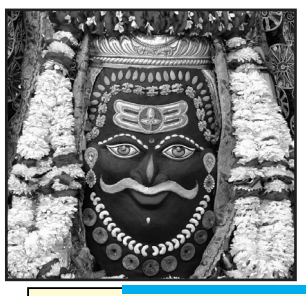
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Centre offers two-year extension to 75% of Agniveers, opens pathway to regular forces

NEW DELHI . (Agency).

The Centre has introduced a revised pathway for the absorption of Agniveers into the regular Armed Forces, offering an additional two-year engagement period to the 75% who would otherwise leave the service after completing their initial four-year tenure.Chief of Defence Staff General NS Raja Subramani on Wednesday said the Cabinet had created a provision under which the remaining 75% of Agniveers would be offered an additional two years of engagement, after which those willing to continue would be enrolled into the Armed Forces, subject to objective selection criteria.

"Today is a very significant day for the Indian Defence Forces and for our Agniveers. The Cabinet has created a pathway for all Agniveers to be absorbed into the Indian Armed Forces," he said.The announcement comes as the first batch of Agniveers, recruited under the Agnipath scheme introduced on June 14, 2022, approaches the completion of its four-year tenure.Raja Subramani said the performance of Agniveers had been continuously evaluated during the four-year period and that the scheme was subject to periodic reviews.

Annamalai attacks CM Vijay over recruitment process in Tamil Nadu

New Delhi(Agency).

Former Tamil Nadu BJP president K Annamalai on Wednesday launched a fresh round of attacks on the Joseph Vijay-led government over its reported decision to outsource lower-level government jobs, accusing it of undermining the recruitment system and questioning whether young aspirants were gradually losing faith in the Tamil Nadu Public Service Commission (TNPSC).The controversy comes amid reports that the Tamil Nadu government has decided to fill lower-level vacancies, including Group IV posts, through the Overseas Manpower Corporation Limited (OMCL), instead of the TNPSC. The reported move has also raised questions over the government's commitment to its pre-election promise on government recruitment.

In a detailed social media post, Annamalai, who quit BJP and launched his own outfit, We The Leaders, pointed to the declining number of applicants for the TNPSC Group IV examination, arguing that the trend reflected growing concerns among young people about the recruitment process.According to the figures cited by him, the number of applicants fell from 22.06 lakh in 2022 to 20.37 lakh in 2024 and 13.89 lakh in 2025. The figure has dropped further to 9.80 lakh so far this year, marking a decline of nearly 56 per cent over four years."Government jobs are the dream of lakhs of young people in Tamil Nadu. However, questions are being raised over whether young aspirants are gradually losing faith in the Tamil Nadu Public Service Commission (TNPSC), which is expected to serve as a symbol of hope for turning that dream into reality," Annamalai said.

A zero speaks volumes: PM praises CRPF for no operational fatalities in a year

Prime Minister Narendra Modi praised the CRPF for completing 12 consecutive months without an operational fatality, the first such achievement in 47 years. The force's last operational death was reported on October 30, 2025. Nine personnel were killed while performing operational duties between January 1 and October 30 that year.

New Delhi (Agency).

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday praised the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) for completing 12 consecutive months without losing a personnel in operational duties, marking the first such achievement in 47 years.A zero speaks volumes," Modi said in a post on X, sharing a graphic featuring the number zero and three CRPF personnel holding guns."Zero CRPF casualties in 12 consecutive months. For the first time in 47 years," the Prime Minister said.



The milestone was also announced by CRPF Director General GP Singh. In a post on X, Singh said the force had completed one year without any operational fatality, with the last such death reported on October 30, 2025."This has happened after 47 years (last such period ended in January 1979)," the CRPF chief said.Officials said nine CRPF personnel were killed while performing operational duties between January 1 and October 30, 2025.The force said the achievement came despite sustained and intensified operations across various operational theatres where its personnel are deployed.A senior CRPF officer described the development as a satisfying achievement, noting that the force has been at the forefront of internal security operations in several violence-affected regions.

"Not losing even a single jawan or officer in operations reflects the improving security situation and the force learning from its mistakes," the officer said.With around 3.25 lakh personnel, the CRPF is India's largest paramilitary force and plays a key role in internal security operations across the country.Its responsibilities include anti-Naxal operations, counter-terrorism duties in Jammu and Kashmir and counter-insurgency operations in the northeastern states.The force was raised in 1939 under British rule and was renamed the Central Reserve Police Force in 1949, two years after India's Independence.According to official data, 2,270 CRPF personnel, including officers and jawans, have laid down their lives in the line of duty so far.

NANDURBAR CRIME SYNDICATE: MD Drugs, Illegal Arms and Gambling Network Allegedly Operating Near Gujarat Border

Mahanagar Metro Desk

Nandurbar / Mumbai: border in Nandurbar district, is allegedly emerging as a major hub of organised criminal activities. What was once considered a sensitive border town is now facing serious allegations of an expanding criminal network that could pose a significant challenge to the state's law enforcement and security apparatus.An investigation by Mahanagar Metro raises serious questions about an alleged nexus between organised crime, illegal gambling, drug trafficking and corruption within sections of the local administrative and law enforcement machinery. The allegations point towards a network that reportedly operates through financial influence, political connections and alleged protection from certain individuals within the system.A New Criminal Hotspot: Juna RTO and BidkhipadaBehind the main road near Juna RTO (Navi RTO), Shriram Park and the Indian Petrol Pump, in the Bidkhipada area, large sheds made of iron structures and tarpaulin are allegedly being used for illegal activities.According to sources, these locations are not merely gambling centres. They are allegedly frequented at night by individuals from Maharashtra, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh and



Daman, including sus pected criminals and individuals reportedly linked to interstate criminal networks.Sources further claim that substantial amounts of unaccounted money are wagered every night, while the alleged network operates beyond the reach of ordinary law enforcement scrutiny.The nature, scale and possible interstate connections of these activities warrant an independent and impartial investigation by the competent authorities.Key Figures Named in the Alleged SyndicateAccording to the information received by Mahanagar Metro, three individuals have been named in connection with the alleged network:1. Raees Sheikh (Navapur): Serious allegations have been raised regarding his suspected links with underworld elements and the D-Company network. Sources claim that approximately ₹2 lakh is allegedly collected daily as extortion or protection money, with claims of its connection to an international criminal network. These allegations require independent verification.2. Pappu Goswami (Lakadkot): Allegedly described by sources as a key intermediary responsible for influencing or managing police, Local Crime Branch (LCB) and administrative officials through financial arrangements.3. Suraj Jaiswal: Allegedly involved in managing interstate connections, logistics and financial recovery operations associated with the network.The alleged connections of these individuals with the D-Company syndicate associated with Dawood Ibrahim and other interstate criminal networks raise serious security concerns. However, these claims have not been independently established and require investigation by the appropriate agencies.Drugs, Human Trafficking and Illegal Weapons: Serious AllegationsThe activities allegedly taking place inside the sheds of Bidkhipada raise concerns about public safety, particularly given the possibility of organised criminal operations.1. MD Drugs: A Threat to the Younger GenerationSources allege that MD drugs and synthetic narcotic substances are being supplied through the network.

Youth Congress suspends 60 office-bearers for skipping 'vote chori' rally in Delhi

Bhopal(Agency).

The Madhya Pradesh Youth Congress has suspended 60 office-bearers, including nine district presidents, for failing to attend the Congress's 'vote chori' rally at Delhi's Ramlila Maidan on November 1.

In an order issued on November 3, the organisation suspended them with immediate effect until further orders. The action was taken on the instructions of the Indian Youth Congress's national leadership.The action covers nine district presidents, five vice-presidents, 14 general secretaries and 32 secretaries.The suspended district presidents are Saurabh Sharma of Maihar, Prithviraj Chauhan of Agar, Manmohan Shaktawat of Neemuch,



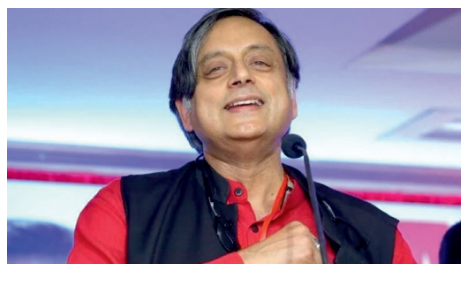
Arjun Jangle of Burhanpur, Manvendra Mishra of Anuppur, Pancham Bhil of Guna, Aditya Goyal of Barwani, Manvendra Singh Parmar of Chhatarpur and Manish Purohit of Bhind.

Office-bearers had been directed to attend the rally, which was organised over allegations of vote theft. The suspension order described their absence as "organisational indiscipline."The suspensions are being seen as an effort to enforce organisational discipline and compliance with the leadership's instructions.The action follows the Congress's show of strength in Delhi over its allegations of vote theft, with the leadership taking a strict view of the Madhya Pradesh office-bearers' absence.

Tired of 'andhbhakts'? Shashi Tharoor suggests a new word for political puppets

New Delhi(Agency).

Tired of calling political loyalists 'andhbhakts', 'godi' or 'paid followers'? Congress MP Shashi Tharoor has a new word for them -- 'quockerwodger'.The Thiruvananthapuram MP has suggested the obscure English term as an alternative,



using it to describe people who act as political puppets, controlled by someone else and following their instructions.

The Thiruvananthapuram MP, known for introducing uncommon English words to his social media followers, explained that a 'quockerwodger' refers to "a political puppet; a person who is controlled by someone else and acts on their instructions".Sharing the definition on X, Tharoor wrote. "For those tired of describing people as 'andhbhakts', 'godi', 'paid followers' and the like, an acceptable alternative?"Tharoor had also introduced the meaning of 'quockerwodger' in April 2022, calling it a useful addition to the country's political vocabulary. The author and politician has frequently drawn attention to obscure English words through his social media posts, often prompting followers to look up their meanings.Among the other words he has used in political contexts are 'allodoxaphobia', which he explained as an irrational fear of opinions, 'farrago', meaning a confused mixture, and 'troglodyte', referring to someone regarded as deliberately .

More trouble for Omar Abdullah? 10-15 disgruntled MLAs hold secret meet

Amid growing discontent within the ruling National Conference, around 10-15 disgruntled MLAs held a meeting in Srinagar on Tuesday. The unease stems from Omar Abdullah's controversial reshuffle and expansion of his council of ministers.

Srinagar(Agency).

The crisis within Jammu and Kashmir's ruling National Conference deepened after six-time MLA Mubarak Gul intensified his posturing to express disappointment over being denied a ministerial post.

Separately, around 10-15 disgruntled NC MLAs held a second round of discussions in Srinagar on Tuesday evening amid unease over Chief Minister Omar Abdullah's controversial reshuffle and expansion of his council of ministers.The developments come as a jolt to the National Conference, which was dealt a fresh blow after Srinagar MP Aga Syed Ruhullah quit the party on Tuesday. Ruhullah claimed the NC abandoned its electoral promises on the restoration of Article 370 and the protection of J&K's constitutional rights.Ruhullah's exit comes amidst a broader crisis for the NC over the cabinet expansion on October 27.



On Tuesday, 10-15 MLAs held a meeting to deliberate on their future course of action.The disgruntled MLAs have sought the replacement of all eight Cabinet ministers, including the deputy chief minister, within 15 days. They have also demanded the removal of Omar's adviser Nasir Aslam Wani. The MLAs have alleged that Wani wields excessive influence over the Chief Minister.On Tuesday, Mubarak Gul, Eidgah MLA, created a flutter after he called a press conference at his residence on November 4. His supporters have been staging protests in Srinagar against Omar since the Cabinet reshuffle. It seemed Gul would announce his resignation or the next course of action.However, on Wednesday, Gul deferred his press conference, saying he would speak at an appropriate time. He is likely to hold a meeting with NC's top leadership.Gul, who also served as the J&K Speaker, had earlier expressed disappointment.

Motorcyclist dies after WagonR rams into bike in Sohna

Gurgaon.(Agency)

A motorcyclist was killed in an accident after a WagonR allegedly being driven at a high speed collided head-on near Khutpuri turn in Sohna Monday. The driver abandoned the vehicle at the spot and fled, police said.The deceased was identified as Manoj Kumar (38) from Hajipur village. According to a complaint filed by his younger brother Sonu, Manoj was nearing the petrol pump at the turn when the car, approaching from the Khutpuri village side, allegedly collided with his motorcycle head-on. Manoj sustained serious injuries in the accident. His brother, who reached the spot, rushed him to the govt hospital in Sohna where he was declared dead. Sub-inspector Satpal reached the hospital with a police team where Sonu submitted his complaint. He told police that the collision occurred because the driver was allegedly being driven at high speed negligently and sought legal action against the driver.An FIR was registered at Sadar Sohna police station for rash driving and causing death by negligence under BNS. Efforts are underway to identify and trace the car driver.

One-year-old boy wanders off while playing near home, gets crushed by mini truck in Noida's Shahdara village

Noida.(Agency)

A one-year-old boy died after being hit by a mini-truck carrying water bottles in Shahdara village in Sector 141 on Tuesday. The driver allegedly abandoned the vehicle at the spot and fled. Police reached the spot, seized the truck and sent the body for an autopsy.Police said the accident took place around 10.20am in a narrow lane near a T-junction, barely a few metres from the toddler's house. The child, Shivraj, was playing near his house's front door. His mother was in the kitchen keeping an eye on the child, but he eventually wandered further away, where he was struck by the reversing mini-truck.

"By the time the driver noticed the child it was too late and he could not stop the vehicle. The rear wheel of the truck had run over the boy, leaving him with grievous injuries on his head," a police officer associated with the investigation said. His mother rushed out of the house and pulled him out from beneath the vehicle.

Children's play area in Sec 43 park dug up for Chhath, locals protest

Noida.(Agency)

As Chhath Puja approaches and dedicated spaces are being prepared across the cities for the festivities, residents of Sector 50 have objected to the recent digging of the children's play area in Sector 43 park for Chhath Puja preparations.They said the festival was earlier celebrated at a vacant spot near the park, and the sudden shift has raised concerns over safety and damage to public infrastructure.

Puneet Vasishta, a resident of Godrej Woods Apartments in Sector 43, said, "There are also vacant plots near Som Bazaar that could have been used, and the horticulture department did not have to dig up an established playground just for a two-day ceremony. It will take months for them to restore the park."

Vinod Agarwal, a Sector 50 resident, said the extensive digging had made the park unsuitable for recreation and that the disruption undermined the integrity of public amenities.

Alka Aggarwal, a Sector 43 resident, added, "This park was the only space for children of Sadarpur to play. It has been destroyed by the horticulture department now."Rajiva Singh also wrote to the director of the horticulture department, seeking immediate intervention.

CRORES IN DONATIONS UNDER SCRUTINY? Calls Grow for Independent Audit of Religious Trusts

Mahanagar Metro Desk

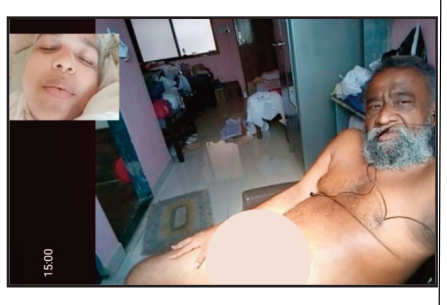
Mandsaur, Madhya Pradesh: The teachings of Lord Mahavira guide humanity towards self-discipline, moral conduct and spiritual purity. However, when serious allegations of misconduct, misuse of religious faith and financial irregularities emerge against someone wearing the sacred robes of a Jain monk, questions naturally arise across the community.The controversy surrounding Sagarchandra Sagar has now reached a significant level, triggering widespread discussion and concern among Jain devotees, with reactions reportedly emerging from Masaur in Madhya Pradesh to Palitana in Gujarat.VIRAL SOCIAL MEDIA CONTENT RAISES QUESTIONS OVER THE DISCI



PLINE OF MONASTIC LIFEThe controversy primarily revolves around alleged WhatsApp conversations, audio recordings and photographs circulating on social media. The material has raised serious questions about the dignity, discipline and ethical standards expected from Jain monastic life.Allegations involving purported inappropriate relationships with certain women and



Jain nuns have also gained attention.However, material circulating



on social media cannot, by itself, be treated as conclusive evidence or a basis for declaring anyone guilty.Two important questions arise:If the allegations are baseless, why has a clear and comprehensive explanation not been presented by the concerned parties? And if there is substance to these allegations, why should an impartial legal investigation not be welcomed.

Sometimes Losing Is the Greatest Victory in Life!

Mahanagar Metro Desk

Rupesh Solanki: Life is not merely a race to win; it is also the art of understanding the invaluable lessons hidden within defeat. Every person wants to succeed in life and expects their hard work to bring positive results. The desire to stay ahead in every competition, maintain one's position in every relationship, and achieve victory in every situation is a natural human instinct. However, the reality of life is that not every battle is meant to be won, and not every defeat is a symbol of failure.Often, a person keeps arguing to make someone understand, suppresses personal opinions to preserve relationships, and struggles continuously to prove their identity. But a time comes when one realizes that it is not necessary to prove oneself right everywhere. Sometimes, remaining silent, forgiving someone's mistake, or peacefully walking away from a conflict is also a sign of great wisdom.We often associate defeat with weakness. When a person scores low marks in an examination, suffers a business loss, loses a competition, or fails to achieve the desired outcome in



life, they begin to consider themselves unsuccessful. But in reality, defeat is not the final destination; rather, it is an experience that can lead to a new beginning. A person who is willing to learn from their mistakes can stand stronger and more confident in the future.Even in the world of relationships, losing sometimes becomes necessary. A person who wins every argument may emerge victorious in a discussion but may lose valuable relationships. When someone insists only on making their own point without understanding the feelings of others, distances begin to grow in relationships. Sometimes, putting aside one's ego to bring happiness to someone else is not a defeat but a victory of humanity.Parents sacrifice many of their own wishes for the happiness of their children. Teachers dedicate their time and hard work to building a bright future for their students. Soldiers sacrifice their personal comforts for the security of their nation. One thing is common in all these examples: where dedication becomes greater than selfish interests, personal sacrifice transforms into a greater human victory.In today's world, money, position, reputation, and social identity have become the measures of success. People constantly compare themselves with others and remain caught up in an endless race. In this pursuit, they sometimes lose their peace of mind, precious family time, and the little joys of life. But towards the end of life, a person does not remember only how many competitions they won; they also remember how many relationships they preserved, how many hearts they won, and how many people's lives they made happier.

Manchester-based techie found dead in Gurgaon hotel jacuzzi

Gurgaon.(Agency)

A 37-year-old Agra resident, who was working for a Zurich-based R&D firm and living in Manchester for three years, was found dead floating face down in a hotel jacuzzi in the city on Monday evening after staff opened the room with a master key when he failed to respond to repeated knocks.The visiting techie had booked the hotel after dropping his friends at IGI airport on Sunday. Cops recovered a strip of pills from the room and are examining them.Pranjal Pathak was from Old Idgah Colony in Agra. He had arrived in India on Oct 24. He travelled to Rishikesh with a group of friends and later returned to Delhi to drop them. While his friends went back, Pathak stayed on to meet his fiancée, a police officer said.After shopping on Sunday with her, he booked the room at Orsum Hotel in Sector 53. He was staying in room 302 on the third floor and was scheduled to check out around 11.30am on Monday. When he did not check out or respond to hotel staff till the evening, they entered the room using the master key and found him unconscious.Cops from Sector 53 police station reached the hotel after being informed by the control room and sent the body for a postmortem examination. His family in Agra was notified. A forensic team also visited the spot and collected evidence.

"Some tablets were found in the room. Police are examining the tablets to ascertain their nature and whether they were energy supplements or some other medication.

Investigators are also scanning the hotel's CCTV footage," an officer said.The body has been handed over to the family after the autopsy on Tuesday. The cause of death has not been established so far. Police have initiated inquest proceedings, though no case has been registered.

Gurgaon AQI enters 'very poor' category for first time this season, rises to 305 despite GRAP-II

Gurgaon.(Agency)

The city's air quality deteriorated to the 'very poor' category for the first time this season on Tuesday, despite GRAP-II being in effect across Delhi-NCR. In four days, the air quality index (AQI) jumped from 69 (satisfactory) on Oct 30 to 305 (very poor) on Tuesday. Of the four monitoring stations in the city, TERI Gram recorded the highest AQI at 335 (very poor), followed by NISE Gwalpahari at 328 (very poor).Sector 51 recorded an AQI of 300, while Vikas Sadan reported 256, with both in the poor category.Dr Sunny Kalra, director and unit head of pulmonology at Max Hospital, Gurgaon, said, "PM2.5 and PM10 particles enter the respiratory system, with fine PM2.5 particles capable of penetrating deep into the lungs and even entering the bloodstream. Exposure to these pollutants can trigger inflammation, breathing difficulties and worsen existing respiratory and cardiovascular conditions. Immediate effects include coughing, throat irritation, breathlessness, wheezing and eye irritation, while prolonged exposure can lead to reduced lung function, chronic bronchitis, aggravated asthma, cardiovascular diseases and an increased risk of lung cancer. Children, elderly people and those with existing illnesses are particularly vulnerable."Dr Kalra advised residents to check daily AQI levels, avoid outdoor activities during high-pollution hours and wear well-fitted N95 masks when outdoors. He also recommended keeping windows closed during severe pollution, using HEPA air purifiers indoors and avoiding strenuous outdoor exercise. "Residents should seek medical advice if they experience persistent coughing or breathing difficulties," he said. The spike reflects typical winter conditions in North India. Low temperatures, calm winds and early-morning fog reduce the dispersion of pollutants from vehicles, construction, industry and waste burning. As a result, pollutants remain trapped near the ground, keeping AQI levels elevated for extended periods.The city has seen similar episodes over the past few winters. Authorities typically implement measures under the Graded Response Action Plan when pollution levels rise sharply, but the broader pattern shows air quality often deteriorates in late December and early January when weather conditions remain still.'Very poor' air causes breathing discomfort for most people, particularly children, the elderly and those with asthma or heart and lung conditions. Health advisories recommend avoiding strenuous outdoor activity and reducing exposure.The city recorded a minimum temperature of 14.1 degrees Celsius on Tuesday, as the mercury continued to dip in the mornings. The maximum temperature settled at 28 degrees Celsius, according to India Meteorological Department (IMD) data. The minimum temperature at Gurgaon's automatic weather station (AWS) was 3.1 degrees below normal.

IIT-Roorkee to study Parthala underpass design, work may begin next month

Noida.(Agency)

Noida Authority has sent the detailed project report for a six-lane underpass beneath Parthala flyover to IIT Roorkee for technical vetting, taking forward a key project to unclog one of the city's busiest traffic bottlenecks. Estimated to cost Rs 92 crore, the 710-metre underpass is expected to be completed within 18 months of construction, which is likely to begin by Dec.Parthala roundabout is where traffic from Vikas Marg and Faridabad-Noida-Ghaziabad (FNG) road converges. The junction connects sectors 52 and 71 with Gaur Chowk, while FNG corridor links Sorka village to Chhajarsi Colony and provides access to Ghaziabad, NH-9 and Delhi-Meerut Expressway."The DPR for the underpass beneath the Parthala Signature Bridge on FNG route has been sent to IIT Roorkee for technical vetting. The process of appointing a developer will begin once the institute's report is received," said AK Arora, general manager at Noida Authority.The 600-metre, six-lane Parthala flyover opened in 2023 to improve connectivity between Noida and Greater Noida West. Congestion, however, persists at the roundabout below, where traffic police often have to regulate vehicle movement manually during morning and evening peak hours. The pressure is expected to rise further once the FNG Expressway is completed and provides a direct link between Noida and Faridabad.The underpass will have three lanes in each direction and is expected to benefit residents of sectors 119, 120, 121 and 122, Chhijarsi and adjoining areas. Two sumps and a



pumping system will drain rainwater. Construction will use diaphragm walls and cast-in-situ reinforced cement concrete (RCC), with the walls designed to protect the stability of surrounding structures and land."Parthala roundabout has become a major traffic bottleneck, particularly during peak hours. We often have to wait for long periods as vehicles from Vikas Marg and FNG road converge here. The underpass will significantly ease the situation," said Mukesh Kumar, a Greater Noida West resident.

Kerala: Union government opposes bar licence renewal order

KOCHI.(Agency)

The Union government on Tuesday opposed the previous LDF government's order directing the excise commissioner to renew FL-3 (bar) licences of hotels that sought reclassification of their star ratings for 2026-27 and are awaiting approval from the Ministry of Tourism.In an affidavit filed in the High Court, the Union government said pendency of an application on the



NIDHI portal could not be treated as grant of classification or reclassification by the ministry or give rise to any presumption or inference of administrative inaction, negligence or delay on the ministry's part.

The affidavit was filed in response to a petition by M M Sanjeev Kumar of Kollam, seeking a CBI probe into the procedure adopted by the then LDF government in February for the renewal of bar licences of hotels that did not obtain the mandatory star rating from the tourism ministry.

Odisha: No charge sheet filed, man gets bail in brown sugar case

CUTTACK.(Agency)

The Orissa High Court has granted default bail to a person arrested with 320 grams of brown sugar, holding that the prosecution's failure to file a charge sheet within the statutory 180-day period under the NDPS Act violated his legal rights and the constitutional guarantee of personal liberty.Justice V Narasingh, while disposing of the bail petition, took serious note of the prosecution's failure to adhere to the timeline prescribed under section 36-A(4) of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act.The petitioner had been in custody since July 28, 2025, in a case registered at Khurda Industrial Estate police station. He was accused of possessing 320 grams of brown sugar. After the special NDPS court at Khurda rejected his bail applications on February 10, he approached the high court seeking default bail. The HC observed that the the statutory requirement had been completely breached in this case.It also noted that the matter was not even listed before the trial court on the 180th day, pointing to the failure of the court concerned to appreciate the statutory mandate.

Centre proposes hubs in Telangana for drugs, medical devices import

HYDERABAD.(Agency)

The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare has proposed two Inland Container Depots (ICDs) in Hyderabad — Sanathnagar and Thimmapur — be included as authorised entry points for the import of drugs, medical devices and cosmetics into the country.

According to a draft notification issued by the Ministry on Tuesday, the proposed expansion includes additional Inland Container Depots, a Special Economic Zone (SEZ) and an international airport across different States. Apart fromHyderabad, the proposed locations include ICD Sonipat, Piyala and Harsaru in Haryana, ICD Dadri in Uttar Pradesh, ICD Gandhidham/Mundra in Gujarat and ICD Whitefield in Bengaluru.The ministry has also proposed adding SEZ Bommasandra in Karnataka and Noida International Airport in Uttar Pradesh for the import of drugs by air. The new locations will be added to the existing network of authorised import gateways, which include ICDs at Dhannad and Tihi in Indore, Madhya Pradesh, besides airports already notified for drug imports.The inclusion of Sanathnagar and Thimmapur is expected to provide importers in and around Hyderabad with additional options for clearing consignments. It could also reduce inland transportation distances and logistics costs by allowing importers.

HC orders fresh post-mortem of Daljit Singh at PGI, directs cremation in Chandigarh

Family insists on cremation in native village; court bars politicians, political parties and organisations from participating in last rites

Mansa.(Agency)

The Punjab and Haryana High Court on Tuesday ordered a fresh autopsy on Mansa resident Daljit Singh by a panel of doctors at the Postgraduate Institute of Medical Education and Research (PGIMER), Chandigarh on November 4 and subsequent cremation in Sector 25 Chandigarh, allowing only family members to attend.The directions came amid mounting tensions over Daljit Singh's death and the handling of his body by the police, with his family alleging that he died of a drug overdose, while the police have claimed that he was murdered.His sister, Amarjit Kaur, had approached the court alleging that the police took away his body while the family was taking out a peaceful procession to highlight the drug menace. She had sought the body's return and insisted that he be cremated in his native village, Bhamme Kalan.Presided over by Justice Sanjay Vashisth, the court took serious note of the "alarming public unrest" and conflicting accounts surrounding Daljit Singh's death. It also referred to two incidents in Mansa district on October 13 and October 27, which triggered widespread protests. The first involved the alleged murder of anti-drug activist Parminder Singh alias Jhota at a chemist shop. His body continues to be kept in mortuary as his family and others



continue with protests demanding justice. The second concerned Daljit Singh, whose body was found about two kilometres from his home on October 27.An initial post-mortem examination at AIIMS, Bathinda, had recorded eight distinct injuries on Daljit Singh's body.Emphasising the dignity of the deceased, Justice Vashisth observed in the order that "a dignified cremation is a right which deserves to be respected even after death of a person".The court further remarked that "merely on the basis of suspicion, whether from either side, or to achieve individual or collective objectives, no person could be permitted to use mortal remains of a departed soul in a manner that undermines dignity of deceased or disturbs public peace/law and order".

The court directed the Punjab and Chandigarh DGPs and PGIMER authorities to coordinate the transfer of the mortal remains to the institute for a fresh post-mortem, followed by arrangements for cremation at the Sector 25 cremation ground on November 4.It ordered that all family members be brought to the cremation ground under adequate police protection, ensuring that they were not subjected to injury, intimidation or harassment and that their sentiments were respected.The court also made it clear that "no political party or politician, whether belonging to ruling party or opposition, or any other group/organization, shall be permitted to participate in or interfere with arrangements for cremation".

ED raids AAP MLA Dr Amandeep Kaur Arora's premises in Punjab's Moga

Moga MLA Dr Amandeep Arora has been re-nominated by AAP and her name figures in the first list of 40 AAP candidates announced for the 2027 Punjab Assembly polls.

Ludhiana.(Agency)

The Enforcement Directorate Wednesday conducted searches on the premises of ruling Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) MLA Dr Amandeep Kaur Arora in Punjab's Moga.An ED source said searches are "in connection with fraudulent acquisition of government and institutionalised properties and misappropriation of public funds."Dr Arora, 42, has been re-nominated by AAP from Moga and her name figures in the first list of 40 candidates announced by the ruling party for 2027 Punjab Assembly polls. She is also the chief of the party's women's wing in Punjab.The ED teams are conducting searches at seven premises, including Arora's Icon Heights flat, GT Road, and her camp office in Model Colony, Dosanjh Road in Moga. Her camp office operates from a bungalow where she meets people throughout the day.A group of AAP workers gathered outside the MLA's camp office where the search is being conducted and raised slogans of "BJP murdabad, AAP zindabad." They said that the BJP-led Central Government was playing vendetta politics against AAP ahead of the Assembly polls. A source from the ED said that raids are being conducted based on a case registered by the Punjab Police in June 2024 concerning fraudulent mutation of government land acquired for National Highway No 754A and wrongful disbursement of compensation."The searches covered premises associated with Smt Amandeep Kaur Arora, AAP's Women's Wing Punjab president and Moga MLA, her husband Dr Rakesh Arora, family members, associates and others, including a de-addiction hospital associated with Dr Rakesh Arora," the source added.





In June 2023, following his transfer to Patiala, a Moga health supervisor named Mahinder Pal Loomba publicly accused Dr Arora of corruption. He alleged that the MLA took a Rs 3 lakh bribe for a senior medical officer's posting and diverted state hospital resources (including three air conditioners and a driver) for her personal use.

Dr Arora dismissed the allegations as completely baseless and countered by sending a legal defamation notice to Loomba.

Amandeep Kaur, a qualified doctor

A qualified doctor who started practising in 2008 after completing her medical studies in Ukraine, Arora had resigned as a medical officer from Army Polyclinic to contest the 2022 Punjab polls. A first-time MLA, she had defeated Congress's Malvika Sood, sister of actor Sonu Sood and a native of Moga, by over 20,000 votes to win the Moga seat. Arora is a confidante of Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann's wife Dr Gurpreet Kaur.Arora had joined AAP as a worker in 2015, but continued practising as a doctor before contesting the 2022 polls. Her husband Rakesh Arora, also a doctor, is a government employee.In January 2024, the Punjab Lokpal had summoned Dr Amandeep Kaur Arora and three of her family members on the complaint of her former personal assistant (PA), Harsh Aren, who has alleged that the legislator was involved in "buying benami properties, extorting money from a revenue official, and encroaching government land," among others. The MLA had denied all allegations and said that she was "open for any inquiry" and that Aren, who was just an AAP supporter, "was misusing AAP's name for his real estate business".

Three drown in swollen rivers of Rayagada in Odisha, two bodies found

BERHAMPUR.(Agency)

Rising water levels in rivers following cyclone Arnab have claimed three lives in Rayagada district with rescue personnel retrieving bodies of two victims while a 14-year-old boy remains missing after being swept away by strong currents.The body of Prabhat Kumar Pani (19), who had gone missing in the Nagavali river three days ago, was recovered by fire services personnel on Tuesday. Prabhat, who was staying with his maternal uncle in Rayagada for his studies, had gone to the river near Antariguda with his friends on Sunday. He was reportedly swept away by the strong currents while bathing.Similarly, the body of an elderly woman, identified as B Pagadalu (63) of Katalaguda village under Gunupur municipality, was recovered from Vansadhara river on the day. She had gone missing on November 1 after entering the river to take bath.Meanwhile, search operation is underway for 14-year-old Kani Khosala of Nuasahi in Rayagada town, who was swept away while bathing in Jhanjavati river near Ambaguda on Tuesday morning. Fire services personnel launched the search operation, but the boy remained untraced till the filing of this report.In neighbouring Gajapati district, the search for a 52-year-old man who went missing in Mahendratanaya river following cyclone Arnab has been suspended after four days, leaving his family members to arrange a private rescue team at their own expense.The missing man, Pitambar Badhiasahu of Jirang village under Rayagada block, had gone to the swollen river for his usual bath on October 30. However, he was swept away in the strong current.Following the incident, the block administration deployed ODRAF and fire services personnel to carry out search operation for four days. However, despite extensive efforts, Pitambar could not be traced. With the cyclone Murasu posing a fresh threat, the administration has withdrawn the rescue teams and redeployed them to other vulnerable areas as part of emergency preparedness.Sources said the missing man's family has now hired a private rescue team using its own money to continue the search operation.

Ghanakanta Gogoi, killer of Bilas Inn, killed in police firing in Sivasagar wee hours

Assam.(Agency)

The notorious shooter Ghanakanta Gogoi, the prime accused in the Guwahati Bilas Inn hotel shooting that left five people dead, was killed in police firing during an alleged escape attempt in Assam's Sivasagar district in the early wee hours of Wednesday.The incident took place around 3.10 am near Rongmon Dhaba at Phulpanisiga, under Gorisagar police station in Sibsagar district, while a Sivasagar Police team was bringing Gogoi from Guwahati Central Jail in connection with a case registered at Sivasagar Sadar Police Station.Sivasagar Senior Superintendent of Police Papari Chetia after the incident said the police had obtained a production warrant from a Guwahati court on Tuesday night after learning that Gogoi was an accused in a case involving alleged Punjab National Bank loan fraud.According to Chetia, Gogoi had allegedly secured a loan for an excavator by submitting forged documents. The bank subsequently scrutinised the documents and lodged a case against him. Police said Gogoi was wanted in six cases.The SSP said Gogoi, who was allegedly trained in handling firearms, told the police team that he would lead them to Gorisagar to recover weapons. During the journey, he allegedly attempted to flee and tried to snatch a police officer's service revolver.A scuffle followed, during which three rounds were fired from the service revolver, Chetia said. One police officer sustained serious injuries and was admitted to Gauhati Medical College and Hospital for treatment.

The officer-in-charge of Sivasagar Sadar Police Station, who was accompanying the team, subsequently fired from his service weapon to overpower Gogoi and prevent his escape. Gogoi sustained bullet injuries and was taken to hospital, where he was declared brought dead, the SSP said.Chetia said the police vehicle was also hit during the exchange of fire. She added that the officer involved in the scuffle sustained minor injuries, apart from the seriously injured personnel.Gogoi was the accused in the October 26 shooting at Hotel Bilas Inn in Guwahati's Bora Service area, in which five people, including four members of the same family, were killed and another person was injured. The killing of five persons instantly by a person instantly created sensation in entire country.He had been arrested shortly after the shooting and was recently sent to judicial custody after police did not seek further remand.



Keralam's cooperative airline plan gains momentum, Rs 5 cr raised in a week

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM. (Agency)

Keralam's ambitious plan to launch its own domestic airline through the cooperative sector is zooming ahead with Rs 5 crore mobilised as share capital within a week of the registration of the cooperative society spearheading the initiative. If all necessary permissions, licences and clearances from the ministry of civil aviation (MoCA) and the directorate general of civil aviation (DGCA) are secured, plans are afoot to commence the first service during the next Onam season.The newly registered Kerala Civil Aviation Development Cooperative Society is envisaged on the lines of the Cochin International Airport Limited's (CIAL) public-private partnership model. Since its registration last Wednesday, the society has mobilised Rs 5 crore, with Rs 2.5 crore each coming from primary cooperative societies and individuals."This will be the world's first airline service operating in the cooperative sector," C N Vijayakrishnan, chairman of the Kerala Civil Aviation Development Cooperative Society, told TNIE. "Once we mobilise a share capital of Rs 50 crore, a public limited company can be registered. We have three names under consideration."Like CIAL, the chief minister will be the chairperson of the company, while the cooperative minister will be its vice-chairperson. Vijayakrishnan said the company would commence operations only after mobilising at least Rs 400 crore."We should be able to pay salaries to employees regularly. Even if all seats remain vacant, we will ensure that salaries and other amenities do not suffer for at least three years," he said.



With Chief Minister V D Satheesan supporting the project, the state government is expected to take the steps necessary to facilitate the registration of the public limited company.The proposed airline aims to improve regional air connectivity by operating services linking all four airports in Keralam -- Thiruvananthapuram, Kochi, Kozhikode and Kannur -- with major South Indian cities such as Mangaluru, Bengaluru, Chennai, Coimbatore and Madurai.

Chemmani: Search for truth beneath contested ground

In Sri Lanka, an old ethnic wound has been torn open with the release of the third interim forensic archaeological report on the Chemmani mass gravesite in northern Jaffna. The report, submitted to the Jaffna Magistrate on October 19, was authored by archaeologists Raj Somadeva and Anusha Wanninayake. It has since thrown everyone off balance, sparked controversy that could drive a deep wedge between communities, and triggered competing narratives.The report noted that the site shared characteristics with formal burial contexts rather than clandestine mass graves, raising the possibility that the high concentration of remains—particularly children and infants—could relate to historical epidemics or natural disasters and avoided the reference to a "mass grave"The report's summary states: "The assemblage of material evidence documented in this report is insufficient, in isolation, to support a definitive conclusion regarding the nature and character of the burials investigated," adding: "Nevertheless, the artefacts and associated contextual evidence suggest that the site exhibits greater similarities to contexts characterised by formal burial practices than to clandestine burial sites documented in other parts of the world."The report's suggestion that the site could be an ordinary burial ground or the result of a historical epidemic has sparked immense backlash, with rights organisations, legal representatives and families of the disappeared pointing to the gravesite's proximity to a former wartime military checkpoint and rejecting its contents. They highlight plastic toys, a UN school bag and highly unusual placements—such as multiple instances of an adult skeletal frame positioned as if carrying a child—to argue that these do not match a conventional cemetery.The excavations were not planned. Instead, it was a reaction to the accidental emergence of potential evidence of a wartime graveyard.

In February 2025, local labourers expanding a Hindu cemetery in Ariyalai in Chemmani accidentally struck human bones while digging a foundation for a new crematorium. The workers informed the local authority in Nallur, and the Jaffna magistrate ordered excavations and 24-hour police security for the site. Forensic archaeologist Prof Raj Somadeva and team have, after 110 days of excavations, exhumed over 570 skeletal remains. An estimated 41 percent of the deceased are children and 22 percent are infants. More than 90 percent had no clothing attached.

Following the "accidental discovery" of the potential mass graveyard linked to Sri Lanka's ethnic conflict—also the country's largest—the national Human Rights Commission released a report based on an August 2025 fact-finding mission to Chemmani and averred the "reasonable likelihood that the burials were unlawful and pursuant to extrajudicial killings", and recommended setting up a new independent institution for the investigation and prosecution of serious crimes. The Commission observed major gaps in the expertise and technology available for the probe and recommended seeking relevant expertise and technological facilities, including from overseas, to ensure a credible and independent analysis of DNA samples gathered from the skeletal remains found in Chemmani.

Much earlier, the Office on Missing Persons acknowledged critical gaps, including a shortage of forensic anthropologists and geneticists, the absence of centralised DNA databases, inadequate laboratories and reliance on archaeologists rather than mass grave specialists.Sri Lanka has experienced various epidemics, and evidence points to major health crises in the '60s and '70s, including records from Jaffna.

Booster shot for satellite navigation

India needs more satellites to build a reliable, independent network

ON October 30, the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) successfully launched the navigation satellite NVS-03 from Sriharikota, Andhra Pradesh, on the GSLV-F18 (Geosynchronous Satellite Launch Vehicle). This is a significant boost for NavIC, India's regional navigation system. Once NVS-03 is in orbit and commissioned, the system will have four satellites in operation, the minimum number required to restore the basic positioning capability. It is not just for civil use; it's also crucial for national security.NavIC stands for Navigation with Indian Constellation. Like the US Global Positioning System (GPS), it is a satellite-based navigation system. Unlike GPS, which offers global coverage, NavIC is designed to serve India and the region extending roughly 1,500 km beyond its borders.To calculate your location, a mobile phone or a car's navigation device generally needs signals from at least four satellites. The receiver uses these signals to work out its three-dimensional position — latitude, longitude, altitude — and also corrects the error in its own clock.Until now, NavIC has been operating on a thin margin. Since 2013, India has launched 11 navigation satellites, but many of the imported atomic clocks aboard them failed. Currently, only three, IRNSS-1B, IRNSS-1I and NVS-01, continue to operate. NVS-02, launched in January 2025, could not reach its intended final orbit. With only three satellites operational, NavIC can provide timing services but not positioning and navigation services. NVS-03 is the third satellite in the second generation of NavIC spacecraft.One may consider India's own GPS as a flagrant misuse of public money for national pride. The answer is strategic autonomy. GPS is controlled by the US military. During the Kargil war, the US withheld GPS support in the region, seriously affecting Indian military operations. Similar concerns arose during missile tests. The lesson was clear: India's security cannot depend entirely on a system whose signals or services may be restricted by another country. China has BeiDou, Russia has GLONASS and Europe has Galileo; each has developed its own satellite navigation system.How does a navigation satellite tell you where you are? They are essentially lighthouses in the sky, continuously beaming radio signals. Each signal contains information about the satellite's position and the time at which the signal was transmitted. Radio waves travel at the speed of light. Your phone receives the signal and calculates how long it took to arrive, allowing it to determine the distance between the phone and the satellite. By taking distance measurements from several satellites, it can triangulate its position (this is known as trilateration). A fourth satellite is used to correct the timing error in the receiver's clock (which is nowhere near as accurate as the atomic clocks on the satellites).



Putting a satellite into its final orbit can be compared to crossing a river with a bicycle. First, you load the bicycle onto a boat and cross. Only then can you ride it. In much the same way, a rocket carries a satellite through the dense lower atmosphere. It places it in a Geosynchronous Transfer Orbit (GTO). That is the boat journey. The satellite's own Liquid Apogee Motor (LAM) then helps move it into its intended geosynchronous orbit, about 36,000 km above Earth. That is the bicycle ride.

Another twist in the tale: picture riding a scooter down a slope, coasting with the engine off and only re-engaging when you get to level ground. That's the LAM in the satellite's case. It's off during launch. Once in GTO, it's used in a series of precisely planned burns to raise the orbit. The satellite will orbit Earth several times as the orbit is raised. A final burn gets it into the required circular orbit.NVS-02 was expected to bring NavIC back to the minimum number of satellites needed for positioning services. But a problem arose during orbit raising. A pyro-valve in the fuel line to the satellite's LAM failed to open, so the engine could not fire. Like a scooter that will not restart after a downhill stretch, the satellite could not reach its final orbit and remained in GTO. For NVS-03, ISRO adopted a different strategy to avoid a repeat of this problem: it kept the relevant valve open at launch, a calculated risk that paid off.

The failure of the imported atomic clocks was another blow to NavIC. ISRO has since developed indigenous rubidium atomic clocks, which are now being used on the NVS class of satellites. Each NVS satellite has three clocks. If one fails, the other two can continue providing the timing information the system needs. This also reduces dependence on imported hardware and moves toward greater self-reliance in this key technology.

NVS-03 also builds on NVS-01 (the previous satellite in the series). A key addition is support for the L1 frequency band, which is used by many consumer navigation devices. This could, in principle, allow compatible smartphones and smartwatches to receive NavIC signals directly and thus extend the utility of the system beyond just the defence domain. The practical benefit would, of course, depend on device compatibility and service availability.The benefits for fishermen are potentially huge, especially along the Tamil Nadu and Bengal coasts. NavIC-enabled equipment could alert a fishing vessel as it approaches a neighbour's maritime boundary and thus help it avoid an inadvertent crossing. With the right equipment, it could also be used for distress alerting.

Farmers would benefit from accurate positioning for land surveying and services that combine satellite navigation with weather information. In aviation, it could be used to support operations in poor visibility with the appropriate systems and procedures. For the armed forces, an operational NavIC would reduce their reliance on GPS for navigation and guidance.Still, NVS-03 alone will not deliver a fully robust navigation service. NavIC needs at least seven satellites (three in geostationary orbit and four in inclined geosynchronous orbits) to provide adequate coverage for independent positioning. For a dependable service with sufficient resilience, around 10 to 15 NavIC satellites will need to be operational.

Tamil Nadu must overhaul prison staffing and supervision

Two prisoners escaped from Puzhal in separate incidents nearly two weeks ago, followed by 17 undertrials breaking out of Theni jail last week in the most serious breach. Although all 19 were recaptured, that does not diminish the gravity of the failure.

A succession of of jailbreaks has exposed serious failures in the staffing, supervision and management of Tamil Nadu's prisons. Two prisoners escaped from Puzhal in separate incidents nearly two weeks ago, followed by 17 undertrials breaking out of Theni jail last week in the most serious breach. Although all 19 were recaptured, that does not diminish the gravity of the failure. The transfer of the prison chief and suspensions of lower-level personnel must be followed by scrutiny of the entire chain of command, including the inspector general, deputy inspectors general and superintendents. Responsibility must be fixed for entrenched malpractice or supervisory failures at these levels. The CB-CID's finding that prisoners were illegally deployed for domestic work at a DIG's residence underlines why scrutiny cannot stop with warders. Pending disciplinary proceedings must reach timely, transparent conclusions.Theni jail housed 334 inmates against a capacity of 200. Nearly a tenth of sanctioned prison posts statewide remain vacant, while staff strength at some prisons has remained unchanged for



decades. The government must reassess sanctioned strength, fill vacancies, minimise the diversion of custodial personnel to administrative duties and enforce directions prohibiting their deployment for household work at senior officials' residences. Independent inspections should verify staff deployment, assess security procedures and track implementation of orders to correct lapses.Security must go hand in hand with humane custody. Healthcare, counselling, legal assistance and family contact should be integral to prison administration. Regular reviews of undertrial detention can ease overcrowding. Tamil Nadu must enforce its ban on caste-based discrimination and segregation, including in work allocation. Its tradition of prisoner rehabilitation, dating to the establishment of the Discharged Prisoners' Aid Society in 1921, deserves renewed investment in employment and post-release support.The failure of custodial care extends to the revenue-administered foreigners' special camps at Cheyyar and Tiruchy. Reports point to inadequate drinking water, sanitation and medical care, as well as people remaining confined after securing bail, being acquitted or completing their sentences, while administrative clearances are delayed. Their cases require regular legal review, with clear responsibility for proper care, access to courts and timely repatriation.

Parijata parimalam

Stories in Indian theology add to how Indian faith is deeply married to the land through its various creations. In contrast to how the West sees it now, we cannot be thankful enough that our ancestors taught us how to cherish and celebrate its features, flora and fauna

The air in many parts of India is sweet now with the scent of parijat, the night jasmine or coral jasmine, with its pure white petals and fiery orange stem. It's called harsingar or God's ornament in the Hindi belt and shiuli in Bengal. Its blooming heralds Durga Puja and Navratri, and it lasts until early December, before the season of Shishir, or severe cold, sets in. The parijat sheds its blooms on the ground at dawn, and is the only flower, in all of India's bounteous flora, that can be picked up from the ground and offered in worship. No other 'fallen flower' has that privilege.

tories in Indian theology attest not only to its special status but also add to how Indian faith is deeply married to the land through its mountains, rivers, lakes, sacred trees, herbs and flowers; its animals like elephants, bulls and cows, lions, tigers, monkeys and also mice; its birds like peacocks, eagles, parrots, crows, owls and doves; and even reptiles like snakes, lizards and geckos, not forgetting insects like the bees that 'string Kamadeva's bow' in ancient poetry. Even the Indian squirrel finds a place of honour as God's little helper at Ramsetu.Thankfully, cockroaches, mosquitoes and bugs are not celebrated but wryly accepted as the flip side of this mysterious Creation, and exterminated when they intrude on dwellings and crops. The logic being that if there was no 'bad', how would we ever appreciate the 'good'?Other countris also have holy mountains, like Mount Demavand in Iran, sacred to Zoroastrians, and mythical creatures like the phoenix. Or a plant like the raihon, the Uzbek name for tulsi, which was described to me as the 'Khuda plant' or God's plant.Even in the United Kingdom, whose history affected us so deeply, certain native trees have deep roots in ancient folklore, Celtic mythology and pre-Christian spiritual traditions, and I found the following interesting. The yew, for one, was revered as a symbol of immortality, death and resurrection. Because of their extreme longevity, such as Scotland's Fortingall Yew, estimated at 2,000 to 5,000 years old, and the Ankerwycke Yew, pre-Christian Britons viewed them as sacred 'trees of life'. This later led early Christians to build churches and plant graveyards directly around them.The oak, known as the 'king of the forest', was sacred to gods like Thor, Jupiter and the Celtic pantheon. Druids held sacred rituals beneath them and cut 'lucky' mistletoe from their branches. They also hosted community gatherings and served as



village boundary markers. A famous example is the Major Oak in Sherwood Forest, known to readers in India as the home of the legendary Robin Hood.

The hawthorn was considered a magic door to the 'otherworld'. Folklore warned that great misfortune would befall anyone who harmed or cut down a sacred hawthorn. People plaited hawthorn crowns and left them out for fairies and angels.People widely planted rowan and carried it as a talisman against witchcraft, evil spirits and enchantment. Twigs were bound with red thread into small protective crosses and placed above doors or sewn into coat linings.The holly was the evergreen symbol of protection in winter. Druids and early Britons wore or displayed prickly holly leaves to ward off negative spirits during the dark winter months, and its presence still features in Christmas decorations in the Christian West.But the old gods of the UK are dead. Except for the holly as a survivor of old beliefs, the UK's sacred trees no longer seem to be honoured like the pipal and banyan still are in India. We cannot be thankful enough that our ancestors taught us how to cherish and celebrate the features, flora and fauna of our land. In fact, I cannot think of another living civilisation today that rejoices to our extent in deep, abiding physical-spiritual connection with its land of origin.The parijat, too, has several stories attached to it. One is that a mortal princess called Parijata fell in love with Surya, the sun god, and was burnt when she went too near him. Out of pity.

Keep these in mind while buying rustic Furniture



If you are the one who swears by the rugged and country-side look, having rustic furnishings in your house will add to the charm. Not only will this sort of decor look interesting and unique, it is also a great way to make your home look different from the others. Here are a couple of ideas that you can consider, while doing up your home with rustic furniture.

For your living room

Instead of having a sofa in your living area, opt for light-weight wooden arm-rests. To add comfort, you can add a few cushions. To jazz up the look, you can also paint the chairs in quirky colours, but if you want to maintain the old-world charm, then, keep it the way it is.

For your bedroom

Choose a teak wood bed, instead of rot iron. For the country-side charm, you can also have a piece of log placed in the room, near the bed to make your room look interesting. Also make sure that the log remains unpolished so that it retains its original look.

For your balcony

A few wooden chairs in the balcony looks great. You can accentuate the look by having a cane swing chair placed in the balcony to complete the look. You can also have a faux garden set up to make the ambiance look interesting.





Ways to revamp your Living Space

Apart from gorging on sinful delicacies and spending quality time with friends and family, one of the best things about the festive season is going decor shopping to give your home a makeover. It gives you a valid excuse to splurge on revamping your home, without feeling guilty. Depending on your budget, here's how you can give your living space a fun facelift.

Decals, accent walls and more

Brighten up your room with an accent wall — a wall whose colour/design differs from that of the other walls in the room. Paint your favourite wall in a brighter shade and others in lighter tones to maintain the balance. If painting is not paint, you can still add some magic to your wall by going for decals; these are a more convenient and less expensive option. Another way to spruce up your old walls is by going for colourful hangings, mirrors and paintings.

Change those linens, cushions and rugs

Simply using a set of new bedsheets and curtains can completely transform a room. For your bedding, go for festive colours like fuchsia, turquoise, orange and royal blue. Throw in a pair of bright-coloured cushions or those which have intricate embroidery or mirror work on them. For your curtains, opt for fabrics like tissue. Prints like floral, geometric shapes and abstract art are great options. Curtains in colours like ivory and gold, adorned with applique in red, maroon, lilac and blue will make your room look lively. If you have a big space in the centre of the room, decorate with a fancy rug.





How to prevent and remove sweat stains

Sweat stains are a reality for most of us. The yellowish tinge around your armpits are a result of the stain. Not only are they ugly, but they are time consuming too when you set about to remove them. Best is to prevent them from happening and if they still are a bother try these tricks.

* Try to wear an undershit which will absorb the sweat and keep your outer clothes beautiful.
* If you use a roll-on deodrant, allow it to dry completley before you wear your clothes.
* You can also opt for deos with less of aluminium content.
* Try to remove the stain when it is still fresh, since removing a dried stain is a tedious task.
* While removing the stain at home, use cold or warm water and avoid hot water since it sets the stain more.



Create a cosy Balcony for yourself

The other way to ensure that your balcony or seating space near your living room window looks glamorous and party-ready is by lending a personal touch to your balcony. So, whether it is incorporating colourful cushions or quirky furniture pieces to this space, there is so much you can do to make this place a haven for yourself as you sit down to enjoy your cuppa coffee.

Apart from having plants of various types and sizes, you can also have vases with fresh flowers in them. To make the balcony come alive in the evening, you can place some twinkly lights for extra lighting. Apart from chairs and a coffee table as the centrepiece of your balcony, you can also throw in some cushions and mattresses to make the area cosy.

If you are someone who does not like too much furniture in your balcony, opt for a comfortable rocking chair or a swing to make your space look different and vibrant. You can also select a particular colour shade to lend a theme to your balcony or seating space near your window. Have some plants with flowers in it, to make the space look more green.



How to remove wallpaper without much difficulty



Wallpapers look good and are easy to put up on the walls too. However, removing them sounds difficult unless it is a removable wallpaper. The wallpaper is attached to the wall with a wheat-based non-toxic adhesive. The entire process of removing it is delicate and difficult. If you are stuck with a wall paper that is not removable, then try these techniques.



* Use proper solvents which are easily available in the market today. These are chemical based and you need to spray them and then gently peel away the wallpaper.
* Try using warm water on the wallpaper which is the cheapest form of removing it.
* Use a steamer to appy steam on the wallpaper.
* Use a electrically powered wallpaper removal tool.
* Before using any of the above tools perforate the wallpaper with a sharp instrument.
* Remember when you spray water on the wallpaper you are also risking damaging the wall



5 ways to remove wine stains from Clothes

Party season or not, there's always a good reason around the corner to indulge in that inducing and seductive glass of sparkling wine.

While studies have also suggested that a glass of wine is good for health, hot bubble bath without a glass of wine, feels incomplete. And while indulging in it takes to another high, removing wine stains makes us all time low. So, here are some easy tricks that you can try as soon as that wine spills on you..

Cover it up with salt

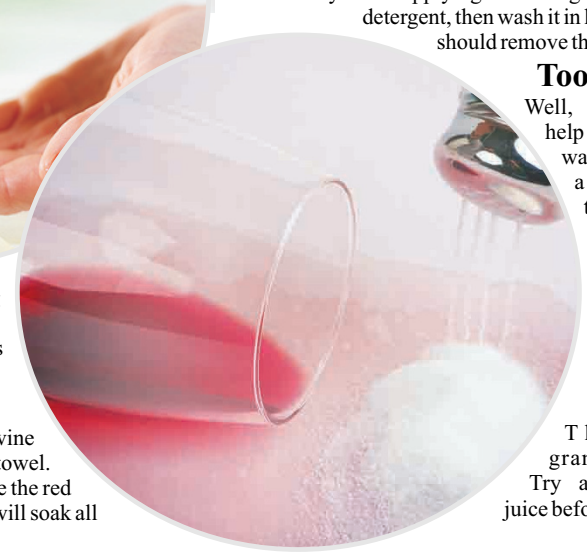
Especially useful for rugs or carpets. Whenever wine spills over, blot as much of it as you can with a paper towel. Then cover the entire stain with salt until you can't see the red wine stain anymore. As and when the salt dries up, it will soak all the salt. Vacuum it well.

Use soda

Another method is to use soda. Continue pouring the soda over the stained area until the color fades away. Once the stain is removed, let the fabric dry. Use paper towels to clean up any excess club soda.

Vinegar

One can also use white vinegar. Cover the stain with white vinegar. It neutralizes purple and red pigments. Immediately after applying the vinegar, rub in liquid detergent, then wash it in hot water. This should remove the stain.



Toothpaste

Well, toothpaste can help in more than one way. Apply a little amount of toothpaste before washing your clothes, toothpaste works wonders on wine stains.

Lemon Juice

The classic grandma remedy. Try applying lemon juice before washing.

How to make your bedroom Sleep-friendly

Getting a good night's sleep is vital to your body. Did you know that your bedroom plays a major role in making you fall asleep? And if you have trouble getting adequate sleep you should try to take a look at how to make things right.



So right from paint colour to bedding to the room temperature, here is a sleep-boosting decorating plan.

Avoid all lights Melatonin, also known as the vampire hormone is called so because it comes out only in darkness. It's the key that starts the engine for sleep, so it's best to avoid bright lights after about 8 p.m. and throughout the night. Block street lights as well as alarm clocks which emit light.

Use neutral shades of paint

Muted, neutral colours like light blue, lilac, soft pink are best for the bedroom since they help you relax as opposed to bright colours, like red. Also choose a matte finish instead of high gloss, which reflects light.

Ensure comfortable bedding

Use cotton sheets which are the most breathable, instead of synthetic ones. A thin pillow is best for those who sleep on their back or stomach while a thicker pillow is best for side sleepers since it keeps your head and spine aligned.

Make it sound proof Drown out all noises like street nights or a snoring partner with artificial noises, like the sound of falling rain which has lower, steadier frequency. The humming of a fan too works well, or you can try an app like Rain, Rain Sleep Sounds that you can set on a timer.

Maintain ideal temperature

Its been proven that people sleep better when it's cool so maintain the ideal room temperature between 18C and 21C.

Use scents to relax Lavender, ylang-ylang and vanilla can all help you feel more relaxed?—?and you need to be relaxed before you can sleep. So use these aromas in diffusers or as spray them on your pillow.

Make your relocation exciting by exploring

Did you just relocate from your hometown to a faraway land? Are you looking forward to save yourself from paying that hefty amount to a broker? Here is an option! You are just a click away. Yes, the biggest platform in form of social media would help you.

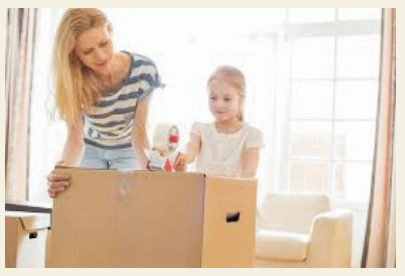
Be it any city, there are specific pages for you on social media to find out the availability of flats, flat mates, furniture, gadgets, automobiles on rent. Interestingly, there are also a few pages where you can find a pet of your choice. Since you are really new to a place, you would want to explore the city as well as its culture; few pages would offer you to just check out a few events that might include the local exhibitions and concerts.

Finding a place to stay

When you step into a new city, the first thing that you would require is a place to crash in for those hours after your work. One just needs to put in his/her requirement that includes the rent budget or whether s/he prefers a furnished or non-furnished place to stay in. There you go, you would start getting n number of leads. Being just a fresher or a starter, you would want to share your place with some likeminded person to divide your expense and save some amount in your pocket. You are at a perfect place, you can find your flat mates from here. You can perfectly communicate and get in touch with new people around you who are looking for the same things that you are looking for.

Getting few gadgets

After a while, you just feel that you are in a need of washing machine or a refrigerator. There you go! You also have few pages that would be offering you some of the essential electronic gadgets as well as furniture at a subsidized rate that you would want to have. If you are lucky enough, you might get a good second hand things at a cheaper rate. While working for a couple of days or months in a new city, you would want to travel the exciting places that are in and around. Instead of wasting your time waiting for a bus, you would just want to rent an automobile and roam around freely. There are also pages that would help you find such vehicles.



Get the pet of your choice

Don't know what to do in a spare time? Looking for some companion? Just find a pet of your choice online. Like you came to a new city, there might be someone in the same city relocating somewhere else and they would want to give the responsibility of their pet to someone as responsible as you. Loneliness would disappear in a fraction of seconds and a life would get a new life with a new owner.

Knowing the local events

Every place has a different texture of life and culture. Being a part of that place, you would want to mingle with that air. There might be a few local concerts and exhibitions that you can be part of. Apart from the monotonous things that you would be coming across every single day, this experience of yours would definitely be refreshing.

Part time jobs

And yes, one last thing, are you looking for part time jobs in your field to add on to your pockets? There are a few pages that would provide you few leads for such requirements. Just type a few letters of your field and you would get a list of it.

Like we say, world is a global village; everything is connected and every part is linked. Staying at a new place or relocating would only be a rejuvenating experience.

FIR against Prashant Bhushan over fake video of Russian foreign minister

Delhi.(Agency)

Delhi Police has registered an FIR against senior Supreme Court lawyer Prashant Bhushan for allegedly sharing a digitally manipulated video of Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov containing remarks critical of India, officials said.

The case was registered at the Special Cell Police Station following cyber patrolling on November 3, when police noticed a social media post by the handle @thequotesnews, claiming that a purported doctored video of the foreign minister had been shared from Bhushan's X handle.The video allegedly carried misleading and inflammatory content, with the potential to spread rumours, defame individuals and disturb public order, police said.

The FIR was filed under sections 336 (4) (forgery), 353 (1) (c) (statements conducing to public mischief), 356 (defamation) and 340 (2) (forged document used as genuine) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), along with 66 C (punishment for identity theft) of the Information Technology Act at Special Cell Police Station.The development comes after the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) fact-checked the digitally manipulated video falsely attributed to the Russian foreign minister.The fabricated clip purportedly showed him making remarks critical of India over its internal affairs and oil purchases.Police are investigating the matter and examining the content and its circulation on social media.

Sirsa says AAP misrepresenting stubble-burning data in Punjab

Delhi.(Agency)

Delhi Environment Minister Manjinder Singh Sirsa on Tuesday accused the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) in Punjab of misrepresenting data on stubble burning in the state, alleging that FIRs are being registered against farmers despite the party claiming no farm fire incidents this year.

Sirsa claimed that the Punjab government had spent Rs 20-25 crore on advertisements to project that there was no stubble burning in the state this year. He alleged that 271 FIRs have been filed against farmers in different



districts of Punjab for stubble burning.

"There are more than 1,000 stubble-burning cases that we know of and 271 FIRs filed," Sirsa said, alleging a contradiction between AAP's public claims and the action being taken against farmers.

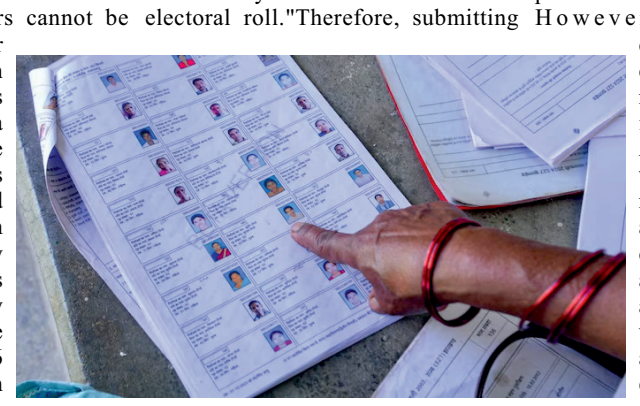
Accusing the party of misleading people over the contribution of stubble burning in Punjab to Delhi's pollution, he said AAP leaders were claiming that the two were unrelated while FIRs were being filed against farmers.

He claimed that the average AQI in Delhi was around 10 per cent lower than the corresponding levels in previous years. He also accused AAP national convenor Arvind Kejriwal of taking "revenge on Delhi", alleging that the party was uncomfortable with the improvements in the capital's air quality under the BJP government.

Voters missing from SIR draft rolls can reapply via Form 6, won't face prosecution: EC

Delhi.(Agency)

The Election Commission on Tuesday said that voters whose names are missing from the draft electoral rolls published after the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) can submit Form 6 to seek fresh inclusion in the final voters' list, even if they were registered electors previously. The Commission also made it clear that such voters cannot be prosecuted, merely for submitting the form despite their previous enrolment.In a communication to the Chief Electoral Officers (CEOs) of all states and Union Territories on Tuesday, the poll body said it had received reports that some previously enrolled voters were hesitant to submit Form 6 because of the declaration required under the application.The form requires applicants to declare that their names are being included in the electoral rolls for the first time. Consequently, some voters whose names do not figure in the draft SIR rolls believe that submitting the form despite having been registered earlier could amount to making a false declaration, risking prosecution under the Representation of the People Act.Addressing these concerns, the Commission clarified that the declaration prescribed under Form 6 has been in effect since August 2022. It said voters whose names are absent from the draft electoral rolls can submit the form to seek inclusion in the final electoral rolls by following the prescribed procedure.The Commission further explained that any voter whose name does not appear in the draft electoral roll will have to enrol afresh under the SIR process or thereafter, irrespective of whether they were included in an earlier electoral roll."Therefore, submitting



Form 6 in such circumstances is for the purpose of enrolling his or her name in the electoral roll under the SIR or thereafter and merely because the voter was previously enrolled is not in itself wrong," the Commission said.The clarification comes amid intensifying protests by opposition parties against the SIR process, which they have termed illegal and flawed, while demanding the resignation of Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar.

NO PROSECUTION FOR SUBMITTING FORM 6

The EC has issued a specific clarification to Electoral Registration Officers (EROs), stating that no action should henceforth be initiated against a voter under Section 31 of the Representation of the People Act, 1950, solely on the ground that the person was included in a previous electoral roll but submitted Form 6 during or after the SIR process.

However, the Commission's clarification comes with certain conditions. The voter must not already be enrolled in another parliamentary or Assembly constituency and the declaration submitted must otherwise be in accordance with the law.The clarification is intended to address apprehensions among previously registered voters who fear that applying afresh for inclusion in the electoral rolls could expose them to legal proceedings on the grounds of making a false declaration.

COMMISSION CITES DELHI HC ORDER

The Commission said its position is consistent with a judicial decision of the Delhi High Court in the case of Nilotpal Dutta and Others.In the case, the petitioners had raised concerns that submitting Form 6 despite having been registered as voters earlier would amount to making a false declaration and could make them liable for prosecution.

Delhi HC to hear lawyers' plea against suspended ACP, cops over alleged threats to advocates on Friday

Delhi.(Agency)

The Delhi High Court on Wednesday agreed to hear on November 6 a plea by lawyers seeking action against suspended Delhi Police ACP Manasvi Vashishta and other police personnel over alleged threats to advocates.The plea was mentioned for urgent listing before a bench of Acting Chief Justice Nitin Wasudeo Sambre and Justice Sanjay Sharma. "List it on Friday," the bench said.A group of lawyers had initially urged the court to take suo motu cognisance of the matter. However, the bench declined to initiate proceedings on its own and asked them to file a formal petition along with supporting material.

On Tuesday, the lawyers had flagged remarks allegedly made against advocates, including references to the "use



of AK-47" and calling them "kale coat ke gunde" (goons in black coats).The controversy traces back to an October 23 incident at Shahdara police station, where advocate Lalit Bansal allegedly suffered a serious head injury during a scuffle.The incident was followed by a confrontation between lawyers and police personnel at the police station, triggering an indefinite strike by district court lawyers.On October 28, Delhi Police transferred Vashishta, then posted as the sub-divisional police officer in Gandhi Nagar, to the Special Police Unit for Women and Children (SPUWAC). Inspector Arun Kumar, who was then the SHO of Shahdara police station, was also transferred to the security unit.

The story of Kolkata's vanishing yellow ambassador taxis, told through photographs

Photographer-writer Ananth Padmanabhan's exhibition 'No Refusal', opening today in Delhi, captures Kolkata's fading yellow Ambassador taxis, exploring urban change, collective memory and his enduring relationship with the city.

Delhi.(Agency)

Our cities have their lifelines. Delhi has its Metro. Mumbai its local trains. And Kolkata its yellow taxis; the iconic yellow Ambassador taxis have long been a familiar sight on its streets. But with production of the cars having stopped in 2014, they are gradually disappearing from the city. Photographer, writer, publisher and CEO of HarperCollins India Ananth Padmanabhan's exhibition 'No Refusal' has stepped in, as it were, to document them while they are still around.Opening today at the India Habitat Centre, Delhi, the exhibition is a photographic documentation over several years. It captures the taxis on the streets, in motion, and in garages where ageing cars are taken to be scrapped. The title of the exhibition comes from a state government directive in 2014 that taxi drivers could not refuse passengers. The phrase also appears on the taxis themselves, making it a familiar part of Kolkata's streetscape.For the photographer, the phrase also captures the anxieties associated with public transport. "The very idea that the city steps in to say that passengers cannot be stranded, and therefore it's a command that nobody will refuse a passenger wherever they go," he says.

An object of beauty

Having photographed New York's yellow taxis, Padmanabhan was fascinated by the Ambassador's presence in Kolkata. Through his photographs, he wanted to draw attention to the beauty of an everyday object. "One of those things I want people to notice



is that when you interact with a particular city or anything, you have to look beyond," he says. "The taxis are one of the most beautiful objects on Indian roads," he says, pointing to its striking yellow body. "It's very odd to find a colour like this, and this striking a colour particularly against the backdrop."The photographs present the bright yellow taxis against the worn-down Art Deco buildings and busy streets of Kolkata. Padmanabhan says the contrast was deliberate, but the cars could not be separated from the city they belonged to. "You can't take that car out of Calcutta. They are one and the same. If I put it anywhere else, it'll look like a prop," he says, adding that he wanted to show that even in a city often described through its decay, there was beauty to be found.

Stories through the lens

During his visits, Padmanabhan would take a map of Kolkata, drop himself at different points and walk with his camera. "You never know what you're going to bump into," he says.

Delhi records worst air quality in 287 days, AQI hits 350

Delhi.(Agency)

The capital has recorded its worst air quality in 287 days on Tuesday, with the Air Quality Index (AQI) climbing to 350, and 10 monitoring stations reporting severe pollution levels. Delhi last recorded a higher AQI on January 20 this year settling at 378.Of the 57 air quality monitoring stations in the city, 10 recorded severe air quality, 35 were in the very poor category and 12 reported poor air quality. Jahangirpuri recorded the highest pollution level, with an AQI of 462, placing it in the severe category.PM2.5 was the dominant pollutant in the index. These fine particulate matter particles, measuring 2.5 micrometres or less in diameter, can penetrate deep into the lungs and even enter the bloodstream, posing significant health risks.The Air Quality Early Warning System has forecast that air quality is likely to remain in the very poor category till November 6, with the outlook for the next six days indicating conditions could persist in the very poor to severe range. The city was brought under Stage II of the Graded Response Action Plan (GRAP) on Monday after the AQI deteriorated to 324, marking the first day of very poor air quality this season.Meanwhile, the contribution of stubble burning to Delhi's PM2.5 pollution is expected to increase over the next three days. According to the Decision Support System (DSS) for air quality management under the Ministry of Earth Sciences, the contribution of farm fires is forecast to rise from 8.5% on November 2 to 15.3% on November 3, 20% on November 4 and 22.2% on November 5. The forecast is based on climatological data on fire counts and emissions.Satellites detected 219 paddy residue-burning incidents across the monitored states on November 2. These included 98 in Punjab, 67 in Rajasthan, 48 in Madhya Pradesh, four in Uttar Pradesh and two in Haryana. No farm-fire incidents were detected in Delhi or Uttarakhand, according to



data from ICAR-Indian Agricultural Research Institute.A total of 3,535 farm-fire incidents were detected across seven states and Delhi between September 15 and November 2. Punjab accounted for the highest number, at 1,612, followed by Rajasthan (738), Madhya Pradesh (614), Uttar Pradesh (349), Uttarakhand (176), Haryana (44) and Delhi (two).Despite the continued occurrence of farm fires, satellite data indicate a significant decline in cases over the years. Across regions covered by the bulletin, 51,822 incidents were detected during the corresponding period.

Govt plans DFS overhaul to strengthen response system

Specialised equipment and appliances required to tackle fires involving highly combustible materials will be procured in accordance with MHA norms through an MoU with the Delhi Metro Rail Corporation.

Delhi.(Agency)

The Delhi government has announced a comprehensive overhaul of the Delhi Fire Service (DFS) to build strengthen emergency response, upgrade technology, expand frontline manpower and address infrastructure gaps in the city.

Home Minister Ashish Sood on Tuesday said the government was undertaking a multi-departmental revamp of the Delhi Fire Service to tackle emerging fire risks, including high combustible loads in residential buildings, electrical overloading, narrow lanes and traffic congestion."From tackling modern risks such as high combustible loads in residences to mandating automatic sprinklers in existing commercial buildings, upgrading power grids and launching door-to-door safety drives, we are moving towards a proactive safety culture," Sood said.He was outlining the outcomes of a review meeting chaired by Lieutenant-Governor Taranjit Singh Sandhu recently. Sood said the action plan involved coordination among the DFS, civic bodies, power distribution companies and the Delhi Development Authority.The DFS will organise fire safety awareness campaigns in schools, colleges, markets and Resident Welfare Associations (RWAs) to educate people about combustible materials and everyday fire hazards.

Sood said the Power Department would direct DISCOMs to address electrical overloading by increasing sanctioned loads and upgrading network capacity. The department will increase its sanctioned manpower in accordance with



the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) report and ARD concurrence.

Recruitment of station officers and firemen will be expedited in coordination with the Home Department, Services, UPSC and DSSSB. Regular fitness assessments will also be conducted for fire operators.Specialised equipment and appliances required to tackle fires involving highly combustible materials will be procured in accordance with MHA norms through an MoU with the Delhi Metro Rail Corporation.

8th Pay Commission: 1 year later, 3 big questions employees want answered

New Delhi. (Agency)

A year has passed since the 8th Pay Commission was formally set up, but central government employees are still waiting for answers on some important questions. How much will their salaries increase? What will the fitment factor be? And when can they expect the revised pay structure to come into effect?Formally established on November 3, 2025, the 8th Central Pay Commission is tasked with reviewing the salaries, allowances and pensions of central government employees and pensioners. Its recommendations are expected to benefit more than 50 lakh employees and nearly 69 lakh pensioners.

While the commission has begun its preparatory work, crucial details such as the final fitment factor, the extent of the salary hike and the implementation timeline are still awaited. Here are three big questions employees want answered.

HOW MUCH WILL SALARIES RISE UNDER THE 8TH PAY COMMISSION?

One of the biggest expectations surrounding the 8th Pay Commission is an increase in basic salaries. To understand how significant the next revision could be, it is worth looking at how government pay has changed over the years.Minimum basic pay for central government employees has increased from Rs 55 under the First Pay Commission to Rs 18,000 under the Seventh Pay Commission. The salary structure has also evolved over time.Under the Seventh Pay Commission, the earlier Pay Band and Grade Pay system was replaced with a Pay Matrix, bringing a more structured approach Explaining this evolution, Adhil Shetty, CEO of Bankbazaar, said, "The evolution of government pay since independence shows how significantly the structure and level of basic pay have changed over time. Minimum basic pay for central government employees has risen from Rs 55 under the 1st Pay Commission to Rs 18,000 under the 7th Pay Commission."

Fake job interviews, malicious code: How hackers pulled off Binance's $6.3 billion heist

New Delhi. (Agency)

The hackers behind the $6.3 billion breach at cryptocurrency exchange Binance used fake job interviews, malicious software disguised as legitimate developer tools and artificial intelligence (AI) techniques to infiltrate the company's systems, according to a detailed account released by the exchange.Binance said the attackers carried out a sophisticated, multi-stage campaign that began by targeting one of its software engineers through a job-hunting platform. The hackers allegedly posed as a project director and later arranged an interview with the employee through a social messaging app, claiming to represent a fictitious company.

The employee was then asked to download an assignment containing a malicious code repository. This triggered a series of unauthorised activities, Binance said in a report published on Tuesday, November 3.The disclosure offers a closer look at how the attackers gained access to the exchange's systems and eventually carried out one of the biggest cryptocurrency thefts on record.Binance attributed the attack to North Korea. The country has denied responsibility for the breach.

HOW THE HACKERS USED FAKE JOB INTERVIEWS

According to Binance, the attackers did not rely on a single compromised device or security lapse. Instead, they combined fake recruitment interviews, malicious software disguised as developer tools, compromised devices and AI techniques to gain access.

Buying gold on Dhanteras? What's the value of gold bought last year?

New Delhi. (Agency)

Dhanteras is the time when Indian households bring home auspicious items such as precious metals, utensils and new household goods, as symbols of prosperity and good fortune. But gold, whether in the form of jewellery, coins or small investments, remains the purchase that draws the most attention. Gold prices have surged since last Dhanteras, touching a record high in January, but has seen a slide in recent months. So, where does the value of the gold you bought last Dhanteras stand? And what is the current demand for the precious metal?Dhanteras is on November 6 (Friday) this year. Prices are currently hovering around Rs 1.38 lakh to 1.41 lakh per 10 grams for 24-carat gold, while 22-carat gold per 10 grams is trading in the Rs 1.27 lakh to 1.29 lakh range. These rates are before GST and making charges.Compared to 2025, buyers will have to shell out more for the precious metal this Dhanteras despite the recent fall in gold prices. The sharp correction from its record high earlier this year has offered some relief though.Gold is roughly 5.5% to 7.6% more expensive than it was around Dhanteras last year, when 24-carat gold was trading at around Rs 1.3 lakh to Rs 1.34 lakh per 10 grams. This translates into an increase of approximately Rs 8,000 to Rs 10,000 for every 10 grams over the past year.Gold started 2026 on a strong note, touching a record high of around Rs 1.75 lakh per 10 grams in late January before witnessing a sharp correction. Prices have since fallen nearly 20% from that peak, with October alone accounting for a decline of around 5%.

Dhanteras 2026: Gold nears Rs 1.45 lakh, should buyers wait for a dip or buy?

The price of gold on the Multi Commodity Exchange (MCX) rose by Rs 3,309, or 2.37%, to Rs 1,42,761, as of 2.13 pm, recovering after a sharp correction from its record high earlier this year.

New Delhi. (Agency)

Gold prices surged on Wednesday, November 4, offering a fresh twist to the buying decision for households preparing for Dhanteras. The price of gold on the Multi Commodity Exchange (MCX) rose by Rs 3,309, or 2.37%, to Rs 1,42,761, as of 2.13 pm, recovering after a sharp correction from its record high earlier this year.Retail gold prices also moved higher across major cities.In Delhi and Noida, 24-carat gold was priced at Rs 14,295 per gram, while 22-carat gold was selling at Rs 13,105 per gram. The price of 18-carat gold stood at Rs 10,725 per gram. In Mumbai, Kolkata and Bengaluru, 24-carat gold was priced at Rs 14,280 per gram and 22-carat gold at Rs 13,090 per gram.The latest rebound comes at a time when gold buyers are weighing the traditional appeal of purchasing the precious metal during Dhanteras against the sharp price swings seen in 2026.Gold touched a record high of around $5,595 per ounce in January before correcting sharply, with profit-taking, liquidation of leveraged positions, rising bond yields and a stronger US dollar putting pressure on prices.So, with gold rising again just ahead of the festive buying season, is this a good time to buy?



WHY GOLD PRICES ARE RISING AGAIN

Gold and silver have rebounded as the US dollar weakened following early Democratic wins in the US midterm elections, according to Augmont's November 4 bullion report.The report said investors were also watching the US non-farm payrolls report for clues about the Federal Reserve's next policy move. Early election results pointing to possible Democratic gains in both the House of Representatives and the Senate raised the possibility of political gridlock in Washington.Continuing geopolitical uncertainty is another factor supporting interest in safe-haven assets. Augmont noted that there was no sign of a breakthrough between Iran and the United States, with the two sides still far from a deal to end their conflict.The report also said a possible Democratic sweep could weigh on technology stocks and economic growth, potentially pushing more money towards safe-haven assets and pulling US bond yields lower.Religare Broking's Special Diwali Report 2026 noted that the US Federal Reserve kept its benchmark interest rate in the 3.75%-4% range at its October meeting after raising it by 25 basis points in September. Two policymakers dissented in October, favouring another rate increase amid concerns over persistent inflation.

Choice International proposes 1:1 bonus issue as revenue hits record high

New Delhi. (Agency)

Choice International's board has recommended a 1:1 bonus issue, under which shareholders would receive one additional share for every share held, subject to shareholder approval.The company announced the proposal alongside its financial results for the quarter ended September 30, 2026. It has not specified a record date for determining shareholder eligibility in its announcement.The proposed bonus issue comes as Choice International reported its highest-ever quarterly consolidated revenue of Rs 379 crore in Q2 FY27, up 33% from Rs 284.1 crore in the corresponding quarter last year.Consolidated profit after tax rose 23% year-on-year to Rs 69.47 crore, compared with Rs 56.5 crore in Q2 FY26. The company's profit after tax margin stood at 18.33%, against 19.88% a year earlier.Consolidated EBITDA increased 32% to Rs 130.6 crore, while the EBITDA margin was 34.47%, compared with 34.84% in the year-ago quarter.



Rs 900-CRORE INVESTMENT

Separately, Choice Equity Broking received Rs 900 crore from South Korea's NH Investment & Securities after the quarter ended. The investment is expected to support the company's margin trading facility (MTF) expansion and broader business growth.Choice added 1.73 lakh demat accounts during the quarter, taking its total to 13.78 lakh, a 14% year-on-year increase. Its assets under custody stood at Rs 66,300 crore, while its MTF book was Rs 463 crore.The company's government advisory business had an order book of Rs 710 crore. Its investment banking pipeline comprised 24 IPO mandates with estimated fundraising of Rs 6,210 crore.

US stocks were sold without consent: Inside investor's Rs 3.19-crore Stockal ordeal

New Delhi. (Agency)

An Indian investor who had been buying US stocks through Stockal since 2020 was left shocked when he discovered that shares worth $335,768 (approximately Rs 3.19 crore) in his portfolio had been sold without his authorisation. The proceeds were used to buy 3 lakh shares of Chinese company Zhibao Technology, a transaction he says he neither initiated nor approved.

He is among nearly 30 retail investors who have reported similar incidents involving Stockal. As reported by Moneycontrol, their accounts were allegedly accessed without authorisation, after which their US stock holdings, including shares of large, well-known companies, were sold. The proceeds were then used to buy shares of thinly traded stocks, exposing investors to a different and potentially riskier set of securities without their consent.

Preliminary losses exceeded Rs 100 crore, based on losses disclosed by two investors, reported Moneycontrol although the total financial impact remains unclear.



The investor, a senior official at a leading beverage company in India, told IndiaToday.in that he was introduced to Stockal through HDFC Securities and had been using the platform for his US investments for around six years. He said the arrangement had worked smoothly until October 2026, when he was informed of suspicious activity in his account.“I have been investing in US securities through a platform called Stockal since 2020. Stockal was introduced to us by HDFC Securities,” he said.According to the investor, he first received an email on October 18 informing him that suspicious trading activity had taken place in his account and could have financial implications. When he contacted the company, he was told that some securities had been sold and that the matter was being investigated.

Highway Infrastructure shares jump 62% in a month. Here's why

New Delhi. (Agency)

Shares of Highway Infrastructure Ltd have rallied sharply over the past month, gaining 61.76% as of November 4, according to market data. The stock, which was trading at Rs 71.11 at around 1.37 pm, has risen Rs 27.15 over the past month.The latest gains come as the company announced that it has secured a Rs 198.31 crore civil construction contract from the Central Public Works Department (CPWD). The company described this as its biggest-ever civil construction order.The stock touched an intraday high of Rs 73.89 on November 4, compared with its previous close of Rs 70.76. This represents an intraday rise of Rs 3.13, or 4.42%, from the previous close.The rally has been supported by a series of order wins, corporate actions and the company's plans to expand its business beyond toll collection.Highway Infrastructure has secured a domestic contract worth Rs 198.31 crore from CPWD for the planning, designing and construction of residential and non-residential infrastructure for the CISF 12th Reserve Battalion at Village Jamunia Talab in Madhya Pradesh's Sehore district.The project will be executed under Engineering, Procurement and Construction (EPC) Mode-I, with a stipulated completion period of two years.The scope includes the development of residential and non-residential infrastructure required for the establishment of the CISF battalion.Following this order, the company's order book has increased to Rs 1,776.19 crore, according to the company.

NHAI CONTRACTS AND ORDER WINS

The latest CPWD contract comes after Highway Infrastructure secured two user fee collection contracts from the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI), together worth around Rs 431.86 crore.The company had secured tolling and expressway mandates during September and October, including contracts across key corridors in Uttar Pradesh and Tamil Nadu. These included the Gorakhpur Link Expressway and Velanchettiyur Fee Plaza.The steady flow of orders has been one of the key factors supporting investor interest in the stock.The company's board, at its meeting in October, approved a preferential issue of convertible warrants worth Rs 49 crore to the promoter group. It also approved an increase in authorised share capital and the acquisition of a controlling 51% stake in Indore Highway Real Estates Private Limited.These developments have added to investor interest as the company looks to expand its business operations.The combination of fresh orders, fundraising plans and the proposed acquisition has helped improve sentiment around the stock, although the sustainability of the rally will depend on execution.

Healthcare costs may rise slower in 2027, but why your medical bills could still hurt

Healthcare costs may not rise as sharply in 2027, but does that mean you will spend less on treatment? Not necessarily. So, what is keeping medical expenses high?

New Delhi. (Agency)

Healthcare expenses in India may not rise as sharply next year, but that does not necessarily mean medical treatment will become cheaper. Medical costs are projected to increase by 10.1% in 2027, compared with 11.5% in 2026, according to a new report, titled ‘2027 Global Medical Trend Rates Report’ by Aon, a global professional services firm.While the pace of increase is expected to slow, medical cost growth will continue to remain significantly higher than general inflation. This means households and employers may still have to deal with rising healthcare expenses.According to the report, India's general inflation rate is projected at 4% in 2027, while the net medical trend rate, which accounts for inflation, is expected to be 6.1%, down from 7.4% in 2026.

MEDICAL INFLATION TO REMAIN HIGHER THAN GENERAL INFLATION

The projected moderation in medical cost growth does not mean healthcare expenses will fall. Instead, it indicates that the pace at which medical costs are rising is expected to slow.India's projected medical trend rate of 10.1% is also higher than the Asia Pacific average of 9.7% for 2027. The regional average is expected to decline from 11.3% in 2026.



Among major Asian markets, India's projected medical cost growth is higher than China's 6%, but lower than Singapore's 14.7%, Thailand's 11.7% and Indonesia's 17.3%.These differences reflect variations in healthcare systems, population trends, disease patterns and the use of medical services across countries.Commenting on the outlook, Ashley D'Silva, Head of Health and Wealth Solutions, India, Aon, said, "Moderation in India's medical trend rate reflects easing cost pressures and improving conditions across many healthcare systems globally."However, he pointed out that long-term challenges remain, including chronic diseases, growing demand for healthcare services and increased use of advanced treatments."With local medical costs still rising at more than twice the rate of inflation, benefits budgets will remain under pressure," he said.

HEART DISEASE, RESPIRATORY DISORDERS DRIVE MEDICAL CLAIMS

Chronic health conditions continue to account for a significant share of medical claims across the region, the report noted.Cardiovascular diseases remain the biggest driver of medical claims, followed by ENT and lung-related disorders, respiratory diseases and cancer.Lifestyle-related risk factors such as high blood pressure, physical inactivity and poor nutrition are also expected to contribute to future healthcare claims.The findings highlight the growing need to focus on preventive healthcare rather than relying only on treatment after a health condition develops.

FDA suspends licences of Pune's popular Karachi Sweet Mart, other businesses

Pune.(Agency)

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has suspended the licences of several establishments in Pune, including the main manufacturing centre of the popular Karachi Sweet Mart at Bhimpura Lane in Camp.Shrikant Karkale, Joint Commissioner, FDA (Food), Pune division, told The Indian Express that officials raided the manufacturing centre on Tuesday."We found the use of synthetic food colours without maintaining records of their quantification. There was a violation of the FSSAI advisory regarding traceability, storage, temperature control, and handling of khoa. Food Safety Officer S S Hake, under the guidance of Assistant Commissioner (Food) N R Sarkate, also identified the use of expired ingredients (choco sticks)," Karkale said.

Karkale said there was large-scale non-compliance with requirements under the Food Safety and Standards Regulations and that samples of motichoor ladoo, khoa, and malai pedha were drawn for analysis.

Sentenced to life term, murder convict 'ends life' at Surat jail

Surat.(Agency)

A MURDER accused – who was convicted and sentenced to life imprisonment on Monday by a court – allegedly died by suicide at Surat Central Jail on Tuesday, police said.Police said Shambhulal Ada (37) hanged himself with a cloth tied to a ventilation grill in a common toilet facility inside the jail. This is the second such instance at the Surat prison in less than 10 days, as another murder accused had allegedly hanged himself on October 26.Ada had been convicted by an Additional Sessions Judge of the Surat District Court on Monday and sentenced to life imprisonment. The court proceedings were carried out through video-conferencing.Assistant Public Prosecutor Dipesh Dave said, "Ada was convicted by the court on the basis of the evidence found against him and statements of witnesses."According to sources, Ada, who had been in jail since 2024, appeared to be distressed and did not talk to other inmates in his barrack after the court verdict. Ada had been convicted in connection with the murder of his live-in partner in February 2024. He was arrested and jailed after the woman's daughter registered a police complaint against him.

Police said that on Tuesday afternoon, Ada went towards the common toilet rooms and did not return for a long time. Jail staff knocked on the door from the outside, but got no response.

From Gomtipur to Shilaj: Row over 'relocation' of 400-year-old Jain idols reaches Gujarat HC

Vadodara.(Agency)

A DISPUTE over the relocation of 400-500-year-old idols from the Shri Rajpur Jain Shwetamber Murtipujak Chitamani Parshwanath Bhagwan Derasar in Gomtipur to Shilaj has landed before the Gujarat High Court (HC), with five devotees alleging that the trustees shifted the idols without informing the community members or securing the Charity Commissioner's permission. The petition alleges that the idols were removed overnight on February 10-11, 2025.It further alleges that the trustees, "in conspiracy with some other persons and for their own selfish reasons", dug up the idols from the Jinalaya and took them away for installation at Shilaj.The petition, filed through advocate Utkarsh Dave, challenges the Charity Commissioner's August 21, 2026, order rejecting the devotees' application seeking restoration of the idols. The petitioners have questioned the trustees' authority to relocate the idols, which they claim are 400 to 500 years old, arguing that the decision was an administrative act requiring scrutiny and could not be treated as a matter of religious practice.

They got actor Imran Khan to apologise for SIR protest. Now fury shifts to sister Zayn

The move comes after an FIR was registered against Zayn Khan, a US citizen, for participating in the October 10 protest against CEC Gyanesh Kumar

Mumbai .(Agency)

Two days after actor Imran Khan apologised for participating in the Mumbai SIR protests and submitted an undertaking to never participate in any demonstration in the future, the Mumbai Police has written to the Foreigners Regional Registration Office (FRRO), seeking verification of his cousin and actor, Zyan Marie Khan's Overseas Citizen of India (OCI) status for attending the demonstration.The move comes after an FIR was registered against Zayn Khan, a US citizen, for participating in the October 10 protest against Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar in Mumbai, alongside brother Imran Khan. It was organised by Tushar Gandhi's Hum Bharat Ke Log organisation. Both actors were later detained from the protest site.Following their detention, the Mumbai Police's South Region wrote to the FRRO, seeking verification of the OCI status of both the actors."As part of the procedure, the police had written to the FRRO stating that their OCI status should be checked," a police officer said.On October 14, the FRRO issued a Leave India Notice to Imran Khan. Two days later, the Mumbai Police wrote to the FRRO, informing it that Zayn Khan holds an OCI card and requested verification of her status."The regional office wrote to the FRRO stating that an FIR had been registered against her and that her OCI status must be checked," the officer said.The FRRO subsequently examined the OCI status of both Imran and Zayn Khan.On Monday, November 2, the Bombay High Court ordered Imran Khan to tender an "unconditional apology," stating that the OCI cardholders do not have the right to protest.According to the Mumbai Police, Zyan Marie Khan was born in Mumbai, but holds an OCI card. "She was born in Mumbai but is a US OCI cardholder. The FRRO will check her OCI status," a police officer said.Imran Khan's lawyer told The Indian Express that Zayn has not been served the FRRO notice.



Forced to borrow Rs 50 lakh, then sued by bank: The hidden cost of digital arrest scams

Cybercrime officers say banks must step up safeguards, from flagging suspicious transactions to conducting additional verification checks, to prevent digital arrest scams.

Bengaluru .(Agency)

Imagine taking a Rs 50 lakh loan under pressure in a digital arrest scam, only to learn later that the bank has initiated criminal proceedings against you for failing to repay it. Or finding out that your bank account has been linked to a cybercrime case in another state after you submitted personal details for what appeared to be a legitimate loan offer.

Such cases are increasingly making headlines as cyber fraudsters find new ways to exploit victims beyond draining their savings. This comes amid a sharp rise in digital arrest frauds across India.According to figures submitted before the Supreme Court by the Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre, digital arrest complaints rose from 39,925 in 2022 to 1,25,672 in 2024, with reported losses of around Rs 1,935 crore in that year alone. The trend has continued, with 58,239 complaints involving approximately Rs 1,211 crore recorded in 2025. Between January and August 2026, another 21,928 complaints were recorded, involving losses of more than Rs 647 crore.



A loan taken under coercion, followed by bank action

A recent Karnataka High Court ruling spotlighted this issue. The court refused to quash criminal proceedings ICICI Bank initiated against a 32-year-old Bengaluru woman who claimed she was forced to take a Rs 50 lakh personal loan during a digital arrest scam.According to the woman, on September 17, 2024, she received a call from someone posing as a FedEx employee, who told her that her Aadhaar number was linked to a drug case. She was subsequently connected to people posing as Mumbai police personnel and an RBI official, who allegedly threatened her with arrest and told her that she needed to transfer money to clear her name.During the calls, the fraudsters allegedly made her apply for an instant personal loan of Rs 50 lakh. The amount was credited to her account within 15 minutes, following which they allegedly made her add three beneficiaries and transfer the money to them on the assurance that she would receive a no-objection certificate clearing her name.She approached the police on September 21, 2024, and also complained to the RBI ombudsman. However, the loan remained outstanding. In May 2025, ICICI Bank initiated criminal proceedings against her after an instalment payment instruction for Rs 52.41 lakh was dishonoured due to insufficient funds.The woman approached the Karnataka High Court, arguing that she had no intention of taking the loan and had done so under coercion. Her counsel also questioned the bank's due diligence, pointing out that a Rs 50 lakh loan had been sanctioned and disbursed within minutes despite the unusual circumstances and subsequent transfers to newly added beneficiaries.

What happens when 32 prisons face a bomb threat and nobody can leave?

Ahmedabad.(Agency)

Early November 3, the police headquarters in Gandhinagar received a message: One of the state's 32 prisons and the state police chief's office would be "blown up". The threat mail, however, did not specify which prison.Such threats have become regular over the past two years. The targets are usually schools, courts, civic body buildings, stadiums and even events like concerts and international summits, which can be evacuated. But not prisons.Prisons here house gangsters such as Lawrence Bishnoi, convicts of the 2008 serial bombings, gangsters accused under the older terror laws and self-styled godman Narayan Sai.While other premises can be immediately evacuated—schoolchildren can be sent off home, courts can be adjourned, and government buildings can be emptied, checked and then declared safe—prisons cannot be evacuated, unless in the most extreme circumstances.At Sabarmati Central Jail in Ahmedabad, the largest correctional facility in Gujarat that has Bishnoi among the 4,300-plus inmates, teams of the bomb and doq squad and the anti-terror arm— the Special Operations Group (SOG)—were deployed, along with three vehicles of the Ahmedabad Fire and Emergency Services (AFES), on Tuesday.A senior official said, "The key places that had to be checked were those where visitors come, such as the front offices, the administration area, and where visitors meet prisoners."Also, there are spots between the barracks and the main gate that are accessed by several people. An officer in South Gujarat said, "While we have stringent security measures in place, there are areas where items and products arrive from outside. These include canteens, food storage units, medical facilities, clothing stores and visitors' rooms."In some cases, there may be secondary structures abutting the prison premises, such as a temple in Lajpore Central Jail in Surat where Narayan Sai is lodged.The state houses more than 18,500 prisoners lodged in its 32 prisons and 50 other holding facilities. The 32 prisons include four Central Jails in Ahmedabad, Surat, Rajkot and Vadodara; nine district jails; two special jails; four open jails; 11 sub-jails and two women's jails.

5,000-year-old Neolithic rock paintings discovered in Kallakurichi

KALLAKURICHI.(Agency)

Rock paintings believed to be around 5,000 years old and belonging to the Neolithic period, possibly depicting a prehistoric hunting scene involving a human figure and deer, have been discovered at a hillock at Seedevi village in Ulundurpet taluk of Kallakurichi district.A team comprising V Vijayrangam, associate professor in the Department of History at Arignar Anna Government Arts College, Villupuram, research scholar C Immanuel from the same college and archaeological enthusiast A Kulanthairaj of Eraiyur conducted a field survey in the village on Monday. During the survey, they found red-ochre paintings on a rock formation at a hillock locally known as 'Saavadikkal'.Explaining the discovery, Vijayrangam said two large rocks stood vertically at the site. "A large deer with long, branched antlers has been depicted in red ochre at the centre of one of the rocks. Opposite the deer is a human figure, shown standing with one leg on the ground and the other raised, holding what appears to be a weapon," he said.

The scene appeared to depict a hunting activity of prehistoric humans, he said. The human figure had been outlined in dark red and filled with a lighter shade of red. "A smaller deer has also been depicted above and to the right of the larger deer.

Murasu-induced rains lash parts of Telangana

HYDERABAD.(Agency)

The effects of Cyclone Murasu were felt in parts of the state on Tuesday, with some districts receiving around 6 cm of rainfall. Bhadradri Kothagudem recorded the highest rainfall at 6.5 cm, followed by Khammam at 5.2 cm.The India Meteorological Department (IMD), Hyderabad, had issued a red alert for heavy to very heavy rainfall earlier in the day.

According to the IMD's Meteorological Centre, light to moderate rainfall is likely at most places in the state on Wednesday. Rainfall activity is expected to continue on Thursday, though with reduced intensity. Isolated places in some eastern districts may receive heavy rain on Wednesday, accompanied by thunderstorms, lightning and gusty winds of 30-40 kmph.

Allow IT employees to log out early: Police

Meanwhile, Joint Commissioner of Police (Traffic) Sunpreet Singh on Tuesday urged IT companies and other organisations to allow employees to leave early from 2 pm on November 3 and 5 in view of the rainfall forecast.In a press note, he said staggered logouts should preferably be completed by 4 pm to minimise travel risks and ease pressure on roads, as rain was expected from afternoon to late evening. Companies were also advised to consider work from home as an alternative to reduce traffic congestion and ensure the smooth functioning of essential services.The South Central Railway (SCR) has cancelled, diverted and rescheduled several trains as Cyclone Murasu disrupted rail services on Tuesday and Wednesday. According to the SCR, seven trains have been cancelled.

'Rs 1,614 crore Korean investment was never ours': TN government denies losing out to AP

CHENNAI.(Agency)

Tamil Nadu has rejected reports that its auto components industry is losing ground to neighbouring Andhra Pradesh, after reports that three component suppliers are setting up plants in Anantapur.Reacting to three South Korean automotive component manufacturers — Hwashin, Seoyon and Iwamet — choosing to set up a combined Rs 1,614 crore investment cluster, an industries department official said it was being "presented and read out of context", and pointed out that the move reflects how automotive supply chains work rather than any shift in the state's appeal. Hwashin and Seoyon already operate units in Sriperumbudur and Krishnagiri while Iwamet, a key global supplier of precision automotive parts, has a registered entity in Sriperumbudur.



"Component suppliers are located close to the OEMs they serve," the department said. The Anantapur investments follow an anchor manufacturer's decision to expand capacity there, which "started operations long before the current (TN) government". This comes amid Kia India's reported expansion at its Anantapur plant, which couldn't be confirmed.The government was in discussions with these companies to persuade them to invest in Tamil Nadu and serve Kia from here. "We knew the odds were stacked against us, as the companies already had a presence near Kia, but we made every effort to convince them. We did not succeed, and that is true. But these investments were never ours to begin with. We nevertheless pursued them.""When we signed MoUs with Motive Link, Inzi Controls, Woo-young and DYC1, we pulled off an investment coup against Andhra Pradesh. Despite Kia being their principal buyer, these companies chose Tamil Nadu. That should demonstrate the extent of our efforts and the lengths we go to in persuading investors to set up operations here," the official said.The industries department said the episode "does not reflect any change in Tamil Nadu's competitiveness" and that it is unfair to expect Tamil Nadu to secure 100% of the investments coming into India. "We strive to attract every possible investment.

NEWS BOX

Raphinha, Yamal power Barca to Champions League win over Villa

Barcelona. (Agency)

Raphinha struck twice to propel Barcelona to a 3-0 Champions League win over visitors Aston Villa on Tuesday, ending the English side's perfect start to the competition.Five-time winners Barcelona took an early lead through Lamine Yamal before Raphinha continued his fine goalscoring form with a second-half brace.Barca bounced back after defeat by champions Paris Saint-Germain in their previous European outing to stay in the hunt for a top eight league phase berth.Unai Emery's Villa competed well in the first half but were eventually undone by Barca's greater ability in the final third.The Champions League anthem was not played before the game, as a mark of respect for Tenerife striker Jesus De Miguel, who died on Tuesday morning after an on-pitch collision in a Spanish second division match the previous day, provoking shock across the football world."Yes it was (a good win), I want to dedicate this win to the fans, but today I don't want to talk about football, I want to send a message to the family of Jesus -- may he rest in peace," Raphinha told Movistar."This can happen to anyone, it's very tough... you're going to play a game and the same thing can happen to you..."From the club, I want to send a message of strength to the family."Villa captain John McGinn had only visited the Camp Nou once previously, on a summer holiday as an eight-year-old, and might have expected better weather than the downpour both teams were subjected to.

The skipper might also have expected a more focused start, with Villa handing Barcelona the lead in the seventh minute.The Spanish champions pressed Aston Villa extremely high and Joao Gomes played a poor pass straight to Yamal in his own box. The 19-year-old winger gladly took the gift and stroked past Villa goalkeeper Zion Suzuki."Tonight was a huge learning curve for us and I am sure it will stand us in good stead for the future," McGinn told TNT Sports."Barcelona made the right decisions at the right times and scored really good goals."Yamal's goal was his 14th in the competition across his career, beating Real Madrid striker Kylian Mbappe's previous record tally of 13 netted as a teenager in the Champions League.Emery, who endured one of the worst nights of his career away at Barca when helming PSG in 2017 during a 6-1 defeat, may have feared the worst.However Villa reacted strongly and Matty Cash had a vicious drive deflected narrowly wide before Joao Cancelo blocked Gomes's effort.

PSG make Champions League history, Barcelona cruise past Aston Villa

Paris Saint-Germain smashed a Champions League record with a stunning 6-0 victory over Villarreal, while Barcelona ended Aston Villa's perfect run with a convincing 3-0 win. However, Rodri's injury cast a shadow over the night.

New Delhi. (Agency)

Paris Saint-Germain made Champions League history with a record-breaking start to their 6-0 demolition of Villarreal, while Barcelona delivered an impressive 3-0 victory over Aston Villa at Camp Nou on Tuesday. The defending champions produced a ruthless attacking display despite missing several key players, while Barcelona brought Villa's perfect start in the competition to an end.PSG were without Ousmane Dembele, Marquinhos, Nuno Mendes and long-term absentee Khvicha Kvaratskhelia, but their absence barely showed as Luis Enrique's side overwhelmed Villarreal. The French champions scored four times inside the opening 17 minutes, setting a new benchmark in the competition before adding two more goals after the break.

Barcelona, meanwhile, were equally convincing against an Aston Villa side that had won their opening three matches in the league phase. Lamine Yamal opened the scoring early before Raphinha struck twice in the second half to seal a comfortable win. However, the result was tempered by an injury concern surrounding Spain midfielder Rodri, who was forced off at half-time.Elsewhere, Bayern Munich beat Atletico Madrid 2-0 despite being without head coach Vincent Kompany, while Manchester United recovered from a two-goal deficit to defeat Roma 3-2 at Old Trafford. It was a night of significant results across Europe, with PSG and Barcelona providing two of the standout performances.

PSG MAKE CHAMPIONS LEAGUE HISTORY

PSG needed just 16 minutes and two



seconds to score four goals against Villarreal, setting a new Champions League record. The previous benchmark belonged to Real Madrid, who had reached four goals in 20 minutes during their 6-2 victory over Dinamo Zagreb in 2011.Joao Neves opened the scoring in the ninth minute, reacting quickest to a loose ball after a corner. Desire Doue doubled the advantage in the 12th minute before Senny Mayulu struck just a minute later. Fabian Ruiz completed the extraordinary burst in the 17th minute, with Villarreal's defensive errors playing a part in the three goals that followed Neves' opener.The defending champions did not take their foot off the pedal after the break. Ruiz scored his second of the night before 17-year-old David Boly came off the bench to mark his Champions League debut with a goal in the 78th minute. The 6-0 victory kept PSG at the top of the league-phase standings with 12 points from four matches.

BARCELONA CRUISE, RODRI INJURY SPARKS CONCERN

Barcelona made a statement of their own by ending Aston Villa's winning run in the competition. Yamal gave the hosts an early lead in the seventh minute after intercepting a misplaced pass from Joao Gomes, cutting inside and finding the bottom corner.

Age is just a number: Kohli, Rohit put on a fielding masterclass in Auckland

New Delhi. (Agency)

Make no mistake, Virat Kohli and Rohit Sharma are pushing hard for a place at the 2027 ODI World Cup. The intensity of their efforts was on show in Auckland on Wednesday as the two senior India batters combined to manufacture two wickets against New Zealand in the opening ODI of the five-match series.India dominated proceedings, reducing New Zealand to 146/9 in 35 overs. The four fast bowlers in the Indian attack were impressive as the hosts struggled to negotiate the pace, bounce and hint of seam movement on offer.Arshdeep Singh picked up four wickets, while Anshul Kamboj claimed two as India kept New Zealand under pressure. But amid the bowlers' impressive showing, it was the fielding efforts of the two senior statesmen that caught the eye.Rohit Sharma set the tone in the 22nd over. Shubman Gill had brought spin into the attack for the first time in the match when Glenn Phillips tapped the ball towards the leg side and set off for a single, hoping to take advantage of his partner Daryl Mitchell's proficiency



against slower bowling.The batters hesitated briefly, unsure whether to commit to the run. Rohit needed no second invitation. Charging in from short midwicket, he collected the ball and fired a rocket throw to KL Rahul, who was standing at the stumps.The dismissal sparked celebrations among the Indian supporters in the stands and offered another reminder of Rohit's sharpness in the field.With the 39-year-old raising the bar, Kohli was hardly going to be left behind.

Fielding in the slips in the 29th over, Kohli flung himself to his right to grab an edge from Nathan Smith. The ball travelled at considerable speed, giving the fielder little time to react, but Kohli's sharp reflexes and anticipation helped him complete the catch.India eventually bowled New Zealand out for 185 in 40.2 overs, with their seamers leading the charge and the fielders ensuring the pressure never eased. For Rohit and Kohli, the two dismissals were another demonstration of the athleticism and commitment they continue to bring to the side as India build towards the 2027 ODI World Cup.

Harry Kane thanks Virat Kohli for special Ballon d'Or message

New Delhi. (Agency)

Harry Kane received congratulatory messages from some of the biggest names in sport after winning the Ballon d'Or, but few messages clearly stood out for the English centre-forward. The Bayern Munich star singled out Indian cricket icon Virat Kohli among the people he was particularly pleased to hear from after claiming football's biggest individual honour.Kane became the first Englishman since Michael Owen in 2001 to win the award, capping a remarkable season with Bayern Munich. He finished ahead of Kylian Mbappe and Lamine Yamal in the voting, with the ceremony taking place at the London Palladium on October 26.Kohli was quick to congratulate his friend after the announcement, praising the England captain for his resilience, hard work and honesty throughout his career. The former India captain also sent his best wishes to Kane and his family.Kane was asked whether any of the messages he received left him starstruck. While he was reluctant to use that description, the Bayern forward made sure to include Kohli among the sporting greats who reached out to him."People like David Beckham, who was a big idol of mine, Tom Brady, Virat Kohli, a lot of sportspeople I really admire. A good friend of mine, Ed Sheeran, who's at the top in the music industry, too. I had many, many messages, all of which I was extremely grateful for," Kane said.

KANE OVERWHELMED BY RESPONSE

The England captain admitted that the sheer volume of messages had taken him by surprise. While he expected his family and friends to celebrate the achievement, the reaction from people outside his immediate circle made the occasion even more special."It's fine wanting it for yourself, and your friends and family want it, but the outpouring from social media, and people texting me who didn't even have my number and wanted it just to reach out, was overwhelming," he said.Kane added that the messages made him realise just how much the achievement meant to people beyond his own circle. He also stressed that he was grateful to everyone who had taken the time to congratulate him.

Manchester United stun Roma with comeback win to ease pressure on Michael Carrick

New Delhi. (Agency)

Manchester United looked to be heading for another miserable night at Old Trafford, but instead produced a comeback to remember, beating Roma 3-2 after going two goals down. Their first win in 10 matches could hardly have come at a better time for Michael Carrick, whose position had come under increasing scrutiny during the club's poor run.Matias Soule and Donyell Malen had put Roma 2-0 ahead inside 17 minutes, leaving United with a mountain to climb. The home side were booed off at half-time, and Carrick was facing more uncomfortable questions after a run that had brought little to cheer.The response, when it came, was emphatic. Bruno Fernandes converted a retaken penalty to



give United a way back into the contest before Matheus Cunha scored twice in the final stages to turn the game on its head.Fernandes was keen to make it clear that, despite the noise surrounding the club and its manager, his faith in Carrick had not wavered. The United captain also admitted that the players shared the frustration of supporters who have grown accustomed to seeing the club compete for trophies.

"The manager is the one that makes the decisions. I have to accept them, I have to go forward with that. It doesn't change the belief I have in the manager, in the staff and every player that is in this club," Fernandes told Amazon Prime.The midfielder also hoped the result would give United something to build on after a difficult spell.

"We're all frustrated with the situation at the moment and we all want to get out of this. Hopefully this win today gives the start of something good for us," he said.

FANS TURN ON GLAZERS AGAIN

The frustration was not limited to the players. United supporters had made their anger towards the Glazer ownership clear, with tennis balls thrown onto the pitch during the first half.

Robin Montgomery "hopes to stay as healthy as possible" after injury-plagued years

CHENNAI. (Agency)

SUFFERING an injury takes a toll on an athlete, both mentally and physically. The long lay-off period following the blow can be mentally exhausting, especially when other competitors do better, with the rankings or by title wins. Off the court, the finances and sponsors can dry up, which is crucial for athletes.For US's former Junior World No 1 Robin Montgomery, she had to deal with the pangs of it in the years following her Junior US Open singles and doubles title victory in 2021. With rising expectations, Montgomery had to fight a battle of her own. Early in 2022, she suffered a severe right wrist injury, which aggravated early last year. She had no choice but to undergo surgery later that year.But before she stepped on to the court, life was not the easiest. She was raised by a single mother in Washington DC, but as she said: "It takes a village to raise a child." her grandmother and her aunt were also there. "I definitely come from a household of strong, independent women, and I wouldn't change that for the world," she said.

Introduced to sports by her mother — a skier from Oregon in the USA —Montgomery picked up tennis at age six. "My mom happened to put me in tennis because I was a hyper child and she just wanted to tire me out," she said. From there on, the journey has had its highs, but in her lows she has learnt valuable lessons. She revealed how she discovered a different side to her in her recovery from the wrist injury. "I took that time to relearn myself and learn new things about myself on and off the court, and finding different hobbies and things like that to make sure that even though I love tennis and tennis takes up a lot of my time, I'm still Robin. I'm very grateful for that time, granted it was much longer than I wanted it to be," she said.And the approach has worked out to an extent. She won her first WTA level tournament in her career in the Netherlands in June (Libema Open WTA 250). Then at the Chennai Open on Tuesday, she began her campaign by beating Panna Udvardy.But the biggest moment of the year came in the US Open in September. Partnering with Ashlyn Krueger – with whom she won the junior doubles title of this Grand Slam event in 2021 – the pair entered the final but they lost to Katerina Siniakova and Taylor Townsend.

India eye 7th Asian Champions Trophy final as Mohali makes international debut

Brazil head coach Carlo Ancelotti praised the India for their "organised" defense despite the hosts' 4-0 defeat in the historic friendly.

Mohali. (Agency)

India will be chasing a record-extending seventh appearance in the Asian Champions Trophy final when they take on Korea in the semi-finals on Wednesday, November 4. The occasion will be even more special as Mohali prepares to host its first-ever international hockey match at the Olympian Balbir Singh Senior Hockey Stadium.ndia and Korea will battle for a place in the final, while the other last-four clash will see Malaysia take on Japan. The action on Wednesday will begin with the fifth-sixth place playoff between Bangladesh and China before the two semi-finals bring the curtain down on a historic day for Mohali. Excitement is already building as the city prepares to welcome international hockey for the first time.The tournament enjoyed an encouraging turnout during its league-stage matches in Jalandhar, with India producing a dominant display in front of the home crowd. The team will be hoping for similar support in Mohali as they look to take another step towards the title. However, standing in their way is a Korean side in transition, one that India will be expected to overcome.

DOES DOMINANT INDIA HAVE ANYTHING TO WORRY ABOUT?

Going by India's performances in the league stage, there is little reason to doubt their credentials as title favourites. The hosts have been in formidable form, winning all five of their round-robin matches to finish unbeaten at the top of the standings.India scored 34 goals and conceded just five during the league phase, underlining their dominance at both ends of the pitch. Their attacking threat has also been spread across the forward line, with Sukhjeet Singh and Dilpreet Singh emerging as key contributors with four goals apiece.Abhishek has also made his mark with three goals, although an



injury kept him out of the previous game. Leading the scoring charts is skipper Harmanpreet Singh, who has found the net nine times in the tournament. Fellow drag-flicker Jugraj Singh has chipped in with three goals, further highlighting India's depth in penalty-corner specialists.The upcoming clash against Korea also gives India an opportunity to build on their recent dominance over the Asian rivals. Before thrashing them 8-0 in Jalandhar, India had registered an emphatic 8-2 victory over Korea in Nagoya during the Asian Games. That remains their biggest winning margin against Korea at the continental showpiece.

However, despite their impressive numbers and attacking firepower, India have one area they will be keen to address before the knockout stage.In the four matches following their 13-0 demolition of Bangladesh, India have shown signs of vulnerability in the second quarter. The team has occasionally lost its grip on proceedings during that period, allowing opponents back into games.Their previous meeting against Korea in Jalandhar saw India concede as many as six penalty corners.

Against China, Malaysia and Japan, too, the second quarter proved to be a tricky period, with India conceding the equaliser before recovering in the final two quarters to turn things around.

Alia Bhatt



Neetu Kapoor Grace Ranbir Kapoor's Ramayana Mumbai Premiere; Ravie Dubey Touches Sunny Deol's Feet

With just two days left for its theatrical release, the excitement around Nitesh Tiwari's Ramayana: Part One is building. The makers are hosting a special screening for the film's cast, crew, and invited guests from the film industry in Mumbai today, November 3. The event is being held at an IMAX theatre in Lower Parel, ahead of the grand release on November 5. Alia Bhatt and Neetu Kapoor were seen arriving in style to cheer for Ranbir Kapoor, who will be seen playing Lord Rama's role in the film.

Alia Bhatt, Neetu Kapoor root for Ranbir Kapoor

In the viral videos, Alia Bhatt can be seen donning an elegant sea-blue saree paired with a heavily embellished halterneck blouse. Neetu Kapoor, meanwhile, went for a contemporary look in a coordinated brown outfit featuring a cowl-neck top and wide-legged trousers. The saas-bahu jodi looked all things gorgeous as they flashed their million-dollar smiles for the paparazzi. Have a look:



Ranbir Kapoor made a dapper appearance at the premiere, opting for a maroon kurta paired with black trousers. Keeping his look understated yet elegant, the actor struck the perfect balance between traditional and contemporary style.Sunny Deol, who will be seen playing Hanuman's character in the epic saga, was also seen making a splash at the premiere night in an all-white suit paired with a sky-blue shirt. As he posed at the red carpet, Ravie Dubey, who essays Lakshman's character in the film, was seen touching Sunny's feet as a mark of respect. The sweet gesture has been winning hearts online. One fan wrote, "Wow." Another fan wrote, "Such a sweet gesture." Others were seen dropping red heart emojis.

Other starcast, including Vivek Oberoi, Rakul Preet Singh, Kajal Aggarwal, and Lara Dutta were also seen arriving with their families. Director Nitesh Tiwari graced the red carpet with his wife and filmmaker Ashwiny Iyer Tiwari and their kids. Alia's sister Shaheen Bhatt and mom Soni Razdan also made an appearance. Ranbir's cousins Aadar and Armaan Jain also attended the special screening with their wives.

Ramayana Makers Unveil Sai Pallavi's Sita Promo; Fans Praise Her 'Grace, Serenity And Divinity



With Ramayana only days away from release, the makers have unveiled a new character promo featuring Sai Pallavi as Sita. The video arrived shortly after Ravie Dubey's Lakshman poster and has quickly drawn attention online, particularly from fans who had been debating Sai's casting in the role.Sharing the promo on social media, the makers wrote, "Daughter of the Earth, princess of Mithila. Bound by love, guided by Dharma. Sai Pallavi as Sita. Promo out now."The new glimpse focuses entirely on Sai's portrayal of Sita and has triggered a wave of positive reactions from viewers, many of whom praised the restraint and composure in her performance.

Fans Praise Sai Pallavi As Sita

Sai Pallavi's casting had initially divided some sections of the audience, with viewers debating whether another actress might have suited the role better. The latest promo, however, appears to have softened some of that scepticism.One user wrote, "She has the perfect balance of gentleness and inner strength. Sai Pallavi as Sita Maa is a casting worth celebrating!"Another fan commented, "#SaiPallavi as Maa Sita. The promo is OUT NOW! Pure grace, serenity and divinity. She looks absolutely ethereal!"A third user highlighted the physical stillness in her performance, writing, "Marvellous stillness in her face and body and sheer grace in her movements."

The reactions have largely centred on Sai's calm screen presence and the measured quality she brings to the character in the brief promo.

Ramayana Part 1 Releases On November 5

Directed by Nitesh Tiwari, Ramayana is being released in two parts. The first instalment is scheduled to hit theatres on November 5, 2026.The second part is currently slated for Diwali next year, although reports have suggested that the release could be pushed to 2028. No official announcement confirming any delay has been made so far.The film features Ranbir Kapoor as Lord Ram, Sai Pallavi as Sita and Yash as Ravana, with Ravie Dubey playing Lakshman.

Advance Booking Builds Ahead Of Release

Expectations around Ramayana remain high ahead of its theatrical release, particularly given the scale of the project and the attention around its cast.

Honey Singh Hugs Grieving Brother-In-Law After Nephew Vidit's Death In Jalandhar Accident



Some moments are simply too painful for words and Honey Singh is going through just that. The rapper is dealing with a heartbreaking loss in his family after his nephew Vidit Auluck died in a road accident. Honey recently made his way to Jalandhar to be with his loved ones.A video from his visit has now surfaced online, capturing an emotional moment between the singer and Vidit's father, Dinesh Auluck. In the video, Honey is seen stepping out of his car and walking towards Dinesh. The moment the two meet, the singer pulls him into a tight hug and breaks down in tears. Dinesh holds him close before taking him inside the house.

Honey also remembered his nephew by sharing a childhood photograph on Instagram. The picture shows him spending time with his nephews. Along with it, he wrote, "Rip Puttar (son)," and tagged Vidit.Earlier, the rapper had also shared a post about the loss, expressing just how difficult this time has been for him. He wrote, "its dark decade for me. Loss of my nephew is devastating. Bhole nath mehr mehr."Vidit was the son of Dinesh Auluck, the owner of popular Punjabi music label Speed Records. His friend Aarav Talwar, whose father owns Pappy Sweets, also lost his life in the same accident.The accident happened on a flyover near the Police Lines area. The Volkswagen carrying the two friends crashed into a tractor-trolley that was parked on the road. The two were reportedly returning home after attending a friend's birthday party.Baradari police station SHO Sahil Chaudhary said the police received a call about the crash at around 3 am. He explained that Municipal Corporation sanitation workers were cleaning the flyover and had left the tractor-trolley there to collect garbage. The car was coming from BMC Chowk and heading towards BSF Chowk when it rammed into the parked vehicle.There were five people inside the Volkswagen at the time. While Olak and Talwar lost their lives in the crash, the other three occupants survived and had returned home, the SHO said.

Kareena Kapoor



Confirms SRK's King Cameo; Shafaq Naaz Responds To Karwa Chauth Trolling

Shah Rukh Khan is celebrating his 61st birthday today, and social media has been flooded with heartfelt wishes from fans, colleagues, friends and loved ones. Among them was Kareena Kapoor Khan, who wished the superstar with a special Instagram post that has left fans delighted. Interestingly, Bebo also confirmed her appearance in SRK's upcoming film, 'King'.Actress Shafaq Naaz faced severe trolling after she posted pictures with her husband while celebrating Karwa Chauth. The actress was questioned for celebrating a Hindu festival while being a Muslim. She has now hit back at trolls questioning her choice to celebrate the festival, stating that she respects all religions and doesn't feel the need to justify her actions to anyone.



Hanuman Ansh may have emerged as one of 2026's biggest box office success stories, but disagreements within its core team have now come into the open. The devotional biopic on Neem Karoli Baba, reportedly made on a budget of Rs 2 crore, went on to earn Rs 452.86 crore worldwide, according to Sacnilk. Behind that extraordinary commercial run, however, differences appear to have developed between director Dr Vishal Chaturvedi and producers Namrata G Singh, Ragini Sona and Anupriya Nagar.Michael Mann, the director of popular films like Heat and Collateral, had a scary experience over the weekend. The 83-year-old filmmaker was injured in an accident at a gun range in Los Angeles on Saturday. He was taken to the hospital for treatment, but his representatives have confirmed that the injury was not serious.Sanjay Gupta's death has left Milap Zaveri heartbroken. Today, on October 2, he took to his Instagram account and shared a long, heartfelt note on behalf of Sanjay Gupta's wife, Anuradha. Mourning the loss of Sanjay Gupta, she wrote, "A part of our lives has been lost forever, and nothing can ever fill the void or make up for this loss."

NEWS BOX

Brazil's Senate approves Lula's main bet to strengthen fight against criminal gangs

SAO PAULO.(Agency)

Brazil's Senate approved on Tuesday legislation that strengthens the government's power to fight criminal gangs, in another win for reelected President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, who has touted the changes as key to tackle one of his nation's biggest problems.The constitutional amendment, which will be sanctioned later this week, creates a public security ministry, changes the coordination of Brazil's security agencies, and allocates more resources to fight Sao Paulo-based First Command of the Capital, or PCC, and Rio de Janeiro's Red Command, or CV.In June, the U.S. State Department designated both groups as foreign terrorist organizations, a move that Lula interpreted as interference and an attempt by U.S. President Donald Trump to shore up support for Lula's election rival, Sen. Flávio Bolsonaro, son of former President Jair Bolsonaro.The amendment, which was approved b Brazil's lower house in March, passed in two rounds of voting with no opposition. Bolsonaro, whose term expires at the end of January, voted remotely..Stricter penalties for gang leaders and members would include mandatory imprisonment in a maximum-security prison, curbs on parole and asset seizures.Brazilian senators removed from the amendment an attempt to reduce Brazil's criminal age to 16 from the current 18. Many security experts say lowering the age of criminal responsibility is inefficient and could increase recruitment into organized crime within Brazil's overcrowded prisons.Crime is a top concern for Brazilians and was a key issue in the presidential election last month. Drug-trafficking gangs have expanded their presence in recent years and now control large swathes of the Amazon rainforest, while paramilitary-type militias.

Iran says tankers destroyed after hitting mines in Hormuz

TEHRAN .(Agency)

Four oil tankers caught fire after hitting mines while attempting to pass through the Strait of Hormuz, Iran said Wednesday, after it warned no one would benefit from a return to war.It came a day after President Donald Trump said the United States had launched strikes on the Islamic republic, following reports of a raid on Qeshm, the largest island in the strait."Four non-compliant oil tankers attempting to pass through the prohibited passage south of the Strait of Hormuz were destroyed after striking naval mines and are still burning," Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps said in a statement quoted by state TV."Two other non-compliant ships or vessels have also been halted."Tehran claims control over Hormuz, a vital global energy conduit, and has targeted vessels that attempt to cross without its authorisation since the war erupted.

The conflict, triggered by US-Israeli strikes on Iran in February, has been at a stalemate for months.Indirect contact between the United States and Iran via mediators has continued with little sign of any diplomatic breakthrough, and Iran has said it is ready to reopen the strait but only if Washington agrees to a long-standing list of demands.Tehran's chief negotiator in talks with the United States, Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf, said the Islamic republic was "ready for battle with its finger on the trigger", although President Masoud Pezeshkian insisted his government was trying to resolve the crisis "through dialogue".

It's Trump's time to face the music as Democrats sweep US midterms

World. (Agency)

Before the US midterm elections, Donald Trump urged voters to treat the polls as a referendum on his presidency and imagine that his name was on the ballot. Voters listened, and then rejected him. The Democrats, who faced the brunt of two tumultuous years of Trump 2.0, are set to win the House of Representatives and also take control of the Senate. Trump will now have to contend with angry Democrats in Congress, who could block his agenda, decide on government spending, and also initiate impeachment proceedings. Trump is effectively likely to become a lame-duck president.The 'Blue tsunami' (blue is used to represent the Democrats) reflects strong dissatisfaction with the direction in which Trump has taken the country over the past two years. Cost of living, rising cost of diesel, and the economic consequences due to the Iran war proved to be the bugbear for Trump and the Republicans.The Republicans entered the midterm polls with a slim majority in both chambers of Congress. It gave Trump considerable legislative support since his return to the White House in January 2025. However, the Democrats are well on course to change the balance of power in Washington. It essentially means a weak Trump in the White House, even though he will retain his executive powers over areas such as tariffs, immigration and foreign policy.

LEGISLATIVE AGENDA MAY HIT A WALL

With Democrats controlling both the House and Senate, Trump will find it much harder to pass new laws. His plans on taxation, spending, healthcare and other domestic issues could face stiff resistance. Moreover, the Democrats could also use their control of Congress to refuse to approve funding for some of Trump's priorities.

Veto Power

However, Trump, not known to accept defeats gracefully, has touted an ace up his sleeve - veto power. The eccentric US President said he would "veto" Democratic legislation if necessary, and



gave him the moniker "Mr Veto". As per the US Constitution, a president can veto legislation passed by Congress. Overriding a presidential veto requires a two-thirds majority in both chambers, something Democrats are unlikely to achieve without help from Republicans.Moreover, the Senate's 60-vote filibuster threshold could prove to be a hurdle for the Democrats. In the Senate, major legislation can be blocked through a procedure called a filibuster. To end it and move towards a vote, a party generally needs 60 votes out of 100. In such a scenario, the Democrats, with 52 Senate seats, may have to negotiate with Republicans.

INVESTIGATIONS AGAINST TRUMP

A majority in the House will give Democrats control of the body's committees. This, in turn, will give it the ability to subpoena documents and witnesses as part of investigations.The Democratic Party has signalled they would investigate Trump's family business, immigration enforcement, and matters related to sex offender Jeffrey Epstein. The business dealings of Trump's son-in-law Jared Kushner and son Donald Trump Jr. are expected.

Kansas turns blue after 94 years as Democrats storm Republican Senate strongholds

World. (Agency)

Democrats delivered a stunning electoral setback to Republicans in the US midterm elections, breaking decades-long winning streaks in some of the country's most firmly Republican states and flipping key seats that had initially been considered safe for the party.In Kansas, Democrats ended a 94-year losing streak in Senate elections, while Texas saw an end to the Republican Party's three-decade hold on the governor's office. In South Carolina, Democrats broke a 28-year drought by winning a Senate seat. The results marked a remarkable resurgence for the party in traditionally conservative territory.

The results were particularly striking in Texas and South Carolina, which Trump had carried by significant margins in the 2024 presidential election and Kansas, where he had won by more than 16 percentage points. The victories came amid growing dissatisfaction with Trump's handling of the economy and the war with Iran.Republicans had mounted extensive campaigns to defend their seats, with Trump and Vice President JD Vance personally campaigning for candidates. However, their efforts failed to prevent Democrats from making significant inroads into states where the Republican Party had enjoyed decades of electoral dominance.



KANSAS: ADAM HAMILTON ENDS 94-YEAR DEMOCRATIC LOSING STREAK

Democrat Adam Hamilton defeated Republican incumbent Roger Marshall in Kansas, ending the party's 94-year losing streak in Senate elections. He became the first Democrat to represent the traditionally Republican state in the US Senate since 1932.The upset was particularly striking as Donald Trump had won Kansas by more than 16 percentage points in the 2024 presidential election and the Senate seat had been considered safely Republican.

Amy Acton defeats Trump-backed Vivek Ramaswamy in Ohio governor race

Washington.(Agency)

Indian-American Republican Vivek Ramaswamy, who was backed by US President Donald Trump, has lost the Ohio governor's race to Democrat Amy Acton, the Press Trust of India reported.Acton, 60, became the first woman elected governor of Ohio after securing more than 51 per cent of the votes. Ramaswamy, 41, received more than 45 per cent.In his concession remarks, Ramaswamy said: "It was a tough race. It was bitter at times in both directions... All of us in this room should be rooting for the success of her administration," according to C-SPAN. He also thanked his parents, wife and parents-in-law for their support.Ramaswamy lost despite being advised by top strategists from his political team and that of Vice-President JD Vance, NBC News reported.The billionaire, who unsuccessfully challenged Trump for the Republican presidential nomination in 2024, put more than USD 36 million of his personal fortune into the race as loans, The Washington Post reported. He also received millions of dollars in donations from billionaires Elon Musk and Jeffrey Yass, according to NBC News.Days before the election, Ramaswamy faced criticism over an advertisement in which Acton's mother, Donna Arthur, called her daughter a liar and urged Ohio voters not to support her, PTI reported, citing NBC News.Acton said she had neither seen nor spoken to Arthur in nearly 50 years. She has accused her mother's then-husband of sexually abusing her when she was a child, the report said.Ramaswamy had helped Musk plan Trump's Department of Government Efficiency initiative to overhaul the federal government. After leaving the role, he was endorsed by Trump, who also travelled to Ohio to campaign in his support.Despite Trump's endorsement, support from prominent strategists and substantial campaign funding, Ramaswamy finished behind Acton, who secured a majority of the votes and became Ohio's first woman governor.

Federal judge temporarily blocks Trump plan to deport detained Afghans to Afghanistan

MIAMI.(Agency)

A federal judge in New York temporarily blocked the Trump administration's plans to deport Afghans detained in the United States to Afghanistan or Pakistan on Tuesday, after advocates and dozens of members of Congress warned that their lives would be at risk.The government told the court Tuesday that Immigration and Customs Enforcement had no chartered or commercial flights for deporting Afghan nationals to Afghanistan or to Pakistan at least to the end of the week. Judge Valerie Caproni's order, which expires Saturday, asks all officials to adhere to that. ICE books the flights weeks in advance.A letter led by California Democratic Rep. Scott Peters and signed by 65 other members of the House and Senate said they were "extremely concerned that sending vulnerable people" would expose them to "persecution, torture, or even death." The letter was sent Monday to Secretary of State Marco Rubio and Homeland Security Secretary Markwayne Mullin.Immigrant rights organizations have also warned that those deported could face retaliation from the Taliban.

Thousands of Afghans fled persecution and feared for their lives after helping the U.S. military and aid groups in Afghanistan.According to court documents obtained by the Associated Press, the U.S. planned to deport Afghan immigrants on Monday on flights from Louisiana, where ICE has immigrant detention and processing facilities, to Pakistan.President Donald Trump's administration has deported thousands of immigrants to countries other than their own. In some cases, it has resorted to third-country deportations when removal to their countries of origin was not possible, like when formal diplomatic relations were absent, as is the case with Afghanistan's Taliban government. In other instances, third-country deportations have been used as a deterrent.Advocates and attorneys said that more than 80 detained Afghans had contacted them after ICE notified them that they could be deported this week via Pakistan. Among them are women, a police officer, members of religious minorities, and people whose family members served in the U.S. military. Most fled Afghanistan because of persecution and do not have legal representation, according to Human Rights First and AfghanEvac, a nonprofit organization that advocates for immigrants.

Afghanistan expressed 'serious concern' for the deportations

Before the judge signed her order, Zia Ahmad Takal, deputy spokesman of foreign ministry, said "the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan expresses its serious concern" about the reports that U.S. plans to transfer Afghans to Pakistan.

Iran says Democratic midterm sweep reflects Americans' 'no to war' message

world.(Agency)

Iran's chief negotiator in talks with the United States, Mohammad Bagher Ghalibaf, said Wednesday that Americans voted "NO TO WAR" after Democrats routed the Republicans in the midterm elections.Democrats won full control of



the US Congress in a sweeping landslide of upsets that delivered a crushing rebuke of President Donald Trump and his party.

The vote reflected deep anger over living costs, tariffs and Trump's war against Iran, which has sent fuel prices soaring and compounded dissatisfaction with an already deeply unpopular president."Conscience or the cost of living, Americans said NO TO WAR, and we endorse this message," Ghalibaf posted on X.

"If the US govt betrays their public will to serve international paymasters and blackmailers, it will learn our NO comes with a Nightmare."Earlier, Trump told Fox News that the Iran war played a role in the stunning midterm election defeat for his Republican Party."I think a part of it was Iran, but at the same time, people understood the importance of what I've done with Iran," Trump said in a telephone interview with Fox.The war, triggered by US-Israeli strikes on Iran in February, has been at a stalemate for months, punctuated by sporadic exchanges of fire amid fears of a full-scale resumption of hostilities.

North Korea launches unidentified projectile toward the sea, South Korea says

SEOUL.(Agency)

North Korea launched an unidentified projectile toward the sea on Wednesday, South Korea's military said, adding to a recent series of provocative weapons demonstrations by Pyongyang.South Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff said the launch happened off North Korea's east coast but gave no further details, including what type of weapon was fired.In recent weeks, North Korea has ramped up its weapons tests in a likely bid to increase its leverage in potential diplomacy with the U.S. after President Donald Trump expressed his desire to restore diplomacy with Kim Jong Un.The latest launch also came a day after North Korea denied involvement in the recent cryptocurrency heist at Binance, dismissing as "a trite provocation" a US announcement that North Korean hackers were behind the incident.Binance, the world's biggest cryptocurrency exchange, said Friday that hackers stole more than $6 billion in what appears to be the largest cryptocurrency heist on record. The FBI later said the theft was orchestrated by North Korean hackers, attributing the attack to a hacking group known as TraderTraitor, which was also behind a $1.5 billion hack of the Bybit exchange last year.On Wednesday, Kim Yo



Jong, the influential sister of North Korean leader Kim Jong Un, issued another statement criticizing the FBI announcement, saying Pyongyang views it as "an extension of Washington's invariable hostile policy toward" North Korea."It is our clear stand that we have no need to sit face to face with such unreliable and hostile persons," she said. "The choice for peace includes dialogue of course, but this is not surely equated with national interests for us."North Korea's recent weapons tests include a submarine-launched ballistic missile, hypersonic missiles, attack drones and cluster bombs designed to be carried by ballistic missiles. Pyongyang said Tuesday that it tested a new cluster warhead for strategic cruise missiles the previous day, claiming it could destroy an area of 5 to 6 hectares (12 to 15 acres) with "high-density power."

Tensions between the two Koreas have also deepened since mine blasts at their border in September wounded three South Korean soldiers. Seoul accused North Korea of burying the mines south of the military demarcation line and demanded an apology. Pyongyang has denied responsibility for the explosions and warned of retaliation if provoked.North Korea later threatened to resume propaganda loudspeaker broadcasts and place new weapons systems along the border.