms within two weeks and posted the matter for February 25, 2026.

HC stays NOIDA authority's letter asking DND developer to pay ₹100 cr over advt



The Delhi High Court (HC) has stayed a demand letter issued by NOIDA authority, seeking ₹100 crore from Noida Toll Bridge Company Limited, the developer of DND flyway, in alleged advertisement license fees. Justice Jasmeet Singh stayed in the interim, the letter issued by Outdoor Advertisement Department of New Okhla Industrial Development Authority (NOIDA), which had reportedly also called for the removal of outdoor advertisements displayed by the petitioner on the Delhi-NOIDA-Delhi (DND) Flyway.

"Prima facie, it seems that the petitioner has a right to display advertisements and the balance of convenience lies in favour of the petitioner. In case interim orders are not granted to the petitioner, it may cause irreparable damage and loss to the petitioner which cannot be compensated in terms of money," the court said in its September 25 order.

The court further said "no coercive measures shall be taken against the petitioner" pursuant to the letter of September 10, till the next hearing as it issued notice to the NOIDA authority, directing it to file a reply within four weeks. The court would hear the matter on January 16, 2026. On October 26, 2016 the Allahabad High Court stopped the petitioner from collecting user fee from commuters using the DND Flyway, which was later upheld by Supreme Court in December 2024.

X to appeal against Karnataka HC verdict dismissing petition against Govt takedown order

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ New Delhi

Social media platform X will appeal against Karnataka High Court's verdict dismissing its petition challenging the authority of Government officials to issue content takedown orders under the Information Technology Act.

Elon Musk-owned X through its official handle said orders issued by police officers to arbitrarily take down content from its platform through a "secretive online portal called the Sahyog" is a violation of Indian citizens' constitutional rights to freedom of speech and expression.

"X respects and complies

with Indian law, but this order fails to address the core constitutional issues in our challenge and is inconsistent with the Bombay High Court's recent ruling that a similar regime was unconstitutional," the social media platform said on Monday.

The Karnataka High Court had on Wednesday dismissed X Corp's petition challenging the authority of Government officials to issue content takedown orders under the Information Technology Act and maintained that social media needs to be regulated. The bench presided over by Justice M Nagaprassanna stressed on regulation of social media, especially in



Sahara seeks SC nod for sale of assets to Adani

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

■ New Delhi

The Sahara India Commercial Corporation Ltd (SICCL) has moved the Supreme Court (SC) seeking its permission to sell various properties, including Amby Valley in Maharashtra and Shahara Sahar in Lucknow, to Adani Properties Private Limited. The plea, which was mentioned for hearing recently, would likely come up on October 14.

"To outright sell various properties belonging to the Sahara Group to Adani Properties Private Limited, for the consideration and on the terms and conditions as set out in the term sheet dated September 6, 2025," said the petition filed by Sahara.

The interlocutory application, filed in the pending matters related to Sahara group, said pursuant to various orders passed by this court, from time to time and after taking the permission of this court through various orders, the SICCL and the Board of India (SEBI) to liquidate or sell Sahara Group assets, despite engaging reputed estate brokerage companies, the SICCL said the entirety of the funds deposited in the SEBI — Sahara Refund Account were



"Out of a total principal amount of ₹24,030 crore, the Sahara Group, by way of sale/liquidation of their movable and immovable assets have realised an amount of approximately ₹16,000 crore and deposited the same in the SEBI — Sahara Refund Account," it said.

Pointing to the inability of the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) to liquidate or sell Sahara Group assets, despite engaging reputed estate brokerage companies, the SICCL said the entirety of the funds deposited in the SEBI — Sahara Refund Account were

deposited through the sole efforts of and with great difficulty by the applicant and the Sahara Group.

The SICCL further said post the death of Sahara Group chief Subrata Roy in November 2023, the group lost its sole decision maker, who was until now, making all decisions on its behalf.

The family members of the late Subrata Roy were not involved in the day-to-day business operations and management of the Sahara Group so that their claims would be well satisfied and they receive maximum value. It, however, said the efforts did not yield any positive

result due to the prevailing market conditions, absence of viable offers and the pendency of multiple litigations, all of which collectively eroded buyer confidence and significantly impacted the marketability of the said properties. It said the efforts were further complicated with multiple investigating agencies having initiated inquiries against the family members of Late Subrata Roy and other senior officials of Sahara Group. Roy's wife and sons are settled in Macedonia for the seven years.

"The said parallel and uncoordinated actions are not only creating confusion, conflicting narratives and unwarranted doubt in the mind of investors/ depositors but are also effectively hampering and are likely to further hamper, the ongoing efforts of the Sahara Group to monetise its assets and comply with the directions of this court," the plea said.

The SICCL said the decision was taken in the interest of all stakeholders, most particularly in the interest of the investors in the Sahara Group. However, considering the family members desire to safeguard the interest of the investors, the Sahara Group

has decided that the assets of the Sahara Group be liquidated at the maximum value and in an expeditious manner to satisfy the orders passed by this court, to discharge the liabilities of the Sahara Group and put a close to the present contempt proceedings," it said.

The SICCL said the decision was taken in the interest of all stakeholders, most particularly in the interest of the investors in the Sahara Group. However, considering the family members desire to safeguard the interest of the investors, the Sahara Group

authorities. They were dealt with appropriate action through complaints across various jurisdictions to protect the group's assets and prevent any unauthorized transactions, it added.

Seeking approval of transactions as contemplated under the term sheet dated September 6, executed between the SICCL and Adani Properties Private Limited for the sale of 88 properties mentioned in the schedule, the group said the proposed transaction represents a significant breakthrough, not only in unlocking substantial value from the Sahara Group's key immovable assets, but also ensuring compliance with the financial obligations required to be fulfilled by the Sahara Group pursuant to court orders.

On September 12, the top court ordered the disbursement of ₹5,000 crore of over ₹24,030 crore deposited by Sahara Group with SEBI to repay dues of the depositors of the Sahara Group of Cooperative Societies. It had said the order was in line with the March 29, 2023 order where a similar application of the Centre was allowed for allocation of ₹5,000 crore to repay dues of the depositors of the Sahara Group of Cooperative Societies.

SC orders training for two Delhi judges over flawed bail to accused in ₹6 crore cheating case

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

■ New Delhi

Seeing series of flaws, the Supreme Court (SC) recently came down heavily on the manner in which bail was granted to a couple accused of duping a private company of over ₹6 crore. A Bench of Justices Ahsanuddin Amanullah and SVN Bhatti held that the Additional Chief Metropolitan Magistrate (ACMM) and the Sessions Judge of Karkardooma Court had failed to apply settled principles while granting and upholding bail to the accused. The Court directed that both officers undergo a minimum of seven days of training at the Delhi Judicial Academy.

The top court in its order dated September 25,

uploaded on Monday, also ordered a departmental inquiry into the conduct of the investigating officer after noting serious lapses on the part of the police. The investigating officer's stand in the bail proceedings "spoke volumes", the Court said while ordering the Delhi Police Commissioner to conduct a personal inquiry into the officer's role and take necessary action.

The dispute arose from allegations by a company that the accused-couple took ₹1.9 crore with the promise of transferring land, but later refused to return the money after it was discovered that the land had already been sold and mortgaged. With accrued interest, the company claimed its dues had reached over ₹6 crore.

The FIR was registered in 2018 and the couple's plea for anticipatory bail was dismissed by the Delhi High Court in 2023, with the Court severely criticising their conduct.

The High Court remarked that the couple misled courts for years by giving false undertakings to repay the amount while enjoying interim protection from arrest. Despite this, the ACMM in November 2023 granted them regular bail, reasoning that since the chargesheet had been filed, there was no need for custody. The Sessions Judge later upheld the order in August 2024 and the Delhi High Court also refused to interfere. The top court disapproved of this approach, noting that the lower courts had glossed

over the accused's prior misconduct and failed to consider the High Court's earlier observations.

The Bench underscored that bail matters must turn on facts and conduct, not mechanical reasoning. "Bail matters are primarily to be adjudicated on the facts and circumstances, before applying any principle of law. In light of the glaring factual matrix, bail ought not to have been granted," the Court said. Taking note of these lapses, the Bench quashed the bail orders of the ACMM, the Sessions Judge and the High Court and directed the accused to surrender within two weeks and directed the Commissioner of Police of Delhi to complete the inquiry against the investigating officer on priority.

Prajwal Revanna moves Karnataka High Court challenging conviction, life sentence in rape case

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

■ Bengaluru

Former MP and Janata Dal (Secular) leader Prajwal Revanna has approached the Karnataka High Court challenging his conviction for repeatedly raping his domestic help and recording videos of the act. Prajwal has also challenged the life sentence imposed on him by Bengaluru Additional City Civil and Sessions Judge Santhosh Gajanan Bhat on August 2.

Judge Bhat had sentenced him to life imprisonment for raping an old domestic worker. Prajwal is convicted for the offence of raping a domestic worker at two locations — one in his farmhouse in Holenarsipur's Gannigarah and another at Banashankari in Bengaluru. The incidents took place between January 1, 2021 and January 31, 2022. In his plea, he has claimed contradictions between the victim's complaint and testimony, alleging that the police forced the victim to file the complaint.

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He has questioned the reliability of evidence such as stains reportedly found on a bed years later. Prajwal has sought quashing of the trial court's verdict and setting aside of his conviction on the ground that the prosecution's case is full of inconsistencies and procedural lapses. Prajwal is facing

trial in several rape cases and his 100s of videos of sexual abuse incidents came to public domain in mid 2024 during Lok Sabha elections and he lost the election. Prajwal is grandson of former Prime Minister Deve Gowda, who ordered his expulsion from the party after videos came out in public domain.

Karnataka court, which will allow millions of police officers to issue arbitrary take-down orders through a secretive online portal called the Sahyog. "This new regime has no basis in the law, circumvents Section 69A of the IT Act, violates Supreme Court rulings, and infringes Indian citizens' constitutional rights to freedom of speech and expression.

The Sahyog enables officers to order content removal based solely on allegations of "illegality," without judicial review or due process for speakers, and threatens platforms with criminal liability for non-compliance," X said.

The social media firm said it is deeply concerned by the recent order from the

SC agrees to hear plea for permission to perform Urs at dargah in Gwalior

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

■ New Delhi

The Supreme Court (SC) has agreed to hear a plea challenging an order that refused to allow religious activities, including Urs, at the dargah of Hazrat Sheikh Muhammad Ghaus in Gwalior.

The Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) declared the dargah as a protected monument in 1962.

The plea challenging a June order of the Madhya Pradesh High Court at Gwalior came up for hearing before a bench of Justices BV Nagarathna and R Mahadevan, which issued notice to the Centre and others seeking their responses in the matter.

"Issue notice to the respondents on the special leave petition as well as on the interim prayer also," the bench said in its September 19 order.

The petitioner has challenged an order of a division bench of the High Court which dismissed the appeal against its single judge's order.

The single judge dismissed a plea seeking direction to the authorities to allow the petitioner and others to perform religious activity like Urs and Nazam at the site.

The High Court noted in its order that according to the petitioner, he was a legal heir of Hazrat Sheikh Muhammad Ghaus.

The petitioner informed the High Court that in the dargah, various religious and cultural activities were

performed for over last 400 years but subsequent to the ASI declaring the dargah as a protected monument, such activities were prohibited or curtailed.

The High Court noted that in March 2024, the petitioner submitted an application to the ASI requesting for permission for performing Urs at the dargah but the same was denied.

Before the High Court, the Centre's counsel said that tomb of Muhammad Ghaus was a centrally protected monument and was protected and maintained by the ASI.

The High Court noted that tomb of Muhammad Ghaus was situated in Gwalior and admittedly, it was a centrally protected monument and declared as national monument way back in 1962.

It further noted, in the premises, tombs of music maestro Tansen and Muhammad Ghaus were constructed.

"In fact it is the duty of the ASI and district administration to protect this monument of national importance with utmost care and strictness so that such ancient monument carrying history and culture into its ambit, be preserved for posterity," the High Court said.

The High Court said it deserves to be protected with utmost care and caution and no activity as sought by the petitioner could be permitted.

While dismissing the appeal, the High Court further said the petitioner had not challenged the ASI's March 2024 order which rejected his application.

Kerala HC raps TDB for lapses in Sabarimala

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

■ Kochi

The Kerala High Court (HC) on Monday found the lapses in handling valuables at the Sabarimala temple as "serious" and suggested a comprehensive inspection of the strong room led by a retired district judge.

A bench of Justices Raja Vijayaraghavan V and KV Jayakumar ordered the inquiry after the Travancore Devaswom Board (TDB) Vigilance Officer filed a report on Monday regarding the reduced weight of the gold-clad copper plates of the Dwarapalaka (guardian deity) idols at the hill shrine.

The gold-clad copper plates of the idols, when removed in 2019 for fresh

gold plating, weighed 42.6 kilograms. However, when they were produced before the company entrusted to carry out the gold-plating, their weight was 38.258 kg. The bench, which hears Devaswom-related cases, had earlier ordered a probe into the matter.

The court noted that temple records were not being properly maintained

further directed that repairs to the sanctum doors be carried out under the supervision of the temple's Executive Officer.

The Vigilance Officer also informed the court that the gold-coated pedestal (pedestal) of the Dwarapalakas, earlier reported missing, had been recovered from the house of sponsor Unnikrishnan Potty's relative. On this, the court clarified that the inquiry should not be limited to Potty but should also cover wider lapses in management and accountability.

The court additionally permitted the TDB to reinstall the gold-clad plates, which had been brought back from Chennai after repair works. The case will be considered again at the end of October.





Editor's TAKE

India victorious again and again

Beyond the thrill of sport, this win is a testament to skill, teamwork, and resilience – qualities that have united fans, leaders, and the country in shared pride

India is a country where cricket is no less than a religion, people pray for the victory of their team, and when the team wins, they are naturally elated and celebrate it as a festival. If the victory is over the arch-rivals Pakistan, the enthusiasm of fans is tenfold. People throughout the country came out in large numbers to celebrate the victory of the Indian team over Pakistan in the Asia Cup final.

Indeed, it was a well-deserved victory for India as it displayed resilience, skill, and composure under pressure moments to emerge victorious. The cricketing triumph often spills over to national pride, inspiring millions of youth across the country to channelise their energies in a constructive way.

The game was a spectator's delight. One witnessed breathtaking fielding, clever bowling variations, and batting performances that made it lift the cup. In the end, it was not just talent but determination and teamwork that secured India's well-deserved victory – virtues that are so much required for nation-building.

The celebrations that followed were as much a reflection of collective joy. Politicians across party lines congratulated the team for their spectacular success. Social media buzzed with congratulations from politicians, sports icons, and cultural figures, all emphasising that this victory was a tribute to India's spirit and talent.

Beyond the immediate thrill of victory, it also gives us a moment to ponder over the regional politics that are often marred by discontent and conflict. In fact, there was even a point of view that India should not play Pakistan. Thankfully, the game happened. If politicians can seize this moment to improve relations with the neighbours, it would be in everybody's favour.

Former prime minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee once famously said we can change our friends but not our neighbours; thus, we need to befriend Pakistan. Indeed, cricket can be a bridge that both countries can connect through. For the millions of fans who stayed glued to their screens, this victory is more than just a trophy; it is a shared celebration of identity, perseverance, and pride. It is a story of individuals coming together for a common goal, of discipline meeting opportunity, and of talent rising to the occasion.

Politicians, too, recognised this symbolic resonance, noting that victories like these inspire national unity and optimism, especially in times when the country seeks aspirational stories. India's Asia Cup triumph over Pakistan will be remembered not only for the thrilling match but also for the moment when two countries decided to set aside their differences and play the game in the spirit of the game. It would not be wrong to say that cricket transcends boundaries and brings together hearts and minds. If you have scores to settle, do it on a cricket ground!

Devi as nature, demon as destruction

In a world where exploitation and greed mirror the demons of old, Navratri is a reminder that true worship, true sacrifice, and true restoration begin with reverence for nature – and the courage to confront the poison within ourselves



ACHARYA PRASHANT

This Navratri, as the planet reels under record heatwaves, poisoned rivers, and collapsing forests, the hymn "Ya Devi Sarvabuteshu..." takes on an urgent meaning. We are not only invoking a distant goddess. We are calling upon the very breath that keeps us alive: the rivers, the winds, the forests, the food on our plate. The Durga Saptashati's third charitra says it without hesitation: when the demons Shumbh and Nishumbh were vanquished, rivers flowed clean, the air turned cool, and mountains and forests healed. The Goddess's victory was the Earth's restoration. The sages were not naïve. They saw that whenever adharma rises, an important casualty is nature. The health of rivers and the coolness of the wind are the truest measures of whether dharma or adharma rules. That is why the text ends its long battle not with the devas celebrating, but with the land itself breathing again.

After Mahishasura's death, the devas had rejoiced, but their joy was short-lived. New demons rose, and again the gods lost their dominion. What do they do when defeated? They do not persist in arrogance. They remember the Mother. On the banks of the Ganga in the Himalaya, they bow and pray: "O Devi, you dwell as strength in all beings, as memory, as intelligence, as hunger, as satisfaction. Whatever we see, whatever we feel, it is you."

This catalogue is deliberate. By naming hunger, memory, delusion, forgiveness, and even forgetfulness as Devi, the devas remind themselves: nothing here is outside prakriti. For us today, this is the forgotten lesson. The grain of rice, the sparrow, the soil, the monsoon, all are Devi. To forget this is to treat fragments of the world as independent, available for exploitation. To forget is to invite demons back into power.

Into this recognition comes the demon. Shumbh and Nishumbh, intoxicated with conquest, hear of a radiant woman wandering in the mountains. Their emissaries go to her with what they call a proposal. But the "proposal" is only a threat. If she will not come willingly, they will drag her by the hair. This is the heart of the rakshasa: to treat the sacred as an object of possession. No reverence, only appetite. This is no myth. We are the demons. We strip forests for contracts, divert rivers into pipelines, blast mountains for mining blocks. Shumbh and Nishumbh live wherever the earth is treated as property to be plundered rather than a mother to be revered.

The battle begins. A lesser demon is killed by the sound of Devi's voice. Others follow: Chanda and Munda, and finally Raktabija. Raktabija is the most profound symbol. Every drop of his blood births another of his kind. Strike him, and he multiplies.



Shows seekers who gave up food and comfort, who reduced indulgence as their offering. The real bali is to surrender what you cling to most: your body's indulgence, your ego's pride. Today, that means offering our greed. Not goats on an altar, but our addiction to plastics, flights, and fossil fuels. To kill an innocent animal is cruelty; to kill your own craving is worship.

Navratri, then, is not a seasonal carnival. It is a rehearsal of truth. Shumbh and Nishumbh are not figures of the past; they are present tendencies. They live wherever there is exploitation without love. Raktabija walks wherever harm multiplies by being mishandled. To worship Devi is to recognise her everywhere: in water, in air, in the sparrow, in the grain of rice. To worship Devi is to oppose what violates her: the ritual that calls violence "sacrifice", the appetite that calls plunder "progress", the indulgence that calls itself love. To worship Devi is also to restore: to cleanse, to absorb, to make whole what has been wounded.

The Durga Saptashati closes with two seekers, a king and a merchant. The king asks for his lost kingdom; the merchant asks for freedom. To both, the Mother replies: "Whatever you ask, I grant. But know this – liberation comes only through knowledge." Even Devi does not bypass this law. Bhakti, worship, sacrifice, all are meaningful only when they lead to clarity. Without right knowledge, the cycle of defeat and restoration repeats endlessly. With knowledge, the chain is broken. For our age too, this is the final lesson. The climate crisis is not of technology but of ignorance. We know how to plant trees and generate energy. What we do not know is how to restrain our greed. Without this knowledge, every solution becomes another problem, every cure another Raktabija.

Navratri is therefore not just about outer restoration. It is about inner illumination. Liberation is knowledge, and knowledge is restoration. Until man knows himself, no river will run clean, no forest will stand safe. To worship Devi is to end the demon within; only then will the earth be free.

LIBERATION IS KNOWLEDGE, AND KNOWLEDGE IS RESTORATION.
UNTIL MAN KNOWS HIMSELF, NO RIVER WILL RUN CLEAN, NO FOREST WILL STAND SAFE. TO WORSHIP DEVI IS TO END THE DEMON WITHIN; ONLY THEN WILL THE EARTH BE FREE

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PIC TALK



Devotees perform traditional rituals on Maha Saptami during the Durga Puja celebrations in Kolkata.

PHOTO: PTI

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DECLARE 'WET DROUGHT,' PROVIDE RELIEF TO MAHARASHTRA

Amid severe flooding and relentless rains across Maharashtra, the demand made by Congress Legislature Party (CLP) leader Vijay Wadettiwar for an immediate special session of the state legislature to discuss the escalating crisis and damage is both urgent and justified. The dire situation in Marathwada, Vidarbha, and western Maharashtra calls for the Government to declare a "wet drought" and announce a comprehensive relief and rehabilitation package for affected farmers and residents.

This natural calamity has left farmers and ordinary citizens in deep distress. Standing crops on over four lakh hectares have been destroyed, while farmlands have been washed away, rendering months of toil futile. Livestock losses, collapsed

houses, and casualties have further compounded the tragedy. Essential infrastructure has also been devastated: electric poles and power lines lie scattered, major roads linking villages and towns have caved in, and contaminated drinking water has triggered serious health risks.

In such circumstances, the Government must act decisively. Immediate fulfilment of previous promises of farm loan waivers, transparent and swift compensation for crop and property losses, and health safeguards are imperative. Relief should be based on thorough, ground-level assessments and delivered without bureaucratic delays. Maharashtra cannot afford half-measures. The people need urgency, empathy, and accountability.

BHAGWAN THADANI | MUMBAI

Please send your letter to the info@dailypioneer.com. In not more than 250 words. We appreciate your feedback.

The ontology of teaching and the burdened self



SAKSHI SETHI

2 THE PIONEER 2ND OPINION

In the towering edifice of education, teachers and school leaders are often portrayed as tireless sentinels – guardians of knowledge and architects of young minds. Yet behind the chalk-streaked hands, carefully drafted lesson plans, and calm demeanours lies a truth often overlooked: educators are not superhuman.

They are ordinary individuals, subject to the same anxieties, stress, and emotional upheavals as anyone else. Parental expectations, though rooted in care, frequently slip into the realm of the unrealistic. Many parents look to schools for an all-encompassing package – academic excellence, flawless character development, and thriving co-curricular participation. Teachers are expected to be endlessly patient, perpetually creative, and infi-

nately available. Few pause to consider the immense burden these demands place upon those already stretched thin. A teacher is far more than a conveyor of knowledge. They are mentors, counsellors, and sometimes even surrogate parents. Beyond the classroom, they balance lesson preparation, assessments, administrative duties, and the ever-shifting landscape of digital education. The pandemic amplified this reality. They are expected to resolve conflicts with Solomon – like wisdom, enforce discipline with delicacy, and oversee complex institutions with machine-like precision. To many, a school leader becomes less of a person and more of a system – programmed for endless productivity. Yet beneath the polished exterior lies a human being wrestling with sleepless nights, personal dilemmas, and the crushing responsibility of shaping an institution.

This tendency to view educators as functionaries reflects a troubling dehumanisation of the profession. It overlooks the daily emotional labour: the quiet encouragement offered to a timid child, the patient repetition of a concept until understanding blooms, or the discreet attention given to a struggling student's mental health. These gestures, rooted in empathy and connection, rarely feature in report cards or school rankings,

yet they define the essence of teaching. Like everyone else, teachers and school leaders require rest, validation, and compassion. A single word of appreciation from a parent, a gesture of trust, or even the acknowledgement of "you are doing enough" can rejuvenate a weary educator. It is time, therefore, to recalibrate the parent-teacher relationship from one of demand and delivery to one of partnership. The irony is striking: while schools emphasise emotional intelligence for students, society often disregards the emotional ecosystem of those who teach. Teachers may be showered with ceremonial praise, but in moments of difficulty, they are reduced to faceless professionals. What is needed is not episodic reverence but sustained recognition of their humanity.

As each school year unfolds, it is worth remembering: a teacher's smile may conceal exhaustion, and a principal's calm may hide turmoil. To humanise educators is not to excuse inefficiency but to affirm that they, too, deserve grace and understanding. Only when we accept that teachers are human and leaders are not machines can we nurture an education system rooted in compassion. A cared-for teacher, after all, is the surest catalyst for a cared-for generation.

The author is an educator and a councillor

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

West acknowledges Palestinian state

A wave of Western recognition of Palestine is in progress, with nations championing the cause of human rights and alleging that Israel is committing genocide in Gaza. Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu has termed "the calls to create a Palestinian state... constitute an absurd prize for terrorism".

Palestinians have endured Israeli occupation for decades. However, the unprovoked aggression by Hamas on October 7, 2023, killing 1,200 innocent Jews and taking 250 civilians hostage, was nothing but mayhem. How can Hamas terrorists kidnap, torture, rape and behead women and children, spit on their bodies, shout Allahu Akbar, and then claim martyrdom and a place in Jannah?

Such acts are evil personified, pure savagery. Israel does not believe in Gandhi's policy of turning the other cheek.

Their doctrine has been to retaliate twice as hard, a stance that enabled survival against Arab onslaughts in 1948, 1967 and 1973. After the inhuman atrocities of Hamas, mercy is far from Israeli minds. The ordinary people of Gaza remain the true sufferers. If Hamas truly cared for them, they would by now have returned the remaining hostages to Israel.

SUBRAT ROUT | MUMBAI

Film stars misjudge political support

This refers to the report "Political blame game clouds TN stampede". A tragic misconception by film stars in India is their belief that the large crowds flocking to see them are their devoted followers who will unquestioningly support them in politics.

Apart from MGR, NTR and Jayalalitha, no actor has really succeeded in politics or lasted long at the top. Yet, actors such as Vijay, Kamal Haasan, Rajnikant, Rajesh Khanna, Shatrughan Sinha and many others, whose fans gather in great numbers, have often mistaken such gatherings as a guarantee of votes.

The Karur tragedy, where fans of Vijay were killed in a stampede, reflects the dangers of this illusion. Such crowds consist of admirers, not necessarily voters. The belief that popularity on screen translates into political acceptance is deeply flawed.

Politicians must recognise that people today vote for ideology and governance, not stardom. It is time actors themselves acknowledged this truth, before more lives are lost to reckless displays of celebrity-driven politics. It is crucial that actors recognise the difference between cinematic popularity and political mandate to prevent further tragedies caused by celebrity-driven politics.

India wins T20 Asia Cup

Apropos the report "India crowned Asia Cup Kings" (The Pioneer, September 29, 2025). World Champions India added the T20 Asia Cup crown with a nerve-shredding five-wicket win over arch-rivals Pakistan in Dubai, a finale as dramatic as the rivalry itself.

Chasing 147, India were reeling at 20/3, with Abhishek Sharma, Suryakumar Yadav and Shubman Gill back in the pavilion within four overs.

But Tilak Varma, calm and composed, struck a nerveless 69 off 53 balls, anchoring the innings with support from Sanju Samson and later Shivam Dube. Together they stitched vital partnerships that swung the game decisively. Earlier, Pakistan looked strong at 113/1, but the Indian spin trio of Varun Chakravarthy, Kuldeep Yadav and Axar Patel ran through the middle and lower order, taking eight wickets between them. Kuldeep was the standout performer with 4/30, as Pakistan collapsed spectacularly to 146 all out in 19.1 overs.

Tilak's composure, capped by a last-over six off Haris Rauf, sealed the match and etched his name into India's T20 folklore. This nail-biting victory over Pakistan in the T20 Asia Cup final, anchored by a nerveless 69 from Tilak Varma, proved India's continued dominance in short-format cricket.

SANJAY CHOPRA | MOHALI



21st-century skills: India's passport to the future

India's youth stand at a precarious juncture. Armed with degrees but lacking essential 21st-century skills, they would be trapped in low-paying jobs. Unless education reforms, digital access, and skill-building initiatives are urgently scaled, the promise of a demographic dividend would be lost

DINESH SOOD

Ravi, a 22-year-old from Bihar, is the first in his family to graduate from college. He studied hard, passed his exams, and earned a degree in commerce. However, after two years of job hunting in Delhi, he still works as a delivery rider. His issue isn't a lack of effort; it's a lack of skills. Employers expect him to be proficient in Excel analytics, problem-solving, and communication in English, none of which were included in his curriculum.

Ravi's story isn't unique — it serves as a warning. India boasts the world's largest pool of young people, but without the right skills, this demographic advantage could turn into a demographic disaster.

Failure to act is not an option. The consequences of inaction will be dire: millions of educated but under-skilled youth will be trapped in low-paying jobs, igniting frustration and deepening inequality. Recently, we have seen unrest in Nepal, as well as earlier in Sri Lanka and Bangladesh, where jobless youth turn their anger against political elites. India must heed these warning signs.

The Employability Dilemma

According to the latest Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) data released on 15 September by the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI), unemployment among young women has increased significantly. The unemployment rate for urban females aged 15-29 has risen to 25.7 per cent, over 10 percentage points higher than the rate for young urban males, which stands at 15.6 per cent.

The India Skills Report 2025 presents a stark reality: only 55 per cent of India's youth are employable this year. Nearly one in two young Indians entering the job market is unprepared for roles requiring adaptability, digital fluency, and resilience. The National Skill Development Corporation warns of a projected shortfall of 29 million workers in high-demand sectors like artificial intelligence (AI), semiconductors, healthcare and wellness, and green technology.



The Pioneer
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This mismatch goes beyond technical skills. The World Bank has found that employers value problem-solving, collaboration, and emotional intelligence as highly as they do coding or engineering. Candidates possessing these "human skills" not only find jobs more easily but also tend to earn higher salaries.

The Innovation Gap

The lack of 21st-century skills also contributes to India's "ingenuity gap." Despite being the world's fourth-largest economy, India invests less than 0.7 per cent of its GDP in research and development, compared to 2.4 per cent in China and over 3 per cent in the US. As a result, while China filed nearly 800,000 patents in 2023, India managed to file barely 30,000.

This disparity is not due to a lack of creativity among Indian youth; rather, it stems from the educational system, which rarely fosters creative thinking. Rote learning and high-stakes exams leave little room for curiosity, design thinking, or problem-solving. Unless India incorporates these skills into its education system, it risks remaining a consumer of global innovations rather than a creator.

Why 21st-Century Skills Matter

The workplace is undergoing rapid transformation, leaving traditional textbooks far behind. As clerical roles decline, jobs in renewable energy, artificial intelligence, fintech, and biotech emerge as dominant forces. The Future Jobs Report 2025 makes it clear: nearly 40 per cent of today's skills will be obsolete by 2030.

Take Suman, a remarkable young woman from Rajasthan, who seized the opportunity to join a coding bootcamp run by a non-profit organisation. In just six months, she went from learning to write software to successfully leading a project team. Her emotional intelligence and collaborative skills — developed through intensive group work — enabled her to secure a remote position with a US-based company.

Stories like Suman's unequivocally demonstrate that 21st-century skills transcend mere employability; they embody dignity, confidence, and mobility. Research reinforces this, showing that students equipped with strong social-emotional skills excel academically, enjoy greater well-being, and are less susceptible to stress.

However, achieving these outcomes

demands systemic change. Significant infrastructure gaps persist: only 57 per cent of schools currently have access to computers, and a mere 54 per cent are connected to the internet. Rural schools are disproportionately affected; in many villages, children encounter a laptop only for the first time at exam centres. Additionally, teacher preparedness and training are woefully inadequate.

Many educators lack the digital literacy and pedagogical tools necessary to cultivate creativity and critical thinking. Overwhelmed by the need to complete syllabi, they often resort to rote teaching.

Social inequities exacerbate this divide, impacting gender, geography, and disabilities. Only 36 per cent of rural adolescent girls own a smartphone, severely limiting their access to digital learning opportunities. Tribal students and children with disabilities frequently face a lack of accessible content.

Moreover, outdated assessment systems continue to prioritise memorisation over innovation. Until these assessments evolve, schools will have little incentive to focus on problem-solving or collaboration.

To confront these challenges head-on,

we must take decisive action on five critical fronts:

- Curriculum Reform: 21st-century skills must be treated as foundational — essential, not optional or vocational. They should be integrated across all subjects, rather than tacked on as separate modules.
- Teacher Empowerment: We must revise training frameworks, provide ongoing professional development, and equip teachers with the digital and social-emotional learning tools they need to succeed.
- Equity and Access: Bridging the digital divide is imperative. We need to implement low-cost innovations such as offline content, peer-led clubs, and multilingual resources.
- Assessment Innovation: It is crucial to shift towards project-based evaluations, portfolios, and digital badges that accurately reflect creativity, teamwork, and problem-solving abilities.
- Partnerships: We must leverage CSR funds, edtech platforms, and industry collaborations to scale pilot programmes and embed essential skill sets into national initiatives.

A National Imperative

This is not just about making Indian youth employable; it is fundamentally about nation-building. Establishing a robust skilling ecosystem is essential for generating jobs domestically while preparing our youth for employment-linked migration, as Western countries actively seek skilled workers. This "circular flow of talent" will undoubtedly enrich India through remittances, cross-cultural experiences, and global networks, transforming our demographic dividend into a strategic global advantage.

Ravi's frustration and Suman's success underscore a critical truth: skills differentiate stagnation from mobility and despair from dignity. If India seizes this moment, our young people can emerge as the world's most dynamic workforce, propelling not only national growth but also global progress.

The choice is clear, and the path forward is undeniable. The imperative is not whether India can afford to invest in 21st-century skills, but how swiftly and effectively it can do so. The time for action is now. It is our responsibility to ensure that every student is equipped with the skills necessary to thrive in the 21st century.

How India's IT sector can thrive amid Trump's H-1B roadblock

SANDEEP
JOSHI

When the US administration recently announced a staggering \$100,000 fee on new H-1B visa applications, it sent shockwaves across the global technology sector. For India, whose IT industry has long relied on the H-1B programme to deploy skilled professionals to the United States, the announcement initially triggered alarm. The immediate concern was clear: such an unprecedented increase in costs could disrupt the business models of Indian IT firms, undermine competitiveness, and severely limit opportunities for talented professionals seeking positions in Silicon Valley and other US tech hubs. Yet, as the initial shock subsides, a deeper perspective emerges. What appears to be a formidable barrier may, in fact, represent a historic opportunity for India's technology sector. By compelling a reconsideration of the decades-old dependence on sending talent abroad, the new H-1B fee could catalyse structural changes that strengthen domestic innovation, retain top talent, expand offshore delivery capabilities, and reposition India as a global technology powerhouse.

The immediate financial implications are undeniable. Analysts estimate that large Indian IT firms could face additional immigration costs ranging from \$150 million to \$550 million annually. For companies that operate with already thin project margins, this is a substantial disruption. However, India's IT sector has consistently demonstrated resilience in the face of external shocks. From navigating the Y2K scare to weathering the 2008 global financial crisis, the industry has repeatedly turned crises into opportunities, recalibrating business models and emerging stronger. This latest challenge is likely to follow the same trajectory. Instead of sending large numbers of engineers to the US at prohibitive costs, companies are expected to increasingly execute projects domestically. India's vast pool of highly skilled professionals can deliver world-class results at a fraction of the expense, making it economically sensible to shift project execution home. This recalibration transforms India from a support base into the core engine of global technology delivery. A key driver of this transformation is the growth of Global Capability Centres (GCCs), also known as captive centres. These offshore hubs, established by multinational corporations to manage technology, innovation, and



back-office functions, already represent a \$60 billion industry in India, employing more than 1.6 million professionals. Rising costs of US staffing will further tilt the balance in India's favour. Projections suggest GCCs could grow into a \$100 billion sector by 2030, providing employment for nearly three million people. This is more than revenue growth — it signals a structural realignment in global technology delivery, with India emerging as the anchor point for multinational operations. Perhaps the most profound long-term effect of the H-1B order lies in its potential impact on India's talent pool. For decades, some of the country's brightest minds migrated abroad, particularly to Silicon Valley, in search of better opportunities. This outward flow created innovation gaps at home, depriving India of the ability to fully harness its intellectual capital. The steep visa fee may reverse this trend, encouraging talented professionals to remain in India or return from abroad. Such repatriation could significantly strengthen India's position in emerging technologies including artificial intelligence, cybersecurity, semiconductor design, financial technology, and advanced software engineering.

Historical precedent supports this expectation. Earlier US visa restrictions led to a 27 per cent increase in foreign affiliate employment within India, translating into high-value domestic jobs. By creating meaningful opportunities locally, Indian IT firms can retain talent and deploy it to develop globally competitive solutions from Indian soil, thereby transforming the perceived disadvantage of US policy into a strategic advantage. The visa disruption also compels companies to rethink broader business strategies. With nearly 57 per cent of Indian IT export earnings currently concentrated in the US, the industry is vulnerable to policy shifts in Washington. The new fee serves as a catalyst for geographic diversification, encouraging firms to expand into Europe, Asia-Pacific, the Middle East, and Africa, while exploring nearshoring options in Canada and Mexico. By spreading risk and broadening their global footprint, Indian IT companies can enhance resilience and strengthen influence across multiple markets.

Simultaneously, rising costs of onsite staffing will accelerate technology-driven efficiencies. Companies are likely to invest more aggressively in automation, artificial intelligence, machine learning, and cloud-based delivery models. Reducing dependence on the physical relocation of workers enhances productivity, scalability, and speed, transforming India's IT sector into a leaner, digitally empowered powerhouse. What was intended as a barrier thus becomes a catalyst for operational innovation.

Government intervention will be crucial in converting this challenge into a long-term advantage.

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How Pakistan turned on Kashmir's killers

MANOJ
RAGHUVANSHI

Pakistan has long carried a reputation for betrayal. But when one of its prime terrorists speaks of being betrayed, the story demands attention. In February 1991, this journalist sat down with Bitta Karate (Farooq Ahmed Dar), the notorious butcher of Kashmiri Pandits, in Kot Bhalwal Jail. Decoding his revelations took time, but what emerged exposed a grim nexus of fanaticism, manipulation, and treachery.

Bitta Karate, a self-confessed fanatic, admitted to killing 20 people, most of them Kashmiri Pandits. When asked hypothetically if he would have killed his own brother or mother, he answered without hesitation: yes. He executed these murders under orders from his 'Area Commander', Ishfaq Majid Wani, who was later killed in an encounter. J N Saxena, then DGP of Jammu & Kashmir, described him as a "compulsive killer" capable of gruesome acts even in front of women and children.

But the deeper story was one of betrayal. Bitta revealed that in 1988, when he crossed into Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (POK) for training, Pakistan had promised him that, while he caused mayhem inside the Valley, they would attack India from the outside. That promise was never kept. "Babut dhokha hua hai," he said — a profound sense of being deceived.

This betrayal was not personal; it was systemic. Pakistan switched support from the Jammu & Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF) to Hizb-ul-Mujahideen, transferring weapons, resources, and strategic cover. The shift coincided with the December 1989 kidnapping of Rubaiyya Sayeed, daughter of the then Union Home Minister. Suddenly, JKLF found itself opposed not only by India and Hizb but also by the aggrieved Kashmiri Hindus.

While both JKLF and Hizb originated from the same jihadi network and ostensibly championed 'Kashmiriyat,' their end goals diverged sharply. JKLF sought an independent Kashmir, whereas Hizb aimed for merger with Pakistan. Initially, Pakistan leveraged JKLF's secessionist sentiment to spark unrest.

But once violence escalated, Pakistan switched allegiance to Hizb, ensuring that Kashmir would align with its own strategic interests. JKLF's idealistic jihad was discarded for Pakistan's pragmatic agenda.

The consequences were devastating. The fall



of JKLF led to a decline in popular support among Kashmiri Muslims, while Hizb's deadlier presence intensified the terror. During Rubaiyya's captivity, intelligence and policing in the Valley collapsed. Once she was released in exchange for five terrorists, the atmosphere became lethal for Hindus. On the night of 19-20 January 1990, mosques broadcast a stark ultimatum: convert, die, or leave. Pandits, facing killings, abductions, and assaults, fled en masse, abandoning homes, jobs, and possessions.

In response, the central government appointed Jagmohan as Governor, imposing central rule to restore order. His decisive action on Republic Day 1990 shoot-at-sight orders for violators — sent jihadis scrambling and prevented a declaration of an "independent Islamic Republic" of Kashmir.

Bitta Karate later realised why Pakistani trainers had blindfolded recruits in POK: Pakistan had been orchestrating a double game all along, training JKLF and Hizb cadres simultaneously while planning JKLF's destruction. For the terrorists, it was a lesson in cold betrayal.

In the end, the story of Bitta Karate is one of mirrored treachery. Monsters like him betrayed their homeland through violence, while Pakistan betrayed the very instruments of that violence. It was a lesson in fanaticism, manipulation, and the brutal reality that in this theatre of terror, loyalty was always conditional — and betrayal, inevitable.

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FIRST
Column

BANK IN BLACK



On September 17, 2025, State Bank of India (SBI), the country's largest lender, reaped hefty gains from an emergency rescue mission. It was possibly forced on it by the Government, which wished to prevent a banking panic. In March 2020, SBI paid ₹10 per share to buy a 49 per cent stake in Yes Bank, an ailing private bank that was on the brink of a complete collapse. Well, there was no option. The private bank had to be saved, the banking system needed to survive. SBI, being the Government's banker, had to step in.

Almost 66 months later, India's largest bank sold a minor 13.18 per cent of Yes Bank to Japan's Sumitomo Mitsui Banking Corporation for more than twice the price. Earlier too, SBI got rid of the shares in piecemeal fashion, and now own just over 10 per cent in Yes Bank. According to media reports, the windfall may ensure that SBI remains India's most profitable company in the July-September quarter. It topped the June quarter chart with a post-tax profit of ₹19,160 crore, comfortably ahead of Reliance Industries' ₹17,904 crore.

"Banks aspire to keep cost-to-income ratio below 50 per cent through the cycle. The Yes Bank stake sale offer is locked in at ₹21.5/share (compared to purchase price of ₹10). This is a binding contract and the period has not lapsed yet," states a report by ICICI Securities. SBI's stock price bumped a few notches on the day the deal was announced. In fact, since August 29 this year, the share price has zoomed by over 8.5 per cent in four weeks. The rise is much higher, at nearly 13 per cent, in the past six months.

SBI delivered a decent quarterly performance, supported by healthy broad-based loan growth, and improved profitability. This was on the back of strong operating efficiency, amid high provision expense in a seasonally weak quarter. According to PL Capital, the bank's asset quality remains strong, as net slippages were 20 basis points lower at 49 basis points despite Q1 generally seeing more stress. The Net Interest Income was ₹40.7 billion, while the Net Interest Margin was weaker at 2.76 per cent compared to PL Capital estimates. Loans grew 11.9 per cent year-on-year and deposits rose 11.7 per cent. Overall, PAT (Profit After Tax) came in at ₹191.6 billion.

According to LKP Securities, the bank's management maintains its guidance of credit growth to be 12-13 per cent in FY26, supported by the corporate segment with a pipeline of Rs 7 trillion. The bank remains confident in maintaining RoA (Return on Assets) and RoE (return on Equity) levels above one per cent and 15 per cent, respectively.

While the growth in express credit cards is muted, SBI plans to grow the unsecured personal loan segment, especially among Government employees. The bank expects continued robust growth in home loans. Gold loans, which have turned into a fad due to continuous rise in gold prices, are being pursued as an opportunistic growth area, driven by market demand and price increases.

"The bank believes that the cost of deposits has peaked at 5.2 per cent (five per cent in Q1-FY25), while slight increase is expected due to customers locking in fixed deposits," states a recent report by LKP Securities. Like a few others, SBI Research has recently urged the central bank to cut interest rates due to benign retail inflation, and GST 2.0 that will keep prices suppressed. There is merit in a rate cut because the impact of the American tariffs is showing in the country's economic activity. Others have urged caution, and status quo.

According to Emkay Securities, on the corporate front the bank expects recovery momentum to continue, leading to a steady decline in NPAs (Non-Performing Assets), and thus lower credit cost. "The bank projects credit growth of ~12 per cent (with an upward bias), led by corporate credit growth at 10-11 per cent, and MSME (mid-level and small-scale units) growth at 19-20 per cent," it adds.

However, the Net Interest Margin is likely to be U-shaped, moderating in Q1 and Q2, before improving, as deposit repricing and CRR (Cash Reserve Ratio) benefits aid margins. Some of the brokerages expect a margin of three per cent in FY26. The bank seems optimistic about the future growth trajectory, which will be led by a revamped digital offering, and demand revival due to the ongoing festive season and tax benefits. "Personal gold loan growth jumped 79 per cent Year-on-year (up 27 per cent Quarter-on-Quarter), though (it was) off a low base. Share of personal gold loans has reached 1.5 per cent versus 1.2 per cent in Q4-FY25, and 0.9 per cent in Q1-FY25," according to a report by ICICI Securities.

"SBI is well-positioned to capitalise on improving macro conditions. Hence, we reiterate our BUY rating... with a Sum-of-the-Parts (SOTP)-based target price of ₹ 908," states a report by LKP Securities. "While most banks surprised negatively on core earnings for Q1-FY26, SBI delivered superior results. (Hence) we keep... SOTP-based TP (Target Price) at ₹960," states a report by PL Capital. The current price is around ₹870.



Walls can hear, see, speak, walk

OUR TAKE

There was a time, not too long ago, when the idea of home appliances that could think for themselves, and for you, felt like science fiction. Sci-fi movies showed refrigerators that knew the households' grocery lists, and TVs that spoke back, and listened to the owners. For most of us, it was fantasyland, sometime in the future. A few days ago, standing inside Samsung's flagship store in Mumbai's famed Bandra-Kurla Complex, the distance between sci-fi imagination and reality suddenly felt constricted, abridged, and narrow.

At an event, "AI Home: Future Living, Now," the Korean phone and home appliances giant demonstrated how Artificial Intelligence (AI) can now allow control of several devices, both personal, and home-related, from a single location, generally the mobile. The so-called future tomorrow was in the grasp of the present, everyday life. Samsung calls it the convergence of Galaxy AI, Vision AI, and Bespoke AI, which are tied together through its SmartThings platform. On the surface it sounds like tech jargon. But one cannot deny that this is the new smart age of AI.

Do not get too excited. AI still has not reached the innovation stage, when it can receive and act on flashy commands, though we do have Alexa, Siri, Assistant, and Bixby. The multi-gadget software is more about subtle observations. It studies households' routines, learns the rhythms and ways of how the members spend their days and nights, and translates the patterns, trends, and knowledge into action. In a sense, it is a giant extension of the Internet of Things.

For example, an AC, is still considered by many as a cold box with a remote. One turns it off and on, swings it up and down, left to right, and controls the temperature. Samsung shows how AI can help the owner to determine how

long the AC runs, and switch it off via the mobile, even if the operator is thousands of miles away. The data that the AI collects over time constitute the first few steps towards slashing electricity bills, and pushing households, without their knowledge, toward less power usages, and energy efficiencies.

The refrigerator is a case of more and intense intimacy. AI can obviously control the temperatures, and convertibles. It can also now focus on behaviours. How often does a household use it? How many times is the door, or doors, opened and shut? What is the 'normal' usage of the appliance? What happens if the refrigerator's behaviour changes suddenly? What if it is being opened more often at night? No need to turn on the lights, late at night, to find out, like in that lamp advertisement, with the tagline, 'Roshni data Bajaj.'

In a world where families are often scattered across nations and cities, where sons and daughters are forced to live separately from elderly parents, or parents from theirs, the behaviour patterns can relate to emergencies, and inculcate a new era of care. A son or daughter can figure out if elderly parents are maintaining their daily routines. No need to call or check, because sometimes people lie or speak the half-truth. Just look at the refrigerator patterns.

A simple door sensor becomes an early warning system. Through the mobiles, the children are alerted if something is amiss. For example, what if the fridge has not been opened for hours, especially during lunchtime and dinnertime? What if the AC was not switched on during the night, or switched on for 18 hours continuously?

Of course, once you open such doors, philosophically and metaphorically, the possibilities are endless. AI's flagging of unusual

behaviours can lead to light-hearted scenarios. Imagine a future, as we sketched out earlier, when late-night fridge raids are no longer secret. A wife, who is checking on how many times the husband or the teenage child opens the fridge during the night, may not be Samsung's punchline, but it is hard to ignore the comic potential.

The technology is designed for efficiency and care, yet in its quiet way it holds up a mirror to our habits, both the mundane and mischievous. At the centre of this AI ecosystem is the smartphone. Once a device for calls, texts, data, and entertainment, it is the nervous system of a modern lifestyle, and the modern home. It is the screen through which data turns into insights. The remote control is always within reach for instant action or reaction. The hub that binds home appliances into singular, interconnected intelligence.

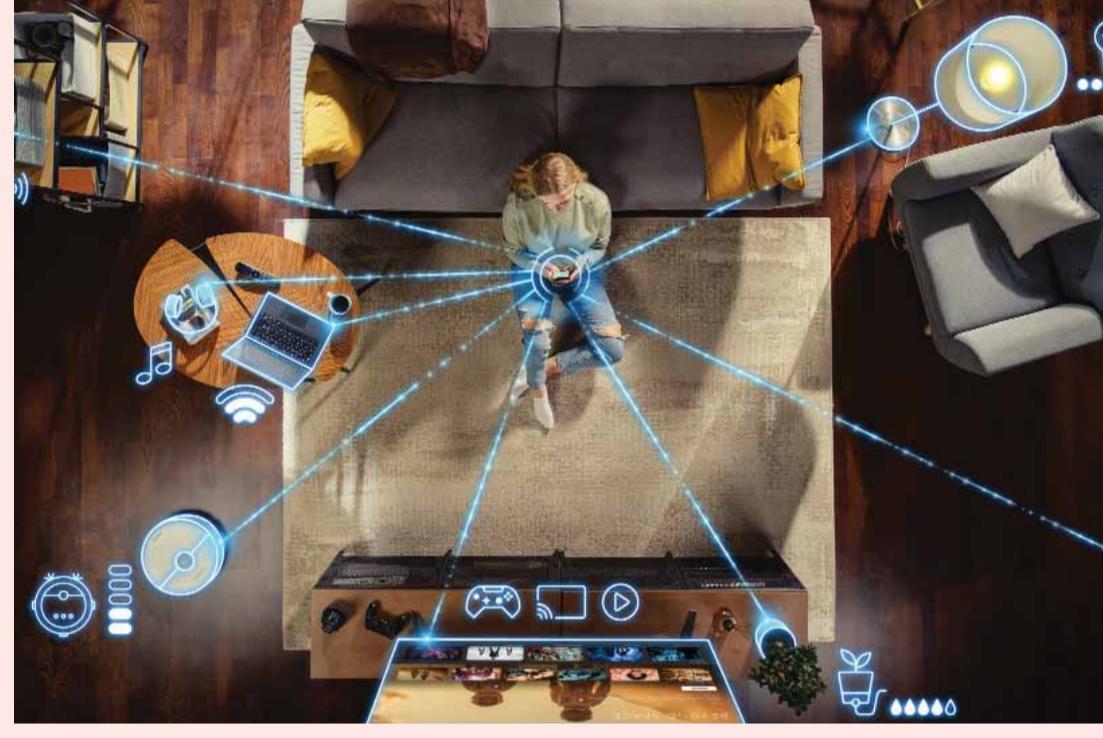
The fridge quietly gathers data, AC coldly optimises usage, and the phone, in its own inimitable manner interprets, alerts, and acts. So, we stand at a curious corner at a monumental moment. AI is no longer a concept reserved for workplaces, labs, and distant tech conferences. It is not just about productivity in factories, loss of jobs, and reskilling needs. It is not confined to GDP growth. It is not just related to professions that may vanish in the future.

AI is slipping right into the centre of your life. Without much ado, and fanfare, it is becoming a part of you, like breathing, heartbeat, pulse rate, flow of blood, and walking and sleeping. As the body tracks such data on a second-by-second basis, analyses it, interprets it, and initiates action, so does AI with your lifestyles. Your body cannot function without monitoring and interpretation. Your life will cease without the AI in your mobile in the future.

Today, AI may track the number of times you open the fridge, or the number of hours the AC is on. Tomorrow, it may map water usage, anticipate health problems, and suggest lifestyle changes without a prompt, or as proactive elements. Each step feels like a small step, almost invisible, but may turn out to be a giant leap. Unless one steps back, and realises that the home has become a living organism that listens, remembers, thinks, and occasionally advises.

Samsung's event in Mumbai, therefore, is not really about a brand's growing AI ecosystem. It is not about AI's growing influence. Think of it as a transformation when the fantastical becomes real and routine. We become Marvel superheroes in unique ways. We sense others, even as the latter's homes understand them. Like in particle physics, we can act even if we are light years away. Like biology, there is an interconnected life, where one influences the other.

Sci-fi imagined homes and workplaces that knew us better than we knew ourselves. These homes are slowly taking concrete shape, brick by brick, gadget by gadget, appliance by appliance. They are being built in our neighbourhoods, waiting for the moment when we notice, or fail to do so, just how alive are our walls. They once said that walls can hear. With AI, they can see, speak, and walk.



Viewpoint

A new Mistry for House of Tata



Call it an intricate, intriguing, involved, and interesting story about the House of Tata. It has a few cracks, which require the involvement of a new Mistry. There are a few Jacks, like in a pack of cards, who feel they can usurp the existing Queens, Kings, and Aces. A hack, in the form of a cyberattack, has left a leading jewel in the empire prone to a huge loss.

Mix in a few financial quacks, who have influenced the forthcoming, high-flyer IPO (Initial Public Offering) of Tata Capital, which involves the sale of shares by the parent, Tata Sons.

Now, one gets a sense of the plot that engulfs the Tata Group. It includes different families, professionals, trustees, and technocrats, apart from the usual crop of regulators, and industry shakers.

Tata Sons, the holding company that owns stakes in most of the empire's most-expensive jewels, is warped in egoistic and regulatory concentric circles. The Reserve Bank of India wants the company to be listed, and the last date is today. Over the years, the company has resisted, and even changed its operations and strategy to wriggle out of the RBI's listing clutches.

It became debt-free, and put in an application to get rid of the non-banking financial company status, which makes it imperative to go public. Tata Trusts, which own a majority in Tata Sons, have categorically asked the latter not to get its shares listed. The Mistry family, which is a minority but powerful shareholder, wants the opposite. Listing will unlock the value of its stake in Tata Sons, and help the Mistry to repay its debts.

Mistry has a long-standing love for the Tata family, which led to the late Ratan Tata anointing the late Cyrus Mistry as the Tata Group's head.

Hate spread because of ego issues and personality clashes, and Cyrus was thrown out in an unceremonious manner.

Now, Tata needs Mistry's help to avoid the listing of Tata Sons. The central bank has hinted that if the shareholders reach a consensus, it may be prone to withdraw its regulatory dictat.

There have been recent overtures between the two groups, with Tata Sons' chairman having reportedly met the Mistry family.

There is a succession change in the Mistry family, with Pallon Mistry, the son of patriarch Shapoorji Mistry, having taken over the reins,

and Firoz Mistry, son of Cyrus, having joined the opera-

tions of the trusts, and sideline Noel Tata, who took over after Ratan's demise, and his supporters.

Several trustees, who held allegiance to Ratan, have resigned, possibly due to Mehli-Noel differences, and Noel is slowly inculcating his children in the minor

trusts, possibly as a prelude to the entry in the major ones, which hold substantial stakes in Tata Sons.

Clearly, Noel is trying to spread his influence and control; Mehli prob-

ably feels he holds Ratan's legacy, and; Tata Sons chairman, a Ratan nominee and a pro-

essional, is insecure in some ways.

Yet another angle cannot be ignored.

During Ratan's fight with Cyrus, and after it,

the Tata Trusts gained crucial powers over Tata Sons. They do not wish to give them up;

a public listing will bring Tata Sons under greater regulatory and shareholders' scruti-

ny, which may force the trusts to back off in the future. Sources contend that since the

trusts depend on dividends from Tata Sons to fund their welfare activities, they wish to

retain control over the inflows. In the recent

past, the trusts needed to dig into their

reserves to fund their programmes. This was

possibly due to the impact of the Covid pan-

demic, which depressed businesses and

profits for a short while. Tussles within Tata

Trusts, and with Tata Sons, both overtly and

covertly, will need to be resolved by Tata and Mistry families, as well as powerful professionals and technocrats in the group.

Tata Motors, which gained immensely

from GST 2.0, like other automakers, lost the

momentum. Its plants in Europe, which

make premium cars, were hit by a cyber-

attack, whose impact dragged on for a longer

period than originally envisaged. In addition,

there was no insurance cover, and billions of

dollars seem to be at stake. The premium cars

face global backlash due to the environment

in China and India. The European operations

have dragged down Tata Motors' consolidat-

ed performances for years. The hack seems

to have complicated the group's strategy,

which is being sidetracked by the events in

Tata Sons and Tata Trusts, among other things.

Only yesterday did the Jaguar-Land Rover

operations begin to limp back to normal, after

a \$2 billion support from the UK Government.

Finally, the financial quacks surrounding,

and hovering around, Tata Capital, have

ruined its IPO. A few weeks ago, the grey

market price of the share ruled at over Rs

1,000. It is now down by a third. The down-

ward movement partially pressured Tata

Capital to announce a price band of just over

₹300, which marks a huge discount over the

price of the unlisted shares in the grey

market. This has trimmed down the issue size and, thus, may reduce the earnings of Tata Sons, which wishes to divest a part of its stake in Tata Capital. Experts contend that the group feared that its unlisted valuation was quite high compared to its peers, and it reduced the issue price band. The market too has faced volatile conditions, and foreign investors have taken out money from stocks in the past few months.

Past experiences indicate that aggressive IPO pricings of financial and other firms have proved harmful to investors. In many cases, the list prices did not offer any upside benefits.

Tata Capital does not want to be in the same boat, and seems happy with less-aggressive pricing. An expert told a newspaper that Tata Capital's price band shows a shift towards conservative IPO pricing, even for a strong company with a "diversified lending stock, and strong parentage backing its

operations."

Still, the buyers in the unlisted market face losses of up to 70 per cent. They may allege manipulations in the grey market. This may prove to be one of the reasons for the market regulator to intervene, and address the issues related to the grey market. At present, some of the pre-IPO private sales are unregulated.

Untold story of BSNL's 15-year delay in 4G installation



J. GOPIKRISHNAN

On Saturday (September 27), after 15 years of delay, Prime Minister and Chief Ministers launched a nationwide implementation of 4G network of BSNL. What caused such a huge delay in implementation of 4G in state-owned BSNL, while three years ago private networks launched 5G? It is an untold story. It is a story of how a mammoth PSU was kept out from implementation of 4G network for the benefit of private operators.

Let us begin the untold story of 4G. First of all there is no 4G in India. BWA (Broadband Wireless Access) mechanism was conveniently named 4G, a typical Indian *jugad*. In mid-2010, after the 2G scam, the government was forced to auction 3G spectrum and BWA spectrum. After the auction was over, Mukesh Ambani's Reliance acquired a company which got BWA spectrum and slowly named it as a new telecom company — Reliance Jio.

State owned BSNL and MTNL which were not supposed to participate in the auction, bought the 3G and BWA at the highest price arrived at the auction. But then manipulations started and even the Employees' Unions were allegedly playing to the gallery. Employees started holding strikes claiming dues and demanded that the BWA spectrum be returned and money used for paying the dues. The UPA Government Cabinet in 2011 allowed BSNL and MTNL to return the BWA spectrum and get around ₹16,000 crore to pay the dues.

And UPA Government's Cabinet in 2012 also equated BWA spectrum with other traditional spectrums to benefit



Reliance Jio to get full-fledged access in telecom industry. But there were issues in allotment of BWA spectrum to the Reliance firm by allowing a takeover of Mahendra Nahata's firm, Infotel Broadband. The Comptroller and Auditor General's (CAG) office questioned how Nahata's company with an annual turnover of just ₹18 lakh paid ₹250 crore

bank guarantee to attend the BWA auction and how it paid more than ₹12,000 crore as spectrum fee after winning the auction. In January 2014, The Pioneer published all details of CAG findings exposing the dubious details.

The CAG clearly said that ₹250 crore bank guarantee from Axis Bank was not

originally from Nahata's company. Many complaints in different forums and in courts delayed the launch of Reliance Jio.

Eventually, the case was disposed off by the Supreme Court and Reliance Jio started the launch in September 2016. How the three-year-long cases got

settled is a story of another day.

Meanwhile, in 2012, Airtel which also got BWA spectrum, conveniently named it as '4G' and was an early bird in the '4G' launch. It was just through a press release, followed by advertising blitz, Airtel renamed BWA as '4G'. There was no 4G spectrum auction or 4G spectrum farming. Only the name BWA was

changed to '4G'. Typical Indian *jugad*! In 2018, the BJP government declared a ₹80,000-crore revival package for BSNL and MTNL, terming them as strategic assets. So the government decided to give back the surrendered BWA spectrum, now already known as '4G' spectrum, to these ailing PSUs. By this time, all private operators had placed themselves firmly in the '4G' category and the majority of the BSNL and MTNL customers had already shifted to the private operators.

Proceedings in BSNL and MTNL were typically slow despite government support. The Covid pandemic for two years also impacted their progress. However, in 2022, BSNL started 4G activities in association with TCS, which was also a single tender process.

As relation with China collapsed due to the Galwan Valley skirmishes of 2020, Chinese equipment were scrapped and European equipment got prominence in BSNL supply. By this time, the private operators had launched 5G on October 1, 2022.

Though BSNL is taking over many MTNL operations in Delhi and Mumbai, the total merger of the two has not yet happened. Better late than never, BSNL launched 4G on September 27, 2025 by installing 97,500 towers, claiming it to be 'Swadeshi' 4G' at an expense of ₹37,000 crore — after 15 years.

The current data of mobile phone subscribers as on July 2025 reveals the total subscribers in India is at 1163.51 million with Reliance Jio holding 41.04 per cent share, followed by Bharti Airtel at 33.65 per cent and Vodafone Idea at 17.52 per cent. The BSNL is presently having only 7.77 per cent share and MTNL a minuscule 0.03 per cent.

Ultimately, it seems, the business of private operator has boomed due to the 15-year-delay BSNL faced.

Author is a Senior Journalist with The Pioneer.

Industrial production grows 4 pc in August: Govt data

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
■ New Delhi

India's industrial production grew at 4 per cent in August, mainly due to better performance by the mining sector, according to government data released on Monday.

The Index of Industrial Production (IIP) growth rate for July has been revised upwards to 4.3 per cent from the earlier estimate of 3.5 per cent. In August 2024, the IIP recorded flat growth.

"With the mining sector growth at 6 per cent, the All India Index of Industrial Production (IIP) recorded a 4 per cent year-on-year growth in August 2025," the National Statistics Office (NSO) said.

The mining sector output in August 2024 had shrunk by 4.3 per cent.

The manufacturing sector, which accounts for more than three-fourths of the index, expanded by 3.8 per cent in August this year, up from 1.2 per cent in the year-ago month.

Manufacturing of 'basic metals' and 'motor vehicles, trailers and semi-trailers' reported a healthy growth of 12.2 per cent and 9.8 per cent, respectively.

The NSO data further showed that the growth in the electricity segment was 4.1 per cent against a decline of 3.7 per cent in August 2024.

During the April-August period of the current fiscal, the IIP growth was slower at 2.8 per cent compared to 4.3 per cent in the year-ago period.

Aditi Nayar, Chief Economist, Icra, said that



despite a low base, the IIP growth unexpectedly eased to 4 per cent in August 2025 from the upward revision to 4.3 per cent in July 2025.

The slowdown was entirely led by manufacturing growth, which eased sharply to 3.8 per cent from 6 per cent in July 2025. In contrast, while mining output witnessed a year-on-year expansion after a gap of four months, growth in electricity generation inched up to a 5-month high, she said.

"Looking ahead, the GST rationalisation is expected to boost consumption demand during the festive season, which is likely to augur well for manufacturing output in September-October 2025, once the older inventories are off the shelves," Nayar added.

As per use-based classification, NSO data showed that the capital goods segment grew by 4.4 per cent in August 2025 compared to a flat growth in the year-ago period.

Consumer durables (or white goods production) growth slowed to 3.5 per cent from 5.4 per cent in August 2024.

In August 2025, consumer non-durables output shrank by 6.3 per cent against a contraction of 4.4 per cent in the year-ago month.

Infrastructure/construction reported a growth of 10.6 per cent in August 2025, up from 2.7 per cent expansion a year ago.

The data also showed that the output of primary goods increased by 5.2 per cent against a contraction of 2.6 per cent growth in August 2024.

The expansion in the intermediate goods segment was 5 per cent in August against 3.1 per cent a year ago.

NSE NIFTY

Intra-day on September 29, 2025



BSE SENSEX

Intra-day on September 29, 2025



Moody's retains 'stable' outlook for India

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

■ New Delhi

Global rating Moody's on Monday affirmed India's long-term local and foreign-currency issuer ratings and the local-currency senior unsecured rating at 'Ba3' with a 'stable' outlook on the back of robust economic growth and sound external position.

The rating agency also affirmed India's other short-term local-currency rating at P-3.

"The rating affirmation and stable outlook reflect our view that India's prevailing credit strengths, including its large, fast-growing economy, sound external position, and stable domestic financing base for ongoing fiscal deficits will be sustained," it said in a statement.

These strengths lend resilience to adverse external trends, in particular as high US (Aa1 stable) tariffs and other international policy measures hinder India's capacity to attract manufacturing investment, it said.

India's credit strength is balanced by long-standing weaknesses on the fiscal side, which will remain, it said.

Strong GDP growth and gradual fiscal consolidation will lead to only a very gradual decline in the government's high debt burden, and will not be sufficient to materially improve weak debt affordability, especially as recent fiscal measures to reinforce private consumption erode the government's revenue base, it said.

India's long-term local-currency (LC) bond ceiling remains unchanged at A2, and its long-term foreign-currency (FC) bond ceiling remains at A3, it said.

The one-notch gap between the LC and FC ceiling reflects limited external indebtedness and the low likelihood of a debt moratorium, especially in the context of recent steps towards liberalisation of non-resident portfolio investment, it said.

Moody's further said that India's credit profile benefits from its strong growth potential, underpinned by a large domestic market and favourable demographics that have historically supported resilient,

demand-driven expansion, and helped insulate the economy from external shocks.

Even as real GDP growth moderated in the fiscal year ended March 2025 (fiscal 2024-25) to 6.5 per cent from 9.2 per cent in fiscal 2023-24,

India has been and will remain the fastest growing G20 economy through at least the next two to three years.

"The four-notch gap between the LC ceiling and issuer rating reflects modest external imbalances as represented by persistent, albeit narrow, current account deficits; a relatively large government footprint in the economy; and moderate predictability and reliability of government policies," it said.

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Manufacturing operations to resume partially soon: JLR

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

■ New Delhi

Tata Motors-owned Jaguar Land Rover on Monday said it will partially resume manufacturing operations in the coming days after being hit by a cyber attack that brought the British luxury carmaker's production to a complete halt this month.

The company is continuing to work around the clock alongside cybersecurity specialists, the UK Government's NCSC and law enforcement to ensure its restart is done in a safe and secure manner, a statement by Jaguar Land Rover spokesperson shared on BSE by Tata Motors said.

"As the controlled, phased restart of our operations continues, we are taking further steps towards our recovery and the return to manufacture of our world-class vehicles. Today we are informing colleagues, retailers and suppliers that some sections of our manufacturing operations will resume in the coming days," the spokesperson said.

"We continue to work around the clock alongside cybersecurity specialists, the UK Government's NCSC and law enforcement to ensure our restart is done in a safe and secure manner," The spokesperson further said.

Thanking everyone connected with JLR for "their continued patience, understanding and support", the spokesperson said, "We know there is much more to do but the foundational work of our recovery is firmly underway, and we will continue to provide updates as we progress." Last week, JLR began a phased restart of its IT operations following a cyber-attack that brought the British luxury carmaker's production to a complete halt earlier this month. In an update issued on Thursday, JLR said it was working to clear the "backlog of payments" to its suppliers by increasing its processing capacity for invoicing.

Production at its factories in Merseyside, north-west England, and Solihull in the



West Midlands, as well as facilities around the world, including India, Slovakia and China, remained at a standstill until the "foundational work" of the recovery programme was completed.

The production shutdown, nearing a month, is expected to cost JLR tens of millions of pounds a day in lost revenue and has raised major concerns for the company and jobs in the supply chain. More than 33,000 people are directly employed with JLR in the UK, across assembly lines at its factories, with an estimated 2,000,000 employed by hundreds of companies in the supply chain.

The government's cyber experts are in contact with the company to support the task of restoring production operations, and are working closely with JLR to understand any impacts on the supply chain, the UK's Department for Business and Trade (DBT) said in a statement after a meeting with the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders (SMMT) recently.



FROM THE WORLD

COLOMBO

Japan sends UAVs to Sri Lanka Navy

Japan on Monday announced the decision to provide the Sri Lanka Navy with two Unmanned Aerial Vehicles during President Anura Kumara Dissanayake's ongoing official visit to Japan. Sri Lanka and Japan have exchanged notes on Japan's Official Security Assistance (OSA) programme in the presence of Japanese Prime Minister Shigeru Ishiba. "Japan's first OSA for Sri Lanka signifies that bilateral cooperation in security has entered a new phase," it said. Launched in 2023, OSA is a new grant aid cooperation framework of Japan to strengthen the security and deterrence capabilities of like-minded countries.

NEW YORK

Trump, Marcos to hold talks on tariffs

The President of the US, Donald Trump, on Monday announced 100 per cent tariffs on movies made outside the country, in a move likely to impact the Indian film industry. "Our movie-making business has been stolen from the US, by other countries, just like stealing 'candy from a baby,'" Trump's post on Monday. Trump said California has been particularly "hard hit" because of this, blaming democrat Gavin Newsom, the Governor of California, for this loss, calling him weak and incompetent. To solve this long time, never ending problem, I will be imposing a 100 per cent Tariff on any and all movies that are made outside of the United States," Trump added. The decision is likely to impact the Indian film industry which produces movies in several languages. These movies are popular among the Indian diaspora in the US.

Israel's Haifa Mayor recalls Indian role in city's liberation from

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ Haifa

bravery.

"In every school, we are changing the texts and saying that it wasn't the British but the Indians who liberated us," Yahav said.

During World War I, Indian cavalry regiments armed with spears and swords cleared the Ottoman forces from the rocky slopes of Mt Carmel under all odds to liberate the city, in what most war historians consider "the last great cavalry campaign in history".

Mayor Yahav had, during the first ceremony at the same venue in 2009, said that the northern coastal city's history textbooks will include the story of its liberation by Indian soldiers, and it is today a well-known fact among youngsters in the city.

He made the remarks while addressing a gathering at the Indian cemetery of fallen soldiers during a ceremony to pay tributes to their



Mysore, Hyderabad and Jodhpur Lancers — that helped liberate Haifa following a dashing cavalry action by the 15th Imperial Service Cavalry Brigade on that date in 1918.

An event to pay tributes to the brave Indian soldiers is also organised every year at the Indian soldiers' ceme-

tery here by the Indian mission and the Haifa municipality. Captain Aman Singh Bahadur and Dafadar Jor Singh were awarded the Indian Order of Merit (IOM), and Captain Anop Singh and 2nd Lt Sagat Singh were awarded the Military Cross (MC) in recognition of their bravery in this battle.

Major Dalpat Singh, widely popular as the Hero of Haifa, was awarded a military cross for his bravery.

The Jodhpur Lancers lost eight men and had 34 wounded in the battle. But they also captured over 700 prisoners, 17 field guns and 11 machine guns.

The battle was described as

were of Jewish descent. About 900 Indian soldiers are interred in cemeteries in these cities of Israel.

As a tribute to the bravery of these soldiers, the Embassy of India, with the help of Israeli authorities, is setting up "The India Trail" in the Holy Land.

History textbooks in Haifa teach about the story of the liberation of Haifa by Indian soldiers from classes 3 to 5. The Haifa Historical Society has also been going around to schools in the city telling the story to youngsters over the last decade.

In a symbolic gesture of friendship with Israel, India renamed the iconic 'Teen Murti Chowk', a memorial erected in 1922 in New Delhi to commemorate this historic deed, as 'Teen Murti Haifa Chowk' during Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's visit to Delhi in January 2018.

North Korea, China's diplomats agree to deepen ties, resist hegemonism

ASSOCIATED PRESS ■ Seoul

The foreign ministers of North Korea and China agreed to deepen bilateral ties and resist hegemonism or unilateralism, a likely reference to their pushbacks against the United States.

Their meeting in Beijing on Sunday came about three weeks after North Korean leader Kim Jong Un and Chinese President Xi Jinping held their first summit in more than six years and pledged mutual support and enhanced cooperation.

Kim and Xi earlier attended a massive Beijing military parade marking the end of the World War II, with other world leaders including Russian President Vladimir Putin.

The joint appearance of Kim, Xi and Putin, the first of its kind, displayed a potential three-way unity against the United States, though it's unclear how far China would go in such an anti-US partnership.

In a meeting with her Chinese counterpart Wang Yi, North Korean Foreign Minister Choe Son Hui cited Kim as saying that further bolstering ties with China is North Korea's unwavering position. Choe expressed an



intent to deepen and develop friendly ties with China in line with the spirits of Kim-Xi summit, the North's Korean Central News Agency reported Monday.

Wang said China maintains a firm position that it intends to solidify bilateral ties, saying it's necessary to boost strategic communications and exchanges, KCNA said.

China's Xinhua News Agency cited Wang as saying China oppose "all forms of

hegemonism" and stands ready to strengthen cooperation with North Korea in international and regional affairs.

It quoted Choe as saying that North Korea "is willing to closely cooperate with China in multilateral affairs, jointly resist unilateralism and power politics and promote a fairer and more just world order."

The comments likely referred to their countries' separate confrontations with

the United States — China over strategic competitions with the US and North Korea over its nuclear weapons programme.

KCNA said Choe and Wang exchanged views on regional and international affairs reached a complete consensus on the issues, but didn't elaborate.

Kim's attendance at the Beijing military parade was his first attendance at a major multilateral event during his 14-year rule.

Thailand PM vows to resolve Cambodia border conflict

ASSOCIATED PRESS ■ Bangkok

Thailand's new Prime Minister told lawmakers on Monday that his Government would address the country's economic woes, find solutions to the ongoing border conflict with Cambodia through diplomacy and push for a new and more democratic constitution.

Anutin Charnvirakul faces a self-imposed deadline. He had promised to call elections in four months in exchange for the People's Party — which holds the most seats in Parliament — supporting his bid to become Prime Minister. He was elected to Parliament earlier this month.

The party has a progressive platform and has long sought to change the existing constitution imposed under military rule, saying it wants to make it more democratic.

Anutin had promised to call a referendum for an elected constituent assembly to draft a new charter. He said in his inaugural speech in Parliament on Monday that his Government will support the referendum and public participation to uphold the country's constitutional monarchy.



Anutin also promised to tackle corruption and crime and "restore faith and happiness to the Thai people."

Anutin is constricted in what he can do by the four-month deadline, but also the terms of his deal with the People's Party, which declared it would act as the opposition in the legislature, potentially voting against Anutin's initiatives.

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Anutin had promised to call a referendum for an elected constituent assembly to draft a new charter. He said in his inaugural speech in Parliament on Monday that his Government will support the referendum and public participation to uphold the country's constitutional monarchy.

Anutin also said the Government will crack down on illegal gambling and strive to improve the country's natural disaster alert system, promote clean energy and tackle air pollution.

Wars and tariffs harming UK's economic: Britain Treasury chief

ASSOCIATED PRESS ■ Liverpool

Britain's Treasury chief warned on Monday that wars in Ukraine and the Middle East and economic headwinds sparked by US President Donald Trump's tariffs have worsened the UK's economic outlook since the governing Labour Party won power last year.

Chancellor of the Exchequer Rachel Reeves is under pressure to say whether she will raise taxes in her autumn budget on November 26.

"In the last year the world has changed, and we are not immune to that change," she told the BBC. "Whether it is wars in Europe and the Middle East, whether it is increased barriers to trade because of tariffs coming from the United States, whether it is the global cost of borrowing, we're not

immune to any of those things." Reeves hopes to deliver a touch of economic optimism when she addresses the Labour Party's annual conference in Liverpool later on Monday.

Since ending 14 years of Conservative rule in July 2024, the Labour Government has struggled to deliver the economic growth it promised. Inflation remains stubbornly high and the economic outlook subdued, frustrating efforts to repair tattered public services and ease the cost of living.

Labour pledged during last year's election not to raise taxes on working people, but has since hiked levies on employers and Reeves has not ruled out increasing other forms of tax in her budget.

"I'm determined not to increase those key taxes that working people pay," Reeves said. The Treasury said

Reeves' speech will include a pledge to end long-term youth unemployment, and kickstart the UK's sluggish productivity. Under the plan, everyone under 25 who has been unemployed for 18 months will be offered guaranteed paid work. One in eight 16-24-year-olds in Britain — about 1 million people — is currently not in education, work, or training.

Thousands of Labour members from around the country are in Liverpool, in northwest England for the party conference — a mix of policy forum and pep rally that this year is lacking in pizazz.

Labour lags behind Nigel Farage's hard-right Reform UK party in opinion polls, and some party members are losing faith in Prime Minister Keir Starmer — even though there may be four years until the next election.

Nepal PM Karki says Govt committed to timely election

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ Kathmandu

Nepal's newly-appointed Prime Minister Sushila Karki on Monday said her interim Government is committed to holding the general elections on the scheduled time. Karki, 73, became Prime Minister on September 12, ending days of political uncertainty after the ouster of Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli following violent protests by a youth-led Gen Z group against his Government over corruption and a ban on social media. In a message on the occasion of Bada Dashain, Karki on Monday assured that the elections for the House of Representatives will be held on time, according to the Himalayan Times newspaper. Bada Dashain, also known as Vijaya Dashami, is one of Nepal's most widely-celebrated Hindu festivals.



China to set 5-year plan, review tariffs in October

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ Beijing

China's ruling Communist Party will hold its annual leadership conclave in October to discuss the new five-year plan, challenges posed by US President Donald Trump's tariff war, his attempts to seize control of TikTok and ensuing strains on the Chinese economy. Besides the prevailing economic situation, the 370-member body of senior party leaders from across the country is expected to discuss the outcome of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) summit, attended by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, among others. The plenary session will be held in Beijing from October 20-23, an official statement, issued after the influential Political Bureau meeting presided over by Chinese President Xi Jinping, said on Monday.

Suspect in Charlie Kirk assassination case faces court hearing

 ASSOCIATED PRESS
 ■ Provo (US)


County Attorney's Office did not respond to email and phone messages seeking comment.

The hearing in Provo is open to the public, just a few miles from the Utah Valley University campus in Orem where many students are still processing trauma from the September 10 shooting and the day-and-a-half search for the suspect.

Authorities arrested Robinson when he showed up with his parents at his

hometown sheriff's office in southwest Utah, more than a three-hour drive from the site of the shooting, to turn himself in.

Prosecutors have since revealed incriminating text messages and DNA evidence that they say connect Robinson to the killing.

A note that Robinson had left for his romantic partner before the shooting said he had the opportunity to kill one of the nation's leading conservative voices, "and

reinstated by ABC.

MAN HANGED IN IRAN FOR ALLEGED ISRAEL ESPIONAGE

 ASSOCIATED PRESS
 ■ Dubai

Iran said on Monday that it hanged a man accused of spying for Israel, the latest as Tehran carries out its largest wave of executions in decades.

Iran identified the executed man as Bahman Choobas, whose case wasn't immediately known in Iranian media reports or to activists monitoring the death penalty in the Islamic Republic.

However, the execution came after Iran vowed to confront its enemies after the United Nations reimposed sanctions on Tehran over its nuclear programme this weekend.

Reeves' speech will include a pledge to end long-term youth unemployment, and kickstart the UK's sluggish productivity. Under the plan, everyone under 25 who has been unemployed for 18 months will be offered guaranteed paid work. One in eight 16-24-year-olds in Britain — about 1 million people — is currently not in education, work, or training.

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Moldova's pro-EU party wins clear parliamentary majority

ASSOCIATED PRESS

■ Chisinau

to join the EU in 2022 in the wake of Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine and was granted candidate status that year. Brussels agreed to open accession negotiations last year.

The election results

With nearly all polling station reports counted on Monday, electoral data showed the pro-EU Party of Action and Solidarity, or PAS, securing 50.1 per cent of the vote, while the pro-Russian Patriotic Electoral Bloc won 24.2 per cent. The Russia-friendly Alternativa Bloc came third, followed by the populist Our Party. The right-wing Democracy at Home party also won enough votes to enter parliament.

European leaders on Monday hailed Moldovans for reaffirming their commitment to a Western path and future membership in the European Union in the face of alleged Russian interference. The country is small in size and population, but with outsized geopolitical importance.

"You made your choice clear: Europe. Democracy. Freedom," European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen said in a post on X. "No attempt to sow fear or division could break your resolve."

Landlocked between war-torn Ukraine and EU and NATO member Romania, Moldova was a Soviet republic until it proclaimed independence in 1991. In recent years, it has taken a clear Westward path, turning the country into a geopolitical battleground between Russia and Europe.

The outcome of Sunday's high-stakes ballot was noteworthy considering Moldovan authorities' repeated claims that Russia was conducting a vast "hybrid war" to try to sway the outcome and seize power in Chisinau. Moldova applied



galities. It used criminals to try to turn our entire country into a haven for crime. It filled everything with hatred."

Building a new Government

After a legislative election, Moldova's president nominates a prime minister, generally from the leading party or bloc, which can then try to form a new Government. A proposed Government then needs parliamentary approval.

It is considered likely that President Maia Sandu, who founded PAS in 2016, will opt

for some continuity by once again nominating pro-Western Prime Minister Dorin Recean, an economist who has steered Moldova's Government through multiple crises since 2023.

Recean has also previously served as Sandu's defence and security adviser.

Speaking to reporters at the PAS campaign building, Recean said Moldovans "demonstrated that their freedom is priceless and their freedom cannot be bought, their freedom cannot be influenced by Russia's propa-

ganda and scaremongering."

"The major task right now is to bring the society together, because what Russia achieved is to produce a lot of tension and division in society," he added.

Sandu said on Monday that the outcome proved Moldovans "can unite when our country's future is at stake", but that the victory must benefit all citizens.

"Moldova is our common home," she said. "We all share the same hopes: to live in peace and freedom, and to offer our children a

safe future here, at home."

The surest path to those goals is the European path. Yesterday's vote is a strong mandate for Moldova's EU accession."

Throughout this campaign, the Kremlin sought to divide us, to undermine our trust in the state, in our institutions, in one another, and in our ability to resist," she said. This election showed that yes, we have vulnerabilities, but also capable institutions and dedicated people.

The alleged Russian schemes included orchestrating a large-scale vote-buying scheme, conducting more than 1,000 cyberattacks on critical Government infrastructure so far this year, a plan to incite riots around Sunday's election, and a sprawling disinformation campaign online to sway voters.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky said he had spoken to President Sandu on the phone and congratulated her on what he called "a very important victory" for Moldova.

"Russian subversion, constant disinformation – none of this worked," Zelensky said.

Bomb threats and cyberattacks on election day

Election day was dogged by a string of incidents, ranging from bomb threats at multiple polling stations abroad to cyberattacks on electoral and Government infrastructure, voters photographing their ballots, and some being illegally transported to polling stations.

Three people were also detained, suspected of plotting to cause unrest after the vote.

Igor Dodon, a former president and a member of the pro-Russian Patriotic Electoral Bloc, called for a protest in front of the Parliament building on Monday after alleging, without presenting any evidence, that the ruling PAS meddled with the vote.

PAS campaigned on a pledge to continue Moldova's path toward EU membership by signing an accession treaty

to the 27-nation bloc by 2028, doubling incomes, modernising infrastructure, and fighting corruption.

An unambiguous victory

Cristian Cantir, a Moldovan associate professor of international relations at Oakland University in Michigan, told The Associated Press that PAS's victory is "a clear win for European forces in Moldova, which will be able to ensure continuity in the next few years in the pursuit of their ultimate goal of EU integration."

"A PAS majority saves the party from having to form a coalition that would have most likely been unstable and would have slowed down the pace of reforms to join the EU," he said, but added, "Moldova will continue to be in a difficult geopolitical environment characterised by Russia's attempts to pull it back into its sphere of influence."

Some 1.6 million people, or about 52.1 per cent of eligible voters, cast ballots, according to the Central Electoral Commission, with 280,000 of them coming from votes in polling stations set up abroad.

The Kremlin on Monday said "hundreds of thousands" of Moldovans living in Russia were unable to vote in the election due to an alleged lack of polling stations set up in the country. Kremlin spokesperson Dmitry Peskov said it was "obviously insufficient and couldn't allow everyone to vote," without providing further details.

Dialogue featuring Afghan women activists, political leaders begins in Pakistan

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

■ Islamabad

A two-day dialogue featuring Afghan women activists and political leaders commenced in Pakistan on Monday, aiming to explore pathways for a peaceful future for Afghanistan, a nation long troubled by conflict.

Titled 'Towards Unity and Trust,' the dialogue is organised by Women for Afghanistan (WFA) and the South Asian Strategic Stability Institute University (SASSI).

According to a statement from the organisers, the event seeks to foster constructive discussions among Afghan leaders – both women and men – and their Pakistani counterparts.

Fawzia Koofi, who leads WFA and lives in exile, has organised a series of meetings primarily involving women activists opposing Afghan Taliban policies. She has been a vocal critic of the Taliban rule. Dr Maria Sultan, a defence analyst, heads SASSI.

According to the statement, the primary aim of the meeting is to "promote inclusive and constructive discussions among leaders, including men and women from diverse segments of society in Afghanistan, to develop a shared understanding and identify common principles for Afghanistan's future stability, inclusivity, and peaceful settlement."

Dawn newspaper said it has seen a list of 37 Afghans invited to the event, including members from previous Governments led by Hamid Karzai and Ashraf Ghani, such as governors, ministers, lawmakers, and women activists.

Some invitees were unable to attend the meeting due to visa issues, according to a participant.

"The dialogue underscores

a simple truth: peace between people leads to peace between nations," the statement noted.

The dialogue will also serve to identify common grounds for cooperation between Afghan leaders and their Pakistani counterparts on an engagement basis of developing people-centric approaches to find common solutions for regional challenges and to build trust and stability, the statement added.

"We believe that a more people-centric approach focused on economic development and regional cooperation will lead to an enhanced and meaningful relationship between the people of Afghanistan and Pakistan," it said.

Originally scheduled for August 25-26, the event was postponed following criticism from prominent figures, including Zalmay Khalilzad, the former US special envoy. Khalilzad called the meeting "unwise" due to the participation of individuals opposing the Afghan Taliban.

"Afghan citizens are entitled to their political views, but Pakistan's seeming support of them by hosting their conference is hugely unwise and an intended provocation," he wrote on X.

"The dialogue underscores



Singapore's population hits 6.11 million, driven by

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

■ Singapore

Singapore's total population hit a new high of 6.11 million as of June 2025, an increase of 1.2 per cent in a year, mainly due to the growth in the non-resident population, mostly foreigners and migrants, according to a Government report published on Monday.

This is the first time that the city-state's population exceeded 6 million, as per the annual Population in Brief report by the National Population and Talent Division (NPTD) of the Prime Minister's Office and its partner agencies.

As of June 2025, there were 4.2 million Singapore residents – 3.66 million citizens and 0.54 million Permanent Residents (PRs).

The non-resident population increased by 2.7 per cent from 1.86 million in June 2024 to 1.91 million in June 2025. The increase came primarily from work permit holders, followed by

migrant domestic workers or maids and domestic helpers, it said.

The foreign workforce makes up about two-thirds of the non-resident population, while the remaining third comprises mainly maids, dependents and students.

"The non-resident population is diverse, and its size

and composition fluctuate depending on our economic and social needs," Channel News Asia reported, citing the report.

The citizen population increased by 0.7 per cent from 3.64 million in June 2024. Singapore's local birth rate among citizens is low, while the PR population remains stable.

Singapore's annualised population growth rate of 1.5 per cent over the past five years – from 2020 to 2025 – was higher than the 0.5 per cent over the preceding five-year period.

The increase in the population was mostly due to an increase in the number of work permit holders in the labour-intensive construction

sector to support key infrastructure projects such as Changi Terminal 5 under construction and the ramping up of housing supply through a state-funded scheme, the report said.

The report said that the island nation takes in a "carefully controlled" number of PRs and new citizens each year, with all new adult citizens coming from the pool of PRs, as individuals have to obtain permanent residency before they may apply for citizenship.

Last year, 22,766 people were granted citizenship and 35,264 individuals were granted permanent residency.

The report said the Government will "continue to maintain a measured pace of immigration".

The exact number of PRs and citizens granted each year depends on several factors, including the number of work permit holders in the labour-intensive construction

Heng Ratana, director-general of the Cambodian Mine Action Centre, said that soon after February's aid freeze announcement by US President Donald Trump, Washington had issued a waiver allowing \$6.36 million in scheduled aid to continue until November 2025.

He said the new funding was for mine-clearing operations from November through April 2026. He expressed hope that a recent congressional visit and the signing of the funding agreement demonstrated Washington's commitment to continued assistance for demining.

Cambodian deminers are among the world's most experienced, and several thousand have been sent in the past decade under UN auspices to work in Africa and the Middle East.

However, neighbouring Thailand has accused Cambodia of planting new antipersonnel mines along their border as part of a territorial dispute that led to five days of armed clashes in late July. Cambodia has denied the allegations.

Cambodia's ally China, which has been vying for influence in Southeast Asia, also has touted its own contributions to demining programs in Cambodia.

US renews Cambodia demining aid despite budget cuts

ASSOCIATED PRESS

■ Phnom Penh

The United States will grant \$675,000 for crucial demining programs in Cambodia, the US Embassy said on Monday, after a freeze on foreign assistance raised doubts about the future support for mine clearance in the Southeast Asian nation.

An estimated 4 million to 6 million land mines and other unexploded munitions littered Cambodia's countryside during decades of conflict that began in 1970 and ended in 1998. Since the end of the fighting, nearly 20,000 people have

been killed and about 45,000 injured by leftover war explosives, even though Cambodia has a worldwide reputation for an effective demining program. Washington has contributed over \$220 million since 1993 for demining operations and has partnered with the Norwegian People's Aid and the Cambodian Mine Action Centre, the US Embassy said.

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Gunmen kill 12 forest guards in Nigeria's northcentral region

ASSOCIATED PRESS ■ Abuja (Nigeria)

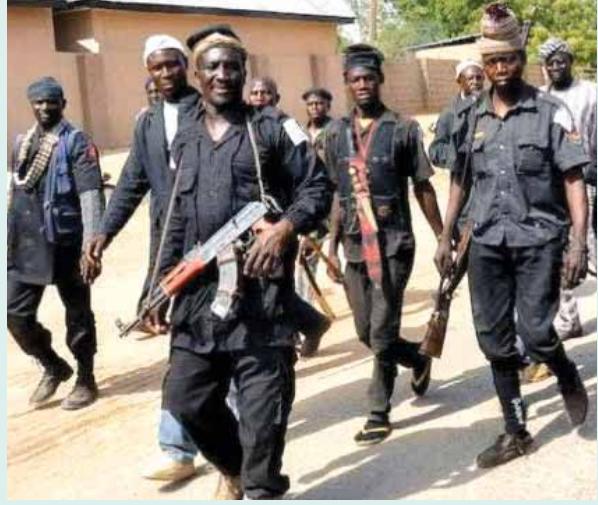
At least 12 forest guards have been killed after gunmen attacked a community in northcentral Nigeria, local police said Monday. No group has immediately claimed responsibility for the killings on Sunday in Oke-Ode, a community in the state of Kwara, police spokesperson Adetoun Ejire-Adeyemi said in a statement. Such attacks are common in Nigeria's northern region where local herders and farmers often clash over limited access to land and water. The farmers accuse the herders, mostly of Fulani origin, of grazing their livestock on their farms and destroying their produce. The herders insist that the lands are grazing routes that were first backed by law in 1965, five years after the country gained its independence.

"The dialogue underscores

Xi says religions in China should further adapt to socialist society

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ Beijing

Chinese President Xi Jinping on Monday said religions in the Communist nation should "further adapt" to the socialist society, expanding on his earlier assertion of sinicization of religions in China. He emphasised the importance of ensuring that religions in China further adapt to the Chinese context, state-run Xinhua news agency reported. Xi also called for providing active guidance to religions so that they can adapt to a socialist society while he was presiding over a group study session of the Political Bureau of the CPC Central Committee. Since he came to power in 2012, Xi, 72, has been reorienting the ruling Communist Party's policies on religion, realigning them with Marxist ideology.





PROSPECT



Assam CM Himanta Biswa Sarma visited various Durga Puja Mandaps in Guwahati to offer prayers and extend festive greeting.



Nagaland BJP President Benjamin Yephomi attending a 'Dandiya Night' in Dimapur

DELHI CELEBRATES WORLD HEART DAY WITH WALKATHON



Delhi celebrated World Heart Day with a spirited two-kilometer walkathon, "Chalta Rahe Mera Dil," flagged off by Bollywood actress Bhumi Pednekar. The event also marked a milestone in cardiac care with the formal inauguration of the hospital's advanced Cardiac Cath Lab - the first of its kind in North and West Delhi. It promoted heart health, encouraged an active lifestyle under one roof. Bhumi Pednekar expressed her delight at the turnout and the hospital's initiative. "It was truly inspiring to see so many people this morning, all committed to making heart health a priority. Small lifestyle changes, like walking daily, can have a big impact on our well-being. I am proud to support Yatharth Hospital, Model Town, in spreading this message on World Heart Day. Yatharth Tyagi, Director, Yatharth Group, Stated, "Events like this bring the community together and remind us that prevention is equally important. With the advanced technology at our Delhi facility, we are strengthening our commitment to providing world-class care to the people of Delhi."

Lakshmi Puri's novel to be adapted into web series

GYANVI SHARMA
■ New Delhi

Acclaimed diplomat and author Lakshmi Puri's best selling debut novel 'Swallowing the Sun' is set to be adapted into a web series by Abundantia Entertainment. The announcement was made at a press conference in Delhi, attended by Lakshmi Puri and Vikram Malhotra, Founder and CEO of Abundantia Entertainment.

Puri, former Ambassador and Assistant Secretary-General of the United Nations, expressed her delight at seeing her novel "move from the intimacy of the word to the shared experience of the screen." She said the story had lived within her for decades, as "a family saga, a political chronicle, a grand romance and above all, a woman's journey of identity and aspiration."

The novel, which became a bestseller within just three months of publication, has

been critically acclaimed and awarded both in India and internationally. It has been celebrated at the United Nations, Harvard University, and the Massachusetts House of Representatives, with translations in Hindi, Marathi, Telugu and Assamese already underway. International editions are also planned in Japanese, German, Spanish, and French.

Malati, a fearless and tender protagonist whose fight for education and empowerment mirrors India's own journey during the freedom struggle where the author described the book as "love in the time of revolution": a story of families, friendships, politics, sacrifice and resilience. She emphasised that the adaptation will relate with today's youth, who continue to negotiate questions of freedom, identity and aspiration.

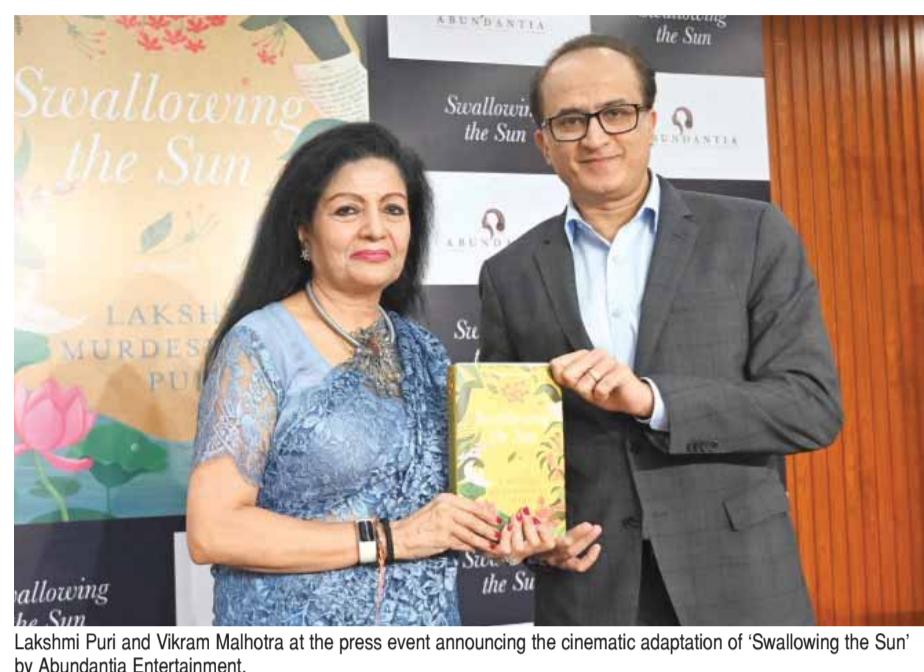
Vikram Malhotra recalled reading the novel shortly before his first meeting with Puri. "Within a few pages, I

knew this was special," he said. "Swallowing the Sun blends imagination with history, fact with dramatisation. It is a uniquely Indian

saga that will connect with a global audience."

Abundantia, known for productions like Shakuntala Devi, Sherni and Breathe, has

built a reputation for strong, character-driven storytelling. Malhotra said the new series would continue that tradition, celebrating women's



voices and timeless characters.

"This is a multigenerational saga with a fearless female protagonist at its heart," he said. "It resonates with the youth of today and inspires young women everywhere to dream audaciously to, as the book says, 'swallow the sun.'

For the author, the adaptation is also about reclaiming India's cultural voice globally. "This is India writing back expressing our civilisational richness on the world stage," she said. "It is about not erasing ourselves, but deepening ourselves."

With its cinematic settings, historical sweep and universal themes of love, freedom and empowerment, the adaptation is being positioned as a premium original series with global reach.

Summing up the anticipation, Puri said: "When you see Malati on screen, you will see not just a young girl of the past, but today's young woman, still daring to dream, still swallowing the sun."

Powerful lobby behind rumours over ethanol blending: Gadkari

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ Nagpur

Union Minister for Road Transport and Highways Nitin Gadkari on Monday refused to be pulled into a controversy over allegations against him with regard to ethanol blending, saying it is work of a powerful import lobby upset by his decisions.

Speaking at a programme here, the minister likened himself to a "tree that bears fruit," and said, "I don't respond to such criticisms because then it becomes news. The tree that bears fruit is the one people throw stones at. It is better that we avoid it."

Gadkari said the focus of his policy is to promote ethanol blending, make farmers energy producers and reduce pollution.

He claimed that the policy had directly hurt those with vested interests in fuel imports.

"About ₹22 lakh crore were going out of the country due to imports of fossil fuels. Their businesses got affected and they got angry and

started paid news against me," the minister said.

"I have not taken a single penny from any contractor till date and hence contractors fear me," he stressed.

Gadkari said that he would

focus on his work and not get distracted by false allegations, which are common and predictable part of politics. "People know what the truth is I have gone through such things many times in the past."

CIAN Agro Industries, a company run by Nikhil Gadkari, son of the Union Minister, has been the centre of a controversy over dramatic rise in profits and revenues since the time the BJP-

led Government mandated 20 per cent ethanol blending in petrol.

The company saw its revenue surge from ₹17.47 crore (Q1 FY24) to ₹510.8 crore (Q1 FY26). Profits too shot up from almost negligible levels to over ₹52 crore, largely riding the ethanol blending boom and expansion into new subsidiaries.

CIAN Agro's share price also zoomed to ₹2,023 on the BSE on Monday from ₹172 a year ago.

Analysts have said the growth is not only from ethanol sales, but also from "other income" and new businesses.

DG BSF inaugurates decision support system at force headquarters

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ New Delhi

Daljit Singh Chawdhary, DG BSF has inaugurated the Decision Support System (DSS) at Force Headquarters on Monday. The Decision Support System is designed to enhance decision making capability of Commanders at all levels.

2. The DSS will enable commanders to plan and execute operations based on informed decision making process through role-based access of the system via custom designed dashboards. Apart from providing advanced GIS functionalities, Decision Support System integrates GIS platform with legacy operations incident database and sensor feeds from the border, forming a Complete Operating Picture (COP) at Headquarters.

3. The DSS will operationally benefit BSF with facilities of Monitoring and Predictive & Trend Analysis which will further enhance capabilities of effective border management.

4. The system would be capable of performing AI/ML based operations on GIS & Legacy data for predicting smuggling hotspots, infiltration routes etc for better resource allocation and operational planning and execution.

5. The DSS will be integrated in future with CIBMS, other Command Centres' of BSF and also with GIS platforms of other security forces and organisations. There are plans of integration of mobile applications with the DSS for real time



data collection and incident reporting. In its next phase, DSS will be integrated with other data sources like OSINT, BIG DATA and IMD Data.

6. The DSS will improve the BSF's capabilities, enabling to safeguard India's borders and protect the national interests effectively, by helping commanders in decision making. Harnessing the technological solutions, BSF will be able to meet emerging threats of border security.

Shashi Tharoor flags concerns over AI Express plans to curtail Kerala flights

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ New Delhi

Lok Sabha member and senior Congress leader Shashi Tharoor on Monday expressed deep concerns over Air India Express' planned curtailment of flights connecting various cities in Kerala, saying that Air India "must stop treating Kerala as an afterthought".

Air India Express is the low cost arm of Tatas-owned Air India Group.

"I have written to @airindia MD Campbell Wilson to express my deep concern over reports of large-scale cancellations of @airindiaexpress services from Kerala's airports in the forthcoming winter schedule.

According to widely-circulated media accounts, a significant number of flights are being withdrawn from Thiruvananthapuram, Kochi, Kozhikode and Kannur between late October and March," Tharoor said in a post on X.

Tharoor, who represents

Thiruvananthapuram constituency, said Kerala is one of the busiest aviation hubs in the country, with exceptionally high international passenger traffic, particularly to the Gulf region. Any curtailment of services at this stage will inevitably cause severe hardship to migrant workers, students, tourists and families, while also hampering trade and tourism, he said, asserting that Air India must stop treating Kerala as an afterthought.

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DU-IIT, Kanpur sign MoU for research programmes

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

■ New Delhi

Delhi University (DU) and IIT

Kanpur

have signed an

agreement to work together

on

education and

research

programs.

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India's women eye breakthrough at ICC ODI World Cup

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

■ Guwahati

With home advantage and current form on its side, the Indian women's cricket team will look to end a 47-year wait for its maiden ICC title when it takes the field at the ODI World Cup starting with a clash against Sri Lanka on Tuesday. Ranked world Number 3, the Harmanpreet Kaur-led India will look to make the most of their familiarity with conditions in the 13th edition of the tournament, that is returning to India after 12 years.

The global showpiece will feature eight top ranked teams like Australia, England, India, New Zealand, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and Pakistan competing in 28 league matches in a round-robin format across four venues in India and one in Colombo for a record prize money of \$13.88 million.

The prize pool is also nearly four times higher than 2022 and surpasses the men's 2023 edition (\$10 million) to be in line with the ICC's push for parity and growth of women's cricket.

The Sri Lankan capital will host 11 round-robin matches, including Pakistan's seven

league stage games and the marquee clash against India on October 5. One semifinal and the final are also scheduled there, should Pakistan go all the way.

On current form, India arrive with confidence, having recently beaten England in both ODI and T20I series. They also ended a worrying losing streak against Australia in a recent tournament build-up series.

The Indians nearly chased down 413 in the final ODI in New Delhi against the team which is chasing a record-extending eighth title. Indian vice-captain Smriti Mandhana remains the fulcrum of the batting unit, enjoying the form of her life at the top of order.

The left-hander has already struck four ODI centuries, including two back-to-back against Australia, this year. She aver-



ages 66.28 with a strike rate of 115.85. Her partnerships with young opener Pratika Rawal, who has provided solidity at the top, give India the cushion to post or chase big totals in the absence of an out of favour Shafali Verma.

Playing her fifth World Cup, Harmanpreet, who reserves her best for big tournaments, carries a tournament average of over 50. She smashed a century against England recently and followed it up with a fifty against Australia. Jemimah Rodrigues, back from injury, scored a composed 66 in the warm-up against England and adds stability in the middle order.

Richa Ghosh, Harleen Deol and Deepthi Sharma add further depth, while Amanjot Kaur offers a seam-bowling all-round option.

Return of Renuka Singh from an injury would bolster the pace attack as she would spearhead the

bowling on flatbeds across the venues. Twenty-two-year old Kranti Goud, with only six caps to her name, has shown promise with her pace and variations including a searing yorker.

During her country's tour of England this summer, she joined Jasprit Bumrah and Kuldeep Yadav as the only players to ever take six wickets for India in ODIs in the country, with 6/52 at Chester-le-Street. However, India's pace department remains thin on experience.

Renuka aside, the other pacers Kranti, Arundhati Reddy and Amanjot have played just 25 ODIs between them and the bowling has conceded 300-plus scores in recent past.

Injuries are also a concern with Reddy having left the field on a wheelchair after being struck in a warm-up game, while Amanjot also had an injury scare before she made a return in the last warm-up against New Zealand. The spin lineup led by Deepthi Sharma, Radha Yadav, Sneha Rana and N Sree Charani, is tailor-made for home conditions but it remains to be seen how much turn would be on offer in the flat decks.

HOPE ASIAN TEAM WINS CUP: ATHAPATHTHU



Sri Lankan players during a training session ahead of the ICC Women's Cricket World Cup 2025 match against India in Guwahati

PTI

Sri Lanka have similar conditions. But if we think too much about it, we won't do well. If we can make the semifinals, that will be a really good achievement for us. Then we can take it from there," she said.

Athapaththu admitted India were the team to beat in familiar conditions.

"We've been playing really good cricket in the last 12 months. India are favourites, they know the conditions well. We just

"This is the first time Sri Lanka is co-hosting. Playing in the subcontinent is an advantage because India and

India are a good and experienced side," she remarked. Sri Lanka's build-up included a runners-up finish in the home tri-nation series earlier this year, besides lifting the Asia Cup T20 crown last year. "We haven't played any international cricket after the tri-series, but we had a good domestic season. In the tri-series, we beat South Africa but lost the final to India. Overall, we played really good cricket. Both our youngsters and seniors are in good form, and I hope we can play our best cricket in this World Cup," she said.

▼ BRIEFLY

CHHETRI JOINS NATIONAL CAMP AHEAD OF AFC QUALIFIERS



Talismanic striker Sunil Chhetri and his two Bengaluru FC team-mates Rahul Bheke and Roshan Singh Naorem on Monday joined the national men's football team's preparatory camp in Bengaluru ahead of the upcoming AFC Asian Cup qualifier matches against Singapore. With the joining of the trio, the total number of players who have reported to the camp has risen to 28. Head coach Khalid Jamil had named 30 probables for the camp ahead of India's crucial Asian Cup qualifying round matches against Singapore on October 9 (away) and October 14 (home). But the camp began on September 20 with only 18 players as 14, including Chhetri, were not released by three clubs. Seven Bengaluru FC players, three from East Bengal and four from Punjab FC were not released initially. The clubs had said that they would release the players towards the end of this month. "Sunil Chhetri, Rahul Bheke, and Roshan Singh Naorem have joined the national training camp today," the All India Football Federation (AIFF) said on X. The trio will have just a few days for training in the camp before the Indian team's departure for Singapore for the crucial October 9 match. Those players who joined the camp after its start are: Farukh Choudhary, Gurpreet Singh Sandhu, Rahim Ali, Muhammed Uvais, Praveen, Nikhil Prabhu, Muhammed Suhail, Anwar Ali and Mahesh Singh Naorem. Jamil had earlier urged the clubs and the AIFF to find a solution that "balances club and national commitments" through "constructive dialogue" as he did not have enough players, especially in defence.

BOPANNA, YUZUKI SEAL PLACE IN JAPAN OPEN FINAL



In a season-best performance, veteran Indian tennis player Rohan Bopanna and his Japanese partner Takeru Yuzuki stormed into the Japan open final after stunning top-seeded American duo of Christian Harrison and Evan King in a tense semifinal clash on Monday. The Indo-Japanese wild card pair displayed remarkable grit to upset Harrison and King 4-6, 6-3, 18-16 in a match that kept the crowd on the edge of their seats. After dropping the opening set, Bopanna and Yuzuki bounced back strongly in the second and then held their nerve in a marathon super tie-break, converting their third match point to seal the contest. The 44-year-old Bopanna used his big serves to good effect, while Yuzuki impressed with sharp returns and net play. The win takes Bopanna into yet another career final. Before this, reaching the quarterfinals of the ATP 500 at Queen's Club was Bopanna's best show of 2025.

Swiatek wins 400th career match in China Open

ASSOCIATED PRESS

■ Beijing

Wimbledon champion Iga Swiatek defeated Camila Osorio for her 400th career win and advanced to the fourth round at the China Open on Monday.

Swiatek, who became the first player to register 25 or more wins at WTA-1000 events for three consecutive seasons with her straight sets victory of Yuan Yue in the third round, showed no signs of slowing down as she dismantled her Colombian opponent 6-0 in the first set, before Osorio retired from the match in the opening game of the second set.

Top-seeded Swiatek, who won last week's Korea Open in Seoul, has also won the French Open four times and the US Open once among her six Grand Slam singles titles, next plays American Emma Navarro. In earlier third-round matches

Monday, fourth-seeded Mirra Andreeva beat Jessica Bouzas Manero 6-4, 6-1 and Marta Kostyuk beat Aliaksandra Sasnovich 6-4, 6-2. Navarro was leading Lois Boisson 6-2, 1-0 when the French player

retired from the match. In the ATP 500 men's tournament being held concurrently in Beijing, top-seeded Jannik Sinner cruised into the semi-finals with a 6-1, 7-5 defeat of Fabian Marozsan. The 24-

year-old Italian will next play third-seeded Alex de Minaur, who advanced by walkover after his opponent Jakub Menczik retired with injury trailing 4-1 in the first set.

Yuvraj Sandhu finishes 43 in Taiwan Masters

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

■ Taipei City

Indian golfer Yuvraj Sandhu shot 2-over 74 to finish Tied-43 at the Mercuries Taiwan Masters as majority of the players struggled on the final day and under par rounds were just a few.

The Taiwan Golf and Country club has proved a challenge all week as scoring was difficult.

Sandhu made four birdies, three bogeys and one triple bogey in his final round of the week.

The Indian made an early bogey on the third hole and followed it up immediately with a birdie on the fourth. He repeated the same cycle on the ninth and 10th holes before dropping three shots on the 12th hole.

Consecutive birdies on the 15th and 16th holes saw him mount a short lived resurgence only to end the round with a bogey on the 17th hole.

Resurgent Lyon beats Lille to move level on points with PSG



final hole. He finished the week with a total score of 10 over par.

Rattanong Wannasrichan carded a final round of 1-over 73 to hold off all his challengers and win the Mercuries Taiwan Masters by one stroke. The Thai made three birdies and four bogeys in the final round to end the week at five under par.

Suradit Yongcharoenchai finished in second place as Atiruj Winaicharoenchai struggled on the final day and fell down the leaderboard to T-4.

Yongcharoenchai carded a final round of 1-under 71 with three birdies, four bogeys and one eagle for a total score of four under for the week.

Winaicharoenchai shot 5-over 77 for a final score of one under par. This round included six bogeys, one double bogey and three birdies.

His dominance in the event at the Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium was such that each of his five throws after the opening 10.66m effort was good enough for him to get the gold.

The 38-year-old Russian was in a league of his own, and his 11.85m on his third attempt bettered Paralympic gold medallist Portuguese Miguel Monteiro's world record. The 11.92m effort on the last throw raised the bar even higher in the event meant for short stature athletes.

Gnezdilov, the Tokyo 2020 Paralympic gold medal winner, claimed his third World Championship crown

to continue his stranglehold on the event. Russian, as well as Belarusian, athletes are competing as part of NPA as they are not allowed to compete under their national flag after the invasion of Ukraine.

Monteiro was second with 11.31m while Garrah Tnaish of Iraq took the bronze with 10.86m. There were two championship records that



were breached on Monday morning. Poland's Bartosz Gorczak rewrote the meet mark in the men's shot put F53 final with a 8.67m throw while the women's discus throw F44 final witnessed Mexico's Osiris Aneth Machado getting the gold with championship record of 44.36m. Poland won their second gold of the day through Faustyna Kotlowska

from Siwach in the opening minutes of the third quarter to claim the win.

India had lost two games on the trot against the Australia U21 side earlier, but with this win, the visitors will be hoping to ride on the newfound momentum in the remaining two matches of the tour.

Siwach scored the winning goal in the 32nd minute at the National Hockey Centre here. After a goal-less first half, India finally broke the deadlock courtesy of a fine field goal

in the women's discus throw F64 event. The two gold medals helped Poland vault to the top of the medal table with four gold and four bronze, ahead of Brazil (3 gold, 5 silver, 2 bronze) and China (3-4-3).

From among the Indians in the fray, Dayawanti had the best placing, a 27.94m effort on her last attempt saw her finish fourth in the women's discus throw F64 final on Monday morning.

It fetched her the Asian Record but 1.51m separated her and the bronze medalist Alicia Guerrero of the United States of America.

Ayush Verma was fifth in men's shot put F5 final, his best effort of 7.23m falling 97cm short of the bronze medal distance attained by Ales Kisy of Czechia.

Rongali Ravi, a seasoned campaigner, was unable to be in the mix in the dramatic men's shot put F40 final with his season's best effort of 10.10m, falling 76cm short of a podium finish.

shown a red card by referee Mathieu Vernice and continued to remonstrate as he walked up to the stands.

Vernice showed his authority again when he gave winger Matias Fernandez-Pardo a yellow card for diving in the penalty as he tried to win a penalty late on. Nabil Bentaleb's shot from just outside the penalty area flew just past the right post with the last kick of the game.

Lens holds red card

Lens drew 0-0 at Rennes despite having defender Jonathan Gradit sent off in the first minute. Gradit clattered into Rennes captain Seko Fofana - his former teammate

at Lens. Rennes striker Esteban Lepaul had a shot saved in the closing stages. The draw kept Lens in seventh place and one point above Rennes in eighth. Earlier, Nice's miserable run of form continued when it conceded a late equalizer. Nice has won only two of nine games in all competitions this season, losing six. Nice was beaten home and away by Benfica in Champions League qualifying and lost its Europa League opener at home to Roma. Mohamed-Ali Cho's fine pass set up the goal for midfielder Sofiane Diop for a neat finish in the 40th minute. But striker Jean-Philippe Krasso's 88th-minute penalty earned his side a point.



Yadav donates total match fees to Armed Forces

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

■ Dubai

India captain Suryakumar Yadav will donate his entire match fee from the just-concluded Asia Cup to the country's armed forces and the victims of Pahalgam terror attack.

India defeated bitter foes Pakistan by five wickets in the final to win the trophy on Sunday night.

"I have decided to donate my match fees from this tournament to support our Armed Forces and the families of the victims who suffered from the Pahalgam terror attack. You always remain in my thoughts. Jai Hind," the 35-year-old posted on 'X' after the high-voltage win. India players are entitled to Rs four lakh per match in the T20 format, which means that Suryakumar would be donating a total of ₹28 lakh for the seven games played in the continental event.

The Indian team steadfastly refused to exchange pleasantries with the Pakistani side during the entire tournament, where it ended up beating Salman Ali Agha's men on three consecutive Sundays.

Suryakumar had taken the lead in snubbing Pakistan at every opportunity during the tournament. He also paid tribute to the Pahalgam attack victims and the Indian armed forces after his team beat the arch foes in a group match on



September 14. A furious Pakistan had accused him of making political statements and sought a ban on him in its complaint to the ICC. The world body

INDIA DEFEATED BITTER FOES PAKISTAN BY FIVE WICKETS IN THE FINAL TO WIN THE TROPHY ON SUNDAY NIGHT. INDIAN TEAM STEADFASTLY REFUSED TO EXCHANGE PLEASANTRIES WITH PAKISTANI SIDE

had then asked him to refrain from making any statement that might be construed political, besides imposing a 30 per cent fine on his match fee of that day.

I responded with my bat: Tilak

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ Dubai

Pakistan players had "a lot to say" to Tilak Varma when he walked to the crease during the Asia Cup final which fired up the Indian batter to play one of the most defining innings of his career thus far. Having lost early wickets, India were in a precarious situation when Tilak came out to bat. Considering the hostilities between the two teams, there was plenty said to Tilak as well but he kept his composure to produce a batting masterclass in a high-pressure scenario. "I wanted my bat to do the talking. They were saying a lot of things I just wanted to respond with my bat. Now they are not visible on the ground," said Tilak in a chat with teammate Shivam Dube on BCCI TV. The 60-run stand between Dube and Tilak helped India win the Asia Cup with two balls to spare. Tilak remained unbeaten on 69 off 53 balls.

"I think my bat did the talking as well, they did not have much to say to me," said Dube in a light-hearted conversation.

Tilak added that the atmosphere in the stadium fuelled him to excel in a high stakes contest. "The chants of Vande Matram in the stands gave me goosebumps. I just want to say Bharat mata ki jai," added Tilak. Besides the crucial 33 in the middle-order, Dube was handed a stiff challenge of bowling the first over of the game in the absence of injured

THE 60-RUN STAND BETWEEN DUBE AND TILAK HELPED INDIA WIN THE ASIA CUP WITH TWO BALLS TO SPARE. TILAK REMAINED UNBEATEN ON 69 OFF 53 BALLS

Hardik Pandya. There were serious question marks over his bowling not so long ago but Dube passed the bowling test as well with flying colours.

"There is a lot of hard work behind (my bowling) and prayers of Indian team supporters. Lot of support and confidence has been given by the management. It was crucial game, I got a big opportunity. It was fun," concluded Dube.

Don't want to be harsh but Surya disrespected cricket, says Agha

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

■ Dubai

Salman Agha feels that Indian team's 'No Handshake' policy while playing Pakistan in the Asia Cup was "disrespectful" to the game and not the best example of sportsmanship for the young fans who look up to cricketers as role models.

India beat arch-rivals Pakistan by five wickets in a highly volatile Asia Cup final here on Sunday to win their second tournament title in the T20 format. "What India have done this tournament is very disappointing. They are not disrespecting us by not shaking hands, they are dis-

pecting cricket. Good teams don't do what they did," the Pakistan skipper said at the post-match press conference. For Salman, fulfilling obligations is a part of playing the sport. "We went to pose with the trophy (photo shoot) on our own because we wanted to fulfil our obligations. We stood there and took our medals. I don't want to use harsh words but they've been very disrespectful."

Salman claimed that Suryakumar has been a different person in public when it came to exchanging courtesy compared to how he behaved in private. "He shook hands with me

in private at the start of the tournament, both at the pre-tournament press conference, and when we met in the referee's meeting.

But when they're out in the world in front of the cameras, they don't shake our hands.

"I'm sure he's following the instructions he's been given, but if it was up to him, he'd shake hands with me." Salman tried to justify Asian Cricket Council (ACC) chief Mohsin Naqvi's decision to stand on the presentation dais before walking away with the trophy. He said India were not awarded the trophy as they didn't want to collect it from the PCB chief.

"He shook hands with me

Abhishek and Kuldeep shine brightest in Asia Cup

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

■ Dubai

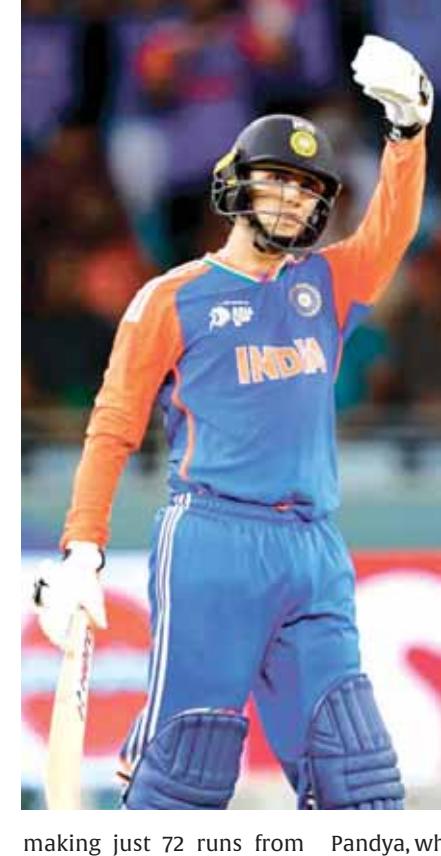
The just-concluded Asia Cup was deeply saturated with off-field drama. But even amidst the bedlam, there were sparks of brilliance, emergence of new stars and tears of failure.

From a team perspective, India remained unconquered in seven matches, though Sri Lanka stretched them to the Super Over in an inconsequential Super 4s match and the final against Pakistan went into the final over of the tournament.

Pakistan won their matches except the three fixtures against India, but defending champions Sri Lanka disappointed with losses against Pakistan and Bangladesh. Afghanistan promised a lot but delivered little as they failed to make it to the Super 4s. The number-crunching as an intriguing, emotionally-draining tournament comes to a close.

This was India's 9th Asia Cup title (combined in ODI and T20 formats), and this was also India's 9th straight win against Pakistan while chasing in T20s.

India's Abhishek Sharma justified his world number one status in T20Is with 314 runs from 7 matches with three half-centuries and a highest score of 75. His average stood at 44.85 and strike-rate an astounding 200.00. India captain Suryakumar Yadav struggled in the tournament,



making just 72 runs from seven matches with a highest of 47 not out. His deputy Shubman Gill was also patchy with 127 runs from six matches and four wickets for 120 runs at an economy of 8.57.

Tilak Varma emerged one of the stars of the tournament with 213 runs from seven matches with the match-winning knock of 69 not out in the final against Pakistan which was also his highest of the tournament.

India all-rounder Hardik



Pandya, who missed out the summit clash, due to an injury, had an ordinary tournament with 48 runs from six matches and four wickets for 120 runs at an economy of 8.57.

He was pulled up for his gun-firing celebration in the Super 4s match against India, but opener Sahibzada Farhan was the top batter for Pakistan with 217 runs in seven matches with two half-centuries and a highest score of 58. Fakhar Zaman

was the other notable performer with the bat for Pakistan, making 181 runs from seven matches with a highest of 50.

The lone century of the tournament, however, came from the bat of Pathum Nissanka of Sri Lanka who smashed 107 against India in the Super 4s. But his ton eventually went in vain as his side lost in the Super Over.

Most of his batting team-mates struggled except Kusal Perera who

accumulated 146 from six matches. Pakistan captain Salman Agha's tournament run tally was eerily similar to his Indian counterpart Suryakumar -- 72. The all-rounder, a capable off-spinner, inexplicably under-bowled himself -- just two overs for a solitary wicket.

For Bangladesh, the fourth team in the Super 4s, Saif Hassan was the best batter with 178 runs from four matches with 69 being his highest score.

India's Kuldeep Yadav was miles ahead of other bowlers with 17 wickets from seven matches, 10 scalps more than his nearest rival Shaheen Shah Afridi (10 wickets from seven matches). His best figures were 4/7 and the economy rate a measly 6.27.

Kuldeep swelled his Asia Cup wicket tally (across ODI and T20 formats) to 36 to go past the previous record set by former Sri Lankan pacer Lasith Malinga 33.

India's pace spearhead Jasprit Bumrah did a decent job with seven wickets for 135 runs from five matches, with an economy of 7.43.

UAE's Junaid Siddique was the surprise package with his nine wickets from three group matches. His 4/18 against Pakistan, though in a losing cause, was among the best figures in a match in the tournament.

Afghan star Rashid Khan disappointed with just three wickets from as many matches as his team crashed out in the group stage itself.

not like that because in my life I have learned that if you create something like it's a big thing I am doing then on the 15th day, you will lose motivation.

BCCI announces ₹21 cr award for team, staff



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

■ Mumbai

The BCCI has declared that the Asia Cup-winning Indian cricket team and its support staff will be presented a prize money of ₹21 crore for its unbeaten run in the just-concluded tournament.

The Board made the announcement after the team defeated arch-rivals Pakistan by five wickets in the final of the tournament in Dubai on Sunday.

"It was (an) extraordinary victory and therefore as a part of celebrations, BCCI has announced a cash award of ₹21 crore in favour of the players and the support staff who are part of the Indian team in the Asia Cup," BCCI secretary Devajit Saikia said.

However, the body did not give details of the exact break-up of the fund.

"That money will be distributed and this is a big reward

for our team and the Indian cricket board as well as the people of India. We are extremely proud of our cricketers and the support staff for their superb performance in Dubai," Saikia added.

The BCCI also posted a jubilant message on its social media pages. "Three blows. o response. Asia Cup Champions. Message delivered. ₹21 crores prize money for the team and support staff," it stated referring to India's unbeaten streak against Pakistan.

The Indian team was, in fact, undefeated through the tournament, winning all its seven matches.

"The undefeated champions of ASIA. Congratulations Team India on a dominating win and 3-0 against Pak. Marvellous display by Tilak Verma and @imkuldeep18. A great show under pressure," posted Board vice president Rajeev Shukla.

Gutted to miss final; win will help us in long run: Hardik

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

■ Guwahati

Hardik Pandya was understandably "gutted" to have missed the Asia Cup final against Pakistan with a niggle but found comfort in the team's title triumph, saying said such tight chases will stand the side in good stead for the future. India chased down the target of 147 set by Pakistan in 19.4 overs to clinch their ninth Asia Cup title on Sunday. "I was very gutted to miss the most important game, but the way the boys played was outstanding. They showed a lot of character," Pandya said in a video posted by the BCCI.

"These games are going to help us in the long run where we will be tested, we will be put under pressure. The way we held our nerves was fantastic," he added. Pandya said this Indian side is learning fast to adapt to all kind of situations and conditions. "T20 cricket is about that, come and dominate, play a fearless brand, and at the same point of time learn and adapt, I think this team

is learning that," he said. The Baroda cricketer praised opener Abhishek Sharma for helping the team to start off the block in a blazing manner. "Outstanding effort by Abhishek from the top — the way he played and the fearlessness he showed, half of the game he won for us in the Power Play itself," he said.

Personally, Pandya did not have a bright Asia Cup campaign, taking just four wickets from six matches at an economy rate of 8.57. However, the 31-year-old did not read too much into records and said he relished the challenge of handling the new ball duties alongside Jasprit Bumrah.

"I have always enjoyed any role that I am given, and this time I was handed over the new ball, which I really enjoyed. Batting has always been there, whenever the team requires, as that's the way I like to bat," he said. "Bowling has been my No. 1 priority for a long time now, if Hardik Pandya bowls then batting is never a problem. I treat myself as

a pure fast bowler and I have taken a lot of pride in that. It's a lot of hard work, a lot of discipline, and it has been a constant which I really enjoy," he said.

Pandya said he has accepted bowling as a choice in his life rather than as a mundane chore.

"I tried making a big deal out of it, but as a person I am

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