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Government digs in on MDR for UPI

Opposition parties call the move anti-people as Government rejects demands for rollback

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ New Delhi

The Union Government on Wednesday categorically rejected the Opposition's claims on Merchant Discount Rate (MDR) on Unified Payments Interface (UPI) payments above ₹2,000 while ruling out a rollback. Brushing aside the Opposition charge that the Government has bowed before "American imperialism" by introducing the MDR framework for UPI, the Union Ministry of Finance on Wednesday posted a statement on X. "Some claims suggest the change is due to foreign influence. This is false. India's UPI policy decisions are made independently, with the clear goal of building a self-sustaining, inclusive, and affordable digital payments ecosystem," it said. A top Government official,



Representative image

ISTOCK

when asked whether the Government was mulling a rollback of the proposed MDR charges on UPI transactions above ₹2,000, to be implemented from October 15, said a decision has been taken and there was no question of reversing it. Sources

said the decision to impose MDR charges was taken in the larger interest of the UPI ecosystem and to strengthen its safety and security. The decision to levy charges, as prevalent in other countries, was taken at the time of introduction of UPI

system in 2020, sources said, adding that new MDR framework will make UPI self-sustainable. The decision drew strong opposition from several quarters, including traders, shopkeepers and political parties who dubbed the

move as Modi Tax. Some Opposition parties, including the Congress, accused Prime Minister Narendra Modi of succumbing to US pressure. Defending the decision, the Government said on Tuesday that it will also give incentives for further expansion in rural and semi-urban areas and maintain competitiveness, while ensuring that large majority of payments remain free of charge. Parliament's Standing Committee on Finance, in its 32nd report, warned that the zero-MDR regime "puts pressure on Government finances" and limits the ecosystem's ability to invest in long-term infrastructure, urging that "establishing a viable revenue mechanism is critical to ensuring the UPI ecosystem achieves financial sustainability without perpetually straining the government exchequer".

CONTINUED ON >> P4

NIA court hands death sentence to 10 Maoists in Jheeram massacre

PRAMOD KUMAR SINGH
■ New Delhi/Jagdalpur

A special court of the National Investigation Agency (NIA) on Wednesday sentenced 10 Maoists to death for the 2013 Jheeram Ghati massacre, in which a Congress convoy was attacked in Bastar and 29 people were killed. Special Judge Abhay Singh Rajput imposed the death penalty on all 10 of the convicted persons, including two women, on grounds of murder and criminal conspiracy. The court convicted them on September 5, and the sentence was announced on Wednesday. Each convict was also fined ₹800. The death sentences will take effect only after the High Court confirms them. The convicts have 30 days to appeal and will stay in Jagdalpur Central Jail until then. The people sentenced are Pramila Modiyam, Chaitu



Security forces personnel carry a body from the site of Maoist ambush of May 25, 2013

AP

Lekam alias Munna, Sumitra Punem Modiyam, Mukka Mandavi, Kosa Kavasi alias Kosaram, Aayata Markam, Madkami Deva, Joga Madkami, Banjami Sanna alias Chamru and Mahadev Nag. Arvind Choudhary, the defence counsel, said the defence would challenge the verdict.

CONTINUED ON >> P4



CBI books Christian group for FCRA violations

PRAMOD KUMAR SINGH
■ New Delhi

The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has filed a case against the US-based Christian missionary group The Timothy Initiative (TTI), along with its India operations



Representative image

FILE

head Jonathan Rajan, financial head Ajit Varghese Mathai, and others. They are accused of using ₹92.55 crore in foreign funds between November 2025 and April 2026 for missionary activities, allegedly violating the Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act. Agencies report that TTI lacks FCRA registration. The Enforcement Directorate (ED) filed the FIR after sharing its findings. Investigators say the accused withdrew cash from ATMs across India using foreign debit cards issued by the Truist Bank in the US.

CONTINUED ON >> P4



Representative image

FILE

Cabinet raises EPFO wage ceiling to ₹25k

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ New Delhi

The Union Government on Wednesday approved raising the wage ceiling for mandatory coverage under the Emoloyees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO) to ₹25,000 per month from ₹15,000 to expand access to provident fund savings and pension protection. The wage ceiling revision is taking place after 12 years. "Effective from Vishwakarma Day, 2026, the EPF wage ceiling has been revised from ₹15,000 to ₹25,000 per month, bringing more employees within the ambit of EPF social security coverage," the EPFO posted on X. The Union Cabinet decision is expected to bring more than 51 lakh addition-

al employees within the ambit of mandatory EPFO coverage, significantly widening social security protection for workers, Union information and broadcasting minister Ashwini Vaishnaw said at a press briefing. At present, a fresh employee joining employment at a wage above ₹15,000 per month is not automatically covered under the EPF framework and may remain outside mandatory provident fund, pension and associated insurance protection. Raising the ceiling will bring a substantial segment of employees in the ₹15,000-₹25,000 wage band within the statutory social security framework, said a Cabinet press release on Wednesday.

CONTINUED ON >> P4

Pakistan warship hits Indian vessel; Delhi lodges protest

ASHOKE RAJ ■ New Delhi

India on Wednesday summoned Pakistan's chargé d'affaires in New Delhi following a collision between a Pakistani naval vessel and an Indian Navy warship in the Arabian Sea, with New Delhi lodging a formal diplomatic protest over the incident. The incident occurred on Tuesday, 15 September in international waters and did not result in significant damage to the Indian naval vessel.

The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said Pakistan's chargé d'affaires, Saad Ahmad Warraich, was called to the ministry to convey India's strong objection to what it described as "unacceptable and unprofessional conduct" by Pakistani naval personnel. "The Charge d'Affaires of Pakistan was advised to convey to the concerned Pakistani authorities the need for all military units to observe due care and respect the provisions of the relevant agreements between the two sides in order to prevent any repeat of such incidents," the ministry said. The Pakistani diplomat was summoned to the MEA's Janpath office and remained there for roughly 30 minutes, according to reports. Warraich was also asked to convey India's concerns to Pakistan's Ministry of Foreign



Pakistan High Commission in New Delhi

FILE

THE INCIDENT TOOK PLACE ON TUESDAY EVENING, WHEN A PAKISTANI NAVAL VESSEL CAME NEAR AN INDIAN WARSHIP ON ROUTINE SURVEILLANCE

Affairs. Separately, New Delhi instructed its chargé d'affaires in Islamabad to raise the issue with Pakistan's foreign ministry. The MEA said the conduct of the Pakistani naval vessel was contrary to provisions of the 1991 India-Pakistan agreement governing advance notification of military exercises, manoeuvres and troop movements. According to Indian Government sources, the

incident took place on Tuesday evening, when a Pakistani naval vessel approached an Indian frontline warship conducting a routine surveillance mission in the North Arabian Sea. The sources said the two vessels were operating roughly 220 kilometres east of Oman when the Pakistani vessel allegedly approached at high speed and manoeuvred in what India considered an unsafe manner, resulting in a collision. The identities of the vessels have not been officially disclosed. However, Indian sources said the Pakistani vessel was a Hunain-class corvette and that it collided with an Indian frontline warship.

CONTINUED ON >> P4

Anant Nag to get Dadasaheb Phalke award

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ New Delhi

Veteran actor Anant Nag, known for his impressive work in Hindi and Kannada cinema in classics such as *Minchina Ota*, *Hamsageethe*, *Ankur* and *Manthan*, will be honoured with the Dadasaheb Phalke Award for 2024, the Union Government announced on



Anant Nag WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

Wednesday. With a filmography of more than 250 films in five decades across multiple languages, the 78-year-old is also a renowned name in the theatre world. Last year, Nag was honoured with the Padma Bhushan. Nag will be given the award, the highest recognition in Indian cinema, at the National Film Awards ceremony in Kevadia, Gujarat, on September 22.

CONTINUED ON >> P4

SAUDI SAYS HOUTHIS TARGETED MECCA

Saudi Arabia on Wednesday accused Yemen's Iran-backed Houthi rebels of attempting to attack Mecca, declaring Islam's holiest city a "red line" as the kingdom faces mounting pressure amid the wider Iran conflict. Saudi authorities said they intercepted and destroyed a drone before it entered Mecca's airspace. The Houthis denied targeting the city. The alleged attack drew condemnation from Pakistan, Turkey and the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation, which said any attempt to target the holy sites violated their sanctity. The incident is an early test of a new defence pact involving Saudi Arabia, Turkey and Pakistan. Officials from Ankara and Islamabad told The Associated Press that Riyadh had not requested military assistance. The Houthis later claimed they had shot down a Saudi-led coalition F-15 fighter jet over Yemen's Marib province, but provided no evidence and the claim could not be independently verified. Washington has so far signalled reluctance to intervene directly.

RAJESH KUMAR ■ New Delhi

Varanasi will celebrate Prime Minister Narendra Modi's 76th birthday and 25 years in public office in grand style on Thursday with a mega show of strength of the BJP-led NDA bloc. As nationwide cleanliness drives, lighting lamps, blood donation camps, prayers and bike rallies take place throughout the country, NDA alliance leaders and chief ministers will convene at PM Modi's parliamentary constituency. The event comes in the backdrop of Legislative Assembly polls scheduled next year in Uttar Pradesh. The Varanasi-to-Vadnagar Seva Sankalp bike rally will be flagged off simultaneously with another travelling in the opposite direction from Vadnagar in Gujarat, Modi's

birthplace. UP CM Yogi Adityanath, Union defence minister Rajnath Singh along with NDA allies N Chandrababu Naidu of the TDP, Eknath Shinde of the Shiv Sena (Shinde), Anupriya Patel of Apna Dal and Chirag Paswan of the LJP, will attend the flag-off bike rally ceremony in Varanasi. Union Home Minister Amit Shah will flag off the Vadnagar-to-Varanasi leg in Gujarat, where CM Bhupendra Patel and other senior leaders will be present. The rallies will begin on September 17 and culminate on October 7, the day he first took office as Gujarat CM in 2001. Under the "Varanasi to Vadnagar Seva Sankalp" the BJP aims to connect the Prime Minister's birthplace with his *karmabhoomi*, Varanasi.



PM Narendra Modi addressing a public meeting in Varanasi on November 12, 2018

WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

The bike rally will pass through 193 districts and around 1,159 villages across 10 States, covering approximately 40,000 kilometres. Around 1,000 young people from across the country are expected to participate in the yatra. Before the rally, the participants will perform a *Jalabhishek* of Lord Shiva at the Kashi Vishwanath Temple in Vadnagar and the Kashi Vishwanath Temple in Varanasi. The bike rally is among a series of programmes the BJP has lined up across the country as it seeks to turn PM

Modi's birthday into the launch of a month-long outreach for the party. The party has planned some special events to mark Modi's birthday and 25 years of public service. Three programmes — Youth Connect program, Modi@25, and Seva Pakhwada — have been planned so that the party directly reaches out to first-time voters, college youth, and GenZ. Coming ahead of key Assembly elections in UP, Uttarakhand, Punjab, Goa and Manipur, followed by elections in Gujarat and Himachal Pradesh in 2027, the BJP aims to use the occasion to showcase his political legacy and welfare initiatives to mobilise party cadres and reinforce his leadership image.

CONTINUED ON >> P4

Youth to fulfil PM Modi’s vision of Viksit Bharat @ 2047: CM Dhami

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ Dehradun

Chief minister Pushkar Singh Dhami has said that the role of youth will be crucial in realizing Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s resolve of Viksit Bharat by

He said that the youth of Uttarakhand are hardworking, talented, disciplined and capable of facing challenges. The CM added that providing the right direction, better

villages and the State to fulfil their dreams.

Dhami claimed that the State government is paying special attention to equipping youth with modern skills

mission is an important step toward integrating the hopes and aspirations of youth into policymaking.

The CM said after successful hosting of the 38th National Games Uttarakhand has gained a new identity as Khel Bhoomi. He said that strict anti-copying laws have been implemented in the State to make recruitment processes transparent and protect the future of hard-working youth. The government is committed to ensuring that no youth’s years of hard work, their dreams and their rights are disregarded.

Expressing concern over the growing drug addiction among youth, the CM said that addiction not only weakens the body but also affects a person’s dreams and future. On his birthday, Dhami asked the youth to make three resolutions. He urged them to first set a goal in life and then work hard to achieve it. He also asked youth to stay away from drugs and encourage their friends to do the same.

Cabinet ministers Khajan Das and Ganesh Joshi, State President of Mahendra Bhatt, Rajya Sabha MP Naresh Bansal, MLAs Vinod Chamoli, Savita Kapoor and Brijbhushan Gairola, Mayor Dehradun Surabh Thapliyal and others attended the programme.

CM celebrates birthday with visually impaired children

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ Dehradun

Chief minister Pushkar Singh Dhami celebrated his birthday with the children studying at the National Institute for the Empowerment of Persons with Visual Disabilities (NIEPVD) in Dehradun on Wednesday. He met the children with great warmth and

encouragement and confidence to thrive. Empowering persons with disabilities is not limited to government efforts alone, but is also a collective responsibility of society,” he said. The CM added that with strong willpower, self-confidence and persistent ef-



fort, every challenge in life can be overcome. He encouraged the children to move forward toward their goals with full confidence and enthusiasm and wished them a bright future. CM’s wife Geeta Dhami, cabinet minister Ganesh Joshi and teachers of the institute were present on this occasion.

interacted with them, encouraged them and spent time with them. The children looked excited and delighted to have the CM of the State among them. Dhami said that time spent with children gives life new energy and inspiration. “Every child has immense talent and potential. They should be given the opportunity,

Congress raises issue of sale of land by UIIDB on Dhami’s birthday

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ Dehradun

Uttarakhand Congress again raised the issue of what it alleges, a meha land scam patronised by the State

land at Patuwa Dangar in Nainital, conversion of Alaknanda Hotel in Haridwar and Dak Bunglow of PWD in



government through the Uttarakhand Investment and Infrastructure Development Board (UIIDB). On Wednesday, which happened to be the birthday of chief minister Pushkar Singh Dhami, the party organised press conferences in every district of the State on the issue. Addressing the media in Dehradun, the Mahanagar Congress president Jaswinder Singh Gogi claimed the State BJP government will soon auction three Dak Bunglows of Public Works Department (PED) located at Duggal Bittha, Fata and Guptkashi in Rudraprayag district at throwaway prices. He said that the State government is planning to transfer thousands of acres of land and properties to private owners for 90 years. Gogi said that the UIIDB has invited tenders for construction of a premium resort on 14 acres of

Rishikesh. General secretary (organisation) Rajendra Bhandari claimed that CM Dhami has already signed and approved proposals to give 1,200 acres of government department land to the UIIDB.

State spokesperson Pratima Singh alleged that in addition to land, the government has also taken an in-principle decision to lease 25 inspection bungalows of PWD and some hotels of the Tourism department to private hands.

Earlier in 2023, the BJP government had leased approximately 142 acres of government land worth Rs 30,000 crore at Park Estate (Hathipaon) in Mussoorie to “Rajas Aero Sports and Adventure Private Limited” for 15 years at a rate of only Rs one crore per year. The Congress leaders averred that the party will not allow the State government to sell the precious land of the State.

PG doctors postpone agitation after Health minister's assurance

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ Dehradun

Postgraduate doctors of all the government medical colleges across the State have postponed their ongoing agitation following assurances from the Health minister and secretary on Wednesday. The PG doctors

The PG doctors of Government Doon Medical College, Dehradun had started their protest on September 8.

The president of the Resident Doctors Association of GDMC, Dr Abhijeet Rathi

positional for increasing their stipend would be discussed in the cabinet and that it could be passed within this month. Additionally, the Health minister Subodh Uniyal personally visited the hospital to meet with the doctors, assuring them that their stipend was already being considered before the protest began. On the assurance given by the Health minister and secretary, doctors decided to postpone their stir for 15 days. Rathi said that the PG doctors will resume their agitation if no action on their demand is taken in 15 days.

It is important to mention that the prolonged strike by the postgraduate doctors has created significant challenges for patients at the government college hospitals of the State. Many have expressed concern over the difficulties they are facing due to the ongoing protest by the PG doctors



across the State have been protesting for the past few days for a stipend hike.

The PG doctors are demanding that their stipend should be increased from Rs 69,000 to Rs 1.1 lakh.

informed that on Wednesday, they visited the secretariat to meet with the Health secretary regarding their demands. He stated that the Health secretary assured them that the pro-

Uttarakhand Board to digitise old examination records

The board to upload old mark sheets and certificates on DigiLocker

Chanchal Gola ■ Ramnagar

Thousands of students who passed high school and intermediate examinations from the Uttarakhand Vidhyalaya Shiksha Parishad (UVSP) will soon be able to access their old marksheets and certificates online without having to visit the board office in Ramnagar. The UVSP is

Board of School Education, Vinod Kumar Dhyaniyal.

“A proposal in this regard has been sent to the State Government. Once approved, the work of digitising the old records will be assigned to a firm. After the process is completed, students will be able to access their high school and intermediate certificates through DigiLocker,” he added.

He further said that digitisation of old records would be particularly useful for students who have lost their original marksheets or certificates. “They will be able to access the digital documents through DigiLocker and take a printout when required. Online verification of certificates for government jobs and other recruitments will also become possible,” he stated.

Since the establishment of UVSP in 1999, high school and intermediate examinations in the Kumaon and Garhwal regions have been conducted through the board office in Ramnagar. Around 2.5 lakh students take the high

school and intermediate examinations every year.

Speaking of the matter, the board’s deputy secretary Sushma Gaurav said that certificates for the Uttarakhand Teacher Eligibility Test (TET) conducted from 2021 to 2025 have also been uploaded on DigiLocker. “Candidates can access their TET certificates online,” she added.

“Students will also get relief in case of spelling or other errors in their marksheets and certificates,” she said, adding that at present, records requiring corrections are sent to the firm concerned, a process that can take around a month.

Notably, preparations are now underway to enable the board to make corrections at its own level. “After the corrections, the updated certificates will also be uploaded on DigiLocker, reducing the need for students to visit the board office,” she added.

According to the board officials, students will have to enter the required details on DigiLocker to access their certificates. After entering their Aadhaar number, an OTP will be sent to their registered mobile number. Once the OTP is entered, the available certificates can be accessed.

Miyanwala MDDA Park launches Nainital-style pedal boating

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ Dehradun

A new pond park developed by Mussoorie-Dehradun Development Authority at a cost of Rs 8.63 crore near Government Inter College in Miyanwala is now ready for residents, officials said on Wednesday. “The park has been developed around the existing pond to protect the natural water body and provide a new recreational space for people in the area. Residents can now visit the park and enjoy pedal boating facilities as outdoor recreation,” the MDDA vice-chairman, Banshidhar

was often dumped around the site, while wild bushes had covered large parts of the area. The land was not properly maintained and there were encroachment threats.

The park now has strolling and jogging paths for visitors. Trees, including local and shady species, have been planted around the pond. Benches and gazebos have also been installed where people can sit and relax.

Moreover, the park has toilets for men and women, drinking water facilities, parking and a Yoga deck. A



Tiwari said.

Prior to the implementation of the project, garbage

plant and fruit educational garden has also been developed as part of the project.

Cong seeks probe into Ganesh Joshi’s pre-verdict remark

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ Dehradun

The Uttarakhand Congress on Wednesday demanded an independent inquiry into the circumstances surrounding the Cabinet minister Ganesh Joshi’s

statement on September 11 that the petition against him had been dismissed,” he alleged.

He also referred to a September 15 High Court order, which, according to the Congress spokesperson, recorded that it would not be appropriate for the bench to decide the case due to certain circumstances and subsequently the case was directed to be placed before the Chief Justice for listing

11 regarding the outcome of a case pending before the Uttarakhand High Court. Addressing a press conference, the Congress spokesperson and advocate Pankaj Singh Kshetri referred to the case ‘Vikesh Singh Negi versus State of Uttarakhand’.

Kshetri said that the arguments in the case had concluded on September 8 and the judgment had been reserved. “Joshi subsequently told the media on September

11 that the petition against him had been dismissed,” he alleged.

He also referred to a September 15 High Court order, which, according to the Congress spokesperson, recorded that it would not be appropriate for the bench to decide the case due to certain circumstances and subsequently the case was directed to be placed before the Chief Justice for listing

before another bench. He questioned how the outcome could have been known before a judgment was publicly pronounced and demanded a high-level, impartial inquiry into the circumstances. “This is not about declaring anyone guilty. We are just demanding an impartial inquiry into this unusual sequence of events,” Kshetri said. He added that the issue be brought to the notice of the Prime Min-

ister’s Office and other relevant constitutional authorities. They sought action under law regarding Joshi’s Assembly membership if any violation is established through the appropriate process. Congress leaders stressed that the final judicial conclusion would be determined by the competent court.

PM SHRI KENDRIYA VIDYALAYA
ORDNANCE FACTORY RAIPUR DEHRADUN
(Website: <https://dehradunof.kvs.ac.in>, Tele: 0135-2971615, 2971668)

(Walk-in-Interview)

Applications are invited to fill up the post of PGT COMMERCE purely on Contractual basis for the session 2026-27.

Designation and Post	Date and time of Interview
PGTCommerce	24.09.2026 (10:00 am)

Before applying for the posts, interested candidates to visit KVS HQ, New Delhi website (www.kvsangathan.nic.in) for eligibility, honorarium and other information. Please note the following points:-

1. No Travel allowance/Dearness allowance will be payable for the attending the interview.
2. All terms and conditions shall be applicable as per the directions of Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan for contractual appointment.
3. Applicants to bring duly filled Application Form, Bio-data form (with photograph) and all the relevant certificates (self attested) along with the original certificates (for verification).
4. The time of Registration will be from 09:00 am to 10:00 am on the scheduled dates of the interview.

Principal

किच्चा शुगर कम्पनी लिमिटेड, किच्चा
जलपट्ट-उदयन सिंह नगर (उत्तराखण्ड)
Mob. No. 9410121168/9927087957 Email: purchas@kichha@gmail.com

फाईल 873/8/किच्चा/2026-27 ई-निविदा सूचना दिनांक: 16.09.2026

येराई सत्र 2026-27 के लिए निविदा स्वीकृत प्राप्तगी एवं जीवित कार्ड हेतु GST के अन्तर्गत पंजीकृत निर्यात / अधिभुक्त निर्यात / स्वयं आयुक्तित एवं ठेकेदारी से, उत्तराखण्ड अधिभुक्त प्राप्ति (प्रोपोजरमेंट) नियमावली 2026 में निहित प्रक्रियाओं के अन्तर्गत दो निविदा प्रणाली (Two Bid System) के अन्तर्गत ई-निविदाएं www.uktenders.gov.in पर आमंत्रित की जाती हैं। www.uktenders.gov.in पर प्राप्त निविदा ही मान्य होगी, अन्य माध्यम से प्राप्त निविदा स्वीकार्य नहीं होगी। आवश्यकता होने पर नैजीगिफेशन L-1 / M-1 (श्रेष्ठ चयनन / न्यूनतम) दर दाताओं किमिया जयंगम IL-1 / M-1 सत्रों के चयनन में सहभागी न होने पर अन्य निविदा दाताओं से बाती की जा सकती है। विस्तृत सूचना मिल की वेबसाइट www.kichhasugar.com पर उपलब्ध है। निविदा में किसी भी प्रकार के संशोधन की दशा में संशोधन का प्रकाशन केवल www.uktenders.gov.in एवं www.kichhasugar.com के माध्यम से ही प्रकाशित किया जायेगा।

अधिसारी निदेशक



preparing to upload marksheets and other certificates issued between 1999 and 2016 on DigiLocker. The records from 2017 to 2026 have already been uploaded on the digital platform, said the secretary, Uttarakhand

IN FOCUS



A Theyyam artist during an idol immersion procession on the third day of the Ganesh Chaturthi festival, in Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala, Wednesday

Moitra faces egg attack in Nadia

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ Kolkata

TMC MP Mahua Moitra on Wednesday alleged that BJP workers threw eggs at her in the presence of police personnel during a protest in West Bengal's Nadia district, and claimed she "faced them as a freedom fighter faced bullets", in reference to a recent Supreme Court observation.

Moitra, a two-term MP from the Krishnanagar Lok Sabha constituency, alleged that seven to 10 BJP workers, including the local Mandal president and the president and vice-president of the panchayat samiti, entered the area where her programme was being held and began throwing eggs at her.

In an X post, Moitra invoked a recent Supreme Court observation, saying, "Big shout out to Hon'ble Justice Dipankar Datta! MiLord - I came to my constituency for a mtng informing [WBPolice] & BJP workers with their help pelted eggs on me. True to your advice I faced them as a freedom fighter faced bullets."

A bench comprising Justices Dipankar Datta and Sheel Nagu last month questioned Moitra's apprehension of eggs being thrown at her, observing that freedom fighters had faced bullets.



TMC MP Mahua Moitra alleges that political rivals threw eggs at her convoy during a constituency meeting, in Krishnanagar

Moitra went to Tehatta to attend a party meeting after informing the police, according to a video message posted by her on X.

"We are at Tehatta party office. You can see, we are under police protection, and the court has said no one will throw eggs. They brought eggs right in front of the

police. Look at this, all of you. What is happening right in front of the police? Police are present, and right in front of the police, they are trying to throw eggs-this is contempt of the high court," she was heard saying in the video.

Broken eggshells could be seen on Moitra's face in the clip. "According to the court's

direction, four police personnel were with me. During the attack, more police personnel came, but instead of controlling the protesters, they forcibly put me into the car. This is what is happening in West Bengal! The high court is saying this should not happen," she said.

Moitra also went live on social media during the confrontation and questioned how eggs could be thrown at her in the presence of police personnel.

The TMC MP alleged that the protesters also raised "Jai Shri Ram" slogans while throwing eggs at her.

In another post, she said, "Justice Dipankar Datta - MiLord I am officially both an MP in independent India & a freedom fighter today! BJP office bearers (NOT public) surrounded my mtng & pelted eggs as I left. Thank you MiLord for upholding our Constitutional protections."

The reference was to the August 7 Supreme Court hearing on Moitra's plea challenging a Calcutta High Court direction requiring her to appear before the police in connection with a case over an allegedly provocative Facebook post.

The apex court had been informed that Moitra feared eggs could be thrown at her if she appeared before the investigating officer in person.

Rescued orangutans battle anaemia



A juvenile orangutan rescued from Balasore forest, at the hand-rearing centre of Nandankanan Zoological Park, in Bhubaneswar,

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ Bhubaneswar

Three of the five baby orangutans rescued in Odisha are suffering from anaemia, officials said on Wednesday.

A comprehensive health check-up of the primates, including X-rays and blood tests, was carried out after one of the juvenile orangutans developed fever, they said.

According to a health bulletin issued by the Nandankanan Zoological Park, where the orangutans have been quarantined, in-house haematology analysis found severe anaemia in one of the primates and mild anaemia in two others. "Supportive supplemen-

tation for the said orangutan babies, as advised by the Technical Committee, has already been started," it said.

"X-rays of the chest, abdomen and skull were taken, while blood, serum and nasopharyngeal swab samples were collected from all five animals. Laboratory tests are underway," it added.

Nandankanan Zoological Park Director Sanath Kumar N said the overall health condition of the orangutans appeared to be stable.

Four of the five animals recorded a body temperature of 98.4 degrees Fahrenheit, while a male orangutan recorded 99 degrees Fahrenheit, an official said.

Bainsla, cousin sent to remand in Gurugram hit-and-run case

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ Gurugram

Gurugram hit-and-run accused Kalyan Bainsla and his cousin, Lavnish, who was with him in the car, were sent to two days of police remand by a city court on Wednesday, an official said.

The police had sought a two-day remand to recreate the crime scene, a request the court of Nidhi Beniwal granted.

The next hearing in the matter has been scheduled for September 18.

Gurugram Police Commissioner Sibash Kabiraj also announced the formation of a special investigation team, or SIT, to investigate the case.

The SIT will work under the leadership of ACP (Crime Against Women) Sushila Devi.

Sector-56 SHO Inspector Manoj Yadav, CIA Sohna In-



Accused Kalyan Bainsla kneels beside his vehicle in police custody following his arrest in connection with a hit-and-run case involving a woman biker, in Gurugram, Haryana, Tuesday

charge sub inspector Vinay, and two assistant sub inspectors, Jagbir and Narender, of Sohna crime unit, will be its part.

On Sunday, Bainsla, a gym owner, grazed his car with

biker Shivani Chauhan, alias Siya, on the Golf Course road, coming at speed from behind. The contact knocked Chauhan off and sent her skidding down the road in a life threatening situation.

At the hearing, Bainsla's counsel Lalit Bindal argued that his client had already been in police custody for 24 hours, during which time the scene could have been recreated.

"Allowing the remand application filed by the police today, seeking two days of police custody, the court has awarded two days of police custody, with the next hearing scheduled for September 18," Bindal said.

Bainsla and Lovneesh, aged 33 and 34, were nabbed from Rajgarh in Rajasthan, a short distance from Gurugram, on Tuesday.

Chauhan said Bainsla's arrest was not enough and demanded strict action against him and others who were allegedly in the car at the time of the incident.

Speaking to the media on Tuesday night after recording her statement in the district court, Chauhan also hit back at Bainsla's cousin, Kamal, who claimed that she was playing the victim card.

The 27-year-old said that if Bainsla secures bail in three days, it cannot be considered strict action.

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Assam, and other States.

The complaint alleges that using overseas cards for cash withdrawals bypassed FCRA rules and hid the identities of the people who received the money.

Searches earlier this year, based on ED information shared with the CBI, found foreign debit cards, cash, and digital devices. Officials say some cards had generic or coded labels, and that local associates made repeated ATM withdrawals in several states. The case is still being investigated.

Cabinet raises EPFO wage ceiling to ₹25k

The EPFO wage ceiling remained unchanged from 2004 to 2014 and was enhanced to ₹15,000 in September 2014. The press further claimed, "The present decision carries forward this approach by further raising the ceiling to ₹25,000 to reflect sustained wage growth, rising incomes and continued expansion of formal employment over the intervening years." The annual government outgo is estimated at about ₹11,339 crore against the existing annual budgetary support of about ₹10,250 crore. The estimated expenditure over five years is approximately ₹56,696 crore.

"The (Cabinet) approval will expand access to provident fund savings, pension protection under the Employees' Pension Scheme (EPS) and insurance protection under the Employees' Deposit Linked Insurance Scheme (EDLI), in accordance with the applicable scheme provisions," the press release added.

In a post on social media, Union labour and employment minister Mansukh Mandaviya said the Cabinet decision will not only provide a broader shield of social security to the country's workers but will also accelerate the formalisation of employment. "I want to inform all the workers of the country that tomorrow is the sacred occasion of both Vishwakarma Jayanti and Service Day. This important decision will come into effect from this auspicious day," he added.

EPFO operates one of the world's largest social security systems, administering the Employees' Provident Fund (EPF), Employees' Pension Scheme (EPS) and Employees' Deposit Linked Insurance Scheme (EDLI). According to the latest EPFO data, about 7.98 crore contributing members across about 7.68 lakh contributing establishments, while the EPS provides pension benefits to around 82 lakh pensioners. EDLI provides insurance protection linked to EPF membership.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ Patna

RJD working president Tejashwi Yadav on Wednesday alleged that the JD(U), headed by former Bihar chief minister Nitish Kumar, has become a "B team" of the BJP which could "merge" with the saffron party in future.

The former Deputy CM made the claim while citing the JD(U)'s inability to come out with a clear stand on the Uniform Civil Code and Nitish Kumar making way for a BJP-led government in the state a few months ago.

"I have been saying that JD(U) is now just a B team of the BJP. In the days to come, it will merge with the BJP. (JDU working president) Sanjay Jha is at work to ensure a smooth merger. We had said that Nitish Kumar will not be allowed to remain the chief minister and see what happened," said Yadav.

He was responding to



queries about the JD(U)'s reluctance to take a clear stand in the wake of Union Home Minister Amit Shah's statement that "UCC will be implemented across 22 NDA-ruled states by 2029".

JD(U) leaders have sought to buy time, asserting that the party would "study the provisions" of the proposed legislation, after which Jha will hold talks with Shah.

Yadav, who is also the leader of the opposition in the state

assembly, reiterated that the RJD's stand on the issue "has been clear from the very beginning that we are against imposition of any such code and stoutly opposed to it".

The RJD leader's statement came hours after his party colleague Bhairu Virendra held out an olive branch to the JD(U), urging the BJP ally to quit the NDA and help formation of a "Mahagathbandhan government headed by Tejashwi Yadav".

Pakistan warship hits Indian vessel; Delhi...

The sources said sea conditions were rough at the time and that the two vessels subsequently moved apart. Pakistan had not issued an immediate public response to India's allegations.

The reported collision is not the first such encounter involving the Indian and Pakistani navies. A similar incident occurred in June 2011 involving the Pakistani Navy vessel Babur and the Indian Navy's INS Godavari.

The latest incident comes against the backdrop of strained relations between the two nuclear-armed neighbours. Diplomatic ties have remained limited since 2019, when India revoked the special constitutional status of Jammu and Kashmir and both countries subsequently downgraded their diplomatic representation. India and Pakistan have not maintained ambassadors in each other's capitals since then.

Ahead of UP polls, BJP to mark PM Modi's...

Through these mega events, the BJP is seeking to project his 25-year public career as a continuous commitment to *selfless service*, or 'seva'. The scale may also be a strategic response to the recent public outreach by Congress leader Rahul Gandhi. Elsewhere, BJP president Nitin Nabin will light a lamp at Ram Ghat in Ujjain as part of the nationwide programmes. The party has also appealed to people to light lamps at their homes in the evening as a gesture of gratitude for PM Modi's years in public office. Delhi CM Rekha Gupta has appealed to Delhiites to light a lamp on September 17 and pray for the PM's good health, long life and continued strength.

The New Delhi Municipal Council (NDMC) will light 1.25 lakh lamps along the Kartavya Path, organise a blood drive at Thyagaraj Stadium and prayer.

Anant Nag to get Dadasaheb Phalke award

"On the recommendation of the Dadasaheb Phalke Award Selection Committee, the Government of India is pleased to announce that the Actor will be conferred the prestigious Dadasaheb Phalke Award 2024 for his contribution to Indian cinema and an illustrious cinematic journey that has inspired generations," a gov-

ernment statement said. Last year, the recipient of the award was Malayalam cinema star Mohanlal.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi congratulated the veteran actor and said, "For several decades, his effortless performances, remarkable versatility and brilliance have left a very strong mark on Indian cinema, particularly Kannada cinema. In whichever role he has played, he brought rare depth and authenticity." In a post on social media, he termed the award a "richly deserved honour for a truly distinguished artist".

Nag, a high-profile actor who also dabbled in politics and served as a minister in Karnataka, grew up in a religious family in Bhatkal in coastal Karnataka. He was sent to Mumbai for higher education. His early influences of growing up in a math shaped his interest in stories.

While in Mumbai, Nag felt like a fish out of water but gradually became drawn to the theatre movement there. He started doing plays in Konkani, Hindi and Marathi for five years. There he met and was influenced by people like Satyadev Dubey, Girish Karnad and Amol Palekar.

Nag made his cinema debut with 1973 Kannada movie "Sankalpa" and gradually became an integral part of the parallel cinema there in the 1970s and 1980s. He was a part of popular Doordashan serial *Malgudi Days*, the TV adaptation of RK Narayan's popular work that was directed by Nag's filmmaker brother, Shankar Nag.

Dubey introduced him to Shyam Benegal and then began a collaboration through six films, each one a classic. It began with the *Ankur*, also Nag's first Hindi film, and *Nishant*, *Manthan*, *Bhumika*, *Kondura* and *Kalyug* followed. He is equally successful in the commercial Kannada cinema. Nag's portrayal as a disciple of Carnatic music in G B Iyer's *Hamsageethe* in 1975 won him the National Film Award for Best Feature Film in Kannada.

The actor, a multi-faceted personality who is equally good as a singer and tabla player, became known for his natural acting at a time when stars actively cultivated certain mannerisms. Nag, who was minister in Karnataka's J H Patel government, has spoken about being influenced by JP movement at its peak. In 2004, Nag unsuccessfully contested the Chamarajpet constituency, Bangalore assembly election from Janata Dal (Secular).

First introduced in 1969, the awards are named after Dadasaheb Phalke, who is regarded as the father of Indian cinema with his 1913 movie *Raja Harishchandra*.

MCD to take up 426 development works across 100 wards

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ Dehradun

The Municipal Corporation of Dehradun (MCD) on Wednesday is set to take up 426 development works across all 100 wards at an estimated cost of around Rs 50 crore. The tendering processes have been completed and work orders for major projects are expected to be issued by next week. The proposed works include road construction and repairs, drainage and paving, repair of monsoon-damaged retaining walls, park development, plantation, footpaths, safety walls and community buildings. The corporation's construction wing is conducting site inspections and preparing estimates for the

works.

The MCD executive engineer, Rajit Kotiyal said that the tendering process had been completed to enable the works to begin at the earliest.

Notably, Dehradun municipal commissioner Alok Kumar Pandey has directed officials to take up these works on a priority basis across the wards while maintaining quality and transparency. Councillors have also been pressuring for a prompt start of these development works in their respective wards.

Meanwhile, the corporation has prepared a list of damaged roads and plans to undertake patchwork worth

about Rs 6.5 crore in the first phase. Estimates are being prepared and tenders are being issued. The MCD aims to start the repairs by the end of September. Besides road and drainage works, the plan includes park development, footpaths, safety walls, community buildings, mini-stadium up-gradation and improvements to office infrastructure.

The projects are expected to address several pending local infrastructure issues. However, their impact on residents will depend on timely execution and adherence to quality standards, said the residents of the city.

Delivering justice to every victimised woman our priority: Kandwal

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ Dehradun

The primary responsibility of the Uttarakhand State Commission for Women (USCW) is to provide timely assistance, legal advice and justice to every victimised woman, said chairwoman Kusum Kandwal while chairing the first board meeting of the financial year 2026-27 on Wednesday. In the meeting, several important decisions were made unanimously after a thorough discussion on women's safety, rights protection, public awareness, strengthening the functioning of the commission and a comprehensive action plan for the coming year.

Addressing the meeting, Kandwal said that the commission is committed to protecting women's rights in coordination with the government and administration. Women's confidence in the commission's working style has steadily increased, as women from remote, mountainous, rural and border areas of the State are now approaching the commission with their

complaints and petitions, she said.

Kandwal further informed that, in light of this increasing workload and the expectations of women, the board meeting unanimously passed a proposal to create 10 new positions within the commission. Additionally, the board ap-

The USCW chairwoman said that to ensure the active presence of the commission in all 13 districts of Uttarakhand, district-wise responsibilities were assigned to the vice presidents of the commission. The members will conduct regular public hearings, women's awareness programmes, in-



proved a proposal to appropriately increase the honorarium for commission members, as well as the salaries of sanitation workers, she said.

Rs 2 L theft solved: Rs 72K cash & iPhone 13 Pro recovered

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ Uttarkashi

Uttarkashi police claimed to have cracked the theft of Rs two lakh from a grocer in the district headquarters and arrested an accused within just eight hours following the receipt of complaint. Police also recovered Rs 72,000 in cash and an iPhone 13 Pro purchased with the stolen money from the accused.

Police informed that a businessman had filed a complaint at the Uttarkashi police station on September 15, stating that on the night of September 12, his bag had been stolen by a young man who engaged him in conversation. Based on the complaint, a case was registered against unknown persons. Subsequently, a joint police and SOG team was formed on the instructions of the superintendent of police, Kamlesh Upadhyay. Led by the inspector-in-charge, Dinesh Kumar, the team inspected CCTV footage from the scene and surrounding areas. Information regarding the suspects was also gathered through manual policing. "The team solved the case within just eight hours and arrested 21-year-old Shivam Dabral, a resident of Bhairav Chowk. After interrogation, Rs 72,000 in cash and an iPhone 13 Pro purchased with the stolen money were recovered from his possession," informed Kumar, adding that they are now taking further legal action in the case and gathering information about the accused's criminal history.

IN BRIEF

UPES & NECTAR partner for advance technology-led solutions

DEHRADUN: : UPES and the North East Centre for Technology Application and Reach (NECTAR) have signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) to strengthen collaboration in research, technology innovation and deployment, entrepreneurship, capacity building and sustainable development. The MoU was signed by pro vice-chancellor – Operations and Growth Initi-



tiatives and registrar, UPES, Manish Madaan and director general, NECTAR, Arun Kumar Sharma in the presence of the vice-chancellor, UPES Sunil Rai. The collaboration is particularly relevant to Uttarakhand and Northeast India, where geography, ecological sensitivity and development needs create opportunities for technology-led interventions in areas such as disaster resilience,

clean energy, healthcare, livelihoods and environmental sustainability, UPES said. Speaking on the collaboration, Rai said: "We look forward to enabling our students, faculty members and researchers to work on solutions that are relevant, scalable and sustainable." Sharma said, "NECTAR works to enable the application of appropriate technologies in response to regional needs."

Ist phase of 2nd National Sports Competition concludes

HARIDWAR: The first phase of the second National Sports Competition under the Indian Education Board concluded at the indoor stadium of Acharyakulam here on Wednesday. Yoga Guru Baba Ramdev and Acharya Balkrishna inaugurated the first phase of the national competition. A total of 100 athletes from Acharyakulam participated in the national competition. Players from various states displayed their strength in Kabaddi, Badminton, Basketball, Football and Wrestling. The next phase of the second National Sports Competition will be held in Varanasi, Prayagraj, Bulandshahr, Delhi and Hapur. At the conclusion of the first phase of the games, Baba Ramdev felicitated all the best performing players with medals and trophies.

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NEM warns of intensified agitation over recruitment delay

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ Dehradun

The Nursing Ekta Manch (NEM) Uttarakhand on Wednesday warned of intensifying its agitation, accusing the government of ignoring thousands of unemployed nursing graduates waiting for employment.

The Manch held an important meeting at the Press Club in Dehradun on Wednesday where various issues related to nursing recruitment, current circumstances, court cases and the organisation's future strategy were discussed in detail.

At the meeting, NEM office-bearers and active members expressed displeasure over the government's current nursing recruitment policy, stating that interests of candidates waiting for jobs for a long time are being ignored.

Speaking on the occasion, NEM president Naval Pundir said, "The government should take the demands of unemployed nursing candidates seriously and resolve them soon.

If the government does not take a positive decision, the NEM will intensify the movement in the coming days. The government will see its consequences in 2027."

NEM members said that in the coming days, a strategy will be developed to unite unemployed nursing candidates and expand the movement to a broader level. The forum will also continue its fight on the judicial process and other issues related to recruitment. The NEM members informed that the roadmap of future struggle before the government and the strategy for the upcoming movement in the interest of unemployed nursing candidates. The Manch clarified that the fight for employment and rights of unemployed nursing candidates will continue. Secretary Rajendra Kukreti, members Mukesh Ramola, Anil Ramola and other active members of NEM were present in the meeting.

District hospital to seek police post after violent clash

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ Dehradun

The Deen Dayal Upadhyay District Hospital administration is planning to soon approach the senior superintendent of police, Dehradun, for the establishment of a police post within the hospital premises.

The move comes after two groups allegedly clashed inside the hospital recently while seeking medical examination. The miscreants allegedly broke chairs and glass panes at the hospital during the altercation. When the hospital security guards tried to intervene, one guard sustained injuries. Though a complaint has been filed by the hospital authorities, the lack of safety measures and absence of a police post in the district hospital has raised concerns over the safety of patients and staff. One visitor,

Hemant Jha said "The incident has raised safety concerns among visitors like us. The hospital administration must look into the matter seriously and take preventive steps so that such cases do not harm innocent people".

The principal medical superintendent Dr Yatendra Singh said that following the incident, security guard duty has been increased during night hours. Two security guards have been deployed at night. "Safety at the hospital is important. In view of this, the hospital administration has decided to write soon to the SSP Dehradun for establishment of a police post within the premises. The police post will surely prevent such cases and any untoward consequences," he added.

Bajrang Dal stir prompts transfer of constable to Police Lines

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ Dehradun

A police constable, accused of harassing a woman in the Lakhbigha area, was sent to police lines on Wednesday after Bajrang Dal activists protested outside Lakhbigha Chowki. The protesters blocked Saharanpur Road for nearly 90 minutes, demanding action against the constable and a fair investigation into the complaint.

Bajrang Dal workers alleged that no action had been taken for two days since the woman had submitted a complaint against the constable. They demanded immediate action from the senior police officers.

The protesters later squatted in the middle of Saharanpur Road, affecting movement of traffic towards Ghantaghar and Dharampur Chowk. The

Doon traders, buyers worry over proposed UPI costs

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ Dehradun

Shopkeepers and customers in Dehradun are apprehensive of the proposed charges in digital payments through UPI from October 15. While merchants are officially barred from directly passing Merchant Discount Rate (MDR) or UPI charges on to customers, local consumers said that they could still feel the impact indirectly if businesses adjust prices or change how they accept larger digital payments.

"Even if the rules say customers cannot be charged separately, businesses will have to bear the cost somehow. We already see some merchants adding charges when customers pay by Mastercard or other cards," a customer Sakshi Kanyal said.

Another customer Jyoti Gaur said that the impact could be more noticeable at petrol pumps and for other essential services. "If I am paying for fuel through UPI and there is a separate fee involved, even if the pump cannot directly charge me for it, there could be changes in prices or payment practices. So customers may be affected in one way or another," she added.

For shopkeepers, the proposed charges could add to operating costs, particularly for businesses receiving frequent high-value UPI payments. "We cannot directly recover the MDR from customers, but if the cost keeps adding up, it will affect our margins," Suraj Kumar said.

Another shopkeeper Uday Gupta said that the impact would depend on how much business is conducted through large UPI transactions. "For small payments, there should not be much difference. But for bigger transactions, the charges can become an additional business expense," he said. Under the proposed structure, most UPI payments of up to Rs 2,000 will remain free. Small merchants receiving up to Rs one lakh a month through UPI will also remain exempt. Eligible

merchant transactions above Rs 2,000 will attract an MDR of 0.4 per cent, capped at Rs 300 per transaction. However, fuel, railway, insurance, telecom and some other essential-service payments above Rs 2,000 will attract a flat Rs 5 MDR. Payments for stocks, mutual funds and broker-related services will attract 0.02 per cent, capped at Rs 300.

The government said that the MDR cannot be directly passed on to customers, leaving merchants to absorb the applicable charges.

Advertisement No. 101/2026

Government of India

Public Enterprises Selection Board

invites applications for the post of

Chairman & Managing Director

in

MECON Limited

Last date of submission of online application by

applicants is by 15:00 hours on

01st October, 2026

Last date of forwarding of applications by the Nodal

Officers on online system of PESB is by 17:00 hours on

12th October, 2026.

For details login to website

<https://pesb.gov.in>

Link for registration of nodal officers/ competent

authorities is available on PESB website.

CBC 40110/12/0017/2627

The Pioneer CLASSIFIEDS PUBLIC NOTICE

I am Manjeet Singh. My name is recorded as 'Manjeet Singh Nakoti' in the educational documents of my son, Aditya Nakoti, whereas my correct name is 'Manjeet Singh'. Therefore, I request that my correct name be recorded in the documents. Semwal Gaon, Palla Satyo Jad Gaon, District Tehri Garhwal, Uttarakhand.

मेरे आधार कार्ड नं० XXXX XXXX 5213 में कुटुंबिक मेरा नाम कुंती (KUNTI) गलत दर्ज हो गया है। जबकि मेरा वास्तविक नाम कुंती देवी (KUTTI DEVI) है। जोकि मेरे जन्म प्रमाण पत्र सं० B202605900090000004 व मेरे स्वं पति SHISHUPAL SINGH के पीपीओआर नं० 245197900902 में भी दर्ज है। भविष्य में मुझे कुंती देवी (KUTTI DEVI) W/o LATE SHISHUPAL SINGH के नाम से जाना पहचाना व पुकारा जाए। निवासी—बर्दीली बमोली उत्तराखण्ड।

मैं, संगीता देवी (वर्तमान नाम) W/o आमी नं. 3203597L हवलदार बर्मेन कुमार, ग्राम व पोस्ट – झरिन, तहसील – नकुड़, जिला – सहारनपुर, यू.पी.–247232, ने शायथ पत्र सं. IN-UK97718336612891Y दि. 16.09.2026 द्वारा अपना गलत नाम संगीता देवी से बदलकर 'संगीता' कर लिया है। अब से मुझे मेरे सही नाम से ही जाना-पहचाना जाए।

मेरे पुत्र के सैन्य अभिलेखों के अनुसार, मेरा गलत नाम मम ताज दर्ज है जबकि आधार नं. के अनुसार मेरा सही नाम ममताज बेगम M/o 18019425H सैपर रेजाउल करीम, ग्राम – मोरे ग्राम, पोस्ट – शहीपुर बेरु ग्राम, तहसील – कटवा, जिला – पूरवा बर्दमान, पश्चिम बंगाल –713129 है।

PUBLIC NOTICE

We would like to inform the General Public that the Original Registered Gift Deed/Upahar Patra No. 579/2019 dated 06.02.2019, in respect of the property of Smt. Vandana Gupta, W/o Shri Rahul Gupta, R/o G-180, Nehru Colony, Dehradun, registered at Sub-Registrar Office, Dehradun-I, under Book No. 1, Jild No. 7615, Pages 211 to 234, has been lost and untraceable. Further, Punjab National Bank, Nehru Colony Branch, Dehradun intends to mortgage the above property. If any person finds the said original document, or claims any interest, right, title, lien or objection in respect of the said property/ document, he/she is requested to contact Punjab National Bank, Nehru Colony Branch, Dehradun within 7 days from the date of this publication. If no claim/objection is received within the aforesaid period, the Bank shall proceed further with the proposed mortgage as per rules.

Smt. Vandana Gupta, W/o Shri Rahul Gupta, R/o G-180, Nehru Colony, Dehradun,

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This is to inform the public that certain original documents pertaining to the property of Mr. Anesh Ansari S/o-Naseebuddin Ansari have been lost. The details of these documents are as follows: Sale Deed (Registered)– Book No. 1, Volume No. 7662, Pages 25 to 48, Document No. 27, Registration Date: 03/01/2022; and POA (Power of Attorney)– Book No. 4, Volume No. 580, Pages 77 to 92, Document No. 2, Registration Date: 03/01/2022 (duly registered at the Sub-Registrar's office, Dehradun). If any information regarding these documents is found, please notify the number given below:

Advocate Pritam Singh Ramola- PLS Plaza, Gandhi Road, Near Prince Chowk, Dehradun, Mob.: 9412347776

NOTICE

My son's name is recorded as Mayank Singh Rawat in his birth certificate (Registration No. B2024050270700000769), and it has been changed to Advik Rawat; therefore, a birth certificate should be issued reflecting the name Advik Rawat. Shri Manoj Singh Rawat, son of Shri Mahitab Singh, resident of Lane No. 6, near Durga Mandir, Sai Vihar, Shyampur, Ambiwala, District Dehradun, Uttarakhand.

PUBLIC NOTICE

I, Mrs. Shubhra Roy W/o Late Shri Amar Chandra Roy, resident of 8, Kabul Enclave, Shakti Vihar, Adhoiwala, Dehradun, Uttarakhand, hereby declare that earlier wide public notice/ publication dated 30.07.2025 made in The Himachal Times, I had disowned my son **Abhishek Roy** from all my movable and immovable properties, that the said publication was published by me under compulsion, duress and misrepresentation and which was incorrect and false and therefore I revoke and cancel the same with immediate effect and that I am declaring that I have cordial, loving and amicable relations with my son and that he continues to be my legal heir and legal representative as per law.

NOTICE

This is inform you that my Municipal Corporation, Property No.138/89/2, situated in Ward No.23, Ajmal Kna Road, Dispensary Road, District Dehradun, which is registered in the office of the Sub-Registrar, Dehradun, under Book No.1, Zild (Volume) No.2758, Pages-107/118, Serial No.7407, date 14-08-1987, and following which I am the sole owner, proprietor and possessor of the said property, I intend to sell the said property. If any person has any objection, they may contact our Bank Penal Advocates, Alok Pundir, whose Chamber No.1, Near Bar Bhawan, Court Compound, Dehradun, Mobile No. 9412054582. Sanvi Khemani W/o Rajan Khemani 190/1,-66, Rajpur Road, Dehradun.

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Editor's
TAKE

Space as battlefield:
The new frontier

The American disclosure of having on-orbit weapons raises the prospect of a new arms race in outer space, where international rules offer few safeguards

For decades, Washington maintained careful ambiguity about what orbits above us. That ended Monday at the Air, Space and Cyber Conference in Maryland, when Air Force Secretary Troy Meink told a packed hall that the United States now possesses “on-orbit space control weapons” able to defend American forces against hostile action. By his own admission, this was no slip - the phrasing, he said, was “very well thought out”. For the first time, a senior Pentagon official confirmed what analysts had long assumed but no administration had said aloud: America has weaponised orbit.

Nothing about the weapons – type, number, when they went up – was disclosed. That silence is itself the message. Meink offered only that the systems serve offensive and defensive purposes, and pointed, unprompted, to nearly two decades of watching Russia and China build their own counter-space arsenals. The admission lands alongside the Golden Dome missile-shield programme, backed by an initial \$25 billion in congressional funding and envisioning layered orbital interceptors as the backbone of homeland defence – a project Beijing and Moscow have jointly warned risks “spurring an arms race” among nuclear powers. The real shock is less the hardware than the precedent. The 1967 Outer Space Treaty bars weapons of mass destruction in orbit but says nothing about conventional ones, so Washington has broken no law – only an unwritten norm of strategic ambiguity all three powers had, until now, quietly kept. China’s foreign ministry responded within hours, with spokesperson Guo Jiakun urging Washington to halt its military build-up in orbit and warning against turning space into what he called ‘a war zone’.

Moscow, having long denied pursuing weapons of its own, is likely to answer less with words than with a demonstration - a satellite manoeuvre, an anti-satellite test, something visible. That is the real danger arms-control specialists are flagging: not that the admission provokes war, but that it hands Beijing and Moscow political cover to stop hiding their programmes and start showcasing them. A secret arms race is dangerous; a public one, with each side signalling resolve, is worse – it removes the face-saving option of pretending not to notice. Does this restore American supremacy? Only briefly, and only on paper. China’s reconnaissance satellite fleet has roughly tripled in six years; Russia’s anti-satellite ambitions are well documented. Deterrence by disclosure buys Washington a news cycle, not a lasting edge – and the long history of missile shields suggests they tend to accelerate the arms races they claim to deter, not end them. This is not yet a march to a third world war, but it is a step towards a costlier, less predictable one - space without rules. What is needed now is not louder signalling but renewed diplomacy: a modern successor to the Outer Space Treaty that explicitly covers conventional weapons, and deconfliction channels robust enough to stop an accident in orbit from becoming a crisis on Earth. The alternative is a contest with no referees, playing out in the place where everyone’s satellites, and increasingly their security, now live.

Can the BSP reclaim its space in UP?

Mayawati seeks to revive the BSP ahead of the 2027 Uttar Pradesh Assembly elections by reconnecting with Dalits, marginalised communities and younger voters. The party faces strong competition from the BJP and SP, while navigating alliances, organisational reform and changing voter expectations



KALYANI SHANKAR

The political situation in Uttar Pradesh is evolving. Mayawati, Leader of the Bahujan Samaj Party and former ruler of the state, hopes to return after a five-year break from active politics. While she may not seek to regain full control, her presence could affect the elections by drawing votes from her opponents.

Uttar Pradesh will hold its next Assembly elections in 2027. The key rivalry will be between the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and the Samajwadi Party (SP). Additionally, the Congress Party is teaming up with the SP to try to revive its political presence.

The BSP once held influence in UP, Punjab and Uttarakhand.

Mayawati faces several new challenges, including heightened political awareness among young voters, increasing competition from rival parties, and the continued dominance of dynastic politics.

Her strategy for the upcoming elections emphasises acknowledging past achievements, staying relevant in today’s political landscape, and actively engaging with local communities. This approach aims to rejuvenate the BSP’s future and reconnect with its support base.

Uttar Pradesh is significant in India because it is the most populous state. Many past Prime Ministers have travelled through U.P. on their way to Delhi, highlighting its influence in national politics. It has 80 Lok Sabha and 403 Assembly seats.

The BSP’s recent election performance has been disappointing, with the party securing only 1 of 403 seats. After this setback, Mayawati and her party face a crucial turning point. To regain their relevance and influence, she must effectively navigate a competitive environment where both the BJP and SP are actively reaching out to Dalits and marginalised communities.

The BSP has ruled out forming any pre-election alliances and plans to contest the upcoming 2027 elections independently. Mayawati aims to recreate the successful Dalit-Brahmin alliance of 2007 by selecting more Brahmin and upper-caste candidates to run alongside her core Dalit supporters. Senior leader Satish Chandra Mishra has been appointed to oversee vital tasks related to legal matters, media strategy and election coordination to ensure effective campaign management.

One of Mayawati’s primary strategies for the 2027 elections will be to reaffirm her dedication to the Dalit community and other marginalised



MAYAWATI MUST USE TECHNOLOGY ADEPTLY IN HER CAMPAIGN EFFORTS. EMPLOYING DIGITAL STRATEGIES FOR CAMPAIGNING, OUTREACH, AND VOTER ENGAGEMENT IS VITAL. SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS CAN EFFECTIVELY CONNECT WITH YOUNGER VOTERS, ALLOWING THEM TO ACCESS RELEVANT, ENGAGING CONTENT WHILE ADDRESSING THEIR CONCERNS

The author is a popular columnist

sections of society. She recognises the importance of establishing a strong support base as the political landscape in Uttar Pradesh transforms ahead of the elections. Her vision integrates historical awareness, maintaining contemporary relevance and grassroots community involvement to enhance the BSP’s prospects.

Young voters, increasingly aware of their rights and issues, are shaping the political landscape, as seen with the recently emerged Cockroach Janata Party. Mayawati’s party also faces competition from other parties trying to attract these voters.

To start her innings anew, she recently distanced herself from her nephew, whom she had once supported, causing tension within the party. While he remains affiliated with the BSP, she stressed that he needs to develop more political maturity before taking on significant responsibilities.

To regain her party’s relevance, Mayawati must adeptly navigate this competitive political environment, particularly as both the BJP and SP work hard to connect with communities. She is expected to launch outreach programmes to reconnect with her traditional voter base, which has eroded significantly in recent years. To address dynastic politics within her party, Mayawati is working to reshape the BSP’s internal structure. To tackle this challenge, she should promote a more democratic process by filling leadership positions through grassroots elections rather than appointments by a select few party leaders. This shift can foster a more inclusive party culture and restore members’ faith.

Engaging younger party members and fostering future leaders in key roles is essential to revitalising the BSP. Mayawati can

launch leadership-development initiatives to ensure new leaders represent younger voters’ interests and concerns while also involving them in decision-making.

The BJP’s influence in Uttar Pradesh is notably strong, especially among upper-caste and Hindu voters, while the SP continues to strengthen its position among Yadavs and Muslims. To counter her rivals’ polarising tactics, Mayawati might seek strategic alliances with regional parties and organisations that share her vision of social justice.

The BSP is focusing on mobilising Other Backward Classes (OBCs) alongside Dalits, which can create a larger voting bloc compared to Muslims. OBCs make up approximately 40 per cent of the state’s population, while Dalits represent more than 20 per cent. The Muslim community accounts for nearly 20 per cent of the population. Mayawati must use technology adeptly in her campaign efforts. Employing digital strategies for campaigning, outreach and voter engagement is vital. Social media platforms can effectively connect with younger voters, allowing them to access relevant, engaging content while addressing their concerns.

Additionally, Mayawati should develop online and offline programmes to educate potential voters about their rights and the political process. This outreach can empower marginalised communities.

Finally, Mayawati needs to evaluate her past governance approaches to align them with current expectations. By implementing effective strategies and utilising technology to connect with voters, she can help build a stronger foundation for the BSP’s influence in the upcoming elections. The question is whether she will return or fade away further.

Daiv Vani

WISDOM FOR A MEANINGFUL LIFE

The Dog Who Was
Never Left Behind

At the end of their lives, the five Pandava brothers and Draupadi began their final journey toward the Himalayas, renouncing their kingdom to walk toward heaven on foot. Along the way, a stray dog joined them, walking faithfully beside Yudhishthira, through cold, hunger, and exhaustion, as one by one, his brothers and wife fell and passed away.

When Yudhishthira alone reached the gates of heaven, Indra invited him in, but told him the dog could not enter. Yudhishthira refused outright, saying he would rather forsake heaven itself than abandon a creature that had remained loyal to him through the entire journey.

Only then was the test revealed, the dog was Dharma itself, testing whether Yudhishthira’s righteousness would waver even at heaven’s threshold.

We often compromise our values the moment a big enough reward comes before us, convincing ourselves the end justifies the exception.

Today, hold firm to one value you’re tempted to bend for personal gain, no matter how small the compromise seems.

-DAIV



RAJYOGI
BRAHMA
KUMAR
NIKUNJ JI

2ND OPINION

“Kindness is a language which the deaf can hear and the blind can see,” said Mark Twain.

Human beings are kinder to each other when they feel safe and secure. However, with the rise of aggression in our culture, the threat of terrorism, and the increase in stress in our schools and workplaces, we find ourselves in a position of fear, which creates anxiety, resulting in distorted thinking. These recent changes in our culture have promoted a lack of goodwill towards others and fostered more self-absorption and less outward giving. It seems that today there are no takers for acts of kindness, truthfulness and simplicity. As a result, those who do good are often left deserted. On the other hand, the clever and shrewd steal the show. It’s very sad that the world today is more conducive to those who are



manipulative and practical, and those who chase rewards, than to those toiling hard with faith in the return of good actions. In such a scenario, then what is the point of being good in a mad, bad, sad world? Because every good deed anyway gets ‘lost’, as many of us have come to believe. Just like everything becomes dark at night and a lone flower in a thick jungle remains unseen, the little goodness flickering here and there in the world seems to be of no use.

History presents us with innumerable examples of times when the bad seemed to be all-pervasive, when powerful conquerors looted and trapped the masses in an undignified life. And yet, from these very masses emerged a small, courageous group of awakened

people who led a revolution against injustice and finally turned the tables on their oppressors. But, of course, all acts of goodness do not amount to a revolution, for they do not always aim to blow strong winds of change. But nevertheless, they work like a cool breeze in a hot desert, or a drizzle on parched land.

We all know the story of the little bird that filled her beak with water from a pond and headed for the woods that were on fire. While she was at it, a spectator asked the tiny creature what was the point of her efforts, for the small droplets would not douse the huge flames. She quipped, “When I die, and my life’s record is being read out, my name will appear on the list of those who tried to put out the flames, and not among those who sparked it or did nothing about it.” We must remember that there is a law of cause and effect that guides every act in the universe.

And what a person does unto anyone, he does unto himself. So, while a negative action piles debt on a person, a positive act is an investment in a good future. So, an honest person must hold on to his virtue with courage and patience in testing times. He must empower himself with the unflinching hope that, as night is followed by day, better times will inevitably follow. It is just a matter of time before the clouds will give way to clearer skies. So, keep the faith until the new day arrives.

The writer is an educator and a councillor

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

India’s chip ambitions take shape

SEMICON India 2026 is not just another industry expo; it marks a moment when India can move from announcing semiconductor ambitions to demonstrating a working silicon-to-systems ecosystem.

By bringing policy, capital, talent and global partnerships together, the event can accelerate India’s transition from a design-led participant to a credible node in the global chip value chain.

The event comes at an important juncture. Three of the 12 projects approved under Semicon 1.0 have begun commercial production, while an outlay of ₹1,27,500 crore has been earmarked for Semicon 2.0. This indicates that the next phase is being treated as an industrial strategy.

A persistent bottleneck remains skilled manpower and applied research. SEMICON 2026’s Workforce Development Pavilion, student hackathon and Women’s Forum can help expand the talent pipeline and make semiconductor careers visible beyond elite institutes.

With global firms participating, India can position itself as a stable, policy-backed ecosystem for long-term investment. The real test will be how quickly India converts the fab ambitions showcased at SEMICON into factory-floor execution and a sustained semiconductor ecosystem.

BAL GOVIND | NOIDA

UPI charge could burden consumers

Digital finance would never have become a habit among Indians unless the trinity of JAM (Jan Dhan, Aadhaar and Mobile Banking) had been introduced in India way back a decade ago. Finally, when Indians are well shifted to the cashless economic model, here comes a novel twist with the Unified Payments Interface (UPI) of the NPCI. As per the Finance Ministry, from now onwards, payments to merchants above two thousand rupees will attract a tax of 0.4 per cent. Although Person-to-Person (P2P) UPI transactions are exempted from this newly introduced tax limit, the ministry has also clarified that the MDR for small merchants will remain tax-free. High-value transactions of Rs 75,000 and above will be capped at three hundred rupees per transaction.

The government’s new tax initiative is, somewhere, going to add another burden on the pockets of Indian consumers. Merchants will similarly transfer this UPI charge burden to consumers, like what is done in the case of GST and other taxes. Or somewhere, the introduction of this charge will promote people to adhere to paying in cash itself. Somewhere, cashless habits are going to become a little costly. Either we will promote cash, or let us be ready to accept more financial burden on the consumer for every cashless transaction.

KIRTI WADHAWAN | KANPUR

Politics needs dignity in speech

Reference the news report ‘DMK leaders A Raja, Sekar Babu booked for remarks against TN CM’ (Sep, 16). During an Assembly discussion, Vijay questioned the DMK’s claim that MK Stalin was detained during the Emergency under the MISA Act. He also made a gesture involving Stalin’s jaw, which the DMK members strongly objected to. TVK minister R Nirmal Kumar subsequently challenged the DMK to produce a formal detention order to prove their claim of ‘Stalin’s MISA arrest’. The DMK responded by organising state wide demonstrations, during which the said party leaders made abusive remarks against the CM and his colleague. The DMK leadership is known for its oratorical skills, including abuses hurled at opponents.

In the past, they referred to Kamaraj as ‘Buffalo Skin’, Rajaji as ‘Dwarf Fox’ and MGR as ‘Dumb Hero’, while J Jayalalithaa was subjected to obscene remarks. Recently, LoP Udhayanidhi made a lewd remark linking an actress to the CM, for which he was taken into police custody and released on bail the same day. None disputes that in a democracy there needs to be debates, even acrimonious exchanges in the legislatures, questioning events and their causes. A repeated lie cannot be allowed to become the truth. But when remarks turn abusive in public, the law needs to step in and take deterrent action!

V JAYARAMAN | CHENNAI

PICTALK



A white goose preens and splashes water over itself in a waterbody at Jorpuhuri Park, in Guwahati, Assam

PHOTO: PTI

Land justice needs a new procedural framework

From commercial courts to RERA and insolvency proceedings, Parliament has repeatedly redesigned procedures when conventional litigation proved inadequate. With land disputes consuming years and locking up enormous economic value, the case for a dedicated land-justice framework is becoming harder to ignore



VIVEK KUMAR SINGH

Whenever Parliament has concluded that ordinary civil procedure is inadequate for a particular class of disputes, it has redesigned the process. Commercial disputes have stricter timelines and case management. Insolvency operates against a statutory clock. Real-estate grievances

have specialised authorities and tribunals. Specific-relief suits have legislated disposal timelines. Arbitration permits tighter control over pleadings, hearings and expert evidence. The common principle is simple: a general procedural framework need not be applied identically to every category of dispute. That is the strongest answer to the objection that a separate law for land justice would be too radical. The question is not whether India knows how to create a special procedural regime. It plainly does. The real question is whether land disputes, given their scale, economic importance and recurring factual patterns, now justify the same legislative attention.

The Commercial Courts Act is perhaps the closest precedent because it works substantially within the civil-court system while changing procedural discipline for a defined class of cases. For specified commercial disputes, the elasticity of ordinary civil procedure is replaced by firmer limits. A defendant who fails to file the written statement within the statutory outer period loses the right to do so. The court is expected to hold an early case-management hearing, identify issues, fix dates for evidence and arguments, and control the future calendar of the suit.

The importance of this model lies less in any one deadline than in the philosophy behind it. Parliament accepted that certain disputes require the judge, rather than the parties, to control the pace of litigation. It also accepted that procedural opportunities cannot remain indefinitely renewable merely because the dispute is before a civil court. That is directly relevant to land litigation.

A partition suit, boundary dispute or title contest is no less deserving of procedural discipline than a commercial contract. Yet ordinary land suits continue to move largely through the general CPC sequence, where extensions and interlocutory stages can accumulate. The Commercial Courts Act shows that the CPC is not an indivisible procedural package. Its rules can be modified for a defined category when the nature of that litigation demands it. That makes a separate land procedure an evolutionary step, not a leap into the unknown.

Time limits are already part of civil justice

Commercial courts establish that procedure can be tightened for a defined class of civil disputes. The Specific Relief Act establishes something further: even an ordinary civil remedy, frequently involving immovable property, can be placed within a statutory disposal timeline, subject to a limited extension for recorded reasons.

Parliament has therefore already accepted that a civil remedy concerning property can be put on a legislative clock. The Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code goes further. Its architecture treats time as an integral component of the remedy itself. Its experience also shows that timelines do not automatically eliminate delay; institutional capacity and appellate intervention still matter. But the design principle remains important: where delay destroys value, the law need not leave time open-ended. Land has an equally strong claim to that principle. A disputed parcel can remain economically frozen for years. The precise duration of a land suit need not be prescribed here. The narrower point is that Indian legislation already recognises that Parliament may impose procedural clocks where delay seriously diminishes the value of the remedy.

Specialisation is an established technique

Timelines address one dimension of delay; specialisation addresses another. RERA demonstrates this route. The Real Estate (Regulation and Development) Act did not merely shorten a few CPC timelines. It identified a defined field, created specialised adjudicatory institutions, specified remedies and linked dispute resolution to the regulatory information of that sector.

Land disputes share many characteristics that make specialisation useful. They recur in familiar forms: title, succession, partition, boundary, possession, validity of instruments, record correction and overlapping civil-revenue claims. The point is not that RERA should be copied, nor that every land case should be transferred to a tribunal. It is that Indian law already accepts purpose-



REPRESENTATIONAL IMAGE

THE REAL ESTATE (REGULATION AND DEVELOPMENT) ACT DID NOT MERELY SHORTEN A FEW CPC TIMELINES. IT IDENTIFIED A DEFINED FIELD, CREATED SPECIALISED ADJUDICATORY INSTITUTIONS, SPECIFIED REMEDIES AND LINKED DISPUTE RESOLUTION TO THE REGULATORY INFORMATION OF THAT SECTOR

built adjudication for recurring categories of disputes. The legislature therefore has more than one institutional option. A land-justice law could operate through designated civil courts, specialised benches or another carefully designed structure. The choice belongs to the design stage. What RERA establishes here is the legitimacy of specialisation itself.

Specialisation, however, is only one way to redesign procedure. Arbitration supplies a different lesson: adjudication need not depend on the full conventional sequence of oral hearings and repeated applications in order to remain fair.

Arbitral tribunals can regulate whether issues require oral hearings or can be decided substantially on documents. They can appoint experts, discourage unnecessary adjournments and impose meaningful costs. Civil courts deciding land disputes obviously cannot be converted into arbitral tribunals: questions of title may affect third parties and public records, and judicial safeguards must remain stronger. But the larger lesson survives. Natural justice does not require every dispute to use every procedural device to its maximum extent. Fairness requires notice, opportunity to contest, impartial adjudication and reasons. Within those boundaries, procedure can differ according to the controversy. That is precisely what a separate land law would seek to do.

Technology makes specialisation more workable

These statutory precedents establish the legal possibility of differentiated procedure. Technology now strengthens its practical feasibility in land matters. India has invested heavily in computerisation of Records of Rights, digitisation of cadastral maps, registration systems, georeferencing and parcel identification. Programmes such as DILRMP, ULPIN and SVAMITVA are creating an increasingly digital information environment around land.

Technology does not settle title. A digitised error remains an error, and satellite imagery can show occupation without proving its legal character. But digital land infrastructure changes what a specialised procedural law can realistically require from courts, parties and government departments. The point is not to prescribe the detailed evidentiary architecture of such a law, but to establish that the administrative infrastructure required to support it increasingly exists. Seen together, these developments amount to more than scattered reforms. They provide the legislative building blocks of a separate land procedure. Commercial courts show that a defined category of civil disputes can be subjected to modified CPC rules and active case management. The Specific Relief Act shows that civil property remedies can carry statutory timelines. The IBC shows that Parliament can treat time as part of legal design. RERA shows that recurring disputes can be placed within a specialised framework. Arbitration shows that evidence and hearings can be controlled more tightly without discarding fairness. No single model should simply be transplanted into land law. Nor should speed become an excuse for weakening notice, appeal, judicial review or the opportunity to challenge State records. The value of these statutes lies elsewhere: together they demolish the assumption that ordinary CPC procedure is the only legitimate way to deliver civil justice. The case for a separate land-justice law is therefore not a demand to experiment blindly. It is a proposal to apply lessons that Indian legislation has already tested elsewhere. The question is no longer whether India can create a specialised procedure for land disputes. Its own statute book answers that question. The real challenge is what such a law should contain: which disputes it should cover, which forum should decide them, how civil and revenue jurisdiction should be separated, how evidence should be organised, what timelines should govern each stage, how appeals should be structured and how a final decree should translate into the record, map and possession on the ground. India has already proved that when delay threatens the purpose of a law, procedure can be redesigned. Land justice should no longer be treated as the exception. The question now is not whether a separate law can be written, but how well we choose to write it.

The writer is a former IAS officer and is presently Chairman, RERA Bihar. He served as Principal Secretary, Department of Revenue and Land Reforms, Bihar. This is the second part of a three-part series on land reforms. The third article will appear in this space on Monday

The thin line between dissent and disorder



ASHOK KUMAR

If court decisions make the police and administration hesitant to act against violence and disorder, it may encourage a tendency to violate the law. The recent decision of the Allahabad High Court quashing the arrest of activist Aakriti Chaudhary under the National Security Act (NSA) raises questions that go well beyond the individual case. It concerns the larger responsibility of the police and administration to maintain law and order, protect public safety and safeguard the constitutional rights of citizens.

The Government has reportedly decided to challenge the decision before the Supreme Court. The High Court, while doing so, questioned the evidence presented by the state authorities, described the police version as a "fabricated story" and directed that compensation of ₹5 lakh be paid to the petitioner, including for the manner in which the action was taken by the authorities, particularly the district administration. The Court's observations and the subsequent debate deserve careful consideration. There can be no dispute that the Constitution guarantees every citizen the right to freedom of speech and peaceful assembly. In a democracy, citizens have every right to express their grievances, question the government and demonstrate peacefully. This distinction becomes particularly important in situations where violence appears to have been organised or pre-planned. The Noida incident cannot, therefore, be viewed simply as an ordinary labour protest. During the violence, more than a hundred vehicles were reportedly damaged, several factories were vandalised, and vehicles, including police vehicles, were set on fire. When a large crowd becomes violent, the police cannot simply remain passive spectators.

At the same time, the police response must remain firmly within the framework of law. If an individual has been accused of instigating violence, the State must establish that allegation through credible evidence. Preventive detention under the National Security Act is an extraordinary measure and cannot become a substitute for ordinary criminal investigation or prosecution. If there was insufficient evidence against Aakriti Chaudhary, or if due process was not followed, judicial intervention was entirely justified. But that cannot mean that the administration's entire assessment of a law-and-order situation is automatically rendered baseless.

A functioning democracy requires both strong policing and strong judicial oversight. The two are not contradictory; they are complementary. The police must act decisively when public safety is threatened, while courts must ensure that such action remains lawful, proportionate and supported by evidence. Any abuse of authority by an individual officer must be investigated and dealt with appropriately. If evidence has been fabricated or a person has been unlawfully detained, there must be accountability and justice. However, the larger issue is what message such judicial decisions may unintentionally send to the police and civil administration. Maintaining law and order often requires officers to take difficult decisions in situations where events are unfolding rapidly and where the consequences of inaction can be severe. If officers begin to believe that firm action taken in good faith, even in response to genuine violence, could later expose them to personal consequences without adequate consideration of the circumstances in which the decision was made, it may create hesitation at the operational level.

A police officer facing a violent crowd has to make decisions in real time. The officer must assess the threat to life and property, determine whether the situation is escalating, identify the level of force required and act within the law. These decisions cannot always be judged in isolation, detached from the circumstances prevailing at that particular moment. This does not mean that police action should be placed beyond scrutiny. On the contrary, every use of extraordinary powers must be subject to rigorous review. An accountable police force should not become a fearful or paralysed police force.

The balance between individual liberty and public security is one of the most difficult responsibilities of a democratic State. While protecting the rights of the individual, the State must also protect the rights of millions of other citizens whose lives, livelihoods and property may be affected by violence. The responsibility of the State to protect citizens cannot be reduced to the protection of those participating in a protest. It also extends to the ordinary citizen whose shop, vehicle or home may be damaged; the worker whose factory may be unable to function; the commuter whose road is blocked; and the police personnel who may themselves become targets of violence. This is why the distinction between dissent and disorder must remain clear. A protest against a government decision is legitimate. But setting vehicles on fire in the name of an ideology, attacking police personnel, vandalising factories or damaging public property cannot be justified as an exercise of democratic rights. India's democracy is strong precisely because it accommodates disagreement. But democratic disagreement cannot survive if the rule of law is weakened. Roads, industrial establishments, government institutions and police facilities cannot be allowed to become centres of violence. If such conduct is normalised, the consequences will extend far beyond a single incident or a particular administration. There is also a need to recognise that the relationship between violence and the individuals accused of provoking it must be established through credible evidence.

The answer, therefore, lies neither in giving the police unchecked powers nor in making the administration excessively cautious. What is required is lawful firmness, institutional accountability and evidence-based policing. The State must act decisively against violence, but it must also ensure that every such action is legally sustainable. Police officers must be accountable, but they must also be given the institutional confidence to discharge their responsibilities without the fear that every difficult operational decision will subsequently be viewed in isolation. Courts, too, have a vital role in maintaining this balance. Judicial scrutiny protects individual liberty and prevents misuse of State power. But the larger institutional objective should also be to ensure that legitimate law-enforcement action is not rendered ineffective by an atmosphere in which officers become reluctant to act when public order is genuinely under threat. The police must remain restrained, but not paralysed. The administration must remain accountable, but not helpless. The judiciary must protect individual liberty, while recognising that public order is the foundation upon which those freedoms can meaningfully exist. The day the distinction between democratic protest and anarchy disappears, the consequences will not be borne by the police, administration or judiciary alone. The entire country will ultimately have to pay the price.

The writer is a former Director General of Police, Uttarakhand



The rupee and the school bell



DEBDULAL THAKUR

SHRABANI MUKHERJEE

India has chosen to protect part of its tax revenue for education. Indeed, an important commitment. However, the latest parliamentary data invite a second question: once money is raised for education, does it reach the system at the time when schools can use it best?

On August 10, 2026, the Ministry of Education told the Lok Sabha that the education share of the Health and Education Cess was ₹63,252.86 crore in 2024-25 and ₹65,890.50 crore in 2025-26. It also reported utilisation of ₹40,900 crore and ₹48,049.09 crore through the Prarambik Shiksha Kosh, and ₹11,162.60 crore and ₹10,314.31 crore through the Madhyamik and Uchchatar Shiksha Kosh.

These numbers need care. The gap between annual collections and utilisation cannot simply be called "unspent money". Reserve funds can carry balances across years. A sound assessment requires the opening balance, fresh credits, with-

drawals and closing balance. The real policy question is therefore not whether a single year's figures match, but whether the full flow of money can be tracked from collection to eventual use.

It's a long flow. Cess proceeds move through designated reserve funds; schemes receive budget support; States prepare annual plans; approvals are made; State contributions are matched; and releases follow after financial conditions are met. Under Samagra Shiksha, these include the pace of earlier expenditure, audited accounts, utilisation certificates and receipt of the State share. These are legitimate safeguards, not needless paperwork.

However, education has a feature that public finance cannot ignore — timing changes value. A textbook arriving after the first term is not equivalent to one available on the first day. A roof repaired after the rains does not undo classes already disrupted. A delayed payment can affect teachers, vendors or school services even if the account is eventually settled. This is why timeliness should be treated as part of financial performance, not as an administrative after-



thought. Significantly, NEP 2020 itself recognised that education funds are often not spent in time at district and institutional levels and called for a "smooth, timely and appropriate flow of funds". The argument, therefore, is not against existing policy; it is for carrying one of its own principles further.

Responsibility is shared. The Centre must make releases as predictable as possible. States must provide their matching share, submit accounts on time, improve procurement and avoid weak execution. A delayed transfer at one level can become an unspent balance at another. Looking

only at the Centre or only at the States risks confusing where the bottleneck actually lies.

The federal setting makes this more important. The Sixteenth Finance Commission retained States' share of the divisible pool at 41%, while purpose-specific cesses remain outside that pool. It also reported that States' education expenditure was between 2.2 per cent and 2.5 per cent of GDP over 2011-12 to 2023-24. This should not be compared directly with NEP 2020's 6 per cent goal, which refers to combined public investment by the Centre and the States. Adequate funding and efficient execution are different policy problems.

The case for better reconciliation is also practical. CAG's 2025 Union Government audit found that Ministry of Finance figures for combined transfers to designated Health and Education Cess reserve funds did not match amounts reflected in the Union Government Finance Accounts for 2018-19 to 2023-24, and called for reconciliation. That is an accounting issue, not evidence of misuse.

Three practical improvements might strengthen the system without weakening accountabil-

ity. First, publish one annual reconciliation showing cess collections, transfers to reserve funds, opening and closing balances, scheme allocations, releases and actual expenditure. Second, map major school expenditures to the academic calendar, so time-sensitive items are released before they lose part of their value. Third, create an early-warning dashboard identifying States or components at risk of missing release conditions, allowing problems to be corrected before they affect schools.

The World Bank has similarly noted that delayed fund releases, complex financial requirements and procurement problems can hold back books, teaching materials and other resources at school level. The lesson is modest but important: 'budget execution is part of education policy, not merely an accounting exercise'. India does not need to choose between financial discipline and educational continuity. It needs both. Earmarking can protect the purpose of a rupee; good public finance must also protect its timing.

For a child, this distinction is simple. The value of education spending is realised not when money is collected, but when the teacher, textbook and classroom are available when learning is supposed to begin. After all, the school bell cannot wait for the treasury!

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Hero Motors IPO fully subscribed on day one

The initial public offer of auto parts maker Hero Motors Ltd was fully subscribed on the first day of bidding on Wednesday. The ₹1,000-crore IPO received bids for 9,75,33,498 shares against 8,86,07,596 shares on offer, registering 1.10 times subscription, according to NSE data till 14:42 hours. The retail investors' category was subscribed 1.83 times, while the quota for non-institutional investors received 86 per cent subscription. The portion for qualified institutional buyers (QIBs) was subscribed 1 per cent. Hero Motors Ltd on Tuesday garnered nearly ₹300 crore from anchor investors. The company has fixed a price band of ₹79-84 per equity share for its ₹1,000-crore IPO, which will remain open for subscription till September 18. The IPO comprises a fresh issue of equity shares aggregating up to ₹600 crore and an offer-for-sale (OFS) of shares worth up to ₹400 crore by promoters. Under the OFS, OP Munjal Holdings will divest shares worth ₹395 crore, while Hero Cycles Ltd will sell shares worth ₹5 crore. Of the fresh issue proceeds, ₹190 crore will be used for repayment or prepayment of certain outstanding borrowings, while ₹200 crore will be utilised for purchasing equipment required for capacity expansion at the company's facility in Gautam Buddha Nagar, Uttar Pradesh. (PTI)

Delhi tops India Electric Mobility Index 2025

Delhi has retained its top position in India Electric Mobility Index 2025, which captures the extent of electric vehicles adoption across states and UTs, followed by Maharashtra and Karnataka. According to a report by Niti Aayog based on the index, Delhi recorded the highest overall score in the country at 84, followed by Maharashtra (78), Karnataka (73), Chandigarh (71) and Goa (65). Among large states, Maharashtra and Karnataka were the leading performers, while Manipur ranked the highest among the hilly and northeastern states, as per the report titled 'India Electric Mobility Index 2025: Tracking Electric Mobility Trends in Indian States'. Among UTs and City States, Delhi, Chandigarh and Goa performed substantially better than their peers, with the category exhibiting the widest internal variation - the highest- and lowest-ranked territories were separated by more than 70 points. The India Electric Mobility Index (IEMI) is a composite index assessing both the policy framework and implementation outcomes for e-mobility at the subnational level. The report covered three themes Transport Electrification Progress, Charging Infrastructure Readiness and EV Research and Innovation Status. "In transport electrification progress, three states and UTs-Delhi, Chandigarh and Maharashtra-were in the top performer category, while 14 of the 36 jurisdictions were in the aspirants category," it said. The report said charging infrastructure readiness presented comparatively stronger performance, with Karnataka recording the highest score nationally at 97 and six states and UTs achieving top performer status. (PTI)

RBI absorbs ₹2.90 lakh crore via two VRRR auctions amid huge surplus liquidity

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ Mumbai

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on Wednesday absorbed ₹2.90 lakh crore through two variable rate reverse repo (VRRR) auctions from the banking system amid a huge surplus. In the first auction, the central bank received bids worth ₹3,17,088 crore for a notified amount of ₹2.50 lakh crore. However, it accepted only ₹2,50,025 crore at a cut-off and weighted average rate of 5.24 per cent. The central bank received a tepid response in the second auction with bids worth ₹40,302 crore for a notified amount of ₹1 lakh crore, which it accepted fully. The RBI, since last month, has been conducting various VRRR auctions in order to

absorb surplus liquidity from the banking system and align the overnight money market rates to the repo rate. Currently, liquidity in the banking system is estimated to be in surplus of around ₹9.85 lakh crore as on September 15. Apart from VRRR, last week, the central bank announced

The Pioneer

DEHRADUN | THURSDAY | SEPTEMBER 17, 2026

UPI MDR may attract 18% GST, merchants to get input credit

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ New Delhi

Merchants would have to pay 18 per cent GST on the Merchant Discount Rate (MDR) charges for UPI payments above ₹2,000, but can claim input tax credit (ITC), thereby easing the overall tax burden, tax experts said on Wednesday.

Effective October 15, UPI payments to merchants (P2M) above ₹2,000 will attract a 0.4 per cent merchant discount rate with an overall cap of ₹300. Besides, a flat concessional MDR rate of ₹5 would be applicable on specific merchant categories such as rail-ways, telecom services, insurance, and fuel for transaction above ₹2,000.

The share of P2M UPI transactions above ₹2,000 has steadily increased from 15.1 per cent in FY23 to 20.1 per cent in the June quarter of FY27, reflecting a sustained shift towards higher-value merchant payments on UPI.

Under the proposed framework, the MDR would be borne by the merchants as a charge for payment settlement services. Since the charge is to be borne by merchants for processing and settling digital payment transactions through the payment

network, the 18 per cent GST on the service will be applicable on the merchants.

AMRG Global Managing Partner Rajat Mohan said the introduction of MDR on UPI transactions exceeding ₹2,000 brings significant GST implications for India's digital payment ecosystem.

Under the statutory framework, these payment settlement services will now attract an 18 per cent GST on the MDR billed to merchants. The proposed MDR charges could generate an estimated ₹3,500-₹4,000 crore in annual GST collections, thus unlocking substantial revenue for the exchequer.

"However, the regulatory structure provides crucial relief: registered merchants absorbing these fees can claim Input Tax Credit (ITC) on the GST paid, heavily softening their overall tax burden," Mohan said.

Nangia Global, Executive Director - Indirect Tax, Sivakumar Ramjee, said under this framework, GST will not touch the core transaction value; instead, 18 per cent GST will apply strictly to the 0.4 per cent merchant fee.

"For large, GST-registered enterprises, this tax creates minimal friction as it qualifies fully for Input Tax Credit, effectively neutralising the tax hit. Concurrently, strict

exemptions for small vendors and transactions under ₹2,000 completely insulate the grass-roots retail economy," Ramjee said.

Ramjee said merchants with output tax liability in Goods and Services Tax (GST) system will be able to claim ITC. But, those who are dealing with exempt goods and services under GST, for such merchants the GST burden on MDR charges will have to be borne by them.

According to Ramjee, at the current transaction volumes, where high-value P2M payments comprise a significant share of UPI's financial value, this tax-on-MDR model is projected to generate over ₹5,000 crore annually in fresh GST revenue for the exchequer.

This structural update strikes a calculated balance: it builds a lucrative revenue stream for the Government and funds payment infrastructure, all while preserving the zero-fee experience that drives India's retail digital adoption, Ramjee added.

EY India, Tax Partner, Saurabh Agarwa, said the 18 per cent GST will be leviable on MDR charges which will be recovered by the banks from the merchant.

Sensex climbs 332.63, Nifty ends 23,217

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ Mumbai

Market benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty rebounded on Wednesday on value buying after falling sharply in the previous session, with bank stocks driving the rally in equities.

The 30-share BSE Sensex climbed 332.63 points, or 0.45 per cent, to settle at 74,336.45. During the day, it jumped 502.04 points, or 0.67 per cent, to 74,505.86.

The 50-share NSE Nifty was up 99 points, or 0.43 per cent, to end at 23,217.60.

Among the 30 Sensex firms, ITC, State Bank of India, Axis Bank, Trent, Mahindra & Mahindra and Bharat Electronics were the major winners.

Tata Consultancy Services, Infosys, Tech Mahindra and Bajaj Finserv were among the laggards.

"Indian equities staged a measured recovery on Wednesday, supported by value buying in banking stocks and select heavy-weight counters following Tuesday's sharp decline. Bank Nifty led the rebound, reclaiming the 56,000 mark and providing the principal support to the benchmark indices," Hariselman

Radhakrishnan, Founder and CEO of HST Wealth, a Research Analyst firm, said.

However, the recovery lacked strong momentum as Brent crude remained elevated between \$107 and 108 a barrel and the US 10-year Treasury yield held near 5 per cent ahead of the Federal Reserve's policy announcement, he added.

ACES India enables 5G for Jio at Noida Airport in 25-year partnership

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ New Delhi

The long-term agreement brings ACES India's neutral-host connectivity infrastructure to Noida International Airport, supporting 4G and 5G services across passenger, operational and outdoor areas.

ACES India and Reliance Jio have entered into a 25-year agreement to enable advanced 4G and 5G connectivity at Noida International Airport, marking a significant long-term partnership around the airport's digital connectivity infrastructure.

Under the agreement, ACES India will deploy an integrat-

ed In-Building Solutions (IBS) and outdoor telecom infrastructure network across the airport, covering passenger terminals, operational areas and outdoor environments.

The infrastructure will provide reliable mobile connectivity to support passengers, airport stakeholders and day-to-day operations, while meeting the growing demand for connected devices, digital applications and mobile services across the airport ecosystem.

Dr Akram Aburas, Group CEO, ACES, said: "Connectivity is now an integral part of modern airport infrastructure, supporting both the passenger

experience and the way airports operate. Our partnership with Reliance Jio at Noida International Airport reflects the importance of building a strong connectivity foundation that can support the airport over the long term."

Mohammad N. Mazher,

Managing Director, ACES India, said:

"Noida International Airport is being developed as a major aviation hub, with technology and connectivity playing an important role from the outset. Our partnership with Reliance Jio brings together

Dampener for festive season: Retailers on UPI MDR

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ New Delhi

The Retailers Association of India (RAI) on Wednesday said the Government's move to impose a 0.4 per cent Merchant Discount Rate (MDR) could reverse gains in digital payment adoption among small retailers ahead of the festive season.

On Tuesday, ending nearly six years of fully free UPI payments, the Government introduced a 0.4 per cent fee on transfers worth more than ₹2,000 made to merchants through the platform from October 15, while explicitly ring-fencing everyday person-to-person transactions as well as small payments from any charge.

The MDR, capped at ₹300 for transactions of ₹75,000 and above, keeps consumers outside its ambit but places the cost on merchants, many of whom operate on thin margins, RAI said.

"For MSME retailers already running on thin margins, burden creates a straightforward incentive to steer transactions back toward cash," it said. RAI, in its statement warned that the charge "could undo years of progress in digital payment adoption" among India's smallest retailers, just as the festive season

gets underway.

"Small merchants will now think twice about whether to accept cash or UPI," said RAI CEO Kumar Rajagopalan.

RAI said the shift back to cash would also hurt the Government's own formalisation push, as transactions that move off the UPI network no longer feed into GST reporting, the opposite of what a decade of digitisation policy has tried to build.

"This cuts against the Government's own formalisation agenda. UPI acceptance should be incentivised, not taxed," Rajagopalan said.

Rupee slips 3 paise against US dollar

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ Mumbai

The rupee stayed weak for the seventh consecutive session, declining 3 paise to 95.91 against the US dollar on Wednesday, tracking a strong greenback overseas and foreign fund outflows.

Forex traders said the rupee's slide was capped by positive domestic equity markets, even as crude oil prices remained elevated amid escalating US-Iran conflict. At the interbank foreign exchange market, the rupee opened at 95.89 and moved in the range of 95.85 to 95.98 against the greenback. The unit finally settled 3 paise lower at 95.91 against the American currency.

The local unit ended 34 paise lower at 95.88 against the American currency on Tuesday, after weakening by 113 paise, or more than 1

per cent, in the preceding five sessions since the closing level of 94.43 on September 4.

Anuj Choudhary, Research Analyst at Mirae Asset Sharekhan, said the local currency declined on a positive dollar ahead of the Federal Open Market Committee (FOMC) decision. "Elevated crude oil prices

and rising US Treasury yields also pressurised the rupee. Rising crude oil prices have led to higher demand for dollars by importers. However, positive domestic markets cushioned the downside," Choudhary said, adding that "USD-INR spot price is expected to trade in a range of Rs 95.75 to ₹96.20".

Meanwhile, the dollar index, which gauges the greenback's strength against a basket of six currencies, was trading 0.04 per cent higher at 99.38.

The dollar gained strength amid market expectations of a hike in interest rates by the US Federal Reserve, which will announce its monetary policy decision later in the day. Brent crude, the global oil benchmark, was trading lower by 1.14 per cent but remained elevated at \$107.51 per barrel in futures trade.

the infrastructure and connectivity capabilities required to support this vision.

For ACES India, it is an important project that demonstrates the value of neutral-host infrastructure in large and complex environments."

The 25-year agreement provides a long-term framework for connectivity at Noida International Airport, with infrastructure designed to support the airport's evolving operational requirements and the continued growth of mobile and digital services.

The partnership also reinforces ACES India's role in developing neutral-host connectivity infrastructure for

large-scale environments, helping create a shared connectivity platform that can serve the needs of multiple stakeholders as the airport develops.

ACES India is a leading provider of integrated digital infrastructure and connectivity solutions, delivering advanced indoor and outdoor connectivity systems for airports, metros, commercial developments and other high-density environments. Part of the ACES Group, the company specialises in designing and deploying reliable, scalable connectivity infrastructure across critical and high-traffic locations.

Coal Ministry to launch commercial mine auctions

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ New Delhi

The Coal Ministry will launch the 16th round of commercial coal mine auctions on Thursday, with an aim to generate more employment and attract new investments into the sector.

The latest round will offer a fresh set of fully explored and partially explored coal blocks, the ministry said in a statement on Wednesday. Commercial coal mining was launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in 2020.

"The 16th round is expected to carry this progress forward by bringing additional coal blocks into production, generating further employment and attracting new investment into the sector," the statement said.

Over the past six years, across fifteen completed rounds, 147 coal mines have been successfully auctioned, bringing 44 new companies into the sector.

The auctioned mines are expected to generate annual revenue of approximately ₹47,500 crore, attract

capital investment of nearly ₹55,000 crore and create around 4.9 lakh employment opportunities across coal-bearing states.

The framework continues to operate under liberal terms, with no end-use restrictions, 100 per cent FDI permitted through the automatic route and low upfront payments adjustable against future revenue share, the ministry said.

As per official data, India's coal production from captive and commercial mines reached 210.46 MT as of March 2026, registering a robust year-on-year growth of 10.22 per cent over 190.95 MT in the previous fiscal.

During FY26, 12 captive and commercial coal blocks were operationalised through the grant of Mine Opening Permission (MOP), significantly expanding the operational coal mining base by adding more than 86 MT of annual production capacity.

In 2023-24, the coal production was at 147.11 MT and in FY23, the country's dry fuel output was at 115.78 MT.

Restoring trust: Taiwan’s rightful place in the free world



DR LIN CHIA-LUNG

The rules-based international order is under growing strain as authoritarian States seek to weaken its safeguards and reshape international rule to serve their own interests. Even the fundamental principles of peaceful settlement of disputes and prohibition against the threat or use of force, which are enshrined in the United Nations Charter, have been openly challenged and flagrantly flaunted.

Today, the international community stands at a critical juncture. Either we act together to uphold justice, defend the rule of law, and maintain peace and security, or we watch the world

order steadily crumble away, taking freedom, self-determination, and democracy with it.

There are few places where this choice is more starkly presented than in the first island chain of the Indo-Pacific. The region's security has come under growing pressure from China, which continues to deploy gray-zone tactics—including military intimidation, cyber intrusions, and economic coercion—in an attempt to unilaterally reshape the existing rules and norms.

Standing on the front line of defense of freedom and democracy, Taiwan will continue to firmly uphold the status quo. However, preserving peace and stability in the region is not just in Taiwan's interests. It is a shared concern of the international community.

The Taiwan Strait is one of the world's busiest shipping lanes and a major artery for interna-

tional supply chains. Its significance to global security and prosperity is reflected in statements from the G7 and other summits and ministerial-level meetings between Japan, the United States, the United Kingdom, Australia, New Zealand, and other countries.

They make up a growing chorus of voices worldwide that underline the importance of cross-strait peace and stability.

The integrity of the rules-based order is also being undermined by China's deliberate misrepresentation of UN General Assembly Resolution 2758.

Adopted in 1971, the resolution covers the question of China's representation at the UN. The text does not mention Taiwan, determine its political status, or address its participation in the UN system.

Yet China has conspired to

conflate UNGA 2758 with the so-called "one China principle" and use the resolution to block Taiwan's participation in the UN and other international organisations. If left unchecked, this distortion could set a dangerous legal precedent and serve as a pretext for future military action across the Taiwan Strait.

Despite its exclusion from the UN, Taiwan is determined to act as a force for good. The strengths that Taiwan possesses in advanced manufacturing, disaster preparedness, and public health could contribute to the international community in many ways.

Taiwan has pursued an integrated and value-added foreign policy based on strengthening democratic alliances, promoting collective security, and building economic resilience.

Working with like-minded part-

ners, Taiwan advances democracy, human rights, and freedom worldwide. As a leader in semiconductors, artificial intelligence, and technology, Taiwan is committed to building supply chains that are secure, resilient, and free from dependence on authoritarian regimes.

Through its Diplomatic Allies Prosperity Project, Taiwan fosters prosperity with its partners.

Taiwan contributes its expertise and resources to technology-driven projects in cooperation with its diplomatic allies to address development challenges and enhance local capacities.

Concrete examples include collaboration on an integrated healthcare information system with Paraguay, the construction of a strategic oil reserve facility in Eswatini, and collaboration with Palau National Hospital on smart

healthcare. These initiatives have strengthened data management and efficiency, bolstered energy security, fostered industrial growth, and advanced sustainable development.

Khalilur Rahman, President-elect of the upcoming 81st UN General Assembly, has made restoring trust and managing institutional transformation the overarching themes of his presidency. Taiwan shares these objectives and stands ready to help realize them. Restoring confidence in the UN must begin with treating every member of the international community in a fair and just way.

Transformation cannot be complete while a constructive and trustworthy member remains unjustly excluded. We are calling on the international community to uphold the principles of inclusiveness, leaving no one behind,

settling disputes peacefully, and neither threatening nor using force. These imperatives underpin the rules-based international order and should be applied consistently and without exception.

The free world needs Taiwan—and a stronger, more credible United Nations needs Taiwan's meaningful participation.

Working hand in hand with Taiwan will strengthen collective security, enhance economic and technological resilience, and build our shared capacity to withstand authoritarian pressure.

Ensuring Taiwan's meaningful participation in the United Nations is therefore essential to building a more inclusive, secure, resilient, and rules-based international order.

The author is Minister of Foreign Affairs ROC (Taiwan)

Russian drone strike kills 5 on passenger bus in Ukraine

HANNA ARHIROVA ■ Kyiv

A Russian drone struck a passenger bus in southern Ukraine early on Wednesday, killing five people and wounding at least seven. President Volodymyr Zelenskyy described the attack, the latest in a series of Russian strikes on civilian transportation, as an "atrocious."

The strike occurred in the Nikopol district of Ukraine's Dnipropetrovsk region, near the war's southern front line. Oleksandr Hanzha, head of the regional military administration, said all five were killed at the scene while the seven wounded were receiving medical care.

In a post on social media site X, Zelenskyy described the vehicle as a minibus and said the strike had "no military rationale," and that the incident was connected to Russia's targeting of logistics and critical infrastructure that has continued "unabated."

Zelenskyy said a passenger train was also struck in the Mykolaiv region on Wednesday, damaging a railway station and a diesel locomotive. Nearly 170 passengers on board the train were evacuated before the strike. An electric locomotive in the northwestern city of Kovel was also struck, Zelenskyy said. Russian strikes on Ukraine's rail network have resulted in over 500 locomotives being damaged or com-



Firefighters put out a fire at private homes following a Russian air attack in Sumy, Ukraine on Wednesday

pletely destroyed since the beginning of the war in February 2022, with more than half those strikes occurring this year, Ukrainian Foreign Minister Andrii Sybiha wrote on X.

Sybiha described such attacks as "systematic" and aimed at disrupting logistics across Ukraine. He said Ukraine urgently needs replacements for damaged locomotives, and called on the country's partners to assist in finding locomotives compatible with its 1,520-millimetre rail gauge and to assist in financing.

In another post on X on Wednesday, Sybiha said Russian forces were striking passenger trains, locomotives, stations and railway routes "knowing exactly how essential they are for civilians, evacuations, and Ukraine's economy." "This is not collateral damage. It is a systematic hunt for people and an

attempt to paralyse civilian life," he wrote. In an interview with CBS News on Tuesday, Zelenskyy pushed back against an earlier claim by US President Donald Trump that Ukraine and Russia had agreed to mutually cease attacks on each other's energy infrastructure.

In the CBS interview, Zelenskyy said the possibility of an energy truce was discussed during a recent meeting in Kyiv with Trump's representatives Steve Witkoff and Jared Kushner, but that he had told them: "If the Russians are ready for an energy truce, that means there will be no attacks on energy facilities at all."

The deputy head of the Russian armed forces' military-political department, Lt. Gen. Apti, confirmed that a decorated Russian general had been killed by a Ukrainian drone in the occupied Donetsk region. (AP)

Saudi calls Mecca red line as Houthis accused of drone attack

ASSOCIATED PRESS ■ Cairo

Saudi Arabia accused Yemen's Iran-backed Houthi rebels of trying to attack Islam's holiest city, as the region responded with condemnation Wednesday but no sign of military support. The kingdom, a key US ally, declared Mecca a "red line" as it slid deeper into the new front of the Iran war.

With the world's biggest oil exporter under fire from the rebels backed by the Saudis' regional adversary, the kingdom needs a safe outlet for its crude as well as military assistance. There's no clear path to either.

A crucial Saudi pipeline has been shut down, reportedly for weeks, after an attack by Iranian-backed militias in Iraq. The Houthis have been targeting infrastructure in the kingdom and its shipping on the Red Sea, where they have seized several islands in the Bab el-Mandeb Strait.

And Iran is still targeting ships in the Strait of Hormuz. Oil prices remain above \$100 a barrel.

The Houthis denied firing drones toward Mecca, about 1,100 kilometres (680 miles) from Yemen's border. The Saudis said they intercepted and destroyed the drone before it entered the airspace over the birthplace of the Prophet Muhammad.

Criticism also came from the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation, representing over 57 Muslim states, which said the attempt violates the "sanctity of holy sites." This



Pickup trucks travel in a mass funeral procession for Houthi officers and other military personnel in Yemen

was the second attempted attack by the Houthis against Mecca after the rebels fired a ballistic missile toward the city in 2017, according to Col Turki al-Maliki, spokesperson for the Saudi-led military coalition fighting the rebels.

Later Wednesday, the rebels claimed, without offering evidence, that they shot down an F-15 fighter jet operated by the Saudi-led coalition over Yemen's central province of Marib.

Houthi military spokesperson Brig Gen Yahya Saree didn't say when it occurred, and The Associated Press could not independently verify the

claim. The rebels at times take days to claim attacks. Spokespeople for the Saudi-led coalition and the Saudi Government didn't immediately respond to a request for comment.

The United States has sold billions of dollars in weapons to Saudi Arabia and has committed to providing training and other support to protect the kingdom, but top US officials in recent days have indicated a lack of desire to get involved in the conflict.

"The Houthis called us, and they don't want to fight with us," US President Donald Trump said Saturday, adding

that the rebels appear focused on the Saudis.

Vice President JD Vance on Monday said Washington had been in "constant contact" with the Saudis and had been "engaged in direct conversations with the Houthis themselves," calling it "a very fluid and dynamic thing" to be monitored.

On the ground, forces with Yemen's internationally recognised Government have said they are regrouping to combat the Houthis after fleeing the rebels' advance. But those forces are a collection of armed groups with varying aims.

The number of Yemeni

ABBAS ARAGHCHI MEETS WANG YI

Beijing: Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi called on the US and Iran to exercise restraint and reopen the Strait of Hormuz as soon as possible, and expressed China's concern about the spread of the fighting to Yemen and the Red Sea, according to China's Foreign Ministry.

Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi said in a statement after the meeting that Tehran seeks "the restoration of calm to the region and friendly and peaceful relations with our neighbors." "In this regard we have begun dialogue with the countries of the region," he added. China has avoided direct involvement in the war, but President Xi Jinping at the BRICS summit over the weekend again offered Beijing's help in ending it. Oil flows through the Hormuz have recovered somewhat as tankers risk using a route near Oman on the other side of the waterway, with guidance from US forces. Estimates vary because ships can turn off location systems but range from 5 million to 7 million barrels per day on average. (AP)

civilians fleeing the fighting in the Arab world's poorest country soared once again to over 100,000 people, the International Organisation for Migration said, as fears grow over a return to civil war.

EAM Jaishankar discusses development partnership with Bhutanese counterpart

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ Thimphu

India and Bhutan discussed development partnership, energy, trade and connectivity as External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar held talks with his Bhutanese counterpart DN Dhungyel in Bumthang on Wednesday.

Jaishankar is on a two-day official visit to Bhutan starting Wednesday, during which he will also call on the King of Bhutan Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck and the Prime Minister of Bhutan Tshering Tobgay. "Delighted to meet @FMBhutan Lyonpo D N Dhungyel and jointly review our wide-ranging cooperation. Thank him for hosting



External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar with Bhutan Foreign Minister DN Dhungyel during the foundation stone laying ceremony of the 500 KW Lunana Hydropower Project in Gasa district, Bhutan

me in the spiritual and historical centre of Bumthang," Jaishankar posted on X. "Our conversation focused on

advancing our multifaceted engagement in development partnership, energy, trade, connectivity, culture and

people-to-people ties. Today's discussions reflected the trust, goodwill and warmth of our ties," he said.

EAM also inaugurated a couple of projects, including a 65-bed Gyaltsuen Jetsun Pema Mother and Child Hospital in Mongar. "The state-of-the-art facility will strengthen access to quality, maternal and child care in Bhutan," he posted on X.

Jaishankar also inaugurated the Jaganathan Bridge in Samdrup Jongkhar, built under Project Dantak.

"The Bhutan-India friendship project will improve connectivity between Trashigang and Samdrup Jongkhar in eastern Bhutan," the EAM said.

Indian worker loses leg in Israel construction accident

HARINDER MISHRA ■ Jerusalem

An Indian worker has lost his left leg in an accident at a construction site in Jerusalem after tiles being lifted by a crane fell on him.

Sharwan Kumar Warma, 36, from Rajasthan, lost his left leg in the accident last Wednesday and is being treated at Hadassah Hospital in Ein Kerem, Jerusalem.

Warma's colleagues from India told PTI that his "leg was severed from his body at the construction site itself the very moment tiles fell on him from a crane whose belt got torn midway in the air". "He received emergency treatment at the site and was then transferred to the hospital in an unconscious state," one of them said.

He was initially admitted to the neurosurgery department but was transferred to a general ward on Tuesday after "starting to respond and speak somewhat", his colleagues said.

An executive at the company where



Warma works said that he is "fully covered through insurance" and that the company is also involving Bituah Leumi (National Insurance) "so that he can get the best possible care".

The incident has raised concerns among Indian workers over workplace

safety and compensation in case of workplace accidents.

The Indian embassy in Israel sent officials to check on the worker at the hospital. "The embassy is in touch with concerned officials to make sure that the worker is looked after properly," the mission said.

Meanwhile, ambassadors and representatives from the Philippines, Thailand, Sri Lanka, Fiji, Singapore, Vietnam and Nepal met at the Philippine Embassy on Tuesday to discuss issues affecting foreign workers in Israel.

The group emphasised the need for coordinated efforts to address issues including safety and security, compensation, emergency re-entry visas and workplace accidents, as well as other concerns affecting the well-being and protection of foreign workers in Israel.

There are more than 40,000 Indian workers in Israel, with several thousand more expected to join them as the country faces an acute labour shortage. (PTI)

Gold mine collapse kills at least 67 people, many more missing in Sudan

ASSOCIATED PRESS ■ Cairo

A gold mine collapse in a remote area in Sudan has killed at least 67 people, a medical group and survivors said on Wednesday, the latest tragedy in a nation mired in a devastating war.

The survivors said the collapse took place at al-Zara gold mine in the town of Nuhud in West Kordofan province, which is controlled by the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces that have been fighting against the Sudanese military for over three years.

The Sudan Doctors Network, a medical group



tracking the war in Sudan, provided the death toll and said it could increase as rescuers continued to search for people trapped under the rubble. The group said the mine—an informal site that employs unregulated workers—lacked basic safety and protective measures.

Two survivors reached by phone and the physicians network said the tragedy took place on Tuesday evening. However, the Kordofan Observatory monitoring group said the collapse was on Sunday in a group of interconnected shafts at the mine that stretched over 1 kilometre (0.6 miles). The Observatory

said at least 70 miners were killed or missing at the site, which stretches across a wide swath of fragile, sandy soil.

It described the miners as unregulated and informal workers. The discrepancy in the accounts of when the collapse happened could not be immediately reconciled. Survivors said many people remain missing. Khairal-Sayed Gabara, one of the survivors, said the collapse was "massive," and that machinery needed to remove the collapsed soil and rubble was not available.

"We do not have the machinery to lift dirt and stones and search for survivors at depths of more than

30 meters," he said. "There were dozens of people working in the mine."

Al-Amin Suliman, one of the surviving miners, said they had recovered 60 bodies as of Wednesday morning, and that "there are still people stuck inside."

Sudan is a major gold producer but deadly mine collapses are not uncommon in the country, where safety standards are not widely applied. A 2023 collapse killed 14 miners and one in 2021 claimed 38 lives.

The collapsed mine is one of thousands of small-scale and informal mines scattered across Sudan, engulfed in a war that has at times pushed

parts of the country into famine. Large quantities of gold have been smuggled out of the country to finance the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces, or RSF, who control gold-producing areas in Darfur, Kordofan regions, according to experts commissioned by the United Nations.

Sudan plunged into an all-out war in April 2023 as fighting erupted between the RSF and the Sudanese military. The conflict has killed at least 59,000 people, according to Armed Conflict Location & Event Data, a monitoring group. Aid organizations say the figure is an undercount, and the true number could be many times higher.

Central Bank of India receives first Rajbhasha Kirti Award

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ New Delhi

The Central Bank of India was conferred the First Rajbhasha Kirti Award for its outstanding implementation of Official Language Hindi at the All India Rajbhasha Conference organised by the Department of Official Language, Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India, in Navi Mumbai on 14-15 September 2026.

During the conference, the Rajbhasha Shield, presented as the First Prize, was received by the Bank's Managing Director & CEO, Kalyan Kumar, from the Union Minister for Home Affairs and Cooperation, Amit Shah, in the presence of the Chief Minister of Maharashtra, Devendra Fadnavis, the Deputy Chief Minister, Eknath Shinde, and Sumitra Panwar. This honour is a proud recognition of the bank's sustained efforts towards effective implementation of the official language, promotion and propagation of Hindi,



and its continued commitment to the official language policy.

On this occasion, a special 'Heritage Edition' of the Bank's bilingual in-house magazine, 'Centralite', published to commemorate the completion of 100 years of the magazine, was released by the Minister of State for Official Language, Nityanand Rai, Bandi Sanjay Kumar, and Secretary, Department of Official Language, Anshuli Arya. The special edition showcases

the glorious heritage, growth journey, and institutional values of the Central Bank of India.

During the conference, the Bank also set up a special exhibition showcasing its glorious journey of 115 years. The exhibition attractively presented the Bank's heritage, innovation initiatives, achievements in the field of Official Language, and its development journey through various models and presentations. The exhibition effectively highlighted

not only the Bank's historical achievements but also its innovative approach to modern banking and its vision for the future.

On this significant occasion, the Bank's Managing Director & CEO, Kalyan Kumar, Executive Director, Mahendra Dohare, Chief General Manager-Rajbhasha, Kushal Pal, Assistant General Manager-Rajbhasha, Hitendra Dhumal, and Rajbhasha Officers posted across the country participated in the conference.

AI consolidated loss widens to ₹22,238 crore in FY26

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ New Delhi

Air India's consolidated loss widened to ₹22,238.23 crore in the fiscal ended March 2026 from ₹10,858.83 crore in the year-ago period amid multiple headwinds.

During the same period, total income declined to ₹71,869.94 crore against ₹78,635.61 crore in 2024-25, according to regulatory filings. The consolidated figures include financials of Air India Express.

Air India has been grappling with multiple challenges, including the fatal AI171 accident in June last year that killed 260 people, as well as geopolitical disruptions, airspace closures, fuel price volatility and various operational issues.

The regulatory filings showed that on a consolidated basis, total expenses jumped to ₹93,733.31 crore in the last financial year from ₹89,317.12 crore a year ago.

In 2025-26, aircraft repair and maintenance costs increased to ₹14,976.45 crore from ₹13,901.82 crore, while fuel expenses fell to ₹26,871.80 crore from



₹29,023.37 crore in the year-ago period. Foreign exchange loss rose to ₹7,388.23 crore in the last fiscal against ₹1,545.01 crore, the filings showed.

In the last fiscal, exceptional items stood at ₹429.05 crore, including an amount related to the fatal AI171 plane crash. According to the filings, the parent company is adequately covered under its aviation hull and liability insurance policies.

"The parent company has received the agreed amount from the insurer towards loss of aircraft and related incidental costs under its hull insurance. The net impact after the derecognition of the aircraft has been presented as an exception-

al item," one of the filings said. The filing said that based on the information currently available, the management believes that any financial liability arising from such claims is expected to be substantially covered by the parent company insurance policies.

"Accordingly, no material financial impact on the company's reserves and losses is presently expected..." it added. The financial statements for the 2025-26 fiscal year were approved on June 1, 2026.

On a standalone basis, Air India's loss widened to ₹15,367.75 crore in the fiscal year ended March 2026 from ₹3,975.75 crore in the year-ago period.

PanIIT AP summit to focus on deeptech, innovation

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ Vijayawada

Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu has called on young innovators, entrepreneurs, IIT alumni and technology leaders to contribute to the state's vision of a Swarna Andhra Pradesh, as the State prepares to host the PanIIT Andhra Pradesh Summit 2026 in Vijayawada on October 3.

"The energy, enterprise and ideas of our youth are the driving force behind our vision for a Swarna Andhra Pradesh!" Naidu said, highlighting Andhra Pradesh's emergence as a hub for future-facing technologies including artificial intelligence, quantum computing, DeepTech, space-tech, clean energy, data centres and advanced manufacturing.

PanIIT Alumni India Chairman Prabhat Kumar, IRS, said: "The State's global diaspora and potential in emerging technologies position it to become a major technology and innovation hub."

Vice Chairman Amitabh Ranjan highlighted, "Andhra Pradesh's coastline, mineral resources, connectivity and talent base are strategic advantages for technology-led growth."

Summit Chair Swadeep Pillarisetti said the



initiative seeks to connect technology, capital and skills across Government, industry and all 23 IITs, while co-chair Rajesh Dasari emphasised converting the state's strengths into actionable partnerships.

Among the distinguished participants are Sunil Kumar Barnwal, CEO, National Health Authority; Sai Prasad Guttapalli, Chief Secretary, Andhra Pradesh; Hitesh Garg, India MD, NXP Semiconductors; Professor Ravindran, Head of School of AI, IIT Madras; Amith Singhee, Asia Pacific CTO, IBM India & South Asia; Arun Ramchandani, Head, L&T Aerospace; Yaram Vijay Kumar, India MD, Honeywell Aerospace; Dr Giridhar Parvatam, CSIR-CFTRI; and Lalit Aggarwal, Managing Director, India Region, SLB.

CEPC holds 43rd annual general meeting

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ Noida

The Carpet Export Promotion Council (CEPC) held its 43rd Annual General Meeting (AGM) on 15 September 2026 at Hotel Radisson, Noida.

Capt Mukesh Gombar, chairman, CEPC, presided over the AGM. The meeting was attended by Aslam Mahboob, vice-chairman, CEPC, along with Mahavir Pratap Sharma, Mohd Wasif Ansari, Anil Kumar Singh, Sanjay Gupta, Piyush Kumar Baranwal, Bodh Raj Malhotra, Rohit Gupta, Sheikh Ashiq Ahmad, Mehraj Yasin Jan and Shukat Khan, Members of the Committee of Administration and Dr Smita Nagarkoti, Executive Director-cum-Secretary (officiating).

The AGM was also attended by Vijay Thakur, Cottage Crafts of India; RB Mathur, Warp + Weft International; Suman Kaul, Kashyap Carpets; Ashwani Tiwari, ANA International; Qayyum Abdul, Hannan's Oriental Rugs; Bilal Ahmad Kawoosa, Kashmir



Carpet Producer Co Ltd; Hilal Ahmad, Jansons; and Sunil Bazaz, Qaleen Alishan.

The General Body approved the following key matters:

Adoption of Balance Sheet
The General Body adopted the Audited Balance Sheet and Income & Expenditure Accounts of the Council for the year ended 31 March 2026, along with the Report of the Auditors.

Revision of Membership Fee Structure

The membership fee structure was reviewed and placed before the General

Body for consideration. Following deliberations, the General Body approved the revised Annual Membership Fee linked to export performance, with the following slabs: Export Performance Annual Membership Fee Up to ₹50 lakh ₹3,000 Above ₹50 lakh up to ₹1 crore ₹4,500 Above ₹1 crore up to ₹10 crore ₹6,500 Above ₹10 crore ₹12,000

Retirement by Rotation and Elections

The General Body approved the conduct of elections for one-third of the

Members of the Committee of Administration from the various categories. The election will be notified on 2 November 2026, with the elections to be conducted in December 2026.

Export Achievement Incentive for New Members

The General Body approved an Export Achievement Incentive for eligible new Members. A new Member achieving exports of ₹50 lakh or more during the first year of membership will be eligible for reimbursement of the ₹3,000 annual membership fee in the following year.

BRO moots strategies for infrastructure in North East

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ Guwahati

Jitendra Prasad, VSM, Additional Director General, Border Roads Organisation (Additional DGBR), addressed a special session on Wednesday at the Infra Build Northeast Conference organised by Indian Infrastructure at Guwahati on 16 September 2026.

Speaking on building roads in remote and difficult terrain, Prasad shared field insights from his 36 years of BRO's experience in the most challenging sectors, including the Northeast region.

He further stressed four key themes: Firstly, key challenges during the planning

and execution stage: Quality of DPRs, quality assurance, and maintenance post-construction were the challenges highlighted by him, secondly, new techniques & technology: use of LiDAR & drone surveys, AI and digital twins for project management, use of mechanised and automated machines/equipments, new generation pavement material, precast modular construction technology and specialised tech like Rejupave (Bio fuel) for cold climate and high altitude area were highlighted, thirdly bottlenecks and strategies: delays in utility shifting, extreme monsoon and short working season causes hindrances and frequent disruptions. He emphasised that all stakeholders should work in a synchronised manner to overcome them and, fourthly, priorities



and upcoming opportunities: prioritising strategic frontier connectivity, development of alternate axes to create redun-

dancy, by-passes to towns & cities, connecting tourism centres. He apprised regarding huge upcoming opportunities like high-speed economic corridors, road connectivity with ASEAN countries, Bridges over the Brahmaputra & other major rivers.

In his closing remarks he said, "Let us build the Infrastructure — that connects the remote villages — connects the border to meet the National Security — Connects the economic hubs to ensure economic growth & more importantly that connects aspiration with opportunities, North East with Nation, India with the World & for the India of 2047."

Govt seeks to end advance tipping on cabs

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ New Delhi

The Government has ordered cab aggregators to stop providing advance tipping options even before booking a ride as the practice is misleading and unfair, Consumer Affairs Secretary Nidhi Khare said on Wednesday. The secretary's comment comes a day after the Central Consumer Protection Authority (CCPA) slapped a Rs 10 lakh penalty on ride-hailing platform Rapido for various unfair business practices, including advance tipping for drivers.

The authority is currently examining the business practices of Uber and Ola.



Responding to queries related to taxi ride aggregators, Khare on Wednesday said the National Consumer Helpline has received a lot of complaints against them. "Consumers were) basically alleging that actually even before taking the ride, there was a concept of introducing an advance tip," she said, adding that consumers were being cajoled that unless

they pay the tip, they will not get the ride.

"Now this we found to be misleading and also an unfair trade practice. And after detailed investigation into the matter and also after hearing, we have ordered discontinuation of this kind of you know built-in mechanism," said the secretary, who also heads the CCPA.

DIRECTORATE
Uttarakhand Agriculture Produce Marketing Board
Mandi Bhawan, Rudrapur (U.S.Nagar) Ph:05944-250056 Fax: 05944-500059

Ref: U.K.A.P.M.B./2026/1547 Date: 16.09.2026

Cancellation Public Information

Uttarakhand Agriculture Produce Marketing Board, Rudrapur has invited auction for 1.20 acre land is hereby cancelled in Bhurarani Rudrapur and to be given on lease sent is hereby cancelled.

General Manager (Finance)

Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar
Engineering Department
Short Tender Notice
Tender Reference No. GNDU/ENGG/2026/09/03-08

The Engineering Department of Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar invites online bids for:-

(i) Construction of Toilet Block (He, She & Handicapped) within GNDU College Jalandhar Under Swachh Bharat Mission Urban 2.0 (ii) Construction of Toilet Block (He, She & Handicapped) within GNDU College Pathankot Under Swachh Bharat Mission Urban 2.0 (iii) Construction of Toilet Block (He, She & Handicapped) within GNDU College Verka Under Swachh Bharat Mission Urban 2.0 (iv) Construction of Toilet Block (He, She & Handicapped) within GNDU College Jalandhara Under Swachh Bharat Mission Urban 2.0 (v) Construction of Toilet Block (He, She & Handicapped) within GNDU College Phillaur Under Swachh Bharat Mission Urban 2.0 (vi) Renovation of Toilet (He & She) and Staff Toilet of GNDU College Verka.

Closing date & time: 28-09-2026 upto 04:00 pm
For details log onto www.eproc.punjab.gov.in
Note: Any Corrigendum/Addendum to the tender notice shall be published on the above website only.

2426/12/2026-27/115228 Dated CHD :- 16/09/2026

Gullak users can swap digital gold for Senco jewellery

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ Palampur

Senco Gold & Diamonds, a leading pan-India jewellery retailer with a legacy spanning over 87 years, and the largest jewellery retail player in Eastern India by number of showrooms with a whopping count of 189+showrooms, announced a significant step towards entering a strategic collaboration with Gullak.

Gullak and Senco Gold and Diamonds have partnered to enable Gullak users to redeem their accumulated digital gold against jewellery purchases at Senco Gold and Diamonds' elaborate network of retail showrooms across India.

Gullak is an Indian digital gold savings and



investment platform that makes gold savings simple, accessible, and technology-driven. The platform enables customers to invest in 24K, 99.9% pure digital gold through flexible savings options, including daily, weekly, and monthly SIPs, one-time investments, and automated savings plans.

Commenting on this, Dilip Jain co-founder of Gullak said, "Gullak is building a new generation of gold buyers — Customers who accumulate gold digitally and consistently but ultimately want the freedom to turn those savings into jewellery".

DD marks 67th Foundation Day with gala night

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ New Delhi

Doordarshan, India's iconic public service broadcaster, celebrated its 67th Foundation Day with a vibrant evening of music, dance and entertainment at Doordarshan Bhawan, Copernicus Marg, Mandi House, New Delhi.

The celebrations, themed "Doordarshan@67 — Kal Bhi Apna, Aaj Bhi Apna", commemorated Doordarshan's remarkable journey of over six decades and its enduring connect with generations of Indians.

The evening featured a special musical performance by Shikha Khare and her group. Adding to the evening was an engaging interaction with prominent artists associated with Doordarshan's upcoming television serials 'Sanskar' and 'Suraag 2.0'.



spectacular 'Rhythm Without Borders' fusion dance performance by Shikha Khare and her group. Adding to the evening was an engaging interaction with prominent artists associated with Doordarshan's upcoming television serials 'Sanskar' and 'Suraag 2.0'.

The interaction featured KC Bokadia, Mahesh Thakur, Aman Verma, Darshan Jariwala, Pankaj Berry, Sudesh Berry, Sai Ketan Rao, Jigyasa Singh and Rehan Shahrukh Mirzaibeg.

The celebrations were hosted by Namitaa Sachdeva and Ali Asgar, who

Customs should accelerate AI use: CBIC chief

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ New Delhi

The Customs department should accelerate the deployment of artificial intelligence, machine learning, and real-time analytics to reduce physical interface with trusted taxpayers, Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC) chairman Vivek Chaturvedi said on Wednesday.

Outlining 5 pillars for the Customs department to follow over the next decade, Chaturvedi said the CBIC intends to create a "unified, trusted taxpayer ecosystem" which records consistent compliance by businesses in GST, customs and other indirect tax payments. This would bring synergy across the indirect tax division.



CBIC chairman Vivek Chaturvedi

The CBIC chief also asked the customs department to handhold MSMEs and conduct outreach programmes so that small businesses can reap the benefits of customs deferred duty payment schemes like Eligible Manufacturer Importer (EMI) and also the Authorised Economic Operator (AEO).

Chaturvedi said technology should act as a "great enabler" for customs and the ambition should be to move towards a near-touchless, near-paperless experience for businesses registered as AEOs. Currently, there are over 6,000 entities, including importers, exporters, logistics providers, custodians or terminal operators, custom brokers and warehouse operators with AEO certificates.

AEO is a voluntary compliance programme, which enables Indian Customs to enhance and streamline cargo security through close cooperation with the principal stakeholders of the international supply chain.

BRIEFLY

F1 schedules 2027’s opening race in Bahrain despite uncertainty



Formula 1 plans to open the 2027 season in Bahrain even as uncertainty remains over this year’s races in the Middle East. F1 released a 24-race schedule for 2027 on Wednesday starting with the Bahrain Grand Prix on March 14 and then Saudi Arabia a week later, with events also scheduled for Qatar and Abu Dhabi at the end of the year. All have long-term contracts to host F1 and Bahrain also hosts preseason testing in February. Races in Bahrain and Saudi Arabia were called off this year due to the Iran war. An extra race in Malaysia next month will have Bahrain Grand Prix branding. The Qatar Grand Prix on Nov. 29 and the season-ending Abu Dhabi Grand Prix on Dec. 6 remain on the schedule. F1 has considered a change to Europe if they can’t go ahead but tickets remain on sale for both races. Bahrain has opened most F1 seasons in recent years and was only moved from that position in 2025 and 2026 because of a clash with the Muslim holy month of Ramadan. Next year’s schedule avoids clashes with two other auto racing highlights, the Indianapolis 500 on May 30 and the Le Mans 24-hour race on June 12-13. F1 scheduled races on the same days as both this year. Four-time F1 champion Max Verstappen has said he wants to race at Le Mans in future. F1 is also expanding from six to 10 sprint races in 2027, including a first at the Monaco Grand Prix, where overtaking is almost impossible. (PTI)

Millie, Mona, Avani win team gold at Para Shooting World title



Millie Shah, Mona Agarwal and Avani Lekhara combined to win gold medal in the R2 women’s 10m air rifle standing SH1 team event at the Changwon 2026 WSPS Para Shooting World Championships in South Korea recently. Rakesh Nidagundi, Anandha Krishna and Swaroop Unhalkar claimed silver in the R1 men’s 10m air rifle standing SH1 team event. They shot a combined total of 1856.3a across five series. The Indian women’s trio aggregated 1878.6 to win the top prize recently. Mona and Avani also won a silver and bronze respectively in the R2 women’s 10m air rifle standing SH1 event. (PTI)

Asian Games boxing medallists to get direct Worlds entry

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
■ New Delhi

Indian boxers finishing on the podium at the upcoming Asian Games will directly qualify for next year’s World Boxing Championships, which is the first Olympic qualifier for the 2028 Los Angeles Games, the BFI announced on Wednesday. The Boxing Federation of India (BFI) has released an expansive selection policy focused on having the maximum number of boxers for the LA Games. The policy lays down a four-stage pathway based on the qualification system developed by World Boxing and approved by the International Olympic

Committee (IOC), the BFI said in a media release. According to the World Boxing criteria, the 2027 World Boxing Championships will be the first qualifying event, followed by the Asian Qualifier in China and two World Qualifying Tournaments in 2028. “Asian Games 2026 medallists will be selected as the main entry in their respective weight categories. The gold medallists of the 10th Elite National Championships shall serve as the reserve entry in that weight category,” said the circular issued by BFI this week. According to the policy, for weight categories in which India has not won a



India's Lovlina Borgohain medal at the Asian Games as well as for LA 2028 Olympic weight categories that were not part of the Asian Games, FILE PHOTO

the gold medallist of the 10th Elite National Championships shall be selected as the main entry. Boxers who reach the quota bout round but fail to win a quota place at the World Championships will receive direct entry to the Asian Qualifiers. The remaining slots will be filled through a ranking selection trial among the national campers, after the boxers have entered the national coaching camp through the dedicated pathways. A similar process will be followed for the two World Qualifying Tournaments in 2028, to be held in Italy and Hungary. “This policy has been framed to give our boxers a clear and structured

route to Los Angeles 2028, built around consistent performance at the National Coaching Camp and at World Boxing’s qualification events,” said BFI President Ajay Singh. The national coaching camp will start with the medallist of 10th Elite National Championships, Asian Games medallists and any wild cards to be selected by the BFI selection committee, as per the provisions mentioned in the policy. For the non-Olympic weight categories, the gold medallist of the National Championships will serve as main entry to the 2027 World Championships, while the silver medallist will serve as the reserve.

Asian Games: Indian athletes start checking in, not completely hassle-free

PHILEM DIPAK SINGH
■ Nagoya (Japan)

Wushu and table tennis players, as well as a few shuttlers, were among the first Indian athletes to check in for the Asian Games here on Wednesday, but the process was not completely hassle-free. The seven-member wushu contingent, accompanied by two coaches, reached Nagoya in the afternoon. It is learnt that one player and two coaches did not find their names at venue during registration process. “Six wushu players got their rooms at the cruise ship docked at the Nagoya port. However, one player and two coaches did not have their names there,” a member of the contingent said that around two hours after reaching the venue for registration. An Indian Olympic Association (IOA) official, however, said all the players had got their rooms on the Italian cruise ship. The wushu and table tennis players are among the Indian athletes who are scheduled to stay on the cruise ship during the Games, which begin on Saturday. Both wushu and table tennis events start on Sunday and so they were



Wooden container units built to house athletes ahead of the Aichi-Nagoya 2026 Asian Games, in Nagoya, Japan FILE PHOTO

among the first to reach here. The table tennis contingent also underwent “a long process” before finally checking in at the cruise ship in the evening. “It is a long process after reaching the cruise,” a member of the table tennis contingent said. “But now things have settled.” There have been reports that the number of rooms earmarked for Indian athletes on the cruise ship is less than the number allotted, but this could not be independently confirmed. There are also reports that officials from the Philippines have been moved to Airbnbs due to a shortage of hotel accommodation. Deputy Chef de Mission Achantia Sharath Kamal simply said the athletes had

started checking in and that “there is not much of a problem.” India’s contingent of 501 athletes and 265 officials will be spread across container-style rooms, a docked cruise ship and hotels, much like the nearly 17,000 other participants who will be in Aichi-Nagoya for the Games beginning September 19. The container rooms have been criticised as too small by the South Korean contingent, while some Asian Cricket Council members have also voiced concerns over the quality of accommodation on offer. Around 4,000-5,000 athletes will be housed in the luxury cruise liner Costa Serena, which will be docked at Nagoya Port. (PTI)

Parveen returns to Asian Games with lost Hangzhou medal on her mind

APARAJITA UPADHYAY
■ New Delhi

Boxer Parveen Hooda is heading back to the Asian Games chasing a medal she once won but can no longer call her own, hoping to replace the bronze taken away from her due to a ban with another podium finish. The Indian pugilist won that bronze in the 57kg category in the Hangzhou Games in 2023, along with an Olympic quota for India, only to lose both after being handed a suspension. Since then, Parveen’s comeback has involved one adjustment after another – a new weight class, a couple of injuries, another move up and a quarterfinal exit at the Commonwealth Games. “Of course, yes,” the 26-year-old told PTI when asked if she has unfinished business at the Asian Games. The bronze has been gone for nearly two years. The memory of winning it has not. Neither has the feeling of what followed. Parveen was suspended by WADA for 22 months in May 2024 after three whereabouts failures within a 12-month period. The suspension, later backdated by 14 months, cost her the Asian



Parveen Hooda FILE PHOTO

Games medal and the Olympic quota she had secured for India. Her return has since been less about picking up where she left off and more about finding a new way forward. When she came back to international boxing in November last year, the 57kg category was no longer hers to reclaim. Jaismine Lamboria had won India’s Paris Olympic quota in the weight class and then gone on to claim the World Championship title. So Parveen moved to 60kg. She made the switch look seamless at the World Cup Final, winning gold. But another turn soon followed. An injury forced her to miss the Asian Championships earlier this year, where Priya

Ghanghas won the 60kg title and earned a direct Commonwealth Games qualification. Parveen had to move again. This time it was 65kg, the only feasible available slot in India’s Commonwealth Games team and the highest weight category she had competed in. The quarterfinal exit in Glasgow showed just how different the challenge was. “CWG was my first major competition in this weight category. There was some weight issue and strength was also low because this is a higher weight category than what I used to compete in,” she said. “I have worked on the mistakes I made then. But now I feel better in this weight,” she said. (PTI)

DAILY SUDOKU

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★★

HOW TO SOLVE IT

Sudoku is a logic puzzle where you fill a 9×9 grid so that numbers 1 to 9 appear once in every row, column, and 3×3 box, using elimination and logical deduction—no maths involved.

SOLUTION (16.9.26)

1	8	6	3	5	7	4	2	9
9	5	3	8	2	4	6	7	1
4	2	7	9	1	6	8	3	5
7	4	1	5	6	8	2	9	3
2	9	8	4	3	1	7	5	6
6	3	5	2	7	9	1	8	4
3	7	2	1	4	5	9	6	8
5	1	9	6	8	2	3	4	7
8	6	4	7	9	3	5	1	2

DOUBLE CROSSWORD
THURSDAY | SEPTEMBER 17, 2026

ACROSS

4 Dad’s attempt at baking? (6)

7 Port of Spain, where you can’t get caught in a lie! (8)

8 Wild nights aren’t what they used to be (6)

10 A cut at computing? (5)

13 As top man, he gets a bit of publicity (4)

14 Employee of an ancient emperor, briefly (4)

15 Young Simpson, entitled to “Sir”? (4)

16 The little that sank in (3)

17 Finished bowling? (4)

19 Either of the lads in prison for arson?

DOWN

1 In some way, it’s possibly belted (5)

2 Nominal hair-style for the male (5)

3 Might it be full of Avon water? (4)

4 He’s among the trumpeters, having no ability to strum (5)

5 Such lids can save cracking nuts (4)

6 Recover anew and make a profit (6)

9 In Alice in Wonderland, he couldn’t quite build a theatre (6)

11 Cricket side in a scrabble game (3)

12 Snappy film centre? (5)

13 Busy time, seen in a harsh sort of light

15 He’s big at Westminster (3)

21 Read about a terrible hound in history

23 In Piccadilly, a tasteful addition (4)

24 The “dash” needed in a singular game!

26 A world wide threat to insect life? (3)

27 Aptly enough, it goes with “22 Down” (4)

29 Burn the fish! (4)

32 Grand girl, high in the epicure’s appreciation (4)

33 The quiet individual did well (5)

34 Entreat a person to buzz off! (6)

35 Understood to make the grade (8)

36 A start in bed making? (6)

16 Try to buy a lot (3)

18 Immortal, but he needed an unusual amount of luck to get in front (6)

20 As a witness, be careful! (5)

21 Adam’s spare one? (3)

22 It links up toppingly with “27 Across”

23 It can make you fed up with a bit of a beating (6)

25 In prohibition, bank a thousand less (3)

28 The end of an alphabet (5)

30 An alluring female I have time for (5)

31 Prepared to go steady? (5)

32 Picture a Yankee in Indian territory (4)

33 So gets a little house in London (4)

SOLUTION (16.9.26)

ACROSS

1, S-wee-t.

6, Spate

9, Article

10, Jerry

11, Onset

12, Show-N

13, Liberty

15, Deb

17, Aled

18, U-nyse

19, Fling

20, Cockle

22, Last

24, Ha-h

25, Pla-inl-y

26, Stot-E

27, P-II-ot

28, Strew

29, Resid-U-e

30, Sheer

31, Brief

DOWN

2, We-evil

3, Ear-Ned

4, Try

5, Fl-shy

6, S-low-ing

7, Penn.

8, The-M-ES

12, Stale

13, L-arch

14, Bench

15, Di-van

16, Betty

18, Un-CL-e

19, Flutter

21, O-a-fish

22, Litter

23, Sleeve

25, P-Laid

26, So-re

28, Sub

Athletics coach gets life ban for doping, seven suspended

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
■ New Delhi

Athletics coach Rakesh Kumar was slapped with a life ban for administering prohibited substances, while power-lifter Gaurav Vats was provisionally suspended for possession and trafficking of banned drugs in the latest list of sanctions issued by the National Anti-Doping Agency (NADA) here on Wednesday. Rakesh was suspended last year in March and his ban will be effective from that period. National Inter-State bronze-winning sprinter Prakruthi Roopa Rao has been provisionally sus-



pended after testing positive for banned steroids Stanozolol and Drostanolone. Among other prominent names, Khelo India Games gold medal-winning weightlifter Chelsi has got a five year ban for failing a dope test. Among the other provisional suspensions, a minor weightlifter is also in the new additions after

testing positive for Oxandrolone. Quartermiler Kaushal Kumar, steeplechaser Jujhar Singh, and long-distance runner Baljeet Kaur were among those suspended as doping continued to cast a shadow on Indian athletics. In all, seven names from athletics feature in the provisionally suspended list.

Military service, then the climb again: Resilience of Korean tennis

AMANPREET SINGH
■ Seoul

Professional tennis is built around rhythm — playing week after week, collecting ranking points, carrying confidence from one tournament to the next—but for South Korean men, there is an unavoidable interruption that can arrive in the middle of that journey. For Korean players, it means learning to adapt their careers around an obligation and then, in many cases, finding their way back to the professional circuit after 18-month absence. The 29-year-old reached a career-high 139 in September 2024. In top-form he had beaten formidable teammate Soom-woo Kwon and India’s Sumit Nagal at Indian Wells that year. He also won 14 ITF titles and one Challenger. But he enlisted in the military in January 2025 and returned to competition this year. Due to the long break, he is now ranked outside 1000. He has played only a handful of matches since his return as he begins the climb again. Korea Davis Cup captain Jong-Sam Chung acknowledged the



difficulty of the situation, even as he stressed that the players have little choice because military service is an obligation for all Korean men. “When you are doing well, you have to be in the right mood. But we are obligated to be in the military,” Jong-Sam said ahead of Korea’s Davis Cup tie against India here. The current active-duty period is 18 months for the Army and Marine Corps, with longer terms for the Navy and Air Force. The system stems from South Korea’s security situation following the Korean War, which ended in a 1953 armistice but not a peace treaty. Universal male conscription has subsequently remained

a central part of the country’s national defence system. Initially, they learn basics like how to shoot, throw a grenade and for 12 months they perform assigned jobs as per their skills—fixing electricals, vigilance and once in three months they perform war simulation. They get rest on weekends and can earn vacations by being exceptional in their duties. For elite athletes, there is a special sporting pathway. Olympic medallists and Asian Games gold medallists get exemption that allows them to continue their sporting careers after completing basic four-week military training. (PTI)

I am not robot: Samson about competition for top-order

AMIT KUMAR DAS ■ New Delhi

Sanju Samson has learnt to deal with the “outside noise” surrounding his career graph but he admits that the intense competition for India’s top-order spots can be challenging even though players have little or no time to sulk over selection decisions.

Samson smashed a brutal 57 off 22 balls in India’s series-clinching seven-wicket win over Afghanistan in the second T20I here on Tuesday. But he is well aware that the conversations about the trajectory of his career would not end.

“I try to turn off the Wi-Fi. But sometimes the Wi-Fi turns on and I see the comments of the senior players. It’s very normal. I think it’s their choice,” Samson said in the post-match media interaction.

“Sometimes it’s their frame of mind. It’s totally up to them. They can use a positive frame of sentences or they can use a negative frame of sentences. So, I think I have been mature enough and experienced enough how to handle it.

“At first, it feels bad. I am not a machine. I am not a robot. It definitely matters. And you kind of get a bit affected. But then you try to talk to yourself and tell that what you are and what you need to do.”

The wicketkeeper-batter said the scrutiny surrounding Indian cricketers can be difficult to



escape but stressed the importance of maintaining clarity about one’s approach.

“I think definitely, yes, outside noise do affect the cricketers in India. But you need to be very clear that what is your mindset... How do you want to prepare... How do you want to play...”

“If I had paid attention to those things, I wouldn’t have been able to bat like this. I would have thought 10 times before batting that if I get out, then

there will be a Wi-Fi problem.

“So, I said it’s okay. My international career has been very good. The World Cup has also helped a lot. So whatever pressure you are in, you kind of realize that what type of a player you are and you try to go out there and express yourself, keeping your team in front.”

There is a lot of pressure on Samson with 15-year-old Vaibhav Sooryavanshi breathing down his neck

for the opening slot.

Samson was replaced by Sooryavanshi after low scores in Ireland and the early matches in England.

However, with the young batter producing a string of low scores in three matches, Samson returned in the fifth game.

“It’s not easy to run an Indian team. You see, a 15-year-old boy has scored 700-800 runs. My tournament (World Cup) was before that. After that he performed so well and he had to come in in some or the other manner,” said Samson.

“I didn’t perform in 2-3 games and he was in form and we wanted to win games in that series. It was very understandable from a leadership kind of a thing. I have been in this situation and I have taken tough calls as a captain in the IPL franchise. So, I understand that.

“That’s where the communication comes in. GG Bhai’s communication was very important. There was a lot of communication in the middle of the England series as well. He spoke to me a lot before this series as well. It’s not easy to take hard decisions, it’s very easy to take popular decisions. But as a leadership group, we have been taking some really tough calls keeping the team in front.” (PTI)



Pybus calls for better wickets as Afghanistan seek T20 growth

AMIT KUMAR DAS ■ New Delhi

Afghanistan head coach Richard Pybus admitted his side must improve its strike rate and reduce dot balls, while stressing the need for quality pitches at home to develop its white-ball game after the seven-wicket loss to India in the second T20I here.

Afghanistan lost to India by seven wickets in the second T20I here on Tuesday after posting 164 for seven, allowing the Men in Blue to chase down the target in just 15.2 overs and seal the three-match series 2-0.

“Look, we want good cricket wickets. It’s as simple as that. This is T20 cricket. We’re not trying to make a track spicy for a Test match. We’ve got to be good enough,” Pybus said.

The 62-year-old England-born coach suggested that Afghanistan could look at appointing an international curator to ensure greater consistency in domestic conditions.

“I do think that one of the things I would suggest to the board, as we did in West Indies, is to appoint an international curator to achieve a uniform surface.

“And that was more for when we were travelling around the territo-



ries in the West Indies when we were playing international matches, to make sure we were getting the wickets that we wanted. “But I do think we need to make sure that the stadiums have got very specific wickets for our white-ball cricket. We need quality of wickets to develop quality of practice.”

Pybus said Afghanistan’s batting needed to become more aggressive, particularly during Powerplay.

“If we’re going to improve as a T20 side, our strike rate’s got to improve. Our dot ball percentage is too high and our strike rate’s got to improve,” he said. (PTI)

Varun Chakravarthy ruled out of Asiad, Vipraj to replace him



KUSHAN SARKAR ■ New Delhi

Young leg-spin all-rounder Vipraj Nigam will replace Varun Chakravarthy in India’s Asian Games squad after the senior spinner was ruled out of the continental event with a side strain.

The Asian Games will begin on September 19 in Aichi-Nagoya, Japan.

“Varun is out for an indefinite period of time. Vipraj Nigam and Kuldeep Yadav were the two available options from the long list. Kuldeep will play the West Indies ODIs later this month,” a BCCI source told PTI on conditions of anonymity.

Chakravarthy, who was forced out of the ongoing T20I series against Afghanistan after suffering the injury in the opening game, is expected to remain sidelined for some time.

The 22-year-old Nigam, who represents Delhi Capitals in the IPL, has so far played 19 matches in the league, taking 13 wickets. Vipraj has also shown his big-hitting ability, scoring at a strike rate of around 176 in his IPL career.

Will Vaibhav Sooryavanshi get to play in inconsequential third T20I?

BHARAT SHARMA ■ New Delhi

With the series already in bag, India might be tempted to move away from the established combination and give some game time to the awe-inspiring Vaibhav Sooryavanshi among others when they take on Afghanistan in the inconsequential third T20 International here on Thursday. Playing in familiar conditions, India have played like an unstoppable force, making the dangerous Afghanistan outfit look ordinary.

Having sealed the series on Tuesday night, India captain Shreyas Iyer said there could be a change in the combination for the final game at Ferozshah Kotla to give players on the bench much-needed time before they fly to Japan for the Asian Games beginning September 19.

The selections so far have made it clear that India are not willing to go out of the



way to make room for Sooryavanshi who made his debut on the tour of England in July when Sanju Samson was not in the best of form. Now both Samson and Abhishek Sharma are in good touch and considering they both are one-format regulars, they would not want to be rested, leaving the management to make that call.

“We want all of them to get used to the wicket and the conditions and also get some practice.

So, it would be a nice game to give opportunities to the players, especially who have been sitting out, and also change a little bit in the combination as well,” said Iyer after another dominating win. Another option to fit Sooryavanshi in the playing eleven would be to give Ishan Kishan a rest.

Kishan captained East

Zone to the Duleep Trophy before linking up with the national squad. Samson has been performing the wicket-keeping duties in the ongoing series.

Also the management would want Iyer and Tilak Varma to get some time in the centre with the destructive top-three leaving little to do for the rest of the batters in the first two games.

With top three blowing away the opposition, the likes of Nitish Reddy and Shivam Dube are yet to bat in the series. On the bowling front, from the team’s point of view, it was threatening to see a fit again Reddy among the wickets on Tuesday. He is seen as a back up for injury-prone star Hardik Pandya, making him an important figure in the team’s plans going forward.

CM Rekha Gupta unveils finisher medal for Vedanta Delhi Half Marathon 2026

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ New Delhi

Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta on Wednesday unveiled the finisher medal for the Vedanta Delhi Half Marathon 2026 at an event held at the Delhi Secretariat. The Vedanta Delhi Half Marathon will be held on October 18. The event aims to promote fitness, a healthy lifestyle, sportsmanship and social participation. The half marathon will start from Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium, cover a long route and finish at the same venue. It will also feature categories such as the Half Marathon, Open 10K, Great Delhi Run, Senior Citizens’ Run and Champions with Disability Run. Delhi Cabinet Minister Kapil Mishra and other dignitaries were also present on the occasion.

Speaking on the occasion, Chief Minister Rekha Gupta said the half marathon held in Delhi is no longer just a sporting competition, but has become a celebration of the city’s energy, diversity and public participation. She said that when we talk about ‘Fit India’ and ‘Fit Delhi’, such public-participation events become extremely important. Welcoming the Vedanta Group, all partners, volunteers, NGOs and organisations associated with the event, she said the event



not only encourages people to adopt a healthy and active lifestyle but also brings society together.

Enthusiasm continues to grow after participation of over 40,000 last year.

The Chief Minister said more than 40,000 people had participated in the event last year and there is considerable enthusiasm among Delhi residents this year as well. Participation by people from different age groups and social backgrounds makes the marathon a truly public-participation event. The participation of different groups, along with participants with disabilities, makes the event particularly special.

CM Rekha Gupta described the growing participation of women in the marathon as particularly encouraging. She said the large number of women coming forward to participate in fitness and running events reflects growing awareness about a

healthy and active lifestyle. The increasing participation of women and youth is a sign of positive change in society, and such platforms encourage them to focus on health and confidence and to participate actively in public life.

The Chief Minister urged the Vedanta Group to undertake major social development projects for needy and underprivileged sections in Delhi as well. She said that, in the spirit of ‘charity begins from home’, work should be undertaken for those sections in Delhi that need it the most. The Delhi Government is ready to extend its cooperation to ensure that the benefits of Vedanta Group’s social initiatives reach underprivileged sections in Delhi. The Chief Minister said the Delhi Government would extend all possible support for the Vedanta Delhi Half Marathon. The Metro, Tourism Department and other concerned agencies will provide the necessary

support for arrangements related to the event.

The Chief Minister said the ‘Fit India’ message given by Prime Minister Narendra Modi aims to inspire people across the country to adopt a healthy and active lifestyle. Events such as the Vedanta Delhi Half Marathon take this message forward through public participation. She appealed to the people of Delhi to join the event and see it not merely as a race, but as a commitment to a healthy lifestyle, community participation and a Fit Delhi.

On this occasion, Tourism Minister Kapil Mishra said that the Delhi Half Marathon has now become an important brand event in Delhi’s annual calendar. People from all over the world come to participate in this event, and participants from different states across the country also reach Delhi. Such major events promote tourism along with branding Delhi. The Delhi government is fully committed to promoting live events, concerts, and sporting events, and new policies are also being introduced in this direction. He urged everyone to actively participate in the Delhi Half Marathon on October 18 and contribute to fulfilling the resolve to develop Delhi as a major tourism destination.

Smriti’s evolving game offers blueprint for youngsters: Ex-captain Anjum Chopra

HARDIK SHARMA ■ New Delhi

India batting stalwart Smriti Mandhana’s evolved power game and her dominance against spinners offer a blueprint for younger players as women’s T20 cricket continues to change rapidly, feels former captain to see is that in the last two years, two and a half years, how she topped the all-time run charts across

formats in the recently concluded Asia Cup, reaching the milestone during her century against Hong Kong and moving past the legendary Mithali Raj.

“What has become so nice change rapidly, feels former captain to see is that in the last two years, two and a half years, how she worked on her power game. How she



is able to clear the boundary with such ease and confidence. That is such a heartening sign to see,” Chopra told PTI in a conversation.

“Earlier, we were having a chat as to how the players need to improve. I think you don’t need to go too very far, especially for a player who is there in the middle order or a younger player coming in.

NORTHERN RAILWAY

E-Auction Notice

The bids are invited from the registered entities on IREPS by Sr.DCM./PS/MB through e-tender with closing date/time 09.10.2026 at 11:00 hrs for" Design, Development, Implementation and Maintenance of sanitation dashboard for monitoring station cleanliness over Moradabad Division." The catalogues have already been published on IREPS website www.ireps.gov.in and complete details of e-tender are available at website www.ireps.gov.in. No. 09-sanitation/MB-Div./2026.C Date: 16.09.2026 3212/2026

SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE

NORTHERN RAILWAY

Tender Notice

SR.DENI/MB acting for and on behalf of The President of India invites E-Tenders. Closing date and time mentioned against each tender. Bidders will be able to submit their original/revised bids up to closing date and time only. Manual offers are not allowed against this tender, and any such manual offer received shall be ignored. Contractors are allowed to make payments against this tender towards tender document cost and earnest money **only through online payment modes** available on IREPS portal like net banking, debit card, credit card etc. Manual payments through Demand draft, Banker's cheque, Deposit receipts, FDR etc. are not allowed.

Tender No. Date	195-DRM-MB-26-27 Dt. 16.09.2026
Name of Work	Provision of temporary Infrastructure for staff facilitation center & camp and other associated facilities i.e barricading, bedding etc. at DNRA, RK, JBRA etc. or at any other location and Provision of facility of tentage and temporary toilet etc. for Passenger at DNRA, RK, JBRA & LRJ etc. or at any other location for entire Ardhra Kumbha Mela -2027 upto 22.04.2027.
Type of Contract	Works
Tender Cost	Nil
Advertised Value (Rs.)	3,49,48,522.26
Earnest Money (Rs.)	6,99,000.00
Tender Closing Date / Time	08.10.2026, 16.00
Bidding Start Date	24.09.2026
Validity of Offer (Days)	60 Days
Period of Completion	06 Months
No.: 74-W/23/WA/Publication	Dated.: 16.09.2026 3211/2026
SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE	

NORTHERN RAILWAY

TENDER NOTICE

Dy. Chief Engineer/Const., Northern Railway, Moradabad for and on behalf of the President of India invites open e-tender under **Two Packet System** for the under noted work:-

1. Name of work and location	Construction of Service building, S&T rooms, gate lodge at level crossing, Rail/ high level passenger platforms, fencing, extension of minor bridges etc. provision of station name board, including dismantling of existing Building structure & fencing, Up gradation/ extension of Level Crossing, Construction of Limited height subway/ Road under bridge in lieu of L.C by pushing method of precast box segments under running traffic condition including construction of approaches, provision of height gauges at LHS and L-xings etc. and Linking of BG Track & turnouts, provision of glued joints & S.E.s, dismantling of existing track & turnouts, handling, lifting, loading, leading, unloading and spreading of ballast, handling of P.way material including working in BNVI/ NI period and other allied works at Dalei Nagar, Chodiala, Aghwanpur station on Lucknow-Moradabad-Saharanpur section in c/w/ "Longer loops in both direction at Dalei Nagar & Chodiala" and "Extension of Siding to accommodate full train load" in the jurisdiction of Dy CE/C/MB unit on Moradabad division
2. Completion period	12 (Twelve) months
3. Approx. Cost of the work	Rs. 3200.63 Lakhs.
4. Bid Security	Rs. 64.01,300.00
5. Detailed Tender Notice & Tender Documents	The detailed e-tender notice is available on Northern Railway website i.e. www.ireps.gov.in . Above tender document will be available on IREPS website i.e. www.ireps.gov.in from 16.09.2026 to 08.10.2026 upto 15:00 Hrs. All other terms and conditions in respect of above tenders are given in tender documents. The detailed tender notice also can be seen on the Notice Board at the above office.
6. Last date/Time of upload of tenders	08.10.2026 upto 15:00 hours. Tender documents can be uploaded by the tenderer on IREPS website w.e.f. 24.09.2026 to 08.10.2026 upto 15:00 hours.
7. Date and time of opening of tender	11.09.2026 at 15:00 hours (Immediately after close of uploading of tender (D2)). In case of two packet system, Financial bids of the eligible tenderers would be opened subsequently on the date & time to be notified later on.
Tender Notice No. 1-W-Tender-298-DY.CE-C-MB Dt. 16.09.2026 3207/2026	
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RITES LIMITED

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

Requirement of professionals for the following posts through Interview at RITES Office:

VC Nos.	Post Name Individual Consultant	No. of Post(s)	Mode & Venue
YP/40-R1/26	Tunnel Design Engineer	1	RITES Corporate Office, Gurugram / Project Office, Guwahati / Video Conferencing
YP/41-R1/26	Bridge / Structural Engineer	1	
YP/42-R1/26	Tunnel Safety Expert	1	
YP/43-R1/26	Senior Geotechnical Expert	1	
YP/44-R1/26	Senior Geologist	1	
YP/46-R1/26	Senior Contract Expert	1	
YP/49-R1/26	Instrumentation & Control Expert (SCADA)	1	
YP/52-R1/26	Tunnel Lining Expert	1	
YP/56-R1/26	Safety Engineer	2	
YP/58-R1/26	Survey Engineer	1	

For complete details, candidates may refer the detailed advertisement posted on RITES website www.rites.com under Career Section.

The South Indian Bank Ltd

Regional Office - Delhi, 3rd Floor, Plot No.21, 21/1, Pusa Road, Karol Bagh, New Delhi -110005.
Phone - 011 4233 1664/011 4512 8661
E-mail - ro1008@siib.co.in.

RO:DEL/CRD/SAR/37/2026-27 Date: 16-09-2026

E-Auction SALE NOTICE

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 8(b) and 9(1) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002.

Borrower : 1. M/s. Ruchi Medical Private Limited, 18, PD Tandon Marg, Laxman Chowk, Dehradun, Uttarakhand - 248001 Also At 68, Hardwar Road, Race Course Chowk, Dehradun, Uttarakhand - 248001, Also At 2nd Floor, 1/17525 Part of 60/4, Yusuf Sarai Market, Aurbindo Marg, Green Park, New Delhi, NCT of Delhi - 110016 Also At Shop No.6, Near Grover Shop, Opp. BSNL Exchange, Patel Nagar, Dehradun, Uttarakhand - 248002

Guarantors : 2. Anjana Rastogi, 18, PD Tandon Marg, Laxman Chowk, Dehradun, Uttarakhand - 248001

3. Neeraj Rastogi, 18, PD Tandon Marg, Laxman Chowk, Dehradun, Uttarakhand - 248001

4. Ajay Rastogi, 18, PD Tandon Marg, Laxman Chowk, Dehradun, Uttarakhand - 248001

5. Shweta Rastogi, 18, PD Tandon Marg, Laxman Chowk, Dehradun, Uttarakhand - 248001

Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the borrower/guarantors that the below described immovable property mortgaged to the South Indian Bank Ltd, Branch Ghaziabad and Branch Dehradun (Secured Creditor), the symbolic possession of which has been taken by the Authorised Officer of The South Indian Bank Limited (Secured Creditor), will be sold on "as is where is" basis, "as is what is" and "whatever there is" condition on 07.10.2026 for recovery of an amount of Rs. 16,17,58,815.23 (Rupees Sixteen Crore Seventeen Lakhs Fifty Eight Thousand Eight Hundred Fifteen and Paise Twenty Three Only) as on 17-04-2026, with future interest, costs and expenses etc. thereon due to The South Indian Bank Limited, Branch Ghaziabad and Branch Dehradun (Secured Creditor), from the above mentioned borrower and guarantors.

Name of Property Owner	Neeraj Rastogi and Anjana Rastogi
Description of property	All that part and parcel of ground floor portion of property bearing Municipal no. 20 (New No. 23/18 and now 23/2) (Old No. 14, Laxman Chowk), P.D. Tandon Marg, Dehradun addressing 477.35 Sq. Mtrs. along with residential building thereon having a total area of about 532.70 Sq. Mt.(5514 Sq. Ft) considered for valuation being permissible BUA) along with all other constructions, improvements, easementary rights existing and appurtenant thereon and owned by Neeraj Rastogi and Anjana Rastogi morefully described in Gift Deed no 2858/2016 dated 19-03-2016, Gift Deed no 2856/2016 dated 19-03-2016, Sale Deed no 6379/2003 dated 08-10-2003, Sale Deed no 2121/2001 dated 09-01-2001 all of Sub Registrar Office -Dehradun and bounded on North : Road South : Property of Vijay Kumar Rastogi & Others East : Road West : Property of Mr. Kamal Mittal
Reserve Price	Rs.3,68,00,000/- (Rupees Three Crore Sixty Eight Lakhs Only)
Earnest Money Deposit (EMD)	Rs.36,80,000/- (Rupees Thirty-Six Lakhs Eighty Thousand Only) EMD shall be deposited on or before 06-10-2026 till 02.00 PM
Bid Increment amount	Rs. 50,000/- (Rupees Fifty Thousand Only)
Date and time of E-auction	07-10-2026 from 11:00 AM to 11:30 AM (with 5 minute unlimited auto extensions till sale is concluded)
Encumbrances known to the Bank	Nil/ Encumbrances from 30-12-2019 to 31-05-2025.

For detailed terms and conditions of the sale, please refer to the link provided in web portal of South Indian Bank Ltd, (Secured Creditor) website i.e. www.southindianbank.com. Details also available at <https://bankauctions.in>. For any further clarification with regards to inspection of property, terms and conditions of the e-auction or submission of bids, kindly contact South Indian Bank Ltd on 9037-854-355 (contact number)

Sd/- AUTHORISED OFFICER