

Probe ordered against Kerala ex-CM, family in CMRL case

THREYAMBAKA AB
■ Thiruvananthapuram

The Congress-led UDF Government in Kerala on Tuesday ordered a police inquiry, based on a report submitted by the Enforcement Directorate (ED), seeking action against former Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan, his daughter Veena T, and her husband, former Minister PA Mohamed Riyas, in the alleged Cochin Minerals and Rutile Ltd (CMRL) bribery case — a controversy popularly referred to as the ‘Monthly Payoff Case.’

Home Minister Ramesh Chennithala announced that the State Government has entrusted Director General of

Police (DGP) Ravada A Chandrasekhar with conducting an inquiry into the ED’s findings. Sources indicated that the probe would be carried out by the Crime Branch wing of the State police, without the immediate registration of an FIR. The decision followed the Government’s examination of a legal opinion from the Advocate General (AG), who had left it to the State police to determine the further course of action on the ED’s report. Chennithala said the AG’s opinion was received two days earlier, following which he discussed the matter with Chief Minister VD Saheesan on Tuesday morning, after which the

order assigning the inquiry to the DGP was issued.

Explaining the legal basis, Chennithala cited two Supreme Court judgments — one concerning the statutory obligation of law enforcement agencies to act on information received under Section 66(2) of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), 2002, and the Lalita Kumari judgment, which permits a preliminary inquiry in select categories of cases, including corruption, where the information does not clearly disclose a cognisable offence. “Where a cognisable offence is not clearly disclosed, a preliminary inquiry can be conducted to determine



Kerala former Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan

AV MUZAFAR

whether one is revealed,” he said, adding that the DGP would now decide the further course of the inquiry.

The ED had sent a 25-page report to the State Police Chief seeking registration of

an FIR under the Prevention of Corruption Act. The agency has alleged that Vijayan received ₹3.28 crore in bribes from CMRL in exchange for extending Government favours to the chemical firm,

and that ₹2.78 crore was funnelled to Veena’s now-defunct company, Exalogic Solutions, under the guise of “IT consultancy” retainer fees that were reportedly never actually delivered. The report further alleges that Mohamed Riyas helped route the illicit funds abroad through hawala channels to accounts in Dubai.

The controversy traces back to January 2019, when Income Tax Department raids on CMRL’s Kochi offices uncovered fictitious business expenses of ₹182 crore accumulated over 15 years, along with internal diaries allegedly detailing unaccounted cash payments to politicians across both the

LDF and UDF. In August 2023, the IT Department’s Interim Board of Settlement classified ₹1.72 crore in payments to Exalogic as “illegal payments,” finding no evidence of actual consultancy work behind the invoices.

The case was subsequently handed to the Serious Fraud Investigation Office (SFIO) in January 2024, which concluded the arrangement was a fraudulent money-transfer scheme and filed a prosecution complaint in an Ernakulam court in April 2025, naming CMRL Managing Director Sasidharan Kartha as the primary accused and Veena as the eleventh. The ED subsequently registered a money-laundering case, con-

ducting high-profile raids on Vijayan’s residences in Thiruvananthapuram and Kannur in May 2026, and questioning Veena in Kochi in June.

CPM State Secretary MV Govindan dismissed the ED report as a politically motivated attempt to fabricate a false narrative. Vijayan’s supporters have argued that since the ED could not establish a direct case under the PMLA despite extensive searches, it is now attempting to shift the matter to local law enforcement, noting that earlier court judgments had dismissed similar bribery allegations for lack of concrete evidence linking specific favours to CMRL.

Maharashtra CM promises drought aid for farmers

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ Mumbai

Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis on Tuesday said the state Government would provide immediate assistance to farmers affected by the current drought-like situation without waiting for central aid.

He also announced the formation of a Cabinet sub-committee to take speedy decisions on relief measures, and stated that a preliminary notification regarding the drought situation will be issued by Saturday.

The sub-committee, headed by Revenue Minister Chandrashekhar Bawankule, will have Cabinet powers, Fadnavis said after a State Cabinet meeting. Several parts of Maharashtra, especially Marathwada and Vidarbha, are passing through long dry spells. The Opposition has demanded that the Government declare drought immediately and extend relief measures.

The Government has directed officials to start conducting panchnamas (assessment of crop losses) from Wednesday, Fadnavis said. Soybean, maize and cotton had suffered the most damage, while paddy cultivation in the Konkan region had also been affected, he said. He would visit areas affected by drought-like conditions from Wednesday and had directed ministers and public representatives to visit affected areas and assess the



Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis

situation, Fadnavis said. The State would also send a proposal to the Centre seeking assistance for farmers under the National Disaster Response Fund (NDRF) norms, he said.

“Special attention will be given to drinking water and fodder for livestock,” the Chief Minister said, adding that planning would be undertaken for the next seven to eight months.

The drinking water supply arrangements would be planned in coordination with municipal corporations, municipalities and other local self-Government bodies, he said. The sub-committee headed by Bawankule includes Water Resources and Disaster Management Minister Girish Mahajan, Water Supply and Sanitation Minister Gulabrao Patil, Soil and Water Conservation Minister Sanjay Rathod, Animal Husbandry Minister Pankaja Munde, Agriculture Minister Dattatray Bharme, Rural Development Minister Jaykumar Gore, Transport Minister Pratap Sarnaik, Cooperation Minister Babasaheb Patil and Relief and Rehabilitation Minister Makarand Jadhav Patil, among others.

Social media trolls Pak PM over ‘our terrorists’ remark

ASHOKE RAJ ■ New Delhi

Warning that global safety remains inextricably linked to regional stability, Pakistani Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif delivered a stark assessment of his nation’s counterterrorism efforts on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly: “If we hadn’t controlled our terrorists, they would have been roaming the streets of New York or London.”

The striking declaration underscored Pakistan’s central thesis as Sharif joined nearly 130 world leaders in New York for the high-level segment of the 81st UN General Assembly. The annual gathering comes at a precarious moment for global security, as the ongoing US-Iran conflict, Houthi strikes targeting Saudi Arabia, and the devastating war in Gaza continue to fuel wider regional instability. Pakistan has aggressively sought to position itself as a key mediator between Washington and Tehran. Islamabad’s diplomatic intervention previously facilitated negotiations that produced the landmark Islamabad Memorandum of Understanding in June—an agreement designed to establish a framework for ending regional hostilities. However, subsequent peace talks have stalled in recent weeks amid renewed military escalation and sharp disagreements over implementation.

In an official statement released ahead of his general debate speech on Sept. 25, Sharif’s office confirmed that the prime minister will use the platform of the 193-



Pakistani PM Shehbaz Sharif

member assembly to highlight Pakistan’s “active diplomatic and mediation efforts” aimed at reducing regional flashpoints. “In his address, the prime minister will present Pakistan’s position on the evolving regional and global security situation, emphasizing the importance of dialogue, diplomacy and the peaceful resolution of conflicts,” his office stated.

Beyond counterterrorism and regional security, Sharif’s address will articulate Islamabad’s policy stance on sustainable economic development, global climate action, combating Islamophobia, and addressing international economic disparities. Sharif is also expected to renew Pakistan’s long-standing calls regarding Palestine and the Kashmir dispute, drawing direct parallels between the two issues. He will call on the international community to guarantee both Palestinians and Kashmiris their right to self-determination. Throughout the week, Sharif will participate in high-level side events focused on climate resilience and economic development, alongside scheduled bilateral meetings with world leaders and UN Secretary-General António Guterres.

Congress convoy attacked in Assam, party blames BJP, ECI

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ New Delhi

The Congress on Tuesday alleged that a planned “murderous attack” took place on the convoy of Assam Congress president Gaurav

Gogoi and state in-charge Bhupesh Baghel during campaigning for the Nagaon Lok Sabha bypoll, terming it a “shameful attempt” by the BJP to avert a likely defeat, with the “tacit approval” of the Election Commission.

The Opposition party also questioned the Election Commission’s “silence” over such violence while demanding a probe into the incident. Congress general secretary in charge of communications, Jairam

Ramesh, said the stone-pelting incident targeting the convoy of Baghel, Gogoi and other Congress leaders was not merely an isolated event but a “shameful attempt” by the BJP – with the tacit approval of the

Election Commission – to avert a likely defeat in the October 6 bypoll by resorting to violence and intimidating the voters and the Congress.

“Under the Modi Government, the nation has

witnessed a double standard regarding the security of Opposition leaders and workers during elections – spanning from Tripura and West Bengal to Assam,” Ramesh said a post in Hindi on X.



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Editor's

TAKE

Russia's election: Putin wins, but succession looms

Vladimir Putin's party has won with a record majority, but the big question hanging over his political system is: how will power be transferred when he leaves the Kremlin?

United Russia has won again. With nearly all ballots counted, Vladimir Putin's party polled 57.83 per cent, up from 49.8 per cent in 2021, and is set for about 355 of the 450 Duma seats, up from 324.

That is a two-thirds constitutional majority and the biggest haul in the party's history. Turnout was 59.3 per cent. Putin had cast the vote as a test of support for the war in Ukraine. The Kremlin will now call the result an answer. It was not an election in any sense that matters. A real election is a contest whose outcome is unknown until the votes are counted. This one was settled before polling opened.

In August, the Supreme Court struck the liberal Yabloko party's national list off the ballot, removing the only registered party that openly opposed the war. All ten parties left standing back it. Golos, Russia's only independent election monitor, shut down in 2025 after its co-chair, Grigory Melkonyants, was jailed for five years. OSCE observers were not invited. Voting stretched over three days, with electronic ballots in 33 regions, and Yabloko reported detained observers and Moscow voters being refused paper ballots. Polls were also run in occupied Ukrainian territory, which the EU has called a sham.

The Communists took 13.81 per cent, the LDPR 8.98 and New People 7.96. On paper, that is pluralism. In practice, these parties vote with United Russia on the big questions. They exist to make the ballot look crowded, not to offer a different government. That is how democracy works in Russia: the forms are kept and the substance is removed.

The missing ingredient is uncertainty. The Duma does not check the presidency; it stamps its decisions. Putin is not even a member of United Russia, which lets him stand above the machine he runs.

Now, what happens when he goes? Putin turns 74 next month. His term runs to 2030, and the 2020 constitutional changes let him stay until 2036, when he would be 83. No rival has been allowed to grow, so there is no obvious heir. The constitution makes Prime Minister Mikhail Mishustin the interim president, yet security-elite insiders see him as an outsider. Names such as Alexei Dyumina, the Security Council secretary and former bodyguard, keep circulating.

The pool is small, drawn from men who share Putin's background and his fears. The new supermajority is succession insurance. A Duma this pliant can bless whatever the inner circle agrees, from a handpicked heir to a rewritten rulebook. The danger is not a democratic transition. It is a scramble between clans when the arbiter leaves, in a country strained by a war now in its fifth year, whose voters have never been asked to choose.

India, whose defence and energy ties with Moscow run deep, cannot treat this as somebody else's problem. Personalised systems are most fragile at the moment they change hands. Delhi should deal with Moscow's institutions today and plan for the day the man at the top is gone.

Engineering India's next engineer

As artificial intelligence raises productivity and changes the skills employers demand, the old model of hiring large numbers of graduates and training them on the job is beginning to lose its relevance. The next phase of India's technology story will therefore depend less on producing more engineers and more on transforming how they are taught, trained and assessed



HARSH VARDHAN SHRINGLA

India's technology sector will cross \$315 billion in revenue this financial year, growing at 6.1 per cent. Its workforce will grow at 2.3 per cent. Revenue and headcount, which moved together for three decades, have begun to separate, and that single divergence defines the task before our engineering colleges. India's emergence as a global software powerhouse stands as a defining achievement of the last 25-30 years. The current transition towards AI represents the next phase of this unfolding developmental trajectory. Rather than a departure from our legacy, it challenges the same foresight that anchored the industry's inception.

The industry that built modern Indian IT recruited graduates in bulk and trained them in-house, absorbing the distance between what colleges taught and what clients needed, forming a hand-holding safety net. It employs nearly six million people and carries a generation into the middle class. But that model depended on growth being linear in headcount. As AI raises output per engineer, firms will hire fewer people and expect far more of each one.

Capacity is not our constraint. The All-India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) approved 15.98 lakh engineering seats this year, and enrolment is at an eight-year high. The constraint is capability: by the Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology's estimate, only about 16 per cent of India's IT professionals are AI-skilled. We are not short of engineers. We are short of engineers who can build with these technologies.

According to the Competition Commission of India, the global AI market has surged from \$103.6 billion in 2020 to nearly \$289 billion today. Buoyed by deliberate policy, India's own AI economy has grown from \$2.97 billion to \$7.63 billion over the same period, on a trajectory to reach \$131.31 billion by 2032 at a 42.2 per cent annual clip. With analysts projecting 2.73 million new technology jobs by 2028, our difficulty is not a scarcity of opportunity either. The \$10,371.92-crore IndiaAI Mission has taken national common compute past 38,000 GPUs, available at roughly ₹65 per GPU-hour, alongside several hundred open datasets. That capacity was built for students and researchers as much as for start-ups. Ensuring that every engineering department knows how to access it is the lowest-cost, highest-return intervention available to us today.

The Prime Minister's announcement on August 15, that one crore youth will be trained in AI skills over the next year sets the right order of ambi-



CURRICULA MUST BE DESIGNED WITH INDUSTRY, NOT MERELY SHOWN TO IT. THE PARTNERS ARE ALREADY AT THE DOOR: MORE THAN 90 PER CENT OF INDIA'S LEADING GLOBAL CAPABILITY CENTRES WORK WITH UNIVERSITIES ON TALENT PIPELINES AND JOINT RESEARCH

The writer is a Member of Parliament (Rajya Sabha) and former Foreign Secretary of India

tion. Achieving a target of this magnitude requires a combination of national targeted skilling initiatives and systemic shifts within academia, which must be anchored in a rigorous definition of what AI proficiency entails.

Here is the core of the problem. A student can pass a machine-learning paper and remain unable to solve a real problem with AI. Capability is built in four stages: understanding the concepts, using the tools competently, building applications that work, and finally solving problems no one has resolved. Most programmes deliver the first two and stop. The economic value sits almost entirely in the last two. Closing that distance is not a curriculum exercise; it is closer to coaching, and it requires students to spend sustained time with practitioners, on messy problems, with the freedom to fail on a project without it wrecking a grade.

Three institutional changes would do most of the work. Curricula must be designed with industry, not merely shown to it. The partners are already at the door: more than 90 per cent of India's leading Global Capability Centres work with universities on talent pipelines and joint research. That relationship should be converted from guest lectures into something structural; practitioners sitting on curriculum committees, sponsored laboratories, live industry problems set as coursework, and engineers from those firms co-evaluating final projects. Where syllabus revision cycles run to several years, they must be shortened. A curriculum that cannot be updated annually cannot teach this subject. Faculty must be kept current, and funded to stay that way. No department can teach beyond the experience of its teachers. Industry immersion, sabbaticals into technology firms and continuous upskilling should be treated as core institutional expenditure and built into approval norms, not left to individual initiative. This is the least glamorous of the

three changes and probably the most decisive. Assessment must measure what students can build. Employers have already moved: approximately 40 per cent now say they prefer demonstrable AI skills or certifications to a degree. Universities should follow, giving formal academic weight to working prototypes, deployed applications, portfolios and research output. Assessment ultimately determines what institutions teach and what students trouble to learn. Reform it, and curriculum and pedagogy follow on their own.

At the same time, a monitoring framework must shift from auditing infrastructural inputs—such as enrolment figures or tool availability—to quantifying graduates' demonstrable proficiency in executing AI deployments. We must define success by the substantive results of applied student innovation, ensuring our colleges are measured not by the volume of their recruitment, but by the calibre of their creative output. AI is reshaping manufacturing, electronics, energy, biotechnology and aerospace, and our ambitions in semiconductors, space and clean energy will need engineers who can work across disciplines and niche skills such as designing chips. India, as the Prime Minister has said, "must not merely consume technology but create it". What is needed is another UPI moment, this time with AI. UPI showed that India can drive a technological transition at a national scale by setting a common architecture and a clear direction rather than a uniform template. Engineering education needs precisely that: industry-aligned curricula, practitioner-led teaching, applied projects, real apprenticeships and portfolio-based assessment.

The first revolution was built on scale, and India delivered it. The second will be built on capability. An engineering degree takes four years; the demand is here now. The arithmetic leaves us no room for delay.

Daiv Vani

WISDOM FOR A MEANINGFUL LIFE

Karna, Who Gave Without Asking Why

Karna was known through the kingdom for one vow - he would never refuse anyone who came to him with a request, no matter the cost. The gods decided to test this. Indra, disguised as a poor Brahmin, approached Karna at dawn and asked for his Armor and Earrings, the very protection fused to his body since birth, making him invincible in battle.

Those around him begged him to refuse. He knew exactly who stood before him, and what surrendering that Armor would cost him in the war ahead. Still, he peeled it from his own skin and handed it over, saying only that a broken vow would wound him more deeply than any battle ever could.

We rarely face tests so extreme, but we do face smaller versions daily, a moment to help when it's inconvenient, to give without checking what we'll get in return. Real generosity is not what we give when it costs us nothing. It is what we give when it costs us something, and we give it anyway.

Today, do one thing for someone that asks nothing in return, not even their thanks.

— DAIV

Spiritual solution to mental and physical ailments



AJIT KUMAR BISHNOI

2ND OPINION

Recently, a message was forwarded to me about solutions to various ailments and diseases. According to it, diseases are psychosomatic in nature. This means that they are generated in the mind and the result is shown in the body. It was suggested that the body and mind should be studied together to understand the disease phenomenon. We don't have to go into the veracity of this statement in totality, but it is clear that many physical diseases result from stress and worry. The solution suggested was in capital letters: LEARN TO MEDITATE DAILY. This is what caught my attention, because it is the perfect solution to all problems, diseases and otherwise.

How meditation helps can be understood by learning about God, mind, body and diseases. Beginning with God, we know that God is omnipresent, omnipotent and omni-



scient. We also know that God is the Creator of what all we see, which includes our body and mind. What most don't realise is that we are souls — parts of God (The Bhagavad-Gita 15.7). This means that there is an eternal relationship between us souls and God — 'Anshi' (the Whole). Surely, God is prepared to accept us whenever we approach Him sincerely (9.30). Not only that, God is prepared to help us tackle all problems, including diseases, if we develop God consciousness (18.58). Presently, we have material consciousness, that is, I am a material body and the subtle mind.

This is where our problem really lies. Our body is made up of five gross elements, which are earth, water,

fire, air and ether (7.4). Then, there is the subtle body made up of mind, intelligence and 'ahankar' (ego) (7.4). The mind is the leader of the eyes, ears, tongue, nose and the sense of touch (15.7 & 8). This mind is very difficult to control (6.34). But it can be controlled by taking shelter of God in all respects (18.62) by practising meditation. Then only, it acts as a friend; otherwise, it remains an enemy (6.6).

Before I take up meditation, let us understand what diseases are. They are of two types: physical and mental. Medical science is very useful in treating physical diseases through proper investigation and medication. Such diseases are of a temporary nature (2.14) and are the results of punishments for impious acts done in the past.

This brings us to meditation. What is it? To my understanding, it is simply to create a good connection with God, like looking at a manifestation of God and gently chanting His name. Isn't He everything to all intents and purposes, being omniscient and omnipotent? Doesn't God know us inside and out (13.2)? He surely knows what my problem is, diseases included. Isn't He the best to guide and help me? This is exactly what is happening with me in my life in the recent past. I have no idea how this person came up with the perfect solution, but I can vouch for it because it works every time.

The writer is a spiritual teacher and columnist

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Voter deletions need greater transparency

The ongoing revision of electoral rolls in Delhi has raised serious concerns about the possibility of eligible voters being left out. The Election Commission has issued notices to lakhs of electors over discrepancies in their details, including mismatches with earlier records. A voter's right to participate in an election is fundamental, and the process of verification must therefore be transparent, accessible and fair. While the Delhi Chief Electoral Officer has clarified that receiving a notice does not mean that a voter's name will be deleted, the concerns of citizens who have received such notices cannot be dismissed.

The Election Commission must ensure that every eligible voter is given a clear reason for any discrepancy and a reasonable opportunity to provide documents and seek correction. The process should be simple enough for ordinary citizens to understand and follow.

The draft electoral roll must also be carefully checked by voters. Those whose names are missing can seek inclusion through Form 6 during the claims and objections period. Electoral rolls must be accurate, but accuracy and inclusion must go hand in hand. No eligible citizen should lose the opportunity to vote because of an unexplained or easily correctable discrepancy.

YASH PAL RALHAN | JALANDHAR

Caste cannot be erased from campuses

A few statements I heard in the aftermath of the suicide of Sahil Wakode, a Dalit student at IIT Bombay, attested to the existence of caste in minds and on campuses. One callous TV anchor expressed the view that the bereaved family was translating their grief into making false allegations of caste discrimination. One self-righteous professor, on the aforesaid anchor's show, claimed credit for banning the revelation of the ranks of students lest they reveal the communities of students.

Blaming the victim is the easiest thing to do, but it is avoidable and unjustified when the circumstances of his death are still shrouded in mystery and under investigation. "Looking at an object in his pocket" was the most that the management of the institute could come out with as incriminating evidence against the victim driven to the extreme step. There must be something really wrong with IIT Bombay for as many as suicides to occur in a short span of time. One thing is undeniably true: students from lower-caste backgrounds can find IITs and other prestigious institutions, often perceived as preserves of privileged classes, 'alien' and even 'hostile'. This reality must prompt the Government and wider civil society to protect and nurture vulnerable students from marginalised communities and ensure an inclusive campus environment.

G DAVID MILTON | MARUTHANCODE

Political discourse needs equal standards

The controversy over comedian Pulkit Mani's mimicry of Prime Minister Narendra Modi at the 'Chhatron Ki Goonj' event in Indore has once again raised questions about the standards of political discourse in India. The performance drew sharp criticism from BJP leaders, who accused the Congress and Rahul Gandhi of insulting the Prime Minister, while Congress defended it as satire and mimicry. Political satire is a legitimate form of expression in a democracy, but public debate should also leave room for dignity and restraint. The same standards should apply regardless of which political leader is being mocked or criticised. Over the years, Indian political discourse has witnessed personal remarks and sharp exchanges involving leaders across parties. Such language may generate headlines, but it also risks lowering the quality of public debate and shifting attention away from substantive issues.

Political parties and their leaders have a responsibility to distinguish criticism of policies and public conduct from personal attacks. If satire is defended as free expression, that principle should not depend on political affiliation.

India's democratic culture is strengthened not by silencing criticism, but by ensuring that disagreement remains respectful, consistent and focused on public issues.

BIDYUT KUMAR CHATTERJEE | FARIDABAD

PICTALK



Artists work on 'Ek Chala Thakur', a traditional style of Durga Puja idol ahead of the Durga Puja festival, at Bolpur, in Birbhum district, West Bengal. PHOTO: PTI



How real responsibility builds student confidence

“Students grow the most when we hand them real responsibility, not just advice about it,” says Ramakrishnan Raman, Vice Chancellor, Symbiosis International (Deemed University), reflecting on the changing expectations from universities and the need to equip young people with skills, confidence and independent thinking

As higher education evolves, universities are looking beyond classrooms and conventional degrees to prepare students for a changing world. The discussion explores practical learning, industry exposure, global experiences, AI, student well-being and the need to bring fresh talent and real-world experience into teaching.

What kind of campus environment do you believe helps students grow beyond academics, especially in confidence, communication and decision-making?

Students grow the most when we hand them real responsibility, not just advice about it. When they plan and run the budgets for events and academic activities, and reach out to bring outside experts into their own classrooms, they learn to deal with people, negotiate and think on their feet. That is where real confidence and communication come from.

Apart from a degree, what should a



university genuinely provide students to prepare them for the realities of the workplace?

A degree only takes a student so far. What prepares them for the workplace is exposure to real business situations, case studies, time with industry professionals, and involvement with young companies still finding their footing. Students need to work in teams, take charge of something end to end, and adjust when things don't go as expected.

As Vice Chancellor, how do you balance academic excellence with exposure to industry, entrepreneurship and real-world problem-solving?

I have tried to weave this into how we teach rather than treat it as something extra. Our approach rests on knowing, being and doing, so students

work on live cases, meet the people behind them, and compete in settings that test their judgement. We have set up labs with well-known industry partners so students learn by doing, not just watching. For those keen on entrepreneurship, we connect them with mentors and investors.

How important is the right support system for students' mental well-being, and what role should universities play?

This is one of the most important things a university has to get right. Students today often carry less resilience for setbacks than earlier generations did, and many genuinely treat the university as home. That places a real responsibility on us to look after their emotional well-being, not just academics. At Symbiosis,

we run the Symbiosis Centre for Emotional Wellbeing across our campuses, offering confidential counselling and a helpline, so students know where to turn before things get difficult.

With AI entering almost every profession, should colleges teach students to use AI as a tool or prepare them for larger career changes?

We cannot pick one over the other; both need attention at once. Students already use tools like ChatGPT, Gemini, Claude, Grok and Perplexity in their day-to-day work, whether or not an institution has a policy in place. What matters is teaching them to use these tools with judgement, to notice when something is wrong, and to check facts before trusting them. We have set up AI labs for undergraduates for this reason, and faculty need the same grounding.

What do students gain from global exposure that they cannot get inside a classroom?

Culture is not something you can teach from behind a lectern; it has to be lived. When students spend time among people from different countries, languages and backgrounds, they rethink how they communicate and

work with others, and no lecture can replicate that. A classroom gives knowledge, but only real exposure gives real experience.

What does it really take to build a sustainable business in today's competitive, AI-driven environment?

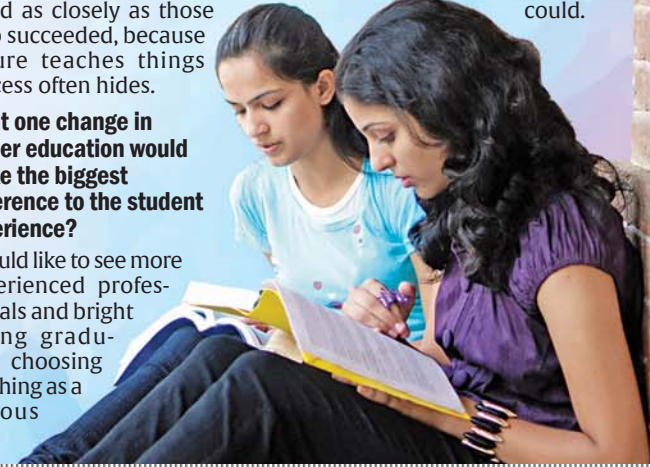
It starts with choosing the right problem and staying committed to solving it, rather than chasing whatever seems profitable. The strongest solutions tend to be simple and affordable, since complexity is usually where sustainability falls apart. Businesses built around real social needs can do particularly well. I tell students to study entrepreneurs who failed as closely as those who succeeded, because failure teaches things success often hides.

What one change in higher education would make the biggest difference to the student experience?

I would like to see more experienced professionals and bright young graduates choosing teaching as a serious



career. When fewer than one per cent of MBA or engineering students want to teach, every administrator should worry about that. Without capable, accomplished people entering the classroom, real change in higher education will stay difficult. Fresh talent bringing real experience into teaching does more for quality than any new building could.



The school library: From a room full of books to a centre of learning

MANAVTA AZAD

Librarian, DAV Public School, Shreshtha Vihar, Delhi

For generations, the school library has been regarded as a quiet room lined with bookshelves, where students go to borrow a book, complete an assignment or spend a free period. But education and society have changed dramatically. Children today have access to an enormous amount of information through smartphones, computers and digital platforms. This raises an important question: what should be the role of a school library in this rapidly changing environment?

The answer lies in recognising the library not simply as a place where books are stored, but as an important part of a child's educational and intellectual development.



A school library provides students with something that a textbook often cannot: the freedom to explore. The classroom generally follows a prescribed curriculum, while the library allows a child to follow curiosity. A student interested in space may discover astronomy; another fascinated by a historical personality may begin exploring history; someone who enjoys stories may develop an interest in literature. Such discoveries can become the foundation of lifelong interests and even future careers.

This freedom is particularly important during childhood and adolescence, when students are developing their personalities, interests and ways of understanding the world. Books expose them to experiences, cultures and ideas beyond their immediate surroundings.

Reading also develops abilities that are difficult to acquire through short-form digital content. A book demands attention and patience. It encourages a child to follow a story, understand an argument, remember details and connect ideas. Regular reading improves vocabulary, comprehension and communication skills, but its benefits go much further. It can strengthen imagination, concentration and empathy.

When children read stories about people living in different circumstances, they learn to see the world from perspectives other than their



own. Biographies, historical books, literature and science books encourage perseverance, curiosity and reflection. In this way, reading contributes to education and character formation.

One of the biggest challenges today is the declining attention span of children. Social media and short videos capture attention quickly, making sustained concentration more difficult. The school library can provide a quiet environment where children slow down, concentrate

and engage deeply with an idea. At the same time, libraries should not treat technology as a competitor. Digital resources such as e-books, audiobooks, online journals and educational databases have opened new possibilities for learning.

However, access to information is not the same as knowledge. Students must learn to question information, verify facts and recognise limitations. School libraries can teach responsible research, source verification, fact-checking, copyright, plagiarism and digital safety. In the age of artificial intelligence, distinguishing reliable knowledge from misleading information is increasingly important.

The role of the librarian is equally significant. A librarian should not be seen merely as the person responsible for maintaining shelves and issuing books. A good librarian can become a mentor and learning facilitator who helps students discover suitable reading material, guides them towards credible sources and encourages them to develop independent research habits.

A student may enter a library looking for one particular book and leave with an entirely new area of interest. Such moments are difficult to measure, but they are among the most valuable outcomes of education.

Libraries can also encourage a culture of discussion and creativity. Reading clubs, storytelling sessions, book reviews, debates, quizzes, author interactions, cre-

ative-writing activities and exhibitions can make students active participants rather than passive readers. Such programmes improve communication skills and give young people the confidence to express their ideas.

The library can also support project-based and interdisciplinary learning. A history project can involve books, maps and archival material. A science assignment can encourage students to consult reference books and scientific publications. A literature project can combine reading with creative writing or theatre. Collaboration between teachers and librarians can therefore strengthen classroom learning.

Another important aspect is equality of opportunity. Not every child has access to a personal library at home, expensive educational subscriptions or unlimited digital resources. A well-equipped school library can provide a common intellectual space where students, irrespective of their background, have access to books and learning material.

Investment in school libraries should therefore be treated as an investment in educational quality. Schools need updated collections, age-appropriate books, trained librarians, digital resources and comfortable reading spaces.

Parents, too, can contribute to building a reading culture. Children are more likely to develop an interest in books when reading is seen as a source of pleasure.

Parents can discuss books with their children, visit libraries with them and allow them to choose age-appropriate subjects that interest them. Ultimately, the value of a school library cannot be measured only by the number of books it contains or the number of books issued every month. Its deeper impact can be seen in the questions students begin to ask, the ideas they explore, the confidence they develop and the curiosity they carry beyond the school gates.

A successful library creates readers, but its influence does not end there. Readers become better learners; better learners become independent thinkers; and independent thinkers become more responsible citizens.

In a world overflowing with information, children need more than the ability to find answers. They need the patience to read, the wisdom to evaluate, the courage to question and the imagination to think differently. The school library can help provide all four.

It is therefore time to recognise the library as an essential part of the educational ecosystem - a place where books, technology, teachers, librarians and students come together in the pursuit of knowledge.

A room full of books stores knowledge. A vibrant school library helps young minds understand, question and use that knowledge. And ultimately, that is what education is meant to achieve.

Engineering's new learning paradigm

ANNIE JACOB

Director, KGC College of Technology

Engineering education is undergoing a profound transformation. In an era shaped by technological disruption, interdisciplinary innovation and rapidly evolving professional expectations, the conventional equation of a degree with employability is no longer sufficient. A degree certifies the completion of an academic programme; it does not, by itself, demonstrate whether a graduate can apply knowledge, navigate ambiguity or create meaningful solutions. The imperative, therefore, is to move from a degree-centric paradigm towards a project-centric model of engineering education.

At its core, engineering is an applied discipline. Its purpose is not merely to understand principles, but to use them to address challenges, improve systems and create value. Project-centric education provides the bridge between conceptual understanding and practical competence. It takes students through the complete problem-solving journey—from identifying a need and analysing its dimensions to designing, developing, testing, failing, refining and ultimately creating a viable solution.

The changing world of work makes this shift increasingly urgent. NITI Aayog's 2026 working paper on education and skilling highlights the continuing challenge of translating educational credentials into meaningful employment outcomes. Meanwhile, Deloitte India's Campus Workforce Trends 2026 reports that 86 per cent of organisations surveyed



are seeing AI or agentic AI transform recruitment processes. More significantly, 35 per cent report that AI adoption is creating new entry-level roles or skill requirements, up from 21 per cent the previous year. AI and data capabilities are attracting hiring premiums of 20-25 per cent, while analytical thinking and problem-solving command premiums of 10-15 per cent.

These numbers point to a fundamental change: employers are increasingly looking beyond what graduates have studied to what they can actually do. This is where projects become powerful. A well-designed project requires students to integrate knowledge across domains, make decisions with incomplete information, collaborate, communicate ideas and respond constructively when things do not work. It transforms learning from the passive acquisition of information into an active process of discovery and creation.

The World Economic Forum's Future of Jobs Report 2025 reinforces this direction. Analytical thinking is considered essential by 69 per cent of employers,

making it the most widely valued core skill, while AI and big data, networks and cybersecurity, and technological literacy rank among the fastest-growing skill areas. The report also estimates that 39 per cent of workers' existing core skills will change by 2030. In such an environment, the ability to learn, adapt and solve unfamiliar problems becomes as important as technical knowledge itself.

This transformation should begin from the earliest stages of undergraduate education. Projects should not be reserved for the final semester. Introductory challenges can nurture curiosity and problem identification, followed by interdisciplinary projects, industry-defined problems, research investigations, prototypes and socially relevant applications. Internships, professional mentorship and industry-linked laboratories can further connect classroom learning with authentic challenges.

Assessment, too, must evolve. If examinations remain the dominant measure of achievement, students will naturally optimise for examinations. A project-

centric ecosystem should also recognise prototypes, simulations, software, research outcomes, design documentation, technical reports and innovation portfolios as tangible evidence of competence.

Importantly, project-centric education does not mean abandoning theoretical rigour. Strong fundamentals remain the intellectual foundation of engineering. The goal is to create a continuum between theory, experimentation and application—helping students understand not only what they learn, but why it matters and where it can be applied.

Ultimately, the engineering institution of the future must be more than a place where qualifications are awarded. It must be an ecosystem where curiosity is encouraged, ideas are tested, failures become learning opportunities and solutions are continually refined.

The degree may signify what a student has learned. The project demonstrates what the student can do with it. And that ability to turn knowledge into action may well define the engineer of the future.

What should an MBA offer today?

JONES MATHEW

Professor of Marketing and Director, IMI Delhi

An MBA graduate today walks into a world which requires a mix of evergreen and new-age characteristics. First of all, what is the world that they are walking into? It's a world of information explosion, AI assists, rapid technological change, choice overload, intellect outsourcing, job shortages, multiple career shifts, short-circuiting of the knowledge discovery process and a skills shortfall.

When there is unlimited information at the fingertips, the MBA class should not be just about transferring knowledge. It should evolve into an experience laboratory, a skills incubator, a curiosity fulfilment theatre. The MBA student must, in the AI world, have some inviolable human graduate outcomes. They should be questioners versus passive receivers, communicators versus talkers, collaborators versus standalone operators, eclectic versus single-idea holders, thinkers on their feet versus formulaic thought processors, character-rich versus shysters - these are the evergreen qualities needed. New-age skills require the following: problem framing and problem-solving; application of AI to functional domains; judgement capability; and technology native.

The Indian two-year MBA has the characteristic of taking in a cohort who may have nil or very little industry experience. This is a very significant disadvantage in truly imbibing the lessons of business management in a practical sense.



Therefore, the MBA of the present must give maximum opportunities to students for industry immersion through observation visits, short-term high-quality projects and other platforms. The MBA programme in the AI world must more purposefully encourage an open mind as compared to blindly accepting AI-generated information, hone articulation skills in opposition to being clarity and communication-challenged, develop the ability to answer the "why" of things and not only the "what" and the "how", and boost curiosity levels instead of mentally dumbing down students. The MBA has survived many shifts in industry over the past century. However, to continue this success, B-schools cannot become complacent and faculty cannot continue to adopt the same pedagogy and assessment methods as before. With the advent of AI, answers are available, the effort is low on the part of the student, and the knowledge discovery process has collapsed to an engineered prompt. Hence, the faculty must

use AI to design the choreography and the need-to-know skills in the class like a movie director who designs the troughs and peaks of viewer interest as the story unfolds.

The MBA class of the present should be about storytelling - telling the story of a subject, a module, a session, a case, an experience, a project, a capstone simulation, a model and everything else in between. The MBA class of the present, in addition to the usual offerings, should be informed by geopolitics, sociology and psychology too. The MBA programme, while having focused a lot on preparing the student for their first job, must now increasingly focus on preparing students for a career in an uncertain world. Students graduating must have undergone at least two years of AI training. AI cannot be a couple of standalone courses in the curriculum. The thrust should be to make it a "horizontal" embedded across areas, with faculty too being trained suitably.

Inculcating a Lifelong Learning (LLL) attitude should be one of the key graduate outcomes in a present-day MBA programme, akin to teaching a person to fish rather than just being served fish, because constant learning will be essential to stay continuously relevant in a rapidly evolving AI world.



Jindal calls the plant an "entry strategy," not the destination. The real test begins outside JSW's own gates, where margin-sensitive fleet operators must accept a higher price for lower running costs. As the chairman conceded, "the economics have to make the case – not sentiment."

BRIEFLY

Table tennis: Indian men’s, women’s teams knocked out

The Indian women's team crashed out of the Asian Games table tennis quarterfinals after a 0-3 defeat to North Korea but did one better than their men counterparts, who were ousted in the round of 16, here on Tuesday.

The Indian women's team had beaten Thailand 3-2 to make it to the last eight with a hard-fought win at the Sky Hall, but could not continue their momentum and suffered a crushing defeat in the quarterfinal against the Koreans.

The world Number 164, Kim Kum Yong defeated the highest ranked Indian women's singles player Sreeja Akula, No. 58, in straight games for a commanding 3-0 (11-7, 11-6, 11-5) victory in the first match.

In the second, DPRK's Pyon Song Gyong, ranked No. 179, crushed the 76th ranked Indian Yashaswini Ghorpade 3-0 (11-4, 11-3, 11-6) for another one-sided win.

Trailing 0-2, India needed something special from Number 66 Diya Chitale but she went down fighting against the 169th-ranked Cha Su Yong 0-3 (9-11, 7-11, 8-11).

Earlier, the Indian women's team had edged out Thailand 3-2. Sreeja was defeated 2-3 (11-7, 11-1, 9-11, 6-11, 10-12) by Orawan Paranang in the opening match. The second match too went into five games as Yashaswini edged out her opponent Suthasini Sawettabut 3-2 (11-5, 5-11, 7-11, 11-9, 11-9). Diya Chitale, however, suffered a defeat to Jinnipa Sawettabut, losing to the Thai rival.

(PTI)



Prachiti becomes first Indian to become MMA referee in Asiad



Maharashtra's Prachiti Nagpurkar gave up chartered accountancy to pursue her dream of becoming a mixed martial arts match official and has no regrets about leaving the lucrative profession after becoming the first Indian to referee a bout at the Asian Games here. Prachiti was a match referee in one of the semifinal bouts of the Asian Games at the Nagoya City Inae Sports Center here as MMA made debut in the continental multi-sport event. She said she has also officiated in qualifiers for the Asian Games and in Asian Championships in Uzbekistan and China this year, as well as in the South East Asian Games.

(PTI)

Badminton at Asiad: Indian men assured of medal

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ Nagoya

Lakshya Sen's stirring comeback was the perfect subplot as the Indian men's badminton team produced a superlative performance to outwit Japan in the quarterfinals and assure itself of a medal, but it was curtains for the women's team following a 1-3 loss to the hosts at the Asian Games here on Tuesday. It was a flawless performance from the Indian men, silver medallists at the last edition, as they rode on victories from Lakshya, Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty, and Ayush Shetty.

Coming into the event after a series of early exits and low on confidence, Lakshya was staring at defeat after losing the opening game and trailing 14-19 in the decider.

However, the 25-year-old from Almora proved his mettle, reeling off seven straight points to beat world No.7 and two-time world championships silver-medallist Kodai Naraoka 11-21, 21-5, 21-19 to give India a 1-0 lead.

Playing the first doubles, Satwik and Chirag, who have won two titles this season, registered a 21-18, 24-22 win over former world champions Hoki



Takuro and Kobayashi Yugo to extend India's lead to 2-0.

Ayush, a finalist at the Asia Championships this year, then produced an impressive performance to see off world no. 16 Koki

Watanabe 21-10 21-19 to seal the match and a medal for India. India will face the winner of the other quarterfinal between defending champions China and Korea in the last four stage on Wednesday.

"It's a great win today for our men's team over Japan at the Asian Games in Japan. This brings back some very special memories of

the 1986 Asian Games in Seoul," former India coach Vimal Kumar said.

Kumar was part of the Indian men's badminton team at the 1986 Games alongside Prakash Padukone, Syed Modi, Uday Pawar, Ravi Kunte, Leroy D'Sa and Sanat Misra.

"One of the most memorable moments of our campaign was our victory over Japan. Prakash and I won our respective singles matches, and Prakash, partnering Uday Pawar, won the men's doubles. It was a proud moment for all of us and a memorable victory for Indian badminton," he said.

"Great to see similar memories being created again. It takes me right back to Seoul 1986," he added.

The win lifted some of the gloom after the women's team's loss earlier in the day.

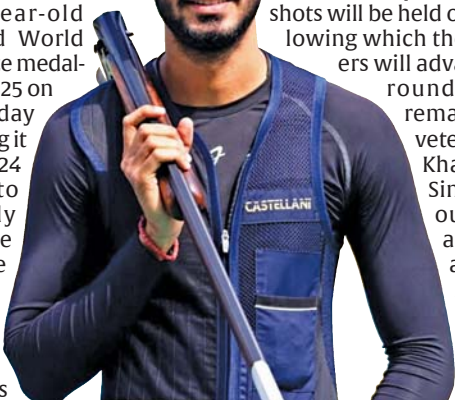
While the World Championships bronze medallists Treesa Jolly and Gayatri Gopichand produced a clinical performance, the singles players faltered as the women's team bowed out of the quadrennial event with a 1-3 loss to Japan in the quarterfinals. The build-up to the Games could not have been worse for world no. 14 Lakshya, as he made an early exit from the home World Championships after losing to USA's Garrett Tan, who was ranked world No. 92 at the time. His mentor Vimal Kumar later revealed that he had been dealing with a back injury.

Naruka, Raiza keep India’s hopes of individual medal alive in skeet shooting

AJAI MASAND ■ Nagoya

India's top skeet shooter Anantjeet Singh Naruka strengthened his chances of making the Asian Games final on Tuesday, producing a superb 96 out of 100 to move into a four-way tie for the lead after four rounds of qualification.

The 28-year-old Olympian and World Cup Final bronze medalist shot 24 and 25 on the opening day before following it up with 23 and 24 on Tuesday to stay firmly among the leaders at the shotgun range. With one more round of 25 targets remaining, Naruka is



well placed to make the eight-shooter final and challenge for a medal.

Naruka's composed performance provided some relief for the Indian shooting contingent after an otherwise disappointing day, with the 10m air rifle mixed team of Elavenil Valarivan and Parth Mane failing to make the medal rounds.

The final qualification round of 25 shots will be held on Wednesday, following which the top eight shooters will advance to the medal round. While Naruka remained in the hunt, veteran Mairaj Ahmad Khan and Bhavtegh Singh Gill were left out of contention after struggling in an elite field. Mairaj finished the day on 91 (23, 22, 23, 23), while Gill was on 86 (21, 23, 20, 22).

IOA chief Usha backs games village system, says Nagoya model should not become norm

AJAI MASAND ■ Nagoya

Indian Olympic Association (IOA) president P T Usha on Tuesday questioned the Aichi-Nagoya Asian Games organisers' decision to do away with a conventional Athletes Village, revealing that she and several other members of the event's coordination committee had objected to the idea.

Usha, one of India's most successful Asian Games athletes, said the Village was not merely about accommodation as it also brought together athletes from different countries, creating the unique atmosphere associated with a multi-sport event. Athletes at the Aichi-Nagoya Games are being housed at different locations, with a cruise ship serving as the principal accommodation facil-



ity instead of a single purpose-built Village. The Games organisers have cited cost and sustainability as the primary reasons for the experiment that has divided opinions.

Boxing: Sakshi upstages Olympic-medallist, Jadumani also wins; duo enters Asiad last-16

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ Nishio (Japan)

Indian boxer Sakshi Chaudhary (51kg) pulled off an upset by out-punching Paris Olympics bronze-medallist Aira Villegas to storm into the pre-quarterfinals, while Jadumani Singh (55kg) also advanced to the last-16 stage of the Asian Games here on Tuesday.

The 26-year-old Bhiwani boxer used her height and long reach to keep the Filipino at bay and notch a convincing 5-0 win. Jadumani also began his campaign with a dominant 5-0 victory over Nepal's Chandra Bahadur Thapa to move into the round of 16, where Tokyo Olympics silver medallist Carlo Paalam of the Philippines awaits him.

After a cagey start from both boxers, Sakshi used her jab



effectively to control the proceedings throughout the round-of-32 bout.

She upped the tempo in the second round, unleashing a flurry of punches as Villegas struggled to cope with her pace and movement.

The Filipina southpaw landed a couple of stinging left hooks on the counter and threw a flurry of punches in the final round, but it was too little too late as all five judges awarded Sakshi a perfect 10 in every round.

Asian Games find an artistic canvas

AJAI MASAND ■ Nagoya

At the Main Media Centre of the Asian Games here, sport has found an unusual canvas — two large display boards filled with drawings by artists from across the subcontinent.

The winning entries of a drawing contest cover a range of sporting moments and messages, offering a different view of the Games from the usual photographs, results and statistics. One of the prominent entries from Nepal features a javelin thrower in full flight, with the spear soaring into the air and a bandana tied around his head. The resemblance to India's two-time Olympic medallist Neeraj Chopra is unmistakable, making it a clear tribute to the star athlete.

Another entry from Nepal focuses on cricket, with a simple message calling for the sport to become a global game. It reflects how the sport has spread beyond its traditional strongholds and found new audiences around the world.



A common feature in many of the drawings is Honohon, the official mascot of the Aichi-Nagoya Games. Inspired by a mythical creature with head of a tiger and body of carp, Honohon is linked to guardian deity of Nagoya Castle.

The mascot appears in different forms and settings, giving the collection a common thread despite the different styles of the artists. The drawings cover a wide range of ideas. Some focus on athletes and sporting action, while others try to capture the wider atmosphere of the Games.

There are no detailed explanations or statistics, just simple images of athletes, sporting equipment, movement and colour. The display also offers a view of the Games from outside the competition. Instead of medals and podiums, the drawings show how sport is seen and remembered by those watching it.

A javelin thrower in action, a cricket bat ready for a shot and the repeated presence of Honohon become simple symbols of an event bringing together athletes from across Asia.

(PTI)

DAILY SUDOKU

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

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.

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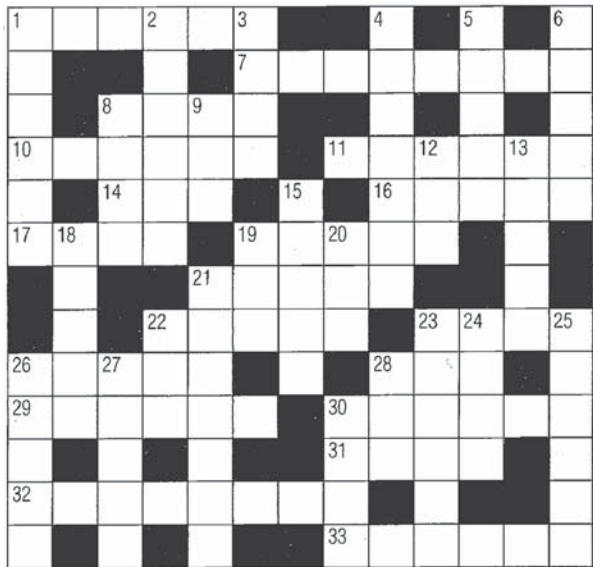


SOLUTION (22.9.26)

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

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DOUBLE CROSSWORD
WEDNESDAY | SEPTEMBER 23, 2026



ACROSS

- The best fellows around central Germany (6)
- Woman for a writer to run away with (8)
- Little chap clutched by a singer (4)
- Darted around as one did business (6)
- Riverside property in a foreign country (14)
- Indeed Scottish (3)
- Virginia and Leslie down in the country (17)
- Go round to the doctor? (4)
- Subdued when mated, maybe (5)
- Well known to have done wrong about central heating (5)
- It's highly brilliant but not meteoric (5)

DOWN

- No pet dog having to sit up with a cup (6)
- Might she be bowled over? (6)
- Speed past (4)
- Let me adore you darling! (7)
- Of central interest when a loaf is shared out for a number (5)
- A chancey call (5)
- Trio of magicians (4)
- Has it a musical ring? (3)
- Chap glad to shed a little weight (3)
- Liven up in the style of novelist Shute (5)
- Getting too immersed in it can be fatal (5)
- Does it make a noise like a squashed

- Pedestrian location in Lambeth? (4)
- French artist, to some degree Anglo-Saxon (5)
- Held in the sense of "caught" (3)
- Flattened by a hard man (6)
- Like silence or those grand days of yore (6)
- Birds slow in movement (4)
- It's players pretend to have fun (8)
- Here on the Green somewhere near Lewisham (6)

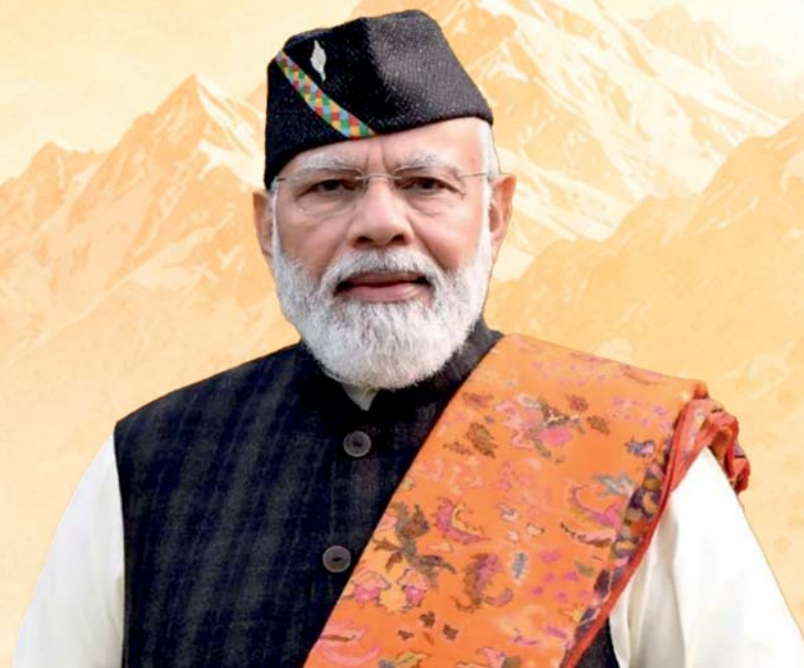
- grape? (5)
- He can be catty (3)
- Satisfied the requirement of some transport line (3)
- Flowery point made in a case of terrible agony (7)
- Has ability in buccaneering (3)
- Container of rainwater maybe, about a half gallon (6)
- Puts on extra for tots? (4)
- Young Germans seem more considerate (6)
- Rid oneself of many a desire (5)
- Nobbled animal about to finish last (5)
- Supposedly brave greeting? (3)
- Crikey, wild hogs! (4)

SOLUTION (22.9.26)

ACROSS	19, Argue	DOWN	2, Curfew	15, Huron
1, Ac-ton	20, Trance	3, Off day	16, Met-er	
6, Swabs	22, Sore	4, N-O-t	18, Aught	
9, Founder	24, Yob	5, Unlity	19, A-cut-ely	
10, Dr-ift	25, Th-inn-er	6, Se-vill-e	21, Rota-te	
11, Verse	26, Stoot	7, Wren	22, Snitch	
12, Stein	27, M-ari-e	8, Busker	23, Refuse	
13, Tenancy	28, St-out	9, Plastic	25, Tansy	
15, Hem	29, Plastic	12, Score	26, Sips	
17, Away	30, Mes-s-y	13, Tasty	28, Sit	
18, A-L-lure	31, Three	14, Nawab		



Govt. of Uttarakhand



“ The construction of a developed India in the 21st century rests on two main pillars: first, pride in our heritage, and second, making every possible effort for development. Today, Uttarakhand is continuously strengthening both these pillars. This decade is the decade of Uttarakhand.”

Narendra Modi
Prime Minister

“ Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi Ji has called the third decade of the 21st century the decade of Uttarakhand. In line with the Prime Minister's vision, we are working with a 'resolve without alternative' (Vikalp Rahit Sankalp) to make the state an ideal state in every field.”

Pushkar Singh Dhami
Chief Minister, Uttarakhand

Viksit Bharat Sashakt Uttarakhand



Sewa - Sushasan - Samarpan

Employment

- Strict Anti-Copying/Anti-Cheating Law & Transparent Recruitment Process: Selection across multiple departments 33,000 youths given government jobs in the past 5 years.
- Chief Minister Skill Upgradation & Global Employment Scheme: Budget increased from ₹75 lakh to ₹33 crore; foreign language training provided to 147 children, with 92 securing employment abroad.
- Growth in MSME Employment: Number of people employed in MSMEs increased from 3,43,922 in 2022 to 4,56,605 in 2025.
- 10% Horizontal Reservation for Agniveers: Applicable to direct recruitment in Group 'C' uniformed services in government jobs.
- Devbhoomi Entrepreneurship Development Scheme: 300+ students established enterprises, registration of nearly 1,200 students is underway, and employment generated for 1,541 students and others.

Industries

- New Momentum to Development Through Grounding of Investments Worth Over ₹1.00 Lakh Crore.
- Investment Agreements Worth ₹3.56 Lakh Crore: Signed during the Global Investors Summit.
- Expansion of Land Bank: Over 6,000 acres of additional land bank developed for industries.
- Thriving MSME Sector: Over 96,400 MSME units active across the state.
- Massive Job Creation in MSME: Generated over 4.70 lakh jobs in the MSME sector.
- Flourishing Startup Culture: Over 1,750 startups established in the state.
- National Recognition: Uttarakhand recognized as a "Leader" state in the States' Startup Ecosystem Ranking.
- Large-Scale Industries: 128 large industrial units currently operational in the state.

Education

- Uttarakhand has become the first state in the country to implement the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020.
- Under the PM SHRI Scheme, 141 schools were selected in the first phase and 84 schools in the second phase.
- Virtual classrooms are being operated in 500 Government Secondary Schools across the state.
- The total number of Government and Private Degree Colleges in the state increased to 139 by 2025.
- The total number of Engineering Colleges (Government and Private) in the state increased to 52 by 2025.
- Under the Secondary Education programme, free textbooks are being provided to students of Class I to XII studying in Government and Private schools across the state.

Health

- Construction of the AIIMS Satellite Centre at Kichha is underway, with 85% of the work completed.
- The AIIMS Kichha project includes a 250-bed hospital, 10 Operation Theatres (OTs), 30 ICU beds, advanced Diagnostics & Laboratory facilities, and speciality departments including Cardiology, Nephrology, Urology, Neurology, General Surgery, Orthopaedics, General Medicine, Paediatrics, and an Emergency & Trauma Centre.
- More than 6.1 million Ayushman Cards have been issued across the state under the Atal Ayushman Yojana.
- Under the Atal Ayushman Yojana, more than 1.7 million patients have received cashless treatment worth over ₹3,400 crore.
- 207 types of pathology tests are being provided completely free of cost across the state.
- A target has been set to establish a Medical College in every district. At present, five Medical Colleges are operational, while two more are under construction.
- Super-speciality healthcare services are available at the Medical Colleges in Dehradun, Haldwani, and Srinagar.
- The newly constructed Child and Mother Care Hospital in Haridwar is now operational.



Connectivity

- Inauguration of the 210-km Delhi–Dehradun Economic Corridor, featuring Asia's longest 12-km Wildlife Corridor.
- The Rishikesh–Karnaprayag Rail Project is progressing at a rapid pace.
- The state's road network has expanded to 51,728 km.
- The All Weather Road Project has ensured seamless connectivity to the Char Dham shrines and border areas.
- A new terminal has been developed at Dehradun Airport, with regular flight connectivity to major cities across the country.
- 13 new heliports are currently under construction.
- Construction of the Sonprayag–Kedarnath (12.9 km) and Govindghat–Hemkund Sahib (12.4 km) Ropeway Projects has commenced.

Women Empowerment

- 30% horizontal reservation has been implemented for women in Government jobs across the state.
- 33% reservation for women has been ensured in Co-operative Management Committees.
- Under the Chief Minister Self-Help Group Empowerment Scheme, Self-Help Groups are provided interest-free loans of up to ₹5 lakh.
- Under the Lakhpati Didi Scheme, more than 2.54 lakh women in the state have become Lakhpati Didis.
- Under the Chief Minister Mahalakshmi Kit Scheme, women are provided with essential maternity kits after childbirth.
- Under the Nanda Gaura Scheme, the State Government provides ₹11,000 on the birth of a girl child and ₹51,000 for higher education after she passes Class XII.

Youth Welfare

- Under the New Sports Policy, a historic decision has been taken to provide Government jobs to medal winners at the National and International levels.
- The daily diet allowance for sportspersons has been increased from ₹250 to ₹480 per athlete per day, in line with the Sports Authority of India (SAI).
- Under the Chief Minister Emerging Sportsperson Development Scheme, around 3,900 emerging athletes aged 8 to 14 years are being provided a monthly sports scholarship of ₹1,500.
- Sportspersons who have won medals or represented the country at National and International events such as the Olympic Games, Asian Games, Commonwealth Games, etc., will receive the benefit of the 4% Sports Quota in Government Services.
- 60 Patent Information Centres have been established in various colleges, universities, and other institutions across the state.