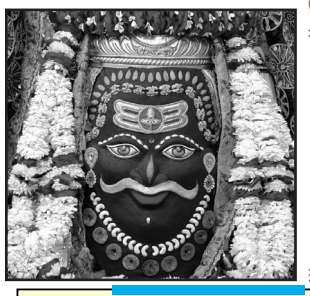
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How Congress's Abhijit Wanjarri retained his MLC seat in BJP's Nagpur bastion

Nagpur. (Agency).

In a city synonymous with the BJP's political and ideological influence, Congress leader Abhijit Govindrao Wanjarri has once again held his ground.Wanjarri retained the Nagpur Graduates' constituency in the Maharashtra Legislative Council, defeating BJP candidate Sudhakar Kohale by 3,271 votes.The win gave Congress a rare electoral success in the hometown of Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis and the Lok Sabha constituency represented by Union Minister Nitin Gadkari.It was also the party's sole victory in the latest round of MLC elections across four states.Wanjarri defeated BJP candidate Sudhakar Kohale by 3,271 votes after an extended counting process. He secured 67,231 votes against Kohale's 63,960, winning the seat for a second consecutive term.

The result is significant in a region widely regarded as a stronghold of the BJP and the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), whose headquarters is located in Nagpur.A lawyer and educationist by profession, Wanjarri first won the constituency in December 2020 as a candidate of the Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA). His latest victory keeps the seat with Congress and marks another electoral setback for the BJP in Nagpur.

RSS to hold 'Rashtra Vandanam' event in Delhi on November 29, Mohan Bhagwat to address gathering

New Delhi (Agency).

The Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), which is considered as an ideological mentor of the BJP, is set to organise a major event titled 'Rashtra Vandanam' in Delhi on November 29 with participation expected from retired bureaucrats, sportspersons, prominent figures from service colonies, social activists and other distinguished personalities. A significant number of young people, including members of Gen Z and the next generation, are also expected to attend the gathering.The event will also feature the launch of a drug-free campaign, with RSS chief Dr Mohan Bhagwat scheduled to address the gathering.According to a senior source familiar with the preparations, arrangements for the event will begin on November 24. Around 5,000 RSS Swayamsevaks (volunteers) are expected to contribute to organising the programme. The Sangh's victory slogan "Jai Ghosh "(band) will also be played during the event, with around 2,000 volunteers expected to participate in it.As part of efforts to promote environmental awareness and climate-friendly practices, the organisation has set a target of planting around 50,000 trees. Sources said approximately 30,000 trees have already been planted towards this target.A resolution to launch the "Drug Free" campaign is also expected to be adopted at the event. The initiative comes ahead of the Punjab Assembly elections, scheduled for 2027, as the RSS and the BJP are working towards making Punjab.

India ready to share counter-terror expertise with ASEAN partners: Rajnath Singh

Rajnath Singh's remarks come amid concerns among several ASEAN members over China's expanding military presence in the disputed South China Sea and growing calls for compliance with international maritime law.

New Delhi(Agency).

India is ready to share its "battle-tested" counter-terrorism expertise with ASEAN members and their dialogue partners, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh said on Thursday, describing Operation Sindoor as a clear message of New Delhi's stance against state-sponsored terrorism.

Addressing a conclave of defence ministers from ASEAN member states and the bloc's dialogue partners in Cebu, the Philippines, Singh called for stronger cooperation to tackle terrorism and maritime security threats. He said India supports a secure and resilient Indo-Pacific, where peace and stability are achieved through collective efforts.Flagging disruptions to key maritime trade routes, Singh said India would continue to act as a "trusted net security provider" in the Indian Ocean region and the wider Indo-Pacific."Today, when global trade routes are facing new types of international threats, merely issuing statements on maritime security is not enough," he said at the ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting Plus (ADMM-Plus) conclave.Singh stressed the need for coordinated efforts to counter terrorism and offered to share India's operational experience with partner nations.



"India is fully prepared to share its practical and battle-tested counter-terrorism expertise with ADMM-Plus partners," he said, adding that joint military exercises, capacity-building programmes and intelligence sharing could strengthen collective capabilities.Referring to Operation Sindoor, launched last year, Singh said India had destroyed a large number of terrorist infrastructure sites during the operation, calling it a declaration of the country's firm approach towards state-sponsored terrorism.India's counter-terrorism experience, he said, was built over decades of confronting cross-border security challenges, including terrorism emanating from Pakistan."Every strategy of ours against terrorism has been tested and proven in actual operations and has demonstrated its success," he said.

SINGH OUTLINES INDIA'S INDO-PACIFIC VISION

The defence minister also reiterated India's commitment to maritime security, describing it as central to regional peace, security and prosperity."We support an Indo-Pacific that is secure and resilient — one where peace and stability are not merely aspirations, but the outcome of our collective efforts," he said.Singh said India's emphasis on the rule of law, particularly the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), and its advocacy for freedom of navigation and overflight were aimed at protecting the shared interests of regional stakeholders, rather than targeting any country.

Rahul Gandhi says 'Chalo Dilli' march a singular protest for nation; urges people to join to save democracy

In a video on X, Rahul Gandhi said it is a singular protest for the nation, urging student groups, regardless of their political affiliations, to join the march.

New Delhi(Agency)

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Thursday urged student groups, regardless of their political affiliations, to join the INDIA bloc's November 1 march in Delhi to save democracy, stop "vote theft" and protect the Constitution.In a video on X, Gandhi said it is a singular protest for the nation."The 'Chalo Delhi' Ramlila March is a march to save democracy, to put an end to the theft of votes, and to protect the Constitution," the leader of opposition in the Lok Sabha said.This is not a march for any single political party; it is a march for the very soul of India, he asserted.

"To all those who are fed up with Narendra Modi, Amit Shah and Gyanesh Kumar, and everyone who wishes to save democracy and defend the Constitution, I invite you all to join," Gandhi said.Don't worry about police, don't worry about lathis. The BJP will not have the guts to try any of their antics, he said."Come march with us - we will walk together to protect the Constitution, to protect the Indian nation," he said."I urge all student groups, regardless of your political affiliation - if you feel that India is under attack, if you feel you are under attack, your expression, your ideas, your way of thinking is under attack, come and join us," he said."It will be a fantastic march, and it's a march for the soul of this country," Gandhi said."Looking forward to seeing all of you there," he added.The INDIA bloc will be holding a "public impeachment" proceeding against Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar on October 30 at Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge's 10, Rajaji Marg residence, over alleged irregularities in the Special Intensive Revision of electoral rolls.



Congress Flips MLC Polls Script In Nagpur, Jabs PM Modi, Devendra Fadnavis Over Posts

New Delhi(Agency).

A surprise win. A deleted post. And some quick jabs. The Nagpur MLC polls result has provided ammo for the Congress to target the BJP, including Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis, who the party said had to delete his "boastful" post that he made earlier on Wednesday.While the ruling party in the state and the Centre taunted the Congress on Wednesday for "drawing a blank" in the MLC polls, with the Prime Minister himself leading the cheeky charge, in the end the party sprang a surprise by winning the Nagpur seat.In a post on Wednesday, the Prime Minister had mocked the Congress on the MLC election results.Congress leaders lost no time in taunting BJP leaders, including PM Modi and CM Devendra Fadnavis, over their social media posts indicating that the party had scored a duck in the polls."By deleting the tweet, Fadnavis has once again preserved Savarkar's legacy! Fadnavis posted even before the results were out. But his boastful arrow turned back and pierced straight into his chest! In the end, he was forced to delete the tweet," the state Congress said on X."Mr Fadnavis, scared already at this stage? This is just the trailer! In 2029, the people of Maharashtra will drop such a political bombshell on you that even this tweet of today will come back to haunt you! All the best, Mr. Fadnavis! Get ready for the next jolt," it added.Maharashtra Congress shared a screenshot of a deleted tweet by Fadnavis on social media, which said the grand old party got a "big fat zero" in the polls.Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma hit back at the Congress with a cheeky post congratulating the party on winning one seat, and sarcastically apologising for his earlier post on zero for Congress.

IRCTC scam case: Delhi HC seeks ED's stand on Lalu Yadav's plea challenging money laundering charges

New Delhi(Agency).

The Delhi High Court on Thursday sought the Enforcement Directorate's response to a petition filed by former railway minister Lalu Prasad Yadav challenging a trial court order on framing of money laundering charges against him in the alleged IRCTC hotel scam case.Justice Sachin Datta issued notice to the probe agency on Yadav's petition assailing the trial court's September 10 order and listed the matter for hearing on December 3.The Enforcement Directorate (ED) case arises from the CBI's FIR, which has alleged that Yadav entered into a criminal conspiracy with the owner of Sujata Hotels, Sarla Gupta, wife of his close associate Prem Chand Gupta, a Rashtriya Janata Dal MP in the Rajya Sabha, and IRCTC officials for "undue pecuniary advantage to himself and others" between 2004 and 2014.In his petition, Yadav said the trial court passed the order on framing of money laundering charges merely because charges had been framed against him in the scheduled offence, despite it being a matter of record that the RJD leader was "never involved in any process or activity connected with the alleged proceeds of crime".The trial court's order is ex-facie perverse and unsustainable in law, the petition contended, as it emphasised that Yadav was never summoned by the ED for the purpose of investigation, which reflected that he was never involved in activity connected with the alleged proceeds of crime.



Drought: CM DK Shivakumar plans to meet PM Modi in Bengaluru

BENGALURU(Agency).

Karnataka Chief Minister DK Shivakumar said on Wednesday that he will seek an appointment with Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who is expected to be in Bengaluru on November 15, to submit a memorandum to him seeking drought relief to the state.

Modi is expected to be in Bengaluru to inaugurate Metro's new line. Addressing reporters here, Shivakumar said that his government has urged the Centre to hold a meeting on drought relief."The PM is expected to be in Bengaluru on November 15 to inaugurate the Metro line, I will request for an appointment. He was scheduled to visit Mysuru, but postponed it due to Dasara. I will request for an appointment with the PM to meet an all-party delegation during his Bengaluru visit," he said. He said the state government has released compensation to the districts affected by drought.A scrutiny of beneficiaries is on. Once it is done, compensation will be transferred to the beneficiaries' bank accounts, he added.



On whether the state government has any objections to the final electoral roll released by the Election Commission, he said the commission has accepted its objection regarding Form 7.

Cyclone Arnab: Home Minister Shah speaks with CMs of affected states, assures all support

New Delhi(Agency).

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Thursday spoke with the chief ministers of Andhra Pradesh, Puducherry, Odisha and Chhattisgarh in the wake of Cyclone Arnab, and assured all assistance to mitigate the hardships of the people.The India Meteorological Department (IMD) had said in a bulletin on Wednesday night that the severe cyclonic storm over coastal Andhra Pradesh, Yanam and the adjoining Bay of Bengal had moved slowly at around 8 kmph over the preceding six hours and weakened into a cyclonic storm."It is very likely to move north-northwestwards during the next 48 hours and weaken gradually. It will weaken into a deep depression by midnight of October 28, 2026," the IMD said.Shah said teams of the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) and State Disaster Response Fund (SDRF) have sprung into action and are continuing rescue and relief operations on a war footing."In the wake of Cyclone Arnab, spoke with the Chief Ministers of Andhra Pradesh, Puducherry, Odisha and Chhattisgarh and assured them of every assistance to mitigate the hardship of the people in the face of the disaster," he said on X."IMCTs (inter-ministerial central teams) will soon be sent to assess the impact and further assistance required. Government of India stands with the people with resolute commitment," he said.



Shah said teams of the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) and State Disaster Response Fund (SDRF) have sprung into action and are continuing rescue and relief operations on a war footing.

factory, no casualties reported

Ghaziabad.(Agency)

A fire broke out at a factory in Tronica City on Wednesday morning, and five fire tenders were deployed to control the flames. A short circuit is suspected to have caused the blaze. A car also caught fire in a separate incident, and its driver jumped out. No casualties were reported in either incident.
According to chief fire officer (CFO) Saurabh Singh, a fire broke out around 9.15am on the ground floor of a two-storey building in Tronica City. The building, housing the manufacturing unit of Javed Fabrication, is used for flexible printing and metal fabrication work.Initially, three fire tenders and fire service units were dispatched to the spot from the Tronica City fire station, with one fire tender each being dispatched from Vaishali and Baghpat soon after.
"The fire service units immediately laid out hose pipes and started pumping water through the motor fire engine onto the fire, and the fire was brought under control within a short time," the CFO said.

Gurgaon air turns poor, AQI climbs to 203

Noida.(Agency)

City's air turned poor on Wednesday, with the Air Quality Index (AQI) rising to 203, after staying moderate for four consecutive days following a brief improvement in the middle of Oct.According to Haryana State Pollution Control Board's monitoring dashboard, the AQI rose from 134 on Oct 25 to 156 on Oct 26 and 174 on Oct 27, before crossing the 200 mark on Wednesday.The deterioration comes after a relatively cleaner spell in mid-Oct. The city's AQI improved to 89 on Oct 16, the lowest reading recorded on the dashboard during the month. It subsequently rose to 159 on Oct 18 and 184 on Oct 20, before touching 216 on Oct 21. The reading eased to 193 on Oct 22 but deteriorated again to 215 on Oct 23.Oct's readings show repeated fluctuations in air quality. The AQI stood at 182 on Oct 1 and rose to 207 on Oct 2. It crossed 200 again on Oct 9, at 201, and on Oct 21 and 23, at 216 and 215 respectively.
Data from the city's four active monitoring stations showed that pollution levels varied across locations on Wednesday.

New software to help owners find impounded vehicles at Gurgaon Sector 29 traffic police parking yard

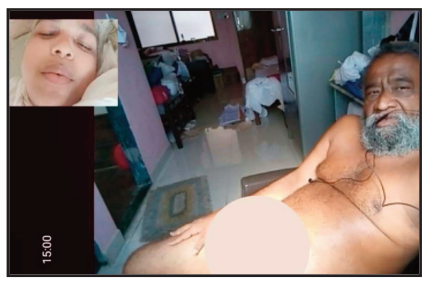
Gurgaon.(Agency)

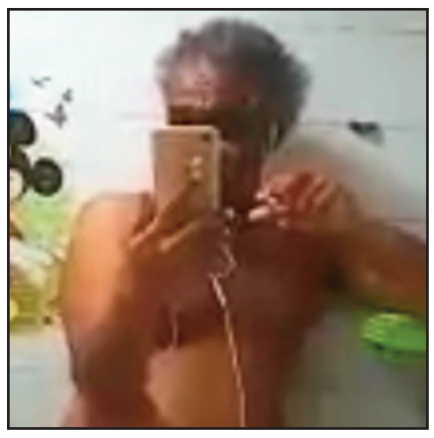
Vehicle owners who spend hours searching through hundreds of impounded vehicles at the Sector 29 traffic police parking yard may soon be able to retrieve them more quickly. Traffic police have introduced a software, Vahan Setu, to help locate vehicles after their owners clear the challan and arrive to take them back.
The yard has around 3,000 vehicles parked in congested rows across nearly four acres of uneven land. Until now, owners often had to walk through the crowded premises and search for their vehicles manually, a process that could take more than an hour.
The ordeal was evident when Ganesh, a resident of Ashok Vihar, was seen searching for his bike, which had been impounded the previous week. He was looking through the bushes and across the sprawling yard before a traffic police officer helped him locate it. "It's been around 40 minutes since I was looking for my bike before a traffic police officer helped me find my vehicle," Ganesh told
The new system, which came into use on Tuesday, records the row in which each vehicle is parked.

Jain Community Seeks Transparency Over Alleged Misuse of Religious Donations

Mahanagar Metro Desk

Ahmedabad/Ujjain: Palitana, one of Jainism's most revered pilgrimage destinations, has become the centre of controversy following serious allegations against Acharya Sagarchandra Sagar. According to claims circulated by members of the Jain community, concerns have been raised over alleged misconduct, the treatment of female ascetics, and the possible misuse of donations received in the name of religion.The allegations have reportedly triggered resentment among sections of the Jain community, with calls for a transparent investigation and protests in Ujjain and Palitana. The claims, however, require independent verification, and the response of the individual concerned remains es





sential to establishing the facts.Calls for Clarification and an Impartial InvestigationCommunity members raising the allegations have questioned the lack of a public clarification and are demanding answers regarding the claims circulating in the public domain. They have called for the matter to be examined impartially, with relevant evidence assessed by the appropriate authorities.The allegations reportedly include claims concerning objectionable photographs, alleged misconduct involving female ascetics and women, and questions about the handling of funds collected as religious donations. These remain allegations and should not be treated as established facts unless substantiated through credible evidence and due legal process.Questions Raised Over Donations and AssetsQuestions have also been raised regarding the alleged use of donations made by devotees for religious and charitable purposes. Those demanding accountability have called for scrutiny of the relevant financial records and assets, wherever legally justified.Community representatives have urged that, if any financial irregularities are established, appropriate legal action should follow and any recovered funds should be used transparently for charitable and community welfare initiatives, including educational institutions and healthcare facilities.

The Working Style of Sagar Bagmar!

Mahanagar Metro Desk

Rupesh Solanki A strong law-and-order system is essential for the development, peace, and security of any district. In a vast district like Kutch, known for its border areas, ports, industrial units, and thriving commercial activities, the responsibilities of the police increase manifold. Amid these challenges, the work of Shri Sagar Bagmar, IPS, former Superintendent of Police of East Kutch, draws attention in the context of law enforcement, action against crime, and efforts to strengthen public safety.A Vigilant Police Force Against CrimeThe true test of the police lies not merely in apprehending an accused after a crime has occurred, but also in preventing crime, reaching its roots, and strengthening the sense of security among citizens. The efforts undertaken by the East Kutch Police to control crime, conduct investigations, and resolve unsolved cases highlight the importance of guidance, coordination, and teamwork.During the Crime Conference organised by the



East Kutch Police in February 2026, the status of crime was reviewed in consultation with officers from various police stations and branches. Necessary instructions were also issued to maintain law and order and resolve unsolved cases. Such reviews help make the police system more accountable, efficient, and result-oriented.Effective Use of Technology in Border SecurityConsidering Kutch's geographical conditions and its international border, continuous vigilance is essential for maintaining an effective security system. Efforts to bring villages in East Kutch under a network of CCTV cameras represent an important step in this direction.

HDFC Mutual Fund Organizes Investor Education and Awareness Programme

Mahanagar Metro Desk

Surendranagar Branch Manager Tushar Bhimani Provides Detailed Guidance on Investments; Krishnakant Thakor of S.K. Investment Coordinates the Programme(Vandna Neelkanth Vasukiya) Viramgam: An Investor Education and Awareness Programme was organized by HDFC Mutual Fund at Sheth M.J. High School in Viramgam. The primary objective of the programme was to promote financial awareness among people, enhance their understanding of investments, and provide essential information about various investment options, including mutual funds. A large number of people attended the programme and gained valuable insights into investment strategies and financial planning.During the programme, Tushar Bhimani, Surendranagar Branch Manager of HDFC Mutual Fund, provided detailed guidance to the attendees on various aspects of investment. He explained the importance of making informed investment decisions, setting clear financial goals, adopting a long-term investment approach, and understanding the risks associated with investments along with their potential returns.In today's rapidly evolving financial landscape, the importance of financial planning continues to grow. Individuals need to make investment decisions by carefully considering their income, expenses, savings, and future financial requirements. The participants were also made aware of several important factors to



consider before investing in mutual funds, including how mutual funds operate, their associated risk levels, investment horizons, and the investor's financial capacity.The entire programme was coordinated by Krishnakant Thakor of S.K. Investment, who ensured that the event proceeded in an organized and systematic manner. The attendees showed keen interest in learning about investment opportunities and obtaining practical guidance on financial planning.The participation of a large number of people in the programme held in Viramgam reflected the growing public interest in financial awareness and investment-related knowledge. Such educational initiatives play an important role in improving financial literacy among citizens and encouraging them to make informed financial decisions. By understanding different investment options and planning for future needs, individuals can work towards greater financial awareness and a more secure financial future.

SC panel visits south Haryana mining belt amid Aravali definition row; locals flag hill damage, forest land auction

Gurgaon.(Agency)

A Supreme Court-appointed high-powered committee reviewing the definition and demarcation of Aravalis visited villages in south Haryana on Tuesday, where residents raised concerns over hill destruction, falling groundwater levels and illegal mining. Villagers in Mahendergarh's Rajawas questioned the proposed auction of land notified as protected forest and demanded that



the wider Aravali landscape be declared a conservation reserve.Brij Mohan Singh Rathore, former joint secretary in the Union environment ministry and a member of the five-member committee, and Prof Jagdish Krishnaswamy, dean of School of Environment and Sustainability at Indian Institute for Human Settlements in Bengaluru and a special invitee to the panel, visited Ramalwas in Charkhi Dadri and Rajawas in Mahendergarh. They held consultations with communities affected by mining and assessed local concerns linked to forest protection, groundwater depletion and ecological damage.
The committee headed by director general of Indian Council of Forestry Research and Education is reviewing the definition of Aravali hills and ranges after concerns were raised over an earlier proposed definition based on hill elevation and the distance between hills. Environmental groups and local communities had feared that such a definition could exclude several ecologically significant areas from protection. SC has directed the committee to submit its final report by Nov 30, 2026.
"We have been undertaking stakeholder consultations over the past couple of months. These involve two kinds of consultations — field visits, during which we reach out to villages and interact with local communities, and more structured consultations, which are held at district headquarters.
This time, we had time, so during the field visits, we reached out to the communities and interacted with them. We are also conducting our own geospatial analysis of the terrain-based definitions, examining different polygons and how the proposed definition plays out on the ground," a member of the committee told
At Ramalwas, residents alleged prolonged quarrying had damaged hills, grazing commons and local biodiversity. They said mining below the groundwater table had caused nearby wells to dry up, while intense blasting led to cracks in several houses.

Two women crossing road mowed down by truck in Kasna

Noida.(Agency)

Two women were killed when a truck hit them as they were crossing the road near UPSIDA company in Kasna, Greater Noida, on Tuesday. The victims were Manisha (45) and Vimlesh (43), residents of Jari Sagar village in Badaun district. They were rushed to a hospital, where doctors declared them dead on arrival.Police said the truck driver fled towards Sirsa after the accident and was caught within hours. Police have seized the truck and detained the driver.
The women lived near the Kasna industrial area and worked at a factory there. They were returning home on foot around 8 pm when the truck knocked them down. They suffered severe injuries.
The SHO of Kasna police station said they were informed about the incident by the locals through the emergency helpline number Dial 112. A police team reached the spot and arranged for the women to be taken to a nearby hospital. However, doctors declared them dead.Following the incident, police launched an investigation to identify and trace the truck involved in the accident. During the search, the team tracked down the vehicle a few kilometres from the accident site. The driver was detained on the intervening night of Tuesday and Wednesday, police said.
"The driver, aged around 25, is a resident of Haryana. He has been detained. The vehicle has also been seized," Sharma said.Police said a case had been registered against the driver under the relevant provisions of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) for rash driving and causing death by negligence. Police are conducting further investigation into the circumstances surrounding the accident.Data shows Gautam Buddh Nagar recorded 577 road accidents between Jan and July this year, claiming 450 lives and leaving another 250 people injured, underscoring the urgent need for stricter road safety measures and enforcement.In July, three agricultural labourers from Bihar were killed in a hit-and-run incident on the Jewar-Khurja road. Police seized the Scorpio SUV allegedly involved in the crash and also arrested the driver.Police said the accident occurred around 10.30pm near Neemka village in Jewar. Karan (22), Vishwajeet (24) and Mithun (25) were returning home on foot after finishing their work in the field when the SUV that was allegedly being driven at a high speed by Deepanshu (32) ran them over. The driver fled with the car. The three men died before any medical assistance could reach them. Police reached the spot and sent the bodies for autopsy.

Gujarat Confidential: 'Counter' Protests

Ahmedabad.(Agency)

VADODARA'S political scene served up an interesting irony on Wednesday– while the BJP took out a march to 'Save Democracy, Remove Anarchy', the Congress alleged that police turned up at its office to keep opposition leaders under virtual house arrest. Congress city president Rutvij Joshi alleged that police had been sent to the Congress office to "restrict opposition leaders even as the ruling party marched in democracy's defence."The BJP's 'Loktantra Bachao, Arajakta Hatao' march began at Navlakhi Ground, drawing workers from across central Gujarat, and wound its way through Khanderao Market and Raopura.

State ministers Raman Solanki and Manishaben Vakil, along with Kamlesh Patel and chief whip Balakrishna Shukla, joined the procession even as Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel skipped the yatra. However, for the BJP, the drama had begun even before the march. Posters proclaiming 'BJP Sudharo, Lokshahi Bachao' (Reform BJP, Save Democracy), alongside pro-Modi and anti-BJP messages, appeared on major roads of the city earlier in the day. As the controversy gathered momentum, these were swiftly removed ahead of the commencement of the yatra.

Arnab triggers heavy rain in Andhra's Krishna district

VIJAYAWADA.(Agency)

Cyclone Arnab threw normal life out of gear in Krishna district on Wednesday, with Machilipatnam bearing the brunt of heavy rainfall and widespread waterlogging. Several localities in the port town were inundated, bringing public life to a virtual standstill as residents struggled to move through flooded streets.Heavy rain lashed the coastal belt, inundating roads and low-lying areas and affecting the movement of people and vehicles. The downpour also raised concerns over electricity supply, drinking water, and the safety of residents. Machilipatnam and surrounding coastal areas received rainfall as the cyclone's impact intensified. Coastal mandals bore the brunt, with roads inundated, trees and hoardings uprooted and electricity supply disrupted. Koduru recorded the highest rainfall of 165.8 mm, followed by Machilipatnam North and South with 112.6 mm each, Nagayalanka with 108.8 mm, Pedana with 103.2 mm and Guduru with 102.2 mm.The district recorded an average rainfall of 68.7 mm according to preliminary reports. Venugopalapuram village in Koduru mandal was among the affected areas where incessant rain and strong winds caused waterlogging and uprooted trees.

'Zero casualty' achieved, says CM Majhi as Arnab moves past south Odisha

BHUBANESWAR.(Agency)

As cyclone Arnab moved inland and tracked across southern districts on Wednesday, the Odisha government shifted more than 43,000 people to safety across eight districts. No loss of life was reported till reports last came in.Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi, who reviewed the situation at the Special Relief Commissioner's (SRC) control room in the evening, said the state achieved its 'zero casualty' target as no loss of life was reported yet.He said the state and district administrations were fully geared up to deal with the situation. Union Home Minister Amit Shah had spoken to him several times over the phone before and during the cyclone to discuss preparedness and response measures. The Odisha government was also in touch with the Andhra Pradesh government, he added.Meanwhile, the weather system, which had begun to weaken, was expected to pass through Malkangiri during the night before moving across Nuapada into Chhattisgarh and further north.While Gajapati reported damage to roads and a bridge following torrential rain, large parts of Ganjam were waterlogged. However, the biggest threat from the cyclone could be to kharif paddy, as several districts received rainfall.

3 bighas of land, 12 men accused of dacoity: Inside Kanpur fake encounter case

Lucknow.(Agency)

In 1995, the Uttar Pradesh Police's Crime Branch-Criminal Investigation Department (CB-CID) recommended registering an FIR against 18 police officers accused of framing 12 men in a Kanpur dacoity case after arresting them in a "fake" encounter. The agency had been tasked by the state government to probe the allegations following a complaint by the relative of one of the men.For over three decades, nothing happened.On October 16, a case was finally lodged against 12 policemen — 10 of whom have retired — at Maharajpur police station on a complaint by CB-CID Inspector Sushil Kumar under IPC sections relating to fabricating evidence, making false charges, wrongful confinement and causing hurt. The other six have since died.In 2007, the agency said, a Kanpur court had acquitted all 12 men accused of dacoity.Dev Prasad Pathak, elder brother of Rakesh, one of the men picked up by the police, who had spent years seeking action on his complaint, said, "We are relieved that the CID found our allegations to be true and registered a case, but we are also astonished that it took the agency and the state government so long to act."Rakesh died in a road accident in 2002. Pathak said their uncle, Jagdish Dwivedi, and two employees, Dinesh Kumar and Shiv Kumar, were also falsely booked in the case in 1991.

According to Pathak, who worked as a property dealer, trouble began after he allegedly refused to give one of the policemen, Vidyasagar Tripathi, then the station house officer (SHO) of Maharajpur police station, three bighas of land free of cost so he could build a house."The land in Shyam Nagar was worth around Rs 20 lakh at the time. Since I was in the plotting business, I asked him to pay the amount I had spent to purchase the land. However, Tripathi was unwilling to pay anything, so I refused to transfer the land to him. This angered him," alleged Pathak."The CID had recorded my statement and those of others during its inquiry in 1995, yet the findings and the action taken on them have emerged only now. Since 1996, not a single police officer had come to us in connection with the case," he further claimed.



How police account fell apart

According to the original police account, Tripathi allegedly received a tip-off on August 22, 1991, that criminals planned to rob vehicles near Narval crossing on GT Road.It was claimed that in the early hours of August 23, police caught 12 men who had cut branches from babul trees and placed them across the road to stop a truck and rob it. Illegal firearms and bombs were allegedly recovered from them.A chargesheet was subsequently filed on charges of preparing to commit dacoity and attempted murder, along with offences under the Arms Act and the Explosive Substances Act.However, the CB-CID inquiry found that the police had allegedly fabricated an encounter story. Instead, the inquiry found, some of the men had been picked up from their homes while they were asleep. Licensed firearms belonging to their family members were allegedly shown as weapons recovered from them.

Vadodara woman, two adult kids found dead at home; suicide suspected

Deputy Commissioner of Police Andrews Macwan said, "The exact time and cause of death will become clear only after the post-mortem reports," he said.

Chandigarh.(Agency)

A year after losing her husband to a heart attack, a Vadodara woman and her two adult children were found dead at their home in the city's Mandvi area. The three deaths have left police investigating the circumstances that led to the suspected suicides.

The family managed an Ayurvedic hospital.Aarti Soni(50), her son Nilkanth (24) and daughter Jenny (22) were allegedly found hanging at separate locations in their three-storeyed house in Dala Patel's Pol, also known as Narsinhji's Pol, on Wednesday evening. Police said that the condition of the bodies suggested that "some time had elapsed" since their deaths, but the exact time and circumstances would be known only after forensic and post-mortem examinations.

The police, quoting neighbours, said Aarti's husband, Chetan Soni, died of a heart attack last year. The family continued to manage its business interests, including Zaps Health Care, an Ayurvedic hospital on Old Padra Road.Ketan Shah, a business associate of the family and a partner in the Ayurvedic Hospital, told media persons on Wednesday that just three days before the alleged incident, they had "discussed plans to bring 10 visiting doctors on board" and expansion of the hospital



Deputy Commissioner of Police Andrews Macwan said, "The exact time and cause of death will become clear only after the post-mortem reports," he said.

Police officials added that a case of accidental death had been lodged, and relatives as well as close contacts of the family were being questioned.

SI 'dies by suicide' at official quarters

A police sub-inspector (PSI) deployed for the Chief Minister's security died at his official quarters at Police Line in Sector 27 of Gandhinagar on Wednesday morning. "PSI Tanvirsinh Zala lost his life to a gunshot wound to the head. It is believed to be self-inflicted and caused by his service weapon. The incident took place around 11:30 am in a room of his allotted residence while his family was in the next room," said Gandhinagar SP Ravi Teja Vasamsetty. The SP said that an accidental death (AD) report had been filed at the Sector 21 police station and that it primarily appeared, through statements of family and neighbours, that it was a suicide allegedly caused by marital discord..

Seven killed as Cyclone Arnab batters Andhra Pradesh

VIJAYAWADA/ VISAKHAPATNAM.(Agency)

Seven people lost their lives across the coastal districts of Andhra Pradesh in rain-related incidents triggered by the landfall of Very Severe Cyclonic Storm Arnab in the early hours of Wednesday.The devastating storm unleashed intense gale-force winds and torrential downpours across 14 districts, ravaging an estimated 2.2 lakh hectares of agricultural and horticultural crops.

Normal life and economic activity were severely disrupted on Wednesday across the coastal districts of Kakinada, Dr BR Ambedkar Konaseema, East Godavari, West Godavari, Eluru, Krishna, NTR, Guntur, Bapatla, Anakapalle, Visakhapatnam, Vizianagaram and Srikakulam, alongside the tribal belts of Parvathipuram Manyam and Alluri Sitarama Raju.High-velocity winds uprooted thousands of trees, snapped power lines, downed telecom towers, and submerged low-lying habitations, triggering massive multi-agency rescue and relief operations on a war footing.Cyclone Arnab completed its six-hour landfall process near Narsapur between 2 and 8 am on Wednesday, packing wind speeds of 115 to 135 kmph with peak gusts reaching 150 kmph. The system made landfall near latitude 16.45°N and longitude 81.9°E—approximately 20 km east-northeast of Narsapur, 40 km southwest of Yanam, and 60 km southwest of Kakinada.Although the storm weakened into a severe cyclonic storm after moving inland, the India Meteorological Department warned that severe weather risks persist, issuing heavy to extremely heavy rainfall alerts for north coastal districts, including Srikakulam, Parvathipuram and Vizianagaram over next 48 hours.The deaths included three electrocution fatalities in Visakhapatnam and Anakapalle districts. 65-year-old Devudu, who came into contact with a snapped live wire; 49-year-old Madhavi, who was struck by a falling electric pole at Balaji Nagar; and a 55-year-old woman in Yellamanchili who stepped on an active power line outside her house.In Bhimavaram, 45-year-old Chokka Kishore was killed when a tree fell on him at Churchipeta, and Rambabu died after an electric pole crashed on him at Bondada Street.

In Uttar Pradesh MLC polls, BJP, Samajwadi Party hold 6-4 tally, 1 seat remains

The counting of votes for the five Graduate and six Teachers' constituencies began at 8 am on Tuesday. Voting, done through ballot papers, took place last Friday.

Lucknow.(Agency)

Of the 11 Legislative Council seats in Uttar Pradesh that went to polls, the ruling BJP won six and the Opposition Samajwadi Party (SP) four. The counting of votes for the last Graduate constituency in Varanasi stretched till Thursday morning, with the SP leading.The six seats won by the BJP include four Teachers' constituencies of Bareilly-Moradabad, Lucknow, Meerut and Gorakhpur-Faizabad, and two Graduates' constituencies of Agra and Meerut.The



Samajwadi Party, on the other hand, won the Allahabad-Jhansi Graduates' constituency, the Lucknow Graduates' seat and two teachers' constituencies of Varanasi and Agra-Aligarh.In the last elections in 2020, the BJP held six seats – Agra, Meerut-Saharanpur and Lucknow Graduates' constituencies and Bareilly-Moradabad, Lucknow and Meerut-Saharanpur Teachers' constituencies. The SP held three — Varanasi and Allahabad-Jhansi Graduates' constituencies and Varanasi Teachers' constituency.The remaining two seats — Agra and Gorakhpur-Faizabad Teachers' constituencies — were held by Independents.

Most of these seats were retained by the respective leaders – BJP's Dinesh Kumar Goyal and Manvendra Pratap Singh retained their Graduates' constituencies of Meerut and Agra, while SP's Man Singh Yadav retained Allahabad-Jhansi Graduates' seat.Among the Teachers' constituencies, BJP's Umesh Dwivedi retained Lucknow, while Shrichand Sharma retained Meerut and Hari Singh Dhillon retained Bareilly-Moradabad. SP's Lal Bihari Yadav retained Varanasi, while Akash Agarwal retained Agra, which he had won as an Independent in 2020.BJP's Dhruv Kumar Tripathi also retained Gorakhpur-Faizabad, a seat he had won as an Independent in the previous election.In the Lucknow Graduates' seat, Kanti Singh of SP defeated BJP's sitting MLC Avaneesh Kumar Singh. Kanti Singh got 56,905 votes, whereas Avaneesh got 39,778 votes.

Admin under pressure in Varanasi: Akhilesh

Till late Wednesday night, SP candidate Ashutosh Sinha was leading in Varanasi.As the counting continued in the seat, Samajwadi Party president Akhilesh Yadav late Wednesday night accused the Varanasi administration of coming under "contradictory pressure" from Delhi and Lucknow, alleging that the result favouring his party's candidate was ready but the victory certificate was being withheld. Earlier in the day, BJP workers staged protests, alleging irregularities in counting and demanding a recount.

Son dead, body 'seized' by police, father 'missing': A Punjab family's 'drug story'

The family and acquaintances of Daljit Singh were trying to take his body to the site where the protest is being held over Parvinder Jhota's killing. Then, police, who have denied Daljit died due to drugs, intervened

Amritsar.(Agency)

Even in Punjab's storied fight against drug addiction, what happened on Tuesday was a first. As the family of Daljit Singh, 34, was making its way to a site in Mansa city where an agitation has been on against the killing of anti-drug activist Parvinder Singh Jhota, the police descended in huge numbers and made away with the coffin holding Daljit's body, dodging protesters and beating those who tried to block its way. A day later, the family says they have no clarity on where Daljit's body is, while his father remains "missing".Daljit's family says he died of drugs; police have called it a "murder", without sharing any details.



On Tuesday, the family based in Bhamme Kalan village was trying to make its way to the site 15 km from their home, where the agitation over Jhota has been ongoing, to register their protest. Jhota was shot dead on October 13, when he confronted a pharmacist in Mansa for allegedly selling drugs, prompting protests across the state. Jhota's family was among the three "victims" of Punjab's drug problem whom Union Home Minister Amit Shah met during his recent visit to the state.Daljit's wife Paramjit Kaur says he had been trying to quit his addiction, specifically to "chitta". The two have a 5-year-old daughter and a 14-year-old son; the mother and children are now sitting at the Jhota agitation site.Says Paramjit: "He was sober for the last 21 days. But yesterday, he left home without informing us, apparently to meet someone, and only his body returned." The family believes he got hold of some drugs while he was out. Daljit's body was found near Bharawanandi village, 1 km away.Daljit's father Jarnail Singh retired as a veterinary pharmacist, and is now often called upon by surrounding villages to treat cattle. The family says he took Daljit along in the hope of keeping him busy and steering him away from drugs.

A neighbour, Hardev Singh, says: "Jarnail tried very hard to help his son quit addiction, but the boy did not change."

Gold glittering because other options aren't

Recent fluctuations in gold prices resemble a carnival thrill ride. From 2018, particularly after 2022, it increased to reach a peak of around $5,300 in early 2026. It then fell and is currently trading around $4,000. Over the last decade, even after recent falls, gold has risen around 300 percent. The initial momentum came from the debasement trade. Rising price pressures in the aftermath of the Covid-19 pandemic and Ukraine war created concern about the purchasing power of paper money. This was exacerbated by the decision of the US and its allies to weaponise finance through sanctions, trade restrictions, seizure of Russian foreign exchange reserves and overseas assets, and denying access to payment systems. In combination with erratic American policies around the devaluation of the dollar, US capital controls, and restructuring of Treasury bonds, this encouraged a switch to hard assets, such as gold. Investors and especially central banks increased their holdings of the precious metal. Central banks purchased an average of 1,000 tonnes a year over the past four years, double the average of the previous decade, taking their total holding to more than 36,000 tonnes. Fear of confiscation has meant that gold at 27 percent is now larger than central bank holdings of US government bonds (22 percent). Only around 222,600 tonnes of gold have been mined through history, equivalent to a single solid cube measuring 22.6 metre on each side. The stock grows by annually 1.5-2 percent. There have been few major discoveries in recent years because of lower exploration spending, in part due to unattractive prices and most miners favouring more economic copper-gold ore bodies. This meant that the sudden demand shock drove prices sharply higher.

The retracement was surprising given that the pressures identified remain intact. It may have been driven by fear of rising interest rates, and a recovery in the dollar after the launch of US-Israeli attacks on Iran. Uncertainty about the Federal Reserve policies under new Chair Kevin Warsh, which may raise interest rates again, was another factor. As gold pays no income, higher interest rates increase the opportunity or holding cost. As it is quoted in dollars, currency movements inversely affect the metal's price.The fall may have also resulted from liquidation of gold holdings, in the wake of Operation Epic Fury, to meet cash needs or cover margins calls amidst volatile markets. Central banks in India, Indonesia and Türkiye sold gold reserves to support their embattled currencies as capital fled emerging markets. It may also have been profit taking after the sharp price increase or rebalancing of portfolios with fast money switching to bets on AI, memory chips, semi-conductors, and other technology investments. Gold defies logical explanation. Warren Buffett is a sceptic: "Gold gets dug out of the ground … we melt it down, dig another hole, bury it again, and pay people to stand around guarding it." Industrial use (45 percent culturally based jewellery demand, mainly from India and China, and 15 percent industrial applications primarily in electronics) follows some economic logic. The remaining 40 percent, primarily to meet investment demand, is mired in tenuous theories.

The investment case is mixed. Its tactical value over specific periods is significant. But gold is not itself a great store of value, at least over long periods. While it reached its highest real (inflation-adjusted) price in early 2026, at around $4,000 it is barely above the 1980 price, meaning that investors have earned nothing or very little over nearly half a century.

Learning from the Panchatantra

Ancient classic of pedagogy shows us the path to survival with the possibility of constant self-correction



RECALLING the disturbance that Lutyens' Delhi recently went through draws attention to the ancient classic of pedagogy, the Panchatantra. It gives us rare solace and understanding. The Panchatantra has five cycles, interwoven into a mystifying whole. Its popularity makes many readers think of it as a collection of imaginary animal tales, with didactic value. That may be true of some of the stories but certainly not all. That is why only a selected few are considered suitable for children.

Most of the Panchatantra stories carry a deep political and administrative message that is challenging to interpret. Its structure is no less significant. It has many layers of symbolic meaning, and this is true of the stories also.They enable us to explore the different angles from which ordinary people might relate to the State. Composed long before the idea of civic or human rights was born, the Panchatantra's structure, stories and characters offer remarkable resonance with our current predicaments. Rights are an essential part of citizenship in the modern world, but they are hardly the lone axis along which citizens relate to the State. In fact, the people comprise the State in a philosophical sense, and it is on their behalf that the more visible functionaries of the State serve the nation.However, the once-in-a-while vote we are required to cast often makes us forget our everyday relationship with the State and its apparatus. The Panchatantra reminds us of the numerous ways in which common members of society practise the niti on which the State is supposed to be based. As a book of nitishastra, the Panchatantra has far more to offer us today than we may be aware of.Although each of its stories ends by resolving the problem it starts out with, the end always leads to contestation, followed by another story. The debate that breaks out at the conclusion of a story highlights the possibility of rival interpretations, and hence the need for another story.Discussing the affairs of the world brings endless pleasure to the key characters of a story in Part II, which is concerned with friendship among four creatures of radically different backgrounds: a crow, a deer, a mouse and a turtle. Every afternoon, they gather under a big old tree and take stock of their world: the jungle.What better ideal could you have for a university or college? Alas, our universities of today have lost that ideal. They have adopted a different ideal — that of competition for individual success and submission to whatever order prevails. Thousands of students fail to attain their individual goal. Their prolonged, isolated struggle drains their youthful energy or enthusiasm to take stock of the world as the four friends in the Panchatantra did.Part III or the third cycle of the Panchatantra deals with the problem of permanent rivalry. This cycle looks at divergent advice and a terrible outcome achieved through conspiracy. The rivalry ends in an episode of awful violence, leaving the reader with a difficult dilemma and an uneasy feeling. This feeling originates in the lurking suspicion that the rival sides did not observe the core ethic of the Panchatantra — to settle every problem, even chronic ones, with the help of arguments. No wonder the third cycle is followed by the sobering last two cycles, "The Loss of Gains" and "Unexamined Action", respectively. Both these cycles have a tragic tone, suggestive of a warning against transgression of niti.In the fourth cycle, the framing story is about the consequences of betrayal. It is a popular story, structured around the happy friendship between a monkey and a crocodile. Their relationship has been nourished by the sweet fruit of the tree where the monkey lives and under which the crocodile comes every day to meet his friend. The big tree at Sukhna Lake never fails to remind me of the Panchatantra story. A crisis develops when the crocodile tricks the monkey. He nearly loses his life: he survives but resolutely refuses to be wooed back into his earlier friendship.Story after story is presented to demonstrate that broken trust is hard to repair. No matter how contrite the crocodile feels, his erstwhile friend rejects any possibility of resuming his old, broken bond.

As we read these stories in the present-day atmosphere, we can hardly avoid thinking of the tree of democracy that nourished rival parties and their ideologies for a long time, permitting each to dominate for a while, then handing over to the other. But if this arrangement of transitory dominance breaks down, repairing it may prove to be very hard. Are we heading towards such a situation? There is no way to predict this, but threats of making India mukt of the adversary have set the tone of intolerance and craving for permanent dominance.The Panhatantra offers no permanent solutions.

Instead, it conveys a vision of life and governance that responds to situations. Unlike so many other ancient advisories that communicate hard, principled conduct, the Panchatantra asks us to be responsive to each emerging situation. It is not as if we can live without handrails. Rather, the view embedded in this classic of pedagogy is that niti or the right way shows us the path to survival with the possibility of constant self-correction.The emphasis is on learning from past actions and others' experience, rather than waiting for every experience oneself. As a vicarious activity, learning is nourished by the autonomy to think and deliberate. That is where we have walked into a predicament. It consists of a breakdown (not just "deficit") of trust and alienation of the young. The more sensitive among them are either depressed or resentful.Both responses need to be analysed. The generation gap is not all that unusual a phenomenon, but it seems to have become a lot wider and jagged than anticipated.

Lessons for all in voters' pushback in Brazil, Serbia

If a late social media outrage contributed to a last-minute swing in Brazil, online platforms were the main tools of organisation for Serbia's Student List platform



The outcomes of Sunday's elections in Brazil and Serbia created splashes whose ripples spread far. At first glance, they seem contextually poles apart—with Brazil returning an 80-year-old incumbent to a historic fourth term, and a students' movement in Serbia deposing a 56-year-old strongman who had led the country for 14 years. The common factor was the two electorates' fightback against attempts to unfairly influence the popular mandate. At a time when people's faith in democracy around the world is in tatters, the elections show ways to mend the fabric.In Brazil, Luiz Inácio 'Lula' da Silva staged an unprecedented comeback after narrowly losing the first round of elections on October 4 to Flávio Bolsonaro, whose father is serving a 27-year jail sentence for trying to stage a coup against Lula 3.0. Throughout the campaign, the country's courts and rights bodies noted a tilt in favour of the Trump-friendly challenger on the part of US-based platforms such as Meta. On Sunday, Bolsonarist local leaders' attempts to suppress turnout by throttling bus services were met with people arranging alternative transport and a Supreme Court justice extending voting by two hours. The Bolsonaro camp is refusing to accept defeat, alleging illegality in allowing more people to vote. But even before Sunday, Eduardo Bolsonaro had taken a leaf out of the Trump playbook and advised his elder brother Flávio against conceding if he lost.If a late social media outrage contributed to a last-minute swing in Brazil, online platforms were the main tools of organisation for Serbia's Student List platform, which channelled the anger from earlier street protests against corruption into selecting fresh candidates who swept aside the country's traditional opposition, too. One slogan that reverberated online was "It's either Serbia or mafia", referring obliquely to Putin-backed President Aleksandar Vučić's control over the country's media. Unlike in Brazil, the leader conceded when it became clear that the students' picks would win a majority.But the business of democracy does not end with counting the votes. Serbia, where the students deliberately refrained from electing leaders to avoid targeted clampdowns, will now have to select a few to govern. On the other hand, Brazil's future hangs in the balance amid the legal wrangle between now and January. For now, both countries have shown that voters today may have to try a bit harder to be heard above the noise seeking to drown out their voices.

Reading Jane Eyre with fresh eyes

A classic remains the same, but our reading of it need not. Charlotte Brontë's Jane Eyre, which China recently included in school syllabus, offers a useful distinction between love and possession. But fresh questions can be asked of the novel on feminism and patriarchy

When I read that China had made Jane Eyre compulsory reading for ninth-graders, my first reaction was probably the same as that of many Indian teachers: so what? Charlotte Brontë's novel has been in our classrooms for generations. I have taught it, discussed it and argued over it with students year after year. Why should another country's syllabus matter to us?But the news stayed with me. I am not interested in the political reasons behind China's decision here. The question that interests me is educational. What happens when a classic travels across cultures and generations, and what should young readers take from it? The discussion around the Chinese curriculum has presented the novel as a lesson in love, independence and self-respect. It is also seen as an answer to the shallow ideas of romance that young people pick up from popular culture. That is a fair description, but it is incomplete. And the gap is where the question becomes relevant to us. Have we been asking enough about what we want students to learn from the classics we teach? Or have we become too comfortable with the interpretations we have inherited?

Let me begin with why Jane appeals to young readers. She starts as an orphan with no money, no family influence and no social standing. Through education and work, she builds a life of her own. She insists on being treated as an equal. When she learns that Rochester has hidden his existing marriage, she leaves him, even though she loves him.

Students admire this, and they should. But is the novel simply a story about women's empowerment? Jane's independence is real, yet it sits within the conventions of a 19th-century novel. She does end up married to Rochester, with a home and family. Her independence does not require her to give up love.So, the novel asks a more interesting question. Can a person love deeply without losing herself? Jane's answer is yes, but only on certain terms. She leaves when staying would cost her moral independence. She returns only when things have changed. Here her inheritance matters. Independence is not just a matter of courage. Money changes her position. Once she is financially secure, going back to Rochester is a choice and not a necessity. Rochester, for his part, has lost much of his earlier power. Jane's financial independence and Rochester's changed circumstances alter the balance of their relationship, bringing them closer to equality.

This is also why the novel can be read beyond the question of female independence. Love, in Brontë's telling, is something Jane chooses and not something she surrenders to. A young woman can ask what independence means in a relationship. A young man can ask what equality demands of him. Rochester is charming and emotionally gripping, but he is also used to having his way. He withholds the truth from Jane and tries to set the terms of their life together. The novel does make him face those limits, and it offers a useful distinction between love and possession.



Still, there is a reason not to treat this as a simple feminist text. What happens to Bertha Mason? We hear Jane's voice throughout the book. Bertha hardly has one. Rochester's first wife is locked in the attic and described mostly through the language of madness and monstrosity. Later writers have asked what the story looks like from her side. Jean Rhys's Wide Sargasso Sea is the best-known example. It brings race, colonialism, and gender into questions that Jane Eyre does not fully examine.

Shaken by his own words, Valmiki hurried home. Who did he find waiting at his ashram but Lord Brahma himself, in his swan chariot? Brahma had gone looking for Goddess Sarasvati. Discovering that she had flown by Valmiki's ashram to bless him with eloquence, he stayed to bless Valmiki in his new role as a poet. This marked the birth of Indian poetry, and compassion was its trigger.

Especially dear, how can we ever thank Valmiki enough for giving us the sublime personas of Rama, Sita and Hanuman to love and live by in our inner and outer lives?I will admit that for years, I did not push this question hard enough in my own classes.



Bali

off the beaten track





Amidst a sea of azure blue, away from the main Indonesian islands, Bali floats peacefully with an exciting culture, wonderful landscapes and amicable people. Bali is also well known for its beautiful temples with exquisite architecture and carvings. With stepped paddy fields, expansive beaches, swaying coconut trees and volcanic hills, Bali is truly a landscape lover's delight. Kuta and Ubud are the major tourist attractions; the former for its nightlife and beach, and the latter for its paintings and art galleries. Being an island, there is no dearth of beaches and the numerous vast white sands are one of the most sought after places on this island. Apart from Kuta, the popular beaches are Sanur, Jimbaran and Nusa Dua. Captivating sunsets, various water sports activities and delectable seafood along with numerous accommodation options, make these beaches a traveller's favourite.

Celuk and Mas

Ubud is often referred to as the cultural capital of Bali and this is due to the numerous shops and art galleries here that sells a plethora of wood works, stone arts, silverware and paintings. Both Balinese and Batuan paintings are quite popular. Most of the art works are of Buddha or characters from Ramayana. There are art workshops where visitors can see the making of these on guided tours. Celuk and Mas are the popular places in Ubud where one can witness the artisans in work. Celuk is well known for its silver wares and there are numerous shops which sell them. Also, one can take guided tours where they would be educated about the making of the same. The shops have a huge collection of silverware with very beautiful creations. Mas is a nice little town in Ubud which has numerous shops that sell wood works made by the local artisans. There are also guided tours to the workshops where one can see the artisans in work and also buy the souvenirs.

Kecak and fire dance

This unique Balinese dance performance is quite an interesting watch with absolutely no music instruments but a huge orchestra of seventy people who create music with their vocals. The vigorous dancers remain in a trance and make communications with ancestors and deities throughout the play. Trance dance is also referred to as 'Sanghyang' dance. The dancer's performance is riveting one and definitely packs a punch. Fire is an integral part and is used extensively during the latter part of the play. The play has five acts in total and the story depicts a portion from the epic, Ramayana. The enactment shows Rama, Lakshmana and Sita in the forest, Ravana kidnapping Sita, Ravana's fight with Garuda, Rama and Lakshman meeting Hanuman and finally Hanuman flying to Lanka to meet Sita. With an expansive background, as the evening progresses, the lights and fire make the play a gorgeous affair. The dance is played daily evening near Uluwatu Temple, which is also well known for its enchanting sunsets. Make sure to grab your seats early as it gets a huge number of spectators.

Barong and Keris dance

This captivating dance is a form of a play which represents an eternal fight between the good spirit and the evil spirit. Barong (a mythological animal) represents the good spirit, while Rangda (a mythological monster) represents the evil spirit. The dance has music tones in the background and consists of five different acts which sum up the whole play. The orchestra is huge and has numerous types of instruments being played. The play has reference to mythological Hindu stories, gods, and characters, and has an enthralling performance by the actors. The unique attire and the colourful masks they use are one of a kind. The play has actors dressed as tigers, monkeys, gods and is quite an enactment which keeps the viewers engrossed. One can watch this wonderful dance performance at Jambe Budaya in Batubulan. The play is enacted on a stage inside an auditorium and runs for more than an hour. Viewers are also allowed to go on stage and take photographs with the performers after the play.

Kintamani

Though Bali is known for its ever popular beaches, Kintamani is one of the few hills stations that the island possesses. The warm weather turns cold as the road winds its way to Kintamani past the orange orchards and souvenir shops. From the beaches and paddy fields that Bali is synonymous with, Kintamani in northern Bali is a pleasant surprise with beautiful vistas and cool climate. Mount Batur and Lake Batur are the most popular attractions here. Mount Batur last erupted in 1968 and marks of the overflown black lava are still evident all over the mountain. An ideal way to explore would be go on an early morning trek to the top of this still active volcanic mountain. Lake Batur lies adjacent to the mountain and looks breathtakingly beautiful with the azure waters. The mountain and the lake make a beautiful landscape frame and is a delight for photographers. There are numerous restaurants with the mountain and lake view which offer authentic Balinese cuisine. Kintamani is an ideal place in Bali where one can take a stroll enjoying the vistas, cuisines and climate.

Tegalalang

The famed terraced paddy fields of Tegalalang are well known for its beautiful vistas. It is located a short drive away from Ubud town, winding roads take you to this beautiful terraced landscape. Along with Pejeng and Campuhan, it forms the paddy field region of Ubud. There are coffee shops, which overlook these fields and visitors can enjoy some Balinese coffee alongside. The landscape is enchanting and is a favourite with photographers and painters. One can opt for organised village tours and walk up the paddy fields or cycle around the fields, which is quite the preferred choice. Tegalalang is an ideal place where one can explore the village life and get to know more about the local farmers and their cultivation. Don't be surprised if any of the farmers invite you home as Balinese people are very warm, hospitable and friendly. There are also numerous souvenir shops in the vicinity which sell a wide range of artifacts and paintings made by local artisans. Evenings and early mornings are the ideal time to visit the terraced paddy fields of Tegalalang.



4 experiences that will make you see

Agra

with new eyes



Everybody goes to Agra to see the Taj Mahal, and its cluster of Mughal forts, palaces and gardens. However, these five experiences will give you a new perspective on the city's most famous attractions.

Taj Mahal by night

The Taj Mahal is considered by many, to possess architectural beauty unsurpassed by any other structure in the world. Constructed over a period of 22 years, employing twenty thousand workers, it was completed in 1648 C.E. and cost a whopping 32 million Rupees. Built entirely of white marble, it almost seems to glow in the moonlight, with the shimmering Jamuna river situated just across. The Muslim emperor Shah Jahan built this monument in the memory of his wife Mumtaz, whose grave is housed within the premises at the lower chamber. The grave of Shah Jahan was added to it later. The Taj stands tall and regal on a raised, square platform, forming an unequal octagon with its four truncated corners. The architecture uses the interlocking arabesque concept, where each element is singular in its entirety, but integrates seamlessly with the whole. The central dome spans 58 feet in diameter and soars to a height of 213 feet. It is flanked on four sides by smaller domed chambers, and four slender minarets rising to a lower height of 162.5 feet. The entire mausoleum



is decorated with an inlaid design of flowers and calligraphy using precious gems like agate and jasper, and the main archways are carved with passages from the Holy Qur'an.

Balloon safari

Take a balloon ride for an all-encompassing, bird's eye view of the Taj Mahal, and the surrounding Mughal-era buildings. The tethered helium balloon safaris operate from sunrise to 8.30 pm, but the best time to take a ride is at sunrise, sunset or in moonlight. The balloons travel to a maximum height of 250 feet and can carry up to 16 passengers.

Taj Nature Walk

This nature walk is a great way to explore the lesser-known side of the city. The tour takes visitors through a green belt located on the right bank of the Yamuna River, around 500 metres away from Taj Mahal's east gate. The nine kilometre trail has grass mounds, watch towers and other viewing points to admire the Taj Mahal. This area is also rich in flora and fauna, and has over 46 varieties of flowers. You can also spot local birds, butterflies and mammals such as jackals, blue bulls, hares, parakeets, kingfishers and hoopoes.



Taj Mahotsav

Started in 1992, this annual festival is both a craft mela and a cultural extravaganza that attracts artisans from all over the country. In the past, the festival has had displays of silk and zari work from Varanasi, paper mache from Kashmir, marble and zardozi from Agra and brassware from Moradabad. The programme also includes classical and folk music and dances performances by artistes from across India. There's also a food festival and a fun fair for children.

World's best whale-watching Experiences



Of all the sights nature offers, whale watching never ceases to inspire and thrill us. The best whale watching experiences are worth travelling the world for, and can be enjoyed from land and from sea. The size of the whale, as well as its graceful movements and epic migrations, bewitch us. To watch their lively social interactions, intricate ways of communicating and agile play is to catch a glimpse of the natural world at work.
You can view these gentle giants—and there are many species, from blue whales to humpback and minky whales (the Baleen species), to sperm, orca and pilot whales (the toothed whale species)—from locations in 40 countries as they migrate the globe to mate, calve and follow the blooming plankton that they feed on.

Orcas off Vancouver Island

Orcas (Killer Whales like the famous ocean mammal celebrity, Shamu) are the most popular residents around Vancouver Island, joined in the migrating season by humpbacks and grey whales. Agile orcas have a range of interesting behaviours, which range from the frolic-and-shake to the-spray, the tail-slap, the jump-and-flop and the show-off-Shamu-leap, but they are always entertaining. Their smaller size means orcas are more playful than other whales and brave visitors can kayak amongst them, though be prepared to get sprayed or splashed! Other harbour residents are the harbour seals, porpoises and sea lions.

Humpback whales in Madagascar

Between June and September Humpback whales grace the waters around Isle Sainte Marie to give birth to and raise their calves in the warm waters, and their booming, melodic calls permeate the oceans quiet. Whales surround the island and even travel through the narrow channel that separates Isle Sainte Marie from mainland Madagascar, so you can get an excellent view of their graceful, 30-ton passage, but you can also get closer by taking a boat trip out amongst the pods. When feeding, whales gather in groups to herd plankton together and trap blooms while animals feed individually. This is an awe inspiring sight to behold, as is the whales frolicking play and the mothers' gentle direction as the calves continue their first migration. Orchids and lemur-covered mango and palm trees cover Isle Sainte Marie and its outlying reefs make it a fantastic place to dive and snorkel.

Whales of Antarctica

For animal lovers with an adventurous streak, this stark, angular backdrop of glaciers, icebergs, mountain peaks and unpredictable seas provides the perfect wilderness setting for whale and wildlife watching. Fin, sei, humpback, orca, and minke whales live in these chilly waters as well as several seal and dolphin species, penguin colonies and other hardy seabirds.

The humpbacks in Tonga

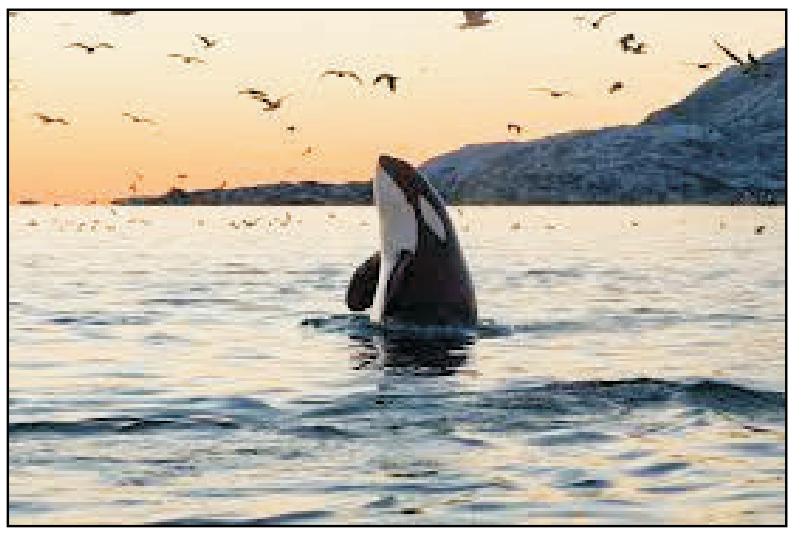
Jump into the sapphire waters of the South Pacific Ocean and swim with one of the most majestic and impressive creatures of the sea. Patience is the key to interacting with the humpback; mothers protecting calves might avoid your path while curious juveniles will come out and investigate. Encounters can last a few minutes or a few hours but will prove to be unforgettable no matter the length. Don't forget to admire the coral reefs of these waters, which are equally as remarkable. Tours are available between July and October.

Wildlife of Canada's Arctic region

Polar bears, arctic foxes, caribou, snowshoe hare, beluga whales, wolves, moose and seals are just some of the animals that thrive in the freezing tundra and pack ice of northern Canada and the Arctic Circle. They have adapted to the seasonal environment and take advantage of both the winters, when much of the bay freezes and polar bears hunt on the ice, and the warmer weather when the ice melts revealing salt marshes that support huge water fowl nurseries. Visitors to the region will also be wowed by the Northern Lights and impressed by the vast, silent, open, untouched spaces. Canada's polar bears are a dangerous lot and have been known to hunt the gentle beluga whale as well as seals and walruses. Much of this region is too far north and too frozen to have been seriously effected by logging or mining, so 90 percent of it remains in its virgin state. It is only in recent years that concerns about the bay being frozen for shorter periods have caused conservationists to worry about the habitat of these southern most polar bears and their animal contemporaries. The best times to see polar bears is between January and April, the best time for whale watching is between June and August, and the best time to see the Northern Lights is between September and October and January through May.

Bay of Fundy's whales

Bay of Fundy is a very natural, unspoilt location for whale watching. The islands and coastline surrounding the bay is a wilderness, and the tides are the world's most variable - in some places up to 14 metres



difference (the literature says one hundred billion tonnes of sea water rolls in and out of the bay each day.) This constant churning of water creates excellent conditions for plankton blooms, and baleen whales especially find plenty to feed on. Scientists have seen fifteen different whale species in the Bay of Fundy, the largest (and I think the most unusual) are the Finbacks who are known for tall spouting. Lucky whale watchers will also see Humpbacks, Minkes, Sei Whales and North Atlantic Right Whales, which are one of the world's most endangered species and are known to mate in the bay. Other kinds of whales are known to drop in from time to time including the world's biggest animal, the Blue Whale. You can also see the occasional Basking Shark or Porpoise. The food is best during Summer.

Humpback migration in Hervey Ba

Hervey Bay calls itself the whale watching capital of the world, which may be an overstatement, but it is definitely one of the most popular whale watching spots. It's on the migration route for Humpbacks between the cold waters of the Antarctic and the warmer tropical waters off Queensland where they calve. Part of the spots popularity must be due to the calves and mums on their way home. Humpbacks are the whale world's most playful and most vocal, and this is one of a whale's most frisky times, so the frolicking, breaching and tail and fin slapping that people enjoy seeing happens here frequently. Humpbacks are also huge - the worlds fifth largest animal. I read statistics saying they're the size of twelve elephants. There are a lot of companies operating in this small area and the bay can be busy. The marine park is also home to dolphins, dugongs and sea turtles.

Whale watching in Tromso

This beautiful coastal region fringed with fjords, glaciers and arctic mountain scenery is a pristine whale watching setting. The ocean around Tromso is deep near the continental shelf, and the churning waters there create a breeding ground for whale food and herrings, which draws Humpbacks, Killer Whales, Minke, Orcas and Fin Whales. Regular operators have counted more than 600 Killer Whales in the waters around Lofoten and most pods travel in large groups, so you have a good chance of seeing twenty or more whales at a time. If you want to get close up, go with an operator with a zodiac. They're easy to manoeuvre, but you may get nudged around by a whale, so make sure they also provide waterproof suits. Whale watchers are also likely to come across dolphins, otters and seals. Top off your experience by seeing the truly magical Northern Lights in one of Norway's traditional west coast villages with wooden houses. If you stay in Tromso you can also visit the worlds most northern brewery.

Digby Neck's whale migration

Digby is a long narrow rocky peninsular on the tip of Canada, with the Atlantic Ocean on one side and a protected bay on the other, and is a great spot to watch the annual whale migrations. Many different types of whales pass along this coast and rest here to snack on the marine life teaming from the warmer waters of the bay. Digby Neck is on the route of minke, humpback, right, pilot and blue whales. Sea birds are also attracted to the peninsular by the abundance of food, and bird watchers will be impressed with the variety of bird life. The tides of Digby Neck's bay are some of the world's most dramatic, and when the icebergs on the bay have risen up higher than the level of the docks, it's a truly unique sight. Visitors brave the powerful swell through the mouth of the bay to the best whale watching spots on the tip of the peninsular or else take to the open seas to get up close to the whales. The best time to meet the whales at Digby Neck is between May and October when you will hopefully catch the boys at their most playful while they perform all kinds of leaping and splashing antics while trying to attract a mate.

Whale Sharks of Ningaloo Reef

Swim in clear, warm waters with the majestic, gentle giant, the Whale Shark. The Ningaloo Reef is one of the few places in the world where Whale Sharks regularly visit in large numbers. It is also close to the shore and shallow enough for people to snorkel safely. These spotted leviathans feed on the coral spawn which happens on mass during April and July, and aren't at all what you would anticipate from their name.

Though up to 12 metres in length, Whale Sharks don't have the shark's signature sharp teeth and are generally good tempered around people. Other smaller and less friendly sharks are also common in the area, including the dangerous Tiger Shark and the well camouflaged, nocturnal Wobbegong.



Must-visits in Andaman and Nicobar

A perfect summer getaway, Andaman and Nicobar, is an archipelago at the confluence of the Bay of Bengal and Andaman Sea. With an array of thrilling water sports, leisure facilities, and a host of activities, a vacation in Andaman and Nicobar can be as relaxed or filled with adventure as you'd like it to be. The weather is temperate most of the year and the best time to visit is between December-May. If you're planning to head here in this summer break then here's a pick of outdoorsy things which will keep you busy.

Radhanagar Beach, Havelock Island

Beach number 7 (or more commonly known as Radhanagar Beach) was bestowed with the title of 'Asia's Best Beach' in 2004 by the TIME magazine. Known for its picturesque sunset, white sand and turquoise blue waters, the beach is a very popular hub lying on the western coast of Havelock Island. There's a watersports centre at the beach where visitors can hire snorkelling and scuba equipment and boats.

Havelock Island, the Andamans

Havelock Island at the Andamans is the most popular spot for scuba diving. Home to one of the richest coral reef ecosystem in the world, the waters here are pristine, and teeming with diverse marine life. There are two diving operators on Havelock—Barefoot Scuba and Dive India—which provide wannabe divers with training and all the requisite equipment. Both the operators are PADI (Professional Association of Diving Instructors) certified dive centres.

Mangrove creek, Baratang Island

Baratang Island is located about 100 kilometres away from the Port Blair city and offers a boat-safari, amidst the nature-made tunnel of thick mangrove plantations. A variety of exotic birds can be spotted along the lush trail of dense tree knots and canopies. This mangrove creek leads to the magnificent Lime Stone Caves, for which you must carry a torch with you.

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North Bay Beach, Port Blair

Located just 15 minutes away from the Rajiv Gandhi Water Sports Complex, the North Bay Beach offers one of the easiest water sports—Sea-walking—in Andaman and Nicobar. Walking barefoot on the base of the sea offers you an exquisite view of rich marine-life and the corals. If you're heading to Andaman and Nicobar, don't miss this. Skilled life guards accompany you underwater, to ensure maximum safety.

Best time of the day to visit: Morning and afternoon.
Required equipment: A transparent helmet, which pumps the oxygen in from an oxygen cylinder kept in the pontoon.

Mt. Harriet, the Andamans

This trek stretches up 16 kilometres starting from Mt. Harriet to Madhuban, winding across a picturesque terrain. Expect to see exotic birds and rare plants along the lush trail. Taking a guide along is highly recommended. Tents and all the trekking equipment are available on hire from the Andaman Teal House. Do not forget to acquire food, water, torch, and first aid, before you start. The best time to go hiking here is November-April.

Rajiv Gandhi Water Sports Complex, Port Blair

Located in the heart of Port Blair, the Rajiv Gandhi Water Sports Complex offers an array of aqua-sports: banana rides, jet skiing, parasailing, speed boat rides, rowboat paddling, you name it! This ought to be your first pit-stop in the Andamans. The Centre is well-equipped with changing rooms, and trained staff to ensure safety.

Eye on boosting infrastructure, Noida Authority nod for AI city-business park

Delhi.(Agency)

In an effort to attract multinational corporations, an AI city-cum-business park will soon be set up in Noida, after the Noida Authority on Wednesday adopted the Uttar Pradesh Private Business Park Development Scheme, 2025, officials said.This comes a day after the Uttar Pradesh cabinet on Tuesday approved setting up a robotics and artificial intelligence park in Greater Noida.On Wednesday, in its 224th board meeting the authority granted in-principle approval to the Request for Proposal (RFP) for selecting a master developer to develop an AI city-cum-Business Park in Noida, through a private sector participation. At least 50 per cent of the built-up area of the park is required to be reserved for IT and knowledge-based services, officials said.According to officials, the initiative aims to foster integrated, and ready-to-operate, business infrastructure in order to attract multinational corporations, IT firms, and innovation-driven enterprises through a plug-and-play infrastructure.

"The project will include facilities for AI, Global Capability Centres, IT services, research, start-ups and skill development. It will follow the Design, Build, Finance, Operate and Transfer (DBFOT) model," the official said, adding that the ownership of the land will remain with the Noida Authority.

The concession period for the park will be 45-years which may be extended by another 45 years, the official said, adding that the contractor will be selected through competitive e-bidding.Officials also said that Sector 147 will house Global Capability Center hub.

DDA, 10 varsities join forces to promote sports

Delhi.(Agency)

In a first, the Delhi Development Authority (DDA) and the 10 GNCTD (Government of the National Capital Territory of Delhi) universities have come together to encourage students in the national capital to take part in physical sports. Students of the 10 universities will compete in five sporting disciplines to win 'DDA University Sports Cup 2026'.The event will comprise tournaments leading up to finales in the disciplines of hockey, Football, kabaddi, basketball and cricket.

Union Minister of Youth Affairs & Sports Mansukh Mandaviya, L-G Taranjit Singh Sandhu and minister Ashish Sood on Tuesday inaugurated the cup at the DDA Roshanara Club. Vice-chancellors of the universities, former hockey player & Olympian Ashok Kumar,



wrestler Deepak Punia and shooter Aashima Ahlawat were among those present.

Addressing the gathering, Mandaviya, lauded the initiative as a significant step towards building a culture of sports and fitness among the youth and called upon the young sportspersons to pursue excellence. He discussed India's goal of hosting the Olympic Games in 2036 and of India's successful bid for the 2030 Commonwealth Games.Adding to that, L-G Sandhu dwelt on the PM's views about how sports teach us not only to become champions but also to become better competitors. "DDA University Sports Cup will bring all of Delhi's universities together on the same platform and will encourage sportsmanship and team spirit," he said, stressing, "Sports is an important part of education and teaches young people how to work together." He also expressed his gratitude to athletes Kumar, Punia and Ahlawat for their presence.Meanwhile, Sood thanked the L-G for facilitating the students' access to DDA sports facilities.

Driver stabbed to death for seeking extra chhole at eatery, vendor held

According to the medico-legal case (MLC) report, the victim sustained three stab wounds on the left side of his abdomen, three lacerated wounds on his left forearm and one lacerated wound on his wrist.



Delhi.(Agency)

A 35-year-old driver was stabbed to death following a scuffle with a chhole bhature seller allegedly over a request for "more chhole" in west Delhi's Nihal Vihar area, police said.According to police, Sanjay Gandhi Memorial Hospital informed them on Monday that Sandeep, a resident of Rav Vihar in Nihal Vihar, had been admitted with stab injuries. He was later shifted to Maharaja Agrasen Hospital in Punjabi Bagh, where he died during treatment on Tuesday evening.According to the medico-legal case (MLC) report, Sandeep sustained three stab wounds on the left side of his abdomen, three lacerated wounds on his left forearm and one lacerated wound on his wrist.

"The injured man was declared unfit to give a statement, following which police initiated an inquiry into the circumstances of the incident. During the preliminary inquiry, it came to light that a scuffle had taken place between the injured man and the chhole-bhature seller near Jwalapuri Nala," a senior police officer said.A case of attempt to murder was registered at Paschim Vihar West police station in connection with the incident, a senior police officer said.

The accused, identified as Chintu Gupta, has been arrested and remanded to judicial custody, police said, adding that murder charges were invoked following Sandeep's death.Police officials said they were questioning people who were present at the spot at the time of the incident. They were also trying to establish the sequence of events and the exact reason behind the attack.Bijender Singh, Sandeep's father, said a weekly market was set up in the area on Sundays and his son had gone there to eat chhole bhature.

"Sandeep asked for some more chhole, on which the eatery owner abused him and a scuffle ensued between them. There were four to five people at that time and Sandeep was alone. They attacked him with a knife multiple times, Singh said.

"I got a call from my daughter-in-law regarding the incident, following which I reached the spot and brought Sandeep to Sanjay Gandhi Hospital. My son had told me that there were five people who attacked me. Then I brought him to Maharaja Agrasen Hospital and he died later on Tuesday evening," Singh further said. Police said further investigation was underway and the role of other persons allegedly involved in the incident was being examined.

Delhi SIR: Only 2.7L file Form 6 for 47L voter deletions

Delhi.(Agency)

With just two days left for the claims and objections period under Delhi's special intensive revision (SIR) of electoral rolls to end, only 2.71 lakh applications seeking inclusion in the voter list have been filed since the publication of the draft rolls, with West Delhi accounting for the highest number.According to the daily report released by the office of the Delhi Chief Electoral Officer, 2,71,639 Form 6 applications were received between August 31 and October 27, after the exclusion of 47,56,722 electors from the draft rolls published on August 31.



West Delhi saw the highest number of Form 6 applications at 33,377, followed by North West Delhi (27,341), East Delhi (26,212), South East Delhi (26,054) and North East Delhi (25,973).The figures come as the claims and objections period, which began with the publication of the draft electoral rolls for all 70 Assembly constituencies, is set to close on October 30. Form 6 is used by eligible voters for inclusion in the electoral rolls, while Form 7 is filed for deletion of names and Form 8 for correction or modification of entries.Delhi received 20,654 Form 7 applications and 1,02,149 Form 8 applications during the same period. South West Delhi recorded the highest number of Form 7 applications at 3,152, while North East Delhi topped the Form 8 category with 13,373 applications.

'Rs 14.9-lakh X-Ray machine bought for Rs 37.8 lakh, 10 key procurement files missing'

ACB files chargesheet in Rs 842-crore medical procurement 'scam' in Delhi

Delhi.(Agency)

These are among the allegations the Anti-Corruption Branch (ACB) has mentioned in its chargesheet into the alleged Delhi government medical procurement scam, pegging the wrongful loss to the public exchequer at Rs 842 crore. The court has taken cognizance of the chargesheet.The case centres on the Central Procurement Agency (CPA), the nodal agency responsible for supplying medicines, vaccines and medical equipment to Delhi government hospitals and healthcare facilities.Filed on September 16, the chargesheet alleged that tenders were manipulated to favour two companies — F-Med Devices and M Sahib and Sons Private Limited — owned by pharmaceutical trader Rajiv Rangila (50). The ACB has described Rangila, who has been arrested, as one of the alleged masterminds of the fraud.The chargesheet names three public servants — Dr Vinod Kumar Ranga, Head of Office of the CPA; Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS) chief Dr Vatsala Aggarwal; and former CPA Deputy Controller of Accounts Neeraj Chopra – along with the two companies.The ACB alleged that tenders were tailored to favour Rangila's companies, their bills were cleared within a day or two while other suppliers went unpaid for two years, and that 10 important procurement files could not be traced.

In the X-Ray machine deal, the chargesheet said, F-Med received an order for 448 machines after a bid for just two was uploaded on the Government e-Marketplace (GeM) portal – a digital platform for procurement of goods and services by Central, state ministries and departments.While the CPA allegedly gave an order to F-Med for 448 X-Ray machines, a bid for two machines was uploaded on GeM portal "so that only few would take interest whereas it was… decided that hundreds of machines Rangila allegedly tied up with manufacturing firm Prognosis and



got F-Med Devices declared as its distributor.While Prognosis sold X-Ray machines to other departments and entities for Rs 14.9 lakh (including taxes), the same were allegedly sold to CPA for Rs 37.8 lakh (with taxes) each. F-Med was the only firm that qualified for the bid.The ACB alleged that Rangila earned over Rs 150 crore from X-Ray machines worth over Rs 50 crore.

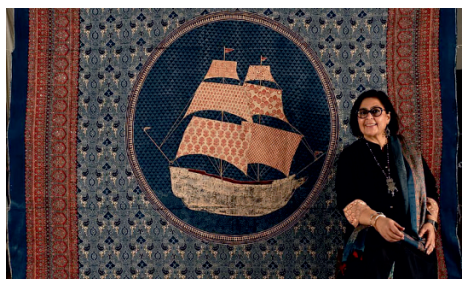
The pattern, the ACB added, repeated across items.For bedsheets, covers and linen items, a payment of Rs 75 crore was made for materials worth Rs 25 crore. For 50 lakh oral rehydration solution (ORS) sachets, a payment of Rs 7.5 crore was made for items worth Rs 1.25 crore. For surgical items worth Rs 20-25 crore, around Rs 100 crore was paid.In terms of medicines, the alleged kickbacks received by Rangila amounted to Rs 300 crore. The money was allegedly distributed among officers of DGHS and CPA."Fake companies by Rangila submitted bills… to the CPA and payment was released in one or two days," the chargesheet said.would be procured".

Shelly Jyoti latest exhibition explores Indigo, migration and textile art

Delhi.(Agency)

For Delhi artist Shelly Jyoti, a ship is more than a vessel, a school of fish more than a representation of aquatic life, and a human being more than a form.On view at Bikaner House, her exhibition 'Indigo: The Blue Gold II' brings together over 18 years of engagement with the dye, tracing its history from the exploitation of farmers in eastern India to its global trade and the migration of people and craft traditions. Using khadi textiles and block prints, the exhibition, which also presents her latest body of work, Indigo: Migration Through Time, brings displaced communities into focus.

Jyoti's journey with indigo began in 2008, when she collaborated with Japanese-American artist Laura Kina on a project exploring the dye's shared histories in India and Japan. "As an Indian artist, I explored the role of indigo in India's freedom struggle," she says, describing how her research led her to the farmers of eastern India, their exploitation and their revolt. The resulting body of work travelled to India and across the US between 2009 and 2014.Her early works explored the farmers' struggles and Mahatma Gandhi's intervention in Champaran, Bihar, in 1917. She also began looking beyond the fields to understand how the dye travelled across continents and became a coveted commodity.Her 2023 exhibition, 'Indigo: The Blue Gold', explored the dye's global trade, using ships as a recurring motif to trace its movement from Indian shores. In Kochi, Jyoti encountered historical cartographic images of vessels used in maritime trade. After studying their structures and experimenting with different forms, she settled on a design that became central to her work. "I wanted it to be very specific that the ship should look like an 18th-century ship," she says.Through textile works depicting merchant vessels, she linked the movement of indigo to the systems of trade and labour that sustained it. Yet after the 2023 exhibition, she felt that part of the story remained untold. "I explored indigo dye, the trade, capitalism and the indignity faced by farmers, along with the dark history of indigo.



But I didn't talk about the migration of these indentured labourers," she says.

Between homelands

In her latest body of work, 'Indigo: Migration Through Time', Jyoti turns her attention to people transported away from their homelands under exploitative labour arrangements as indigo became part of global commerce. The exhibition unfolds through three interconnected sections: Faceless Journeys, Displaced Ecologies and Unresolved Geographies.

Delhi government launches app to book liquor, AAP threatens stir

The move is aimed at reducing queues outside liquor shops, easing pressure on payment counters and making pricing and billing more transparent.

Delhi.(Agency)

The Delhi State Industrial and Infrastructure Development Corporation (DSIIDC) has launched a mobile app, Delhi Liquor Booking, that allows consumers to book liquor in advance from its retail outlets.The move is aimed at reducing queues outside liquor shops, easing pressure on payment counters and making pricing and billing more transparent, officials said. Customers can check the availability of liquor brands at participating stores through the app before placing an order.They can select a store, choose the brand, bottle size and quantity, and make the payment online. However, there is no option for home delivery, and the buyers must collect the bottles within 48 hours of making the payment.The DSIIDC is one of the four government corporations that are authorised to operate retail liquor outlets in Delhi. The four corporations together run more than 700 liquor shops across the national capital in total. But the online booking facility is currently restricted to the DSIIDC's 208 outlets.



However, the Delhi government move to begin the online booking of liquor has drawn fierce criticism from AAP, which has sought a rollback. AAP Delhi unit president Saurabh Bharadwaj slammed the government for "focusing on making liquor easily accessible through an online booking application while failing to address public concerns over healthcare.""If Rekha Gupta does not roll back this app policy, we will seek Delhi Industry Minister Manjinder Singh Sirsa's resignation and stage a protest within the next 24 hours," Bharadwaj said. Hitting back, Sirsa noted that tender for the development of the app was initiated during the AAP regime.

US Fed keeps rates unchanged despite concerns over inflation, signals hikes ahead

New Delhi.(Agency)

The Federal Reserve held interest rates steady on Wednesday, as expected, opting to delay any changes to borrowing costs until after next week's US midterm elections and awaiting further data on the path of inflation.

In a 10-2 decision, the US central bank said it would maintain its benchmark interest rate within the current 3.75 per cent-4.00 per cent range while acknowledging that inflation "remains elevated," upgrading its assessment of the economy, and hinting that further rate hikes may be coming depending on the performance of inflation."The accumulation of more information will help the Committee determine the policy stance appropriate to ensure a timely return of inflation to the Committee's 2 per cent goal," the rate-setting Federal Open Market Committee said in its latest policy statement. "The Committee will deliver price stability."Fed Governor Lisa Cook, currently targeted by President Donald Trump for removal from the central bank, dissented in favour of a quarter-percentage-point rate hike, as did Cleveland Fed President Beth Hammack, a consistently hawkish voice who also dissented in July for the same reason.

TVS Motor to demerge consumer finance business

MUMBAI.(Agency)

The board of TVS Motor Company, part of the TVS Venu Group, on Wednesday approved the demerger of its consumer finance and related businesses into a separate entity, Harita ARC Ltd. It also approved the merger of its wholly owned subsidiary, TVS Motor Services Ltd, with TVS Motor Company.

Under the composite scheme of arrangement, the company's consumer finance and related activities, including lending, investments, leasing and associated support services, will be transferred to Harita ARC. Shareholders of TVS Motor will receive an equal number of shares in the resulting company, allowing them to participate in the future growth of both the mobility and consumer finance businesses.The consumer finance business recorded a turnover of Rs 3,921 crore in the first six months of FY27, compared with TVS Motor's total turnover of Rs 35,770 crore during the period.

Govt notifies more GST reform measures, expands reverse-charge coverage

NEW DELHI.(Ajency)

The Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC) has notified a series of amendments to the Goods and Services Tax (GST) framework, expanding reverse-charge provisions for specified categories of waste and scrap and updating compliance requirements. Most changes will take effect from November 1, 2026, while some e-invoicing amendments will come into force from January 1, 2027.

The government has notified the Central Goods and Services Tax (CGST) (Amendment) Rules, 2026, covering e-commerce registration, registration procedures, returns, the composition levy and various GST forms. The amendments will take effect from different dates, with November 1, 2026, being the general commencement date unless otherwise specified.

It has also amended e-invoicing provisions to cover specified supplies received from unregistered persons under the Reverse Charge Mechanism (RCM) and imports of services, in addition to business-to-business (B2B) supplies and exports. These changes will take effect from January 1, 2027.

Jio is the fifth most valuable telecom company in the world: Know which are ahead of it

New Delhi.(Agency)



Jio Platforms has achieved a milestone in the global telecom industry on the day after listing on the stock exchange. With a market cap of $137.3 billion, or approximately ₹13.1 lakh crore, the company has become the world's fifth most valuable telecom company. In this regard, Jio has overtaken Germany's leading telecom company, Deutsche Telekom. With Jio's entry, the Indian telecom sector's position in the global market has strengthened. However, Jio's valuation remains quite high compared to the world's largest telecom companies.Bloomberg data show, China Mobile is the world's largest telecom company with a market cap of $220.3 billion. Verizon of the US is second with a market cap of $182.1 billion while T-Mobile US is third with a market cap of $157.5 billion.

Jio's digital business

The nature of Jio Platforms' business is considered a key driver of its valuation. The company provides digital connectivity and digital services across the country. Its 4G and 5G network-based services and its own digital platform differentiate it from traditional telecom companies.

Many of the world's largest telecom companies have been in business for a long time and have legacy 2G and 3G network infrastructure. In contrast, Jio's business is relatively new compared to its competitors. According to analysts, this is a key differentiator for Jio which is attracting a higher valuation. This valuation reflects investors' expectations about the company's future growth and earnings, which the management has to live up to.

Leading telecom companies by market cap

China Mobile: $220.3 billion

Verizon: $182.1 billion

T-Mobile US: $157.5 billion

AT&T: $141.1 billion

Jio Platforms: $137.3 billion

Deutsche Telekom: $135.5 billion

Jio's P/E against global telecom giants

The price-to-earnings (P/E) multiple of Jio Platforms provides an understanding of its valuation. Based on Wednesday's market cap and fiscal 2026 net profit, the company has a P/E multiple of 43.5. In comparison, the P/E multiple of the world's leading telecom companies ranges from 8 to 14. This means that Jio's valuation is significantly higher than these companies. This may be due to market expectations regarding the company's digital business and future growth prospects.

Jio's closest competitor in India, Bharti Airtel, has a P/E multiple of 45.6. This puts Jio's P/E slightly lower than Airtel's, but both Indian companies have high valuations compared to global telecom companies.

Can Indian employees sue companies over layoffs without notice

New Delhi.(Agency)



Can a company fire you without notice, and can you sue if it does? The question has gained urgency as employees across the technology sector describe losing their jobs through sudden termination emails, unexpected HR meetings and the withdrawal of access to workplace systems.The latest example comes from Innodata, where employees who said they were affected by layoffs described how they were informed that their roles had become redundant, lost access to work systems and received termination letters later.On Reddit, a user identifying themselves as a process analyst said employees were called into a suddenly scheduled HR meeting and told their positions were being eliminated because a major client had reduced its volume of work.The user alleged that employees were muted during the meeting, lost access to Microsoft Office applications within an hour and received termination letters on their personal email accounts later that day. Another user identifying themselves as an AI analyst said job cuts were taking place across India, the US and the Philippines as part of a project.The pattern is not limited to Innodata. Oracle employees have also reported receiving early-morning termination emails, with some saying their access to workplace systems was withdrawn around the time they were informed their roles had been eliminated.Amazon, meanwhile, cut up to 250 jobs in its devices and services unit on October 28, with employees notified by text messages and emails early that morning, reported news agency Reuters.These developments highlight ho quickly employees can find themselves out of a job, sometimes with little time to prepare for the financial and professional consequences. The Reddit accounts relating to Innodata have not been independently verified, and the circumstances of individual terminations can differ.

But they raise an importan question for employees facing sudden job cuts: does a company have the right to terminate employment immediately, and what legal remedies are available if it fails to provide the notice, pay or compensation required under the applicable law or employment contract?Legal experts say companies can restructure operations and reduce their workforce for genuine business reasons, but that does not automatically exempt them from their legal and contractual obligations.Indian law recognises an employer's right to reorganise its operations, rationalise costs and reduce its workforce in response to genuine commercial requirements. However, the existence of a legitimate business reason does not confer an unrestricted right to terminate employment without complying with applicable legal and contractual obligations," said Akanksha Dua, Partner at Obhan Mason.

CAN A COMPANY FIRE YOU WITHOUT NOTICE?

A company may have a genuine business reason to cut jobs, but that does not automatically mean it can disregard notice periods or other employment obligations. Whether an employee can be terminated with immediate effect depends on the employment contract, the employee's actual duties, length of service and the labour laws applicable to the case.An employer may be able to terminate employment immediately by paying salary in lieu of notice where the contract and applicable law permit it. For eligible workers covered by the Industrial Relations Code, 2020, retrenchment may also trigger statutory requirements relating to notice, compensation and procedure.

Rs 540 to Rs 1,683 extra per month: How much will your salary rise after DA hike

New Delhi.(Agency)

The Union Cabinet has approved a 3-percentage-point hike in Dearness Allowance (DA) for central government employees and Dearness Relief (DR) for pensioners. The increase will take the rates from 60% to 63% of basic pay and pension, respectively, bringing additional money to their monthly income ahead of Diwali.The decision will benefit around 48 lakh central government employees and 68 lakh pensioners. Announcing the decision after the Cabinet meeting on Wednesday, October 28, Union Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw described the increase as a Diwali gift from Prime Minister Narendra Modi. The hike will have a financial implication of Rs 10,016 crore.

HOW MUCH WILL YOUR SALARY INCREASE



AFTER THE DA HIKE?

The actual increase will depend on an employee's basic pay and pay level. Since DA is calculated as a percentage of basic pay, those earning a higher basic salary will receive a larger monthly increase.

According to BankBazaar, at Level 1, an employee earning Rs 18,000 will receive an additional Rs 540 each month, adding up to Rs 6,480 over 12 months. At Level 2, the monthly gain will be Rs 597, taking the annual increase to Rs 7,164.At Level 3, the extra Rs 651 per month will amount to Rs 7,812 a year. For employees at Level 4, with a basic pay of Rs 25,500, the monthly increase will be Rs 765, or Rs 9,180 annually.

Sensex, Nifty trade higher after US Fed holds rates; crude oil remains a concern

NEW DELHI.(Ajency)

Stock market opened on a cautious note on Thursday, October 29, but moved higher in early trade after the US Federal Reserve kept interest rates unchanged, as expected. Elevated crude oil prices and continued foreign investor outflows, however, remain key concerns for the market.At around 9.33 am, the BSE Sensex was trading at 73,405.12, up 159.09 points or 0.22%. The NSE Nifty 50 rose 39.65 points, or



0.17%, to 22,738.50.The Nifty had opened at 22,690.65, while the Sensex started the session at 73,268.47. The early gains came despite crude oil prices remaining elevated, with Brent crude trading at $113.97 per barrel, down 1.17%, and WTI crude at $101.43, down 1.31%.

IT STOCKS LEAD GAINS

IT stocks were among the key supports for the market in early trade. The Nifty IT index rose 0.65%, with TCS gaining 1.19%, Infosys advancing 0.66%, HCLTech rising 0.69% and Tech Mahindra up 0.39%.Other major gainers included Adani Ports, which rose 2.33%, Power Grid, up 1.47%, and NTPC, which gained 1.13%. Reliance Industries advanced 1.02%, while Titan rose 0.95%.However, the market's gains remained uneven. Larsen & Toubro fell 0.82%, Trent declined 1.72%, Maruti slipped 0.74% and Bajaj Finserv lost 0.84%.Broader markets traded in positive territory, with the Nifty Midcap 100 rising 0.21% and the Nifty Smallcap 100 gaining 0.30%. India VIX, the market volatility gauge, fell 0.58% to 16.15, indicating a slight easing in near-term nervousness.Among sectoral indices, Nifty PSU Bank rose 0.66%, while media gained 0.58% and pharma advanced 0.31%. Metal, financial services and private bank indices also traded higher. Auto and realty stocks were among the weaker pockets, while FMCG and chemicals remained under pressure.

US FED HOLDS RATES; FOREIGN FLOWS, OIL IN FOCUS

The US Federal Reserve kept interest rates unchanged on Wednesday, as expected, delaying any changes to borrowing costs while it awaits further inflation data. The Fed said inflation remained elevated.Dr V K Vijayakumar, Chief Investment Strategist at Geojit Investments Limited, said the decision was mildly positive for global equity markets, but added that India continued to face significant headwinds.He pointed to the US 10-year bond yield hovering around 5%, elevated crude prices and foreign investor flows as factors weighing on the domestic market. He also said foreign money could continue to favour artificial intelligence-related stocks in markets such as South Korea and Taiwan, rather than Indian equities.

Rupee rises 11 paise to 95.17 against US dollar in early trade

MUMBAI.(Ajency)

The rupee appreciated 11 paise to 95.17 against the US dollar in early trade on Thursday amid a slight easing of the American currency following the US Federal Reserve's policy announcement.

The US Fed kept interest rates unchanged at 3.75 per cent–4.00 per cent as widely expected, but the market reaction turned mildly dollar-negative, forex traders said.At the interbank foreign exchange market, the rupee opened at 95.20, then gained ground and touched 95.17 against the US dollar, registering a rise of 11 paise over its previous close.On Wednesday, the rupee closed at 95.28 against the American currency.According to traders, elevated crude oil prices and firm US yields remain headwinds for the local unit. While foreign exchange reserves of around USD 721 billion, recent improvement in portfolio flows and the RBI's presence in the market provide support."We therefore see a gradual upward bias in USDINR within the range, rather than evidence of a disorderly move," said Anindya Banerjee, Head of Commodity and Currency Research, Kotak NEO.

The Fed's pause has left markets highly sensitive to incoming data: stronger inflation could reinforce expectations of a December hike, while softer numbers could offer relief to bullion and emerging-market currencies.

Meanwhile, the dollar index, which gauges the greenback's strength against a basket of six currencies, was trading at 102.15, lower by 0.04 per cent.

Brent crude, the global oil benchmark, was trading lower by 1.03 per cent at USD 114.13 per barrel in futures trade.



On the domestic equity market front, Sensex rose 163.03 points to 73,409.06, while Nifty gained 40.40 points to 22,739.25.Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) bought equities worth Rs 871.83 crore on a net basis on Wednesday, according to exchange data.

Cyclone leaves disruption trail in Gajapati, Ganjam and Rayagada

BERHAMPUR.(Agency)

Cyclone Arnab wreaked havoc across Gajapati, Ganjam and Rayagada on Wednesday, inundating villages, damaging houses and washing away roads at several places in the three south Odisha districts.In Gajapati district, the cyclone-induced heavy rains led to collapse of the Gundriguda bridge in Mohana block while torrential runoff from Mahendragiri hills washed away portions of the Kaipur-Burukhata road at two to three locations.

A stretch of National Highway-326 near Palukhola at Taptapani Ghat along the Ganjam-Gajapati border was inundated by muddy water cascading down the hills. Vehicles were stranded on both sides, disrupting traffic along the crucial ghat road.Nearly three feet water was also flowing over roads connecting Kaipur, Burukhata and Mahendragiri. Rising water level in Kaithadhepa canal in R Udayagiri block severed connectivity between Kanakata and Puranapani. In Rayagada block, three houses were completely destroyed after a massive tree fell on them.In Ganjam, the rising Ghodahada river triggered a major disruption after floodwater cut off a key stretch of NH-326 connecting Aska, Patapur and Digapahandi. At around 5 pm on Wednesday, floodwater flowed nearly four feet above the Patapur-Palaspur bridge, forcing suspension of traffic.

Kerala HC revokes ban on hiring women in toddy shops

KOCHI.(Agency)

The Kerala High Court has struck down Rule 7(37) of the Kerala Abkari Shops Disposal Rules, which prohibits the employment of women in any capacity in toddy shops, declaring it unconstitutional.The court observed that the state's obligation to ensure that women are free from harassment and have a safe working environment cannot be fulfilled by prohibiting them from working in an industry of their choice. The order was passed while allowing a petition filed by Sophy, 47, of Thrissur, who sought appointment at a toddy shop on compassionate grounds following the death of her husband, an employee of the shop, in 2024. The government pleader submitted that the rule was intended to protect women from exploitation and all forms of workplace harassment.Citing a Supreme Court ruling, the HC said instead of imposing a blanket ban on the employment of women in toddy shops, the state should focus on eliminating the unequal consequences arising from sex differences and ensuring safe working conditions that inspire confidence among women to pursue their.

New status, historic milestone: Parel church elevated to basilica in Keralam

KOTTAYAM.(Agency)

With the consecration of the new church just weeks away, the historic St Mary's Church in Parel, Changanassery, has received a significant ecclesiastical distinction, with the Vatican elevating it to the status of a basilica. The recognition marks a milestone for the Changanassery archdiocese and the Catholic faithful of the region.Elevating a church to the status of a basilica grants the building special ecclesiastical recognition title, and spiritual privileges. The Parel Marian Pilgrimage Centre will now be known as the Marth Mariam Immaculate Conception Shrine Basilica.The elevation was granted by the Vatican's dicastery for divine worship and the discipline of the sacraments on behalf of Pope Leo XIV. The official announcement will be made on November 21, coinciding with the consecration of the new Parel Marth Mariam Valiyapally.

Changanassery Archbishop Thomas Tharayil described the elevation as a divine blessing. He said the shrine's new status and name would be formally announced on the day of consecration of the new church.

Asked to vacate property, woman tries to hurl purse at Bombay HC judge: 'That's contempt'

After an adverse order, the woman attempted to throw her purse at the judge, which Justice Jamdar noticed and expressed his displeasure towards her conduct.

Mumbai.(Agency)

Coming down heavily on a litigant for attempting to throw her purse towards the judge after an order was passed against her family to vacate a property, the Bombay High Court on Tuesday (October 27) said her conduct amounted to contempt of court.The incident took place while Justice Madhav J Jamdar was hearing a contempt petition in a dispute over property possession.

"It is required to be noted that Minder Gurmit Singh Thukral in the court has behaved in a wholly inappropriate manner, which also amounts to contempt of court," the HC noted. The judge orally said he will initiate contempt proceedings against her and would impose costs.

The dispute involving Minder and her family dates back to 2009, when property owner Onkar Singh Kalra, filed an eviction suit in the Small Causes Court against "gratuitous licensee" Tarlok Singh Thukral, a tenant. The court ruled in favour of Kalra on July 6, 2018.Subsequent challenges by the licensee Thukral failed at every stage. A civil court dismissed the appeal by the Thukrals on October 4, 2021, and the High Court rejected their Civil Revision Application on July 23, 2024.

While the High Court granted eight weeks to vacate the premises, the tenants filed a review petition, which was dismissed.During the prolonged litigation, Tarlok passed away, and his sons, Jaspal and Gurmit Singh, were brought on record as legal heirs. The eviction decree against the Thukrals was finally executed in April 2025.However, the High Court noted that Tarlok's legal heirs and their family, including Gurmit, his wife Minder, and their children, illegally re-entered the



property, prompting the property owners' legal heirs to file a contempt petition."Prima facie I am satisfied that the conduct of these respondents amounts to interference in the administration of justice," the judge noted.Thereafter, the respondents (Thukrals) stated that they will hand over possession on October 29. The HC appointed a Court Receiver to oversee the handover and directed that if physical possession is not handed over by 7 pm on Thursday, the Court Receiver shall take physical possession with police assistance.After an adverse order, Minder attempted to throw her purse at the judge, which Justice Jamdar noticed and expressed his displeasure towards her conduct.While she tendered an apology, the judge stressed maintaining "decorum" in the court and noted her conduct "amounts to contempt." The HC directed all respondents to remain present in court on October 30.

Adani's Mumbai airport shift hits turbulence — Air France, Emirates refuse to give in

Indian carriers account for 3 million of the 5 million passengers MIAL wants out of Mumbai airport by March 2027. After their pushback, now Emirates and Air France are resisting the move. Here's why

Mumbai.(Agency)

After facing pushback from Indian airlines, it is now foreign airlines that are yet to agree to move their international operations from Mumbai airport's Terminal 2 (T2) to Navi Mumbai International Airport (NMIA), leaving the Adani Group-owned Mumbai International Airport Limited (MIAL) short of its target with its November 3 deadline for transition plans days away.MIAL wants to move five million annual passengers out of the existing airport by the end of March 2027 to make way for the redevelopment of Terminal 1B. Indian carriers Akasa Air, IndiGo and the Air India Group have already finalised plans to shift their international operations to NMIA, with the earliest moves scheduled from December 2026. Those shifts account for three million annual passengers, leaving MIAL two million short.A 90-minute meeting between the Mumbai Airline Operators Committee (AOC) and MIAL on Wednesday was largely inconclusive, with foreign airlines seeking more details on the transition. MIAL remained firm on its target.Emirates has argued that NMIA lacks the operational capacity to handle large-scale operations of global airlines. Air France-KLM has rejected the idea, deeming the splitting of operations between the two airports "operationally inefficient".

The dispute began with MIAL's proposal to cut international departures from T2 by 33 per cent, or 265 of the 770 weekly departures, to accommodate traffic displaced by the redevelopment of the northern section



of Terminal 1B. The work was earlier scheduled to begin in January 2027. After the AOC opposed the proposal, the Ministry of Civil Aviation (MoCA) asked both sides to work towards a mutually agreed transition plan.According to sources, MIAL told airlines on Wednesday that its plan to add five million passengers in annual capacity at T2 had been delayed by two years from its scheduled 2027 timeline. It also assured them that traffic temporarily shifted to NMIA would be restored to Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International Airport (CSMIA) once the redevelopment of Terminal 1 is completed.The AOC reiterated that the 2013 slot guidelines must be followed in any decision to reduce capacity at T2, and that such decisions should be taken collaboratively. It proposed a joint committee of airport authorities and airline representatives to draw up a transition plan for the winter 2027 schedule, which begins in late October, rather than shifting operations during the summer 2027 schedule.

Post SIR, special drive to check data of deleted voters in Karnataka

BENGALURU.(Agency)

Election officials have decided to take a relook at electoral data where deletions have been high, and a drastic change in the number of electors has been recorded. Special drives will also be held and camps set up in the coming days to include any eligible electors who were left out.This has come a day after the Office of the Chief Electoral Officer (CEO), Karnataka, released the final electoral roll after completion of the Special Intensive Revision (SIR), in which 99,32,303 electors were deleted. Karnataka now has 4,55,00,011 electors, compared to 5,54,32,314 previously.A senior Election Commission official said constituencies, wards and booths where large differences have been recorded will be picked for verification. Data at the head office will be compared with ground reports. Apart from conducting independent inquiries, information will be sought from Electoral Registration Officers (EROs) and District Election Officers (DEOs). The Election Commission has also directed all officials to conduct special drives to enrol electors.

Data from the CEO office showed the maximum deletion of electors was recorded in Bangalore Urban district. The district had 40,21,039 electors before the SIR exercise began, it now has 24,01,939. In BBMP South district, 21,44,784 electors dropped to 11,13,554 electors at the end of the SIR exercise. Large number of deletions were recorded in BBMP North and BBMP Central districts too.Around 5 lakh electors were removed from the rolls in Belagavi, Mysuru and Kalaburagi, with 1-2 lakh electors being deleted from each of the districts. The least number of deletions were recorded in Udupi, Chamarajanagar and Kodagu districts. Officials said most of those deleted in these districts were migrant labourers.In Bengaluru, the maximum deletion of names was recorded in Bengaluru South assembly constituency -- it has 4,41,232 electors from the earlier 7,85,800. Rajarajeshwarinagar, which had 5,17,859 electors, now has 2,81,687 voters. In Mahadevapura, the number of electors dropped from 6,87,471 to 4,10,671.

Punjab drug crisis: Father died 14 months ago; now teenage son found dead

Gandhinagar.(Agency)

A 17-year-old in Punjab's Fazilka district became the latest victim of the state's drug crisis after he was found dead on Wednesday night in a suspected drug overdose case, 14 months after his father allegedly died under similar circumstances.Abhijot Singh was found dead on a bed in an abandoned house in Ghattianwali Jattan village, where drug users allegedly gathered to procure and consume drugs. His father, Harjinder Singh, had been found dead near a canal in June 2025 and, according to villagers, had also been injecting synthetic drugs.Abhijot, who is survived by his mother and grandmother, discontinued his studies after Class 10. He had returned from a de-addiction centre just two days before he was found dead, police sources said.The teenager's death comes at a time when the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) government is under pressure after the police 'seized' the body of a man who had died of a suspected overdose, and amid an agitation over the killing of anti-drug activist Parvinder Singh Jhota.

Lighter, syringe found near body: Villagers

According to villagers, after Abhijot failed to return home on Wednesday night, his family members and other villagers began searching for him. They eventually found his body. A lighter, silver foil and a used syringe without a needle were also found alongside the bed, villagers alleged.The police have registered an FIR on murder charges against five people based on the statement of Abhijot's mother, Harpreet Kaur. "Two people who allegedly supplied drugs to him have been arrested. A post-mortem examination will be conducted to ascertain the cause of death," Gaganjit Singh, Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP), Fazilka, said.Police officials confirmed that



Harpreet Kaur has shared information regarding Harjinder Singh's death in her statement. The family used to own 40 acres of ancestral land, but the holding has now reduced to around seven acres, villagers said.

Three Kumta fishermen asphyxiate to death due to toxic fumes from spoilt fish

TADADI (UTTARA KANNADA). (Agency)

Three fishermen, who were cleaning a fishing boat, asphyxiated to death after inhaling poisonous fumes emanating from rotten fish inside the boat.The three fishermen, all from Kumta taluk -- Naushad Ali Raja (35) from Kagal village, Aman Ayub Langadu from Onhalli and Amir Abdul from Unchalli -- died on Tuesday evening after getting into a purse seine boat 'Khuzaina', owned by Khasim from Vanhalli, also in Kumta taluk."They had gone towards Goa where they caught a fish variety called chaman, which gets spoilt within 24 hours. The catch was big, but their arrival at the Tadadi port was delayed by a day. By then, the entire lot was spoilt," said Gokarna Inspector Sridhar SR.After anchoring the boat, one of the fishermen went to clean the fish hold, but collapsed. Seeing him faint, four others got in. They too fell into the cold storage tank, unable to bear the pungent odour.



Plenty of fish were rotting at the bottom, says prof

The fishermen managed to get the one who collapsed first out of the cold storage unit, but could not get out on their own. Acting swiftly, the Gokarna police arrived at the spot and rushed them to a local hospital. Three were declared dead, while Abdul (55) from Bhatkuli is battling for life.Local fishermen said Chaman, also known as Indian scad or Tonka, is not edible, and is sent to the factory to make powder. "When we catch this fish, we are careful in how we dispose of it. These people had got a big catch. This is the first such incident where fishers have suffocated to death," they added."Normally when fishermen catch scads, they do not add much ice as it is not edible fish. As fish are rich in vitamins, they release a lot of ammonia while rotting.

As per my information, these people had cleared the boat of scads, but still there were plenty rotting at the bottom. Ammonia is highly toxic gas and this is the gas they have inhaled," said Shivakumar Haragi, professor and chairman, Department of Marine Biology, Karnataka University, Dharwad.

Neelam Sirohi: UP's very own stubborn wrestler who took on the world's best

London.(Agency)

Neelam Sirohi grew up in a village where wrestling akharas were slowly disappearing. In Astana, she found herself standing across the mat from one of the greatest wrestlers of her generation.The Indian had fought her way into the women's 50kg final at the World Wrestling Championships, where Japan's Yui Susaki stood between her and gold. A four-time world champion, Susaki had dominated the mat for years, rarely giving her opponents a chance. Neelam, however, refused to make it easy for her.For the first two minutes, neither wrestler could find a breakthrough. Neelam,



26, defended resolutely and denied Susaki an opening. But just as the first period was drawing to a close, the Japanese wrestler attacked her left leg, secured a takedown and pinned the Indian. Susaki claimed her fifth world title, leaving Neelam with silver.There was more disappointment for India on the same day, as Kajal Dhochak also lost the women's 76kg final. Still, their runs to the gold-medal bouts marked a first for Indian women's wrestling, with two Indians reaching the finals at the same senior World Championships. Before Astana, Anshu Malik had been the only Indian woman to reach a senior World Championships final.

Liverpool knock Chelsea out on penalties as Alonso calls Carabao Cup least important

New Delhi.(Agency)

Liverpool knocked Chelsea out of the Carabao Cup after winning 6-5 on penalties at Anfield, with Wesley Fofana's missed spot-kick settling a tense fourth-round tie. Chelsea manager Xabi Alonso accepted the defeat but played down its significance, insisting the Premier League



remained his side's main priority.Alonso reflected on the result after Chelsea's 1-1 draw with Liverpool ended in a penalty shootout, with the Blues unable to progress despite a competitive performance. Speaking after the match, the Chelsea manager described the Carabao Cup as the least important competition for his side.Every time you reach penalties you know that someone will leave feeling that it was harsh to go out of the competition. But we saw a proper cup game, really intense, really close from both sides and it's open for everything at the end with penalties," Alonso said.

"This is football. This is part of our job. I've seen a team that was competing and showing a good level. And this is the least important competition for us, the Premier League is the main focus."The result marked a disappointing return to Anfield for Alonso, who won the Champions League with Liverpool as a player in 2005. However, Chelsea's cup exit does not end their pursuit of silverware this season, with the Premier League and other competitions still ahead.

HOW LIVERPOOL DEFEATED CHELSEA IN CARABAO CUP

Chelsea took the lead in the 40th minute when Morgan Rogers converted a penalty after Ryan Gravenberch fouled Moises Caicedo inside the box.

Google Translate, war cries and Korea's quest for a hockey renaissance

South Korea were once Asian hockey giants, but a difficult transition has left them fighting to reclaim lost glory. From Google Translate-assisted interviews to rousing war cries, coach Jungbin Lim and captain Yong Bok Kim share their vision for a comeback.

Jalandhar.(Agency)

For years, South Korea stood tall among the giants of Asian hockey. The continental game was once dominated by India and Pakistan, but the Koreans broke that duopoly in 1986, winning the Asian Games gold on home soil in Seoul.They have since added three more Asian Games gold medals to their tally. Their crowning moment came at the Sydney Olympics in 2000, where they stunned the hockey world by winning silver. Fourth-place finishes at the 2002 and 2006 World Cups further underlined their stature. By 2003, South Korea had climbed to fourth in the FIH rankings, establishing themselves as Asia's leading force.South Korea are now a team in transition, having slipped to 20th in the world rankings. They missed out on this year's World Cup and finished fourth at the Asian Games in Nagoya, a far cry from the heights they once scaled.Their campaign at the Asian Champions Trophy in Jalandhar has not got off to the best start either. Despite a spirited display, Japan edged past them 3-2 on the opening day, leaving the Koreans with plenty to ponder.With questions swirling around their future, we made our way to the South Korean team's training session on Wednesday, October 28. How does a former Asian powerhouse hit the reset button? And what will it take to restore a team that once stood among the best in the world?We believed the answers lay with head coach Jungbin Lim and captain Yong Bok Kim.



Both men were at the heart of an intense training session that offered a glimpse into the team's spirit. There was urgency in the drills, but also a palpable sense of camaraderie. Their warm-up run was punctuated by loud war cries that echoed around the Surjit Singh Hockey Stadium, with Lim watching closely from the sidelines.The session soon shifted to tactical work. The focus was on breaking down a high press and moving forward, with Lim constantly communicating with his players in Korean. His voice bounced off the stadium walls, catching the attention of the handful of local reporters who had turned up to watch.We waited for our opportunity to speak to the coach and his players. But before the interviews began, we witnessed one of the most unusual interactions of our time in Punjab.A local reporter asked questions in Punjabi while Lim responded in Korean. Neither seemed particularly troubled by the language barrier. Google Translate was the unlikely mediator, converting the questions and answers back and forth as the conversation flowed.The same process followed captain Kim was speaking.

Kumar Sangakkara accuses Ryanair staff of discrimination and threatening behaviour

New Delhi.(Agency)

Former Sri Lanka captain Kumar Sangakkara has accused Ryanair personnel at Dublin Airport of discriminatory and threatening behaviour while travelling with his family. The



48-year-old took to X on Wednesday, October 28, to express his anger over what he described as a shocking and unacceptable experience.

The former wicketkeeper-batter alleged that the airline's gate personnel had treated his family inappropriately during their interaction at the airport. In his post on X, Sangakkara questioned whether other passengers had faced similar experiences with Ryanair staff in Dublin."Has anyone experienced discriminatory gate personnel @Ryanair in Dublin?" Sangakkara wrote.

"I with my family just did and it was shocking. The tone of address and the mishandling of procedure and threatening behavior. Unacceptable for any passenger. First bad experience in Dublin."Sangakkara did not reveal what led to the confrontation or provide further details about the circumstances surrounding the incident. However, his comments indicated that he was particularly upset by the way the airline's personnel had addressed his family.

For now, the former Sri Lanka skipper has not shared further details about the alleged incident at Dublin Airport, and Ryanair has yet to publicly respond to his claims.

SANGAKKARA REACTS TO DISCRIMINATION CLAIM

The former Sri Lanka captain's post prompted a response from fellow Sri Lankan Sanjiva Weerawarana, who shared his own experiences of alleged discrimination while living and travelling in Western countries."Kumar, I have experienced discrimination in every part of the west. I lived there for 16 years, traveled back and forth for another 25 and now I'm done," Weerawarana wrote.He added that his experiences had left him unwilling to travel to Western countries unless necessary. Sangakkara responded by acknowledging how unsettling such incidents could be.

SANGAKKARA'S ILLUSTRIOUS CRICKET CAREER

Sangakkara is regarded as one of the greatest batters in Sri Lankan cricket history. He retired from international cricket in 2015 after representing his country in 134 Tests, 404 ODIs and 56 T20Is.

Sachin-like hunger, a world medal at 18: Meet wrestling prodigy Kajal Dhochak

New Delhi.(Agency)

When Virender Dahiya talks about Kajal Dhochak, the chief coach of the Indian women's wrestling team reaches for a comparison from another sport. It is not a comparison of achievements or careers, but of hunger."Sachin Tendulkar made his international debut for India at the age of 16. Why? Because of his hunger. Kajal has that same kind of hunger to keep improving," Dahiya tells IndiaToday.in from Astana, Kazakhstan.At 18, Kajal has already won consecutive U20 world titles and made history at the 2026 World Wrestling Championships on Wednesday, becoming India's first heavyweight medallist at the tournament with silver in the women's 76kg category. It was a landmark achievement for Indian wrestling, and one that came on her first appearance at the senior Worlds.The gold she wanted eluded her, but her performance announced her arrival among the senior ranks.Her ambition, meanwhile, stretches well beyond the medal she has won. Kajal's WhatsApp profile picture is the logo of the Los Angeles 2028 Olympics. The Games are two years away, but the image is a reminder of the target she carries into training every day."Right now, the target is the Olympics," says Ajay Malik, who coaches Kajal at the Kuldeep Malik Academy in Sonipat."That is what she focuses on, even during training. She keeps reminding herself that she needs to train harder to achieve that goal."

SWIFT RISE THROUGH THE RANKS

The Olympic logo is not just wishful thinking on Kajal's part. For someone who has already collected three world



titles across the junior ranks before turning 19, it is the next item on a list she seems in a hurry to tick off.Kajal's rise has been swift enough to invite expectations of gold, even before she has had time to settle into senior wrestling. Dahiya admits that the Indian camp had hoped she would win the title at her first senior World Championships, given what she had already accomplished in the junior ranks."Considering what she had already achieved at the U20 World Championships and now at the senior level, we had hoped she would win gold. So, it was a little disappointing, but these things happen in wrestling.

New Zealand dealt double blow as pace duo ruled out of T20I series vs India

New Zealand have suffered a double injury blow, with Lockie Ferguson and Matt Henry ruled out of the remainder of the T20I series against India. With India leading 3-0, the hosts have called up Matt Fisher as they look to avoid a series whitewash.

New Delhi.(Agency)

New Zealand have suffered a double injury blow ahead of the sold-out fourth T20I against India, with Lockie Ferguson and Matt Henry ruled out of the remainder of the five-match series. The setbacks come with India already holding an unassailable 3-0 lead ahead of Friday's match at Eden Park in Auckland.Ferguson sustained a low-grade tear in his right calf during the second T20I in Christchurch, while Henry suffered a similar injury to his right quadricep. Ferguson is expected to need around another week to recover, with Henry facing one to two weeks on the sidelines, according to New Zealand Cricket.Matt Fisher has been called up to replace Ferguson, while New Zealand will hope both injured pacers recover in time for the ODI series, which begins on November 4."We're gutted for Lockie and Matt," head coach Rob Walter said.Injuries are part and parcel of international cricket, but it doesn't make it any easier when you have to miss games."Walter added that Henry had already been scheduled to sit out the remaining T20Is as part of workload management, and expressed hope that the pacer would play a key role in the ODIs. Ferguson, meanwhile, had been eager to play in front of a sell-out Eden Park crowd but is determined to return for the 50-over series.

HOW INDIA BATTERS HAVE PUT PRESSURE ON NEW ZEALAND

The injuries compound New Zealand's problems after India chased down



targets of 226, 181 and 199 in the first three matches, winning each by four wickets, four wickets and six wickets respectively.Sanju Samson struck 67 off 33 balls in the opening match, while Tilak Varma's unbeaten 51 off 26 deliveries guided India home in the second. Abhishek Sharma then produced the standout innings of the series so far, smashing 113 off just 38 balls as India chased 199 in only 13.2 overs.New Zealand's bowlers have struggled to contain India's attack. Ferguson conceded 34 runs in three overs in the first T20I and 37 in three overs in the second, while Henry gave away 57 runs in 3.4 overs in the opener. Mitchell Santner was a rare bright spot, taking 4/21 in the second match.

Fisher is the direct replacement for Ferguson in the squad. New Zealand also have Adam Milne, Jacob Duffy, Zak Foulkes, Nathan Smith and Blair Tickner as pace options. The final combination will depend on team balance, with Henry already due to miss the remaining T20Is under his workload plan. Kyle Jamieson is scheduled to remain in Wellington for Canterbury's Ford Trophy.

A 15-year-old in the WPL too: Meet Uma Kashvi, Delhi Capitals' latest sensation

New Delhi.(Agency)

Indian cricket has a way of finding its next big story when you least expect it.



For much of 2025, Vaibhav Sooryavanshi captured the imagination with his remarkable rise. At 15, he has already made his India debut. While the young batter continues to chase bigger dreams, another teenager has quietly begun carving out her own place in Indian cricket.

October 28 will always be a special date for Uma Kashvi. At the Grand Hyatt in Kochi, amid the excitement of the Women's Premier League (WPL) 2027 auction, the Karnataka teenager became the youngest player ever to be bought at the tournament. Delhi Capitals secured her services for Rs 10 lakh, opening the door to a new chapter in her cricketing journey.At 15 years and 202 days, Kashvi broke the record previously held by Deeya Yadav, who was 16 when she became the youngest player to be bought at a WPL auction last year. The milestone has put Kashvi in the spotlight, but her journey has been years in the making. From piling up runs in age-group cricket to testing herself against older players, she has steadily built a reputation as a cricketer to watch.However, her WPL debut may have to wait. Kashvi is part of India's Under-19 World Cup plans, with the tournament scheduled to be held in Bangladesh and Nepal during a period that overlaps with the WPL.WPL 2027 Auction HighlightsAt the NICE Cricket Arena in Bengaluru, where Kashvi trains, the news came as a pleasant surprise. Even for those who have followed her development closely, the speed at which she has reached this milestone has been striking. Her coach, Arjun Dev, was among those taken aback when Delhi Capitals called her name.

Janhvi Kapoor

Reveals Shikhar Pahariya Took Break From Studies In London To Stand By Her After Sridevi's Death



Janhvi Kapoor is set to appear on filmmaker Karan Johar's chat show Koffee With Karan 9 alongside her Sunny Sanskari Ki Tulsi Kumari co-star, Varun Dhawan. In the upcoming episode, the actress reportedly spoke about the support she received from her rumoured boyfriend, Shikhar Pahariya, following the death of her mother, veteran actor Sridevi, in February 2018.

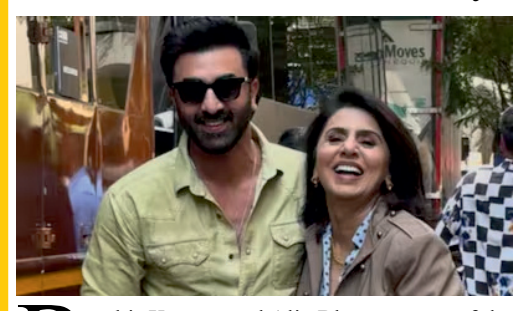
Janhvi Kapoor talks about her beau Shikhar Pahariya

Janhvi Kapoor and Shikhar Pahariya have been linked romantically for years, but the two have largely kept their relationship private. Their appearances together at family functions, festive celebrations and public events have often sparked speculation about their equation. According to Indian Express, Janhvi recalled during the episode that Shikhar, who was studying in London at the time, took time away from his studies and returned to be near her during the difficult period. Although the two were not officially dating then, he wanted to be around in case



she needed him. When Karan Johar asked Janhvi if she always knew Shikhar was her "endgame", the actress reflected on how he stood by her during one of the most difficult phases of her life.She said, "I think he was studying in London, he took like half a semester off. He came to Bombay and he used to stay in town with his dad then, and he moved to his, which I only found out much later, he moved to his friend's house in Juhu for like a month. Not that I was seeing him every day or anything like that, but later on I just found out that he was like, no, in case she needs me, I just want to be around."Veteran actress Sridevi passed away on February 24, 2018, at the age of 54 in Dubai, where she had attended a family wedding. Authorities later confirmed that her death was caused by accidental drowning in her hotel bathtub. Her mortal remains were brought to Mumbai on February 27, and her funeral was held the following day, with film industry members and thousands of fans gathering to pay their final respects.

When Neetu Kapoor Described The Ideal Woman For Ranbir Kapoor: 'Jo Needle Ke Saath Mends The Family'

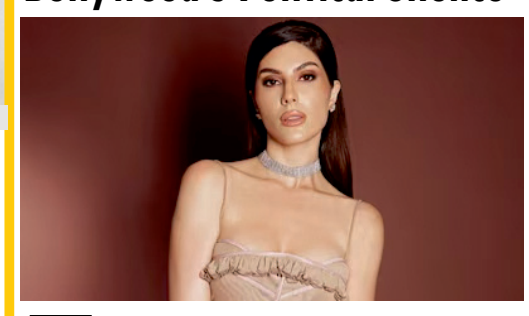


Ranbir Kapoor and Alia Bhatt are one of the most beloved couples in Bollywood. However, when Ranbir was single, his mother and veteran actress Neetu Kapoor described what the ideal girl for her son should be like.As Ranbir appeared on veteran actress Simi Garewal's show 'Simi Selects India's Most Desirable', Neetu shared that the right girl for her son should be like a needle and not a scissor, keeping the family together.During the show, Neetu shared a video message for Ranbir, in which she said, "There are two kinds of girls, one who comes with scissors, and one who comes with a needle. Scissors is the one who breaks the family, or jo needle ke sath aati hai that kind of mends the family together, makes sure the family stays together. And that's the girl I would like."For those who do not know, Ranbir tied the knot with actress Alia Bhatt on April 14, 2022, after dating for some time. The couple welcomed their first child, daughter Raha, on November 6, 2022.



Previously, when Neetu appeared on 'Koffee With Karan', Karan Johar asked her to give special relationship advice to Ranbir and Alia. When KJo asked Neetu about the one thing from her marriage with Rishi Kapoor that she wished Alia and Ranbir to adopt, Neetu replied, "Nothing. Because in today's day and age, do what you want to do. Just be happy. And also, every generation is different. What I went through, I can't expect them to do the same thing, so they know their own vibe."Neetu and Rishi Kapoor got married in a traditional ceremony in 1980. The couple welcomed a girl, Riddhima, in 1980, followed by a boy, Ranbir, in 1982. However, Rishi Kapoor passed away in April 2020 after a two-year battle with leukaemia.

'I Was Born Under Dictatorship, I Don't Expect...': Elnaaz Norouzi On Bollywood's Political Silence



The CJP student protests and the CEC protests at Jantar Mantar reignited conversations around Bollywood's reluctance to weigh in on political issues, raising questions about whether actors have a responsibility to speak out on matters beyond cinema. Actors like Prakash Raj, Swara Bhasker and Naseeruddin Shah directly addressed the industry's silence.But Elnaaz Norouzi believes that the choice to speak up is completely personal. A strong poltical voice, during the 2022 protests in Iran, she expressed solidarity with demonstrators opposing the country's compulsory hijab laws. She also posted a video of herself removing her clothes until she was topless as a protest against restrictions on women's bodily autonomy.Speaking exclusively to News18, she says, "I advocate the fact that nobody should be forced to do anything – what they wear, what they do and what they talk about. In Iran, we were forced to do a lot of things we didn't want to do. If someone wants to wear a hijab or make-up, please let them wear it. If someone doesn't want to, please let them be."

She believes actors too aren't obligated to raise their voice. "One should be free to do what they want to. Don't tell an actor what to do. If an actor decides to talk about their political views and speak up about something, I thank them because that's helping all of us. But if an actor isn't politically well-read or isn't into politics, then just let them do their job, which is acting," Elnaaz remarks.Stressing on the pressure on actors to break their silence, she asserts, "Let artists be artists. Why don't we go to doctors and force them to talk about political issues? Yes, actors and artists influence. But that's also why they shouldn't talk about something if they don't have full information as they may wrongly influence people."

Anushka Sharma



Pregnant? Netizens Speculate After Mumbai Appearance With Virat Kohli

Bollywood actress Anushka Sharma has sparked speculation about a possible third pregnancy after she was recently spotted with cricketer husband Virat Kohli in Mumbai. After videos of the couple's outing surfaced on social media, several users started to wonder whether the actress is expecting another child. However, neither Anushka nor Virat has confirmed the pregnancy rumours.It all started after Anushka and Virat were spotted attending American devotional singer Krishna Das' live kirtan at the Dome, SVP Stadium, in Mumbai's Worli area on Sunday, October 25. The couple was also seen at the Gateway of India before heading to the spiritual music event.



Videos circulating on social media show Anushka clapping and singing along to the devotional chants, with Virat seated beside her. Their appearance quickly caught the attention of fans, with speculation about the actress's pregnancy emerging online.

Reacting to one of the videos, one of the users asked, "Anushka is pregnant again?" Another wrote, "Is it only me who thinks that Anushka Sharma is pregnant?" Meanwhile, a user joked, "Anushka ko bhi Twitter se hi pata chalta hoga ki voh pregnant hai."However, it should also be noted that despite the online chatter, there has been no official confirmation from the couple regarding the possibility of a third child.Anushka Sharma and Virat Kohli tied the knot in December 2017. The couple welcomed their daughter, Vamika, in January 2021, followed by their son, Akaay, in February 2024.

US and Japan, long alarmed by China's aggression, agree to establish missile-production facility

CEBU.(Agency)

The United States and Japan have agreed to establish a Japanese facility for the joint production of advanced medium-range air-to-air missiles, the Japanese defense chief said late Wednesday. It is the latest move by the allies, which have repeatedly expressed alarm over China's growing aggression in Asia.

Japanese Defense Minister Shinjiro Koizumi made the announcement in a news conference Wednesday night in the central province of Cebu, where he met U.S. Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth on the sidelines of an annual meeting of Southeast Asian defense chiefs and their major Asian and Western counterparts.

The annual meetings aim to avert a major regional conflict and strengthen defense cooperation. On the sidelines of the meetings, however, the U.S. and China and their allies have often traded criticisms.

The missiles that will be produced as part of a joint effort called "Operation Supercharge" are "essential for the F-35," Koizumi said.

Iran sentences acclaimed film director Jafar Panahi to new prison term after his return home

CAIRO.(Agency)

Iran has sentenced acclaimed director Jafar Panahi to five years and one month in prison, following his return to the country earlier this year, after the start of the U.S. and Israeli attacks on the Islamic Republic. The Tehran court also ordered the confiscation of Panahi's "movable and immovable assets," his lawyer Mostafa Nili told the reformist news site Emtedad in an interview late Tuesday.Nili did not say what Panahi was convicted of. But the director, who returned to Iran in March, had been previously convicted of "propaganda activities against the system." Panahi's sentence was handed down on Monday, a friend and an Iranian activist based in Europe told The Associated Press over the phone. Hossein Razzagh said he spoke with Panahi on Monday evening after the sentencing and the filmmaker had not been detained.The sentence can be appealed but "now all of his bank accounts have been blocked.

US judge rejects Trump admin interference in California midterm vote

LOS ANGELES.(Agency)

A federal judge on Wednesday rejected the US Department of Justice's efforts to set aside the ballots of more than 20,000 California voters it said might not be citizens, slamming the move as brazen pre-election "interference."The case sparked an uproar ahead of the November 3 midterms, in which President Donald Trump's Republican Party is at risk of losing its control of Congress, and appears to represent another attempt to cast doubt on electoral results.Democratic Party leaders have sued the Trump administration over the request, accusing Republicans of aiming "threats and intimidation" at state and local officials before the vote.

US District Judge David O. Carter agreed, refusing to order the seizure of the ballots and siding with the government of Democratic-led California.

"Never before in American history has the federal government, on the eve of an election, sought to coerce a state and local government to abandon their own onstitutional elections procedures and bend to the will of the Executive Branch,"public interest favors their protection," he added.

A US cruise ship suspends a global voyage in Asia due to fuel costs, stranding 200 passengers

The ship has been carrying 203 passengers, mostly Americans, along with 156 crew members, according to Cambodian officials.

SIHANOUKVILLE, Cambodia.(Agency)

A U.S. cruise ship on an around-the-world voyage that touted its cabins as floating homes suspended its three-year journey in Cambodia due to fuel costs, forcing hundreds of passengers to disembark.The MV Odyssey set sail two years ago on a voyage to the seven continents marketed as combining long-term living at sea with global travel. Its operator had offered to "make the Odyssey your permanent home," with the purchase price of a suite for the lifetime of the vessel starting around $230,000.For now, it is docked at the Cambodian port of Sihanoukville on the Gulf of Thailand, with no certain departure date.The ship has been carrying 203 passengers, mostly Americans, along with 156 crew members, according to Cambodian officials. It has a 650-passenger capacity.Its Florida-based operator, Villa Vie Residences, said monthly fuel expenses per cabin that historically averaged $1,800 have reached an estimated $6,000 to $8,000 in parts of Asia due to the war in Iran. The company said it sought to reduce fuel consumption by slowing the itinerary and spending more time in port, but was unable to offset the surging costs.Traffic has been curtailed in the Strait of Hormuz since the war in Iran began, squeezing supplies of all kinds of petroleum-based fuels, especially in Southeast Asia, and sharply increasing prices."We have been unable to continue carrying the resulting operating losses," Villa Vie Residences said in a statement issued Tuesday. "Passing the full increase on to residents is not a realistic solution. Our focus now is on supporting residents, crew, and employees" while it tries to restructure."The company is working with residents to coordinate disembarkation and identify temporary living arrangements," it said.Those on the ship had hoped to sail for



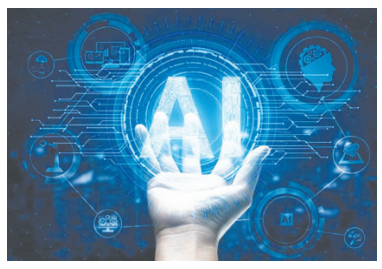
years to comePassengers, however, said they received no support and had to make their own arrangements after being given seven hours notice on Tuesday to disembark. Some were devastated and expressed hope a new company could rescue the venture so life at sea can continue.Paul and Lynn Montoya, a retired couple from Wyoming, said they bought a window cabin and had expected to sail for years. They boarded the ship 17 months ago in Panama.Paul praised the concept of residential cruising but said the shipowner lacked the expertise to make the business financially sustainable. While rising fuel costs had been cited publicly as the reason for the suspension, he said the company had already been struggling. Changes to itinerary, unreliable internet access and declining food quality had pushed many residents to leave the ship in recent months, he said.Lynn said residents were repeatedly asked to contribute additional money for fuel and other expenses, including a fresh call to raise funds for fuel to get out of Cambodia. She said the crew members were also not paid.

"We were tired of every two to four weeks being asked for money for fuel, money for everything," she said. "We had hopes but they just kept sinking further and further into the hole through mismanagement."

New York passes law restricting children's use of AI chatbots

NEW YORK.(Agency)

The governor of New York state signed a new law Wednesday preventing minors from using AI chatbots that act as companions, in one of the broadest moves yet for restricting consumer-facing models.The law requires chatbot operators, such as OpenAI's ChatGPT, to verify the ages of users and restrict the use of certain traits by the artificial intelligence interface if the user is under 18.If used by a minor, chatbots would not be able to produce any content that could leave its user to believe it "is human, alive, or experiences human emotions," the law states.It also cannot generate outputs that makes the user think it "has a personal relationship, professional relationship, or an authority figure role," nor can it frame the content it produces as being a "personal opinion.""No longer will minors have access to chatbots that pretend to be their friends, boyfriends and girlfriends," New York Governor



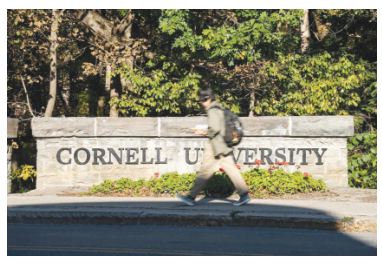
Kathy Hochul said at a signing ceremony Wednesday."No longer will chatbots be able to keep sensitive information about a minor's emotional and physical health," Hochul added.Other US states including California have also passed laws restricting chatbots, but the law signed by Hochul imposes some of the broadest language in regulating the tech, prompting backlash from AI companies. Tech:NYC, a tech industry advocacy group for the sector in New York, criticized the "vague language" of the law."Keeping kids safe online should not mean cutting them off from tools that help them learn and prepare for careers," the group said in a statement.

AI giants OpenAI and Anthropic did not respond to an AFP request for comment on the law.Common Sense Media, a nonprofit advocacy group that provides guidelines for parents about media suitability for children, celebrated the bill's passage, calling it "the strongest kids' AI safety bill in the country.""AI companies offer chatbots with features that are dangerous, and even deadly, for kids and teens.

Cornell faculty to move forward with no-confidence vote over handling of sexual assault allegations

world.(Agency)

Cornell University faculty debated Wednesday over whether they had enough information to pass judgment on the school's leadership over its handling of a woman's report that she was gang raped at a fraternity house in 2024, with some professors urging patience and others arguing that years of institutional failures demanded action.The discussion unfolded during a Faculty Senate meeting closed to the media, according to a recording obtained by The Associated Press. Faculty will now vote electronically on a proposed noonfidence resolution in Cornell's administration through Nov. 6. The largely symbolic vote could pressure



university trustees, who choose its leadership.Some faculty struggled with the decision to speak publicly, sharing painful experiences of harassment and fears of professional retaliation.Beth Frances Milles, a performing arts professor, Cornell graduate and parent, pleaded for civility after describing receiving messages from women who experienced sexual assault, including former classmates."I understand we have to take action," she said. "There are so many things to talk about. Please, let's talk about it together and not sneer at each other when we disagree."After at least an hour of debate, members voted down an attempt to delay voting on the resolution until an independent investigation into Cornell's handling of the sexual assault allegations is completed.

Thousands in Kosovo demand state action after 8 women die this year in domestic violence

PRISTINA, Kosovo.(Agency)

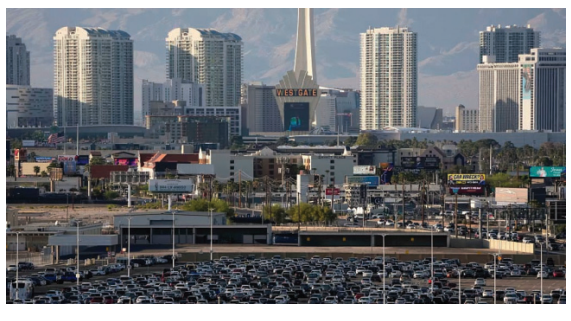
Angry protesters in Kosovo on Wednesday demanded state action over widespread violence against women in the staunchly patriarchal Balkan country, splashing red paint on government buildings in a message to the authorities that they have blood on their hands for failing to prevent it.Thousands of people joined the rally in the capital Pristina that was called after Arlinda Zekaj, 49, was killed by her brother-in-law on Sunday near the western town of Peja. Activists say that Zekaj became the eighth victim killed as the result of domestic violence in Kosovo this year."Do we have to die to be taken seriously?" read one of the banners that the protesters carried during their march. Other messages written in red paint said "Men kill women, the state stays silent" or "Down with the patriarchal system."Protesters also held photos of the murdered women.Kosovo has passed several laws and regulations to combat violence against women — including life sentences for murderers — but activists say that their implementation remains inconsistent and without coordination by relevant authorities, including police, social services, prosecutors and courts.

The situation is similar throughout the Balkans, a region where male dominance is part of tradition. The problem surged following the wars in the 1990s and the political, economic and social crises that have persisted since the conflicts ended.The death of Zekaj, who held dual U.S. and Kosovo citizenship, sparked additional public outrage because she had written to the authorities before her death, asking for help and warning she could get killed.In her letter to the chief prosecutor's office just three days before she was killed, Zekaj said officials were "shifting responsibility from one to another" thus allowing "the danger to my life to continue."Zekaj had repeatedly complained of violence from her husband and had moved away to live with her parents while asking for protection.She returned to her home after her husband was detained last weekend for family violence. Police offered no escort, and her brother-in-law killed her with an ax when she got back, according to a relative.

Man whose 'hijack' text caused plane to turn back said it was banter with co-worker, police say

LAS VEGAS.(Agency)

A passenger arrested for texting that he was going to "hijack" the plane he was on told officers the message was banter with a co-worker and denied intending to harm anyone, according to a police report.The United plane headed to Newark, New Jersey, was diverted back to Las Vegas shortly after takeoff



Saturday night after a flight attendant spotted the text, and Dante Milne, 25, was taken into custody.Milne was charged with making a threat or offering false information in reference to an act of terrorism.His attorney, James Gallo, told The Associated Press that he was still evaluating his client's case, but Milne plans to plead not guilty.The flight attendant told Las Vegas police she had first noticed two passengers exchanging text messages during boarding that included derogatory remarks about other passengers and attendants.She later saw an incoming message that began with "I'm gonna hijack," and she notified the lead flight attendant, according to the police report.

The sender was later identified as Milne, the report said.Police said the full message read: "I'm gonna hijack this" plane - although he used an expletive instead of plane - "and crash ur row only."Once the aircraft passed 10,000 feet (3,050 meters), the captain was notified, the report said, noting that was "consistent with sterile flight deck procedures."The pilot can be heard telling an air traffic controller that a flight attendant reported the text message, so they proceeded to return to Las Vegas, according to a recording posted on the ATC app.Milne, a rsident of Woodridge, New Jersey, told officers he was in Las Vegas for a three-day apprenticeship training program associated with his work as an underwater welder, according to the arrest report.He said e consumed beer and shots at an airport bar and intended to sleep during the flight, the report said.Milne, a resident of Woodridge, New Jersey, told officers he was in Las Vegas for a three-day apprenticeship training program associated with his work as an underwater welder, according to the arrest report.He said he consumed beer and shots at an airport bar and intended to sleep during the flight, the report said.He said he was asleep on the flight when he woke up and learned the flight was returning back to Las Vegas, the report said.Milne acknowledged exchanging texts with the other passenger, who he'd met at the training program, but initially said he couldn't recall the content, the police report said.

Bolsonaro claims he is Brazil's true leader after fleeing to US

MIAMI, United States.(Agency)

United States: Brazil's defeated right-wing presidential candidate Flavio Bolsonaro insisted Wednesday he is his country's rightful leader, after fleeing to the United States to start a self-imposed exile.Bolsonaro's defiance on arrival in Florida signaled continued upheaval for Brazil, where leftist President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva won a dramatic runoff election Sunday."I am the elected president, and the criminals who stole Brazil's election are part of a criminal organization that has established a tyranny," Bolsonaro said in the statement published on his X account, slamming "electoral fraud.""I will lead the opposition from here," he said. In a subsequent statement, he revised his claim, saying he is the "leader," rather than "president."Bolsonaro, 45, touched down earlier Wednesday in a private jet at Opa-Locka Executive Airport near Miami.Rogerio Marinho, the leader of Bolsonaro's Liberal Party in the Senate, told reporters in Brasilia that he was in "solidarity" with the former candidate, describing him as a "political exile."

However, he distanced himself from Bolsonaro's statement, and refused to back up Bolsonaro's claims of electoral fraud."The LiberalParty cannot make that claim," he said. "There is no evidence of that."Flavio Bolsonaro "is an expression of the right in Brazil today...he calls himself a leader and it's true: he's a leader," Marinho told reporters.

US President Donald Trump's hard-right administration has strong links to Bolsonaro and his father Jair Bolsonaro, who is under house arrest in Brazil after attempting to overturn his own electoral loss to Lula in 2022.Trump reiterated his stand that Brazil's election was "very strange" but told reporters he "won't get involved" in Flavio Bolsonaro's claim to the presidency.Details of how Bolsonaro, accompanied by his wife and daughters, made it to US soil are still emerging.He is under investigation in his home country over alleged corruption and money laundering. With his current parliamentary immunity about to expire, he was ordered to surrender his passports but left anyway, reaching the United States via Argentina and Ecuador.A police source told AFP that Bolsonaro's Brazilian and diplomatic passports had been canceled, but the senator has also held Italian nationality since 2023, according to Italian documents seen by AFP.The US Department of Homeland Security said in a statement that the Bolsonaro family members were inspected and cleared "with applicable immigration laws and procedures."

The travel ban was issued by powerful Supreme Court Justice Alexandre de Moraes, who led the case against Bolsonaro's father and is a controversial figure hated by the Brazilian right.