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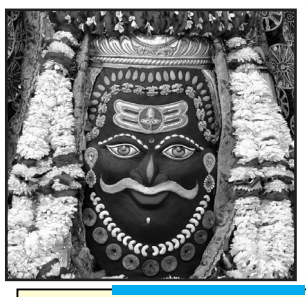
MONDAY

MAHANAGAR METRO

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Gwalior truck accident: Nitin Gadkari expresses grief, extends condolences to victims' families

New Delhi. (Agency).

Union Minister Nitin Gadkari on Sunday expressed deep grief over the tragic truck accident near Sheetla Mata Temple in Gwalior, Madhya Pradesh, which claimed 14 lives, extending heartfelt condolences to the families of the deceased and praying for the speedy recovery of those injured. In a post on X, Gadkari conveyed his sympathies to the bereaved families and said he was praying for strength for those who had lost their loved ones in the tragic incident.

"Deeply saddened by the tragic loss of life in the incident in Gwalior, Madhya Pradesh. My heartfelt condolences to the families who have lost their loved ones. Praying for strength for the bereaved families and a swift recovery for all those injured," Gadkari wrote on X. The accident occurred at around 1.30 am when a truck loaded with paddy reportedly lost control while descending a steep slope and crashed into devotees gathered near Sheetla Mata Temple. The truck allegedly broke through barricades and a police checkpoint before running over pilgrims and hitting the temple's outer wall and gate. The death toll rose to 14, with several others injured.

"Uddhav couldn't prevent 'regime change' in his own Shiv Sena": CM Fadnavis hits back at Shiv Sena (UBT) chief

Nagpur (Maharashtra) (Agency).

Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis on Sunday criticised Shiv Sena (UBT) chief Uddhav Thackeray over his remarks on 'regime change', asserting that governments in India are decided through elections and that any attempt to change the government must follow the Constitution.

Reacting to Thackeray's remarks, Fadnavis said, "First of all, Uddhav Thackeray could not prevent a regime change within his own Shiv Sena, so I do not know what other regime change he is talking about. The moment his party abandoned Hindutva and the ideology of Hindu Hriday Samrat Balasaheb Thackeray, such turmoil erupted within the party that those who wanted to follow Balasaheb Thackeray's principles formed the real Shiv Sena.""Most importantly, I have made it very clear: Stop fighting against the Constitution of India. Decisions in this country will be taken in Parliament and in accordance with the Constitution, not on the streets. In a democracy, governments are decided through elections," he added.

Fadnavis said that the Narendra Modi-led government was in power and would be elected again, adding that those seeking a change of government must contest elections and win public support."Today, Narendra Modi's government is in power, and it will be elected again. But if you want a regime change, you must contest elections, win the hearts of the people and secure an electoral victory.

Putting party above family: Mayawati praises Akash Anand's maturity, wisdom

Mayawati said Akash Anand, recently reappointed as the BSP's national coordinator, had put the party and its movement above family ties after Siddharth's retirement, adding that the Bahujan community had high expectations from him and he was working hard to fulfil his responsibilities.

New Delhi(Agency).

BSP chief Mayawati has said her nephew Akash Anand is showing maturity and placing the party above family ties after his father-in-law Ashok Siddharth retired from politics, news agency Press Trust of India reported. Mayawati also announced a series of programmes that Anand will address across Uttar Pradesh and other states, while ruling out Siddharth's return to the party.

In a post on X on Sunday, the former Uttar Pradesh chief minister said Anand, who was recently reappointed the BSP's national coordinator, had prioritised the party and its movement over family and personal relationships after Siddharth's retirement from politics. The former Rajya Sabha MP retired from politics in September. Mayawati said people from the Bahujan community had high expectations from Anand and that he was working hard to fulfil his responsibilities. According to Mayawati, Anand will address BSP public meetings in Bulandshahr on October 28, Saharanpur on November 2, Ayodhya on November 20, Agra on November 22 and Kanpur Nagar on November 29. He will also attend a seminar organised by the BSP in Punjab on Constitution Day on November 26. On December 6, the death anniversary of BR Ambedkar, Anand will address a seminar or public meeting in Uttarakhand's Haridwar district, she said. Mayawati said Anand's renewed involvement in party activities showed that Siddharth was more responsible than her nephew for the past "unpleasant developments". She said Siddharth had been expelled from the party and advised to retire from politics. The BSP chief cautioned party workers against rumours and attempts by "selfish elements" to mislead them. She urged them to work wholeheartedly to ensure the success of the programmes assigned to Anand.



"There is not an iota of truth in the rumours that Ashok Siddharth, like Akash Anand, will be taken back into the party," Mayawati said, according to PTI. She made it clear that Siddharth would not be readmitted under any circumstances. In another announcement, Mayawati said Akash Anand's brother, Ishan Anand, had completed his law studies in London and would assist the BSP as an active worker at its central office in Delhi under her guidance. He would primarily help with election-related work and other paperwork, she said. Mayawati's announcements set out Akash Anand's upcoming party programmes, confirmed Ishan Anand's role at the BSP's Delhi office and ruled out Ashok Siddharth's return to the party.

Tiger Shroff's Car Targeted in Shocking Juhu Firing Incident: Five Rounds Allegedly Fired, Bollywood Actor Reportedly Safe as Mumbai Police Launch Investigation

Mahanagar Metro Desk

Mumbai: A sensational report has emerged from Mumbai, the heart of the Indian film industry, claiming that the car of popular Bollywood action star Tiger Shroff was targeted in an alleged shooting incident in the Pushpa Park area of Juhu. The reported incident has raised serious concerns about the safety of prominent personalities and public security in the city. According to the account provided, unidentified assailants allegedly fired five rounds at the actor's vehicle, triggering panic in the surrounding area. The report further claims that Tiger Shroff escaped unharmed. However, the incident and the specific details surrounding it require independent verification from official police sources before they can be treated as confirmed facts.Alleged Attack in Juhu Creates PanicAccording to the information provided, the incident reportedly took place near Pushpa Park in Juhu, one of Mumbai's well-known residential and commercial areas. Tiger Shroff was allegedly travelling in his car when three unidentified individuals arrived on a motorcycle and approached the vehicle. The attackers are said to have opened fire, discharging five rounds towards the car.The sudden sound of gunfire reportedly created an atmosphere of fear in the locality. Residents, pedestrians and people present nearby were allegedly caught off guard by the incident. Some people reportedly moved away from the area to protect themselves, while others attempted to understand what had happened. The incident, as described in the supplied account, raises questions about how such an attack could allegedly occur in a busy urban neighbourhood.The report states that the driver reacted quickly after the firing began and accelerated the vehicle to move away from the danger. This response allegedly helped the occupants leave the immediate area. The three suspects are said to have fled on their motorcycle, taking advantage of the surrounding traffic and crowded streets. Their identities, the registration number of the motorcycle and the precise direction in which they escaped have not been independently established.Actor's Safety Becomes a Major ConcernThe reported incident has drawn attention to the security challenges faced by celebrities and other high-profile personalities who regularly travel through public areas. Actors often move between their residences, film sets, studios, professional engagements and private events. Although security arrangements may be in place, incidents involving alleged armed attackers can raise concerns about the effectiveness of existing protective measures.According to the



supplied account, Tiger Shroff was not injured and remained safe following the alleged firing. Nevertheless, the reported targeting of a vehicle associated with a prominent actor would be a serious matter requiring a thorough investigation if confirmed. Authorities would need to establish whether the actor himself was the intended target, whether the vehicle was deliberately followed and whether the suspects had conducted any prior surveillance.At present, the claims regarding the actor's safety and the circumstances of the alleged shooting should be confirmed through an official statement from Mumbai Police or a reliable news organisation. Until such confirmation is available, the reported sequence of events cannot be presented as an established police finding.Police Investigation and Forensic ExaminationThe supplied report claims that personnel from Juhu Police Station, the Mumbai Crime Branch and the Anti-Extortion Cell reached the area after receiving information about the alleged incident. It also states that forensic specialists examined the vehicle and attempted to collect physical evidence that could help establish what happened.In a shooting investigation, forensic examination can play a critical role in determining the number of shots fired, the direction of the bullets, the locations from which the shots may have originated and the type of ammunition involved. Investigators may also examine damage to the vehicle, recover cartridge cases where available and compare ballistic evidence with material recovered in other cases.However, the reported involvement of particular police units and the recovery of evidence have not been independently verified in this case. The exact nature of any police response, the location of the vehicle and whether forensic evidence was collected would need to be confirmed by the relevant authorities.CCTV Footage Could Help Identify the SuspectsThe supplied account further claims that investigators are examining CCTV footage from roads and locations around Pushpa Park and Juhu. If the incident is confirmed, footage from nearby residential buildings, commercial establishments, traffic junctions and other public-facing cameras could help investigators reconstruct the movements of the suspects.

"Investments exist only on paper, jobs only in slogans": Rahul Gandhi slams Dhami govt over Uttarakhand Investors Summit

New Delhi(Agency).

Lok Sabha's Leader of Opposition and Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Sunday launched a scathing attack on the Uttarakhand government over the Global Investors Summit, calling it "a sham in the name of investment" and "yet another example of the BJP's 'double-engine' model."In a post on X, Congress leader Rahul Gandhi said the summit was hyped extensively, with 1,779 MoUs worth ₹3.56 lakh crore announced. He alleged that nearly ₹100 crore of public money was spent on roadshows, after which the government claimed ₹1 lakh crore had been "realised on the ground."



"A sham by the Dhami government in the name of investment in Uttarakhand—yet another example of the BJP's 'double-engine' model. The 'Global Investors Summit' was hyped extensively: 1,779 MoUs, worth ₹3.56 lakh crore. Nearly ₹100 crore of public money was spent on roadshows. Subsequently, the government claimed that ₹1 lakh crore had been "realised on the ground," he posted on X.

Citing an investigation by an online news portal, Gandhi alleged that flour mills, fertiliser and seed shops and small clinics were counted as "investors," some of whom were unaware of it.

How economist Surjit Bhalla cut through 13 crore voter deletions to find 70 lakh unexplained

Economist Surjit Bhalla estimates that around 70 lakh eligible voters may have been removed without explanation during the SIR, while arguing that most of the 13.37 crore draft-stage deletions were justified, as they included names of deceased voters, people who had relocated, duplicate entries and untraceable voters.

Karnataka(Agency).

The debate over the Election Commission's Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls has largely revolved around the staggering figure of 13 crore names removed. But how many of those deletions actually involved eligible voters who should have remained on the rolls? Economist Surjit Bhalla has attempted to answer that question by looking beyond the headline figure. In a blog published on Saturday, he estimates that around 70 lakh eligible voters may have been removed without explanation in states where the revision process has been completed. In an analysis published on Saturday, Bhalla argues that the 13 crore figure counts draft-stage deletions across all three phases of the SIR, including names removed for legitimate reasons such as death, relocation and duplication. It also includes states where final electoral rolls have not yet been published. His calculation, based on population estimates, official birth and death data, and the Election Commission's pre-SIR voter registration figures, puts the number of potentially unexplained deletions at around 70 lakh, significantly lower than the figure dominating the political debate.



"'Unexplained' is not proof that every one of the 7 million was removed wrongly, and it is not small to the people concerned," Bhalla wrote. "But it is less than one adult in a hundred, not the one in seven implied by the headlines."

NHAI adds 2 lanes to ease DME-NH-9 bottleneck near ABES College

Ghaziabad.(Agency)

National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) has widened the entry and exit lanes near ABES College, adding one lane each to ease congestion where NH-9 and the Delhi-Meerut Expressway (DME) converge. Nearly 20 km of DME and NH9 passes through the city and witnesses traffic influxes of 60,000 to 4 lakh vehicles. Jams and long tailbacks are a regular feature. The stretch, which has opened in phases since 2018, has seen a manifold increase in vehicular movement. Over the years, NHAI has been introducing new cuts and exits along with the broadening of lanes to beat the snarls.

"Ispat Nagar in the city is an industrial cluster that sees movement of heavy vehicles and daily commuters through arterial roads in and out of NH9, leading to traffic congestion at the point where the arterial road joins NH9 and the expressway," an NHAI official said. "The extra lanes will do away with this problem.

Noida forum says insurer cannot reject claim citing undisclosed pre-existing illness without proof

Noida.(Agency)

District consumer commission has directed Star Health and Allied Insurance to settle a mediclaim pending for the past four years of Rs 1.2 lakh with 6% interest calculated from the date of filing of the complaint in March 2023 and pay Rs 5,000 in litigation costs within 30 days.

The commission ruled that an insurer cannot reject a policyholder's claim on grounds of a pre-existing condition unless it can prove, with evidence, that the buyer was aware of the ailment and deliberately concealed it at the time of buying the policy. Rejection without sufficient evidence, the commission said, amounts to deficiency in service and unfair trade practice.

Kamlesh Choudhary had filed a complaint with the commission against the insurer and Punjab National Bank, Greater Noida, on March 27, 2023. She told the members that the bank had facilitated her in buying a policy with Star Health and Allied Insurance in April of the preceding year.

Pizza outlets, restos, grocery hubs raided, oil & honey seized in Noida

Noida.(Agency)

Teams of the food safety and drug administration department continued their crackdown on substandard food during the festive season and raided pizza outlets, kitchens of restaurants and warehouses.

Assistant commissioner of food, grade II, Sarvesh Mishra said separate teams of the department conducted inspection drives late into Thursday and Friday, collecting samples of various food products for laboratory testing. From sectors 63, 67 and 68, samples of khoya and a seasoning used on savoury items were collected for laboratory testing.

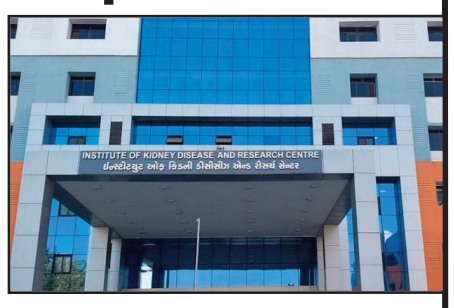
Samples of honey from different batches were seized for testing from a warehouse that stores products for an online grocery platform. An official said the labels on the product did not mention expiry dates.

Food safety officers OP Singh and Amar Bahadur Saroj inspected the base kitchen of Domino's Pizza in Ecotech 1. The team collected one sample each of loose refined .

Pressure from an 'Invisible Apex Authority' Allegedly Stalling Corruption Probe in Gujarat Health Department

Mahanagar Metro Desk

Ahmedabad: A major administrative deadlock has allegedly emerged in the investigation into suspected financial irregularities worth crores of rupees, alleged illegal backdoor recruitments and misuse of public funds at the Institute of Kidney Diseases and Research Centre (IKDRC), located on the Civil Hospital campus in Ahmedabad. Despite repeated forwarding letters reportedly issued by several high-level authorities, including the Prime Minister's Office (PMO), Chief Minister's Office (CMO), Raj Bhavan, Central Vigilance Commission (CVC) and Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB), seeking investigations and disciplinary action, senior officials of Gujarat's Health Department have allegedly failed to take effective action.Who Is the 'Apex' Authority Allegedly Blocking Investigations?According to details cited by the complainant, an individual who sought action in the alleged scam personally approached a Deputy Secretary in the Health Department. During the interaction, the Deputy Secretary allegedly acknowledged that the Additional Chief Secretary (ACS), Health, had directed that no action be taken on the files until a specific order was received from the 'Apex' authority. The complainant further alleges that the official said the complaints should be allowed to accumulate until such instructions arrived.These allegations raise serious questions about the decision-making process within the state administration. Who or what is the authority referred to as 'Apex'? Why are complaints allegedly involving substantial public funds not being acted upon despite representations to multiple government and vigilance institutions? Is any influential individual or group protecting those facing allegations? These questions require an independent and transparent inquiry.IKDRC Director's CAG Audit Defence Challenged by Audit Office CommunicationThe IKDRC Director has allegedly defended the delay in further action by stating that the institution is responding to audit queries raised by the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG), and that further action would be taken after the Principal Accountant General (Audit) reaches a final decision.However, the complainant disputes this explanation. According to the complainant, a representation



submitted through the Right to Information (RTI) mechanism and an official grievance bearing reference number PMOPG/E/2026/0099177 resulted in a written clarification from the CAG office in Rajkot.The office reportedly stated that the Audit Inspection Report had already been issued to the Director of IKDRC, with a copy forwarded to the Health Secretary of the Gujarat Government for necessary action.

When a Person Becomes Small in Their Own Eyes...

Mahanagar Metro Desk

Author: Rupesh Solanki, Bhachau, Kutch The greatest sorrow in a person's life does not arise when the world rejects them, but when they begin to lose their own self-respect. In the race to keep others happy, people sometimes forget their own happiness, emotions, and dignity.Every person expects love, respect, and acceptance in life. However, when fulfilling these expectations leads them to compromise their principles, tolerate injustice, and become afraid to express their thoughts, they gradually begin to lose their identity.Maintaining relationships is important, but repeatedly hurting oneself in the name of preserving relationships is not wisdom. Loving someone does not mean accepting everything they say. Respecting someone does not mean tolerating humiliation, and losing one's identity out of fear of losing someone is never the right choice.Our worth is not determined by the way others treat us; our true identity lies in how much we value and respect ourselves.It is not necessary for everyone in life to understand us. Even when we are right, someone may misunderstand us. We may help others selflessly, yet they may fail to appreciate our feelings. However, undervaluing ourselves because of others' neglect is an injustice to our own selves.Self-respect does not mean arrogance. Accepting our mistakes, understanding others' feelings, and clearly defining our boundaries when necessary are signs of genuine self-respect. It is not necessary to prove our innocence or correctness every time, nor is it necessary to repeatedly plead with people in every relationship to make them recognize our worth.Sometimes, we should pause and ask ourselves: Are we maintaining relationships out of love, or merely out of fear of losing someone? Are we also living for our own happiness, or are we spending our entire lives fulfilling the expectations of others?Becoming successful in the eyes of the world may be an achievement, but remaining true to ourselves is one of life's greatest accomplishments. More important than earning people's admiration is living a life that



brings peace and satisfaction to our conscience.Remember, do not lose yourself in the race to win the world. When a person becomes small in their own eyes, the first step toward rising again is to regain their faith in themselves.

Cops detain protesters, form human chain to allow waste trucks into Aravalis in Faridabad

Gurgaon.(Agency)

Police in Faridabad detained residents protesting the dumping of mixed waste on a disputed 102-acre plot in the Aravalis on Friday, removed their tent and formed a human chain to let the municipal corporation's garbage trucks through. The police action coincided with repeated detentions of protesters in neighbouring Delhi demanding chief election commissioner Gyanesh Kumar's resignation.The protesters, including local councillor Jagat Singh Fagna, were released later that evening. On Saturday, however, protesters returned in large numbers to the plot off Gurgaon-Faridabad road, demanding an end to the dumping.A TOI visit found mixed waste spread across the site, along with drums containing a black liquid. The dumping ground lies close to Sector 49 and the villages of Bhankri, Badkhal, Pali and Nawada. An institute under the Centre's department of biotechnology is also nearby.Fagna alleged that the land was part of the Aravali ecosystem and had been given by a thermal power plant to the forest department for afforestation. "Sector 49 is barely 150-200 metres away, the govt institute is around 200 metres away, and several villages are within a kilometre. The corporation is going to create another Bandhwari here, polluting our soil, water and air. We won't let this happen," he said, referring to the waste facility at Bandhwari."

How can the corporation use this land for dumping if it was given to the forest department for afforestation?" he asked.MCF joint commissioner Anil Kumar, who was present at the site, disputed the claim that the plot formed part of the Aravalis. He said the land belonged to Haryana Power Generation Corporation Limited (HPGCL) and that dumping would continue."The land is not part of the Aravalis and belongs to HPGCL. We will continue dumping waste here. There is no violation," he said.

Scorpio rams car in Gurgaon, its driver grabs woman by neck, pulls her T-shirt

Gurgaon.(Agency)

A 29-year-old woman was allegedly grabbed by the neck and had her T-shirt pulled by an SUV driver after she stepped out to confront him for ramming into her car in Sector 83.

The crash had set off her car's airbags and injured her, her husband and her 68-year-old mother-in-law, who was recovering from a knee replacement surgery. Other commuters intervened to restrain the SUV driver, who was arrested on Friday.The crash occurred at 9.11pm on Oct 14 on the road from Sector 83 towards Jaimal Chowk. Dashcam footage showed a black Mahindra Scorpio hitting the Kia Sonet diagonally. The woman, who works with a media house, said her car was travelling at less than 30kmph when the collision occurred. She alleged the driver appeared intoxicated."The airbags deployed as the Scorpio hit our car. It happened so suddenly that it took us a few seconds to understand what had happened. After checking on my family, I informed my brother and other family members," she told TOI.The Scorpio also hit other vehicles, including a Maruti Ertiga, she said. The Kia was left too badly damaged to be driven.The woman said she suffered injuries to her left hand, lips, nose and chest, along with a swelling in her right hand. Her husband sustained injuries to the nose and lips, which bled heavily. Her 68-year-old mother-in-law suffered fresh discomfort and swelling in her knee. They were taken to Fortis Hospital in Manesar.The confrontation followed when the woman stepped out of the damaged Sonet. "He was totally drunk and could not even stand properly. When he held my hand, I slapped him. He then came after me, pulled my T-shirt, held me by the neck and assaulted me. People around us intervened and held him back," she alleged.A video circulated on social media showed commuters surrounding the Scorpio and demanding that the driver get out. The woman was seen confronting him over his alleged intoxication as others tried to intervene. In he complaint at Kherki Daula police station, she alleged that the driver abused and assaulted her, pulled her clothes and threatened her family. He also allegedly claimed he was not afraid of police and that they could take no action against him. She said repeated attempts to contact police at the scene initially went unanswered."An ambulance that reached the spot took the accused driver to hospital, while we were left there. My sister-in-law drove us to Fortis," she told Police said an emergency response vehicle team received information about the collision that night and found the Scorpio and Sonet damaged. The Sonet was moved off the road. The accused, Chandrashekhar Agrawal, was taken to Aarvy Hospital and arrested later.Police obtained medical reports for the woman and her family, who were declared fit to give statements but initially said they would submit a complaint later. The woman filed it on Oct 15.

An FIR was registered at Kherki Daula police station under sections 281 (rash driving on a public way), 125(A) (acts endangering life or personal safety), 324(4) (mischief causing damage).

20 condos here, yet roads broken for months, drains clogged near Sec 101 metro station

Noida.(Agency)

A stretch of land below Sector 101 Metro Station lies strewn with torn plastic sheets, discarded clothes, broken tiles and garbage, with makeshift homes built of bricks, tin sheets and tarpaulin dotting the area. The stretch is part of the 1-km green belt along Vishwakarma Road, meant to act as a pollution buffer for nearby high-rises. Instead, it is dotted with jhuggis, scrap yards, garbage heaps and unauthorised shops selling pork, meat, fish and liquor.Residents of nearly 20 high-rise societies around the metro station have complained of poor sanitation, damaged approach roads, inadequate drainage and a lack of maintenance of the parking area. They have written to Noida Authority CEO and Noida Metro Rail Corporation managing director Krishna Karunesh, seeking remedial measures.



A Sector 78 resident, Ranjan Samantaray, said the roads, parking areas, drainage systems and pedestrian approaches around the station needed urgent attention. "A metro station is an important public-transport facility used by thousands of commuters. The roads, parking areas, drainage systems and pedestrian approaches around it must be safe, clean and properly maintained," he said. Samantaray added residents had sought a joint inspection by the concerned agencies and a time-bound action plan to ensure accountability and end the cycle of inter-departmental referrals.

Residents said the area had remained in poor condition despite repeated complaints over the years.

Another resident, Brajesh Sharma, flagged the risks posed by garbage and stray animals. "The waste is accumulating there and attracting stray animals. We cross this route often. There is a risk of being hit by a stray animal or bumping into a heap of garbage," he said.

In their representation, residents sought a joint inspection involving senior officials from NMRC, Noida Authority, the irrigation department, sanitation and horticulture divisions, and traffic and parking authorities.

Seven used syringes found on Race Course ground in Madurai

MADURAI.(Agency)

The Madurai city police have launched a probe after a few used syringes were found dumped in a washroom at the Race Course sports ground. Sports department officials lodged a complaint with the police, who are probing whether the syringes were used for administering any substance.

Officials said seven used syringes were found in athlete washrooms inside the race course sports stadium on Saturday. SDAT officials filed a complaint with Tallakulam police.

Cops have collected the syringes to examine the circumstances surrounding the incident and are taking steps to send the syringes to an authorised laboratory for analysis. However, it is yet to be established whether the syringes were used for performance-enhancing drugs, narcotic substances or legitimate medical purposes.

The Race Course ground hosts state-level athletics meets and is regularly used by athletes, coaches and members of the public for training.

Andhra Election Commission implements code of conduct for local elections

VIJAYAWADA.(Agency)

The State Election Commission (SEC) has enforced a comprehensive Model Code of Conduct to ensure free, fair and peaceful local body elections across Andhra Pradesh.State Election Commissioner Anil Chandra Punetha issued revised guidelines applicable to political parties, candidates, ministers, government employees and public servants from the announcement of elections until completion of the electoral process.

Under the guidelines, parties and candidates are prohibited from undertaking activities that aggravate caste, religious or linguistic differences, appealing to communal sentiments or using places of worship for election propaganda. Public meetings and processions require prior permission from the competent authorities. Loudspeakers may be used only between 6 am and 10 pm for transmitting speeches.

The distribution and serving of liquor are prohibited during the 48 hours preceding the conclusion of polling and on counting days.

Voter identity slips must be printed on plain white paper without party symbols or candidates' names. Political parties must also provide suitable badges to their authorised polling agents and workers.

The code places strict restrictions on the party in power. Ministers and authorities are barred from sanctioning grants, announcing new financial schemes, laying foundation stones or making ad hoc appointments after the announcement of elections.

71-year-old man dies of electrocution in TN's Thalaivasal

SALEM.(Agency)

A 71-year-old man died of electrocution in Mummudi near Thalaivasal in Salem after allegedly stepping on a live electric wire lying on the ground after heavy rain on Thursday night.

The deceased was identified as A Karuppannan, a resident of Mummudi. His son, .Kalaiyarasan (41), a daily-wage worker, lodged the complaint with the police.According to the complaint, Karuppannan usually went out early in the morning to drink tea and then collect discarded plastic along the Mummudi-Veeraganur road to sell it for a living. On Friday morning, he left home around 3 am as usual. His family was later informed that he was lying dead near the local veterinary hospital. According to the complaint, heavy rain on Thursday night caused an electric wire on Matha Koil Street in Mummudi to fall to the ground, leaving a live wire exposed on the road.

Karuppannan, who was out early on Friday, is suspected to have stepped on the wire without realising that it was live, resulting in a fatal electric shock. His son, who was informed of the incident around 4 am, rushed to the spot and alerted the police.

9 days, no sitting, no sleeping on ground: Satara village's standing Navratri ritual

Pune.(Agency)

In Pande village of Satara's Wai taluka, the most devout Navratri vow is not about what people do, but what they refuse to do: sit down. For nine days and nights, around 100 men stand, lean and keep one foot on the ground at all times, holding on to a 350-year-old tradition called Ubhyachi Navratra, or Standing Navratri, at the Kalbhairavnath temple.Devotees take the vow, called navas, either to fulfil a wish or to thank the village deity, Lord Kalbhairavnath. At least one member of each participating family usually takes part. "Devotees promise to repeat the standing ritual for 3, 5, 7, 10 or more years," said Hemant Jadhav, chairman of the temple committee.

The participants, known as Navratkaris, are aged from about 18 to 65, and villagers working away from Pande, including those in the armed forces, take leave to join.The rules are demanding. Devotees cannot sit or sleep on the ground. To rest, they lean their chests against specially hung hammocks, called chauphala, inside the temple, keeping one foot firmly on the ground while raising the other."The idea is that the connection to the ground through the feet should not be broken," Hemant said, which is why jumping, brisk walking and running are prohibited.Former sarpanch Madhukar Jadhav said, "Devotees dress in white during aarti, are barefoot, and carry a wooden stick for balance. They also keep a strict fast, giving up oil, salt and chilli, and live on milk, fruit and sago kheer. And participants cannot cross the village borders until Vijayadashami (Dussehra)."



Anyone who breaks the rule, for instance by sitting down by mistake, must confess to the temple priest and begin the practice again. "In our experience, those who hide their mistake have faced trouble, like leg pain or illness," said villager Rahul Jadhav. He added that the Navratri practices at Pande village is different from the usual ShardiyThe days follow a routine. Devotees spend the night on the temple premises. The day begins around 4:30 am, when they go home to freshen up before the morning aarti and breakfast.

They then return to the temple to read books, meditate and chat with fellow participants, while some of the younger ones also use their phones. After about 5 pm, they walk through the village, then return for the evening aarti. Apart from meals and freshening up at home, they stay at the temple.

For many, the pull of the ritual is strong enough to cross distances. Kishor Jadhav, a BSF commando posted in Meghalaya's Shillong, has come home for it for the last four years. "Even if I don't get leave on Diwali, it's okay, but Navratri is a much bigger festival for us," he said.a Navratri.

Actor Imran Khan moves Bombay High Court against FRRO's 'Leave India Notice'

The FRRO on Saturday sent a show-cause notice (SCN) to the actor stating that his registration as an OCI cardholder may be liable to cancellation under Section 7D(e) of the Citizenship Act, 1955, based on his explanation and supporting material.

Mumbai.(Agency)

Actor Imran Khan on Saturday filed a writ petition in the Bombay High Court against the Leave India Notice (LIN) issued by the Foreigners Regional Registration Office (FRRO), asking him to leave India by October 28, calling it "unconstitutional".

The notice was issued on October 14 for an alleged violation of the Immigration and Foreigners Act (IFA), 2025, by joining a protest against Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Gyanesh Kumar near August Kranti Maidan on October 10.The 44-year-old actor sought to quash and set aside the LIN, along with an "immediate stay" on its operation and implementation, pending disposal of his writ plea.The plea also sought an interim relief from the court to restrain officials from taking coercive steps, including deportation, issuing a Look Out Circular (LOC), blacklisting, or taking action against his OCI status.The actor claimed the FRRO action has consequences "far beyond" him, "undermining confidence of Indian diaspora in the US in the certainty of OCI regime". The plea added it would also invite "legitimate concern from a friendly foreign state" whose national is being removed "without due process." Adherence to law cannot be "sacrificed at the altar of a personal vendetta," he claimed.

The plea further said the statutory power under IFA "cannot be converted into an instrument for punishing a public figure for his mere presence near a protest site, or for silencing him for voicing a concern about restrictions on the free movement of the people of this city."

Advocates Zulfiquar Memon, Parvez Memon, and Chirag Naik of MZM Legal are likely to mention the plea on Monday before a division bench led by Chief Justice Mahesh Chandra Tripathi for an urgent hearing.After Mumbai Police detained the actor at October 10 protest, BJP leader Kirit Somaiya filed a complaint alleging the US citizen and OCI cardholder violated the law. Following an FIR forwarded by police, the FRRO issued the LIN on October 14. The actor claimed the authority merely acted "at the behest of and on the timetable of a political functionary who holds office under the IFA". Khan said he was sought to be "uprooted from India altogether without a lesser measure being considered" while "no statute debars any person from mere presence at, or participation in, a rally or a protest."



The LIN was issued based on an "unproven and under investigation" FIR "without him being asked a single question or opportunity to respond," depriving him of his rights under Article 14 of the Constitution, the plea added.It claimed while the FRRO referred to Sections 7(2)© and 29 of the IFA, 2025, to direct his removal, the LIN did not cite any adverse security report. Alleging violation of rights under Article 21 of the Constitution, the actor stated he "cannot be expelled from India by a mere stroke of a pen" after residing, living with family for nearly four decades and earning his livelihood in India.He claimed the LIN referred to him merely as a USA national, with his OCI status under the Citizenship Act, 1955, a statutory status that carries a lifelong right of residence in India "conspicuously ignored" and proceeded to "inflict the drastic consequence of expulsion" with "non-application of mind."

'Vizag beach sand contains high natural radionuclides': Research

VISAKHAPATNAM.(Agency)

Beach sand samples collected along the Visakhapatnam coast contain concentrations of naturally occurring radioactive elements above global average levels, with relatively higher concentrations recorded in the northern sector of the study area, according to a research paper published by Springer Nature.The study, titled 'Spatial distribution of natural radionuclides and radiological hazard assessment in beach sands of the Visakhapatnam coast, Eastern India', examined four naturally occurring radionuclides, including uranium-238, radium-226, thorium-232 and potassium-40, and assessed their distribution in beach sands, and the associated ambient radiation levels.The paper was authored by B Ramesh, P Padma Savitri, J Sudhakar, R Balaram Kumar, SK Sahoo, IV Saradhi and Vandana Pulhani.

Radioactive mineral concentrations can vary as per local geology: Study

The authors are associated with the Environmental Monitoring and Assessment Division of the Bhabha Atomic Research Centre (BARC) in Visakhapatnam, Andhra University, and the Homi Bhabha National Institute in Mumbai.The researchers recorded mean activity concentrations of 167 becquerels per kilogram (Bq/kg) for uranium-238, 292 Bq/kg for radium-226, 2,614 Bq/kg for thorium-232 and 449 Bq/kg for potassium-40. The concentrations varied considerably between sampling locations, particularly in the case of thorium-232, which ranged from 6.9 to 13,691.7 Bq/kg.

The findings point to a marked variation in the distribution of natural radioactivity along the coastline. The researchers observed relatively higher concentrations in the northern part of the study area, while samples collected across different sections of the beach also showed variations in radioactivity.

The measurements were carried out using a high-purity germanium (HPGe)-based gamma spectrometry system, which is used to identify and quantify radioactive elements in samples. The researchers also generated spatial distribution maps to examine the pattern of radionuclide concentrations.The study found that activity concentrations at some locations exceeded global average values. The measured absorbed gamma dose rates were comparable to those reported in monazite-rich high background radiation areas in India, and other parts of the world.

Unsung Heroes: How a Devadasi's grandson became a voice for thousands of broken lives

Bengaluru.(Agency)

In Kushtagi taluk of Karnataka's Koppal, a child grew up watching his family pay for a tradition the state had outlawed on paper. The grandson of a Devadasi, he saw women exploited, abandoned and left to fend for themselves, and children who went to school with the father's column left blank. Today, the 38-year-old runs an organisation that was part of efforts to push the government to introduce a new policy to better a community abused for centuries.Meet Chandalinga Kalalabandi, once a victim of the Devadasi system and now a crusader for families oppressed for several generations. Starting with documenting ground realities and registering the plight of the marginalised community, Chandalinga has worked with many organisations in Bengaluru to improve the living conditions of Devadasi families.

A legacy of exploitation and social stigma

The Devadasi system is a religious-social evil practice in which girls, typically from Dalit and other marginalised communities, are "dedicated" to a local deity, in a ritual similar to marriage.

Once dedicated, a Devadasi cannot marry and is traditionally expected to serve the temple, perform ritual dance and music, and offer sexual services to patrons, often upper-caste men. In practice, it became a form of caste-based sexual exploitation, frequently driven by poverty, debt and superstition.The practice is widespread in north Karnataka, in districts such as Belagavi, Koppal, Raichur, Ballari, Vijayanagara, Bagalkot and Dharwad.

Punjab's (illegal) mining story: A ban in place, but digging goes on

Anandpur Sahib, Ropar.(Agency)

Bhallan village, like most of the others in Punjab, settles into silence by around 10 pm, its residents having retired for the night. The quiet, however, is soon shattered as poclain machines roar, their buckets scooping up sand and gravel from the bed of River Swan and dumping the same into waiting tippers trucks. By morning, the machines are gone, leaving behind fresh tyre tracks, heaps of excavated material and riverbanks scarred by deep pits."They return every night. Soon after midnight, we can hear loud sounds. My house is just a crow's flight away. We often watch the activities being carried out. Using drones, we have clicked photos," says Tikka Yashvir Chand, an activist who has been fighting illegal mining since 2018.

"It is continuing with all guns blazing. Just look at the fresh poclain marks in the sand. This shows machines were here last night," he says, pointing to tyre tracks and machinery marks. The Indian Express team found large mounds of freshly excavated sand and stones on the riverbed."The banks, which were once grasslands, have been eroded to depths of as much as 100 feet. I have been witnessing this activity since 2012.



Night mining, numberless tippers, paper owners: Inside the 'illegal' mining network

Tikka Yashvir Chand, a resident of Bhallan and an anti-mining activist, alleged that village youths were paid to alert mining operators about the arrival of enforcement teams.

Chandigarh(Agency)

From paying village youths Rs 500 to keep a lookout for enforcement teams to transporting sand and gravel in vehicles without number plates, operators involved in alleged illegal mining along the Swan and Sutlej rivers employ multiple tactics to evade authorities.

Residents and anti-mining activists allege that excavation is often carried out at night to avoid detection, while documentation and changes in the stated ownership of stone-crushing units are used to obscure the origin of mined material and the identity of those running the operations.Tikka Yashvir Chand, a resident of Bhallan and an anti-mining activist, alleged that village youths were paid to alert mining operators about the arrival of enforcement teams.

"Our boys are paid Rs 500 each to stand guard in the villages and alert the mining teams if any enforcement agency arrives for a raid. They are spoiling our children. The boys take the money and alert these people if they anticipate any danger," Chand said.Residents allege that mining operations are deliberately conducted in the dead of night to reduce the chances of interception and prevent enforcement agencies from collecting evidence. The use of tippers without registration plates, they said, further complicates efforts to identify vehicles transporting the material.The Indian Express team witnessed tipper trucks without number plates on both sides of the Sri Anandpur Sahib road leading to the Agampur bridge over the Sutlej."There is connivance. Otherwise, such mammoth operations would not take place under the nose of the authorities," an activist alleged, claiming that stone crushers often maintain that the material being processed was sourced from neighbouring Himachal Pradesh.Residents have also alleged that the ownership of stone-crushing units is frequently changed on paper to shield the people actually operating them. According to residents, the actual owners allegedly purchase stamp papers in villagers' names every 15 days or so. If an illegal operation is detected, they claim, a sale agreement is produced to show that the crusher has been sold to a local resident.



Rereading the book of democracy

What's the plan, Rahul Gandhi was asked. He replied that tandava, the cosmic dance of destruction and creation, does not need a plan. The cosmos knows the steps already. It's fortunate that he gets it, because after the dancing is over, his party is likely to play a key role in restoring the Indian political system.

That's assuming that the protesters remain steadfast and that all else remains constant in a turbulent world. If so, it's an educated guess that the Modi government's repressive actions would backfire and that power may slip from its fingers sooner rather than later. Young protesters may not have a plan, but they know exactly what they want: systemic change. Goodbye to the ossified politics of pervasive corruption, outdated hierarchies and rituals, and absurd totems and hatreds. That means dismantling the very foundation—India's culture of distrust, which is a colonial hangover from when the rulers and the ruled were species apart.Democracies which were not preceded by colonialism are usually trust-based cultures. What the citizen says is believed and the onus to prove otherwise is on the government. In contrast, Indian citizens are presumed guilty until proven innocent and the onus of proof is on them. Many of India's chronic disorders flow from this differential.

The Congress is the right party to dismantle this superstructure, because it erected most of its beams and girders. Not because it is particularly vile, but because it has had the advantage of time—it has been in power much longer than the competition. The BJP has been spectacularly anti-democratic—its run rate is much higher, but its innings has been far shorter.India's police and paramilitaries are earning disgrace globally for indiscriminately detaining and assaulting thousands of peaceful protesters, bystanders, women and even children on the orders of their political masters. This is inevitable because in the absence of reform, they are still performing the role of a colonial force subjugating a native population.

Calls for police reform reached a crescendo in 1977, following extreme brutality during the Emergency. The actress and activist Snehalata Reddy died following ill-treatment for eight months in jail without trial. The engineering student P Rajan died under torture. These were only the most shocking cases. The National Police Commission was formed in 1977 to professionalise the force and insulate it from political pressure. Four committees and commissions were appointed since then, a PIL was filed by the senior police officer Prakash Singh and the Supreme Court issued directions in 2006. Compliance has been incomplete.

So now, students, activists, MPs and journalists, many of them women, are being abused and physically and sexually assaulted by the police and paramilitaries. Would a future Congress-led alliance be willing to enforce police reforms—and renounce the ability to use the force as a private army?

Consider the draconian laws which the Modi government has used to imprison and harass a long list of perceived enemies, from the Bhima-Koregaon detenus of 2018 to Sharjeel Imam and Umar Khalid, who remain in custody without trial. The laws most amenable to such ignoble purposes were originally legislated by the Congress or the Congress-led UPA: the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (1967), the National Security Act (1980), the IT (Amendment) Act of 2008 (which added the controversial Section 66A). Financial curbs were initiated under COFEPOSA (1974) and the Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act (1976) followed during the Emergency to prevent Indian NGOs from being caressed by the "black hand of the CIA". The UPA government used it to clamp down on the non-profit sector, and the present home ministry uses it for close control over voluntary and charitable work.

How to unfurl the Tiranga

The Great Game: And so, the moral dilemma is upon us. To be or not to be anti-national is no longer the question



THE centre of gravity this weekend is shifting to Jamnagar, the Kathiawari town in coastal Gujarat, which also boasts of the largest oil refinery in the world. US Secretary of State Marco Rubio is travelling there to applaud its owner, Mukesh Ambani's decision to dial down Russian imports and instead invest $300 billion into building a refinery in Texas.Rubio is also skipping Delhi. This means he won't meet Prime Minister Modi, the first time a US leader has done so in recent memory. Instead, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar is flying down to Mumbai today, where Rubio is stopping over, en route to Jamnagar.So what does this have to do with the ongoing people's protests in Delhi, where the police continue to brutally pick up pro-democracy activists and supporters of the Cockroach Janta Party (CJP), all of whose leaders they have detained this week?Part of the answer lies in Congress leader Rahul Gandhi's social media timeline. To the news that Rubio is not travelling to Delhi, Gandhi wrote scathingly on X, "Mr Rubio has summoned his employee to Mumbai."It's not clear whether any further movement on the Indo-US trade deal will be announced when Jaishankar meets Rubio. Certainly, the stakes are high for the Modi government — it must shift the headlines away from the continuing protests rocking the capital, if it wants to retain control of the narrative. For the first time in 12 years, the INDIA bloc's attack has been hitting its mark, no doubt amplified by the spirited protests of CJP supporters, Neha Bora and her CPI-ML cadres as well as students still showing up from all parts of the country.Certainly, the young, female JNU student's ardent articulation of her politics has so completely caught the imagination of India's Instagram-obsessed audience that memes and games — one of them called "Bhaag, Neha, Bhaag," in which the player accumulates "democracy points" as it attempts to circumvent obstacles laid out by Delhi Police — are all the rage.

Still, the air is thick with contradictions. The world's largest democracy has refused to allow a 'Tiranga rally' to be held in Connaught Place in the heart of Delhi — all the CJP top leadership has been detained. In Mumbai, where Jaishankar is meeting Rubio, the Bollywood actor Imran Khan, a US citizen with an OCI card, has been told to return home because he participated in a CJP rally. And when Ambani hosts Rubio this weekend in Jamnagar, everyone in the room will think but not speak about a certain Elon Musk, a close confidant of Donald Trump, who has openly and repeatedly come out against Ambani.

In this season of the celebration of good over evil, as the goddess Durga descends upon the land this week and declares the end of Mahishasura (ya devi sarvabhuteshu budhirupen sansthita), it's not clear who's winning the good fight, nor who the good or bad people are. Just that the world is closing in.Is the person who wants to unfurl the Tricolour, for example, a good or not-so-good person? Unfurling the national flag, after all, should be classified as a good thing. But Delhi Police have just declared both Jantar Mantar and Connaught Place out of bounds, as neither are designated protest sites; Ramlila Maidan is, but it has been booked out for the rest of this year, save three days, and moreover, rental costs are Rs 1.21 lakh a day.And so, the moral dilemma is upon us. To be or not to be anti-national is no longer the question. The question is, is there a higher calling than Delhi Police?

From all accounts, Rahul Gandhi has decided the Congress will cede space to political outfits like the CJP to carry out their own protests as well as get all the INDIA bloc parties onto the same platform so they protest together — he has been personally calling the top leaders to ensure they show up. The idea is to showcase a united Opposition, despite its many differences, on the resignation of the CEC; to manifest the INDIA bloc's determination to keep the political temperature hot, so that it feeds into Assembly elections in Punjab, Uttar Pradesh, Manipur, Goa and Uttarakhand in early 2027. A second mass protest by the INDIA bloc is being planned for November 1.For Rahul, this is a make-or-break political moment. Under his leadership, the Congress has only won one state out of eight, Kerala, since the 2024 general election; the results of the coming Assembly polls will surely be a referendum on his leadership. He realises he needs the fire that comes naturally to Neha Bora and young CJP student leaders — he wants them to be part of the large Congress umbrella. In this "Shivji ki baraat," say Congress leaders, all are welcome.For the same reasons, the stakes are high for the Modi juggernaut. It cannot let Neha Bora or CJP leaders or INDIA bloc, separately or together, take centre stage again. The BJP believes that Neha's immature statement on Bangladeshi protesters this week, "showing India the way" towards regime change, must be exposed. The government realises it needs to break the backbone of these serial protests if it wants to reshape public perception.That's why Jaishankar's meetings with Rubio — and Rubio's with Mukesh Ambani — are significant. Certainly, the government hopes that oil diplomacy will help stabilise the roller-coaster India-US relationship and give it a win or two to showcase at home. Back in March, within a week of the start of the US-Iran war, when the US gave India a one-month waiver for importing oil, Ambani's Reliance Industries bought 6 million barrels.

Today, on October 17, as Trump's Russia Act, sanctioning companies and countries like India which import Russian oil, kicks in, Reliance's Russian imports are down to zero; instead, it is importing oil from Venezuela, an industry now controlled by the Americans. Back in the US, as mid-term elections approach, the price of diesel is hitting sky high. Notwithstanding Musk, Ambani has certainly earned leverage in Washington DC.Meanwhile, Jaishankar has just emerged from telling Bloomberg that India is "not a middle power," but "a power in the middle" of a new world order being redrawn.

Independent court-led probe into violence on journalists way to go

While the Supreme Court is seized of the matter, the Press Council of India has shared guidelines for journalists to follow while on the job during protests



It has never been easy to be a journalist. Yet in an age of contested narratives, journalists continue to put themselves at risk to gather information first-hand. Over the week past, as authorities in Delhi cracked down on young protesters, several journalists bore witness to the violence and summary detentions. In the course of doing so, many of them were also rounded up. First-person accounts from a number of them testified to police brutality against protesters, detention without access to phones, confiscation and damage of expensive equipment, and release at locations far off from where they had been detained. Their declaration of being journalists made little difference. The accounts are chilling—more so those from women journalists, who spoke out against being sexually harassed, manhandled and assaulted while doing their jobs. It is for this reason that an association of women journalists moved the apex court seeking safeguards for those covering the protests. The Supreme Court has asked for the Delhi Police and administration to explain the alleged incidents and mooted the idea of forming a predominantly women-led independent panel to examine the complaints.

The State has contended that blanket assurances cannot be made as identities of everyone claiming to be a journalist cannot be ascertained. This begs the question as to why journalists with appropriate credentials should face any violence or detention at all. Equally concerning is the FIR under the SC & ST (Prevention of Atrocities) Act registered against a woman journalist on the complaint of a policeman 10 days after she and her colleagues staged a sit-in to place on record her complaint accusing the cop of sexual harassment. The Delhi Police sent her complaint to the Crime Branch for inquiry, but has yet to register an FIR. While complaints under the SC/ST Act must be taken seriously and investigated thoroughly, complaints of sexual harassment at the hands of the police must also be investigated with similar alacrity.

While the Supreme Court is seized of the matter, the Press Council of India has shared guidelines for journalists to follow while on the job during protests. Most journalists do take precautions in tense situations. The question is whether the State agencies will introspect as to whether their treatment of journalists bearing witness is in accordance with the Constitution and their conscience.

Dark clouds in the economic silver lining

As a country with a high interest outgo on debt, India's prospects face reality checks in a world where borrowing rates are rising. Vulnerable households will need targeted protection

India's growth prospects have brightened just as the world economy is becoming a more expensive place in which to borrow. This month, the IMF has raised its growth forecast for India to 7 percent, while the World Bank and the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development put it at 7.1 percent this financial year. These assessments recognise the economy's resilience. But rising prices and interest rates will test how widely, and how durably, that growth translates into prosperity.

Across the US, Britain and Japan, governments are paying more to borrow for the long term. The IMF reports that the average interest rate on 10-year government bonds across the G7 rose by more than one percentage point between February and September, reaching its highest level in nearly two decades. These movements may seem remote from an Indian household's concerns. Their consequences will arrive through loan repayments, employment, prices and government budgets.Several forces are at work. Expensive energy is reviving inflation. Governments need money for defence, ageing populations, infrastructure and existing obligations. Meanwhile, enormous investments in artificial intelligence are competing for finance. Lenders are demanding greater compensation for committing their money for years, particularly when inflation and public debt make future returns less certain.

Japan adds another complication. For years, exceptionally low Japanese interest rates encouraged investors to borrow in yen and invest elsewhere, including in emerging markets. As Japanese borrowing costs rise, this strategy becomes less attractive. A strengthening yen can also make repayment more expensive. Positions built gradually can be reversed abruptly, transmitting selling pressure across countries whose underlying economic conditions may have changed little.

The AI boom is encountering its own financing test. Building data centres requires vast spending on chips, electricity, cooling and land, often well before revenues arrive. The largest technology companies have substantial earnings, but borrowing has become increasingly important across the expanding network of infrastructure providers and newer firms. Higher interest charges make uncertain future profits harder to justify.The sharp sell-offs in South Korean technology shares this week show how quickly enthusiasm can turn into anxiety. There are fears of an AI investment bubble. The crash this week does not establish that AI's economic promise has evaporated. They do reveal growing doubts about investment commitments and the debt supporting them. A technology can transform productivity while some of the businesses financing its expansion suffer heavy losses.

Governments face a related problem on a much larger scale. They must finance current deficits and replace loans that mature. As older, cheaper debt is replaced with more expensive borrowing, interest bills rise. Unless revenues keep pace, further borrowing follows. Global bond markets are facing intense competition for costlier funds and are feeling the squeeze from debt repayments.

India has important strengths. Its government borrows predominantly in rupees; and domestic banks, insurers and retirement funds provide a substantial investor base. This reduces dependence on foreign creditors. It also means that government borrowing draws heavily on savings held on behalf of Indian households. A dependable domestic funding base cushions external shocks. But it cannot eliminate the cost of borrowing.

The Union budget makes the vulnerability plain. Interest payments this year are estimated at approximately ₹14 lakh crore. That is nearly ₹49 out of every ₹100 of tax revenue retained by the Centre after sharing with states. Even including non-tax income, interest absorbs about 40 percent of revenue receipts. By comparison, the average for all low- to middle-income countries is 11-15 percent. India's debt service costs are remarkably high for a country with enormous development needs. State governments face their own repayment obligations.



A rise in interest rates does not immediately reprice every government loan. Most existing bonds continue paying their contracted interest. The pressure accumulates through fresh borrowing and refinancing, gradually reducing room for schools, hospitals, infrastructure and support for vulnerable households. Strong economic growth helps by expanding revenues, but spending commitments can grow too.India's inflation picture has, meanwhile, changed considerably. September retail inflation reached 5.54 percent, while wholesale inflation accelerated to 11.39 percent from 9.92 percent in August, indicating substantial pressure on production costs. Businesses face rising costs even as households face higher living expenses. Companies must either absorb these costs through lower profits or pass them on to customers, risking weaker demand. The cost of expensive imported oil must still be absorbed somewhere: in oil company margins, government revenues and fiscal deficit, or eventual price increases. A weaker rupee compounds the burden.

The RBI has begun raising rates. It cannot produce more oil or repair a deficient monsoon. But it must prevent an initial supply shock from spreading into persistent inflation and weakening confidence in the currency. Higher rates abroad also make it harder to retain mobile foreign capital while keeping domestic borrowing unusually cheap.

Special measures such as the foreign currency scheme for non-residents can buy time. They cannot provide a permanent substitute for confidence and sustainable external financing. Borrowed dollars carry repayment obligations, while incentives and exchange-rate protection can impose costs. When incoming dollars are purchased by the RBI, rupee liquidity increases; absorbing it creates another policy challenge. Conversely, selling dollars to support the rupee withdraws rupees. The overall effect depends on the balance of these operations.

For households, rising prices and borrowing costs can reinforce each other. Food and fuel leave less money for other purchases. Floating-rate home loans can require higher monthly payments or longer repayment periods. Families already dependent on personal loans or revolving credit-card balances have less room to absorb setbacks. The household-debt-to-GDP ratio is at historic highs. Rising defaults are a risk to monitor, rather than grounds for declaring an inevitable banking crisis.

Decorating Home walls in Stencils



It is true that ideas of themed wallpapers or memorable picture frames invariably dominate our minds when doing up our homes but the one trend that has recently become a viable option in home decor is wall stencilling. Interior designer Husnain Heptulla and Delhi-based creative director, Vandana Khosla, guide us on the nuances of this form of decoration and give us necessary tips to try stencilling on our own.

What is wall stencilling: It simply means replicating an image on a wall surface either by using a permanent marker free-hand or else a stencil that serves a template for outlining. Paint colours are later filled into the spaces for a complete picture.Popular designs and patterns: Depending on the texture of the wall whether in tiles, bricks or regular, selecting a suitable stencil design assumes the initial step toward wall stencilling. For a relaxing and calming effect in the room, Husnain recommends nature-inspired themes or arboreal designs to create a landscape-like feel in the house. Floral, damask (woven fabric), nursery, classical and border can be your first time wall art pick. A stencil can also be self-designed complimenting one's taste and preference but that needs skill and right technique only experts are confident with. So you can add depth to your paint by stencilling a design in a contrasting colour over the basecoat. Other techniques such as ragging, sponging, or feathering can be done using another colour over the basecoat.For living area and bedrooms: Every room has a distinct characteristic of its own. Styling a living room for instance cannot be similar in approach to designing a more intimate space like a bedroom. Abstract designs that follow a grid-repetition pattern in pastel colours add a spiritual feel to the living room setup. With bedrooms, a little whimsical and cheerful attitude is accepted feels Husnain. "Using scenes from a memorable trip abroad, snowflakes and picket-fence themes give a more personal flavour to the room shared by a married couple," he informs. Coming to the kids' room, the surroundings should not be overpowering that put them ill-at- ease. The motive is not to turn a child's room into another study but to do it up in a manner that soothes the mind of the child and not burden it. Replicating a scene from the child's favourite book or animated illustrations are some of the quirky templates parents can experiment with.What's stencilling in the kitchen? Cooking is an art and kitchen is the space of culinary execution; so why not outline its walls in stencilled strokes? Vandana Khosla suggests, "Use stencils on cabinets or floors in a unique way and surprise your guests with your expertise in this art. If you have a cabin in the hardwoods, use stencils of black bear, moose or deer, going one per cabinet centre. To add contrast to wood walls opt for white cabinets and stencil black-and-white checkerboards along the edges."Colours and background: The surface or the base is the backbone of good stencilling. The background colour is a decisive precursor to a wall stencil. The contrast could be subtle, like in the living room or the library, or it could be pronounced in a bedroom or entertainment area. Mauve, peach, grey, sandy brown and chocolate brown work well as subtle hues; while shades of blue, red and green act as contrasting agents. The colours should be used in a healthy proportion or else they might end up having a jarring display.

Why stencilling? A stencilled room has a charm of its own. It can highlight existing features such as arches and fireplaces, and make featureless interiors more interesting. More than being a current home decor trend, wall stencil is more original, innovative and cost-friendly than designer wallpapers that have limiting customising options. Interior designers believe stencilling is far more fun and leads the league than wallpapers, textured surfaces and feature-wall type of paint jobs. With the correct atmospherics and lighting a stencilled wall adds novelty and lasts long too.

Try wall-stencilling at home: Here are some easy steps for beginners that Vandana Khosla simplifies:

-First decide the walls you want to stencil. Then select stencil type the desired position.

-Choose the colours. If the background wall colour is to be changed, keep the new colour in mind while preparing the stencil colour scheme.

-Paint the base wall colour (if it is to be changed), or touch up any dirty areas if the colour is to be retained. The wall must be clean before you move on to the next step.-Use a laser level to identify the correct spots where the stencil will be taped. Mark the areas clearly with a pencil. If the stencil is only to be used sporadically, or in one area, you may still want to use the laser level to determine a straight line for taping the stencil into place.

-Tape the stencil into place and follow the below instructions :



There is an artist in each one of us that yearns to indulge in creative pursuits. Wall stencilling is one activity that encourages even amateur artists to sketch designs on the canvas of home walls.

1. Using a stencil brush and paint, begin stencilling in one colour at a time. Follow the directions provided for the type of stencil paint you've purchased.

2. Continue stencilling until all the colours have been completed. Let the paint dry thoroughly before you remove the stencil from the wall. If necessary, move the stencil onto the next area of the wall. Continue until the entire wall is complete.





Ways to increase Positivity in home

Here are some tips from a Vastu and Feng Shui expert for a life full of harmony.

In the present complex scenario, we do not find time for ourselves to analyse the various reasons that lead us to failures in health, wealth or relationships. Most of these problems are connected to major Vastu and Feng Shui defects. Dr Snehal S Deshpande lists some commandments which may help you to increase positive energy in your home:

- Always stand in the centre of your house with a compass in your hand to find out the directions of your house. The main entrance is the mouth of a house which brings in the energy. Avoid a property which has a door facing south-west, as it is the entry of the devil energy and brings in struggle and misfortunes. If your house already has one, fix two Hanumanji tiles outside the door and see the difference.
- Mandir or altar is the king of all Vastu rules — place it in the North-East and everything will start falling in place. Also, face the East while praying.
- Kitchen is the symbol of prosperity and should be ideally placed in the southeast. Kitchen in the North or North-East may bring financial and health problems. In this case, hang three bronze bowls upside down on the ceiling but do not hang over the stove.
- Master bedroom is the key to enter the door of stability and it must be in the South-West. You should sleep with your head in the South or West. But a breadwinner must never sleep in the North-East . Bathrooms and toilets have the energy of 'hell' which are best in West or South. But should never be in North and North-East or they bring financial, health and educational problems.
- Centre is the nose of your house from where your house breathes. It must be open and clutter-free. A wall here gives stomach and financial problems so fix a zero watt blue bulb on this wall and keep it on 24x7 .
- Cuts in any direction make a house paralyzed, mainly cuts in South-West, North, North-East and South-East give serious problems. There are many mysteries and secrets regarding the cuts and their cures.

Now, a rapid-fire round of cures

Never use too much of bright colours such as red and purple for decorating your house or they may enhance sickness energy in the house, if any.

- Do not keep pictures of water or a fountain in your bedroom. It might adversely affect you.
- Do not keep your mandir/temple under any beam or cupboard or you will be always under stress.
- Do not keep heavy objects in the North East and North or it may block your finances.
- Do not keep bonsais in the house or they will hamper the growth in the respective area of your life.
- Mopping the floor twice a week with sea salt water will help you clean your house of negative energy.
- If arguments are the main ruling energy in your house, play a musical CD four-five times in a day and experience the calmness in the house.



Stay hot and stylish this winter. It's easy



"Winter is the time for comfort, for good food and warmth, for the touch of a friendly hand and for a talk beside the fire: it is the time for home." ? Edith Sitwell

The winters are here. And what better a way to welcome the new-year! Time for endless conversations with friends & family over cups of hot beverages, curl up around warm memories and painting the joyful city roads fashionable with your wardrobe of warm, bright and colourful woollens.

These are cherished winter-wears that you've carefully handpicked ... for their color and style-quotient.These woollens not only keep you warm but also define everything that's uniquely you, your winter style statement.

Although there's an enormous amount of care and selection that goes in choosing and buying woollens, we often fail to take as much care when it comes to maintaining them properly.

Woollens are delicate natural fibres which need special care while washing and cannot withstand powder detergents. Powder detergents, how expensive they might be, contain SODA which makes the woollen fibres frail and discoloured. As a result the woollens can look worn-out and faded. What follows is a late realization that along with powder detergents, the brightness, softness and style quotient of the woollens have washed out too ... that too, just in one wash.

You can stop this from being your unhappy story. Your woollens need a specialist-care and not powderdetergents that treat even delicate natural fibres harshly.

Think taking care of your woollens is too complicated a job? Relax. It's actually easy. There's one name that you can blindly trust when it comes to taking care of your stylish winter wears.

Try the woollens' specialist- Ezee Liquid Detergent, Its No Soda, pH-neutral formula cleanses gently and makes woollens bright & fluffy, like new. Now be it the latest cashmere that your better half picked for you this year or your favourite sweater that has kept you warm for years, or the one that was knitted by your mother with soft wool and oodles of warm love, Ezee delivers expert care to all winter-wears!

Ezee No Soda formula keeps woollens 5X* safer, it gently cleans them without damaging the fibre and its unique fabric conditioner makes woollens bright and soft just like new!

Ezee has the prestigious Woolmark certification for adhering to international standards of being safe on woollens.

Best ways to decorate your space with Plants















Here are few ways to decorate your house with plants. You can keep small potted plants on bedside tables on either side of the bed. Use your old crockery set for planting to decorate your kitchen, living room, and even bathrooms.

Plants look just adorable and keeping them indoors not only brings life to the entire place but they also improve the air quality by reducing toxins existing in the atmosphere so make sure you are decorating your abode with plants nicely.

Myna Batavia, Founder of Green Carpet, and Preeti Narula, Founder of Living Balconies, list down ways to decorate your house with plants.

* Your living room is the best place to be decorated with a lot of greenery. Potted plants are the best choice to be kept in the living room. These pots are available in different sizes and colours to suit your requirements. Ensure that they are visible over the furniture kept in the living room.

* The dining area should be graced with plants such as money plants, bamboo plants, and ferns in glass bottles and vases.

* Embellish your bedroom with indoor plants such as Sansevieria which increases oxygen levels at night to have a sound sleep. You can keep small potted plants on bedside tables on either side of the bed.

* In the open space or balconies, install a shelf or hanging flower boxes along the railings to make it look attractive from outside. Also planter in sync with wall colours and embellishing the place with animal artefacts will increase the beauty quotient of these areas.

* Also just to fill in the empty area of your apartment, you can try keeping big plants in colourful pots.

* Decorate your living space with indoor plants as they make any area feel bright, lively, calm and beautiful.

* Place your plants on shelves or wooden pallets to create a mini indoor garden.

* One can also hang indoor plants like Chinese money plant, Staghorn ferns, snake plants and weeping fig in the balcony.

* Use your old crockery set for planting to decorate your kitchen, living room, and even bathrooms.

* Make your own terrarium with succulents to create a decorative piece in your kid's room or dining table.

At home with Ultra Violet







Complex and contemplative in equal parts, ultra violet is often associated with mindfulness practices. A reason why you are likely to spot purple-toned lighting in meditative spaces. The colour is said to fill people with energy and positivity and inspire connection. Why not embrace the hue to bring some happiness and tranquility into your home?

UV ways

Decor expert Astha Khetan says that ultra violet adds a certain depth to a space. Whether you are using a statement pillow, painting, accent wall, a few sprigs of lilac or a vintage rug - a simple touch of the magical hue is all you need to transform your space. Her advice: "The easiest way to start decorating with a new colour is to take baby steps and not go overboard."

Ultra violet, with its bold and vivid blue, is a perfect match with raw materials such as concrete and natural wood. For statement corners, try ultra violet in different combinations; with sage green, lemon yellow, or vermillion. "In small spaces, avoid using ultra violet vertically like in curtains and walls. Use in small accessories on floor and below eye level," suggests decor expert Vaishnavi Pratima. In large spaces, experiment with walls in ultra violet juxtaposed against contrasting furniture.

— Additional inputs from decor expert Anuja Joshi

How to go UV?

Pick jewel tones for a strong visual punch. But the idea is to make an impact without being garish

Make sure your colours stay sophisticated by choosing shades from the same family that are not all too bright

Mix dark and romantic purple with other super-saturated dark colours and rich fabrics like velvet

Use flowers like pansies, iris, phlox, hydrangea, petunia, verbenas, freesia, and columbin

Use vases made in violet assortment

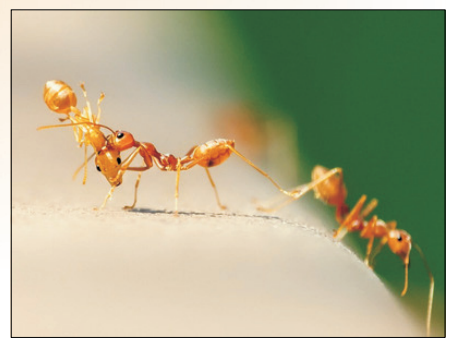
A tricky hue for homes, if you play it right UV can be the pop of colour that your house needs.

Violet can be used in dining couture too. Think a white table with UV napkins.

Bring in violet accessories like candle stands, lampshades, vases to add a splash of colour



5 cheap and easy ways to get rid of ants



Even though they are tiny, ants are irritating and create lot of destruction with their presence in the house. Their long trail leads to a burrow into the ground or kitchen counter-tops and then there is no way you can get rid of them. They march in hundreds and aim at your favourite food left open making you run for its life. They appear in numbers from nowhere and attack at the eatables left unattended. Did you know that some of the queen ants can give birth to millions of babies. Whoa! Doesn't that sound scary?

Though killing ants is not a great idea but you can definitely avoid their excursion to your home. Here are few easy hacks that will solve the purpose and are also not expensive methods. Take a look:

Vinegar

Vinegar is the king of all home remedies and you must have it stocked up all the time at your home. Mix white vinegar and water in equal quantities and wipe down your kitchen counter-tops, cupboards and places where you generally spot ants. Keep repeating throughout the day. Ants hate the smell of vinegar and the solution also removes their scent trails.

Borax

You can mix Borax and sugar and place the mixture where ants can find it. But be careful if you have little kids and pets at home, the mixture can be toxic. Borax damages the digestive systems and outer skeletons of ants resulting in death.

Citrus peels

Leave citrus peels like cucumber peels in the areas known to ants. These peels are toxic to the types of fungi that ants feed on, so ants do their best to avoid them. You can also use the citrus peels of lemon and oranges.

Flour

Ants repel flour and hence you can sprinkle some of it at the back of the kitchen shelves and the entry-points of the ants. Yes, it is true!

Salt

Sprinkle salt across the door frame or on their path and see the difference. Ants will be discouraged from crossing the barrier created.

Five decor trends that are making a comeback



If you are someone who is fond of warm, comforting and old-fashioned styles, especially when it comes to doing up your home, its definitely time for you to rejoice. The upcoming year, 2018 is expected to see some old, overdone and overused decor styles making a comeback with a vengeance and once more, to grab its position in the limelight.

Though trends and style are ever-changing and ever-evolving concepts, many will agree that the bottom line will continue to be the same always — any kind of decor works only when it can make a house feel like home.

Here's looking at a few dated trends that are expected to be a hit next season...

Metal and more

Using brass in fixtures, table lamps and furniture accents has been around forever, and this trend is surely not going anywhere soon. So pick up stylish chandeliers, floor lamps in shiny golden metal who are cooped up in studio apartments; however, big and extra-large furniture is sure to take up space in the top hottest decor trends list for the coming year. If not all, opting for at least one statement x-large piece of furniture could help you be in vogue.

Golds and greens

The avocado green was a big hit in the 70s. Home decor professionals say that this colour is all set to take up center stage once more. You could choose to use it on walls or furnishings, all the while balancing it with golds. Bright golds and yellows can make your home look brighter and warmer all the while adding a certain fresh charm to the room.

Framed forever

Displaying a cluster of pictures all over one wall has been done to death. But the fact that filling a wall with pictures that matter to you will never really go out of style. Gallery walls are expected to make a comeback next year, say experts.

and usher in some bling at home. Adding small doses of brassy goodness to your home can actually bring in a dash of festivity.

Choosing monochrome

The sheer sophistication of monochrome will always ensure that it never goes out of style. The statement a stark black and white decor can make is unparalleled and will appeal to you if you are a follower of the minimalist style. This decor trend is holding on to its position at the top for a long time presumably.

Extra-large luxe

The luxury of space might not really be for many Mumbaikars

Seelampur, Sultanpuri and Lajpat Nagar JJ clusters set for redevelopment

Delhi.(Agency)

Delhi Urban Shelter Improvement Board (DUSIB) has initiated the process for redevelopment of jhuggi-jhopri (JJ) clusters in Seelampur, Sultanpuri and Lajpat Nagar through the public-private partnership (PPP) mode. The slum rehabilitation agency has invited expressions of interest for the appointment of a transaction adviser who will conduct feasibility studies, obtain regulatory clearances and assist in the selection of a private developer for the projects. The proposed redevelopment aims to rehabilitate slum dwellers at their existing locations while allowing productive use of land through private-sector participation. Officials said the model seeks to improve living conditions for residents while generating revenue through development of a portion of the land. "The transaction adviser will assess the feasibility of redevelopment at all three locations, taking into account land values, surrounding infrastructure, connectivity, prevailing property prices and development potential," an official said.

The study will also examine provisions of Master Plan for Delhi, zonal plans, building bye-laws, land-use restrictions and permissible floor area ratio (FAR). Based on these, conceptual layouts and preliminary cost estimates will be prepared, covering housing units, built-up area, parking, utilities and other facilities.

Officials said the exercise would recommend the mix of residential and commercial development needed to balance construction costs, market demand and financial viability. Detailed financial modelling, projected cash flows and revenue-sharing arrangements will also form part of the assessment.

Delhi has 675 officially recognised JJ clusters, though officials estimate the actual number to be around 750. The last comprehensive survey, conducted in 2014, identified nearly 700 JJ clusters and around 3.3 lakh households. However, without an updated, verified database of slums and JJ clusters, Delhi govt plans a fresh survey to count settlements and households and identify beneficiaries for its proposed in-situ rehabilitation programme to improve housing and amenities.

Mending soles, stitching a life

Delhi.(Agency)

NEW DELHI: If you ever visit the post office on Bahadur Shah Zafar Marg, look left before you step past the main gate. You will likely find Aadhar Singh, a puny, grey-haired figure with an earnest sun-browned face, hunched over a shoe, oblivious to people and pollution. The moss-kissed pavement has been his workplace for over 40 years. Singh understands leather the way poets understand meter.

A fleeting glance is all he needs to discern genuine leather and offer his prognosis on its quality. If you have time, he will also explain why leather "needs to breathe", and how a good polish is like "massage therapy". In his deft hands, many a shoe has found out there's life after near-death. You can bring him those prehistoric pair of slippers or the exhausted leather bag, which you just cannot retire because they are like old friends you are comfortable with. He will eye them impassively, like a senior investigator examining a crime scene, point out the rough spots and carry out the repairs. Nobody says he overcharges. Many of Singh's regular customers are employees of nearby govt offices, notably the Bureau of Indian Standards and CAG.

Strolling during the lunch hour, some get their shoes fixed, sandals repaired or leather bags mended. Some years back, Singh also started peddling shoes, most of them priced less than Rs 500. "I order them from Agra," he says. As an open-air craftsman, Singh's livelihood is tied to the vagaries of weather. When the fierce sun pushes people indoors in summer, his customers shrink. During winter, shorter days mean fewer work hours. Even monsoons are a bad time for Singh, who must stuff his anvil and other tools into a weathered wooden box and wait for the rain to stop. "November is a good month for work. It's the beginning of the wedding season," he says. Singh recalls the past, not by days or years, but through events stitched into his memory. He remembers coming to Delhi from Chhoti Harda, a village in southern Madhya Pradesh, a couple of years before Prime Minister Indira Gandhi was assassinated in 1984.

Door-to-door BLO visits expected to include 'left-out' voters in Delhi SIR

Delhi.(Agency)

Left out in the Delhi Special Intensive Revision (SIR) draft rolls? The booth level officer (BLOs) of the area may visit your house to check your eligibility for enrollment as a new voter. The last date to fill up the Form 6, which is used to register as a new voter is October 31, as per the latest SIR timeline in the Capital. Amid intense scrutiny over the SIR exercise, the Delhi Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) on October 14 ordered a special re-verification drive to re-enrol eligible electors who were "left out" of the draft electoral rolls.

Multiple BLOs told\ The Indian Express that they have received communication to this effect verbally or on their WhatsApp groups even as they have not received a formal order regarding this. In one message, an Electoral Registration Officer (ERO) asked BLOs to revisit all electors marked absent, shifted, dead or duplicate (ASDD) and check whether any name was deleted by mistake. "In case any elector marked as Absent/Shifted in ASDD list is found residing at the given address, then BLO shall obtain Form-6 from such electors for their enrolment in the electoral roll," the directive read. The ERO said BLOs must visit houses for "100% re-verification" of the ASDD list, to be completed in the next seven days. BLOs should maintain "proper record" of such electors, it stated. Delhi had around 1.45 crore electors before the SIR process began in the Capital in June. Among them, 97.5 lakh were included in the draft electoral roll published on August 31, while around 47.5 lakh electors were classified as "uncollectible" — after BLOs found them absent, shifted, dead or having duplicate entries, among other reasons — and were struck off the roll. The Indian Express had earlier reported that the Election Commission of India (ECI) has directed the 20 states and Union Territories where the exercise has been completed to run a "special drive" to enrol voters "left out" of the rolls, under fire over the scale of deletions nationwide. Civil society groups and political parties have repeatedly raised concerns that eligible electors have been deleted from the rolls.

A look at numbers

In Delhi, the final SIR roll is scheduled to be published on December 4. Among the 97.5 lakh people who did make it to the draft roll, one-third or around 33.1



lakh electors were issued notices to prove that they are eligible to be on the final roll. While 13.79 lakh electors were marked because they could not link themselves to the electoral roll of the last SIR, 19.33 lakh were flagged for "logical discrepancies" in their enumeration forms. Of 33.1 lakh total notices, 26 lakh cases have been resolved, according to a statement from the CEO office. BLOs across constituencies are currently making house-to-house visits to collect documents from those flagged for notices. This was a relief for electors who were earlier asked to attend hearings at local election offices.

- Booth-level officers (BLOs) in Delhi are expected to conduct door-to-door visits to identify eligible voters missing from the draft electoral rolls and facilitate their enrolment through Form 6.

Now, in the latest order, the Delhi CEO's office has directed that over and above these, the BLOs should "simultaneously identify left out eligible electors in their allotted part and facilitate their enrolment through Form 6, wherever the person is found to be eligible."BLOs have been asked to carry sufficient blank Form 6 applications during these visits. The CEO's office has also directed that physical Form 6 applications should not be refused and must be digitised within two days of receipt. No form is to be rejected on frivolous grounds, the letter stated. Between August 31 and October 16, only 2.3 lakh Form 6 applications had been filed, according to the official data. Meanwhile, special camps are also being organised in the Capital every weekend since September 20, including several for particularly vulnerable groups such as the homeless, those displaced due to demolitions, the transgender community, and sex workers to increase enrolment in electoral rolls.

Supreme Court warns states over silence on menstrual hygiene ruling

Delhi.(Agency)

The Supreme Court has expressed displeasure over states and Union territories not informing the Centre about the steps taken to implement its judgment declaring menstrual hygiene a part of the fundamental right to life under Article 21 of the Constitution, news agency Press Trust of India reported. The court has given states and Union territories one last opportunity to provide the information, warning that it may issue contempt notices to the chief secretaries concerned if they fail to respond. The next hearing is scheduled for December 14. A bench of Justices J B Pardiwala and R Mahadevan said, "If what we have said in the judgment is only going to remain on paper, how is the Union, states/UTs going to give effect to this fundamental right?" The bench said the Supreme Court had declared menstrual hygiene and menstrual health to be among the rights protected under Article 21, which deals with the protection of life and personal liberty. In its January 30 judgment, the court had ruled that the constitutional right to life includes the right to menstrual health. On September 1, it directed states and Union territories to consider the deficiencies highlighted in the judgment and submit reports by the next hearing.

At a hearing on October 13, Additional Solicitor General Aishwarya Bhati, appearing for the Centre, told the bench that the Union government had taken up the matter seriously with all states and Union territories and sought details on how the judgment was being implemented, according to .

Noting that no responses had been received, the bench said, "Unfortunately, the states/UTs have not responded to the Union so far. We fail to understand that once the Union calls for the necessary information, why the states/UTs do not respond." "We are sure that the Union, the states/UTs have realised the importance of the judgment that we delivered, declaring menstrual hygiene as a part of the fundamental right," the bench said. The court said its verdict was intended to help young girls who were dropping out of education, particularly in remote parts of the country, because of problems related to menstrual hygiene.

'Chalo Yamuna Abhiyan': Delhi CM Rekha Gupta joins cleanliness drive at ITO; flags plastic, idol waste in river

Delhi.(Agency)

NEW DELHI: Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta, along with her Cabinet colleagues, participated in a cleanliness drive at Hathi Ghat near ITO on Sunday under the 'Chalo Yamuna Abhiyan', urging residents to stop dumping plastic, religious offerings and other waste along the riverbank.Gupta picked up garbage from the riverbank alongside youths, members of social organisations and local residents. In a post on X, she said thousands of Delhi residents had come together to clean 70 Yamuna ghats across the city, turning their devotion to the river into an act of service. During the drive, Gupta said she found large quantities of broken idols and other items used in worship discarded along the riverbank, along with plastic waste.

"It is the responsibility of everyone who has faith in the Yamuna to keep it clean," she said, calling on residents to maintain the cleanliness of the ghats and encourage others to do the same. In her social media post, the chief minister urged Delhi residents not to throw plastic, puja items or other waste on the Yamuna's ghats and banks. She also called on citizens to become 'Yamuna Pramukhs' and make cleanliness a part of their everyday lives rather than limiting it to a campaign. The drive at Hathi Ghat was attended by Delhi Assembly Chief Whip and MLA Abhay Verma, along with youths, voluntary organisations and local citizens. BJP leaders and workers, as well as members of residents' welfare



associations, also participated. Gupta said the Delhi government was taking several steps to clean the Yamuna, including setting up decentralised sewage treatment plants to tap drain water flowing into the river and desilting drains. The campaign aims to strengthen public participation in efforts to clean the river and its banks, with the chief minister stressing that maintaining the ghats would require residents to take responsibility beyond organised cleanliness drives.

Jamia students on hunger strike over students' union demand face rustication, suspension

Delhi.(Agency)

The Jamia Millia Islamia administration has rusticated one student, suspended two and imposed a one-year campus ban on all three, who had launched an indefinite hunger strike earlier this week demanding the restoration of



the university's students' union. The orders, issued on Friday, stated that Ebin Basil, an LLB student, has been rusticated for one year with immediate effect. The two suspended students are Jasim Khan, a postgraduate student in International Studies at the university's India-Arab Cultural Centre; and Rehaan Haider, an MA Social Work student.

In its order, the administration has accused Basil of participating in an "unauthorised sit-in" at Ghalib Lawn on the campus, obstructing university staff and disrupting the installation of CCTV cameras on October 15. It has alleged that members of the gathering pulled a CCTV camera wire, rendering the system non-functional. It also referred to an earlier protest on September 11, and alleged that Basil and other students had then confronted members of the proctorial team and circulated videos with "misleading accounts" of the incident.

Five students, including the three against whom punitive action has been taken, began a hunger strike on October 12 to demand the restoration of the university's student union. Jamia has not held student union elections since 2006. In a joint statement on Saturday, after the orders were issued, student organisations in the varsity alleged that "more than 100" security guards entered the protest site in the morning and "manhandled" the students on hunger strike. The action against the three students comes a day after Vice-Chancellor Mazhar Asif and Registrar Md. Mahtab Alam Rizvi held a meeting lasting over six hours with elected office-bearers of subject associations from the university's departments and centres. In a statement October 16, the university claimed the meeting provided students with a forum to raise grievances and suggest measures to address their concerns.

A university official told The Indian Express, "We don't have an in principle objection to restoring the students' union. If a formal request is made… upon consideration, a committee would need to examine the matter and assess safeguards against incidents of violence before any decision could be taken."

The official said the administration viewed subject associations as an established channel for student representation across Jamia's 44 departments and 30 centres, allowing elected office-bearers to raise department-specific concerns with their faculty and administration.

Delhi court convicts man for shooting wife after she refused to return home

- According to the prosecution, the incident took place on November 24, 2018, outside Kalawati Hospital in Connaught Place, where Pinki worked as a security guard and had been living at her parental home since her husband was jailed in a separate case in 2015.

Delhi.(Agency)

A Delhi court has convicted a man for attempting to murder his wife by shooting her in the stomach outside a hospital in Connaught Place in 2018, saying the testimony of the injured woman was credible, trustworthy and sufficient to establish his guilt. Additional Sessions Judge Dhirendra Rana, in a judgment dated October 13, held Sushant guilty under IPC Section 307 (attempt to murder) and Section 27 of the Arms Act, which deals with the use of arms. The court, however, acquitted him of the charge under Section 25 of the Arms Act, which relates to illegal possession of a firearm. It noted that a separate FIR for possession of the pistol was registered at Seelampur police station, and the trial in that case is pending before another court.

According to the prosecution, the incident took place on November 24, 2018, outside Gate No. 5 of Kalawati Hospital in Connaught Place. The victim, Pinki, worked as a security guard at the hospital and had been living at her parental home since her husband was sent to jail in a separate case in 2015. Pinki



told the court that Sushant, who had been released from jail about a month and a half earlier, came to the hospital in the evening and called her outside.

As she sat in an auto-rickshaw he had parked across the road, he asked whether she would return to her matrimonial home. When she refused, he fired a shot that hit her in the stomach and fled. The victim said she was operated upon the same day, remained hospitalised for about a month, and underwent four surgeries in a short span. The court said the evidence of the hospital staff, along with CCTV camera footage, established that the accused had come to the hospital and left with the victim shortly before she returned injured.

AI to drive growth over next decade': Infosys co-founder SD Shibulal

BENGALURU.(Agency)

The new wave of artificial intelligence (AI) is expected to drive unprecedented growth across industries over the next decade, said Infosys and Axilor co-founder SD Shibulal. He was speaking after inaugurating a workshop on "Building a Viksit Bharat Through Strategic Investments" at the Invest India Summit organised by the Institute of Company Secretaries of India (ICSI) in Bengaluru on Saturday. He also released a commemorative publication brought out by the ICSI.Shibulal said AI has become deeply embedded in India's startup ecosystem, with 89 per cent of startups launched last year having an AI focus.

He highlighted the country's progress in manufacturing, digital connectivity and capital investment, stressing that good corporate governance and transparency were essential for sustainable growth. With effective governance and efficient functioning, India could achieve its goal of becoming a developed nation by 2047, he added.

Dussehra 2026: You could give up these bad money habits for ever

Kolkata.(Agency)

Dussehra symbolises the victory of good over evil. This year, the festival will be celebrated on Tuesday, October 20. It's not only an occasion to renounce vices but also to correct bad financial habits. During festivals, spending on shopping, traveling, and celebrations increases. Failure to keep track of expenses can lead to a decrease in savings and an increase in debt. To maintain long-term financial stability, it's important for people to pay attention to their spending habits and make informed investment decisions. This Dussehra, focus on breaking six habits that can hinder your financial progress. These include spending without budgeting, postponing savings and investments, ignoring the need for insurance, taking on unnecessary debt, making risky bets in the stock market, and blindly trusting investment advice on social media. This year stop procrastinating and burn these bad habits finally.

Spending without budgeting

During festivals, people often over-purchase due to discounts, coupons, and credit card offers. This can disrupt their budget. Therefore, set a spending limit before shopping. Prioritize essential items and avoid buying items just because they are discounted..

NTPC to begin feasibility studies in more states for nuclear programme

New Delhi.(Ajency)

State-owned NTPC plans to initiate feasibility studies in more states, including Uttar Pradesh, for proposed nuclear power projects as part of its drive to expand non-fossil fuel energy capacity to at least 2 GW by 2032, according to a senior official.As part of its energy diversification strategy, NTPC, which has five decades of experience in power generation, is targeting to set up 30 GW of nuclear projects in the country to contribute to the government's ambitious 100 GW nuclear capacity target by 2047.The company has completed feasibility studies in Madhya Pradesh, Bihar and Odisha, and now it will start looking for locations in more states for nuclear projects, the official told Sharing details of the finalised locations, he said that as per the feasibility study, Banka in Bihar, Basai in Madhya Pradesh and Nabarangpur in Odisha have been identified as potential sites for the nuclear projects.

Aaka Space plans india's first underwater human spaceflight analog mission in Gujarat

- he tests will also help the upcoming Samudrayaan



BENGALURU.(Agency)

Private sector companies are working overtime to build and testIndia's first underwater human space flight analog mission. A two-part analog mission has been planned by Aaka Space. The first, which is a trial running for 24 hours, will be done in December in a controlled environment in Gujarat. The second of 72-hour duration will be conducted in March 2027, for which the location is yet to be finalised.Aaka Space had earlier conducted the Ladakh Human Analog Mission. "The underwater mission aims to create a high-fidelity habitat capable of simulating several operational, physiological and psychological challenges associated with human spaceflight.As India advances toward crewed missions through Indian Space Research Organisation's (ISRO) Gaganyaan programme and future long-duration habitation ambitions through Bharatiya Antariksh Station, the need for advanced astronaut training environments and human-performance research platforms is becoming increasingly significant," said Astha Jhala, Founder and CEO, Aaka Space.Underwater environments are considered to be the closest to outer space analogs. Inside underwater habitats, astronauts experience isolation, confinement, dependence on engineered life-support systems, restricted mobility, altered spatial orientation and operational risk.

These conditions are similar to what astronauts face in spacecraft and in space. The tests will also help the upcoming Samudrayaan mission. Apart from partnering with ISRO, an agreement will also be signed with the Indian Navy for the mission.

Underwater habitat studies have shown that confined environments can influence cardiovascular function, respiratory response, fatigue, stress, sleep cycles and cognitive performance – particularly when atmospheric conditions such as elevated carbon dioxide accumulation are not effectively controlled.

Earn Rs 80,000 a month You are in India's top 10%

New Delhi.(Agency)

In India, earning Rs 80,000 a month could put you among the top 10% of earners. A comparison with fresh data from the World Bank's 2026 Poverty and Inequality Platform shows in some of the world's top economies, even the poorest 10% live on much more.There is no denying the significant progress India has made in reducing extreme poverty over the past decade.The Rs 80,000 figure was drawn from the Economic Survey of India. When taken in context of the fresh numbers released through the World Bank's 2026 Poverty and Inequality Platform, it shows how sharply living standards diverge between India and the world's richest nations, even as India has recorded one of the fastest reductions in extreme poverty anywhere in the world over the past decade.A person who just crosses into India's top 10% of consumers gets by on roughly $10 (Rs 951) a day in 2021 purchasing-power terms. In the United States, Canada, Germany and Australia, the poorest 10% already live on $25 (Rs 2,377) to $31 (Rs 2,948) a day. The situation brings to mind Paul Simon's song — One Man's Ceiling Is Another Man's Floor.Chief economist at Bank of Baroda, Madan Sabnavis, said the comparison is valid, but has its limitations.This is because the same amount of money can buy different quantities of goods and services in different countries, making direct comparisons of income alone an imperfect measure of living standards.

"A McDonald's burger costs around $5, or Rs 500, in the US, while in India, it costs Rs 150-200. So, a relatively well-off person may still have money left after buying a burger, while a poorer person may have nothing left. The weaker rupee also means that goods are often priced lower in India than in the US. Comparisons between countries run into such issues," Madan Sabnavis said.

At the other end of the scale, India's



poorest decile starts at about $3 (Rs 285) per person per day.However, it is important to note that these figures do not diminish the scale of India's recent progress. Extreme poverty, measured at the $3-a-day line, fell from 27.1% in 2011–12 to 2.6% in 2023–24.

Poverty at the lower-middle-income threshold of $4.2 (Rs 400) a day dropped from 57.7% to 16.1% over the same period, moving nearly 500 million people above that line. Yet, 23.3 crore Indians still live below it.

The World Bank noted tat changes in survey methods, including the shift to a Modified Mixed Reference Period (MMRP) that captures household spending more accurately, affect direct comparisons across years. The institution has revised historical estimates to improve consistency, but the decline cannot be explained by methodology alone.

THE MODEST PRICE OF ENTRY INTO INDIA'S TOP TIER

The Rs 80,000 monthly income that marks the top 10% of Indian earners is not a large sum when set against global benchmarks.Converted into daily consumption terms, it aligns with the $10 (Rs 951) threshold that the World Bank's platform identifies as the lower boundary of India's richest decile. In the United States of America, the corresponding threshold for the top 10% rises to $173 (Rs 16,454) a day; in Canada and Australia it stands at $129 (Rs 12,269), and in Germany at $128 (Rs 12,174).

Even those who rank among India's better-off households therefore experience living standards that remain well below those of the least affluent residents of high-income countries.This gap highlights how low income levels remain across all sections of Indian society.The challenge is therefore to lift the entire income distribution rather than only compress the gap between the top and bottom within India.According to the latest data by the World Bank, consumption inequality has actually narrowed in recent years. The Gini coefficient, which is a standard measure of inequality that ranges from 0 for perfect equality to 100 for perfect inequality, fell from 28.8 in 2011–12 to 25.5 in 2022–23 when calculated on consumption data. The World Bank's latest Poverty and Equity Brief for India puts the Gini index at 23.

ECR deadline extended: Why EPFO changed the last date to file electronic returns

New Delhi.(Agency)

As the Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO) has decided to extend the last date for employers to file their Electronic Challan-cum-Return (ECR), employers will now have enough time to reconcile records as per the latest revision in the provident fund wage ceiling and make correct calculations.The deadline to file the ECR for September, which was earlier October 15, 2026, has now been extended to October 31, 2026.

ECR deadline change

Following the government's decision to raise the statutory wage ceiling from Rs 15,000 to Rs 25,000, establishments covered by the EPFO have to revise their payrolls and data on contributions made to the Employees' Provident Fund (EPF), Employees' Pension Scheme (EPS), and Employees' Deposit-Linked Insurance (EDLI).Since the changes were applicable from September 17, 2026, employers need to calculate the payroll separately for the period before that date and the period from that date onwards, based on the previous and revised ceilings. Careful application of the appropriate rules is necessary, as the whole month's salary cannot be calculated based on a single wage ceiling.ECR is an electronic monthly return filed by the employer to upload data, including each employee's salary, provident fund contribution, and other related payments, to the EPFO portal. Once the ECR is approved, a challan is generated, which is then used to remit the dues to the respective PF accounts.Since the data received through the ECR is used to process EPF, EPS, and EDLI benefits, it is important to furnish the correct details on time. Mistakes and delays in the process may affect employees' PF, pension, withdrawals, etc.

Considering the situation, employers have been given more time to file accurate returns so that employees face no difficulties and receive the correct contributions in their respective accounts.

What happens in case of delays

The deadline extension provides relief to employers by giving them more time to complete the ECR filing process for September.

Q2 earnings, FII flows, global yields, crude prices to drive Indian stock market next week

Mumbai . (Agency)

Indian stock markets are likely to take cues from September-quarter earnings, foreign institutional investor (FII) flows, global bond yields and crude oil prices in the coming week, as investors assess whether the recent recovery can sustain its momentum after a strong weekly rally. The Nifty rose 2.77 per cent during the week, while the Sensex gained 3.11 per cent, supported by renewed buying in information technology (IT) stocks, easing pressure from global bond yields and sustained inflows from domestic institutional investors (DIIs).Both benchmark indices extended their gains for a second consecutive session on Friday, strengthening hopes of a recovery following the recent market correction.The Sensex advanced 413.66 points, or 0.56 per cent, to close at 74,729.27, while the Nifty 50 climbed 148.80 points, or 0.65 per cent, to settle at 23,146.15. For the week, the Sensex gained 2,256.94 points, while the Nifty added 625.7 points.Market participants will now focus on the September-quarter earnings season to assess whether the recovery can broaden beyond IT stocks. Results and management commentary from banking, consumption and industrial companies will be closely monitored for signs of stronger revenue growth, improving margins and sustained demand.

Corporate guidance for the coming quarters will also be important in shaping investor expectations. Strong earnings and positive business outlooks could support market sentiment, while disappointing results or cautious commentary may limit further gains.

Foreign institutional investor flows will remain another key factor influencing market direction. Although overseas portfolio outflows have moderated, sustained selling by foreign investors could weigh on equities. Continued buying by domestic institutional investors, however, is expected to provide support to the market.

Global bond yields and expectations



surrounding monetary policy will also remain in focus. Any renewed rise in yields could put pressure on equity valuations by making fixed-income investments relatively more attractive. Conversely, easing yield pressures may support risk appetite and encourage investors to increase their exposure to equities.

Crude oil prices and geopolitical developments will be additional factors to watch. A sustained rise in international oil prices could increase India's import bill, add to inflationary pressures and complicate the outlook for corporate margins. Any escalation in geopolitical tensions could also trigger volatility in global financial markets.

Gold rates remain unchanged : Check Prices in Delhi, Mumbai, and other cities

Kolkata.(Agency)

Gold rates hiked slightly on Saturday, currently standing at Rs 14,766 per gram for 24-carat purity on October 18, 2026. Rates for 22K and 18K gold are Rs 13,535 per gram and Rs 11,074 per gram, respectively.Prices of the yellow metal on October 17 rose by Rs 22 for 24K purity, Rs 20 for 22K purity, and Rs 16 for 18K purity compared with October 16, 2026..The US Consumer Price Index (CPI) data released on Wednesday has again boosted expectations of a Federal Reserve rate hike during the monetary policy meeting scheduled for October 27–28. The cost of gasoline surged, leading to a higher-than-expected spike in consumer prices in September.

As per reports, Treasury yields rose sharply as the Consumer Price Index rose to 3.7% in September, up from 3.4% in August.Previous reports suggested lower chances of a rate hike during the October meeting after Federal Reserve policymakers indicated that "There is no need for urgency" following softer US data.Brent crude rose on Friday, ending the week at $109.86 per barrel amid supply fears due to the conflict between the Houthis and Saudi Arabia. The hike continued even as US President Donald Trump shared on social media that he had decided to buy diesel from Russia to ease elevated energy costs ahead of the November midterm elections.

At the same time, tensions between the US and Iran have continued to keep energy prices high since the end of February. Rising energy costs further boost the chances of a rate hike, which has an impact on the yellow metal.

US inflation data and interest rates set by the Federal Reserve continue to influence the yellow metal's trajectory. When the dollar is stronger and interest rates are high, the yellow metal comes under pressure due to the increased opportunity



cost of holding it.Meanwhile, Saudi Arabia had unexpectedly cut November crude prices for Asia despite raising them for parts of Europe. On the other hand, G7 countries also agreed to release 100 million barrels of crude oil and diesel from emergency stocks following pressure from US President Donald Trump.Gold continues to remain under pressure as its trajectory is likely to be influenced by geopolitical concerns and energy prices, with the Federal Reserve's rate decisions further affecting its price.

Karnataka HC directs officials to ensure safety of Hubballi residents amid farmers' protests

BENGALURU.(Agency)

The High Court has directed Dharwad Deputy Commissioner and the Police Commissioner of Hubballi-Dharwad City to consider the representation submitted by the petitioners and to take appropriate steps to see that the life and property of the residents of the Mayuri Estate, Keshwapur, Hubballi, do not face any threat on account of the apprehended protests by farmer organisations over demand for an increase in sugarcane prices.

A division bench of Justice Anu Sivaraman and Justice KS Bharath Kumar passed the order while disposing of the PIL filed by Sangamnath Hanji and seven others seeking directions to the authorities to ensure that any protest, rally, procession, dharna or gherao by farmer organisations over demand for an increase in sugarcane prices is carried out strictly in terms of the order dated August 1, 2022, passed by the HC, only at a place designated by the authority and not within the residential locality of Mayuri Estate.

Father, son kill UP priest over failed 'boy child' prediction

Muzaffarnagar.(Agency)

Swami Devanand Bharti, 75, a priest at a Shiva temple in Bhaura Kalan village of uzaffarnagar district, was found dead with a bullet injury outside his room on Tuesday, October 13.Three days later, police arrested Hashim (54) and his son Zeeshan (22), labourers from the same village, in connection with the killing. According to the police, the father-son duo decided to teach the priest a lesson after his prediction that Zeeshan's wife Arzoo will have a son went wrong as she gave birth to a baby girl last month. The couple had approached the priest as Arzoo was not conceiving a child after suffering miscarriages twice since their marriage two years ago. After shooting the priest dead, the accused also left photographs of a neighbour, with whom they had a long-running feud, at the scene of crime in an attempt to frame him, police said."Hashim and Zeeshan confessed to have committed the crime. They were unhappy with the priest because his prediction that Zeeshan's wife will give birth to a son proved wrong," said Circle Officer, Muzaffarnagar, Narendra Singh Yadav, adding that the weapon and a motorcycle allegedly used in the crime were also recovered.

'Marauding army': Officials raise alarm over Bijnor's rising leopard numbers

Lucknow.(Agency)

Not far from where the National Capital Region's limits end, Bijnor district in Uttar Pradesh is fighting what alarmed forest officials call a "marauding army" – comprising leopards.

"If their growing population is not checked, toh ye ek marauding army ki tarah tabahi macha denge (they will wreak havoc like a marauding army). They will enter cities and attack people. It will be difficult to stop them," says a senior forest official posted in the area.

A survey by the Forest Department last year put the number of the feline species in Bijnor, a district spread over 4,000 sq km, at 444 in the "affected areas", and expected to triple in five years if left unchecked. Leopards are also turning up now in neighbouring Moradabad, with the two districts accounting for 11 deaths and injuries to 30 in leopard attacks this year alone.

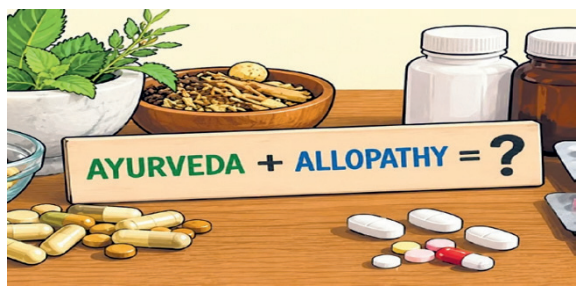
Avtar Kumar of Beeruwala village, who lost one of his two children after a leopard attacked them, told The Indian Express: "The animals have started entering our villages and streets. They can even be seen moving around during the day. We don't step out at night."While the Forest Department has captured 92 leopards in Bijnor and Moradabad (of them 67 in Bijnor) since the start of the year – last year, the number.

Keralam: New holistic healthcare initiative courts row over mixopathy practice

- Critics caution screening programme risks exposure of patient data to private companies

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM.(Agency)

A flagship government programme led by Chief Minister V D Satheesan to build a comprehensive wellness model has sparked widespread controversy, as medical experts question its core provisions. Critics allege that key health department stakeholders were kept in the dark to allow long-opposed provisions, such as the practice of 'mixopathy', to be introduced through the backdoor.'Mixopathy', a critical term coined by modern medicine doctors in India, refers to the practice of combining or integrating modern scientific medicine with traditional AYUSH systems such as ayurveda. Tensions surfaced following the maiden meeting of the 16-member 'Kerala Holistic Model for Health, Wellness & Longevity Task Force' on October 12. Although the meeting



was attended by top health administration officials, including the principal secretary of health, the director of health services, and the director of medical education, concerns remain over how the initiative was structured.

"The senior leadership of the health department have been kept in the dark about the proposals. Integrating ayurveda into public health centres is controversial and not suitable for Keralam, which already has a good network of AYUSH institutions," a source said.Despite a national policy advocating the mainstreaming of AYUSH, the Indian Medical Association (IMA) continues to strongly oppose 'mixopathy' at the national level, and its state leadership has already initiated deliberations on the task force's plans.

Defending the project's objective, the chief minister noted in a social media post: "This is the first time in the country that a state is implementing a comprehensive project for disease prevention, early diagnosis, ensuring quality treatment, and promoting healthy aging. The committee will examine diseases, the growing elderly population, and the healthcare facilities. It will submit its report within two months."However, public health experts argue that the project carries significant risks. Beyond warning against disguised 'mixopathy', critics caution that the screening programme risks overdiagnosis and the exposure of patient data to participating private companies.

As a state with high morbidity, Keralam already operates several initiatives for non-communicable diseases (NCDs), with 20 lakh people screened under existing programmes.

"Instead of expanding the scope of the existing programme, the new proposal has diagnostics as a key component. When private companies are involved, the provisions for the privacy of the patient data assumes importance," the source added.The task force, includes Finance additional chief secretary K R Jyothilal, CM's secretary Ratan Kelkar, former UP chief secretary Deepak Singhal, D. Shiv Kumar Sarin of ILBS, New Delhi, KEF holdings chairman Faizal E Kottikolon, AVP Coimbatore managing.

Police ask several major Durga Pujas in Kolkata to close pandals temporarily

Crowd-pulling pujas like 'Tala Pratyay', 'Alipore Sarbojanin', 'Chetla Agrani', and 'Ballygunge Sarbojonin' were among the pujas asked to stop entry of enthusiasts.

BENGALURU .(Agency)

Several major Durga Puja organisers across Kolkata were asked by the administration on Saturday late evening to temporarily close their pandals, hours after a stampede-in another puja pandal killed 18 people and injured 25 others, an official said.Crowd-pulling pujas like 'Tala Pratyay', 'Alipore Sarbojanin', 'Chetla Agrani', and 'Ballygunge Sarbojonin' were among the pujas asked to stop entry of enthusiasts, he said, adding that the show at Allen Park has also been cancelled.

Organisers of the Santosh Mitra Square Puja restricted entry of visitors to the pandal for the time being, puja committee president Sajal Ghosh said.

"We cannot ask every visitor to enter. And have scaled down the entry of visitors," he saidA senior Kolkata Police officer said, "Wherever we are getting the information regarding major rush, we have asked the puja organisers to stop allowing people there. This is a temporary decision, and we may take a call tomorrow."

Similarly, in Bidhannagar satellite township near here, major pujas like Salt Lake were also asked to shut down and stop allowing people to enter the pandals, a police officer said.Several big-ticket pujas are also organised in Salt Lake."

We have taken a call and asked puja organisers to stop allowing people inside the pandals," he said.On Sunday,



the state administration along with the Kolkata Police officers will hold a review meeting in this connection, a senior bureaucrat said.

Public argument on Mahabharata

UTTAR PRADESH.(Agency)

At Ajgara in Uttar Pradesh's Pratapgarh district, a 5,000-year-old conversation from the Mahabharata has found a new audience as thousands have gathered to debate truth, morality, duty and equality. District Magistrate Abhishek Pandey has taken the legendary Yaksh Samvad beyond its mythological setting, turning it into a district-wide exercise in public debate and critical thinking that has reached 1,148 gram panchayats and 279 urban wards.The Yaksh Samvad recounts how Yudhishthir, the eldest of Pandu's sons, answered a series of questions posed by a Yaksha to bring his brothers back to life. His brothers had died after failing to answer the questions when they went to fetch drinking water from the Yaksha's pond. The exchange, centred on morality, truth, duty and human conduct, remains one of the Mahabharata's enduring philosophical episodes.Ajgara has hosted a traditional fair for generations, but Pandey has sought to revive more than a cultural tradition. He admits that he was initially unaware of the site's significance.

Sabarimala will be made best pilgrimage centre: CM Satheesan

PATHANAMTHITTA.(Agency)

Chief Minister V D Satheesan has said that steps will be initiated after the current pilgrimage season to develop Sabarimala into the best pilgrimage centre in the country by providing facilities for devotees on the lines of Tirupati.

He was speaking to reporters after a review and coordination meeting of various departments at the Sree Rama Saketham auditorium at Pampa to assess the arrangements and preparations for the annual Mandala-Makaravilakku pilgrimage season.The chief minister said all necessary facilities would be put in place to ensure a smooth and hassle-free pilgrimage for devotees this season. He said the government would focus on improving pilgrim amenities, crowd management, safety, healthcare, transportation and waste disposal.

"The Travancore Devaswom Board had assured him that there would be no shortage of appam and aravana prasadam during the pilgrimage season," Satheesan said, adding that offerings and prasadam would remain under the control of the Devaswom Board.Police and Fire and Rescue Services personnel would be deployed under the leadership of their respective department heads to ensure the safety of pilgrims. Special arrangements would also be made to regulate the movement of devotees and prevent crowding at key locations. To ease congestion at Pampa, a German-model shelter with a capacity to accommodate 6,000 people will be constructed at Nilakkal.A total of 22 medical emergency units will be set up to provide prompt medical assistance to pilgrims. Hospitals along the pilgrimage route will also be equipped with better facilities to ensure quality treatment for devotees in need of medical care.The government will strengthen waste management measures at Pampa, particularly to prevent the disposal of ritual garments by devotees from creating a waste problem.

A system will be put in place to regulate the practice, while waste disposal will be carried out within a stipulated timeframe. Facilities at pilgrim rest centres will also be improved.The Kerala State Road Transport Corporation (KSRTC) will deploy 461 buses to transport Sabarimala pilgrims. Temple connectivity will also be strengthened by linking Sabarimala with other temples to facilitate pilgrims visiting multiple shrines.

The fruits of an Assam farmer's foresight

ASSAM.(Agency)

Growing up in an impoverished 11-member family, Tileswar Handique worked as a daily wager earning just Rs 6 a day. A small incident sparked an idea that led him to farming and changed the course of his life. More than four decades later, he has developed a sprawling 40-bigha farm in Assam's Charaideo district, cultivating a variety of vegetables and fruits.

One Saturday in late 1979, Handique, then 15, had returned home, in Cholapathar village, from work for lunch when a stranger arrived with an unusual offer. He was willing to pay double the market price of Rs 24 for a bunch of bananas. He sold it off and received Rs 24. Handique didn't think much about it at that time. He returned home that evening, with his earnings of `36 from six days as a daily wager.

Then it struck him: why he should toil as a daily wager when a bunch of bananas could fetch Rs 24. He realised he had to pursue farming. Recalling those early hardships, Handique says there were many days when his parents and their nine children—three boys and six girls—could barely afford one meal. His father was a Grade IV railway employee, but his meagre salary was insufficient.

"My parents did not pressure me to earn. I decided to work as a daily wager without the knowledge of my family. I wanted to earn to support my parents," says Handique, a bachelor, recalling that he and his two brothers could afford only one pair of clothes each. In 1980, he managed to start a banana plantation. He wouldn't have imagined he would.

Navratri surge: Gujarat sees highest ever single-day electricity demand of 29,822 MW

Ahmedabad.(Agency)

GUJARAT SAW its highest ever electricity consumption on Friday (October 16), reaching 29,822 megawatts (MW), even as production declined, in the renewable energy sector, the government said in a statement issued on Saturday. This development is largely attributed to the rainfall deficit coupled with rising demand during the festive season.

As an immediate step to meet the energy demand, and secure supply for the Rabi season post-Diwali, the state government signed agreements to source a total of 1,379 MW of electricity from the Central quota and the NTPC Ltd's Farakka plant in Murshidabad, West Bengal and Assam as a long-term measure.

In the statement, the government appealed to citizens to "use electricity judiciously in national interest" while assuring that the state had "sufficient supply to meet the power demand"."Wherever possible, electricity consumption should be maximised during the day and unnecessary consumption during the peak evening hours (5 to 11 pm) should be avoided," the statement said.High-level meetings were convened in New Delhi to secure a daily supply of up to 13 to 14 coal rakes daily to the Gujarat State Electricity Corporation Ltd (GSECL), a state government enterprise, to meet the shortfall.

State Energy Minister Rushikesh Patel, who on Saturday chaired a review meeting on the power supply situation, said "Our hydro and wind energy production.

'Bring my daughter back, dead or alive': 7 days on, 10-year-old who fell into open drain stays missing

Seven days after 10-year-old Manisha Salat allegedly fell into a 40-foot-deep open drain on Ahmedabad-Dholka Road, rescue teams have been unable to trace her.

Ahmedabad.(Agency)

Under a flyover on the Ahmedabad-Dholka Road in the city, a family desperately waits for any news of their daughter, who has been missing for several days after she allegedly fell into an open drain. All that the parents can do is get their hopes up every time fire and sanitation personnel go inside in search of their 10-year-old Manisha Salat.

However, the rescue personnel have not had much luck. Manisha, who is said to be visually impaired, has remained untraceable since October 10.Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation (AMC) has stationed a fire truck at the site. Its personnel go down the sewer to look for Manisha wearing safety gear. A kilometre away, a team of municipal staff scan a pit of chemical sludge.

For the last seven days, Paruben Salat, her husband Bhalabhai and their two sons aged five and seven years have been camping under the bridge, watching the drill of the rescue teams. The family lives in a shanty a kilometer away.

"Give me my daughter back, dead or alive," cries Paruben, a daily wage worker. Her family had gotten off an autorickshaw after returning from a chore when Manisha started walking away even as her mother was busy settling the fare. "Ma, I am falling", Paru remembers her daughter screaming as she disappeared into the 40 feet deep pit.

"Even if it is just bones, find her," she says repeatedly, adding how her sons too "cannot see after dark". Manisha was suspected to be suffering from night blindness, like her brothers.

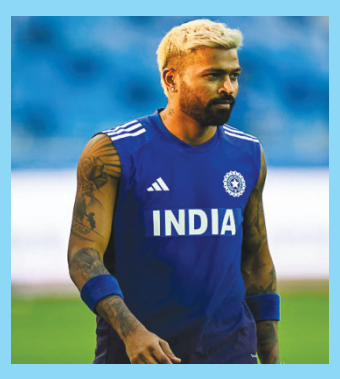


"We removed the grass that had grown over the drain opening camouflaging it. We tried to find our daughter through pipes and sticks but could see nothing as it was full of sludge and water. I appealed to my family to let me go inside and search for her, but they stopped me saying there were poisonous chemicals and gas inside. They said let the rescue teams arrive," Paruben says.

Gavaskar says Hardik Pandya irreplaceable, India should stop looking for like-for-like replacement

New Delhi.(Agency)

India tend to get carried away in their search for a replacement for Hardik Pandya, who is irreplaceable, and should instead look at players who can perform different roles, former captain Sunil Gavaskar said, stressing the need to strengthen the bowling attack.Gavaskar said India should play at least four specialist bowlers, with the fifth and sixth options being all-rounders who can contribute with the bat, instead of compromising their bowling strength to extend the batting line-up."We sometimes get a little bit carried away with trying to find a replacement for Hardik Pandya. Hardik Pandya is irreplaceable. If you can't find somebody of his calibre, then go with somebody who will do a



slightly different job," Gavaskar said on JioStar after the fifth and final T20I against the West Indies was washed out in Bengaluru on Saturday night. The series ended 2-2.

Gavaskar cited Naman Dhir as an example of a player who could fulfil a different role, pointing to the young batter's contribution with both bat and ball."Naman Dhir is doing that job. He's bowling his overs well, and look at the way he batted in this game," he said.

PCB snubs Michael Atherton, Nasser Hussain after Imran Khan interview controversy



New Delhi.(Agency)

The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) has named a six-member commentary panel for the men's ODI tri-series involving Pakistan, England and Sri Lanka, scheduled to be played from October 18 to 31, with prominent English commentators Michael Atherton and Nasser Hussain missing from the line-up.The omission comes two months after the duo interviewed Kasim and Sulaiman Khan, sons of jailed former Pakistan Prime Minister and cricket legend Imran Khan, during the Lord's Test between England and Pakistan in August 2026. The PCB has not provided any reason for their absence from the upcoming assignment.Atherton and Hussain are among the most prominent voices in international cricket commentary and were part of the broadcast team when England last toured Pakistan for a three-match Test series in October 2024.The interview with Imran Khan's sons, conducted by Atherton and aired by Sky Sports, lasted 18 minutes and raised concerns over the former Pakistan captain's deteriorating health in prison. Kasim and Sulaiman alleged that the authorities were 'blatantly trying to kill him' through neglect and isolation. The broadcast triggered a strong reaction from the PCB, which objected to what it considered the political nature of the segment and filed a formal complaint with Sky Sports.

Chelsea keeper Emi Martinez undergoes emergency surgery after nasty collision vs Everton

- Chelsea goalkeeper Emi Martinez underwent surgery after suffering an injury in a collision with Everton defender Jarrad Branthwaite. Martinez posted on Instagram from hospital, confirming that his

New Delhi.(Agency)

Chelsea goalkeeper Emi Martinez has undergone emergency surgery following a nasty collision with Everton defender Jarrad Branthwaite during their Premier League clash on Saturday. The Argentine goalkeeper confirmed that the operation had gone well after being taken to hospital with a concussion following the incident.

Chelsea secured a 2-0 victory at the Hill Dickinson Stadium, with Pedro Neto scoring twice to end Everton's unbeaten start to the league season. However, the result was overshadowed by a lengthy injury stoppage in the second half after Martinez and Branthwaite collided while attempting to deal with a free kick.Everton's Kiernan Dewsbury-Hall delivered the set-piece into the box when the two players came together. While Branthwaite was able to get back on his feet after receiving treatment, Martinez required assistance from paramedics.The 34-year-old was eventually strapped to a stretcher and carried off the pitch before being taken to hospital. Argentine media reported that he had suffered a jaw injury in the collision.

MARTINEZ PROVIDES SURGERY UPDATE

Martinez shared an update from his hospital bed on social media early on Sunday, thanking fans for their messages and confirming that his operation had been successful."Thanks to everyone for the



messages. The operation went well," Martinez wrote."The most important thing is that we won, and kept a clean sheet. In a few weeks we'll be back."The injury forced Chelsea manager Xabi Alonso to hand Mike Penders his Premier League debut. The 21-year-old goalkeeper helped Chelsea secure their first clean sheet in the league since January.Penders, a Belgian youth international, could now be called upon to deputise for Martinez until the Argentine is cleared to return to training.Chelsea face a busy schedule in the coming weeks, beginning with their Premier League home fixture against Tottenham Hotspur next Saturday. They will then travel to Liverpool for a League Cup fourth-round clash on October 28 before hosting Manchester United in the league three days later.

ALONSO BACKS YOUNG KEEPER

Alonso expressed confidence in Penders after the young goalkeeper stepped in following Martinez's injury, praising his composure and performances when called upon."Mike has personality. He's brave and we have full trust with him. He did well," Alonso told reporters.

Anchor or finisher Versatile Tilak Varma ready to change roles at one day's notice

New Delhi.(Agency)

Shoeholed at No. 6 due to the top-order logjam in the Indian cricket team, Tilak Varma says he is only concerned about finishing games. Speaking after the conclusion of the India vs West Indies T20I series, Varma said he does not care about his batting position and is focused on executing his role.The Mumbai Indians batter, who made his name in the Indian Premier League for his excellent temperament at No. 3, has been forced to reinvent himself as a batter to meet the demands of the Indian team. Varma, however, after some initial struggles, has been able to play clutch knocks in high-pressure games, helping India win the Asia Cup 2025 and the Asian Games 2026, among other matches.Speaking at the post-series press conference, the Indian batter said he had the technique to bat at both No. 3 and No. 6, but admitted that it was easier to finish matches in the No. 3 role."It is not that easy to change between No.3-6. I love finishing games for the country. I love that job. Yes, it is easy to finish games while batting at 3 than at No.6, but we have a combination at the top, and they are doing great. I am mentally prepared for the finisher's role and I have already won a few games there," Tilak Varma said."I have got the shots where I can send balls all over the ground. I have got the technique to bat both at No.3 and No.5. I can adapt. I can deliver in any role for the team. It is just a matter of one day of practice for me," he added.The Indian T20I team currently has a logjam at the top of the order, with Vaibhav Sooryavanshi, Abhishek



Sharma, Sanju Samson, Ishan Kishan, Shreyas Iyer and Tilak competing for spots.

The Indian team management has settled on Abhishek, Samson and Ishan for the top order for now, with the captain walking in at No. 4.

The vice-captain now faces even more competition for his spot, with India playing Nitish Reddy, Naman Dhir and Shivam Dube in the West Indies series. The longer batting order has meant that India have been scoring 200-plus runs with ease in most of their games. However, their bowling attack has been left short due to the absence of specialist bowlers.Varma reflected on the same after the series but praised Naman Dhir, who picked up five wickets during the series.

"The positive is that we have scored 200+ in every game. It is a good sign for the team. Naman Dhir's bowling is one of the big positives.

Delhi Half Marathon: Asian Games runner beaten, Matata sets course record

Bengaluru.(Agency)

Kenya's Charles Matata shattered the course record to win the men's elite race at the Vedanta Delhi Half Marathon on Sunday, while Shailesh Kushwaha emerged as the best Indian finisher in the men's race.Matata clocked 58 minutes and 52 seconds to better the previous course record of 58:53, set by Ethiopia's Amedework Walelegn in 2020, by one second. He will pocket an additional USD 12,000 (Rs 11,39,586) for breaking the event record, besides the winner's purse of USD 27,000 (Rs 25,64,068).Matata's twin brother, Alex Matata, had won the 2025 edition with a time of 59 minutes and 50 seconds.Kenyans swept the top three positions in the men's elite race, with Samwel Nyamai Mailu (59:24) and Stanley Waithaka Mburu (59:33) finishing second and third, respectively.In the women's elite race, Ethiopia's Wudinesh Alemu claimed the title with a time of one hour, six minutes and 35 seconds. Kenyans Selah Businei (1:07:01) and Cynthia Chelangat Chepkwony (1:07:32) finished second and third, respectively.

SHAILESH KUSHWAHA LEADS INDIANS

Shailesh Kushwaha won the men's Indian elite race with a time of one hour, five minutes and five seconds. Gaurav Mathur finished second in 1:05:11, while Hemant Kumar took third place with a time of 1:05:37.Kushwaha finished ahead of Kartik Karkera, who represented India at the 2026 Asian Games in the men's marathon category. Karkera clocked 1:07:05, finishing well behind the top three Indian runners.

Among the Indian elite women, Ankita Dhyani took the top spot with a time of one hour, 12 minutes and 46 seconds. Soniya (1:14:56) and Bhagirathi (1:15:51) finished second and third, respectively.The 2026 edition of the Vedanta Delhi Half Marathon offered a total prize purse of USD 275,732, with



the men's and women's elite winners each receiving USD 27,000.

The top three finishers in the Indian elite men's and women's categories will receive Rs 3,50,000, Rs 2,50,000 and Rs 1,50,000, respectively.Over 40,000 participants hit the streets of the national capital for the World Athletics Gold Label Race.

With shades of Lionel Messi, Lamine Yamal leads Barcelona's 5-2 rout of Real Betis

- Lamine Yamal channelled his inner Lionel Messi to inspire Barcelona's 5-2 win over Real Betis, scoring a stunning opener in their LaLiga clash. Barcelona extended their perfect start to the season to



New Delhi.(Agency)

Lamine Yamal channelled his inner Lionel Messi to lead Barcelona's 5-2 rout of Real Betis in LaLiga on Saturday, October 17. Yamal opened the scoring with a stunning left-footed curler from the edge of the box, sending the Estadio La Cartuja crowd into a frenzy.The 19-year-old picked up the ball on the right, dribbled past his marker to create space and whipped a shot into the top corner with surgical precision.

It was the kind of goal Barcelona fans had grown accustomed to watching Messi score throughout the 2010s, a reminder of the Argentine's ability to turn a moment of individual brilliance into a defining moment in a match.Yamal's strike set the tone for Barcelona, who continued their remarkable goalscoring run in LaLiga. However, the league leaders had to work for their victory, with Betis managing six shots on target of their own and keeping the contest competitive before Barcelona eventually pulled away.

The visitors took the lead in the 10th minute, but Betis drew level in the 27th through Valentin Gomez, who headed home Pablo Fornals' cross. Barcelona restored their advantage just before half-time when Rodri powered a header past the goalkeeper from Fermin Lopez's corner.Betis thought they had equalised again through Giovani Lo Celso's spectacular volley, only for the goal to be ruled out for a handball in the build-up.Barcelona extended their lead shortly after the break, with Yamal turning provider as Gabriel Jesus finished his cutback in the 51st minute. Betis responded almost immediately through Ez Abde, but their hopes of mounting a comeback suffered a major blow when Facundo Bernal was sent off following an altercation with Yamal.With a numerical advantage, Barcelona found more room to attack. Eric Garcia made it 4-2 in the 63rd minute after Betis goalkeeper Alvaro Valles failed to deal with Yamal's free kick, before substitute Dani Olmo completed the scoring with a curling effort from outside the box in the 81st minute.

\The victory extended Barcelona's perfect start to the league season to nine wins from nine matches, taking their tally to 27 points and keeping them five clear of Atletico Madrid at the top of the table.

No shortcuts to success: Anshul Kamboj earns another shot at Test cricket

New Delhi.(Agency)

When Anshul Kamboj made his Test debut in Manchester in 2025, he had little time to settle into the demands of international cricket. Called up as an injury replacement after Akash Deep and Arshdeep Singh were ruled out, the Haryana fast bowler landed in England and was thrust into action within 48 hours. Against an England side that piled up 669 runs on a flat pitch, Kamboj bowled 18 overs, conceded 89 runs and picked up a wicket.It was a difficult introduction to Test cricket. His rhythm was missing, his pace came under scrutiny and the performance did little to suggest that he was ready to become a regular in India's red-ball plans. The fourth Test would eventually be part of a series India levelled 2-2, but Kamboj would have to wait more than a year for another opportunity in the format.He did not spend that time waiting for a call.



"There wasn't much of a mindset other than realising where you are lacking and figuring out what mistakes you made, so you can go back home and work on them," Kamboj tells IndiaToday.in.Give up? No, giving up is never an option. It shouldn't even be an option. You always need to work hard; giving up has no chance, it won't lead to anything."The 25-year-old is back in India's Test squad for the tour of New Zealand, having also made his ODI debut earlier this month. The recall was not widely anticipated, but Kamboj has continued to put himself in contention through domestic cricket, India A assignments and a productive IPL season with Chennai Super Kings. His first Test outing did not go to plan.



Isha Malviya

Says Kissing Gurmeet Choudhary In Tum Mere Ho Was 'Not Difficult': 'I Am Confident Enough'

Isha Malviya and Gurmeet Choudhary have spoken about filming an intimate kissing scene for their upcoming romantic drama Tum Mere Ho. The film, directed by Ashish Panda, marks Isha's Bollywood debut and is slated to hit theatres on October 23.The first poster of the film had already grabbed attention for featuring Isha and Gurmeet sharing a passionate kiss. The actors have now explained how the sequence was shot and why the makers decided to use that particular moment as the film's first major promotional image.Isha Malviya Says The Poster Was Taken From An Actual SceneSpeaking to Zoom/Telly Talk India, Isha clarified that the viral poster was not shot separately for promotional purposes. Instead, the image was lifted directly from the film.



"The picture has been taken out of the scene. The moment is very interesting, as you will get to know how Akash and Tamanna meet after facing all the situations. We have not done a separate photoshoot for the poster. All have been taken from the shots. We decided to share the kissing poster first to create buzz and let people know that the 2000s romance is back," she said.

Isha, who became a familiar face to television audiences through Bigg Boss 17, also spoke about working with Gurmeet during intimate scenes.

She said the experience did not feel particularly difficult because of the comfort and professionalism on set."It was not difficult to shoot such scenes with Gurmeet, as he is a wonderful actor and a human being. On the top of that, I managed to get successful only because of my confidence. I am confident enough to face any situation," Isha said.

She added that she had entered the entertainment industry knowing the demands that come with acting. "Since I have entered the showbiz to work, I know its pros and cons. We don't come under the list of commoners, as we are actors. We do our job to entertain people."

Gurmeet Choudhary Says Intimate Scenes Are 'Part Of Our Job'

Gurmeet, meanwhile, said actors need to approach such sequences professionally and ensure that everyone involved feels comfortable during the shoot."I have been working in the industry for more than 18 years. I only know how to act in front of the camera. As actors, we ensure that everyone feels very comfortable while working on set. We shoot such scenes professionally. It is a part of our job," he reportedly said.



Neha Dhupia

Regrets Turning Down Shah Rukh Khan's Chak De! India: 'Missed A Big Opportunity'

Neha Dhupia has revealed that she was offered Chak De! India, the 2007 sports drama starring Shah Rukh Khan, but turned it down. Looking back at the decision years later, the actress admitted that the film remains one of the opportunities she regrets missing.Neha spoke about the project during a board game session on her chat show Double Date. She also named Operation Safed Sagar as another project she wishes she had taken up, saying that both belonged to genres she had always wanted to explore as an actor.

Neha Dhupia Regrets Saying No To Chak De! India

During the conversation, Neha reflected on roles she had declined during her career and admitted that some of those choices have stayed with her.

"Sometimes, when you look back at the opportunities you turned down, you realise what you may have missed. Chak De! India and Operation Safed Sagar were two such opportunities that stayed with me," she said.

Neha did not reveal which character she had been approached to play in Chak De! India.The Shimit Amin directorial eventually released in 2007 with Shah Rukh Khan playing Kabir Khan, a former hockey captain who takes charge of the Indian women's hockey team.The story follows Kabir and the players as they prepare for an international tournament while dealing with differences within the team.

'I Always Wanted To Do A Good Sports Film'

Neha also explained that her regret comes from having missed two genres she had specifically wanted to work in.

"I always wanted to do a good sports film, a good military film, but have missed these two big opportunities," she said.While Chak De! India gave her an opportunity to be part of a sports

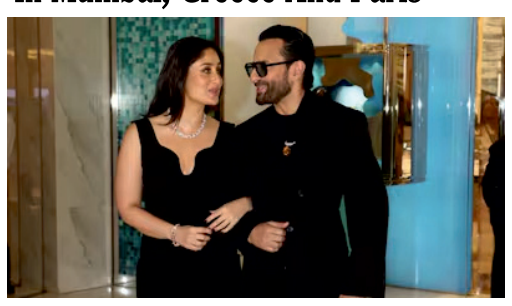


drama, Operation Safed Sagar was another project she chose not to take up.The latter is a Netflix project centred on military operations.Neha acknowledged both titles while discussing professional decisions she would have approached differently in hindsight.

More About Chak De! India

Chak De! India revolves around Kabir Khan and the Indian women's hockey team.The players come from different backgrounds and initially struggle with their individual differences before coming together as a team and competing on the international stage.

Kareena Kapoor Recalls How Saif Ali Khan Proposed To Her 3 Times 'In Mumbai, Greece And Paris'



Bollywood's power couple, Kareena Kapoor and Saif Ali Khan, appeared on the latest episode of 'The Great Indian Kapil Show'. Kareena revealed to host Kapil Sharma and the audience that she only agreed to marry Saif after he proposed to her not once, not twice, but thrice, in Mumbai, Greece and Paris.Bebo shared, "He proposed to me in Mumbai, he proposed to me in Greece, and he proposed to me in Paris, and that's when I finally said 'Yes'". Reacting to this with his unique sense of humour, Saif said, "If you would have just said yes in Mumbai, I would have saved a lot of money.

Meanwhile, Saif and Kareena celebrated 14 years of marital bliss on Friday. Bebo marked the special day with a lovely post on social media. She posted a couple of romantic photos with her husband on her official handle.

One of the images had Saif flaunting his bare chest while relaxing on a yacht. The post also included some unseen memories from their time working on the drama, 'Kurbaan'. Bebo captioned the post, "Another year around the sun…Forever to go."

Saif, who has recently made his Instagram debut, also shared a series of pictures. We could see a solo photo of Saif looking as handsome as ever in a white tuxedo jacket, a white shirt and black trousers."Almost perfect, but something is missing….," he captioned. Next was a photo of him with his better half, Kareena, who looked stunning in a blue gown with a thigh-high slit.

Joining the couple for the last still were Saif and Kareena's kids, Taimur and Jeh. All four of them were seen sitting together on the floor of their home, with a decorated Christmas tree in the background.

Nana Patekar's Son On Tanushree Dutta's Remarks, Lekha Washington's First Post After FRRO Notice To Imran Khan



Imran Khan's girlfriend, Lekha Washington, has shared her first post since the actor received a notice from the Foreigners Regional Registration Office (FRRO) to leave India by October 28. Imran, an American citizen with an Overseas Citizen of India (OCI) card, came under scrutiny after being detained in a Mumbai protest against Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar.Nana Patekar's son Malhar Patekar has reacted to the renewed remarks surrounding the late actor following his death on October 8. Without naming Tanushree Dutta directly, Malhar said that the case being repeatedly referred to had already reached its legal conclusion and questioned why it was being brought up again.

Isha Malviya and Gurmeet Choudhary have spoken about filming an intimate kissing scene for their upcoming romantic drama Tum Mere Ho. The film, directed by Ashish Panda, marks Isha's Bollywood debut and is slated to hit theatres on October 23.Vijay Deverakonda and Rashmika Mandanna's Ranabaali hit theatres worldwide on October 16. But before the film could reach the big screen, its makers took the online chatter surrounding it to court. Mythri Movie Makers approached a Bengaluru court, claiming that false and defamatory content about the film was being shared on social media and other platforms. The court has now passed an interim order restricting several platforms from hosting or circulating the disputed content.aharashtra Cyber Cell has rejected Yo Yo Honey Singh's request for additional time. Singh was summoned by the Maharashtra Cyber Cell in connection with a complaint filed against him over allegedly objectionable remarks made during a concert. Following the summons for October 16, the singer asked for additional time and requested that the authorities allow him to appear on October 22.

10 killed in fire at seaside resort in Bangladesh

DHAKA.(Agency)

At least 10 people were killed and nine injured on Saturday in a fire at a seaside resort in the south-eastern Bangladeshi district of Cox's Bazar, officials said.The fire broke out around 6:30 am on Saturday at TUPTUP Resto and Resort in Inani, Cox's Bazar, according to Mohammad Atikur Rahman Majumder, chief of Ukhiya Police Station.Ten people were killed, and nine were injured, Fire Service spokesman Talha Bin Zasim confirmed the death toll around 1:30 pm, hours after the blaze broke out at the resort near Patuartek Beach along Marine Drive.The nine injured have been admitted to Cox's Bazar Sadar Hospital, bdnews 24 reported.Sabuktagin Mahmud Sohel, resident medical officer at Cox's Bazar Sadar Hospital, said five of the injured had burns covering around 5 per cent of their bodies."The other person was injured in a fall and was discharged after receiving first aid.All five burn patients have been admitted to hospital," he said.The three-storey resort, built mainly of bamboo and wood, is about 29km from Kolatoli, near the entrance to the beach town.

Woman Drives Truck Through Football Game In US, Kills 2 And Injures 11

Washington.(Agency)

A woman drove a truck through a soccer field during a game in Kansas on Saturday, killing two people and sending 11 other victims to the hospital, authorities said.

A 6-year-old boy and a 35-year-old man were killed, Wichita Police Captain Aaron Moses said. The ages of the injured people ranged from 5 to 68.

Moses said the driver, a 34-year-old, was in custody. He did not say whether authorities believe it was intentional.

"We are still working to determine how this happened and why this happened," he said.Two children were also in the truck, Moses said.

Police Chief Joe Sullivan said that immediately after the incident, and before first responders arrived at the scene, people "sprang into action" to provide lifesaving assistance to the victims."It was truly amazing," Sullivan said. "But I think it's indicative of the Wichita community."

"Let's Go To France": Trump Mocks Nationwide Protests, Violence

world.(Agency)

US President Donald Trump mocked the violent unrest sweeping France, saying the country appeared to be a natural destination for “revolutions," as protests over the rising cost of living turned violent, with clashes between police and protesters, widespread looting and fires."Let's go to France? It's a lovely place. No riots, no revolutions. You know, France seems to be so damn good for revolutions. It's unbelievable. Let's go to France and join the revolution," Trump joked about the situation in France.Trump's remarks came as France woke up Sunday to devastated streets after major protests across the country turned violent. The unrest followed weeks of student protests and came just six months ahead of elections to replace President Emmanuel Macron.US Vice President JD Vance also weighed in on the violence, blaming immigration and arguing that France and other Western countries had failed to address questions of assimilation and compatibility.In a post on X, Vance said, "Western liberals imported the third world into France and other countries in the name of diversity and compassion.

Zelenskyy urges support for new US sanctions on Russia after Trump puts them on hold

- **Zelenskyy described Trump's move to put sanctions on hold as unfortunate, but did not directly criticize the U.S. leader despite deepening tensions between Ukraine and Washington in recent days.**

KYIV.(Agency)

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy urged supporters Saturday to speak out in defense of new U.S. sanctions against Russia, hours after President Donald Trump signed an executive order pausing a sweeping package of restrictions targeting the Russian economy.The White House decision has further raised fears that Ukraine could be left exposed to Moscow's escalating assaults with winter approaching.Russian attacks overnight killed at least four people, including an ambulance driver, and wounded dozens, officials said. Ukrainian drones killed a woman in a Russian border region and disrupted flights at Moscow's airports, according to Russian authorities.

In a statement on social media, Zelenskyy described Trump's move to put sanctions on hold as unfortunate, but did not directly criticize the U.S. leader despite deepening tensions between Ukraine and Washington in recent days."A decision was unfortunately made in America to completely disregard the Lindsey Graham Act, which was supposed to impose truly effective pressure on Russia to bring this war to an end," Zelenskyy wrote.

Later, in audio clips answering journalists' questions, Zelenskyy thanked Democrats and Republicans who backed the legislation and praised its bipartisan support. He said



blocking it would encourage Russia to continue killing and do nothing to bring the war to an end.He also added that limiting Ukraine's ability to retaliate against Russian attacks would not bring peace.

"Nevertheless, we very much hope — and I personally hope — that the president of the United States of America will do everything possible to make Putin stop the killing, stop the attacks on our energy infrastructure, and end this war," he said.

Critics say Trump's decision helps Putin

Named after late South Carolina Sen. Lindsey Graham, the legislation had sought to clamp down more quickly on the flow of financial resources fueling Russia's 4 1/2-year-old war against Ukraine. The bill had sought to sanction Russian officials, banks and a shadow fleet of tankers that keeps Russian energy moving.Trump personally signed the legislation just last month and his move came just two days before a deadline set in the law itself for its implementation.

The president told Congress that the pause was in the national interest but gave no further details.Sen. Richard Blumenthal, who co-drafted the bill, said in a statement that Trump was turning his back on "the majority of Americans, their representatives in both houses of Congress, and our European allies." “These waivers have nothing to do with our national security, and everything to do with sucking up to Vladimir Putin," Blumenthal said.

Saudi strikes on Yemen kill 12 including three children, Houthis say

SANAA.(Agency)



Saudi strikes that began overnight have killed at least 12 people in Yemen, three of them children, Houthi media reported on Saturday..Saudi warplanes targeted "civilian homes" in Taiz governorate on Saturday, killing nine people and wounding 16, the Iran-backed group's news agency said, adding that people were still trapped under the rubble.The agency had earlier reported overnight strikes in Dhamar province that killed three children and wounded 17 other people.It said the strikes were carried out "using cluster bombs, which are banned internationally".The Saudi-led colition fighting the Houthis has launched daily raids in Yemen backing the internationally recognised government in the country's long-running civil war.The conflict, dormant for years, erupted again in July and intensified after the Iran-backed group seized the Red Sea coast last month.

The Houthis have repeatedly attacked Saudi targets in recent weeks, including vessels in the Red Sea, oil facilities and Riyadh's international airport, where 13 people were killed in a single attack last week.According to the Houthis, the toll from Saudi strikes between September 3 and October 15 is 115 dead and 305 wounded.

Oxygen Tanks, Air Purifier Sales Up By 600% In Southeast Asia Amid Indonesia Wildfires Haze

Jakarta.(Agency)

Toxic haze from wildfires burning in Indonesia has spiked a demand for oxygen tanks and air purifiers across the region, manufacturers say, as they work the clock on equipment providing life-saving clean air.The months-long haze has blanketed parts of Southeast Asia, forcing school closures and fuelling a rise in respiratory complaints. Families are now rushing to buy devices to keep indoor air clean.At AA Alive, a medical equipment company based just outside of Kuala Lumpur, employees were working at full capacity to deliver oxygen bottles, with officials saying sales were rocketing."We have seen a 35 percent increase in sales because of the haze," Rafina Firdaus, a member of AA Alive's sales team, told AFP during a visit."When I started in the industry, I was shocked to see so many patients who need oxygen tanks," she said.

The company supplies patients with both oxygen tanks and oxygen concentrators.An oxygen tank can run for about three hours of continuous use, while a concentrator can be used for about 24 hours.Md Noor Bin Bujang, 69, spent more than a month in hospital and received his first oxygen concentrator on Thursday evening.

He told AFP that without the oxygen-providing equipment he would have "a shortness of breath, especially with the haze".Mubassar Khan, a 26-year-old AA Alive technician, said an oxygen concentrator's filter is normally replaced after 1,000 hours of usage, but the haze's pollutants have halved its lifespan.

AA Alive currently delivers around 40 rental units per day, and Firdaus said the company was able to meet the increased demands caused by the haze because they have "already experienced it every year".AFP journalists saw close to 60 oxygen concentrators and around 20 oxygen tanks that were due for a service or replacement at the company's showroom and warehouse.

President Trump wants 60-day pause to analyse global impact of sanctions and tariffs: Marco Rubio

UNITED STATES.(Agency)

US Secretary of State Marco Rubio said Saturday that President Donald Trump's waiver of sweeping sanctions and tariffs on Russia would be a 60-day pause to "analyze" their impact on the global economy.

"The president wants to take the 60-day period of time to sort of analyze what imposing both sanctions and tariffs will mean to the global economy and even to the US economy," Rubio said, noting that the economic restrictions involved a number of countries, not just Russia.He said various conflicts were impacting global energy prices, including the US war on Iran and attacks on Saudi Arabia by Yemen's Houthis."These conflicts around the world are starting to crash into each other, and they're having an impact not just on global oil and diesel prices" but on economies as well, Rubio said.

Trump said late Saturday his decision would benefit the US, though it was unclear if he had actually made up his mind on the matter.“We'll figure it out, and you'll figure it out," he said. "It's a very good decision, and it's going to be a decision that's good for the country, and I think good for the world."US lawmakers on both sides of the political aisle have sharply criticized Trump after he signed an executive order Friday that waived sweeping sanctions and tariffs targeting Russia -- measures adopted by Congress last month.The law passed in September, and signed by Trump, included sanctions targeting Russian officials, oligarchs and financial institutions, and provided Trump with the authority to impose sanctions on major buyers of Russian oil and gas.The idea was to cut off sources of funding to supporters of Russian President Vladimir Putin, as well as his war on Ukraine.

But late Friday, two days before the law was due to take effect, Trump exempted Russia from those economic restrictions."Beyond irresponsible," Republican Senator Thom Tillis, a frequent Trump critic who will leave office in January, said in a post on X.If the President wants to actually bring down energy prices, he can do it by solving the Iran problem, not by doing a solid for Vladimir Putin.

Several Afghan Taliban personnel killed in alleged retaliatory action along border, Pakistan says

PESHAWAR.(Agency)

Pakistani security forces on Saturday killed several Afghan Taliban personnel in retaliatory action after alleged unprovoked firing along the border in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, according to security officials.The firing was reported in the Taida sector, Upper Kurram and Ghuz Garhi areas, where the Afghan Taliban allegedly opened fire to facilitate the cross-border infiltration of militants, a security official said.



The Pakistan Army retaliated, killing several Afghan Taliban personnel near the Ghuz Garhi border area, the official said.In the Upper Kurram sector, Pakistani forces targeted the Afghan Taliban's Topsar post and Shipola base camp.The Shipola base camp was completely destroyed in the retaliatory action, he said.

Several Taliban personnel also allegedly abandoned their border post following the Pakistani forces' response, the official said.

Earlier this month, Pakistan conducted what its Ministry of Information described as well-planned and calibrated aerial strikes on terrorist hideouts in Afghanistan, killing multiple militants belonging to Fitna al-Khawarij.

The federal government uses the term 'Fitna al-Khawarij' for terrorists belonging to the banned terror outfit Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan.Pakistan has witnessed a sharp rise in cross-border militant attacks, particularly in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) and Balochistan, since the Afghan Taliban returned to power in 2021.Pakistan recorded its highest monthly number of militant attacks in 12 years in September 2026.According to data compiled by the Pakistan Institute for Conflict and Security Studies (PICSS), an Islamabad-based independent think tank that monitors militant violence, 225 attacks were recorded across the country in September, compared with 199 in August, an increase of 13 per cent.The number of attacks rose for the third consecutive month.

Pakistan launched Operation Ghazab lil-Haq in February 2026, months after the two countries agreed to a ceasefire in October 2025 following clashes at several border points.Despite multiple rounds of talks, Islamabad and Kabul have yet to resolve their differences, with the issue of militant groups allegedly operating from Afghan soil remaining a major point of contention between the two sides.

A Season Of Anger: Protests In Many Nations Around The Same Time

world.(Agency)

Major protests have been reported from many countries in recent days, with some of them continuing to simmer and spread. From France to Argentina, many of these protests seemed to be over issues that have been commonly seen in nearly every nation, issues such as economic strain linked to housing costs, inflation, public-service funding and anti-incumbency.

France and Albania at the moment face the most serious challenges to their policies from wave after wave of protesters, leading to situations that could spread like wildfire. We look at some of these protests.Massive protests have broken out in France due to two reasons concerning government policies linked to anger over high prices ahead of the presidential election, and a massive student and teacher movement protesting school conditions as well as education funding cuts. The election will put the curtains down on President Emmanuel Macron since the country's laws make him ineligible to contest any more.

The France student crisis began last month as a small, localised protest to demand education funding by both teachers and students in Paris before it spread to a larger area. Violent clashes have been reported ever since the protest began, with classes disrupted in many areas.to stop taking the mediToday, it has turned into a massive protest over rising fuel prices and cost of living. French Interior Minister Laurent Nunez told the news channel France 24 that 5.5 lakh people took part in the protests against dwindling purchasing power, with 1.10 lakh coming out on the streets of Paris alone.In Belgium, rsing household expenses amid a cut in public spending have also sparked protests by students, who do not want to pay higher education or university registration charges. This escalated into protests over cost of living concerns across Belgium.cine," he stated.Yesterday, clashes broke out between protesters and the police in Brussels and Liege, forcing the police to use water cannons against them. Belgian Interior Minister Bernard Quintin called it "pure and simple violence, organised and repeated to destabilise our society" and termed the protesters as "rioters."

In Portugal, thousands of people marched in Lisbon over rising cost of living combined with low pay and difficulty in getting affordable housing. In Lisbon and many other cities, property prices have more than doubled since 2017 while rents for new leases have risen by nearly as much.This has placed younger workers and lower-income households under pressure with many feeling the problem goes beyond the inability to buy a house but also rental living becoming increasingly unaffordable.

Unlike the French protesters, the Portuguese marches have remained confined to issues like wages, housing and household affordability.