

PAGE 5 NATION

Didi is with you, for you always: Mamata tells CJP

PAGE 8 GLOBAL

Russia still hitting energy sites, says Zelenskyy

PAGE 10 BUSINESS

Gold sheds ₹1,800 as strong rupee adds to bullion woes

PAGE 11 LAW & JUSTICE

SC asks MEA to notify kin of Russia war victims

PAGE 12 SPORTS

Hope's ton powers West Indies to 247/3



IDBI set for Fairfax takeover

Govt cleared sale of 60.72% stake in IDBI to Fairfax for ₹52,878 crore

RAHUL DATTA ■ New Delhi

In a far-reaching decision to privatise public sector banks, the Government on Wednesday approved the sale of a 60.72 per cent stake in the Industrial Bank of India (IDBI) to Canada-based Fairfax Financial Holdings, owned by V Prem Watsa, for ₹52,878 crore. It is the country's biggest strategic disinvestment since the sale of Air India. Once completed, it will be the largest Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in the financial sector so far.

This decision by the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA), headed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, ends a process that has stretched over five years and marks a significant step in the Government's efforts to reduce its ownership of State-run assets and attract private capital into the financial sector.

Prem Watsa-led Fairfax will pay ₹81 per share, above the benchmark fair value of ₹75.99 set by two independent valuation agencies, an official statement said.

The deal marks a major



milestone in a long-delayed effort to privatise IDBI Bank and reduce State ownership of commercial enterprises. The sale process began in 2022 and faced a setback earlier this year when initial bids fell below the Government's reserve price. IDBI Bank shares rose 9.07 per cent on Wednesday to close at ₹90.44 per share on BSE after the announcement.

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said the

approval will pave the way for attracting Foreign Direct Investment (FDI), while the Government retains a minority stake in the lender.

In a social media post, she said the Government had supported the bank's recovery and was now enabling its next phase of growth through the proposed restructuring.

"Propelled by Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri @narendramodi's visionary leadership, India's reform trajectory

reaches another milestone today with the CCEA's approval of IDBI Bank's strategic restructuring," she said. The move will strengthen India's banking ecosystem and help banking services meet global benchmarks, she said.

Sitharaman said the decision reflects the Indian economy's resilience and the Government's continued commitment to reforms.

CONTINUED ON >> P4

Two CJP leaders in judicial custody

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ New Delhi

Cockroach Janta Party (CJP) leaders Saurav Das and Ashutosh Ranka were remanded to five days' judicial custody on Wednesday for allegedly trespassing into private property to reach Jantar Mantar, a denotified protest site, and violating bonds requiring them to maintain peace, police said. Their associate, Ajinkya Shinde, was bound down to maintain peace and good behaviour for six months and released on a personal bond with a surety of ₹5,000.

Delhi Police has registered two FIRs against 14 members of the CJP for allegedly trespassing into Jantar Mantar, which has been denotified as a designated protest site, and obstructing police personnel from discharging their official duties. In his order, Special Executive Magistrate (SEM) Mahesh Kumar Meena said the leaders' past conduct showed they had violated lawful directions of the authorities. He noted that they had executed bonds to maintain peace and good behaviour for a year but allegedly breached them after their release by issuing protest calls on social media and attempting to mobilise people at Jantar Mantar on Saturday (October 10).

"The past conduct of both accused persons shows that they violated the lawful directions of the authorities. The present conduct of both accused persons shows that they are likely to breach peace and tranquillity in the area. From the material on record, it is imperative that the above-said respondents, after



CJP National Organisation in-charge Ajinkya Shinde along with CJP co-conveners Ashutosh Ranka and Saurav Das inside the Parliament Street police station in New Delhi on Wednesday

PTI

CJP is AAP's 'B' team: CM Rekha

RAJESH KUMAR ■ New Delhi

Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta on Wednesday launched a fierce attack on the Cockroach Janta Party (CJP), calling it the "B" party of the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP), and accused Rahul Gandhi, Arvind Kejriwal and leaders of the INDIA Bloc of "colluding with foreign elements" to harm India.

"The country is progressing and strengthening its position on the

global stage. This is what troubles them. By joining hands with people abroad who are jealous of India, they continue to work towards harming the country," she said while addressing a press conference.

The chief minister also accused the AAP, Congress, and other Opposition parties of troubling Delhi through protests and sit-in, calling them "dharna kings" who can't see a bright future for themselves in politics.

CONTINUED ON >> P4

having executed a bond/bail bond for keeping the peace in pursuance of an order of a SEM South West under Section 136 BNSS, have again committed breach

of the bond/bail bond, which is evident from their conduct/social media posts and the statement of the complainant.

CONTINUED ON >> P4

The ByStander



Blue drum murder case: Muskan, Sahil get death penalty

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ Meerut

A district court in Meerut on Wednesday sentenced Muskan Rastogi and her partner Sahil Shukla to death for the murder of her husband, merchant navy officer Saurabh Rajput. The body had been dismembered and sealed with cement inside a blue drum, a detail that made the case one of the most widely discussed murders in western Uttar Pradesh over the past year.

District Judge Arvind Kumar Mishra delivered the judgment after a 13-month trial with 126 hearings. It's the so-called 'blue drum case'.



and the two convicts appeared before the court via video conference.

Rajput was killed on March 3, 2025. His remains were discovered roughly two weeks later at the house the couple occupied in Meerut.

Investigators found that the body had been cut into pieces, placed inside a large blue drum, and covered with cement in an apparent attempt to hide the evidence.

FULL REPORT ON >> P5

Rail insurance mandatory from October 27, says SC

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ New Delhi

In a move to extend coverage to all train travellers, the Supreme Court has directed the Railways to provide insurance for tickets purchased over the counter from October 27, warning that the Railway Board would be directly responsible for any failure to implement the order.

The October 6 direction came on a plea filed in the wake of the June 2023 Odisha train accident, seeking a commission of inquiry to probe the crash, which the petitioner attributed to the non-implementation of the Kavach safety system. The plea also sought directions to the authorities to ensure its early implementation across all trains.



Hearing the matter, the bench of Justices Ahsanuddin Amanullah and R Mahadevan expanded its scope to cover various aspects of passenger safety, including railway foot over bridges, fencing of tracks, and the lack of insurance for tickets purchased over the counter.

Appearing for the Centre, Additional Solicitor General Vikramjeet Banerjee urged the bench to grant him one last opportunity to file a categorical affidavit setting out the actual work carried out on the ground during the last year, and explaining the reasons for not achieving the prescribed targets, at least in respect of fencing.

The court accepted the request and put its order summoning the Chairman and members of the Railway Board on hold.

CM announces 2027 as Youth Year, seeks greater participation in governance

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ Bhopal

Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Mohan Yadav on Wednesday said the state government would observe 2027 as Youth Year, with young people playing a key role in governance, policy implementation and public welfare. He urged selected young professionals to work closely with district administrations, assess the implementation of Government schemes and suggest improvements to ensure benefits reach people effectively.

Yadav was addressing the inaugural session of a five-day training programme for selected CM Fellows under the Chief Minister Young Professionals for Development Programme at the Atal Bihari Vajpayee Institute of Good Governance and Policy Analysis. He inaugurated the programme by lighting a ceremonial lamp.

The Chief Minister said young professionals selected from all 55 districts rep-



resented new hopes for the State. They would evaluate the implementation of Central and State Government schemes, identify shortcomings and help improve delivery mechanisms, he said. Their work should go beyond routine employment and contribute to the State's development and public welfare.

Yadav said the Government had designated 2025 as the Year of Employment and Investment, 2026 as the Year of Farmers' Welfare and 2027 as the Year of Youth. The district would organise a range of activities during the coming year to encourage youth participation and leadership.

Emphasising professional conduct, he advised the fellows to be confident, remain humble, and communicate effectively. They should work with senior district officials, understand local challenges and combine academic knowledge with practical experience.

Responding to a question from Prachi Gaur of Bhopal about handling field-level challenges, Yadav advised young professionals to stay calm, manage their time efficiently, and maintain open communication with the public.

Referring to former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee, the Chief Minister said his life

offered lessons in democratic values, public responsibility and leadership.

He also cited India's achievements in space science as an example of the country's growing capabilities under Prime Minister Narendra Modi's leadership.

Institute Vice-Chairman Professor Rajiv Dixit said the training would cover data analysis, district-level administrative structures and working procedures. Senior officials from departments including tribal welfare, health, women and child development, revenue, agriculture, and panchayat and rural development would share practical insights with the fellows.

The Global Village Foundation and the governance institute also signed a memorandum of understanding in the Chief Minister's presence. Additional Chief Secretary Neeraj Mandloi, Youth Commission Chairman Praveen Sharma and other officials attended the programme.

Cabinet clears ₹53,428 crore for NSAP

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ New Delhi

The Union Cabinet on Wednesday approved an outlay of ₹53,428 crore to continue the National Social Assistance Programme (NSAP) for five years, from 2026-27 to 2030-31, with revised eligibility criteria and assistance rates for disability pension beneficiaries.



The scheme will be renamed the 'Pradhan Mantri Samajik Sahayata Yojana', while its pension and family benefit components will also be renamed, according to an official statement. The Cabinet's approval is expected to benefit 3.20 crore beneficiaries across all 36 States and Union Territories.

CONTINUED ON >> P4

India-US trade deal nears finish line: EAM

ASHOKE RAJ ■ New Delhi

India and the United States are continuing negotiations to resolve outstanding differences over a proposed bilateral trade agreement, with talks moving toward a possible "landing point," External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar said ahead of US Secretary of State Marco Rubio's anticipated visit to India.

Speaking at the Bloomberg New Economy Forum on Tuesday evening, Jaishankar said negotiations were progressing but declined to disclose details of the discussions.

"I think we are waiting on a few things. I wouldn't be comfortable spilling the beans in public," he said when asked about the status of the proposed trade deal. Jaishankar said India's Commerce and Industry Minister, the US Trade Representative (USTR), and other officials were discussing how to resolve the remaining differences and move the agreement forward.



"I sense that this is an issue which is heading towards a landing point," Jaishankar said.

India and the US have been negotiating a bilateral trade agreement since early 2025, seeking to address tariff-related tensions, reduce non-tariff barriers and expand market access. New Delhi seeks more favourable tariff terms for Indian exports than those offered by com-

peting economies.

Jaishankar noted that the outcome would depend not only on the terms India and the US negotiate but also on the agreements Washington reaches with other competing economies.

Earlier this month, US Trade Representative Jamie Green said the two countries were working to finalise a bilateral trade agreement, though a deal was not imminent. He said both sides had identified the outstanding issues and were working to resolve them.

Jaishankar's remarks came more than a week after Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said negotiations on the trade deal had reached a "plateau".

The external affairs minister also discussed Washington's changing approach to global economic engagement, saying the US was seeking to rebuild its manufacturing base and reset the terms of access to its domestic market.

LIFTING OF FLYASH, BOTTOM ASH AND POND ASH TO ALL USERS OF ASH

INVITING EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

Vedanta Power Limited (erstwhile Talwandi Sabo Power Limited) is one of India's leading private power producers delivering reliable power for a growing economy, that lights homes, touches lives, and drives transformation across the nation. With a total installed thermal power capacity of 4,780 MW, the company supplies power to discoms nationwide through long-term partnerships, while supporting emerging grid requirements. Its portfolio includes a 1,980 MW plant in Mansa, Punjab; a 1,000 MW facility in Nellore, Andhra Pradesh; 1200 MW in Sakti, Chhattisgarh; and a 600 MW unit in Jharsuguda, Odisha. Through operational excellence, technological leadership, and strategic capacity expansion, Vedanta Power Limited is reinforcing grid stability as a cornerstone of India's energy security.

Vedanta Power Limited invites Expression of Interest (EOI) from all users of ash for lifting of fly ash, bottom ash and pond ash on "free-of-cost", "as is where is basis" and "first-come-first-serve basis". The ideal user shall be lifting and transporting of ash generated from 600 MW Thermal IPP located in Jharsuguda at their own expenses for utilisation of ash in an environment-friendly manner, as per the prevailing guidelines of MoEF & CC, SPCB and MoP.

*Interested and eligible ash users can download the bidding documents from:
www.vedantapower.com/becoming-a-supplier/
 Expression of Interest to be submitted by 22nd October 2026, via Email Id:
VedantaPower.Commercial@vedanta.co.in
 For further information, bidders can log in to:
<https://www.vedantapower.com/becoming-a-supplier/>

MP transfers Rs 1,834 crore to Ladli Behna beneficiaries, announces projects for Umaria

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ Umaria

Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Dr Mohan Yadav on Wednesday transferred more than Rs 1,834 crore into the bank accounts of over 1.25 crore beneficiaries under the Mukhyamantri Ladli Behna Yojana as the state government released the scheme's 41st instalment during Navratri.

He also transferred more than Rs 115 crore as assistance for LPG cylinder refills to eligible women and inaugurated and laid the foundation stones for 136 development works worth over Rs 144 crore in Umaria district.

Addressing a Ladli Behna Sammelan at Guruvahi village in the Manpur Janpad Panchayat area, Yadav said the government was committed to women's welfare and empowerment. He said beneficiaries were receiving Rs 1,500 every month under the scheme and that more than Rs 65,000 crore had been transferred since its launch in June 2023.

The Chief Minister said the state government had made a budgetary provision of Rs 47,000 crore for women's welfare. He added that more than 65 lakh women were associated with self-help groups, around 25% of whom were Lakhpati Didis. Women working in employment-generating industries were also being provided additional assistance of Rs 5,000 as wages, he said.

Of the 136 development



works announced for Umaria, 68 projects worth Rs 87 crore were inaugurated, while the foundation stones were laid for another 68 works costing Rs 57 crore. Yadav said the Sleemanabad tunnel would also benefit Umaria and neighbouring districts by improving the availability of irrigation water.

The Chief Minister announced the establishment of a Sandipani School in Umaria, construction of a new building for the community health centre in Manpur and its upgradation to a civil hospital. He also announced steps to promote tourism, allot land at 25% of its value to institutions working in the social sector, and develop Amarpur town in Umaria district as a tehsil.

Yadav said the government was working to improve the lives of poor families through housing, sanitation, educa-

tion and transport initiatives. He highlighted the provision of laptops and scooters to meritorious students, along with bicycles, school buses, free books and uniforms for schoolchildren.

Under the LPG refill assistance initiative, more than 23 lakh women received over Rs 115 crore. The government has provided Rs 1,600 crore in refill assistance over three years, he said.

The Chief Minister also handed over keys of an Aajeevika Express purchased for Rs 8.5 lakh for a women's group in the Pali development block. The service is intended to improve transport access in areas where women associated with livelihood groups face mobility challenges. He distributed tricycles to 10 persons with disabilities and benefits under various welfare schemes.

Yadav said the government was promoting cattle rearing to increase farmers' income, encouraging homestays in tribal areas and expanding air services. He also referred to the role of women in administration, saying women were serving as district collectors in one-fourth of the state's districts.

Yadav said the government was also supporting women-led livelihood initiatives to strengthen rural incomes. Under the Aajeevika Express initiative, a vehicle purchased for Rs 8.5 lakh has been provided to a women's group in the Pali development block to improve transport connectivity in areas where livelihood group members face difficulties commuting. A woman driver is being trained to operate the vehicle, and the income generated through the service will go to the woman running it.

Misrod SHO suspended over tribal students' abuse

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ Bhopal

Misrod police station in-charge Ratan Singh Parihar has been suspended and a departmental inquiry ordered after he allegedly used abusive language against tribal students protesting in Bhopal and objected to their raising the slogan 'Jai Johar'. Chief Minister Dr Mohan Yadav has taken cognisance of the incident, while the police commissioner has directed an investigation into the matter.

The incident took place on Tuesday in the Misrod area, where the student wing of the Gondwana Gantantra Party was protesting over issues concerning students. During the demonstration, Parihar allegedly reacted angrily when tribal students raised the slogan 'Jai Johar', an expression associated with tribal culture and respect.

A video of the incident has surfaced, purportedly showing the station in-charge using abusive language towards the students and threatening them, saying, "I will beat you right here." The video went viral on social media, prompting tribal legislators and various organisations to demand action against the police officer.

Leader of Opposition Umang Singhar described the incident as serious and condemnable in a post on X. He said it was wrong to use abusive language against tribal students raising their voices to protect constitutional and democratic rights.



Army personnel display weapons in an exhibition organised on the 10th anniversary of Shaurya Smarak, in Bhopal on Wednesday.
Pioneer photo

MP eases CPCT rules for fourth-grade staff

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ Bhopal

The Madhya Pradesh government has issued consolidated guidelines providing relief to fourth-grade employees seeking promotion to Assistant Grade 3 and equivalent posts by relaxing certain computer qualification requirements.

Under the revised instructions issued by the General Administration Department (GAD), employees who have completed 45 years of age on the date of promotion will be exempt from the requirement of a Computer Proficiency Certification Test (CPCT) scorecard. However, the requirement to demonstrate computer proficiency will remain applicable.

Other eligible employees will be given up to five years after promotion to acquire the prescribed computer

qualifications. The guidelines aim to resolve confusion that emerged after the promotion process began under the Madhya Pradesh Public Service Promotion Rules, 2025.

Employees required to qualify for CPCT and obtain a computer diploma will have to clear the examination and acquire a one-year computer diploma from a recognised institution, or an equivalent prescribed qualification, during their initial two-year probation period.

If they fail to obtain the required qualifications within these two years, their probation period may be extended by a maximum of three additional years. This gives them a total of five years from the date of promotion to fulfil the requirements.

Employees who fail to

acquire the prescribed qualifications within this period will be reverted to their original fourth-grade posts, according to the guidelines.

The relaxations will apply only to departmental promotions. The prescribed CPCT and computer diploma qualifications will remain mandatory for direct recruitment and appointments through other modes.

The revised instructions have been issued in the interest of fourth-grade government employees and to clarify the requirements applicable to promotions to Assistant Grade 3 and equivalent posts.

The GAD issued the consolidated instructions to ensure uniform implementation of promotion rules across departments and remove ambiguities regarding computer qualification requirements.



Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Mohan Yadav showers flower petals on the beneficiaries during Ladli Behna Sammelan in Umaria, Madhya Pradesh on Wednesday.

Umrah travel agent arrested for alleged fraud worth lakhs

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ Bhopal

The operator of Kohinoor Hajj and Umrah Services, Hafiz Rahil Khan, has been arrested for allegedly cheating several people of lakhs of rupees on the pretext of arranging pilgrimages to Mecca and Medina. Police said the accused was sent to jail after his arrest.

According to the complaints, Khan collected money from people promising to arrange their Umrah trips but neither sent them on the pilgrimage nor returned their money. When the victims demanded refunds, he allegedly cited the Iran-Israel conflict to delay payments, promising to arrange travel later or return the amount.

Police initially received complaints from four to five people alleging fraud of around Rs 10 lakh. After an FIR was registered and the accused was arrested, two to three more people reportedly approached the police with similar complaints. One person allegedly paid Rs 1 lakh, while another claimed to have paid Rs 7 lakh. Police

suspect the total amount involved could be higher, but the exact figure is yet to be established.

The accused had reportedly opened his travel agency near a local mosque and offered services for Hajj and Umrah pilgrimages. One victim also alleged that Khan took Rs 10 lakh from an Ayurvedic doctor on the promise of making him a business partner. This complaint is also under scrutiny.

A cheque issued by the accused to one victim was reportedly dishonoured, according to the information available in the case. Deputy Commissioner of Police Shailendra Singh Chauhan said several people had approached the police alleging that they had paid the travel agent for pilgrimage arrangements but received neither travel services nor refunds. Police registered a cheating case and traced the accused before arresting him.

Officials said further investigation was underway to identify additional victims, establish the total amount allegedly collected and examine the other complaints against the accused.

Avoid boarding moving trains: RPF

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ Bhopal

The Railway Protection Force (RPF) has appealed to passengers not to board or alight from moving trains, warning that even a moment of haste can prove fatal. Passengers have been advised to wait until the train comes to a complete halt before boarding or getting off.

The appeal aims to prevent accidents caused by passengers attempting to board a train that has already started moving or stepping down before it stops completely. Such attempts can lead to serious injuries and may even result in loss of life.

The RPF has urged railway passengers to prioritise safety over urgency and avoid taking unnecessary risks while travelling. Passengers should remain patient on platforms and follow safe boarding and alighting practices. The force has stressed that waiting for a train to stop completely is a simple but crucial precaution that can help prevent avoidable accidents and protect lives.

The RPF has also urged passengers to avoid rushing near train doors. Parents should keep children close while boarding or alighting the train.

Sehore probe finds 31.48 ha of forest land encroached

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ Bhopal

A district administration inquiry report has claimed that 78,700 teak saplings were cut down to encroach upon 31.48 hectares of forest land in Budni, where huts belonging to tribal occupants were demolished during an anti-encroachment drive.

The report, submitted to the state government, states that the Madhya Pradesh Forest Development Corporation's Sehore project division in 2020. In 2021, the corporation planted 3,37,500 teak saplings across 135 hectares of the transferred land.

Google Earth timeline images were reportedly submitted as evidence in the inquiry. The report states that images from 2022 show Sunil, son of Shaitan, and 11 others allegedly destroying the plantation and occupying 31.48 hectares for cultivation. The encroachment was identified in compartment 426 of the Kosmi beat, Ladhui range, in the Bhairunda tehsil.

The report states that all nine occupants evicted

during the October 11 operation already had permanent houses, house numbers and voter identity cards registered in Singhpur and Habibnagar villages. During the drive, nine huts were removed and an illegal well was filled with soil and murram. The entire operation was videographed using drones.

The land, measuring 186,960 hectares, was transferred from the territorial forest division to the Forest Development Corporation's Sehore project division in 2020. In 2021, the corporation planted 3,37,500 teak saplings across 135 hectares of the transferred land.

Google Earth timeline images were reportedly submitted as evidence in the inquiry. The report states that images from 2022 show Sunil, son of Shaitan, and 11 others allegedly destroying the plantation and occupying 31.48 hectares for cultivation. The encroachment was identified in compartment 426 of the Kosmi beat, Ladhui range, in the Bhairunda tehsil.

The report states that all nine occupants evicted

Dindori ranger accused of taking Rs 3.44 lakh

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ Bhopal

Former Karanjia forest range ranger Kaushambi Jha has been accused of taking Rs 3.44 lakh from the chairman of a Forest Protection Committee. Members of five forest committees approached Divisional Forest Officer (DFO) Ashok Kumar Solanki on Wednesday, seeking action against the ranger. The DFO has assured them that the complaint will be investigated within 10 days.

The ranger, however, has denied the allegations, claiming that the complaint was filed because she had taken action against unauthorised construction work in a village. Mohan Singh Karcham, chairman of the Jagatpur Forest Protection Committee, said approval had been

granted for constructing a concrete road from the main road to Kapoti Tola. The project was estimated to cost Rs 4.66 lakh. According to the committee, funds had been withdrawn for the work, and labourers were paid on October 12.

Karcham alleged that the ranger summoned him to a rest house through forest guard Charan Singh. He claimed that he was taken into a room and questioned about the money remaining from the project. The ranger allegedly pressured him into handing over Rs 3.44 lakh in cash.

Karcham said he told the ranger that he would have to account for the money to villagers, but she allegedly did not accept his explanation. The allegations are yet to be independently verified.

Another villager, Jagdish Pratap Singh Dhurve, alleged that after a meeting of Forest

Schoolgirl found hanging at home

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ Bhopal

A Class 9 student, Tamanna Kushwaha, allegedly died by suicide at her home in the Chhola Mandir area on Tuesday night following a reported dispute with her elder sister over household chores. Police have not found a suicide note, and the reason behind her death remains unclear.

Tamanna, a resident of Kaichhi Chhola, was studying at a private school. Her father, Jeetu Kushwaha, works as a driver for a travel agency.

According to police, her father had gone to watch a religious tableau in the neighbourhood, while her mother had been staying at her parental home for eight days. Both sisters were at home when the dispute reportedly occurred.

When her father returned, Tamanna did not respond. He looked through a window, found her hanging and broke open the door. Police registered a case of unnatural death and are investigating. The body was handed over to the family after postmortem on Wednesday.

Lokayukta raids 15 locations linked to head constable

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ Indore

The Lokayukta police on Wednesday launched searches at 15 locations in Indore and Dewas in a disproportionate assets case against Firoz Khan, a head constable (driver) posted at the Police Training College (PTC), Indore. A joint team of the Indore and Ujjain Lokayukta units began the operation around 6 am, including a search at his residence in Dewas.

According to preliminary findings, Khan allegedly possesses disproportionate assets worth around Rs 6.26 crore, approximately 223% more than his assessed income, Lokayukta officials said.

The complaint alleged that Khan used his position in the police department to intervene in disputed land and plot matters in the Dewas region. He is also accused of dealing in property through other people, investing in real estate, owning multiple vehicles and running a timber business. Investigators suspect that properties were purchased in the names of family members

MP may reopen Ladli Behna registration

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ Bhopal

The Madhya Pradesh government may reopen registration for women left out of the Mukhyamantri Ladli Behna Yojana. Minister of State for Health Narendra Shivaji Patel said Chief Minister Dr Mohan Yadav had indicated that a decision on the matter would be taken soon.

According to Patel, officials have been asked to assess the number of eligible women who are not receiving benefits and work out a mechanism for their registration. A portal-based facility is also being considered.

However, Women and Child Development Department Commissioner Sandeep GR denied that any such decision had been taken.

Lokayukta Superintendent of Police Rajesh Sahay said Khan's estimated salary income was around Rs 75 lakh. After including income from other sources, his total assessed income stood at Rs 1.93 crore. The preliminary investigation also found that Khan's mother and wife were associated with a firm named Sahil Trading Company, whose bank account reportedly recorded transactions worth crores of rupees. Another firm, Roshni Sales and Service, operated by his acquaintance Roshni Verma, has also come under scrutiny. Verma has been named as an accused following the alleged discovery of her role in property purchases.

Investigators are also examining investments made through Royal Green Real Estate and a registered agreement involving around 21.75 bighas of agricultural land in Guran village, Sanwer tehsil. The searches cover 11 locations in Dewas and four in Indore, including residential properties, flats, plots, agricultural land and commercial establishments.

BMC orders action over misuse of Ward 69 ID

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ Bhopal

Bhopal Municipal Corporation Commissioner Sanskriti Jain has directed the termination of a computer operator and suspension of the then ward in-charge for allegedly misusing Ward 69's ID to change a property's usage category and commit other irregularities.

During a review meeting at the corporation headquarters, Atal Bhawan, on Wednesday, Jain examined pending cases, civic services, revenue collection and preparations for upcoming religious events. She directed officials to ensure accountability and prevent the recurrence of such irregularities.

According to the corporation, the operator allegedly changed the category of an



EWS residential property to show it as a 150-bed hospital, resulting in a change in its tax assessment. Jain ordered immediate action against the operator and suspension of the then ward in-charge. She warned all 21 zonal officers and ward in-charges that similar misconduct in the future could lead to termination of service.

Jain also directed officials to resolve complaints received through the CM

Helpline and other channels promptly. Birth, death and marriage registration services should be made accessible, ensuring that citizens do not face unnecessary difficulties, she said.

Reviewing revenue collection, the commissioner instructed officials to improve recovery across institutional and other dues, address taxpayers' grievances and take steps to increase the corporation's income.

Wife, two others get life for murder

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ Ujjain

A court in Ujjain has sentenced a man's wife and two others to life imprisonment for murdering him over an alleged illicit relationship.

Fifth Additional Sessions Judge Rakesh Kumar Sharma considered the testimony of the victim's 10-year-old son crucial evidence.

The court also imposed a total fine of Rs 31,000 and directed financial assistance for the deceased's minor son and daughter under the Victim Compensation Scheme.

According to the prosecution, Jitendra Banjara was killed on December 24, 2022, after allegedly catching his wife, Pooja, with Rakesh Kushwah in a compromising position.



An artist prepares effigies of demon king Ravana ahead of Dussehra festival in Bhopal on Wednesday.

Pioneer photo



Speaker of Madhya Pradesh State Assembly Narendra Singh Tomar with Governor Mangubhai Patel during a meeting at Lok Bhawan in Bhopal on Wednesday.

Pioneer photo

NGT orders ground survey of Kerwa Dam

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ Bhopal

The National Green Tribunal (NGT) has directed a committee to inspect Kerwa Dam and submit a report on the final determination of its Full Tank Level (FTL), buffer area and alleged encroachments around the reservoir. The committee has been asked to complete the process within three weeks using official records, drone surveys, satellite imagery and ground verification.

The tribunal had recently heard a matter concerning encroachments around Kerwa Dam and directed the committee to examine available records, contour and topographical maps maintained by the Water

Resources Department, and the reservoir's elevation before finalising the FTL boundary.

The committee was scheduled to begin ground-truthing on Wednesday, but the exercise was cancelled at the last moment. The inspection is now likely to take place on Thursday. The findings are to be compiled into a detailed report for submission at the next hearing, scheduled for October 29.

The NGT has specifically directed that drone surveys, satellite imagery, physical verification and available government records be used to determine the FTL and its buffer area. The exercise is expected to establish the reservoir's actual boundary and help assess the current

status of previously identified encroachments.

According to earlier records, Kerwa Dam's submergence area measures approximately 462.150 hectares. Its boundary was marked using 1,080 concrete blocks or pillars. During the ground verification, the committee will also check how many of these boundary markers are still present at the site.

An earlier investigation identified 33 encroachments in the Kerwa reservoir area. Of these, 18 structures were reported on government land and 15 on private land. Details of the identified encroachers, the nature of the encroachments and notices issued to them have been compiled separately.

HC upholds state notification on State Transport Authority

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ Bhopal

The Madhya Pradesh High Court's Gwalior Bench has upheld the validity of the state government's notification dated August 10, 2026, concerning the constitution of the State Transport Authority, dismissing a writ petition filed by private bus operator Harishankar Singh Patel and others.

The petition, numbered 15560/2026, challenged the legality of the notification. A division bench comprising Justice G.S. Ahluwalia and Justice Anuradha Shukla heard the petitioners and the state government before delivering its decision.

According to the state government, the court found the notification legally valid after considering the submissions made by both sides. The petition was dismissed, allowing the state government to proceed further in accordance with the law. The ruling has cleared the way for the government to take further action under the relevant legal provisions governing the State Transport Authority.

The dismissal of the petition is also expected to enable the authority to decide on interstate permit applications and other related matters, which were linked to the challenge to the notification.

Civic body launches uniform drive

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ Neemuch

The Neemuch Municipal Council has started distributing uniforms to its employees, aiming to provide two sets each to around 950 male and female staff members before Diwali.

The distribution began on Wednesday, October 14, with Council President Swati Gaurav Chopra handing over uniforms to employees at her office on the municipal council premises. Chief Municipal Officer Durga Bamaniya is leading the initiative, while Office Superintendent Kanhaiya Lal Sharma was also present

on the occasion.

Chopra said the council would provide uniforms to around 700 male and 250 female employees. Male staff members will receive trousers and shirts, while female employees will be given sarees, along with petticoats and blouse pieces. Each employee will receive two sets of uniforms.

She said measurements of male employees had already been taken by a tailor and the uniforms were being prepared for distribution. The council aims to complete the process for all employees before Diwali. Chopra urged employees to wear their uniforms during working hours.

Bhopal civic body launches daily fire drills in New Market

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ Bhopal

The Bhopal Municipal Corporation conducted a fire safety mock drill in the busy New Market area on Wednesday to ensure smooth movement of emergency vehicles, improve fire safety and remove encroachments obstructing public movement. The civic body also seized a domestic LPG cylinder and other goods during the drive.

The joint operation was carried out by the corporation's fire brigade and anti-encroachment teams following a meeting between civic officials and New Market traders' association repre-



sentatives. The exercise aimed to ensure that fire engines could move freely through the market's internal roads. During the drill, a fire vehicle was taken through different routes to identify and clear obstructions. Officials also briefed shopkeepers on fire prevention measures and precautions to

be taken in case of a fire.

The anti-encroachment drive was conducted between 3.30 pm and 5.45 pm. Civic staff removed goods placed outside shops and on footpaths, along with temporary encroachments by hawkers. The team seized two truckloads of goods, including one domestic LPG cylinder.

The corporation also plans to shift hawkers to the weekly market near TT Nagar Stadium and mark boundaries for shops to prevent encroachments and improve access within the commercial area.

Municipal Commissioner Sanskriti Jain issued directions for the exercise, while Additional Commissioner Tanmay Vashisht Sharma ordered its implementation under the supervision of Deputy Commissioner Bhuvan Gupta. The civic body said the fire safety mock drill would be conducted regularly every day in New Market to improve emergency preparedness. The team strengthened fire safety and facilitate the movement of citizens.

Police trace cyber fraud accused to Katihar

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ Dewas

The Dewas police have arrested a man from Katihar district in Bihar, around 1,500 km away, for allegedly cheating a 62-year-old retired employee of Rs 6.03 lakh by posing as a bank official. Police recovered Rs 5 lakh in cash from the accused during the operation conducted under the state's e-Zero FIR system.

According to police, the victim, a resident of the Kotwali police station area in Dewas, was contacted by fraudsters who promised to update his pension card and help him obtain tax benefits. Believing them, he transferred a total of Rs 6.03 lakh to accounts provided by the accused

through different modes.

Following a complaint, the Kotwali police registered a case and launched an investigation. A special team was formed under the direction of Superintendent of Police Puneet Gehlod. Investigators analysed banking transactions, mobile numbers and other technical evidence to trace the accused to Katihar.

During the search, police recovered Rs 5 lakh in cash from a cupboard at the accused's residence. Further investigation and technical evidence have indicated links between the alleged cyber fraud network's main accused and Jamtara in Jharkhand, police said.

The police are investi-

gating the other members of the gang, bank accounts, digital transactions and the remaining amount allegedly taken from the victim.

Under the district's Operation Cyber initiative, the cyber cell has so far registered 130 cases under the e-Zero FIR system. Police have arrested 26 accused and seized approximately Rs 98.52 lakh in these cases.

The Madhya Pradesh Police said coordinated action is being undertaken to tackle cybercrime, trace interstate networks and help secure victims' money through the effective use of technical evidence.

Police are also working to identify the remaining suspects and trace the money transferred through the alleged fraud network.

Kalidas Garden to get Rs 1.68 cr makeover ahead of Simhastha

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ Ujjain

The Ujjain Municipal Corporation is undertaking the beautification and renovation of the historic Kalidas Garden in Ward 12 at a cost of Rs 1.68 crore ahead of Simhastha 2028.

The project is being carried out with funds sanctioned by the Madhya Pradesh government on the recommendation of Ujjain North MLA Anil Jain Kaluheda, as part of broader efforts to improve the city's infrastructure and public gardens before the religious congregation.

Mayor Mukesh Tatwal inspected the ongoing construction and beautifica-

tion work at the garden and directed officials to preserve its original character while incorporating modern facilities. He emphasised that the garden's historical identity should remain intact during the renovation.

The ongoing work includes a new boundary wall, a fountain, a gym, a selfie point and other improvements.

The elephant-shaped and aircraft-shaped swings, which have long been associated with the garden, are also being refurbished with a renewed design. A modern gym is being developed to provide residents with facilities for regular exercise.

police seize Rs 1.29 crore hidden in Scorpio-N

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ Mandsaur

Mandsaur police seized Rs 1.29 crore in cash allegedly concealed in secret compartments of an unregistered Mahindra Scorpio-N and detained three men for questioning on Wednesday. The SUV, valued at around Rs 20 lakh, was also seized as part of the operation.

Acting on a tip-off, a special police team raided the residence of Bhawani Shankar Meena, sarpanch of Barkheda Uda village, under Shamgarh police station limits. Police had received information that two men from Uttar Pradesh had arrived at the house in a black Scorpio-N carrying a large amount of cash allegedly linked to drug traf-

ficking.

The vehicle was parked in an enclosure behind the house. During the raid, police found the SUV and three men at the spot. They were identified as Bhawani Shankar Meena (49), Mohammad Islam (47) and Surya Prakash (59), both residents of Bareilly district in Uttar Pradesh.

According to police, the men failed to provide satisfactory explanations during preliminary questioning. They were taken for further inquiry, and the vehicle was brought to Shamgarh police station. Police searched the house, the enclosure and adjoining agricultural fields as part of the operation.

A mechanic was called to inspect the SUV. After opening parts of its body, the

mechanic helped police discover specially constructed compartments containing cash. The amount was counted and found to be Rs 1.29 crore.

The operation was conducted on October 14 by a special team constituted under the direction of Superintendent of Police Vinod Kumar Meena, with guidance from Additional Superintendent of Police Ram Sanehi Mishra and Sitamau Sub-Divisional Officer of Police Dinesh Prajapati.

Police are questioning the three men to establish the source of the cash and determine whether it is connected to any illegal activity. Officials said the Income Tax Department would be informed for further action.

Major IAS reshuffle in MP, 11 districts get new collectors

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ Bhopal

The Madhya Pradesh government carried out a major administrative reshuffle on Tuesday night, transferring IAS officers and appointing new collectors in 11 districts. Sukhveer Singh has been appointed Principal Secretary to Chief Minister Dr Mohan Yadav and will also hold additional charge of the Public Works Department (PWD). Bharat Yadav has been given additional charge as Secretary of the Public Relations Department.

The reshuffle includes changes in Harda, Narmadapuram, Balaghat, Singrauli, Jabalpur, Raipur, Bhopal, Panna, Burhanpur and Maunji. Several officers from the 2017 IAS batch have been given

collector-level responsibilities.

Kumar Satyam has been transferred from Balaghat to Harda, replacing Siddharth Jain, who has been posted as Deputy Secretary in the Commercial Tax Department. Aditya Singh has been appointed the new collector of Balaghat. He has previously served as collector of Harda and Ashoknagar.

Narmadapuram Collector Somesh Mishra has been appointed Director of the AIDS Control Society and Director of Bhopal Gas Tragedy Relief and Rehabilitation. Ashish Vashishth will replace him as collector. Singrauli Collector Gaurav Banel has been posted as Deputy Secretary in the General Administration Department and Director of the Employees Selection

Board. Ankit Asthana, previously Deputy Secretary in the state secretariat, will take over as Singrauli collector.

Jabalpur Collector Raghavendra Singh has been appointed Managing Director-cum-Commissioner of the Madhya Pradesh State Agricultural Marketing Board. Raisen Collector Arun Kumar Vishwakarma will replace him in Jabalpur, while Rohit Sisodia has been appointed Raisen collector.

Shajapur Collector Riju Bafna has been posted as Additional Commissioner, Revenue, in the Ujjain division. Indore Development Authority CEO Parikshit Sanjayrao Jhadey will replace her. Bhind Collector Kirori Lal Meena has been transferred as Deputy Secretary in the Finance Department, with Pawan Kumar Jain appointed

in his place.

Panna Collector Usha Parmar has been posted as Additional Secretary in the Horticulture and Food Processing Department. Burhanpur Collector Harsh Singh will replace her in Panna, while Vivek Kumar has been appointed Burhanpur collector. Maunji Collector Sanjay Kumar Jain has been transferred to the Farmers Welfare and Agriculture Development Department as Deputy Secretary, and Rajesh Kumar Ogra will take over the district.

At the departmental level, senior IAS officer Rashmi Arun Shami has been appointed Additional Chief Secretary of the Public Health and Medical Education Department, with additional responsibility for Bhopal Gas

Tragedy Relief and Rehabilitation. K.C. Gupta has been given additional charge of the Food, Civil Supplies and Consumer Protection Department. John Kingsley A.R. has been appointed Secretary of the MSME Department, while Shobhit Jain will hold additional charge of Cottage and Village Industries.

Sanket S. Bhondve has been given additional charge as Resident Commissioner at Madhya Pradesh Bhawan in New Delhi, and Swatantra Kumar Singh has been appointed Secretary of the Industrial Policy and Investment Promotion Department. Kumar Purushottam is also reported to have been assigned charge of the Industries Department and additional responsibility for MSME.



Madhya Pradesh police contingents during rehearsals ahead of the police commemoration day in Bhopal on Wednesday.

SFI, DYFI marches stopped at barricades; Rahul flags assault, FIR lodged

ABHINAV KUMAR JHA
■ New Delhi

Police barricades halted the Students' Federation of India (SFI) and Democratic Youth Federation of India (DYFI) march on Ferozeshah Road on Wednesday, leaving protesters facing a police line separating them from Jantar Mantar. The students raised their voices, calling for the reclamation of the historic protest site and demanding the resignation of Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar. The march could go no further. Police personnel stopped the group before it could reach its destination.

The confrontation was one of several developments in central Delhi on October 14, as student organisations and opposition-linked groups continued their protests despite

restrictions on demonstrations at Jantar Mantar. The day brought another attempted march towards the site, the detention of youth activists, the imprisonment of two Cockroach Janta Party (CJP) leaders, a press conference at which Rahul Gandhi stood alongside student protesters alleging police assault, and the registration of an FIR by Delhi Police in connection with the bus incident.

The immediate focus on Ferozeshah Road was SFI and DYFI activists' attempt to reach Jantar Mantar. Their march targeted the decision to remove the site from the list of designated venues for demonstrations. The groups wanted the venue restored and Gyanesh Kumar to resign.

Slogans such as "Reclaim Jantar Mantar" and "Gyanesh Kumar must resign" made the

march's purpose clear. The protesters continued to press their demands after police stopped them at the barricades. They said they would reclaim the site, which they argued should remain accessible to people seeking to organise peaceful demonstrations.

Members of the Indian Youth Congress (IYC) began another march from Patel Chowk Metro station to Jantar Mantar in the afternoon, demanding Kumar's resignation and insisting the protest site be restored. The group set out despite the police restrictions in the area. Police stopped the march, and protesters were detained. The Youth Congress also put up hoardings in central Delhi as it stepped up its campaign against the Chief Election Commissioner.

The day's demonstrations followed a series of flash



Security personnel detain activists of Indian Youth Congress (IYC) during a protest march toward Parliament Street, in New Delhi Wednesday

protests around central Delhi, during which student activists were detained near Connaught Place and other locations. With the main

protest site no longer designated for demonstrations, groups tried to mobilise on nearby roads and at metro stations, only to face police

deployments and barricades.

Away from the barricades, Rahul Gandhi held a press conference on allegations of mistreatment of detained

student protesters. The Leader of the Opposition stood alongside members of the National Students' Union of India (NSUI), including women who alleged that police personnel had assaulted them during Tuesday's protest and detention.

Rahul Gandhi paused mid-remark, turned to a young woman beside him, and raised her hands, placing them on the shoulders of fellow protesters. The gesture brought the students gathered around the Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha into the centre of a press conference in New Delhi on Wednesday, where accounts of alleged police violence during recent demonstrations were presented alongside demands for accountability.

The young woman, an NSUI activist, was among the protest-

ers who appeared with Gandhi to describe their experiences in police custody. Gandhi introduced her as "our sherni", referring to her alleged assault during the detention of student activists. She maintained that the experience had not intimidated her. The allegations at the briefing targeted Delhi Police personnel involved in detaining protesters during demonstrations against Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar.

Among those introduced was Athira, a Delhi University student from Kerala, who alleged that she had been struck repeatedly while in police custody and had suffered damage to her hearing in one ear. Gandhi cited her case while accusing the authorities of using excessive force against young demonstrators.

India bats for open Indo-Pacific, rules-based order: Rajnath

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ New Delhi

India envisions an Indo-Pacific where all nations, large and small, can make independent choices, protect their interests, and pursue peaceful development, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh said on Wednesday.

He also emphasised that India and the 10-nation regional grouping ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) share a clear interest in maintaining an open, stable, and inclusive Indo-Pacific. Rajnath Singh also called for respecting state sovereignty, abiding by international law, and keeping dialogue channels open to address both conventional and emerging "borderless challenges collectively."

The region is witnessing rapid changes amid growing strategic competition and pressure, and no single country can address these challenges alone, he said at the first ASEAN-India Defence Think Tank Forum.

He underlined the need to discuss differences "early and

peacefully", before they become disputes, and pitched for a regional order where countries work together without being forced to choose sides. "India believes that security is strengthened when countries build capacity together, respect international law and maintain trust through dialogue," he said.

The defence minister highlighted the centuries-old close ties between India and Southeast Asia and reiterated that New Delhi's Act East policy is a long-term commitment to working with the region as an equal partner.

"India's approach and ASEAN's outlook on the Indo-Pacific can complement each other. We should strengthen cooperation, not create competition between regional forums," he said. Rajnath Singh said keeping the Indian Ocean and Southeast Asia's waters safe is a shared responsibility, as they form one connected maritime space crucial for trade, energy, people, and essential goods.

Strengthening maritime domain awareness, interoperability, and collaboration in

underwater awareness will be key to ensuring a stable, rule-based maritime order, he said. The defence minister noted that 2026 has been designated as ASEAN-India Year of Maritime Cooperation, adding it is an opportunity to turn shared interest into practical action.

"We should improve the sharing of maritime information, strengthen cooperation among our navies and coast guards, and build the ability to respond together to emergencies. We should also work against piracy, trafficking, illegal fishing and other threats, in accordance with international law," he said.

Describing defence technology as another crucial area for cooperation, Rajnath Singh pointed out that Artificial Intelligence, drones, cyber capabilities and space-based systems are becoming increasingly important, with recent conflicts demonstrating that relatively low-cost drones can challenge expensive defence systems.

He underscored the need to respond to the challenges with "practical, affordable

and adaptable solutions. "India believes that innovation should not remain limited to a few large organisations. Start-ups, universities, research institutions and smaller companies can all contribute," he noted.

"India's initiatives like Innovations for Defence Excellence (iDEX) and Technology Development Fund (TDF) have created a way to collaborate with innovators for our defence needs," he said. Rajnath Singh also called for exploring ways for innovators to work together on clearly defined problems, such as counter-drone systems, cyber defence, maritime surveillance and disaster response.

He noted that the region is witnessing rapid changes amid growing strategic competition, pressure, and uncertainty, sometimes driven by actions at sea, as well as threats such as terrorism, cybercrime, piracy, trafficking, illegal fishing, climate-related disasters, and risks to vital supply chains. No country alone can address these challenges, he said.

PM to launch ₹3,350 crore Ladakh projects

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ New Delhi

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will inaugurate five major development projects worth around Rs 3,350 crore in Ladakh on Thursday, covering airport infrastructure, strategic road connectivity, renewable energy, heritage conservation and water security. He will virtually inaugurate and dedicate the projects to the nation, according to a statement issued by the prime minister's office.

The projects include a new passenger terminal building at Kushok Bakula Rimpochee Airport in Leh, built for Rs 640 crore. Spread over 23,800 square metres, the modern terminal is designed to handle 35 lakh passengers annually.

It incorporates geothermal energy to enhance energy efficiency and reduce its carbon footprint, reflecting the importance of sustainable infrastructure in Ladakh's ecologically sensitive environment, the statement said.

Blending modern passenger amenities with elements of Ladakh's rich cultural heritage, the terminal will improve passenger convenience and strengthen air connectivity with the rest of the country, it said.

Modi will also dedicate the 298-km-long Nimmu-Padum-Darcha Road, constructed by the Border Roads Organisation (BRO), to the nation.

Connecting Nimmu in Leh with Darcha in Himachal Pradesh through the remote Zaskar Valley, the road provides an alternative connectivity corridor to Ladakh, supplementing the Srinagar-Leh and Manali-Leh highways, the statement said.

Traversing challenging Himalayan terrain, including the high-altitude Shinkun La Pass, the road marks a significant engineering achievement. Its strategic importance lies in enhancing operational mobility and strengthening logistical support for the Armed Forces, it said.

The statement added that

it will also benefit Zaskar residents by improving access to healthcare, education, markets, and essential services.

As part of efforts to strengthen energy security and harness Ladakh's renewable energy potential, the prime minister will inaugurate the 9 MW Hanu small hydroelectric project and the 66 kV double-circuit Dah-Hanu-Khaltis transmission line.

The projects will strengthen power evacuation infrastructure and improve the reliability of Ladakh's electricity network, marking a step towards harnessing the region's hydropower resources. Recognising the importance of preserving Ladakh's ancient archaeological heritage, the prime minister will inaugurate India's first Petroglyph Conservation Park at Sindhu Ghat in Leh.

Ladakh is home to hundreds of prehistoric rock art sites featuring carvings of wildlife, human figures and symbolic representations

that offer valuable insights into thousands of years of human history.

The prime minister will also inaugurate 40 water bodies developed across 40 villages under Project Him Sarovar, an initiative aimed at addressing Ladakh's unique geographical and climatic challenges through water conservation, in line with the objectives of Mission Amrit Sarovar.

Agriculture in Ladakh faces a seasonal imbalance between water availability and demand. Farmers often experience water scarcity during the crucial sowing season, even as snowmelt and glacial runoff provide substantial water resources during other periods.

Project Him Sarovar seeks to address this challenge by conserving water when it is available and ensuring it is available when needed, thereby supporting irrigation, sustaining agricultural livelihoods, and strengthening long-term water security in the region, the statement said.

IDBI set for Fairfax takeover

The strategic restructuring is part of efforts to build a future-ready financial sector that empowers customers, supports entrepreneurs and contributes to the vision of Viksit Bharat, she added.

Briefing media on the decision, Information and Broadcasting Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw said the Government and the Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) will together hold a 34 per cent stake in the restructured entity.

The proposed sale of a combined 60.72 per cent stake held by the Government and the LIC would transfer control of the lender to Fairfax, subject to the completion of the transaction and requisite regulatory approvals.

"The CCEA...approved M/s 10955230 Canada Inc (parent entity M/s Fairfax Financial Holdings Ltd) as the strategic buyer for this transaction for a purchase consideration of ₹52,877.07 crore for the acquisition of 60.72 per cent stake in IDBI Bank, comprising 30.48 per cent equity held by the GoI and 30.24 per cent by the LIC," the statement said.

Department of Investment and Public Asset Management (DIPAM) Secretary Arunish Chawla said the deal will be completed before the end of the current fiscal year.

Fairfax will also have to make an open offer to the minority shareholders. Fairfax, which holds a stake in CSB, must either merge it with IDBI Bank or exit the holding within two years.

IDBI Bank Ltd is a scheduled commercial bank regulated by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI). Due to its poor financial health, the Bank required repeated infusion of capital, initially provided by the Government of India and later by the LIC.

On 5th May, 2017, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) put the IDBI Bank under the Prompt Corrective Action Framework and imposed several restrictions in view of its non-performing assets and losses incurred by the Bank, an official statement said. After considering the improvement in the Bank's financial health, the RBI later, vide its letter dated 10th March, 2021, lifted the restrictions imposed on the IDBI Bank subject to certain conditions and continuous monitoring.

Against this backdrop, the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) approved the strategic restructuring of IDBI Bank Ltd. In compliance thereof, it was decided that an aggregate 60.72% of the equity stake in the IDBI Bank Ltd. be sold to a Strategic Buyer, of which the GoI share would be 30.48%. The LIC share would be 30.24%, leaving a residual shareholding of 15% with the Government of India and 19% with the LIC.

The decision of the CCEA was implemented through a two-stage, competitive bidding process supported by a multi-layered, collective decision-making mechanism consisting of the Inter-Ministerial Group (IMG), the Core Group of Secretaries on Disinvestment (CGD) and the Alternative Mechanism (AM) consisting of an empowered Group of Cabinet Ministers.

The Preliminary Information Memorandum (PIM), inviting Expressions of Interest (EOI) from all interested parties, was issued on 07.10.2022. Only parties found 'Fit and Proper' by the RBI. They granted security clearance by the Ministry of Home

Affairs could participate in the bidding stage, for which the RBI issued a Request for Proposal inviting technical and financial bids from the Qualified Interested Parties (QIPs).

Of the five parties that initially submitted their expression of interest, four qualified as per the eligibility criteria and disqualification conditions prescribed therein; of these, two finally submitted their techno-financial bids. They became Qualified Bidders (QBs) for this transaction.

After comprehensive evaluation by the CGD and after considering the recommendations of the Alternative Mechanism, the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) in its meeting held on 14/10/2026 approved M/s 10955230 Canada Inc. (parent entity M/s Fairfax Financial Holdings Ltd.) as the Strategic Buyer for this transaction for a purchase consideration of ₹52,878.0806181 crores.

In such transactions, there is no a priori benchmark for bidding. The bidders do their own valuation and submit their bids in sealed envelopes confidentially. Independent agencies are hired to conduct a fair valuation of the enterprise contemporaneously, which is then used as a comparator to assess the reasonableness of the submitted bids. Under this transaction, the company invited initial bids in the financial year 2025-26. For comparison, a reserve price of ₹94.42 per share was fixed at that time, which was directly and indirectly influenced by the impacted market price.

The unimpacted counterfactual was not visible at that time, except that the unexpected pre-EOI price of the IDBI stock was Rs 42.40 per share on the last trading day before the issue of the PIM/EOI on 7.10.2022.

In contrast, the impacted price was Rs 108.12 per share on the last trading day before the invitation of initial bids on 8.01.2026. The initial bids fell short of the reserve price arrived at that time and were not approved. When it became known that the initial bids failed, the stock market price of the impacted stock corrected and fell significantly below the discovered bid price of Rs 75 per share.

Subsequently, exercising the powers delegated and conferred upon the collective decision-making mechanism, and to enhance the value of the transaction as far as possible, the company invited sealed bids reflecting the best offers from qualified bidders in the financial year 2026-27. The stock price of the IDBI Stock was Rs 70.38 per share on the trading day before the invitation of best offer bids on 18.05.2026.

The stock market price of the narrowly traded IDBI stock remained volatile. It fluctuated both above and below the bid-discovered price, with a high-low range of Rs 118.38 to Rs 61.01 per share over the valuation period.

The stock market price was consequently disregarded, as it tended to misalign valuation with the intrinsic value of the enterprise. Instead, Relative Valuation by the Market Multiple Method, which overcomes this problem, was used to determine the fair market value of the enterprise based on the 31st March, 2026 closing accounts of all public sector banks.

Additionally, the Asset Valuation Method, which considers both tangible and intangible assets, including land and properties along with the liabilities, was used to determine the fair net asset value of the enterprise as per the 31st March,

FROM PAGE - 1

2026 audited accounts of the IDBI Bank Ltd.

Accordingly, two professional valuation agencies carried out the fair valuation of the enterprise using two independent methodologies, as explained above. The average of these fair valuations was Rs 75.99 per share, which served as the benchmark price for the evaluation of the qualified bids. Since the winning best offer bid of Rs 81 per share was above the benchmark price, as well as the fair value estimates of both the independent valuation agencies, it was adjudged to be reasonable and approved.

The successful bidder must present its credentials to the Reserve Bank of India, in accordance with the Fit and Proper Assessment conducted at the EOI stage, and submit its roadmap for complying with the regulatory conditions prescribed therein.

Two CJP leaders in judicial custody

Thus, I, Mahesh Kumar Meena, SEM, New Delhi, am satisfied that sufficient grounds exist to proceed against the respondents.

According to police, the Special Executive Magistrate sent Das and Ranka to Tihar jail for five days after considering the kalandara (preventive police report) details, their repeated violations of the law, and the serious apprehension that, if released on bail, they would violate the law again and instigate others. They were produced before the Special Executive Magistrate on Wednesday morning. The CJP leaders were detained early Tuesday after they, along with 11 other activists, allegedly breached barricades and entered the Jantar Mantar area without authorisation, raised slogans against Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar, and erected a national flag there.

Police said Das and Ranka, who were detained on Saturday as well, had signed bonds to maintain peace for a year. The action against the CJP leaders comes amid heightened security in the national Capital following a series of protests held by the youth-led outfit and other organisations demanding the resignation of Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar over alleged irregularities in the Special Intensive Revision of electoral rolls. Condemning the arrest of CJP leaders for trying to enter the Jantar Mantar protest site, Rahul Gandhi, Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha, said on Wednesday that waving the Tricolour at Jantar Mantar in a peaceful protest is "not a crime".

"Jailing youth for it is an act of cowardice. Students. Youth. Journalists. The INDIA bloc. Different banners, one cause. All protests are one: citizens demanding their constitutional rights. Jantar Mantar belongs to the people of India. We will reclaim it," Gandhi said in a post on X. And CJP leader Abhijeet Dipke replied, "Thank you, LoP @RahulGandhi sir, for speaking out against the illegal arrest of @Ashutosh Ranka & @Saurav Das." The post marks a major shift in the Congress's stance on the CJP, sparked by a social media trend in May. Voices in the main Opposition party were initially skeptical of the CJP, which led to the 17-day demonstration against paper leaks at Jantar Mantar in July.

In a statement, Delhi Police said that on the morning of October 13, Saurav Das, Ashutosh Ranka, Ajinkya Shinde, and 11 other CJP members entered Jantar Mantar, a denotified designated protest site, by trespassing through a private premise. "Police personnel deployed at the spot intervened and attempted to stop them. However, the protesters allegedly obstructed police personnel in the discharge of their official duties," the statement said.

All 14 persons were detained, and an FIR was registered against them at Connaught Place Police Station under Sections 223a (disobedience to an order duly promulgated by a public servant), 332 (house-trespass to commit an offence) and 61(2) (criminal conspiracy) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita on October 13 and another FIR was filed at the Parliament Street Police Station under Sections 221 (obstructing a public servant in discharge of his public functions), 115(2) (voluntarily causing hurt), 132 (assault or criminal force to deter public servant from discharge of his duty), 121(1) (voluntarily causing hurt or grievous hurt to deter public servant from his duty) and 3(5) (common intention), the police statement said. Sections 332, 132 and 121(1) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita are non-bailable offences. In view of their alleged attempts to disturb public peace and violate the law, Das, Ranka, and Shinde were arrested under the relevant preventive provisions of law, the statement said.

"Their alleged attempts to instigate others through social media to engage in similar unlawful activities were also taken into consideration. The three individuals were produced before the Special Executive Magistrate, where proceedings under Sections 126 and 170 of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita were initiated," it added.

The Special Executive Magistrate court sent Das and Ranka to jail for five days and bound down Shinde to maintain peace and good behaviour for six months, they said.

CJP is AAP's 'B' team: CM Rekha

She highlighted the financial strain on Delhi traders from recurring demonstrations during the festive season, noting that designated sites like Ramila Maidan and Burari Ground are available. "Delhi has suffered losses worth thousands of crores of rupees today. Traders are distressed, and the public is suffering. This is solely because of them. Why do you want to stage sit-ins and protests? You want to oppose the functioning of a democracy simply because you failed to form the government. I want to ask... if you form the Government in Tamil Nadu or Kerala, will such an exercise not take place there? Does this issue concern you only in states where you have failed to form the government? Where does this CJP go when issues arise in those states? Why doesn't it go there to stage protests, the chief minister said, while criticising the Congress and other opposition leaders.

She also questioned why the CJP members

had not gone to Punjab amid concerns over the drug menace in the state. "Why isn't your focus on Punjab? Just yesterday, a murder took place in the state. Drug rackets are operating there. Why is the CJP not going there? The CJP is working as AAP's B party and pursuing only its agenda," the chief minister said. Activist Parvinder Singh alias Jhota, known for raising his voice against drug abuse and the illegal sale of addictive substances at chemist shops, was shot dead in broad daylight in a busy market in Punjab's Mansa district on October 13.

Questioning the AAP over its opposition to the SIR, the chief minister said the party had not raised objections when it came to power in Delhi following the previous revision exercise but had now resorted to protests after losing public support.

The chief minister said the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls was not the first time in the country. "Delhi witnessed an SIR in 2002. The Congress was in power at the Centre at the time. Yet, did Congress win even a single seat in Delhi after 2015? Was the SIR the reason for that? The public has completely rejected Congress, and that is the reason for these parties' resentment," the CM said.

She also slammed the CJP's insistence on protesting at Jantar Mantar, which has recently been denotified as a designated protest site, saying that they were bent on troubling Delhi people and "destroying" the city.

She said the Congress and other organisations, in collusion, feel rejected by the people after electoral losses because the public is satisfied with the Modi Government's development work and the country's progress. She said Delhi suffered losses amounting to thousands of crores of rupees, and traders and ordinary people were harassed because of the protests.

Cabinet clears ₹53,428 crore for NSAP

At the same time, the Indira Gandhi National Widow Pension Scheme will be called the 'Pradhan Mantri Vidhawa Pension Yojana'.

Under the revised norms, monthly assistance under the disability pension scheme will be ₹375 for beneficiaries aged up to 79 years and ₹625 for those aged 80 years and above. The benchmark disability requirement for availing of the pension has been reduced from 80 per cent to 40 per cent. The minimum age criterion has also been removed, making persons with disabilities eligible for assistance from birth.

The statement said the revised eligibility criteria, beneficiary coverage, and assistance rates under the disability pension scheme will be implemented within three months of the guidelines' issuance.

Launched on August 15, 1995, the NSAP assists poor households as part of the Centre's responsibility under Article 41 of the Directive Principles of State Policy in the Constitution. The Centre provides 100 per cent central assistance under the programme to ensure uniform availability of support for beneficiaries across the country.

Hyderabad construction firm alleges Revanth Reddy demanding commission for projects

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ Hyderabad/New Delhi

A leading Hyderabad-based construction company, RVM Constructions India Limited, has levelled serious allegations against Telangana Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy over irregularities in the evaluation of tenders floated by Hyderabad Growth Corridor Limited (HGCL) for the construction of Radial Road-2 in the State Capital.

The company alleged that Revanth Reddy demanded a 15 per cent commission from contractors to award projects. In a letter to the president and members of the Builders Association of India (BAI), Nama Ramesh, Managing Director of RVM Constructions India Limited, flagged alleged

irregularities in the tendering process and sought the association's intervention.

"It is widely reported that Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy has demanded a commission of 15 per cent for awarding these projects to contractors. It is an open secret, yet no MLA or Minister is speaking about it. It is further alleged that bill payments are being released only to those contractors who pay commissions," Ramesh alleged.

Pointing out that nearly ₹20,000 crore was due to contractors in Telangana against certified bills, some of which had remained unpaid for the past three years, he alleged that substantial commissions were reportedly being demanded for the release of payments.

"Many contractors are suffering because of these delays; some have lost their lives, and many others have lost hope despite repeated requests for payment. If this continues, there will hardly be any contractors left in Telangana," he stated in a letter to BAI. Nama Ramesh sought BAI's intervention and urged the association to take up the issue with the state government.

Meanwhile, the controversy over alleged irregularities in the Radial Road-2 tenders surfaced after Sushee Infra, a company linked to Congress MLA Komatireddy Rajagopal Reddy's family, approached the High Court, challenging HGCL's decision to disqualify it during the technical evaluation without citing adequate reasons. HGCL invited



tenders for the construction of Radial Road-2, an 81-km road connecting the Outer Ring Road (ORR) at Budvel with NH-167N at Nacharam near Kodangal.

The project has been divided into three packages, with an estimated cost of

₹3,295 crore. In his letter to BAI, Nama Ramesh said leading companies, including NCC, BVS, and GKC, participated in the tendering process along with Sushee Infra. "From the manner in which the evaluation was conducted, it appears that

Sushee Infra was deliberately targeted," he alleged.

Ramesh further alleged that the Chief Minister's Office had threatened contractors and discouraged them from participating in the bidding process for Radial Road-2.

"Over the last five to six years, I have observed that at least 10-12 companies typically participate in EPC or HAM projects tendered by the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (MoRTH), the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) and state governments. In these tenders, however, only four bidders participated, and the remaining bidders are understood to be companies pre-arranged with the Chief Minister. It is learnt that other contractors who intended to bid received

threatening phone calls from the Chief Minister's Office. Sushee Infra was the only company that ventured to participate," he said.

Ramesh also said that Sushee Infra had alleged that, during the bidding process, it received calls from HGCL officials and others asking it not to participate in the tender. The company was allegedly warned that it would otherwise be disqualified without any valid reason.

"As is widely known, there is a political rift between Rajagopal Reddy and Revanth Reddy. Since Sushee Infra belongs to Rajagopal Reddy's family, the Chief Minister allegedly influenced HGCL to disqualify the company. To date, HGCL has not disclosed the L1 bidder's financial bid.

Sushee Infra has stated that the current L1 bidders have quoted approximately 3 to 15 per cent above the estimated cost. This shows a clear lack of transparency in the process and raises serious concerns that the award is being finalised under political influence," Ramesh alleged.

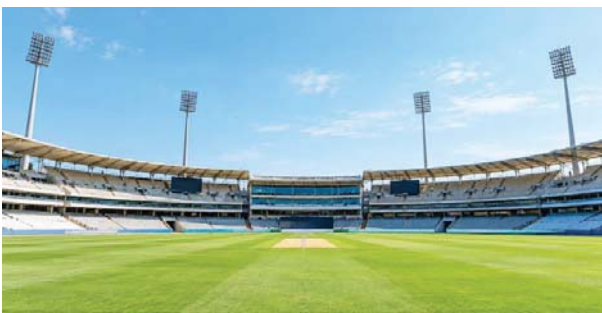
He further stated that Sushee Infra had submitted bids for all three packages and claimed that its quoted prices were significantly lower than those of the current L1 bidders. According to the company, the total difference amounted to approximately ₹600 crore compared with the tendered value, he added.

Ramesh said the potential savings would have benefited Telangana residents and the state's development.

ED flags 20-fold land flip, seeks FIR against PCA over alleged conspiracy and cheating

PRAMOD KUMAR SINGH
■ New Delhi/Chandigarh

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) has asked Punjab Police to register an FIR over the Punjab Cricket Association's (PCA) land purchases, declaring that prima facie cognisable offences of criminal conspiracy and cheating were committed.



paid a total of ₹58.22 crore.

AGM Heights Pvt Ltd and Future Homes bought about 35.64 acres from farmers for ₹6.92 crore. AGM Heights purchased around 7.63 acres for ₹1.36 crore, while Future Homes bought about 28 acres for ₹5.56 crore. They later sold 19.5 acres to the PCA for ₹58.22 crore. According to the ED, the same developers sold land in the village in July 2026 for only ₹31-33 lakh per acre.

The Amritsar land deals are part of nearly ₹78 crore in total transactions. In Bathinda, the PCA paid Darshan Singh about ₹19.77 crore for 100 kanal and 10

marla, which is about 3.93 times the official collector rate of ₹5 lakh per kanal. This was the highest price paid for any single deal in the area during 2024-25.

The letter states that several individuals and companies bought land and sold it to the PCA only a few months later at much higher prices. It alleges this is criminal conspiracy and cheating under Sections 61(2) and 318(4) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS). The letter also accuses the registered society of misusing its funds by overpaying for land, then withdrawing cash and transfer-

ring it to private individuals and companies after the association paid for the land.

According to the timeline, the PCA's top committee met on August 2, 2025, to discuss buying land for a stadium. Five days later, Future Homes purchased a large plot. The association published a public advertisement on August 20, and after that, companies bought more land. On February 16, 2026, AGM Heights, a company founded in 2023 with little capital, and Future Homes sold the land to the PCA.

J&K, Ladakh HC questions Govt accommodation for Ghulam Nabi Azad, Ravinder Raina till March 2027

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ Jammu

A Division Bench of the High Court of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh, comprising Chief Justice Pushpendra Singh Bhati and Justice Rajesh Sekhri, on Wednesday questioned the Union Territory administration on the policy that allowed two political leaders, Ghulam Nabi Azad and Ravinder Raina, to continue occupying Government accommodation until March 2027.



Hearing a PIL filed by Professor SK Bhalla on October 12, a division bench also sought clarity on the policy governing Government accommodation for political leaders in Jammu and Kashmir.

Appearing for the UT administration, senior additional advocate general Monika Kohli told the court that a designated committee considered the cases of former CM Ghulam Nabi Azad and Raina, former president of the J&K BJP, at a meeting on August 14. Kohli submitted

that the committee recommended continuing the allotments for both leaders.

Kohli told the bench that the recommendations were subsequently placed before the competent authority, which, after due consideration, permitted them to retain the residential accommodations until March 2027 or until the next review, whichever is earlier.

The bench, however, sought an explanation regarding the policy governing such allotments, asking Kohli about the rules under which the designated committee exercises its powers to permit political

leaders to retain Government accommodation.

"This court, on such submissions, has posed a question to learned senior AAG, as to what is the policy in the UT of Jammu and Kashmir, which governs the retention of Government accommodation... and from where the designated committee derives its power to consider whether such Government accommodation has to be retained by the political persons," the bench asked.

Kohli sought time to file an appropriate affidavit and assist the court on the issue of a uniform policy applicable to political persons

retaining Government accommodation. Allowing her request, the court posted the matter for November 12.

During the hearing, conducted virtually because the bench is presently based in Srinagar, the petitioner's counsel argued that unauthorised occupation of Government accommodation could not be justified on security grounds.

The petitioner's counsel, senior advocates SS Ahmad and Supriya Chauhan, referred to an order dated December 26, 2022, in which a division bench declined to protect certain persons from eviction from Government properties on security grounds, citing Supreme Court and Delhi High Court judgments to support their submission.

The PIL, filed by Bhalla in 2020, previously led to the eviction of more than 180 politicians from Government accommodations following the 2018 Assembly dissolution and subsequent High Court intervention.

Meerut court awards death penalty to Muskan Rastogi, Sahil Shukla in blue drum murder case

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ Meerut

A district court in Meerut on Wednesday sentenced Muskan Rastogi and her partner Sahil Shukla to death for the murder of her husband, merchant navy officer Saurabh Rajput. The body had been dismembered and sealed with cement inside a blue drum, a detail that made the case one of the most widely discussed murders in western Uttar Pradesh over the past year.



Wednesday was in accordance with that finding. Senior Jail Superintendent Dr Viresh Raj Sharma said the two convicts had been restless in the days before the hearing, had eaten very little, and had not slept well.

Before handing down the sentence, Judge Mishra asked both whether they wished to make any statement about the sentence. He also asked several questions about the case, including the forensic report. The hearing was very brief. Sharma declined to disclose the exact questions asked of the convicts.

Muskan has two daughters, one seven years old and the other ten months old. In the three or four days before sentencing, she requested permission on several occasions to see her older daughter. The younger daughter has been with her in jail, and Muskan has spoken of her concern for the future of that child. The court produced the two convicts

separately for the hearing.

Saurabh Rajput's mother, Renu, was in court with his aunt, brother, and several other family members when the court passed the sentence. Before the verdict, Renu said the family had done everything possible at every level to get justice for Saurabh. She thanked the administration and everyone else who had stood by them throughout the process.

The Prosecution had 22 witnesses. Some of them were people who had been involved in the purchase of the blue drum, the knife and the other materials which were alleged to have been used in the crime. Hotel staff and cab drivers were also called to establish the accused's movements at the time of the killing and at the time of the concealment of the body. Those accounts, together with the forensic evidence, were the basis of the case which the court accepted.

CBI files supplementary chargesheet in NEET-UG paper leak, no official named

PRAMOD KUMAR SINGH
■ New Delhi

The CBI filed a supplementary chargesheet in the NEET UG 2026 paper leak case with the Delhi court on Wednesday. The CBI claims the conspiracy involved private individuals, experts, intermediaries, and people linked to coaching centres, and names one more private individual, while again stating that no government or NTA officer has been named in the case.



People close to the investigation say the filing effectively closes the inquiry into the leak. "No Government official has been named," one officer said. A second officer confirmed that the investigation was carried out to determine whether NTA or any other Government official was involved, "but no such involvement was found."

The supplementary chargesheet filed before Special Judge Ajay Gupta names Sheshraj Bajrang Suryawanshi (alias Raj Suryawanshi), of Nanded, Maharashtra, as the 14th accused. He was arrested on 2nd September and is alleged to have conspired with co-accused Shubham Khairnar to give the leaked medical entrance exam paper to the candidates and

take money from their parents. He is alleged to have asked the candidates to gather at a place in Nanded, given them the paper, and kept the candidates' original documents (i.e., certificates, identity cards, etc.) so he could demand payment from them after the exam.

The court has directed that a copy of the chargesheet be furnished to the accused's counsel, and the matter is listed for further hearing on 15th October. This follows the first chargesheet filed on 28th July, which named 13 persons, three of whom were the subject experts engaged by the NTA: Manisha Gurunath Mandhare (Botany and Zoology), Prahlad Vithalrao Kulkarni (Chemistry) and Manisha Sanjay Havaldar (Physics).

The others were the intermediaries and representatives of the coaching

institutes. The first chargesheet left the role of the other alleged conspirators open until the forensic reports were in; the additional document incorporates findings from the Central Forensic Science Laboratory, the Government Examiner of Questioned Documents, and experts from Delhi University.

The case arose from the NEET-UG exam on May 3. The NTA cancelled the exam on May 12 after it found that at least 10 questions in a 'guess paper' (a paper put together by subject experts and teachers to predict likely questions) matched the actual paper. This led to massive protests, a major row in Parliament and the resignation of then Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan. A re-exam was subsequently held.

The CBI probe traced the

leak to the paper setting and translation process. The CBI found that the three NTA-contracted experts abused their access in various ways.

One of them wrote the questions on chits; the others memorised them and then transcribed or marked the relevant portions of the textbooks, which a network of intermediaries across multiple states then passed on for money.

The CBI raided several states, collected digital evidence such as deleted chats and PDFs, and relied on hundreds of witnesses and documents. The charges include criminal conspiracy, cheating, criminal breach of trust, and destroying evidence under the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, as well as sections of the Prevention of Corruption Act and the Public Examinations (Prevention of Unfair Means) Act, 2024.

Didi is with you, for you always: Mamata tells CJP



Even as the former Bengal Chief Minister on Wednesday expressed her "strong solidarity" with arrested CJP leaders Saurav Das and Asutosh Ranka, condemning their arrest by the Delhi Police and promising to stand by them for all time to come, the Left and the Congress came down heavily on her, questioning her "conspicuous absence from the grand march to the Supreme Court" as well as the rally that her party in Kolkata organised on Tuesday.

"She went to Delhi, and after offering some photo sessions she suddenly vanished... skipped the grand march to the Supreme Court ... at least she was not seen there... then again she was not to be seen in Tuesday's anti-CEC rally in Kolkata," CPI(M) leader Satapur Ghosh said, adding a senior leader like her should shun hypocrisy.

Reminding how the Trinamool Congress chief had ditched the UPA alliance in the 2019 general elections and how "she had always tried to backstab the Congress Party," PCC leader Soumya Banerjee asked why "Mamata Banerjee herself gave a call for an anti-CEC procession in Kolkata and in the final moment backed out, leaving the citadel in the hands of other leaders like Dola Sen and Kunal Ghosh," wondering whether she did not want to rub the Apex Court the wrong way as there were several lawsuits she was fighting up there.

Meanwhile, Banerjee on Wednesday attacked the powers that be for trying to "intimidate" the younger generation by its oppressive policies.

CM Adhikari vows to convert West Bengal from Bhatta Nirbhar to Atma Nirbhar

SAUGAR SENGUPTA
■ Kolkata

The West Bengal BJP Government had charted a plan to transform the State from the present Bhatta Nirbhar (dole-dependent) to Atma Nirbhar (self-reliant) region, Chief Minister Suvenud Adhikari on Wednesday said, adding that a designated group of ministers had submitted a draft industrial policy covering the future industrial roadmap and land policy that would be unveiled soon for the benefit

of prospective investors.

Speaking at the inauguration of a Rs 6,000 crore chemical complex by AdPerma Private Limited, a wholly owned subsidiary of Haldia Petrochemicals Limited, the Chief Minister said his Government was determined to create a business-friendly climate that militant trade unionism and flawed policies of the preceding Left and Trinamool Congress Governments had destroyed.

"We are determined to bring back the healthy industrial climate" for which a



new industrial policy detailing investment incentives, land allocation and power tariff plans would be unveiled before Diwali, the Chief Minister said.

"We will not do a few things that the previous govern-

ments did," he said, accusing the Marxist and the Mamata Banerjee governments. "Trade unions, strikes and assault on the management led to the closure of 50,000 industries in Bengal," he said, adding, "we are determined to stop this and create the best investment climate in the State."

Speaking after the inauguration of the chemical plant, he said the new phenol acetone facility would end India's dependence on imports. "I am immensely pleased and proud to inaugurate India's largest inte-

grated phenol and acetone plant by... this state-of-the-art facility will open new horizons for industrial growth and employment generation across the State," Adhikari said, reminding how it would provide strength to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Atma Nirbhar Bharat initiative besides navigating Bengal to economic self-reliance.

"My Government remained steadfast in its commitment to the comprehensive development of Bengal, the construction of

modern infrastructure and the advancement of Industrialization," he said, laying stress on an economic ecosystem that revolved on self-reliance rather than economic doles.

The Chief Minister also announced that a Pepsi manufacturing plant and a medical equipment manufacturing unit would come up around Haldia. The projects were likely to benefit the people of Bengal in general, and the residents of Nandigram in particular, immensely.



Editor's
TAKE

Kalam's unfinished dream: A developed India

On World Students' Day, Kalam's legacy goes beyond missiles; it lies in his enduring faith in young minds and his vision of a developed India

Every October 15, classrooms across India fill with quizzes, speeches and posters. It is the birthday of the "People's President", celebrated as World Students' Day. Avul Pakir Jainulabdeen Abdul Kalam, born on 15 October 1931, was indeed a president unlike any other. He rose through the ranks, sold newspapers in his childhood and, through sheer grit and determination, went on to become the 'Missile Man of India' and then the country's President.

The day is often described wrongly, so a correction belongs here. The day has not been declared by the United Nations, but it is celebrated in India as Students' Day. No resolution created it. A grateful country did, because Kalam had earned it. Tamil Nadu goes further and observes the date as Youth Renaissance Day. Why students? Because Kalam never stopped being one, and never stopped being a teacher. As President from 2002 to 2007, he met students constantly, and he kept doing so after leaving office.

He returned to the classroom as a visiting professor at the IIMs in Ahmedabad, Indore and Shillong. On July 27, 2015, he collapsed while lecturing IIM Shillong students on creating a livable planet and died soon after, aged 83. He was teaching until his last hour. The nation's debt to him is larger than the classroom.

As Project Director of SLV-III, India's first satellite launch vehicle designed and produced at home, he helped put the Rohini satellite into orbit in July 1980 and bring India into the select circle of space-faring nations. At the DRDO, he led the Integrated Guided Missile Development Programme, which delivered Agni and Prithvi and earned him the name "Missile Man". He then played a central scientific and technical role in the Pokhran-II tests of May 1998, which made India a declared nuclear-weapon state. Every Indian who sleeps behind a credible deterrent owes him a quiet thank-you. The honours followed: the Padma Bhushan in 1981, the Padma Vibhushan in 1990 and the Bharat Ratna in 1997.

Yet his most lasting work may be the one that carried no title. Wings of Fire, published in 1999, gave millions of young Indians a story in which a modest background was no barrier to ambition. India 2020 gave them a target to build towards. His vision aimed at a developed India by 2020. That year has passed, and the work is unfinished. Kalam would have been the last person to call this an embarrassment.

He would have called it homework. So the best way to mark October 15, is not with garlands. It is with better questions in classrooms, better laboratories in universities and more students who believe, as he did, that a dream is a plan waiting for effort. India gave Kalam its highest civilian honour. The least it owes him in return is a generation that finishes what he started.

Nepal's democracy: Can algorithms rewrite history?

Nepal's demand for generational change raises a deeper question: are democratic institutions being renewed or reduced to narratives amplified by digital platforms? The challenge is to embrace change without erasing history, weakening institutional accountability or confusing online visibility with democratic legitimacy



NAVITA SRIKANT

The Nepali Congress is not merely another political party; it is part of Nepal's democratic heritage, shaped by decades of political struggle, sacrifice, imprisonment and democratic movements. Its history is inseparable from Nepal's democratic journey. What is unfolding therefore deserves examination beyond an ordinary contest among leaders and factions.

Can a country's democratic journey be overwritten by the politics of the algorithm?

The Nepali Congress must renew itself. Democratic institutions cannot remain frozen in time; generational change is necessary, leadership must be accountable, and parties must respond to changing aspirations. But renewal is not erasure. Sher Bahadur Deuba cannot constitutionally seek a third term as party president. Any capable leader, from any generation, who believes they can lead the party forward should make their case. Constitutional processes and party representatives must determine its future, not the personalisation of generational transition.

The question is not which leader should remain or make way, but whether leadership claims are judged by institutional merit, democratic principles and the capacity to serve Nepal's future. Change must be judged by what it improves, not simply by whom it replaces.

The question goes beyond the Nepali Congress

Are we renewing institutions, or simply replacing the people inside them?

Nepal's proposed changes to the bureaucracy, lateral entry into specialised positions, retirement and service tenure, and diplomatic appointments may legitimately seek expertise and fresh thinking. But public servants need leaders who respect experience, invest in human capital and give them space to speak up. If the State demands agency, it must provide the authority and institutional space it requires.

Merit must prevail over conflicts of interest. Wider expertise in diplomacy can be valuable, just as deploying the Army in a genuine emergency may be necessary. But emergency deployment does not automatically justify permanent military management of civilian economic functions. Wider diplomatic recruitment should expand competence without weakening professional standards.

Put the right institution, expertise and accountability behind every public responsibility.

Institutional Signalling: A test of institutional renewal

Institutional accountability also depends on how State power is exercised when consequential questions are sub judice.

Court proceedings do not automatically freeze political or organisational action, but the eventual judicial outcome cannot be ignored. Where the Supreme Court remains seized of a consequential question, those involved must recognise that their actions may have implications for the judicial process.

The reported incident of former Chief Justice Cholendra Shumsher Rana being taken from his residence at midnight raises a broader question: how should State power be exer-



cised when institutional confidence is at stake?

The Executive exercises power, the Legislature scrutinises it, the Judiciary independently reviews it, while the media and civil society expose matters requiring public scrutiny. No one is above the law, but the exercise of State power must preserve institutional confidence and judicial independence.

Democracy is protected when each of its pillars can perform its constitutional function without fear of the others.

And then comes the algorithm

Institutional accountability depends not only on how power is exercised, but also on how political responsibility is assigned. Nepal's post-September 2025 political discourse deserves closer examination.

A reading of Nepali media before and after the upheaval reveals a pattern worth questioning: the demand for generational change became increasingly associated with Nepali Congress leader Sher Bahadur Deuba.

This is not to suggest that Deuba was the only senior leader criticised, or that criticism of him lacked justification. The September uprising challenged an established political generation represented by Deuba, KP Sharma Oli, Pushpa Kamal Dahal (Prachanda) and Dr Baburam Bhattarai. Yet subsequent discourse increasingly concentrated political renewal on the Nepali Congress and, more specifically, Deuba.

Prachanda, Oli and other established leaders remained part of the political process around the March 2026 general election. Dr Bhattarai initially filed his nomination but subsequently withdrew it.

Why, then, did the wider burden of decades of political governance appear increasingly concentrated on one party and one individual?

This is where the algorithm matters.

Digital platforms do not create every grievance, nor does their influence invalidate genuine public anger. But amplification can determine which grievances dominate, whose accountability receives sustained attention and which complexities disappear. "Old leader must go" is easily circulated; examining institutional failures, multiple political actors' responsibilities and the reforms needed to prevent recurrence is harder.

The danger is not criticism of established leaders, but the narrowing of accountability into a personalised narrative: one leader represents an era, one party the establishment, and one generation the explanation for failures with multiple political authors.

Visibility is not proof of representativeness; repetition is not evidence of consensus. Political responsibility must be assessed against conduct, decisions and outcomes-not the intensity with which a narrative is amplified.

Daiv Vani

WISDOM FOR A MEANINGFUL LIFE

The Battle Fought Only Within

Navaratri also carries the reminder that our fiercest battles are rarely against others.

Mahishasura, a demon who could not be defeated by any male god, having secured that particular boon through years of penance, terrorized the heavens until the combined energies of all the gods converged into a single, radiant being, Durga, who alone possessed the power to end his reign. It was not brute strength that made her invincible, but the unification of scattered powers into one focused will. Each god gave something of his own: Shiva his trident, Vishnu his discus, and the mountains the lion she rode. None of them alone could have ended Mahishasura; together they became a force he had never planned for. Her victory is a picture of what undivided attention can do.

Mahishasura's boon reveals his real flaw. He had prepared for every threat he could imagine, except the one born of unity itself. His downfall came from what he underestimated, not what he failed to guard against.

We often scatter our own energy across many small distractions, worries, ambitions, comparisons, weakening ourselves against challenges that require our full, undivided strength to overcome. Exhaustion and indecision rarely come from one great enemy. They come from many small ones pulling us in different directions.

This Navaratri, identify one area of your life where your energy feels fragmented, and consciously bring it together, like the gods once did, into a single, focused resolve.

-DAIV



RAJYOGI
BRAHMA
KUMAR
NIKUNJ JI

2ND OPINION

Today, medical professionals all over the world have accepted the fact that diseases such as diabetes, coronary artery disease and hypertension are the result of poor lifestyles, mental stress and tension. Hence, they are now advising less dependence on medicines and emphasising exercise and dietary control to maintain physical health. Medical research has found that almost 85 per cent of all diseases are psychosomatic in nature, ie they originate in negative mental states. Therefore, to nip the evil in the bud, it is important to tackle the malady at the level of the mind, and that involves checking and changing our patterns of thought.

Research has shown that positive thoughts sustained over a long period produce positive health effects, while negative thoughts ultimately lead to diseases. In that case,

The mind as medicine



it is necessary for us to give our minds a positive direction so that we can remain happy and healthy. Having control over our thoughts means having the ability to take the mind where we want, keep it there for as long as we want and withdraw it at will. Practising this frequently, starting with even a few seconds at first, will gradually give us more control over the mind. It will also reduce waste thoughts, which consume a lot of our time and energy.

While this is a rudimentary exercise to improve our concentration, gaining mastery over the mind requires some spiritual knowledge and practice. For this, first of all, we need to understand that we are souls and not bodies. The brain, which is part of the physical body, is merely the hardware that enables the soul to control the body.

The spiritual exercise of the mind involves taking the mind out of the physical body and remaining in an eternal

state of being a soul, i.e. a sentient point of light and power. Along with this exercise, one also needs to have a proper mental diet in the form of pure thoughts that are necessary to keep the mind healthy. On the other hand, waste thoughts deplete mental energy and leave us weak. Negative thoughts are like poison and damage mental health, eroding our ability to make sound judgements, take correct decisions, tolerate negative situations or face adversity. Such thoughts arise from body-consciousness but are rooted in the soul in the form of vices such as lust, anger, greed, attachment and ego. We must understand that the most elevated thoughts arise in a state of meditation, when the soul establishes a loving mental link with the Supreme Source, who is the Father of all souls. It is through this divine connection that true healing begins, not just of the body or the mind, but of the soul itself.

When our inner world is aligned with purity, peace and purpose, the outer world begins to reflect that harmony. A healthy mind, anchored in spiritual wisdom and silence, becomes the foundation of a healthy body. So, let us strive not just for fitness, but for inner well-being, where the mind is calm, the soul is strong and the body follows. Because, in the end, lasting health is not just about how we live, but also about how we think, feel and connect with the Source.

The writer is a spiritual teacher and popular columnist

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Tamil Nadu's costly power purchase

The Tamil Nadu Power Distribution Corporation Limited's (TNPDC) decision to purchase short-term emergency power from private entities at over ₹30 per unit is deeply concerning. It places an additional burden on public funds and raises questions about the ruling TVK government's planning. Neighbouring Andhra Pradesh reportedly secured power for October 2026 through advance tendering at ₹16-₹20 per unit, while Tamil Nadu waited until the last moment. Equally worrying is the state's power generation. Against a conventional thermal capacity of over 5,000 MW, actual production reportedly struggled to reach 3,000 MW. Why are Tamil Nadu's power plants operating below capacity when demand is high?

The government cannot dismiss these expensive purchases as a temporary measure to prevent load shedding. The alleged additional expenditure of ₹5 crore a day points to the need for better forecasting, timely procurement and improved plant performance.

A state cannot progress sustainably without efficient planning and accountable administration. Can Tamil Nadu move beyond personality-driven politics towards an institutionalised system of governance that prioritises public welfare, financial prudence and reliable electricity supply?

RANGANATHAN SIVAKUMAR | CHENNAI

Reservation through separate institutions

If reservations are to be extended on the grounds that a large majority of India's population belongs to BC, OBC, SC and ST communities, an alternative approach could be to establish exclusive institutions and administrative structures managed by members of these communities.

Separate educational institutions, government departments, hospitals, banks, police stations, courts and polling arrangements could be staffed entirely by members of reserved categories. Similarly, representation in legislative assemblies, Parliament and ministerial positions could reflect the proportion of these communities in the population. Such segregation could ensure proportional representation while reducing friction arising from competition and allegations of discrimination, bias and social harassment in educational institutions, workplaces and public offices. It could also create environments where disadvantaged communities feel secure, represented and empowered. Leadership positions, promotions and decision-making could become more accessible to underrepresented groups, promoting social mobility, confidence and community-specific solutions. Such an approach could strengthen dignity, representation and self-governance, though its impact on social integration requires consideration.

O PRASADA RAO | HYDERABAD

Kalam's vision of an inclusive India

As India observes the 95th birth anniversary of APJ Abdul Kalam on 15 October, his life offers an opportunity to examine whether the country is advancing towards the inclusive, knowledge-driven society he envisioned.

Rising from modest beginnings in Rameswaram to the highest constitutional office, Kalam demonstrated the transformative power of education and perseverance. His contributions to ISRO and DRDO, including the SLV-III project, missile development and Pokhran-II tests, strengthened India's technological and defence capabilities. Yet, as the People's President (2002-2007) and a lifelong teacher, his legacy rests equally on his accessibility and faith in youth.

Kalam's *India 2020* vision emphasised technological progress, rural development and self-reliance. Despite advances in digital technology and space exploration, unemployment, educational inequality and the digital divide remain challenges. His principles of scientific temper, ethical responsibility and independent thinking offer guidance in the age of AI. Strengthening public education, scientific research and inclusive growth would be a fitting tribute to his vision.

AC VINEETH KUMAR | KERALA



A man navigates a small wooden boat through a pond to harvest lotus flowers during the festive season, in Nadia district, West Bengal.

PHOTO: PTI

PICTALK

Bihar floods: The need for a continuous record

Bihar’s recurring floods demand more than daily casualty and damage figures. A consistent reporting system linking flood phases, affected communities, river conditions and relief operations can track cumulative impacts, improve coordination, strengthen accountability and support long-term recovery



EKLAVYA PRASAD

often it returns and how its effects accumulate over the monsoon season.

Bihar already has a flood-reporting mechanism. The Disaster Management Department (DMD), Government of Bihar, publishes daily flood reports and press releases. The challenge is to make these instruments more consistent, connect the information they provide and maintain a reliable record of the flood season.

The first step is to make the reporting system easier to follow. The daily report appears under different titles, including Flood/Heavy Rainfall Report, Daily Flood Report and Daily Flood Situation Report. The department should adopt one consistent title, such as *Daily Flood Situation Report*, so affected communities, disaster-response agencies, development partners and government officials can readily identify the same reporting series across dates. Press releases also appear under different titles, including Hindi titles. Their titles need not match that of the daily report, but each release should clearly identify its purpose and the flood phase it covers.

The September 2 daily report summarised affected areas and relief operations, while the accompanying press release detailed specific incidents, river conditions and administrative responses, including erosion in Bhagalpur and flooding in Bhojpur. The September 15 documents similarly demonstrate how the formats can complement each other. Both recorded 15 affected districts and 575 gram panchayats. The daily report provided a summary, while the press release included additional information on relief operations and river conditions. Linking these records would help affected communities, disaster-response agencies, development partners and government officials understand both the scale of the situation and the response under way.

The Daily Flood Report should consistently distinguish three measures: changes during the preceding 24 hours, impacts recorded during each flood phase and cumulative impacts across the season. These figures should be clearly labelled and kept separate. Phase-specific press releases can provide focused updates on important developments, while the daily report maintains the continuing record.

The need for this distinction becomes clear when the September and October reports are read together. The September 24 Daily Flood Report recorded cumulative impacts across 15 districts, 576 gram panchayats and 50.49 lakh people, before the third flood phase developed around September 28-29. By October 7, the Daily Flood Report recorded 22 affected districts and 61.72 lakh people affected cumulatively during the monsoon season. The October 4 press release, focusing specifically on the third phase along and around the Gandak, reported approximately 9.87 lakh people affected across six districts, 30 blocks and 169 gram panchayats. By October 11, the press release for the same phase reported approximately 10.22 lakh people affected across six districts, 33 blocks and 173 gram panchayats. These figures describe the evolving impact of the third phase, while the daily report records cumulative seasonal impacts. They should therefore be linked to provide a clearer picture of how each flood phase contributes to the wider seasonal impact, rather than added together as separate totals.

The reporting system should connect such phase-specific accounts to the seasonal record. It should show which places were affected in each phase, which remained inundated and which experienced flooding again. This also raises an important question about affected populations. If the same community is flooded more than once, how can seasonal figures avoid counting the same people repeatedly while still recording repeated exposure? The total number of people affected and the number exposed to multiple floods measure different aspects of the disaster. Reporting should make that distinction clear.

The same clarity is needed for relief operations. Reports should distinguish assistance provided during a particular phase from assistance provided earlier and from the seasonal total. They should state how many community kitchens are operating on a given day, distinguish this



THE SEPTEMBER 24 DAILY FLOOD REPORT RECORDED CUMULATIVE IMPACTS ACROSS 15 DISTRICTS, 576 GRAM PANCHAYATS AND 50.49 LAKH PEOPLE, BEFORE THE THIRD FLOOD PHASE DEVELOPED AROUND SEPTEMBER 28-29. BY OCTOBER 7, THE DAILY FLOOD REPORT RECORDED 22 AFFECTED DISTRICTS AND 61.72 LAKH PEOPLE AFFECTED CUMULATIVELY DURING THE MONSOON SEASON. THE OCTOBER 4 PRESS RELEASE, FOCUSING SPECIFICALLY ON THE THIRD PHASE ALONG AND AROUND THE GANDAK, REPORTED APPROXIMATELY 9.87 LAKH PEOPLE AFFECTED ACROSS SIX DISTRICTS, 30 BLOCKS AND 169 GRAM PANCHAYATS

The writer is the Managing Trustee of Megh Pyne Abhiyan

from the total established over time and specify the period covered by meal figures. Without these distinctions, affected communities, disaster-response agencies, development partners and government officials cannot reliably interpret what the numbers represent. The Daily Flood Report also needs to identify affected blocks and gram panchayats by name under each district, rather than provide only aggregate figures. This would help affected communities, disaster-response agencies, development partners and officials identify where flooding has occurred, which areas remain affected and where flooding has returned. The same location-wise information should be updated and carried forward in subsequent reports to build a clear record of changing conditions.

River conditions need equally clear reporting. Reports should identify the rivers being observed, show water levels against warning and danger levels, and indicate whether levels are rising or falling. They should also record how long places remain inundated. A falling river level does not necessarily mean that a village is accessible or that drinking water, health care and other essential services have resumed.

Reporting should distinguish between different kinds of damage. A road under water is different from one washed away. A hand pump or piped water supply system that cannot be reached is different from one that has been damaged. A school temporarily cut off is different from one with structural damage. Reports should distinguish assets that are inundated, inaccessible, non-functional, damaged or destroyed. Over time, they should also capture verified impacts on drinking water, sanitation, health care, transport, schools, crops, livestock, housing and livelihoods.

Consistency across reporting days is equally important. Each report should state its cut-off time and indicate whether figures are provisional, verified or revised. Significant changes should be explained, and earlier reports should remain available in a searchable archive. This would allow communities, researchers, development workers, journalists and officials to follow the situation without piecing together information from scattered documents.

These improvements need not require an entirely new data collection system. Much of the information is already generated by departments and district administrations. What is needed is a clear process for collating, verifying and presenting it consistently. The Daily Flood Report should be published regularly, including when the situation stabilises, so that the seasonal record remains continuous.

The need for greater continuity is evident in the online reporting record. As observed on October 13, the latest daily report available was dated October 7, while press releases were available through October 11. The priority should be to maintain a regular, up-to-date Daily Flood Report alongside timely press releases. Together, they can provide both a continuous account of the flood situation and focused updates on significant developments.

The value of this approach extends beyond immediate relief. A continuous record can help assess losses, plan recovery and identify settlements repeatedly inundated, infrastructure that fails more than once and communities whose recovery is interrupted by successive floods.

Bihar does not need figures merely for the sake of having more figures. It needs a connected account of what changed, where it changed, what remained unresolved and how impacts accumulated across successive flood phases. Strengthening the existing Daily Flood Report and linking it more effectively with press releases would make flood information easier to understand and more useful for relief coordination, public accountability and future planning.

Politics of protest: The Opposition’s dangerous drift



TUHIN A SINHA

The BJP’s recent by-election victories in Assam and West Bengal, including in minority-dominated constituencies, have challenged entrenched political assumptions. These results reaffirm that voters cannot be taken for granted. Faced with a BJP that continues to demonstrate electoral resilience, the Opposition appears increasingly tempted to substitute street spectacle for a persuasive political alternative.

The examples of Nepal and Bangladesh offer a cautionary tale. Rahul Gandhi has previously invoked youth-led upheavals abroad while addressing young Indians. But India is a constitutional democracy with an elected Parliament, an independent judiciary and established mechanisms for peaceful political change. Importing the vocabulary of street-driven regime change into Indian politics risks blurring the distinction between democratic protest and destabilisation. Disruption cannot become a substitute for democratic persuasion.

Consider Rahul Gandhi’s reported remarks following his interaction with the President. Expressing surprise that the President had not rebutted his allegations of vote theft after receiving a memorandum betrays a fundamental distinction: receiving a representation is not the same as endorsing its contents. Constitutional office-holders routinely receive memoranda without certifying the claims they contain. The President’s courtesy cannot be converted into an implied admission of the Opposition’s allegations.

This is not the first controversy involving Rahul Gandhi’s interpretation of constitutional institutions. His earlier remarks concerning the Supreme Court’s Rafale proceedings led to an apology. Political leaders have a responsibility to distinguish between allegations, demonstrable facts and what constitutional authorities have actually said. Repeating an accusation does not make it true. The present protests raise another troubling question: why escalate street mobilisation when the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls is already under the Supreme Court’s scrutiny? If the Opposition possesses compelling evidence of electoral wrongdoing, it should present it before the Court. If the Election Commission’s explanations are inadequate, the shortcomings must be demonstrated. The judicial process must be allowed to run its course.

By seeking to amplify political pressure while proceedings are under way, the Opposition risks creating the impression that it is more interested in shaping the public narrative than awaiting judicial findings. A courtroom is where evidence is tested; the street cannot become an alternative route to a judicial outcome. Constitutional institutions must be permitted to function without being overshadowed by political brinkmanship. The Modi government was justified in taking firm action to prevent demonstrations from degenerating into a law-and-order crisis in the national capital. Governance requires prevention, not merely a response after disorder erupts. When protesters threaten to breach barricades, obstruct essential routes or disrupt public institutions, the administration cannot remain a passive spectator.

Delhi is not an open-air political theatre available for indefinite occupation by any party seeking confrontation. It is the capital of the Republic, where hospitals, courts, schools, offices, transport networks and diplomatic missions must continue to function. Millions of ordinary citizens cannot be made collateral damage in a partisan political contest. The police have a duty to maintain public order, enforce lawful restrictions and prevent foreseeable escalation. The claim that every firm police response constitutes an assault on democracy distorts the relationship between liberty and responsibility. The right to protest is not a licence to paralyse public life, disregard lawful orders or compel constitutional institutions to submit to street pressure. Peaceful democratic engagement is welcome; disorder and unlawful obstruction must invite firm, lawful action.

Social media has made this challenge more acute. Viral videos, slogans and short-form content can create an impression of certainty long before evidence is examined. From the Citizenship Amendment Act to reservation policies and now electoral-roll revision, complex issues have repeatedly been reduced to inflammatory narratives. Young Indians deserve facts and context, not to be mobilised through misinformation for the political ambitions of others.

The costs of perpetual agitation extend beyond law and order. India is investing in infrastructure, manufacturing, energy security and technological competitiveness. Where is the Opposition’s credible roadmap for employment, economic growth and preparing young Indians for an economy transformed by artificial intelligence? When every institutional disagreement becomes a conspiracy and every administrative action is portrayed as repression, substantive debate is crowded out by manufactured outrage.

Public patience, too, has limits. Citizens have jobs to reach, schools to attend, businesses to run and families to care for. Public spaces belong to everyone, not exclusively to professional political protesters. When agitation becomes an end in itself, it ceases to serve the public and begins imposing costs upon it.

India needs an Opposition that scrutinises the government, exposes wrongdoing and offers credible alternatives. But criticism must be backed by evidence, allegations must be established and political mobilisation must remain within the boundaries of democratic responsibility. No party can claim a monopoly over democracy or demand that constitutional rules be suspended whenever they become inconvenient.

India stands at a decisive inflection point. The Viksit Bharat mission requires institutional confidence, sustained economic momentum and a national focus on the opportunities ahead. The country cannot afford to have its aspirations derailed by a politics of perpetual confrontation. The choice before India is between democratic competition that strengthens institutions and a politics that risks weakening them through relentless disruption. A confident democracy accommodates dissent while enforcing the law. It does not confuse anarchy with accountability. Viksit Bharat cannot be built by paralysing the present. It must be built by debating the future—and refusing to let the politics of anarchy derail the aspirations of a nation.



The writer is a national spokesperson of BJP and acclaimed author

Bastar’s transformation and the role of Prime Minister Modi’s resolve



NANDAN JAIN

mination to transform the course of the nation. Prime Minister Narendra Modi is one such leader. From his tenure as Chief Minister of Gujarat to his stewardship of the country as Prime Minister, the past 25 years of his public life represent a journey marked by political experience, sustained engagement and an abiding commitment to public service.

Prime Minister Modi’s political journey cannot be assessed solely through electoral victories or the number of government schemes launched during his tenure. One of the defining features of his leadership has been his ability to establish a direct connect with the people. Bringing the aspirations of citizens from diverse regions into the larger discourse on national development has remained an important element of his political approach.

Today, Modi occupies a central place in Indian politics, with large sections of the population

looking to him for stable leadership, decisive action and the fulfilment of the country’s national aspirations. This public confidence is, in itself, a considerable political asset. Yet, sustaining that confidence requires continuous engagement, accountability and tangible results on the ground. Initiatives such as the Seva Sankalp campaign provide an opportunity for the organisation to deepen its engagement with the people and reaffirm its commitment to their welfare.

Among the many significant aspects of Prime Minister Modi’s tenure, the sustained effort to eliminate Naxalite violence stands out as particularly consequential. His firm resolve has contributed to a decisive shift in regions that were once afflicted by Left-Wing Extremism. Areas where violence had taken root amid the absence of adequate educational opportunities and basic amenities are now witnessing a gradual transition towards development. Bastar has emerged as a compelling example of this transformation. Inspired by the Prime Minister’s vision and supported by sustained efforts to restore peace and expand development, the region is seeking to leave behind the shadow of Maoist violence and embark on a new journey of progress.

As Prime Minister Narendra Modi completes 25 years in public life, the Seva Sankalp campaign being undertaken in Chhattisgarh seeks to take



the message of development to villages and connect people with the larger national resolve for progress. As part of this initiative, I had the opportunity to interact with schoolchildren in Tarandul village of Kanker district, in the Bastar division. Our conversation centred on their aspirations, interests and future career opportunities. Spending time with the children, understanding their dreams and encouraging them to pursue education was an enriching and deeply personal experience. Schoolbags and books were distributed among them, along with a message that education remains one of the most enduring means of achieving their goals.

The interaction offered a glimpse into the aspirations of children in rural and remote areas. Even in villages far removed from major urban centres, young minds are looking towards a future shaped by progress, opportunity and

achievement. For many of them, Prime Minister Modi’s life and journey serve as a source of inspiration. His rise from a modest family background to the highest executive office in the country conveys a powerful message: that perseverance, determination and sustained effort can help turn ambitious dreams into reality. Such examples can encourage children to nurture their aspirations and equip themselves to pursue them with confidence.

This, indeed, is the spirit of the Seva Sankalp campaign: to reach out to people, understand their aspirations and strengthen the bond with them through service. Realising the vision of a Viksit Bharat under Prime Minister Modi’s leadership requires sustained efforts to extend access to education, skills, healthcare and employment opportunities to the remotest parts of the country. The time spent with children in Tarandul served as a reminder of a larger national responsibility: investing in the opportunities available to children today is essential to building a stronger India tomorrow.

In a state such as Chhattisgarh, endowed with abundant natural resources and a distinctive tribal cultural heritage, development must be understood in terms that go well beyond the construction of roads, buildings and other physical infrastructure. It must also mean ensuring better educational and healthcare facilities in remote villages, creating opportunities for

young people, enabling women to become economically self-reliant and integrating rural households into the mainstream of development. Only when the benefits of progress reach the last mile can development acquire a truly inclusive character.

As Chhattisgarh looks towards the Assembly elections in 2028 and the Lok Sabha elections in 2029, sustained organisational engagement will remain important. However, our preparations must extend beyond electoral calculations. The long-term strength of any political organisation rests on its ability to earn public trust, communicate the benefits of government programmes, understand the challenges encountered in their implementation and maintain an enduring dialogue with different sections of society.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s public journey offers an important lesson in this regard: progress demands the will to keep moving forward, but lasting public confidence can be secured only by remaining connected with the people. The transformation unfolding in Bastar must therefore be viewed not merely as a change in the region’s circumstances, but as an opportunity to build a future in which peace, education, opportunity and inclusive development become the foundations of lasting progress.

The writer is the State Vice-President of the Bharatiya Janata Party, Chhattisgarh

Houthis attack Saudi Aramco HQ, say officials

SAMY MAGDY/CARA ANNA ■ Cairo

Two regional officials say offices belonging to senior executives with Saudi oil giant Aramco were hit in an overnight Houthi strike on the company's headquarters (HQ), in the latest demonstration of the Iran-backed rebels' ability to attack high-profile targets even after issuing warnings that they would do so.

The officials said the top three floors in a building used by top executives were damaged. One official said the office of the company's chief executive was among those hit. There were no casualties. The officials spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorised to discuss the matter with the media.

The Houthis earlier said they targeted Dhahran, which hosts the headquarters, with a ballistic



missile. Earlier on Wednesday, new explosions were heard in the Saudi capital, residents said, as blame again quickly fell on Iran-backed Houthi rebels in neighbouring Yemen. A Houthi official said that powers including Russia

and China had reached out to the rebels in search of a ceasefire deal. The sight of smoke rising from some of Saudi Arabia's most sensitive facilities in recent days has rattled the region and global markets while increasing ques-

tions for President Donald Trump, who has said he is evaluating whether the US should join Saudi strikes against the Houthis.

In the latest attacks, the Saudi-led military coalition fighting the Houthis said it intercepted a ballistic missile targeting Dhahran; cruise and ballistic missiles and drones targeting the capital, Riyadh; and a cruise missile targeting Al-Kharj, home to Prince Sultan Air Base and the State-owned Military Industries Corporation.

The Houthis called the latest attacks retaliation for "treacherous Saudi aggression" against the rebel-held Yemeni capital of Sanaa and other areas.

Separately, the rebel-run Health Ministry reported two dead in attacks in Yemen on Tuesday and blamed the Saudis. The Houthis have repeatedly targeted Saudi

airports, military facilities and oil infrastructure in the latest front in the Iran war. One of the Riyadh residents, who spoke on condition of anonymity for their safety, lives in northern Riyadh, where King Khalid International Airport — targeted multiple times in the past week with strikes that have killed at least 18 people and hurt over 300 more — is located.

The Houthis, hardened by years of civil war, have emerged as Iran's most effective armed proxy of the moment, but experts say they also have their own agenda. Either way, they are applying increasing pressure on a key US ally.

A senior Houthi official told *The Associated Press* that regional and international powers have reached out in an effort to stop the attacks on Saudi Arabia as part of a ceasefire deal. (AP)

Malaysian court rejects former PM Najib Razak's appeal



ASSOCIATED PRESS
■ Kuala Lumpur

Former Malaysian Prime Minister Najib Razak on Wednesday lost a bid to delay the enforcement of a 15-year jail sentence for corruption.

Najib, 73, has been imprisoned since August 2022 in a corruption case linked to the multibillion-dollar looting of the 1MDB state investment fund that outraged the nation and caused the downfall of his long-ruling party.

Last year he was convicted and sentenced to another 15 years and fined 11.4 billion ringgit (USD 2.8 billion) in a second, bigger graft trial tied

to the 1MDB fund. He was found guilty of abuse of power and money laundering related to over \$700 million channelled into his bank accounts from the fund. That sentence was due to take effect after he completes his current sentence in August 2028. The High Court on Wednesday dismissed his application to postpone the enforcement of his second sentence, saying there was no merit. Najib's lawyer Muhammad Shafee Abdullah said they would challenge the decision in a higher court. Najib set up the 1MDB development fund shortly after taking office in 2009. (AP)

Russia still hitting energy sites, says Zelenskyy

HANNA ARHIROVA/
SAMYA KULLAB ■ Kyiv

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy voiced outrage on Wednesday over Russia's continuing aerial bombardment of Ukraine's energy infrastructure in apparent defiance of US President Donald Trump's demand for a ceasefire.

Moscow's forces pounded Ukraine's power grid, as well as oil and gas facilities, for the third straight night, Zelenskyy said, after Trump claimed that Russia and Ukraine had agreed to an "energy ceasefire" 4.5 years after Moscow's forces invaded. Zelenskyy, meanwhile, has agreed to halt Ukraine's monthslong cam-



paign targeting Russian oil refineries that caused fuel shortages for Russians. Ukraine's last reported hit on an oil refinery was last Friday. The Kremlin has not confirmed that Moscow signed off on the truce, with a spokesman saying only that "contacts on this matter continue." Trump's efforts to stop the fighting have made

no progress. Ukrainian officials say they are pushing back Russian forces in eastern Ukraine, which Russia's bigger army has been trying to capture for years.

Ukraine has liberated 277 square kilometers in the operation that started in the summer, Ukraine's Third Army Corps commander

Brigadier General Andrii Biletskyi said on Wednesday. It was not possible to independently verify the claim, and Russian officials did not comment.

Ukrainian officials fear US support for the war effort is falling away after Trump struck a deal with Russian President Vladimir Putin to import Russian diesel despite international efforts to sanction Russia for its invasion and isolate Putin.

Ukrainian officials said the deal would help Russia continue its invasion, while European leaders fear Moscow's wider ambitions on the continent and accuse Russia of sabotage as part of a hybrid war on the continent. (AP)

Death sentence overturned for Sri Lankan worker

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
■ Colombo

Saudi Arabia's Supreme Court has overturned the death sentence imposed on a Sri Lankan migrant worker over a comment he made on Facebook, Sri Lanka's deputy foreign minister said on Wednesday.

Anojan Sivarasa, 27, was sentenced to death in September after being convicted of blasphemy against Islam and the Prophet Muhammad over his comment. Sri Lanka's Deputy Foreign Minister Arun Hemachandra confirmed in a Facebook post that the verdict had been overturned.



Anojan Sivarasa

Hemachandra said, in a "major relief", the Supreme Court of Saudi Arabia on Tuesday set aside the death sentence imposed on Sivarasa.

He said this verdict was due to sustained diplomatic and legal efforts by the Government of Sri Lanka.

Bulgarian Government suspects Russia in Black Sea drone strikes

ASSOCIATED PRESS ■ Sofia

Bulgaria on Wednesday said Russia was likely behind drone attacks that struck four ships in the Black Sea in the past week, sinking two, but there was no way of proving Moscow's culpability.

Rescuers are still searching for 11 crew members missing after drone strikes on Tuesday sank two ships in Bulgaria's exclusive economic zone and adjacent waters, while five other crew members were rescued.

One of the ships is registered to Guinea-Bissau but the other one, the Chelsea-3, is Ukrainian-owned, registered in Odessa and sails under the flag of Malta, a European Union member. "There is no logic in Ukraine attacking its own ships and crews, given that the outcome of all these attacks favours Russia - and



indeed, the logic points in that direction. The problem is that we cannot prove it," Bulgarian Prime

Minister Rumen Radev told Parliament. Radev on Tuesday summoned the Russian ambas-

sador to Sofia, who said she does not have any information from the Russian defence ministry but she did not rule out the possibility that "these attacks represent a provocation by a third party."

The Guinea-Bissau-flagged cargo ship Dignity sank Tuesday after it was hit by a military strike. Four sailors, three Syrian nationals and one Egyptian, were rescued and arrived in the port of Varna, district Gov. Mario Smarkov said. "All four appeared to be in relatively good condition and had sustained no injuries," he said. A fifth sailor is expected to arrive later on Wednesday. Smarkov said the search for the 11 missing crew members continues.

Bulgaria has requested international assistance for the investigation into attacks on commercial vessels, as well as NATO support to

strengthen surveillance and control systems and response capabilities against drone attacks.

President Iliana Yotova called for an immediate halt to hostilities in the Black Sea and a moratorium on drone attacks against commercial and civilian infrastructure, following the latest drone attacks.

"The unprecedented attacks demonstrate that the war has reached the Black Sea and that the conflict is intensifying," Yotova said in an TV interview on Tuesday. She explained that coordinated steps have been taken with her colleagues from Romania and Türkiye in the wake of the growing risks and dangers in the Black Sea basin.

"The aim is a moratorium on the use of drones over the Black Sea against commercial and civilian infrastructure and to halt hostilities over the sea," Yotova said.

Delayed China-North Korea bridge prepares to open

ASSOCIATED PRESS ■ Beijing

A new bridge linking China and North Korea is set to open on Thursday after more than a decade of delay in the latest sign of closer ties between the two countries. The official Chinese news agency *Xinhua* reported Wednesday that both sides will hold a ceremony for the launch of the New Yalu River Bridge. The four-lane, 3-kilometre (1.8-mile) bridge will connect the northeastern Chinese city of Dandong to the North Korean city of Sinuiju.

The bridge initially was expected to enter use in 2014 after China apparently completed construction of access roads, customs facilities and other related infrastructure on its side. But the date passed with no sign of an opening and without North Korea doing corresponding works on its side. At that time, it prompted an unusually sharp report in the *Global Times*, a newspaper affiliated with



the Chinese Communist Party, which quoted Dandong residents expressing frustration over delays in what they had hoped would be an economic boon for their border city.

A lack of substantial work on the North Korean side prompted speculation that North Korea was wary of an increase in economic dependence or was unhappy with China voting for United Nations

resolutions toughening international sanctions on the North over its nuclear program. Some observers said North Korea and China also differed over the location of the bridge. A Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson said on Wednesday the new bridge will further promote economic, trade and "people-to-people exchanges."

"China and the DPRK are friendly neighbours linked by rivers and mountains," said Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Mao Ning. She added the bridge is an important "project for connectivity" between the two countries.

The new link is expected to lessen the burden on an existing yet aging bridge on the Dandong-Sinuiju route, which handles more than 70 per cent of official trade between the two countries. The old bridge built in 1937 carries a railway line as well as cars and trucks, but vehicle traffic can move only one way at a time.

Ship sank after striking mine in Hormuz: Iran

ASSOCIATED PRESS ■ Dubai

A cargo ship has sunk after hitting a naval mine in the Strait of Hormuz, Iran's Revolutionary Guard Corps navy said.

It was the first time Iran has reported a ship sinking after hitting a mine during the war. There were few details, including about the fate of the crew. State TV quoted a Guard statement saying the ship was travelling on what it called an illegal and dangerous route when it hit the mine on Wednesday morning.

It said the ship was carrying 2,500 containers when it first caught fire. Iran has repeatedly warned ships against trying to transit the strait without its approval.

The US military has been guiding ships through the



A boat floats as commercial vessels appear anchored in the Strait of Hormuz off Bandar Abbas, Iran

strait on a route off Oman on the far side. There was no immediate verification of the sinking and no report by the United Kingdom Maritime Trade Operations monitor.

Iran on Wednesday hanged a man accused of an "armed operation" against the theocracy in support of exiled former Crown Prince Reza Pahlavi. A report by Mizan, an outlet affiliated with the Islamic Republic's judiciary, identified the man as Ali Sina Mostafavi and said he opened fire earlier during the Iran war and injured several people including a child in the southeastern city of Kerman. Executions of people on similar charges have prompted an international outcry. UN experts this month called on Iran to halt all executions.

UK study visa refusals impact university offers for foreign students: Report

ADITI KHANNA ■ London

International students, including Indians, are likely to be impacted as British universities revoke offers to courses amid a clampdown on study visas issued by the UK Home Office, according to a media analysis this week.

The *Financial Times* newspaper analysed official data to find that universities are taking the step to withdraw offers to students over fears of facing a blanket ban on their ability to recruit foreign students. Under the Home Office rules, education institutions where more than 5 per cent of prospective international students given offers

subsequently have their visa applications rejected face the risk of being banned from recruiting them.

This tightening of the previous 10 per cent threshold is aimed at what the UK Government believes is the abuse of the student visa route by certain nationalities, led by Pakistanis and Nigerians.

"Many refusals appear to rest on flawed, inconsistent and highly subjective reasoning, forcing universities to withdraw offers at scale to avoid breaching compliance thresholds," said Jamie Arrowsmith, director of Universities UK International (UUKi) — which represents



institutions recruiting abroad. While acknowledging the need to maintain confidence in the immigration system, he stressed that "visa processing has become markedly less predictable".

The *Financial Times* said its analysis of Home Office data showed that in the first half of this year, 10.5 per cent of study visa applications to the UK ended up being withdrawn, up from 2.3 per cent in the same period last year.

Around 40.9 per cent of prospective students from Pakistan had visa applications withdrawn in the first six months of this year, up from 3 per cent in the same

period last year. Further down the list was 22.7 per cent of study visa applications from Nigeria being withdrawn in the first half of this year, up from 4.5 per cent in the first half of 2025.

Sir David Bell, vice-chancellor of the University of Sunderland, told the newspaper: "The recent and unexpected spike in visa refusals has prompted pre-emptive action in several universities.

"This has involved pulling back from international markets where a tougher approach is being taken to visa applications." The newspaper also referenced figures in the higher education sector

to flag that around 15 universities are thought to have suspended recruitment from Pakistan entirely this year.

Professor Steven McGuire, deputy vice-chancellor of the University of East Anglia, said the policy's effect may be that UK universities "double down" on China and India where refusal rates are lower.

The Home Office said that while international students "make a positive contribution" to Britain, "this must not be at the expense of recruiting responsibly, in turn protecting the integrity of our immigration system", offering universities "support where needed to improve recruitment practices". (PTI)

Monetary rules are not enough, when inflation is fiscal: 2026 Economics Nobel



LEKHA CHAKRABORTY

This year's Nobel Prize in Economic Sciences went to two quiet revolutionaries — Robert E Hall of Stanford and Michael Woodford of Columbia.

Their citation — “for micro-economic foundations of macroeconomic stabilisation” — sounds technical. In reality, they rewired how the world thinks about stopping economic crises before they spiral.

After the 1970s oil shocks left inflation and unemployment rising simultaneously, the old rulebooks collapsed. Central banks had been playing a simple game — raise rates when prices climbed, cut them when jobs vanished. That game stopped working. Hall and Woodford didn't patch the old models. They rebuilt them from the

ground up starting with how real households and firms actually decide what to do.

Hall's breakthrough came in 1978. Building on Milton Friedman's permanent income idea, he showed that most people don't spend every extra rupee or dollar the moment it arrives. They look ahead. They smooth consumption across their lifetimes. Only genuine news about future income moves the needle. The data largely confirmed it (except for a crucial minority of “hand-to-mouth” households living paycheck to paycheck). That distinction still shapes how we judge economic stimulus packages, tax cuts, and automatic stabilisers today.

Woodford took the next leap. His 2003 masterpiece, “Interest and Prices”, became the operating manual for modern central banks. Because prices are sticky and people look forward, words matter as much as rate decisions. Forward guidance — clear signals about where interest rates are headed—emerged as a powerful tool. It proved indispensable after 2008 and again during the pandemic,



Robert E Hall

Michael Woodford

when rates hit zero and conventional firepower ran out.

He also explained why the Taylor rule works, which is the basis of inflation targeting — the central bank must raise interest rates more than one-for-one with inflation, while also reacting to economic slack. Anything less, and self fulfilling expectations can send inflation spinning out of control. Today, policymakers everywhere speak the language Hall and Woodford taught them — natural rates of interest, output gaps, credibility of forecasts. Four decades ago that vocabulary would have

sounded like science fiction.

Yet Woodford's own work contains a sharp warning that too many still ignore. In his “Fiscal theories of Price Determination,” he demonstrated that even the best monetary rule is not enough. Price stability also demands a coherent fiscal rule. Inflation is not purely a monetary phenomenon. When it is fiscal in origin, monetary policy alone cannot pin it down.

The logic is straightforward and unforgiving. An independent central bank can control interest rates and shape expectations. But

if the fiscal authority runs fiscal deficits that are inconsistent with the desired price path, those efforts can be overwhelmed. The two arms of policy are linked through the government's intertemporal budget constraint. Stabilisation is a joint product, or it fails.

Woodford's insight revives the older “unpleasant monetarist arithmetic” of Sargent and Wallace. Bond financing of deficits works only while the real interest rate stays below the economy's growth rate. When r exceeds g, the fiscal deficit eventually has to be monetised. Seigniorage returns, and inflation follows. Post-pandemic, many Governments played with exactly this path. Woodford stopped short of endorsing Modern Monetary Theory, but he left no doubt that fiscal discipline is not optional if you want stable prices.

Hall, for his part, spent years chairing the NBER's Business Cycle Dating Committee, giving the profession a careful, multi-indicator map of peaks and troughs. A significant work by Gita Gopinath and others challenges the neatness of

that map for emerging economies, where downturns can leave “permanent scars” rather than temporary cyclical dips. The framework still matters, the context has grown more complicated.

The Nobel laureates did not simply give us better forecasting models. They showed us that monetary rules, no matter how sophisticated, cannot carry the full burden of price stability when fiscal policy is on a collision course with them.

The institutions that manage money and the institutions that manage budgets must move in concert-or the inflation we thought we had tamed will return by another fiscalist door. 2026 Economics Nobel reiterated the significance of fiscal rules to prelude monetary rules. Who gets to write the rules and how they use the rules determine the economic growth, because the macro-economic path we take is equally important as destination to curb deficits.

The writer is professor at NIPFP, Ministry of Finance, Govt of India and also research affiliate at the Levy Economics Institute of Bard College, New York

7th Amity Model United Nations commences



PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ New Delhi

Amity Educational Resource Centre – the Global Gateway of the Amity Group of Schools, is organising the 17th Chapter of the Amity International Model United Nations (AIMUN 2026), from October 14-16, at Amity University Noida, on the theme “Youth Leadership is the Future of the World”.

Around 500 participants from India and across the world, including France, the Philippines, UAE, China, UK, South Korea, Poland, Slovenia Japan, Russia and China Russia, have participated in AIMUN 2026.

Inaugurating AIMUN 2026, Chief Guest Jean-Eric Paquet, Ambassador-designate of the European Union to India, emphasised the importance of international cooperation in addressing global challenges, stating, “India, Europe

and the United Nations are working together to find solutions to the challenges facing the world.

Dr Amita Chauhan, Chairperson, Amity Group of Schools, said, “AIMUN provides a valuable platform for students to nurture their abilities, showcase their talent and develop the skills required to become future leaders. Students must aspire to achieve great things and work diligently towards their goals.” Guest of Honour Oh Jin-hee, Deputy Chief of Mission, Embassy of the Republic of Korea, highlighted the need for global collaboration in addressing contemporary challenges.

A special highlight of AIMUN 2026 was the presentation of the Young Noble Peace Prize 2026 to Daniel Obst, President and CEO of AFS Intercultural Programs, USA.

ED seizes ₹2,033 crore assets of Reliance Power under FEMA

PRAMOD KUMAR SINGH ■ New Delhi

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) has seized assets worth ₹2,032.81 crore from Reliance Power Limited (RPL) under Section 37A of the Foreign Exchange Management Act (FEMA), 1999. The ED's Headquarters Investigation Unit announced this on 14 October 2026, targeting RPL's bank balances and its shares in Sasan Power Limited. These assets match the value of foreign exchange reportedly held outside India in violation of Section 4 of FEMA.

The investigation began after the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) shared information. SEBI had flagged write-offs and provisions totalling ₹2,101.46 crore in RPL's accounts. These write-offs were linked to overseas investments and loans given to companies in the British Virgin Islands (BVI) and the Cayman Islands.

Searches under FEMA from 6 to 8 March 2026 produced evidence and statements from several people. The investigation found that Reliance Natural Resources Limited (now merged with RPL) raised \$300 million through Foreign Currency Convertible Bonds in 2006. Of this, \$275 million was invested in its Singapore subsidiary, Reliance Natural Resources (Singapore) Pte Ltd (RNRL-S). RNRL-S deposited the funds with Deutsche Bank (Suisse) SA in Geneva. These deposits were used as collateral for loans given to companies in the British Virgin Islands. The ED says the Reliance Anil Ambani Group managed these BVI companies from India using intermediaries who followed the Group's instructions.

Further investigation showed that the loan money was used for different purposes, including briefly sending funds back to India through companies in Mauritius. In the end, the money benefited the Reliance Anil Ambani Group and was kept outside India. The BVI companies later failed to repay



Deutsche Bank's loans. Documents were fabricated to show that RNRL-S and RPL's Indonesian subsidiaries had made advances to these BVI entities for what appeared to be genuine business purposes.

During the investigation, authorities found that this documentation was backdated and prepared specifically to present the transactions as legitimate commercial dealings. The ED said the seized assets, which include bank balances and shares in Sasan Power Limited, are equal in value to the foreign exchange held abroad in violation of FEMA rules. Section 37A of FEMA allows the ED to seize Indian assets equal to foreign exchange kept outside the country in violation of the law.

This latest action is one of several enforcement steps looking into the Group's cross-border fund movements. Sasan Power Limited, whose shares were seized, runs a large ultra-mega power project in Madhya Pradesh. The market did not react right away because the press release was issued after trading hours on 14 October 2026.

RPL shares were already under pressure because of concerns about the Group's debt and regulatory issues. Analysts note that the seizure is significant compared to the company's recent market value, but the final impact will depend on the investigation and future decisions. The ED's action under Section 37A is meant to secure domestic assets equal to those held abroad while it investigates the alleged FEMA violations. The ED says the investigation is ongoing. So far, no chargesheet or final findings have been shared.

Kindathon Spotlight 2026 concludes

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ New Delhi

Kindathon Spotlight 2026 concluded at the Indira Gandhi Kala Kendra, bringing together around 200 people. The event was supported by Avian WE, with Itsy Bitsy as craft partner and CureAble as sensory partner. Program coordinating team was led by Aarti (Trisha Vaish), Ashish



Mishra, Nitya Bansal and Yash Jain. The evening included keynote addresses on employability and inclusion. Preeti Siwach, Head of Work and

Employment at Action for Autism, National Centre for Autism India, spoke on employability and killing. Leenika Khattar, Director, Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging at NASSCOM, also addressed the audience, and Simmi Vasu, Director, Clinical Excellence, Assessment and Therapy Services, CureAble, spoke on inclusion and family advocacy.

Indian surgeons pioneer maternal fibula grafts to rebuild children's lower limbs

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ New Delhi

Surgeons at Aakash Healthcare Super Speciality Hospital have adapted maternal fibula grafting, previously reported only for the upper limb, to reconstruct lower limbs in children with bone cancer and chronic infection.

Doctors first tried this technique in 2021 to help a 16-year-old girl with severe damage to her right femur from chronic osteomyelitis. Five years later, her mother's bone graft continues to grow, and the girl can walk normally.

The team, led by Dr Aashish Chaudhry, Dr Arun Kumar Giri and Dr Abhishek Kumar Sambharia, found no earlier reports of this method being used for the leg. They decided to try it because amputation was



the only other choice. In 2022, they treated a 14-year-old girl with a long-term femur infection and a poorly healed fracture, and she recovered well. Since then, four more children, three from Uzbekistan and one from Tajikistan, have had the procedure.

In September, doctors removed a cancerous tumour from a five-year-old Uzbek boy's right femur and repaired the bone using his mother's fibula, held in place with

RGCIRC forgoes ₹250 cr to treat EWS patients

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ New Delhi

Rajiv Gandhi Cancer Institute & Research Centre (RGCIRC) forgoes about ₹250 crore in revenue every year to treat patients from economically weaker sections (EWS), the hospital said.

Dr DS Gangwar, CEO, said cancer affects almost every part of a family's life. Financial aid is important, he said, but patients may also need nutrition, accommodation, counselling. Dr Vineet Talwar, Medical Director at Rohini, said a patient could receive the best clinical care and still struggle with nutrition, accommodation, finances or emotional wellbeing. Dr Gauri Kapoor, Medical Director at Niti Bagh, said families face uncertainty and practical challenges behind every treatment.

MP Manoj Tiwari addresses DU students

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ New Delhi

Lok Sabha MP Manoj Tiwari on Wednesday said that students should uphold life values in their conduct and pursue their goals with skill and dedication. Interacting with students of Maharaja Agrasen College, Delhi University, Tiwari emphasised that national develop-



ment cannot be achieved without the active and constructive participation of young people. Principal professor Sanjeev Kumar Tiwari encouraged young

people to pursue entrepreneurship rather than merely seek jobs. The programme was attended by Amit Pundir, Mukesh Agrawal, Gitika Saxena and Gitanjali Chawla. Ritu Kohli, Convenor of the Students' Advisory Committee along with a large number of students. The programme was conducted by Dr Indrani Das Gupta.

Kullu Dussehra held in Delhi



PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ New Delhi

International Kullu Dussehra Curtain Raiser ceremony held at New Delhi. MLA Sundar Singh Thakur said that International Kullu Dussehra is being organised from 21st to 27th October 2026 at Kullu.

He said that Governor Kavinder Gupta will inaugurate the event whereas Chief Minister Thakur Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu will preside over the Closing Ceremony on 27th October. Thakur said that the Global Dance event which will be an amalgamation of local and international dance will be a major attraction besides Drone and Laser show. Principal Resident Commissioner Ajay Yadav, Dy Resident Commissioner Mayank Sharma were also present on the occasion.



OFFICE OF UJJAIN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
Pradhikaran Bhawan, Bharatpur Administrative Zone, Dewas Road, Ujjain - 456010
email-udaujain@gmail.com, website-www.udaujain.org

Tender Notice
Online tenders are invited from eligible firms for the following work. Detailed tender details can be found on the website <https://mptenders.gov.in/nicgep/app>

No.	Tender number & date of issue	Name of work	Work duration & PAC	Cost of Tender Form and EMD (INR)	Last date of tender
1.	UDA/ET/162/26 DATE 6-10-2026 2026_DTCP_541417_1	Integrated Development and Conservation of Maharishi Sandipani Ashram, Ujjain	365 days 1,30,75,63,000/-	59000/- 50000000/-	28/10/2026 17:30

Note: Any amendments to the tender will be published online only on the website and will not be published separately in newspapers

Executive Engineer, UDA, Ujjain



RITES LIMITED
(A Government of India Enterprise)
Shikhar, Plot No. 1, Sector-29, Gurgaon-122001



Requirement of professionals for the following posts

VC No(s).	Individual Consultant & Contractual Post(s)	No. of Posts	Mode & Venue of Selection process
YP/67/26	Dy. Chief Signalling System Engineer / Chief Resident Engineer – Signalling	1	
YP/68/26	Dy. Chief System Integration, Testing & Commissioning Expert	1	
YP/69/26	Dy. Chief Quality Assurance & Quality Control Expert for Works (Electrical)	1	
YP/70/26	Interface Manager / Coordinator – Electrical	1	
YP/71/26	Construction Planning, Programme cum Progress/ Monitoring Engineer	1	
YP/72/26	Track Expert	1	
YP/73/26	Environmental Expert	1	
YP/74/26	Section Engineer – SCADA	1	
YP/75/26	Resident Engineer – Signaling	1	
YP/76/26	Resident Engineer – Rolling Stock (Electrical)	1	
YP/77/26	BIM Manager	1	(Document Scrutiny & Interview) RITES Corporate Office Gurgaon/RITES Regional Office Kolkata/ Video conferencing
YP/78/26	Resident Engineer – Civil	2	
YP/79/26	Resident Engineer – Track	1	
YP/80/26	Section Engineer – E&M	1	
YP/81/26	Section Engineer – Lift & Escalator	1	
YP/82/26	BIM Engineer	1	
YP/83/26	Section Engineer – Civil	1	
YP/84/26	Section Engineer – QA/QC	1	
YP/85/26	Site Engineer – Tunnel Ventilation, ECCS & Station Air conditioning	1	
YP/86/26	Site Engineer – AFC	1	
YP/87/26	Site Engineer – Rolling Stock	1	
YP/88/26	Site Engineer – Civil	1	
YP/89/26	Site Engineer – Track	1	
YP/90/26	Site Engineer – Environment	1	
YP/91/26	Site Engineer – QA & QC	1	
YP/92/26	Team Secretary	1	
CP/07-R2/26	Senior Manager (Mech.) Bulk Material Handling Expert	1	Written Test / Interview
CL/08-R1/26	Engineer-UT Testing	2	Interview

For details regarding application, T&Cs, etc., candidates may see the detailed advertisement posted on RITES website www.rites.com under Career Section.



M.P. MADHYA KSHETRA VIDYUT VITARAN CO. LTD.
(Govt. of M.P. Undertaking)
OFFICE OF THE GENERAL MANAGER (O&M) CIRCLE, HARDA
E-mail-ID : mpczgmharda@gmail.com
No. GM/O&M/HRD/NIT/2989
Harda, Dated 13.10.2026

NOTICE INVITING E-TENDERS
E-Tenders are invited from the eligible bidders for carrying out the following works :-

Name of Works	App. Value of Tender (In Crore) including GST	EMD Fee (In Rs.)	Tender Fee (In Rs.)	Date of Sale of Tender Documents	Opening Date of Tender Documents
Empanelment of Agencies for Restoration of Distribution Infrastructure during Emergency in Harda Circle	8.00 Cr.	25000/-	11800 with 18% GST	14.10.2026, 21:00 Hrs. up to 05.11.2026 14.00 Hrs.	06.11.2026 at 15:30 Hrs.

Other details, terms and conditions are available on company website : <https://portal.mpcz.in> & <https://mptenders.gov.in> or the under signed office.
M.P. Madhyam/128594/2026
GM (O&M) CIRCLE HARDA



M.P. MADHYA KSHETRA VIDYUT VITARAN CO. LTD.
Office Of General Manager (City) Circle, Old Kisan Bank Building Sultanija Road Bhopal-462001, Ph. : 0755-2678226, E-mail-secitybhpal@gmail.com., secitypur@gmail.com
Ref. No. GM/CC/Pur./2026-27/6327
Bhopal Dated :13.10.2026

NOTICE INVITING E-TENDER (OPEN TENDER)
E-tenders are invited from the eligible bidders for carrying out the following works :-

Name of Works	App. Value of Tender including GST	EMD (In. Rs.)	Tender fee (Inclusive of GST @18%) (In Rs.)	Tender Submission Last Date & Time	Opening date of Tender Documents
Empanelment of Agencies for New 33/11KV Substation, additional /Augmentation of PTR at existing 33/11 KV S/s, HT Lines, LT Lines, DTR, Service Line and meter related works and any other associated works as per SOR schedules in GM City Circle of MPMKVCL	1000.00 Lakh	25000/-	11,800 /-	12.11.2026 Up to 3.00 PM	13.11.2026 at 3.30 PM

Other details, terms and conditions are available on company website : <https://portal.mpcz.in> & <https://mptenders.gov.in> or the under signed office.
M.P. Madhyam/128596/2026
GENERAL MANAGER CITY CIRCLE BHOPAL

iexceed

Appzillon™

AI Powered Digital Banking Solutions

WWW.i-exceed.com

IIFL Capital's maiden pre-IPO fund raises ₹500 cr in first close



IIFL Capital Asset Management Ltd on Wednesday said it has raised around ₹500 crore in capital commitments at the first close of its maiden late-stage private equity fund. The fund targets a corpus of ₹1,000 crore, with a greenshoe option of an additional ₹1,000 crore, IIFL Capital said in a statement.

The IIFL Late-Stage Private Equity Fund achieved its first close on September 15, 2026, and will remain open for subscriptions, with the final close targeted within the next nine months, it said.

The fund will invest in scaled-up, profitable Indian enterprises preparing to list on the stock market in the near term. It has already committed investments in two companies and is evaluating a pipeline of 7-8 opportunities, ranging from term-sheet negotiations to transactions under due diligence, Deepak Mittal, Chief Investment Officer and Head of Private Equity at IIFL Capital Asset Management Ltd, said. (PTI)

Procedure for silver bullion import licences simplified



The Commerce Ministry has introduced a simplified, self-declaration-based procedure to speed up the issuance of import authorisations for certain silver items, aiming to reduce processing time for genuine applicants.

Imports of silver items are in a restricted category, under which a licence, authorisation, or permission is required from the government.

"To facilitate trade and improve ease of doing business, a simplified procedure is being introduced for expedited issuance of import authorisations, based on self-declaration and trust, for import of silver items...excluding silver dore, with a view to reducing processing time for genuine applicants," the Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT) said in a trade notice.

It said that applications accompanied by a self-declaration that the proposed imports would be made on payment of customs duty at the generally applicable rate, without availing concessions, may be considered for expedited disposal under this procedure.

It said that applications accompanied by a self-declaration that the proposed imports shall be made on payment of customs duty at the generally applicable rate, without availing concessions, may be considered for expedited disposal under this procedure.

Applications not covered under this category would be subject to detailed scrutiny and examination on merits in accordance with the applicable policy provisions, it added. (PTI)

World Bank helps mobilise \$36B in private capital to support job creation

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ New Delhi



The World Bank Group said it has helped mobilise a cumulative \$36 billion over the last four years for development across sectors and to support efforts to boost investment and create jobs.

Of the total, \$9.6 billion was channelled towards Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs), as it seeks to boost private sector-led growth and job creation.

Private capital mobilisation involves attracting investment from private investors to finance development projects and supplement public funding.

Private capital mobilisation by the World Bank Group has grown nearly five-fold in four years, rising from approximately \$3 billion in FY22 to \$14.5 billion in FY26 and unlocking a cumulative \$36 billion for development across sectors, Manuel Reyes-Retana, Division Director, South Asia, IFC, a member of the World Bank Group, said.

"We are seeing a positive response from private sector investors and growing momentum in this area.

Investors across the world, including in India, are increasingly looking to diversify their investment instruments and assets," he told PTI.

The guarantees provided by the International Finance Corporation (IFC) and the Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency (MIGA) are well received by the investor community, he added.

"Institutional investors value these guarantees because they are familiar with the World Bank Group's underwriting standards and governance practices. As a result, these assets are increasingly sought after by institutional investors," he said.

The World Bank Group acts as a bridge between government development

Fertiliser security is food security, and BRICS offers India a way to strengthen both



From the Red Fort on 15 August, the Prime Minister drew attention to the strategic importance of ensuring affordable access to fertilisers amid rising global costs and growing geopolitical uncertainties—a reality well understood by those working across the fertiliser industry. He noted that the Government has absorbed massive costs to provide internationally priced urea costing around ₹3,000 for less than ₹300, and DAP costing over ₹5,000 for just ₹1,350. He further added that essential resources are increasingly being weaponised in the world today.

That difference of nearly ₹2,700 on a single bag of urea is, in the first instance, a measure of protection. It is the reason a farmer in Bundelkhand or Bolangir can plan a sowing season without tracking international commodity prices, and in a country of small and marginal landholdings, the Government's decision to carry that weight has kept millions of cropping decisions viable. The size of the gap is also a reminder of where our vulnerabilities lie, because it reflects how

much of the fertiliser supply chain sits beyond our borders. The more useful question, therefore, is not whether the protection is justified, but how well we use the stability it creates.

Against this background, the agriculture provisions of the New Delhi Declaration, adopted at the 18th BRICS Summit in the capital last month, deserve closer attention than they have received. The Declaration does not treat fertiliser as one more line in a trade schedule, but places fertiliser shortages within the larger framework of food security, agricultural productivity and resilient supply chains. BRICS leaders emphasised the need to mitigate acute price volatility and abrupt supply disruptions, including fertiliser shortages, and called for international coordination to strengthen the availability, accessibility, stability and affordability of agricultural and food production inputs.

For those of us in the fertiliser industry, this language reflects a shift we have already witnessed. The long-standing assumption in global fertiliser trade was that a buyer with the means to pay could always find a seller. Export restrictions, energy price volatility and disruptions to shipping routes have made that far less certain, with availability increasingly becoming the constraint rather than price.

India has pursued two complementary objectives:



strengthening domestic capability while building dependable international partnerships. Government data shows domestic urea production rising to 306.67 lakh metric tonnes in 2024-25, about 35 per cent above the level a decade earlier, while production of phosphatic and potassic fertilisers has also increased significantly over the same period. At the same time, Indian companies have moved beyond reliance on spot purchases, building long-term supply arrangements with major fertiliser-producing countries, including Saudi Arabia, Russia, Morocco and Jordan. These partnerships have helped create more predictable and diversified supply channels, strengthening India's resilience against disruptions in global fertiliser markets.

This is where BRICS becomes relevant to our

sector, because the grouping brings together in a single forum both some of the world's largest agricultural economies and several of its most significant fertiliser producers. India's growing fertiliser relationship with Russia shows what such cooperation can achieve when pursued patiently. The larger opportunity, however, lies in moving beyond a collection of bilateral arrangements towards a predictable shared framework, in which rules are clear and responses to disruption are better coordinated across the wider BRICS agricultural ecosystem.

The Declaration points in that direction. It calls for facilitating intra-BRICS trade in agricultural products and production inputs through resilient and non-discriminatory supply chains, and supports further work on the proposed BRICS Grain

Markets close lower amid elevated crude oil prices

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ Mumbai

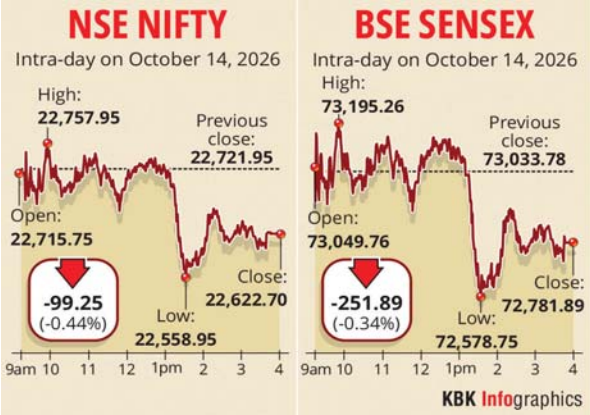
Benchmark stock indices Sensex and Nifty closed lower on Wednesday amid profit-taking after a sharp rally in the previous session, as a spike in wholesale price-based inflation and firm crude oil prices hit investor sentiment.

The 30-share BSE Sensex declined 251.89 points, or 0.34 per cent, to settle at 72,781.89. During the day, it hit a high of 73,195.26 and a low of 72,578.75.

The 50-share NSE Nifty dropped 99.25 points, or 0.44 per cent, to end at 22,622.70.

From the 30 Sensex firms, Bajaj Finance, Mahindra & Mahindra, Bajaj Finserv, Eternal, ICICI Bank and InterGlobe Aviation were among the major laggards.

Infosys, Tech Mahindra, Tata Consultancy Services, Hindustan Unilever, NTPC and Reliance Industries were among the major gainers. India's wholesale price-based inflation rose to 11.39 per cent in September, compared to



9.92 per cent in August, on rising prices of food, manufactured items, and fuel and power, government data showed on Wednesday.

"Indian equities witnessed a volatile session as profit booking emerged after recent gains, with investors turning cautious ahead of key US inflation data. Sentiment found some support from easing intraday crude oil prices, rupee appreciation following the

RBI's forex measures, and expectations of a potential review of LTCG tax and STT.

"However, a hotter-than-expected domestic WPI print pushed bond yields higher, reviving concerns over a tighter monetary policy trajectory and weighing on automobiles, private banks and metals," Vinod Nair, Head of Research, Geojit Investments Limited, said.

Brent crude, the global

oil benchmark, was up 0.36 per cent to USD 106.1 per barrel. Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) offloaded equities worth ₹1,305.13 crore on Tuesday, according to exchange data.

"Indian equity benchmarks ended lower on Wednesday as elevated crude oil prices and renewed concerns over potential supply disruptions kept investors cautious. Gains in information technology stocks helped cushion the decline, with the sector extending its recent recovery.

"Persistent FPI outflows and elevated crude oil prices remain key headwinds, potentially limiting further gains in the equity market," Ponmudi R, CEO of Enrich Money, an online trading and wealth tech firm, said.

In Asian markets, South Korea's Kospi, Japan's 225 index, Shanghai's SSE Composite index and Hang Seng index ended lower.

Gold sheds ₹1,800 as strong rupee adds to bullion woes

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ New Delhi

Gold prices fell for the third straight day, shedding ₹1,800 to ₹1.5 lakh per 10 grams in the national capital on Wednesday as a strengthening rupee amplified pressure on the precious metal.

The 99.9 per cent pure metal declined ₹1,800 to ₹1,50,800 per 10 grams, inclusive of all taxes, from Tuesday's closing level of ₹1,52,600 per 10 grams, according to the All India Sarafa Association. Silver also extended its decline, tumbling ₹5,000 to ₹2.21 lakh per 10 grams, inclusive of all taxes, from previous close of ₹2.26 lakh per kg. The yellow metal has shed ₹3,600 since October 9, and silver has fallen ₹7,500 over the same period, highlighting the scale of the retreat in the domestic bullion markets.

The rupee rose 19 paise to close at 95.17 against the US dollar, registering the fourth



straight session of gains, supported by the RBI's interventions designed to ease near-term demand for the green-back and limit speculative foreign exchange exposure.

Traders said a stronger rupee makes dollar-priced bullion cheaper to import, weighing on domestic prices even as investors track international market movements.

"Gold prices extended losses in the domestic market on Wednesday, tracking weak global cues and a stronger rupee," said Saumil Gandhi, Senior Analyst of Commodities at HDFC Securities.

बैंक ऑफ़ बड़ोदा

Bank of Baroda

Zonal Stressed Asset Recovery Branch, Jabalpur

2nd floor, JDA Building, Block 10, Civic center, Madhatal Jabalpur 482002 MP

Ph. 0761-2480150, 2480160

E-mail: armbj@bankofbaroda.bank.in

E-AUCTION

SALE NOTICE

Sale Notice for Sale of Immovable Properties

APPENDIX- IV-A [See proviso to Rule 6 (2) & 8 (6)]

E-Auction Sale Notice for Sale of Immovable Assets under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with proviso to Rule 6 (2) & 8 (6) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002.

Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower (s), Mortgagor (s) and Guarantor (s) that the below described immovable property mortgaged/charged to the Secured Creditor, possession of which has been taken by the Authorised Officer of Bank of Baroda, Secured Creditor, will be sold on "As is where is", "As is what is", and "Whatever there is" basis for recovery of dues in below mentioned account/s. The details of Borrower/s/Mortgagor/Guarantor/s/Secured Asset/s/Dues/Reserve Price/e-Auction date & Time, EMD and Bid Increase Amount are mentioned below :

Name & address of Borrowers / Guarantor/ Mortgagor	Give short description of the immovable property with known encumbrances, if any & Name of Property Owner	Total Dues.	Date of e-Auction Time of e-auction	Reserve Price EMD Bid Increase Amt.	Status of Possession (Symbolic /Physical)	Property Inspection date & Time.
1. M/s Om Shri Shubh Labh Agritech Private Limited (Borrower) Regd. Address: In front of IIITM college, Near Hazira Police Station, Morena link road, Gwalior, M.P., -474015 (For Information only)	1. Equitable Mortgage of diverted land Survey No 372/2, 373, 374, 375, 376, 377, 378, 387/2/1, 388/1 and 388/3 (in total 3 deeds) aggregate total 3.011 Hectare situated at Village Kedarpur Patwari Halka No 76 RI Circle 4, Lashkar Block ghategoun, Tehsil and Dist Gwalior standing in the name of Mr. Girraj Bansal S/o Mr. Radhey Shyam Bansal.	₹ 27,10,25,311.60 + unapplied interest from 11.06.2025 & other charges & expenses from date of NPA	26.11.2026 2.00 PM to 6.00 PM	₹ 19,40,00,000/- ₹ 1,94,00,000/- ₹ 2,00,000/-	Symbolic Possession	20.11.2026 & From 11:00 AM to 04:00 PM
2. Sh. Girraj Bansal S/o Sh. Radhe shyam Bansal (Director & Guarantor) Address: D-5A, Gulmohar City, City Center, Dist. Gwalior (M.P.), Pin- 474001	2. Equitable mortgage factory land and building (Property used as godown) situated at survey no. 28, 29 & 30 part, Kalyanpur, Gwalior, Ward No. 63, opp. ABV IIITM, Gwalior Purani Chhawani Road admeasuring Plot Area 41773 Sq. ft. out of which area 17320 Sq. ft of Survey No 28 is diverted standing in the name of Mr. Girraj Bansal S/o Mr. Radhey Shyam Bansal.			₹ 8,76,00,000/- ₹ 87,60,000/- ₹ 2,00,000/-	Symbolic Possession	
3. Sh. Ketan Bansal S/o Sh. Girraj Bansal (Director & Guarantor) Address: D-5A, Gulmohar City, City Center, Dist. Gwalior (M.P.), Pin- 474001	3. Equitable Mortgage of freehold Industrial land & Building (used as Godown) bearing Survey No 30, 44, 43/min, 47/1 area 3603.88 Sqm situated at Kalyanpur, Patwari Halka No 47, Gwalior (MP) standing in the name of Mr. Girraj Bansal S/o Mr. Radhey Shyam Bansal.			₹ 7,65,00,000/- ₹ 76,50,000/- ₹ 2,00,000/-	Symbolic Possession	
4. Smt. Mamta Bansal W/o Sh. Girraj Bansal (Guarantor) Address: D-5A, Gulmohar City, City Center, Dist. Gwalior (M.P.), Pin- 474001	4. Equitable Mortgage of diverted Land Survey No 63/1, Area 78749 Sq Ft situated at Village Mundla Patawari Halka No 61, Tehsil Baroda Dist Sheopur (MP) standing in the name of Mr. Girraj Bansal S/o Mr. Radhey Shyam Bansal.			₹ 1,64,00,000/- ₹ 16,40,000/- ₹ 1,00,000/-	Symbolic Possession	
5. M/s B P Food Products Pvt. Ltd. (Corporate Guarantor of Borrower) Through its Director - 1. Sh. Girraj Bansal S/o Sh. Radhe shyam Bansal 2. Sh. Ketan Bansal S/o Sh. Girraj Bansal Regd. Address: In front of IIITM college, Near Hazira Police Station, Morena link road, Gwalior, M.P., Pin -474015	5. Equitable Mortgage of Residential House Sr No 121/10, Area 164.03 Sq Mtrs situated at Ward No 11, Mataji Mohalla, Tehsil Baroda Dist Sheopur (MP) standing in the name of Mr. Girraj Bansal S/o Mr. Radhey Shyam Bansal.			₹ 45,00,000/- ₹ 4,50,000/- ₹ 50,000/-	Symbolic Possession	

For detailed terms and conditions of sale, please refer/visit to the website link <https://www.bankofbaroda.bank.in/e-auction> and online auction portal Baanknet.com. Also, prospective bidders may contact the Authorised officer on Tel No. 0761 2480150 Mobile No: 9810553775.

Date: 15-10-2026, Place: Jabalpur

Authorised Officer, Bank of Baroda



TRANSGLOBE
ADVISORS

Your Trusted Management Advisory

www.transglobeadvisors.in



Order Order

Allahabad HC asks State poll panel to hold panchayat elections



The Allahabad High Court on Wednesday directed the State Election Commission to hold polls to Panchayati Raj institutions in Uttar Pradesh within three months.

The order was passed by a bench comprising Justices Ajit Kumar and Garima Prashad.

The petitioner had moved court seeking direction to the State Election Commission to place on record a detailed time bound schedule for completion of the entire panchayat election process well before the expiry of district panchayat tenure."It is expected from respondent No.2 (State Election Commission) that the entire schedule of holding the election should be finalised and brought on record before the next date of listing," the court observed, while allowing the plea by Dashrath Yadav.

Asaduddin Owaisi moves SC challenging SIR, alleges lapses



AIMIM chief Asaduddin Owaisi on Wednesday moved the Supreme Court challenging the manner in which the Election Commission is conducting the SIR, claiming that the constitutional and statutory safeguards have been overlooked and the voting rights of eligible citizens have been jeopardised.

A bench comprising Chief Justice of India (CJI) Surya Kant and Justice Joyimalya Bagchi took note of the submission of advocate Nizam Pasha, appearing for Owaisi, that the plea be listed on Thursday along with other pending ones on the issue. Assuring consideration, the CJI-led bench indicated that it would examine the matter and the reference to similar petitions. Pasha submitted that the relevant cases had been identified in the memo accompanying his request for listing.

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi and 10 prominent opposition leaders and others have also moved the top court against the alleged malpractices in the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls and other related processes.

Owaisi, in his plea filed through lawyer Lzafer Ahmad, has sought judicial intervention to ensure that the revision process complies with the Representation of the People Act and the Registration of Electors Rules, 1960.

"Declare that the decisions affecting the SIR not duly authorised in accordance with the law, including Section 18 of the Chief Election Commissioner and Other Election Commissioners (Appointment, Conditions of Service and Term of Office) Act, 2023, are liable to be set aside," the plea said.

The plea said it does not challenge the Election Commission's (EC) authority to conduct an intensive revision of electoral rolls. Instead, it questions whether the EC has exercised that authority lawfully, transparently and through procedures prescribed by law.

"Declare that the forms prescribed under the Registration of Electors Rules, 1960, cannot be superseded or supplemented by alternative forms or substantive conditions introduced through portal modifications or executive instructions unsupported by law," it said.

IYC moves Delhi HC over Jantar Mantar de-notification

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ New Delhi

The Indian Youth Congress (IYC) on Wednesday approached the Delhi High Court challenging the de-notification of Jantar Mantar as a designated protest and demonstration site.

The Indian Youth Congress filed the application through its president, Uday Bhanu Chib, in a pending petition seeking permission to hold protests at the Jantar Mantar in central Delhi against Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar for alleged irregularities in the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) exercise. In the application, the petitioner challenged Delhi Police Commissioner Anurag Kumar's standing order dated October 11, which de-notified Jantar Mantar and designated the Ramlila Ground, Burali Ground and the CBD Ground in east Delhi as the new venues for protests and demonstrations.

SC asks MEA to notify kin of Russia war victims

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ New Delhi

Observing that the right to seek compensation has to be enforced, the Supreme Court on Wednesday asked the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) to consider issuing a public notice inviting families of Indians who have died while fighting in the Russia-Ukraine war to seek assistance and compensation.

The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), in its latest status report, apprised a bench comprising Chief Justice Surya Kant and Joyimalya Bagchi that 51 Indians who fought the war have died and 77 recruits remain untraced so far.

The top court asked the MEA to file a fresh status report giving details of exact compensation given by the Russian Government to six



families whose members died in the war zone there.

The direction to this effect was passed after Additional Solicitor General Aishwarya Bhati, appearing for the Centre, said that so far six compensation claims have been processed by the Russian Government. She added that five compensation claims have been satisfied fully and one partially.

The Bench said that the right to seek compensation accrues to the families of all 51 persons who unfortunately lost their lives there.

It also asked the District Legal Services Authorities of Rajasthan, Punjab, Haryana and Himachal Pradesh to comply with its earlier direction to provide free legal aid to the aggrieved families for "submission of claims and/

or conducting of DNA test, apart from other necessary legal/ administrative formalities which are required to be completed by them".

ASG Bhati informed the bench that approximately 267 Indians had joined the Russian armed forces, of whom 51 had died and 139 had been discharged from military service.

The Indian embassy in Russia is pursuing the whereabouts of 77 recruits, including seven whom Russian authorities have confirmed as missing. The Bench took note of the MEA's submission that officials were contacting the affected families individually and expected the authorities to facilitate their compensation claims.

It also considered the difficulties in securing compensation from Russia, delays in DNA-based identification and

the repatriation of mortal remains. The additional solicitor general told the bench that all possible efforts were being made to assist the families. "Ultimately, our diplomatic and consular efforts will help," Bhati submitted, adding that Russian authorities had been cooperating and the government would continue to pursue requests to simplify the process.

The bench also examined the case of one Sikandar Singh who was sentenced to eight years' imprisonment in Russia in a molestation case. The bench was urged to ask the MEA to explore the possibility so that he can be shifted to an Indian jail to serve the remainder of the sentence. The law officer said that for this, Singh will have to withdraw his appeal against conviction from an appellate court there.

The petitioners also sought action against agents allegedly involved in recruiting Indians for the Russian armed forces through false promises of employment.

At the outset, the law officer said that a nodal officer has been appointed in pursuance of an earlier order.

On July 31, the top court had directed the Centre to appoint a nodal officer in the MEA to coordinate with the families of those who have died, gone missing or suffered injuries while fighting in the Russia-Ukraine war.

It had also directed the MEA to facilitate DNA matching of family members with the mortal remains.

The bench was hearing a plea pertaining to Indian nationals recruited into the Russian military after being allegedly duped by travel agents.

Protests: No curtailment or cancellation of services, DMRC tells SC

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ New Delhi

The Delhi Metro Rail Corporation (DMRC) on Wednesday informed the Supreme Court that there was no curtailment or cancellation of metro train services in view of October 10 protests in the national capital and the entry and exit were restricted at just 45 out of the 303 stations.

In an affidavit filed in the apex court, the DMRC also said the number of commuters on October 10 was slightly lower than the ridership on a

normal second Saturday which shows the "adverse impact" of protest on the lives of ordinary citizens.

The top court was dealing with several petitions before the Supreme Court in connection with the October 10 protests and detention of those who were out on streets demanding the resignation of Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Gyanesh Kumar over his handling of special intensive revision (SIR) of electoral rolls and the functioning of Election Commission of India (ECI).



As many as 15 petitions have been filed so far. The protests called by various youth bodies and political parties in Delhi had led to large scale detentions and assault of protestors as well as journalists and lawyers

on October 10 and October 11. The petitions before the Supreme Court include writ petitions, contempt proceedings, habeas corpus pleas and intervention applications challenging restrictions on public transport, alleged unlawful detentions and police action against lawyers, journalists and protesters.

According to DMRC affidavit, over 85 per cent of metro network (258 stations) remained fully operational, accessible and functional for commuters. The DMRC said the entry and exit were

restricted at only 45 out of 303 stations, accounting for 15 per cent of the entire network, from 9 pm of October 9 till October 10.

It said the entry and exit regulations were undertaken pursuant to the assessment of law enforcement agencies and in accordance with their directions. "The actual number of passengers who boarded the metro on October 10, 2026 was 32 lakh approx, as against approximately 58 lakh passengers on a normal second Saturday," the DMRC said.

Kerala High Court declines to stay toll collection on NH 66 at Nattika plaza

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ Kochi

The Kerala High Court on Wednesday declined to stay toll collection at the Nattika plaza on National Highway 66 after the NHAI and the Centre submitted that the fee was being collected only for the completed portion of the road. Counsel for the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) and the Union Ministry of Road Transport and Highways told a bench comprising Chief Justice Soumen Sen

and Justice Syam Kumar V M that 51 km of the 60-km Kappirikkad-Kodungallur stretch in Thrissur district had been completed. "Only one flyover and two viaducts remain to be completed. The toll is being collected only for the completed portion," the counsel said.

He submitted that toll collection should begin within 45 days of the issuance of the completion certificate, as the project was funded by public money. In view of the submissions, the bench sought responses from the ministry, the NHAI and the Keralam govern-

ment on a public interest litigation challenging toll collection at the Nattika toll plaza. The court declined to grant an interim stay, observing that people were already using and benefiting from the completed 51-km stretch. The matter was posted for further hearing on November 4.



WEST CENTRAL RAILWAY, JABALPUR

Material Management Department
(e-Tender Notice for the supply of Stores, No. SR.DMM/EP/56/2026)
Sr.DMM/WCR/on behalf of the President of India invites the following advertised tenders through e-procurement System. No Manual/ Postal offers shall be entertained. Tenders can be accessed under the link https://ireps.gov.in for details and for submission of tender.

Sr.No	Tender No.	Short Description	Tendered Qty.	Opening Date
1.	94265638A	Supply, Installation, Commissioning & Testing of 500 KVA 3PH, 415V, Liquid Cooled DG Set with AMF panel	01 Nos.	05-Nov-2026

(SD.)
Sr.DMM/WCR/JBP

स्वच्छ भारत अभियान, एक कदम स्वच्छता की ओर

DEMAND NOTICE

Office of the Chief Municipal Office Nagar Parishad Bijawar Distt. Chhatarpur (M.P.)

NIT No: 1084 Date: 14.10.2026

Second Notice Inviting Tenders

This is for information of all concerned that online bids for the following works have been invited:

E-Tender No. Id	Name of Work	District	Portable Amount (Rs. in Lakhs)	EMD (in Rupees)	Cost of Document (in Rupees)	Category of Contractor	Period of Completion (in Month)
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
2026_UAD_543043_1	CONSTRUCTION OF C.C. ROAD, DEVIDER AND ELECTRIFICATION WORK WARD NO. 09 FROM MUKTI DHAM TO NEW BUS STAND BIJAWAR	Chhatarpur	20018462.00	200190.0	15000/-	P.W.D. Registration	06 MONTHS (Including Raining Season)

1. Interested bidders can view the detailed NIT & Other document on website https://mptenders.gov.in/nicgep/app (Department Name: "Urban Development Department")

2. The Bid Document can be purchased only online from mptenders.gov.in/nicgep/app from 15.10.2026 to 17.11.2026

3. Amendments to NIT, if any, would be published on website only, and not in newspaper.

Chief Municipal Officer
Nagar Parishad Bijawar Distt. Chhatarpur (M.P.)

Aadhar Housing Finance Ltd.

Corporate Office: Office Nos. 501 & 503, 5th Floor, Light Bridge, Saki Vihar Road, Andheri East, Mumbai Suburban (District), MH-400072
Vidisha Branch: 1st Floor, Gaurav Business Square, Opposite Adani Wilmar Plant, Sanchi Road, Vidisha-464001 (Madhya Pradesh)



E-AUCTION – SALE NOTICE

E-Auction Sale Notice for Sale of immovable Properties under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Asset and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with proviso to Rule 8 (6) of Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002. Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower (s) and Guarantor (s) that the below described immovable property mortgaged, possession of which has been taken by the Authorised Officer of Aadhar Housing Finance Limited will be sold on "As is where is", "As is what is", and "Whatever there is" with no known encumbrances Particulars of which are given below:

S. N.	Borrower(s) / Co-Borrower(s)/ Guarantor(s)	Demand Notice Date and Amount	Description of the Immovable property	Reserve Price (RP)	Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) (10% of RP)	Nature of possession
1	(Loan Code No. 07610000123 / Vidisha Branch) Israr Khan (Borrower) Rajjo Bee & Imran Khan (Co-Borrowers)	11-08-2025 & ₹ 5,97,993/-	All that piece and parcel of the property bearing, Village Pathariya, Tehsil Sironj, Dist Vidisha, Madhya Pradesh. Boundaries: East: Medha, West: Kaccha Way, North: Remaning Part, South: Land of Habib Khan S/o Vaheed Khan	Rs. 17,14,720/-	Rs. 1,71,472/-	Physical

1. Last Date of Submission of DD of Earnest Money Deposit along with KYC, Tender Form and accepted Terms and conditions (Tender Documents) is **18-11-2026 within 5:00 PM** at the Branch Office address mentioned herein above or uploaded on https://bankauctions.com. Tenders documents received beyond last date will be considered as invalid tender and shall accordingly be rejected. No interest shall be paid on the EMD. 2. Date of Opening of the Bid/ Offer (Auction Date) for Property is **19-11-2026 on https://bankauctions.com at 03:00 PM TO 04: 00 PM** 3. AHFL is not responsible for any liabilities whatsoever pending upon the property as mentioned above. The Property shall be auctioned on "As Is Where Is Basis", "As Is What Is Basis" and "Whatever Is There Is Basis". 4. The Demand Draft Should be made in favor of 'Aadhar Housing Finance Limited' Only. 5. Auction/bidding shall be only through "Online Electronic Bidding" through the website https://bankauctions.com. Bidders are advised to go through the website for detailed terms before taking part in the e-auction sale proceedings. 6. The intending bidders should register their names at portal M/s C 1 INDIA PVT LTD through the link https://bankauctions.com/registration/ signup, and get their User ID and password free of cost. Prospective bidder may avail online training on E- auction from the service provider M/s C 1 INDIA PVT LTD through the website https://bankauctions.com. 7. For further details contact Authorised Officer of Aadhar Housing Finance Limited, Lokendra Rathore (Contact : 9977783890) OR the service provider M/s C 1 INDIA PVT LTD, Mr.Prabhakaran, Mobile No: +91-74182-81709, E-mail: tn@c1india.com & support@bankauctions.com, Phone No. +917291981124 /25 /26 As on date, there is no order restraining and/or court injunction AHFL the authorized Officer of AHFL from selling, alienating and/or disposing of the above immovable properties/secured assets. 8. For detailed terms and conditions of the sale, please refer to the link provided in Aadhar Housing Finance Limited (AHFL), secured creditor's website i.e. www.aadharhousing.com. 9. The Bid incremental amount for auction is **Rs.10,000/-**. 10. This newspaper publication and the data contained herein is intended for general public dissemination. Any reproduction, distribution, transmission, or republication of this content, in whole or in part, in any form or by any means, whether print, digital, electronic publication in any form, e-mail or web publications, or otherwise through any mode is strictly prohibited. Any unauthorized use of the above content through any mode may result in appropriate legal action by AHFL.

Place : Madhya Pradesh
Date : 15.10.2026

(Authorised Officer)
For Aadhar Housing Finance Limited



बैंक ऑफ बरौदा Bank of Baroda

Branch : Jayendraganj, Nisha Plaza, Near Aachran Press, Jinsi Road, Gwalior, (M.P.) - 474009, Mob. : 72477-16428, Email Id: vijgwal@bankofbaroda.com

Notice issued under section 13(2) of Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 Read with Rule 3(1) of Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002.

Whereas the undersigned has issued notice on dates mentioned below in table (sent by Speed Post) under section 13(2) of the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002. r.w. Rule 3(1) of Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 to you and to repay the dues mentioned therein within 60 days from the receipt of the said notice, which were returned undelivered and I have reason to believe that you are avoiding service of demand notice on you. Now, therefore, notice is hereby given to you to repay the banks dues within 60 days from this Notice failing which the recovery shall be made as per rules and we. the secured creditor, shall be entitled to exercise all or any of the rights under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002. r.w. Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002. The content of the notice is as under. Your attention is invited to provisions of sub-section (8) of Section 13 of the SARFAESI Act. in respect of time available to redeem the secured assets.

Name of the Borrower/ Guarantor	Description of the Secured Assets	Amount Outstanding Demand Notice Date
Borrower : 1. Uday Singh Gurjar S/o Kok Singh Gurjar 2. Mrs. Lali W/o Uday Singh Gurjar Add: (A) - Narwariya Aata Chakki Ke Pass Sainik Colony, Pinto Park Gwalior-474005 (M.P.) Add: (B) - B-1, Ward No. 18, Kavyanjaliapura, Gram-Maharajpura Pragna Dist. Gwalior (M.P.):474005	Property Owner - Uday Singh Gurjar S/o Shri Kok Singh - EMDTD Part of Survey No. 425, 426, Plot No. B-1 Kavyanjaliapuram, Gram-Maharajpura, Pragna & Dist. Gwalior, Admeasuring 600.00 Sqft. Boundaries : East : Plot No. B-2, West : Prop. of Seller, North : Land Other, South : Colony Road.	Rs.13,71,589.04/- + Future interest w.e.f. 30-09-2026+ Other cost charges and Expenses from the date of NPA till the Date of Realisation)

Demand Notice Date	
30-09-2026	30-09-2026

Account No. 78490600000339

Notice is hereby given to public not to transact/enter into any agreement and to mortgagors not to sell/transfer the above said secured assets without permission of the bank in terms of sec 13 (13) of the act.

Place: Gwalior Date: 14/10/2026 Authorised officer, Bank of Baroda



सेंट्रल बैंक ऑफ इंडिया Central Bank of India

Regional Office Bhopal

E-AUCTION (SALE NOTICE)

Appendix-IV-A [See proviso to rule 8(6)]
SALE NOTICE FOR SALE OF MOVABLE / IMMOVABLE PROPERTIES
E-auction Sale Notice For Sale of movable/ Immovable Assets under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with provision to Rules 8(6) of The Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002.

Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the borrower(s) & guarantor (s) that the below described immovable property mortgaged / charged to the secured creditor, the Symbolic / Physical Possession of which has been taken by the authorised officer the Central Bank of India (secured creditor) will be sold on "AS IS WHERE IS BASIS, AS IS WHAT IS BASIS" & WHAT EVER THERE IS" on dates mentioned below for recovery of bank dues to the Central Bank of India (secured creditor)

Name and address of the Borrower	Description of Properties & Name of Property Owner	Demand Notice Date Possession Date	Reserve Price EMD Amount
Borrower: Mr. Abhishek Kumar Kachhawah	One residential unit, Flat No. 08204, Block No 08 Second Floor, which has super built up area admeasuring 1127 Sq. ft. (104.73 Sq. meters) and built up area admeasuring 783 Sq. Ft (72.76 Sq. meters) The property is situated on land parcel (Khasra Numbers) 150/1-K/2, 309/1-K/2, 310/2K/2, 150/1-K/1, 309/1K/1, 310/2-K/1, 150/5/2K, 309/3/2, 309/2-K, 310/3, 311/2, 311/2/1-K. The total area 5.59 acres. The flat is located in the multi-story building named " Soumya Parkland, situated in village Khajuri Kalan, palwari Halka No-19 ward No. 60 (Govindpura Ward), Tehsil Huzur & Distt. Bhopal In the name of: Mr. Abhishek Kumar Kachhawah, Residence at H.No. 146/2-A- Saket Nagar, Bhopal Public School Habibganj Bhopal, M.P. - 462024 Bounded by :-On the North by: Flat No. 09203, On the South by: Flat No. 08203, On the East by: Road, On the West by: Flat No. 08201 Symbolic Possession	18.12.2025 07.04.2026	₹ 26,40,000/-
Borrower: Mrs. Rani Gurjar W/o Mr. Mehraban Singh	One Diverted Residential Plot No. 22 which is a part of the Land bearing Revenue Survey No. 125/1/Kh, Area-600 sqft. situated at Village- Palasi, Tehsil- Huzur, District- Bhopal within Municipal corporation ward No. 75, In the name of: Mrs. Rani Gurjar W/o Mr. Mehraban Singh Boundaries: North : Plot no 23, South : Road, East: Remaining land of seller, West: Road Symbolic Possession	26.05.2026 03.08.2026	₹ 24,00,000/-

Last date for submission of EMD is on or before 30.10.2026 upto 5.00 p.m.
Date and Time of e-auction : 31.10.2026, 10:00 AM to 5:00 PM
Property Inspection Date : 26.10.2026, 3.00 p.m. to 6.00 p.m.

For detailed terms and conditions of the sale please refer Central Bank of India website www.centralbank.bank.in or http://BAANKNET
Date : 14.10.2026, Place : Bhopal

AUTHORISED OFFICER

Hope's ton powers West Indies to 247/3

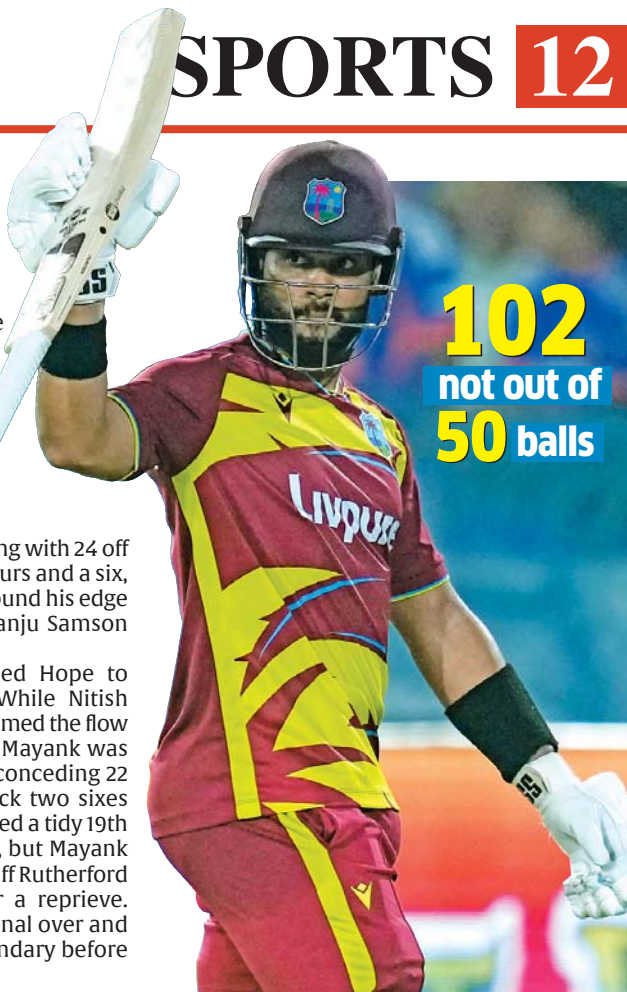
PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ Hyderabad

Shai Hope produced a stunning unbeaten century, completing the landmark with a six off the final ball, as West Indies piled up 247 for three against India in the fourth T20 International here on Wednesday, exposing the hosts' bowling frailties. Hope smashed 102 off just 50 balls, while Sherfane Rutherford provided the finishing flourish with an unbeaten 49 off 26 deliveries as the visitors dominated India's attack after being asked to bat. West Indies struck 16 sixes and benefited from 18 extras, with India's bowlers struggling for consistency throughout the innings. Mayank Yadav and Arshdeep Singh conceded 52 runs apiece in their four overs, while the hosts also suffered from missed opportunities in field. Hope's century was his second of the series, fourth on the tour and third in T20Is, underlining his outstanding form. He shared an unbeaten 91-run stand off 43 balls with Rutherford to



propel the visitors to a formidable total. The West Indies made a blistering start, racing to 79 for one in the powerplay, equalling the joint-highest six-over score against India in T20Is. New Zealand had posted the same total in Trivandrum earlier this year. The visitors also reached 100 in just 7.4 overs, matching their own record against India in Lauderhill in 2016, when they had achieved the milestone without losing a wicket. Hope dictated terms from the outset, bringing up his half-century in 28 balls. It was his second fifty of the series and 14th in T20Is. At the other end, Jewel Andrew struck 21 off 16 balls before Axar Patel trapped him leg before wicket with his first delivery. Shimron Hetmyer then launched a fierce assault, smashing 33 off just 12 balls, including four fours and two sixes, as the visitors raced past 100. Naman Dhir conceded 19 runs in his first over, with Hope and Hetmyer repeatedly finding the boundary. Prince Yadav eventually ended

Hetmyer's charge in the ninth over, deceiving the left-hander with extra pace as a mistimed pull went straight back to the bowler for a caught-and-bowled dismissal. Rovman Powell kept the momentum going with 24 off 17 balls, including two fours and a six, before Arshdeep Singh found his edge in the 13th over, with Sanju Samson completing the catch. Rutherford then joined Hope to maintain the assault. While Nitish Kumar Reddy briefly stemmed the flow with a disciplined over, Mayank was taken apart in the 17th, conceding 22 runs as Rutherford struck two sixes and a four. Prince delivered a tidy 19th over, conceding 10 runs, but Mayank dropped another catch off Rutherford to offer the left-hander a reprieve. Nitish returned for the final over and was greeted with a boundary before Hope took charge.



102
not out of
50 balls

ITBP honours Mt Abi Gamin team and Asian Games medal winners

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ New Delhi

The Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP) organised a flag-in ceremony at its Force Headquarters on Wednesday to mark the successful completion of the Mount Abi Gamin Expedition-2026, alongside a felicitation ceremony honoring force sportspersons who excelled in national and international competitions.

ITBP Director General Shatruijeet Kapur graced the occasion as the chief guest, in the presence of Additional Director General (HQ) Sanjay Gunjyal, senior officers, mountaineers, sportspersons, and support staff. The event commenced with a welcome address by Deputy Inspector General (Sports) Pawan Malik.

The expedition team successfully summited the 7,355-metre high Mount Abi Gamin peak on September 16, adding another landmark achievement to the ITBP's distinguished mountaineering legacy. During the event, personnel who delivered stellar performances between January and October 2026 were honoured with the DG's Insignia and Commendation Roll. Among the key awardees were



Assistant Sub-Inspector Parveen, who won a Gold Medal in Boxing at the 20th Asian Games in Japan, and Constable Neeraj Chauhan, who secured a Silver and a Bronze Medal in Archery.

Addressing the gathering, Kapur congratulated the mountaineers and medal winners, stating that high-altitude mountaineering is integral to the ITBP's operational ethos, forging mental resilience and physical endurance required for adverse border terrains. He reaffirmed the force's commitment to providing modern training infrastructure and sustained support to its sportspersons.

ACT is special as my entire family will watch me play at stadium for first time: Harmanpreet

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ New Delhi

The upcoming Asian Champions Trophy (ACT) in Punjab is going to be a "special occasion" for Indian men's hockey team captain Harmanpreet Singh as his entire family will physically watch him play an international match for the first time in his career.

The tournament will bring international hockey back to Punjab after 17 years. India is hosting the tournament for the second time. The 2009 Punjab Gold Cup was the last international hockey tournament held in the state.

The tournament will be held in Jalandhar and Mohali from October 27 to November 5. "It's going to be a special occasion for the entire team, especially for the players who belong to Punjab because it's the first time that we will be wearing the India jersey at an international tournament in Punjab," Harmanpreet, the first player to captain India to two consecutive Asian Games gold medal victories, said in a Hockey India release.

"My entire family is expected to be at the stadium watching me play an international match together from the venue for the first time, including my father who has never seen me play for the country while sitting inside the stadium." Besides hosts India, the other participating teams in the tournament



are Malaysia, South Korea, China, Japan and Bangladesh. India is the most successful team in the tournament, having won the title five times — in 2011, 2016, 2018 (as joint winners), 2023 and 2024.

For Punjab, hockey is more than a sport. It is a source of immense pride and an integral part of the state's cultural identity. From its villages and academies to the international arena, Punjab has played a defining role in shaping Indian hockey.

Punjab's contribution to the national team is reflected in generations of players who have represented the

country at the highest level, from Udhm Singh and Balbir Singh Sr. to the current generation of Manpreet Singh and Harmanpreet Singh.

The Olympian Surjit Singh Hockey Stadium at Burlton Park, Jalandhar, named after the celebrated defender and 1975 World Cup winner, will host the opening ceremony and league-stage matches from October 27 to November 2. The tournament will then move to the Olympian Balbir Singh Senior International Hockey Stadium in Mohali for the semifinals and medal matches on November 4 and 5.

ACA opens new cricket ground and pavilion at Naharkatia

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ Guwahati

Assam Cricket Association (ACA) on Tuesday inaugurated a state-of-the-art cricket ground and pavilion at Naharkatia, marking a significant step towards expanding cricket infrastructure beyond the traditional centres of the state.

Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma inaugurated the facility in the presence of BCCI Honorary Secretary Devajit Saikia, ACA President and MLA Taranga Gogoi and other dignitaries. The new complex has five centre pitches, a fully furnished pavilion including match officials' room and dressing rooms, practice facilities, and infrastructure suitable for hosting domestic matches.

CM Sarma said the inauguration marked a new beginning for Naharkatia. "This is a proud day for Naharkatia. This initiative will help young cricketers move ahead and fulfil their dreams," he said.

The Chief Minister also praised the Assam Cricket Association for its efforts to develop cricket infrastructure and promote the



sport across the State. BCCI Secretary Devajit Saikia highlighted the importance of developing cricket facilities outside Guwahati and other established centres, with the new Naharkatia facility expected to strengthen the grassroots cricket pathway in Upper Assam.

"The facility at Naharkatia will also serve as the ACA Cricket Academy's satellite academy for the Upper Assam Zone in the coming days. This will provide young crick-

eters in the region with access to structured training and development programmes," said Saikia.

ACA President Taranga Gogoi said they are proud to play a role in building cricket infrastructure in the state. He also highlighted the ACA's vision of taking cricket to every corner of Assam, ensuring that talent from smaller towns and rural areas receives the right platform to grow.

The inauguration was attended by ACA Vice President Romen Dutta,

Joint Secretary Rajendra Singh, Treasurer Anupam Deka, Apex Council member Mukutananda Bhattacharjya and former Apex Council members, besides officials of the Cricket Association of Naharkatia and other guests.

The project is part of the ACA's efforts to create a wider and more inclusive cricketing network in Assam, with modern facilities and professional training opportunities made available to players in different parts of the state.

Bengal thrash Delhi by nine wickets to begin Ranji Trophy campaign on winning note

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ Kalyani (WB)

Bengal began their Ranji Trophy Group C campaign on a winning note, thrashing Delhi by nine wickets after bowling out the visitors for 277 in their second innings and chasing down a target of 89 on the fourth and final day on Wednesday. Resuming their second innings at 101 for three, Delhi managed 277 in 106.2 overs, with captain Ayush Badoni top-scoring with a gritty 85 off 134 balls, including 10 fours, while wicketkeeper-batter Anuj Rawat contributed 39 off 76 deliveries. Bengal, who had secured a substantial first-innings lead after posting 429 in reply to Delhi's 240, needed just 15.3 overs to reach the target, finishing at 89 for one to seal a comprehensive victory.

Badoni, who held the Delhi innings together, found some support from Rawat as the pair attempted to rebuild after early setbacks. However, Bengal's disciplined bowling prevented Delhi from setting a challenging target. Delhi had lost their first three wickets for 59 before Badoni and Rawat stead-



ied the innings with a crucial partnership. Rawat was dismissed for 85, caught by A b h i m a n y u Easwaran off

Pradipta Pramanik, left Delhi struggling at 213 for six. Dev Lakra (13) and Hrithik Shokeen (8) were dismissed in quick succession, while Divij Mehra struck 21 off 28 balls to offer some late resistance.

Saini remained unbeaten on 20. Pramanik was the pick of Bengal's bowlers with three wickets, while Gani and Gupta claimed two wickets each. Mohammed Shami, Akash Deep and Mukesh Kumar chipped in with one wicket apiece.

Parthiv doesn't apply, Ojha set to be full-time chairman

KUSHAN SARKAR ■ New Delhi

Former India wicketkeeper Parthiv Patel, widely tipped to replace Ajit Agarkar as the West Zone representative on the BCCI senior men's selection committee, has not applied for the position, paving the way for Pragyan Ojha to continue as chairman for the remainder of his tenure. The deadline for applications to fill the West Zone vacancy ended on Wednesday, with Parthiv opting to stay away from the selection process.

"Don't know if the BCCI would extend the deadline, but Parthiv had not applied till 5 pm on October 14. The situation could change if the deadline is extended or he changes his mind," a BCCI source told PTI on condition of anonymity.

Ojha, the South Zone representative, is set to continue as chairman for the remainder of his term, with his higher



number of Test appearances among the existing selectors strengthening his candidature.

Ramesh Powar, who was widely expected to become chairman of the junior men's selection committee, could now emerge as a contender for the senior selector's position from the West Zone. Former India wicketkeeper Sameer Dighe is another name doing the rounds. Both Powar and Dighe had applied when selectors' positions were last advertised.

Wickham earns call-up in West Indies' Test team for Bangladesh tour

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ St John's (Antigua)

Top-order batter Kevin Wickham has earned his maiden Test call-up to the West Indies' 15-member squad for a two-match away series against Bangladesh, which is the last assignment of the 2025-2027 ICC World Test Championship cycle for the Caribbean side.

The Tests will start on October 28 and November 5 in Mirpur and Sylhet respectively. Shai Hope, the white-ball captain, has been rested for the series after an extended run across all three formats. He is currently leading the West Indies in a white-ball series in India. With the ICC Cricket World Cup Qualifier scheduled for February next year, Cricket West Indies is managing Hope's workload through the period in the lead up to the tournament. The 23-year-old Wickham gets his first opportunity at senior level following an impressive showing in West Indies Championship where he scored three consecutive centuries.

