



**2**  
FARMERS TO  
INTENSIFY STIR  
FROM NOV 26



**9**  
IRBMS & ICBMS  
STRATEGIC POWER  
ACROSS CONTINENTS



**16**  
INDIA'S  
PACERS WRECK  
AUSTRALIA 67/7

## 10 NAXALITES GUNNED DOWN IN C'GARH FOREST ENCOUNTER

The era of peace returns to the Bastar region: CM Vishnu Deo Sai

AGENCIES  
SUKMA

Ten Naxalites, three of them women, were gunned down in an encounter with security personnel in Chhattisgarh's Sukma district on Friday, a senior police official said.

Chief Minister Vishnu Deo Sai hailed the security forces and said the era of peace and progress has returned to the Bastar region.

The gunfight broke out in the morning in a forest near Bhandarpadar village in the jurisdiction of the Bheji police station, where a joint team of security personnel was out on an anti-Naxalite operation, said Sundarraj P, inspector general of police (Bastar zone).

He said personnel of the District Reserve Guard (DRG) and Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF)



DRG (District Reserve Guards) Jawans celebrate after succeeding in eliminating 10 Naxals during an encounter, in Sukma on Friday. (ANI Photo)

launched the operation based on inputs about the presence of Maoists from the Konta and Kistaram area committees on forested hills of Korajguda, Dan-

tespuram, Nagaram and Bhandarpadar villages.

"Bodies of 10 Naxalites, including three women, clad in 'uniform', have been recovered from the spot",

he said.

Besides, 12 weapons, including an INSAS rifle, an AK-47 rifle, a self-loading rifle (SLR) and Barrel Grenade Launchers (BGLs),

were also seized, he said.

Two of the deceased have been identified as Madkam Masa (42), a divisional committee member and military in-charge of the south Bastar division of Maoists, and Lakhma Madvi, an area committee member, the IG said, adding that they were carrying a bounty of Rs 8 lakh and Rs 5 lakh respectively.

The other deceased included Masa's wife Duhni Huni (35), his guard Kowasi Kesa, Madkam Jitu and Madkam Kosi, he said, adding that the four were members of the PLGA platoon no. 4 and carried a bounty of Rs 2 lakh each.

The official said the identity of the remaining four deceased cadres was yet to be ascertained.

After returning from the operation, the security personnel

AGENCIES  
WASHINGTON

Asserting that the relationship between India and the US is built on a strong foundation, the White House has expressed confidence that it can navigate the ongoing crisis surrounding bribery charges against Indian billionaire Gautam Adani.

At her daily news conference, White House Press Secretary Karine Jean-Pierre told reporters on Thursday that the administration is aware of the charges against Adani.

Adani has been charged by US prosecutors for allegedly being part of a scheme to pay over USD 250 million (about Rs 2,100 crore) bribe to Indian officials in exchange for favourable terms for solar power contracts.

"Obviously we're aware of these allegations, and



US-India ties stand on an extremely strong foundation anchored in ties between people and cooperation across a full range of global issues.

— Karine Jean-Pierre  
Press Secretary  
White House

I would have to refer you to the SEC (Securities and Exchange Commission) and DOJ (Department of Justice) about the specifics of those allegations against the Adani Group," she said.

"What I will say is on the US and India relationship, we believe that it stands on an extremely strong foundation anchored in ties between our people and cooperation across a full range of global issues," Jean-Pierre said.

"What we believe and we're confident about is that we'll continue to navigate this issue as we have with other issues that may have come up as you just stated.

And so the specifics of this, this is something that the SEC and DOJ can speak to directly, but again, we believe that...this relationship between India and the US has been built on a strong foundation," the Press Secretary said.

## X is number one news app in India, claims Musk

AGENCIES  
SAN FRANCISCO [US]



Elon Musk on Friday claimed that X, formerly the microblogging site Twitter, had become the number one news app on the App Store in India.

Elon Musk shared the news via a post on X, saying, "X is now number 1 for news in India"

The announcement was initially shared by a X handle Dogedesigner who claimed, "BREAKING: X is now the number one news app on the App Store in India.

The X handle also revealed a new feature on

## SC order on Nov 25 on pleas to delete 'secular', 'socialist' from Preamble

AGENCIES  
NEW DELHI

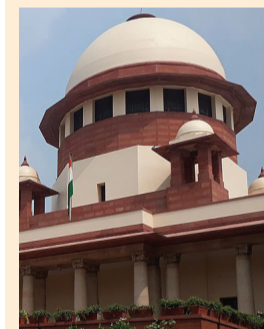
The Supreme Court on Friday said that it would pass an order on November 25 on a batch of petitions seeking to delete the words 'secular' and 'socialist' from the Preamble of the Indian Constitution.

A bench of Chief Justice of India Sanjiv Khanna and Justice Sanjay Kumar, while hearing the petitions, observed that being socialist in the Indian sense is understood only to be a "welfare state."

The bench said secularism is part of the basic structure of the Constitution and the 42nd Amendment had been examined by the Supreme Court earlier as well.

The apex court was hearing petitions filed by BJP leader Subramanian Swamy, lawyers Balram Singh, Karunesh Kumar Shukla and Ashwini Upadhyay. Earlier also, the bench had said that secularism has always

THE GIST



■ A SC bench has observed that being socialist in the Indian sense is understood only to be a "welfare state".

■ The bench said secularism is part of the basic structure of the Constitution and the 42nd Amendment had been examined by the Supreme Court earlier as well.

## SC flags Delhi govt's failure on GRAP-4 curbs

NEW DELHI: The Supreme Court on Friday directed the Delhi government and Police to immediately set up checkpoints on all 113 entry points to Delhi to check the entry of trucks in the national capital. A bench of Justices Abhay S Oka and Augustine George Masih said the personnel who are going to man the entry points must be clearly informed about the accepted items to enter in trucks under essential commodities.

■ DETAIL P5

## Priyanka's fate to be decided today

NEW DELHI: The counting of votes for the bypolls



to 46 Assembly seats in 13 states and in the Lok Sabha segments of Nanded in Maharashtra and Wayanad in Kerala, a crucial electoral exercise since the parliamentary polls. ■ DETAIL P4

## Poll outcome in Maha, J'khand to shape India's political trajectory

AJIT MAINDOLA  
NEW DELHI

The election results of Maharashtra and Jharkhand, set to be announced on Saturday, will be crucial for the BJP and the Congress.

For Congress, this election is particularly crucial, as a loss in a key state like Maharashtra could have severe consequences. Such a defeat would create challenges for both Congress and the I.N.D.I.A alliance.

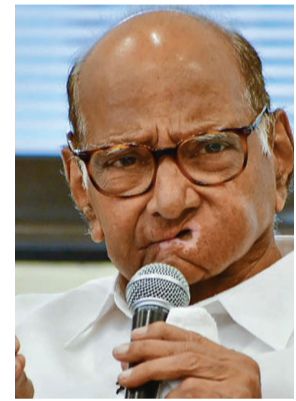
If the BJP fails to retain power in Maharashtra, it could strengthen the opposition, making it difficult for the NDA to complete its term. However, based on exit polls and reports so far, the BJP, along with its allies, appears to be on track to form the government again. The final results, expected by Saturday afternoon, will determine the future direction of Indian politics.

The Congress governments in Karnataka, Himachal Pradesh and Telangana will face their biggest crisis if the BJP wins in Maharashtra. This defeat



would put Congress in a precarious position as it would need to focus on preserving its existence in upcoming elections next year. The party is already struggling, and the results in Jharkhand will also be crucial for both BJP and Congress, but the national impact of Jharkhand's outcome will not be as significant as that of Maharashtra. This is because the battle in Maharashtra involves a deeper struggle, with the stakes being about both genuine and fake political dynamics.

Maharashtra politics is shaped by veteran leaders, and the stakes are incredibly high for experienced



figures like Sharad Pawar. If the Mahavikas Aghadi fails to win, it could spell trouble for Pawar's political future. He is already concerned about his daughter Supriya Sule's political trajectory, and a loss would only heighten these worries, further deepening the divide within his family. His nephew, Ajit Pawar, may emerge as the true leader of the NCP, causing a shift in the party's dynamics and creating uncertainty among its workers. Similarly, Uddhav Thackeray's political future hinges on these election results. Thackeray had negotiated extensively with Congress

## Omar wants fair probe into 'torture of civilians'

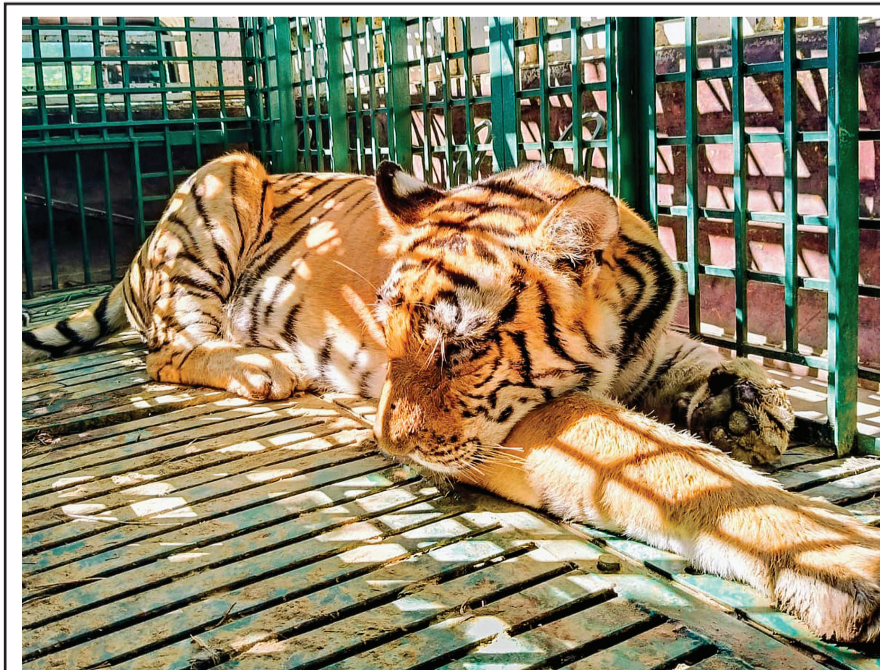
AGENCIES  
SRINAGAR/JAMMU

The alleged torture of five civilians by Army personnel in Kishtwar has triggered angry reactions from various political parties in Jammu and Kashmir, notably from Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, who has demanded a transparent investigation and court martial for those found guilty.

The controversy erupted following the Nagrota-based XV Corps' announcement of an inquiry into claims of brutal torture inflicted on five residents of Kuath village in the region. Disturbing footage circulating online showed the individuals struggling to walk, their faces marked with injuries.

On November 20, the Army initiated operations in the Mughal Maidan area of the district based

■ P3



The Assam forest department trapped a Royal Bengal Tiger, who attacked local residents, in Nagaon on Thursday. ANI

## PM meets 31 world leaders in 3-nation trip

AGENCIES  
NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi participated in 31 bilateral meetings and informal inter-actions with global leaders during his three nation foreign visit to Nigeria, Brazil for the 19th G20 Summit and Guyana from November 16-21.

He held a bilateral meeting in Nigeria, 10 bilateral meetings on the sidelines of

the G20 Summit in Brazil. Thereafter, during the visit to Guyana, he held 9 bilateral meetings, according to the official statement.

In Nigeria, PM Modi held a bilateral meeting with the Nigeria president Bola Ahmed Tinubu

In Brazil, PM Modi held bilateral meetings with leaders of Brazil, Indonesia, Portugal, Italy, Norway, France, UK, Chile, Argentina and Australia.

*In Brazil, PM Modi held bilateral meetings with leaders of Brazil, Indonesia, Portugal, Italy, Norway, France, UK, Chile, Argentina and Australia*

Amongst the 10 bilateral meetings in Brazil, this was the first meeting of PM Modi with 5 leaders: Prabowo Subianto, Indonesia president; Luis Montenegro, Portugal PM; Keir Starmer, UK PM, Gabriel Boric, Chile President and Javier Milei, Argentina President, as per the statement.

In Brazil, PM also had informal interactions and pull aside meetings with leaders of Singapore, South Korea,

Egypt and Spain and with the heads and executives of various international organisations like Ursula von der Leyen, European Union; Antonio Guterres, United Nations; Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, World Trade Organization; Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, World Health Organization; and Kristalina Georgieva and Gita Gopinath, IMF.

In Guyana, PM Modi held

■ P3

# FARMERS TO INTENSIFY STR FROM NOV 26

SKM (Non-Political) and Kisan Mazdoor Morcha to launch fast unto death from November 26--the anniversary of 2020-21 farmers agitation

NEERAJ MOHAN  
CHANDIGARH

Protesting against the Union government for not fulfilling demands made to farmers during 2020-21 protests, the farmers associated with the Samyukta Kisan Morcha (Non-Political) and the Kisan Mazdoor Morcha have decided to intensify their agitation by launching fast unto death from November 26--the anniversary of 2020-21 farmers agitation.


Farmer leaders, who jointly announced this decision in Delhi to Friday, said the Samyukta Kisan Morcha (Non-Political) and the Kisan Mazdoor Morcha announced that decision was taken following no response from the government on their pending demands including legal guarantee for Minimum Support Price (MSP) and a Loan Waiver.

The SKM (NP) leader Jagjit Singh Dallewal to himself start an indefinite hunger strike at the Khanauri border. The leaders said that farmers and labourers from Punjab, Haryana, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, and other states will gather at the Khanauri Border to support the hunger strike. Similarly, peaceful protests will be held at district headquarters across Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Telangana, and other South Indian states.

The leaders warned that if the government fails to address their demands, farmers will launch a march towards Delhi from Shambhu Border on December 6. Protesting farmers

### THE DEMANDS

- Legal guarantee for MSP
- Implementation of Swaminathan Commission recommendations Pensions for farmers and farm labourers
- No hike in electricity tariffs
- Withdrawal of police cases against farmers
- Justice for victims of the 2021 Lakhimpur Kheri violence Reinstatement of the Land Acquisition Act, 2013 Compensation for families of farmers who died during the 2020-21 protests.



Farmers gather at the Shambhu border protest site. File photo

## SKM gears up for nationwide protests

Chandigarh: Farmer leaders associated with the Samyukta Kisan Morcha (SKM) -- an umbrella body of several farmers and labor organizations -- planning to Nationwide Protests on November 26 to mark the anniversary of 2020-21 farm agitation.

As per the SKM leaders millions of farm workers and tenant farmers from across the country will participate in district-level joint labour-farmer protests, jointly called by the SKM and the Joint Platform of Central Trade Unions (JPCTU) along with independent and regional federations and associations also extended the support.

The protests aim to counter the corporatization of agriculture and defend the livelihoods of working-class communities while strengthening farmer-labor unity and the participants will engage in campaigns such as foot marches, bicycle and motorcycle rallies, and door-to-door distribution of pam-

phlets and notices. The three platforms SKM, farm worker unions, and tenant farmer organizations agreed to work independently while ensuring joint and coordinated action based on common issues and concrete demands. Their primary goal is to resist the corporatization of agriculture and attacks on the livelihoods of the working class.

Their key demands include minimum wages and employment for all, 200 days of work under MGNREGA with a daily wage of Rs 600 and protection of the Public Distribution System (PDS) and control over rising prices, Central laws to protect the rights of farm workers and tenant farmers, ending social discrimination and violence, development of collective and cooperative models for agriculture production, procurement, storage, processing, branding, credit, and insurance and Institutional support from the public sector for agriculture.

have been camping at the Shambhu and Khanauri border points between Punjab and Haryana since February 13, after the Haryana police did not allow them to enter Haryana curtailing their 'Delhi Chal' march. The

SKM and KMM accused the union government of ignoring their genuine demands for not holding any meeting with the farmer leaders pointing out that no discussions have been held after their last meeting with the group of union

ministers held on February 18 remained inconclusive.

However, the Supreme Court had also formed a committee of experts to resolve the issue and the committee earlier this month held its first meeting with the farmers as

only 12 farmer leaders attended the meeting and KMM group had already refused to hold talks with the committee.

The farmers are demanding legal guarantee for MSP, Implementation of Swaminathan Commission recommendations, Pensions for farmers and farm labourers, no hike in electricity tariffs, Withdrawal of police cases against farmers, Justice for victims of the 2021 Lakhimpur Kheri violence, Reinstatement of the Land Acquisition Act, 2013 and Compensation for families of farmers who died during the 2020-21 protests.

"On November 26, Dallewal will begin a fast unto death at the Khanauri border. Despite farmers sitting in protest at the Shambhu, Khanauri, and Ratanpura borders for the past nine months, the government has not paid any attention to their demands. This drastic step is being taken to awaken this deaf and blind government from its deep slumber", said farmer leader Abhimanyu Kohar.

The press conference saw participation from prominent leaders like Sarwan Singh Pandher, Sukhjinder Singh Khosa, Tejveer Singh (Haryana), Abhimanyu Kohar, and representatives from Uttar Pradesh, including Rajinder Yadav and Jatinder Sharma. The Morcha appealed to the central government to fulfill its commitments and called on all stakeholders to ensure that farmers' demands are met in the upcoming parliamentary session starting November 25.

# Gyanvapi ASI survey: SC seeks response of Masjid Committee

AGENCIES  
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Friday sought the response of the Gyanvapi Masjid Committee on an application filed by some Hindu worshippers seeking an Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) survey of the sealed area of the mosque, where a "Shivlinga" was claimed to have been found in Varanasi.

A bench of Justices Surya Kant and Ujjal Bhuyan issued notice to the Committee of Management Anjuman Intezamia Masjid, which manages the mosque in the Gyanvapi complex and others on the application filed by some worshippers.

The bench posted for hearing the matter on December 17. The bench said it will also hear same-day other petitions relating to the case, including an application to consolidate all suits and transfer them from the Varanasi district court to the Allahabad High Court.

The application said that since a part of the building was sealed by an interim order of May 20, 2022 and confirmed by order November 11, 2022, the ASI could not make a survey of the sealed area of the property in question.

"It is submitted that there are important evidence and material relating to the temple within the sealed area and same are importance pieces of evidence for decision of the case. The portion of the building in question is also required to be sur-



A view of the Gyanvapi Mosque, in Varanasi on Sunday. (ANI Photo)

*The application said since a part of the building was sealed by an interim order of May 20, 2022 and confirmed by order November 11, 2022, the ASI could not make a survey of the sealed area of the property in question.*

veyed by ASI in the same manner as the remaining area of the building in question has been surveyed by various scientific techniques as contained in report of December 18, 2023," the application said.

It would be expedient in the interests of justice to direct ASI to conduct a scientific survey of the sealed area by adopting the latest methods of investigation/survey and submit a report within such time as may be provided before this court and the interim order of November 11, 2022, may be modified to that extent, said the petitioners.

"Pass an order directing ASI to conduct survey using all possible scientific methods of the sealed area of the property in question and submit report within time provided by the court. Suitably modify the order

dated November 11, 2022 permitting ASI to conduct survey within sealed area of the property in question," they urged the apex court.

Earlier, the top court had put on hold the carbon dating of the "Shivlinga," saying that the implementation of the directions contained in the Allahabad High Court's order shall stand deferred till the next date of hearing.

Allahabad High Court had allowed the scientific survey of the "Shivlinga" in the premises of the Gyanvapi complex under the supervision and direction of District Judge Varanasi.

The apex court had deferred the "scientific survey," saying, "Since the implications of the impugned order merit closet scrutiny, the implementation of the directions concerned in the order shall stand deferred till the next date."

# Manipur violence claimed 258 lives since May last year

AGENCIES  
IMPHAL

The ethnic violence between Meitei and Kuki communities in Manipur has claimed 258 lives since May last year, the state government's Security Advisor Kuldiep Singh said on Friday.

He said that the state would get around 90 companies of the Central Armed Police Force (CAPF), over and above the 198 companies that are already in Manipur.

"The total number of deaths is 258 including militants," Singh while addressing a press conference after holding a security review meeting here.

The security advisor said that 32 people were arrested in connection with vandalism and torching of properties of ministers and MLAs while around 3,000 looted weapons have been recovered.

"We are getting approximately 90 companies of CAPF, over and above the 198 companies which were earlier sent to the state. A sizeable number of them have already reached Imphal. We are distributing forces to protect the lives and properties of the citizens and vulnerable points," Singh said.

The authorities would set up coordination cells and joint control rooms in each district, he said after the meeting which was attended by representatives of the Army, BSF, CRPF, Assam Rifles, SSB, ITBP and the Manipur Police.



Security personnel conduct a search operation and area domination in the fringe and vulnerable areas of hill and valley. File photo

ordination, for functioning, for fringe area security, for national highways security, and for any other important points which have to be taken care of," Singh said.

Chief Minister N Biren Singh would be briefed about *Manipur will get about 90 companies of CAPF, over and above the 198 companies which were sent earlier. A sizeable number of them have already reached Imphal.*

The outcome of the meeting as is done in all similar cases, he said.

He said that nine bodies, including those of the six abducted and killed in Jiribam, were buried peacefully under tight security.

The bodies include three women and three children, who were allegedly abducted from a relief camp on November 11 by Kuki-Zo militants from Jiribam's Borobekra

area when a group of Kuki youths were engaged in an encounter with CRPF in which 10 of them were killed.

"The CRPF post was attacked during which 10 militants were neutralised. Soon after that, it came to light that three women and three children were abducted," Singh said.

It will be found out whether the abduction happened in presence of the security forces, he said.

No information is available if the militants involved in the abduction belonged to Suspension of Operations (SoO) groups but it will be checked, Singh said adding that NIA is looking into the cases. The SoO pact was signed by the Centre, the Manipur government and two conglomerates of Kuki militant outfits -- Kuki National Organisation (KNO) and United People's Front (UPF). The pact was signed in 2008 and extended periodically thereafter.

The violence between Imphal Valley-based Meiteis and adjoining hills-based Kuki-Zo groups, besides inflicting heavy casualties, rendered thousands of people homeless since May last year.

## Over 100 monkeys die of toxic chemical, buried in pit to hide carnage

Hathras (UP): More than 100 monkeys perished after inhaling a pesticide sprayed in a food godown and were stealthily buried in a pit, police on Friday said. On Friday, the bodies of monkeys, buried in a pit, were taken out for a postmortem by a team of veterinarians.

Circle Officer Yogendra Krishna Narayan said police came to know about the deaths on Wednesday. Police have registered a case against the employees of Food Corporation of India and started an investigation.

According to police, the chemical in question was aluminium phosphide sprayed on wheat sacks to protect it from insects and rodents in an FCI warehouse on November 7. A troop of monkeys entered the warehouse through a broken window of the godown on the night of November 7 and ended up inhaling the gas. When the workers opened the warehouse on November 9, they saw several monkeys dead. They allegedly chose not to inform their seniors about deaths and buried the bodies in a pit.

The CO said the bodies were exhumed when some Vishv Hindu Parishad leaders came to know about the incident.

# Rahul calls for collective effort against pollution

TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

Congress leader and Lok Sabha Leader of Opposition Rahul Gandhi on Friday raised concern over air pollution in the northern part of India, and termed it a "national emergency," as the air quality continues from poor to severe according to the Air Quality Index in the region for the past few days.

Taking to social media platform X, the Rae Bareilly MP highlighted that the situation was a "public health crisis" affecting the entire region, "stealing children's future" and "suffocating the elderly."

He further pointed out that the pollution was not only harming public health but also contributing to an environmental and economic disaster. He emphasised that the poorest sections of society are suffering the most, unable to escape the polluted air and noted that children are falling ill and many lives are being



shortened due to exposure to the harmful air.

"Air pollution in North India is a national emergency--a public health crisis that is stealing our children's future and suffocating the elderly, and an environmental and economic disaster that is ruining countless lives. The poorest among us suffer the most, unable to escape the toxic air that surrounds them. Families are gasping for clean air, children are falling sick, and millions of lives are being cut short," Gandhi said on X.

The Leader of the Opposi-

tion in the Lok Sabha also mentioned the decline in tourism and the negative effect on India's global reputation, further calling for a collective response to the pollution crisis and urging governments, companies, experts, and citizens to work together to address the issue.

"Tourism is declining and our global reputation is crumbling. The cloud of pollution covers hundreds of kilometres. Cleaning it up will need major changes and decisive action--from governments, companies, experts and citizens. We need a collective national response, not political blame games," he said.

With the winter session of the Parliament to begin in a few days, he reminded the parliamentarians of the urgent need to address the issue "once and for all."

"As Parliament meets in a few days, MPs will all be reminded of the crisis by our irritated eyes and sore throats.

It is our responsibility to come together and discuss how India can end this crisis once and for all," the LoP further added.

On Friday, a thick layer of smog engulfed the national capital while the air quality index remained in the 'very poor' category, according to the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB).

At 7 am today, the CPCB recorded Delhi's AQI at 371, which placed it in the 'very poor' category.

According to the CPCB data, the AQI measured at Chandni Chowk till 7 am was 359, IGI Airport (T3) 357, ITO 344, Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium 342, RK Puram 372, Okhla Phase 2 374, Patparganj 379, Sonia Vihar 400 and Aya Nagar 359. However, several places in Delhi are still in the 'severe' category for air pollution, with Anand Vihar recording an AQI of 410, Bawana 411, Mundka 402, and Wazirpur at 413.

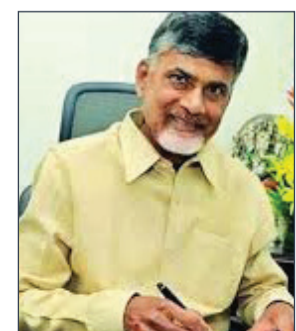
# Naidu introduces SwarnaAndhra@2047 vision

AGENCIES  
AMARAVATI

Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu on Friday introduced SwarnaAndhra@2047 Vision document in the Assembly here, which envisages 'wealthy, healthy and happy' Andhra Pradesh in the next 23 years.

The Chief Minister noted that 2047 is a significant milestone as it will mark the centenary of Indian independence from colonial rule, and everyone will need to proudly say what we have achieved in 100 years.

"Prime Minister Narendra



Modi launched Viksit Bharat 2047 and we are launching SwarnaAndhra@2047. It (state) should be a wealthy, healthy and happy Andhra. It should have these three elements," said Naidu, addressing the House. According to

the CM, the vision document was drafted following wide-spread consultations and grassroots-level engagement such as conducting workshops at mandal and municipality level and covering over 1.18 crore households, among others. "By 2047, Andhra Pradesh envisions a state of happy, thriving, and responsible Telugus, fostering a progressive and inclusive community, a valley of innovation, a knowledge hub for global speed of doing business," said Naidu, reading the vision statement.

Listing other goals of the vision, he said that they include

top per capita income for the state in the country with family as a unit and raising global thinkers; making the southern state a global hub for skills, among others. Further, the Chief Minister observed that the vision will be driven by 'Padhi Sutralu' (10 guidelines) or broad goals, which encompass achieving zero poverty, employment, skilling & human resource development, water security, farmer agri tech, global best logistics, cost optimization of energy & fuel, product perfection, swacch (clean) Andhra and deep tech in all walks of life.

## THE DAILY GUARDIAN SURVEY ON ICC WARRANT

### 52% of people think Netanyahu will be arrested

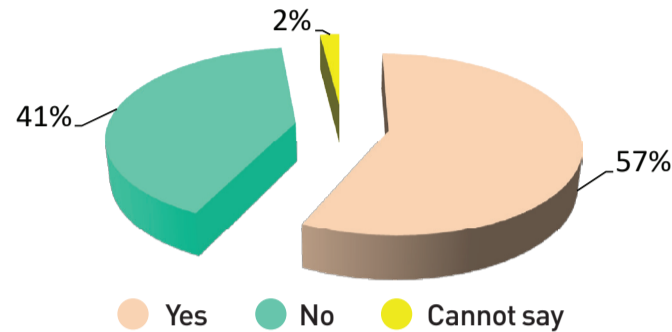
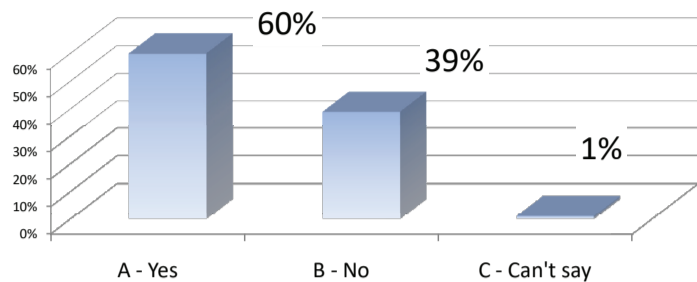
The International Criminal Court (ICC) has issued arrest warrants for Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, former Defence Minister

Yoav Gallant, and Hamas military commander Mohammed Deif. Netanyahu and Gallant are accused of war crimes, including

using starvation as warfare and crimes against humanity, while the ICC dismissed Israeli jurisdiction objections.

#### Q1. ▶

Do you believe that Netanyahu has committed a crime by starting a war?

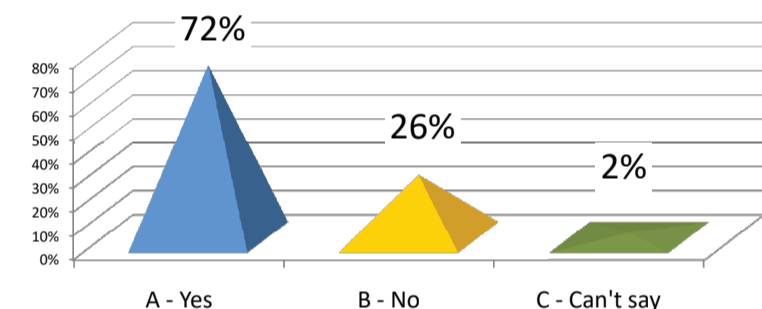
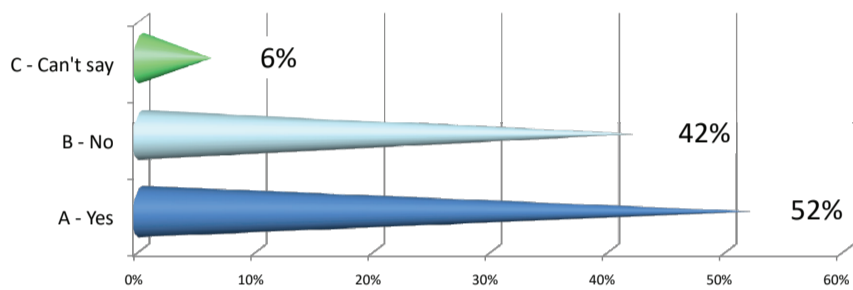


#### Q2. ◀

Do you think the arrest warrant issued by the International Criminal Court (ICC) against Netanyahu is justified?

#### Q3. ▶

Do you think Netanyahu will be arrested?



#### Q4. ◀

Do you believe Netanyahu is escalating matters due to his stubbornness?

## THE DAILY GUARDIAN SURVEY ON POK POLITICS

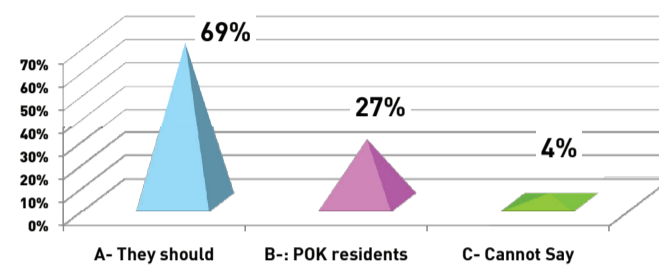
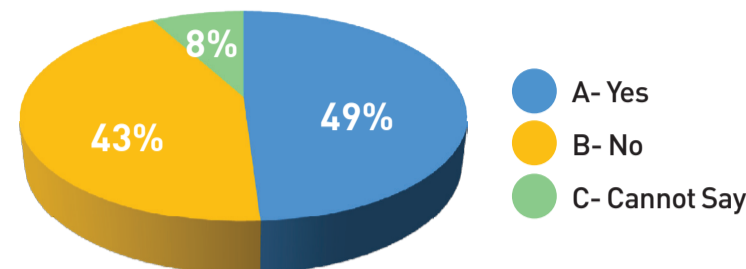
### 86% people believe that POK residents want to join India after seeing the development in Jammu and Kashmir

Pakistan-occupied Jammu & Kashmir (POJK), also called Azad Jammu and Kashmir, has long been a focal point of India-Pakistan tensions since 1947. Despite its cultural diversity and natural beauty, recent political shifts in POK reveal a growing sentiment among its residents to align with India, moving away from Pakistan's control. This reflects changing dynamics in the region.

to align with India, moving away from Pakistan's control. This reflects changing dynamics in the region.

#### Q1. ▶

Is the Pakistani President's decision to impose a three-year sentence, declare red zones, and enforce various restrictions on political rallies, assemblies, and protests in POK, correct?

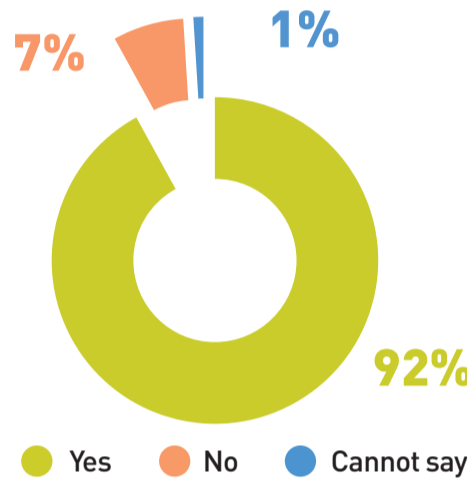


#### Q2. ◀

People in POK are protesting the government for the release of political prisoners, police violence, and lack of development in the region. What is your opinion on it?

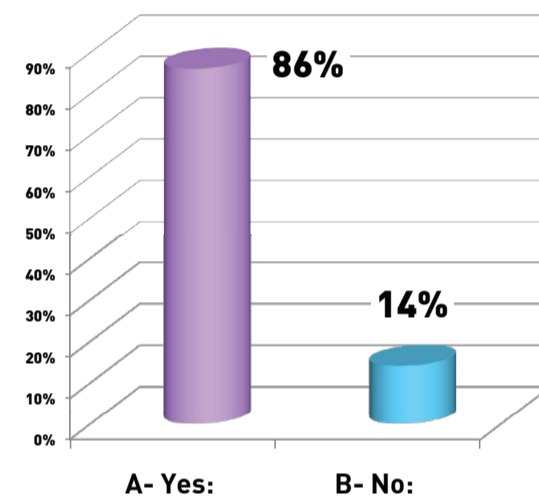
#### Q3. ▶

Human rights violations are openly happening in POK, and people feel helpless. Do you agree?



#### Q4. ▶

Do you think the time has come to bring POK back to India?



## 10 Naxalites gunned down

CONTINUED FROM P1

were seen celebrating and dancing to regional songs at their camp. Videos of their celebration have surfaced on social media.

Chief Minister Sai praised the security forces and asserted that his government's priority is to establish peace, facilitate development and ensure the safety of citizens in the Bastar region.

Sai, in a statement, said the state government has been working on the policy of zero tolerance towards Naxalism.

"Ensuring development,

peace and safety of citizens in Bastar is the top priority of the state government. The era of peace, development and progress has returned to Bastar," he said.

He congratulated the security forces for their indomitable courage and dedication and said the elimination of Naxalites from Chhattisgarh is certain.

"We are moving forward in a planned manner towards fulfilling the target set by Union Home Minister Amit Shah to eliminate Naxalites from Chhattis-

garh by March 2026," he added.

With this incident, 207 Naxalites have been killed so far this year in separate encounters in the Bastar division comprising seven districts, including Sukma, Sundarraj said.

He said as many as 787 Naxalites have been arrested, 789 have surrendered, and 262 weapons have been recovered during this period in Bastar.

Two Naxalites were neutralised this year in Dhamtari district in the Raipur division.

## X is number one news app in India

CONTINUED FROM P1

X. "BREAKING: You can now rewind a live video on X," Dogedesigner posted.

According to Statista.com, India has the third highest number of Twitter users by country with approximately 25 million plus users.

Following the announcement that X is now the number one news app on App Store in India, Musk's followers praised the platform.

One user, Hitman Hub, said, "X has claimed the

No.1 spot in Australia! Big love down under X is No. 1 in Germany! Feeling blessed to have reached the top here. X is now No. 1 in Brazil! Thank you for all the amazing energy, Brazil X takes the No. 1 spot in India! Incredible to see such love and support in India."

Another user, Raghu Rajaram, commented, "Not sure of others, but I feel X has certainly changed the game against the usual polarised media owned and influenced by politicians! X breaks it first every time."

Meanwhile, after the 2024 United States presidential election, which confirmed Donald Trump's victory, social media platform X witnessed its largest user exodus since Elon Musk acquired it in 2022, with users migrating to alternatives like Bluesky. According to CNN, more than 115,000 U.S. users deactivated their X accounts the day after the election. Bluesky's user base has since doubled, reaching 15 million after gaining 1 million new sign-ups in a single week.

## SC order on Nov 25...

CONTINUED FROM P1

been held to be a part of the basic structure of the Constitution and orally observed that 'secular' and 'socialist' in the Preamble need not be looked at through the western lens.

"Socialism can also mean that there should be equality of opportunity and the wealth of a country should be distributed equally. Let's not take the Western meaning. It can have some different meaning as well. Same with the word secularism,"

the bench had said. BJP leader Subramanian Swamy, who is one of the petitioners, had said that the two words inserted in the Preamble in 1976 cannot bear the date of the original Preamble, which was framed in 1949. Swamy in his petition had said that the two words, inserted in the Preamble through the 42nd Constitution Amendment Act of 1976 during Emergency, violated the basic structure doctrine enunciated in the famous Kesavananda Bharati

judgement by a 13-judge bench in 1973, by which Parliament's power to amend the Constitution was barred from tinkering with the basic features of the Constitution.

The framers of the Constitution had specifically rejected inclusion of these two words in the Constitution and alleged that these two words were thrust upon the citizens even when the framers never had intended to introduce socialist and secular concepts in democratic governance, Swamy had contended.

## Poll outcome to shape India's political trajectory

CONTINUED FROM P1

on seat-sharing, promising a victory. The results will determine whether his strategies were right or wrong. Thackeray is also working to secure his son's place in politics, making these results crucial for his legacy.

The outcome of the election is critical for oppo-

sition leaders like Rahul Gandhi, Uddhav Thackeray, and Sharad Pawar.

A defeat would deal a significant blow to their political careers. On the other hand, for BJP leaders such as Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Home Minister Amit Shah, Devendra Fadnavis, Eknath Shinde, and Ajit Pawar, a loss could also disrupt their future political prospects.

Speculation is already rife that, following the results, defections similar to the 2019 scenario could occur. In 2019, Thackeray won the election with BJP but later aligned with Congress for the Chief Minister's post. If there's a hung assembly, regional parties and independents may shift alliances, which could prevent national parties like Congress and BJP from suffering a major defeat.

## PM meets 31 world leaders



Prime Minister Narendra Modi arrives at Palam Airport after concluding his visit to Nigeria, Brazil and Guyana, in New Delhi on Friday. (ANI Photo)

CONTINUED FROM P1

bilateral meetings with leaders of Guyana, Dominica, Bahamas, Trinidad Tobago, Suriname, Barbados, Antigua & Barbuda, Grenada and St. Lucia. On Thursday night, PM Modi marked the final leg of a significant journey that began in Nigeria, continued in Brazil for

the 19th G20 Summit, and concluded with a historic State visit to Guyana. The three-nation tour showcased India's growing global engagement, with pivotal discussions in Nigeria, active participation in the G20 Summit in Brazil, and reinforcing ties with the Caribbean during the historic Guyana visit.

## Kolhapur's Kalash, Bihar's Mihila paintings: Gifts PM presented

AGENCIES  
NEW DELHI

Over the years, Prime Minister Narendra Modi has transformed India's foreign diplomacy into a vibrant display of cultural diversity. With each international visit, he doesn't just carry India's diplomatic agenda but also its rich heritage, showcasing its traditions, languages, art and spirituality.

Similarly, during his three-nation visit to Nigeria, Brazil and Guyana, PM Modi presented global leaders with unique gifts from all corners of the country.

Among the gifts presented by Prime Minister Modi, eight were from Maharashtra, five from Jammu and Kashmir, three each from Andhra Pradesh and Rajasthan,

two from Jharkhand and one each from Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Odisha and Ladakh. The Prime Minister presented Silofar Panchamrit Kalash (Pot) - a stunning example of traditional craftsmanship from Kolhapur, Maharashtra, to Nigerian President Bola Ahmed Tinubu.

He presented Warli paintings - a tribal art form originating from the Warli tribe primarily located in the Dahanu, Talasari and Palghar regions of Maharashtra, to Brazilian President Lula da Silva, who was also the host of the G20 Summit in Rio.

Prime Minister Modi also presented several gifts in the customised gift hamper to leaders of CARICOM countries. Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese was given Natural Rough Amethyst with a Silver

Camel Head on Top from Pune. A Hand Carved Silver Chess Set with Traditional Design was given to Portuguese Prime Minister Luis Montenegro.

Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni was presented with an Exquisite Silver Candle Stand, and a Hand Engraved Silver Fruit Bowl featuring intricate depictions of a peacock and a tree was given to CARICOM Secretary General Carla Barnett.

The vibrant culture of Jammu and Kashmir was also represented through gifts of a pair of papier-mache gold work vases, that PM Modi presented to his UK counterpart, Keir Starmer.

He also gave a Pashmina Shawl in a Papier Mache Box to the First Lady of Guyana and Kashmiri Saffron in the customised gift hamper to the leaders

of CARICOM Countries.

A Silver Photo Frame with floral Work showcasing the state's rich heritage of detailed metalwork and traditional motifs was given to Argentina President Javier Milei. 'Marble Inlay Work', also known as 'Pietra Dura' with base marble sourced from Makrana in Rajasthan was given to Norwegian PM Jonas Gahr Store; and Gold Work Wooden Raj Sawari figurine - a beautiful representation of traditional Indian craftsmanship, combining intricate gold work with finely carved wood, given to Prime Minister of Guyana, Mark Phillips.

A Silver Clutch Purse studded with semi-precious stones handcrafted with intricate floral motif designs was presented to Brazil President Lula's spouse, Rosangela da Silva.

# WILL FORM GOVERNMENT IN JHARKHAND, SAYS CONGRESS AHEAD OF POLL RESULTS

Mahagathbandhan with JMM and Congress will form government after winning polls: Cong leader Rajesh Thakur

TDG NETWORK RANCHI

Ahead of results in Jharkhand for the recently-held assembly elections, Congress leader Rajesh Thakur on Friday expressed confidence over the Mahagathbandhan including Jharkhand Mukti Morcha and Congress forming government in the state. Thakur, former Jharkhand Congress chief, said that he wasn't sure about the number of seats Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) was going to win since earlier they said they would win 65 seats, but now they are saying they will win 55 assembly seats.

"BJP is saying they would get 55 odd seats, last time they mentioned 65 seats. When someone contests elections, a party contests elections and all feedbacks come, they speak their mind.

## CONFIDENT OF WINNING POLLS

- We trust the public. With the kind of mandate they have given, we can say that we are going to form the government once again. We are going to form a strong government, Congress leader Rajesh Thakur said to the media.
- Says we will also ensure to bring scheme for those who have been deprived.
- JMM-led alliance consists of Congress, Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD), and the Communist Party of India (Marxist-Leninist).



Results will be out tomorrow and the truth will come out. We trust the public. With the kind of mandate they have given, we can say that we are going to form the government once again. We are going to form a strong government. We will also ensure to provide (government) scheme to those who have been deprived," Congress leader Rajesh Thakur said to the media.

Meanwhile, BJP Spokesperson Pratul Shah Deo on Friday expressed confidence, saying that they believe that NDA's majority government will be formed in Jharkhand tomorrow evening.

Taking a dig at the ruling party Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (JMM), Deo said that people have ousted them for misgovernance, loot and false promises that

occurred in the last 5 years and hence, JMM can day-dream for one more day.

"Only a day is left in the counting to begin and only a day is left for the JMM to be happy. They can day-dream and be happy for now because the reality on the evening of November 23 is going to be very rude for them. People have ousted them and voted against the misgovernance, loot and

false promises that occurred in the last 5 years" he told the media.

The BJP-led alliance in Jharkhand includes the All Jharkhand Students Union (AJSU), Janata Dal (United), and Lok Janshakti Party (Ram Vilas), while the JMM-led alliance consists of Congress, Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD), and the Communist Party of India (Marxist-Leninist). Matrice exit poll estimated the NDA could win 42-47 seats, the INDIA bloc 25-30 seats, and others 1-4 seats. The first phase of polling in Jharkhand covered 43 of 81 assembly seats on November 13.

The results for all 81 constituencies in Jharkhand, along with those for the Maharashtra Assembly elections and bypolls in several states, will be declared on November 23.

BJP's Vinod Tawde sends Rs 100 crore defamation notices to Rahul, Kharge

TDG NETWORK NEW DELHI

BJP leader Vinod Tawde has sent defamation notice to Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge, Leader of the Opposition in Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi and party spokesperson Supriya Shrinete for making "false and baseless" allegations against him.

Tawde had been accused by Bahujan Vikas Aghadi (BVA) chief Hitendra Thakur of distributing money to voters in Palghar on the eve of the assembly elections. Tawde and the BJP had dismissed the charges as baseless and termed it as a desperate attempt by the opposition Maha Vikas Aghadi ahead of the polling.

In his notice, Tawde said the Congress leaders did not bother to check the fact or despite knowing the entire fact they made the false and baseless allegations.

"You all have deliberately, mischievously with the sole intention of damaging the reputation of our client intentionally fabricated the story distribution of money. You all have published false, baseless allegations against our client on various media for tarnishing his image in the eyes of right thinking people in the society," the notice read.

# JMM can daydream for one more day, says BJP's Pratul Deo

TDG NETWORK RANCHI

A day before counting of votes of the Jharkhand Assembly elections, BJP Spokesperson Pratul Shah Deo on Friday expressed confidence, saying that they believe that NDA's majority government will be formed in Jharkhand tomorrow evening. Taking a dig at the ruling party Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (JMM), Deo said that people have ousted them for misgovernance, loot and false promises that occurred in the last 5 years and hence, JMM can day-dream for one more day. "Only a day is left in the counting to begin and only a day is left for the JMM to be happy. They can daydream and be happy for now because the reality on the evening of November 23 is going to be very rude for them. People have ousted them and voted against the misgovernance, loot and false promises that occurred in the last 5 years. Our voting percentage has also increased, with this, we believe that NDA's majority government will be formed in Jharkhand tomorrow evening and JMM can day-dream for one more day."



"People have ousted them and voted against the misgovernance, loot and false promises that occurred in the last 5 years. Our voting percentage has also increased, with this, we believe that NDA's majority government will be formed in Jharkhand tomorrow evening and JMM can day-dream for one more day"

dey said that he will not be outspoken as everything will be cleared in just some hours. He added that the party is confident and they trust their voters. Manoj Pandey said, "Where will be joy and where will be sorrow - it is just a matter of few hours. I won't be outspoken. Let's wait. We are confident, we trust our voters, we trust the women of this state who queued up

and voted in large numbers. We have reasons to be happy. But the outsider campaigners who had come here have now left. Had they felt even a little chance of victory, the 2-3 outspoken outsiders would have stayed back and left only after celebrating..." In Jharkhand, exit polls suggested the BJP-led National Democratic Alliance (NDA) might replace the JMM-led alliance.

# Vote counting for bypolls today, Priyanka fate to be decided

TDG NETWORK NEW DELHI

The counting of votes for the bypolls to 46 Assembly seats in 13 states and in the Lok Sabha segments of Nanded in Maharashtra and Wayanad in Kerala, a crucial electoral exercise since the parliamentary polls in April-May, will begin at 8 am on Saturday.

Congress general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra is making her poll debut from Wayanad, a seat that was earlier represented in the Lok Sabha by her brother, Rahul Gandhi.

Elaborate arrangements have been made for the counting of the votes polled in the three bypolls in Kerala -- Wayanad Lok Sabha and the Palakkad and Chelakkara Assembly seats. In Wayanad, Priyanka Gandhi was pitted against Communist Party of India (CPI) veteran Sathyan Mokeri and BJP's Navya Haridas.

The Assembly bypolls were held in nine seats in Uttar Pradesh, seven seats in Rajasthan, six seats in West Bengal, five seats in Assam, four seats each in Punjab and Bihar, three seats in Karnataka, two seats each in Madhya Pradesh and Kerala and one seat each in Chhattisgarh,



Gujarat, Uttarakhand and Meghalaya.

The Meerapur, Kundarki, Sisamau, Katehari, Phulpur, Majhawan, Ghaziabad, Karhal and Khair seats went to bypolls in the crucial political battleground of Uttar Pradesh on November 20. While the results will not directly impact the composition of the 403-member state Assembly, the contest is being seen as the first major face-off between the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and its political rivals since the Lok Sabha election.

The BJP and the opposition parties have accused each other of election malpractices.

While Samajwadi Party (SP) president Akhilesh Ya-

dav has exuded confidence that the bypoll results will be favourable for his party, Deputy Chief Minister Keshav Prasad Maurya has asserted that the BJP will emerge as a clear winner.

In the 2022 Uttar Pradesh Assembly polls, the BJP won the Phulpur, Ghaziabad, Majhawan and Khair seats, while the SP secured victories in Sisamau, Katehari, Karhal and Kundarki. The Rashtriya Lok Dal (RLD), which was an SP ally then, won the Meerapur seat. The party has since switched sides and is now a part of the BJP-led NDA.

While the Congress did not contest the bypolls, it extended support to the SP. The Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) contested all nine seats independently, while Asaduddin Owaisi's All India Majlis-e-Ittehadul Muslimeen (AIMIM) fielded candidates in Ghaziabad, Kundarki and Meerapur. The Aazad Samaj Party (Kanshi Ram), led by Chandrashekhar Azad, also contested all seats except Sisamau. A three-tier security arrangement has been put in place for the counting of the votes cast in the seven Assembly bypolls in Rajasthan, an official said on Friday. The

Jhunjhunu, Ramgarh, Dausa, Deoli-Uniara, Khinvsar, Salumber and Chaurasi seats went to bypolls in the desert state on November 13.

Bypolls were held in the Gidderbaha, Dera Baba Nanak, Chabbawal (reserved for Scheduled Caste candidates) and Barnala Assembly seats in Punjab on Wednesday. The bypolls were necessitated after the incumbent legislators were elected to the Lok Sabha.

The contest in Punjab is being seen as a litmus test for the ruling Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) and Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann, whose government has completed two years and a half in office. The Congress and the BJP are the two other main contenders.

Karnataka witnessed a fierce fight between the ruling Congress and a combative BJP-JD(S) alliance in the bypolls to the Sandur, Shiggaon and Channapatna Assembly segments on November 13. A good show by the Congress will be seen as an endorsement for both Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and his deputy D K Shivakumar, while a solid performance by the BJP would mean the silencing of its state president B Y Vijayendra's critics within the saffron organisation fold.

# Poster depicting NCP's Ajit Pawar as CM taken down

TDG NETWORK PUNE

A poster depicting NCP chief and Deputy CM Ajit Pawar as the Chief Minister in Pune was taken down. The poster was placed by party leader Santosh Nangare.

In Maharashtra, the primary contest is between the BJP-led Mahayuti alliance and the Congress-led Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA). The ruling BJP-led Mahayuti alliance includes the BJP, Shiv Sena, and the Nationalist Congress Party (Ajit Pawar faction), while the opposition MVA comprises the Congress, Shiv Sena (UBT), and the NCP (Sharad Pawar faction). The ruling Mahayuti is poised to retain power in Maharashtra and the NDA also has an edge to form government in Jharkhand, exit polls predicted on Wednesday as polling concluded in the two states. Most exit polls also predicted



that Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) would put up a strong show in polls but is unlikely to cross the majority mark in the 288-member assembly. According to the P-MARQ exit poll, the Mahayuti alliance would win 137-157 seats whereas the Maha Vikas Aghadi would get 126-147 seats and others 2-8 seats. Chanakya Strategies projected that Mahayuti will win 152-150 seats, MVA 130-138 seats, and others 6-8 seats. Earlier, Shiv Sena MP Shrikant Shinde said that post assembly results leaders of Mahayuti would sit together and decide on who would be the Chief Minister of Maharashtra.

# ECI gave 'focus, attention and time' for state polls, says Maharashtra Chief Electoral Officer

TDG NETWORK MUMBAI

Ahead of the counting of votes for Maharashtra Election 2024, State's Chief Electoral Officer, S Chockalingam praised the efforts of the Election Commission's officers and employees and said ECI has given "focus, attention and time" for Maharashtra polls.

"Election Commission of India gave a lot of focus, attention and time for Maharashtra this time. Each and every strategy was conceptualised and implemented with high precision. This resulted in a huge number of addition in the voter list also between the Parliament election and the current election. Efforts made to make voting easier, especially in a place like Mumbai where we had some problems at the time of Parliament elections but



this time everyone praised the arrangements," he said. "So, so much of work has been done. Election Commission thanks all the voters who came out to vote on the day to ensure that history is created...We have increased by 5% more. We want to thank all of them. Nearly, 6 lakh officers and employees were putting their efforts to welcome the voters and ensure that they vote very easily..." he added. Meanwhile, Shiv Sena (UBT) leader Priyanka

Chaturvedi exuded confidence in the opposition alliance Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) reclaiming power in Maharashtra as she took a dig at the ruling Mahayuti on Friday. Speaking to ANI, Priyanka said that the people of Maharashtra would free the Mahayuti for the next 25 years and claimed that the MVA would get the majority in the recently held assembly elections.

"People of Maharashtra are going to free them (Mahayuti) for the next 25 years. The government of loot, corruption and Adani is going to end. We will get the majority. They are booking helicopters because they know people will ask them questions and they need to run away," she said. Prataprao Jadhav, Union MoS in the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare

was confident that the Mahayuti alliance would return to power. "Mahayuti will form the government. We are going to win with a majority... The result that will be announced tomorrow will be in our favour...The name of the CM will be announced after the result... There is no competition in the alliance...We will get above 200 seats," he said.

In Maharashtra, the BJP is in alliance with Eknath Shinde-led Shiv Sena Ajit Pawar-led and Nationalist Congress Party, called the Mahayuti. The Mahayuti is facing a tough battle against the opposition Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA), comprising of Congress, Uddhav Thackeray-led Shiv Sena and Sharad Pawar-led NCP. One needs to secure at least 145 seats to secure a majority in the 288 seats assembly.

# VBA chief signals power play, says 'will choose side that can form government'

TDG NETWORK MUMBAI

A day ahead of declaration of results of the Maharashtra Assembly, President of the Vanchit Bahujan Aghadi (VBA) President Prakash Ambedkar said on Friday that if his party obtains the required numbers in the polls, it will choose the side that can form the government.

"If VBA gets the numbers, tomorrow, to support a party or an alliance to form the government in Maharashtra, we will choose to be with one who can form the government. We will choose power!" posted Prakash Ambedkar on X.

This comes as a message for both - the ruling BJP-led Mahayuti and the Congress-led Maha Vikas Aghadi (IN-



DIA) bloc. VBA chief Ambedkar cast his vote for the Maharashtra assembly elections at a polling booth in Akola on voting day -- November 20. The voting for 288 assembly seats in Maharashtra concluded on Wednesday, and the counting of votes is scheduled for November 23. Most exit polls have projected that the BJP-led Mahayuti alliance is likely to form government, while some predicted a close contest.

# WHY ALLOW TRUCKS? SC FLAGS DELHI GOVT'S FAILURE ON GRAP-4 CURBS

The bench said it will consider on Nov 25 whether the GRAP-IV restrictions should be continued.

TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Friday directed the Delhi government and Police to immediately set up checkpoints on all 113 entry points to Delhi to check the entry of trucks in the national capital.

A bench of Justices Abhay S Oka and Augustine George Masih said the personnel who are going to man the entry points must be clearly informed about the accepted items to enter in trucks under essential commodities.

It appointed 13 members of the Bar as court commissioners to visit the entry points to Delhi and verify whether entry of trucks is being stopped.

The order of the apex court came after it was told that there are 113 entry points and the vigil is maintained primarily at 13 major entry points.

The bench said that this



People amid low-visibility due to smog, in Gurugram. PTI

meant that for the other 100 points there is no restriction on vehicles which is banned under GRAP stage IV.

The apex court expressed dissatisfaction with the compliance of GRAP IV measures saying despite orders passed by the apex court and CAQM, there is a failure on the part of the Delhi government and Po-

lice to comply with clauses under GRAP stage IV.

"So far as compliance is concerned, we are not satisfied. Government has not stated clearly as to how many entry points there are officers present to comply with measures of GRAP IV," it said.

"We direct the Delhi Government and Delhi Police to

ensure that checkpoints are immediately set up at all 113 entry points," the bench ordered.

While appointing 13 advocates as court commissioners, the bench asked the Additional Solicitor General to forward their names to the Delhi Police Commissioner to facilitate their visit to the entry

points and they can take photographs and file a report to the court.

## POLLUTION CRACKDOWN

- Truck monitoring
- Staff must identify permitted items under GRAP-IV rules.
- 13 advocates will inspect and report on compliance at entry points.
- SC criticized Delhi for monitoring only 13 of 113 entry points.
- Footage from major checkpoints to be reviewed by the amicus curiae.
- Delhi government and police must ensure full compliance with GRAP-IV.
- SC will reassess GRAP-IV restrictions on November 25.

footage to be given to amicus curiae in the case at the earliest.

The bench said it will consider on November 25 whether the GRAP-IV restrictions should be continued. As per the GRAP-IV restrictions imposed by the Commission for Air Quality Management (CAQM), the entry of trucks is prohibited to Delhi-NCR to combat air pollution.

The apex court was hearing the case relating to the pollution in Delhi-NCR.

The bench said it will consider on November 25 whether the GRAP-IV restrictions should be continued.

As per the GRAP-IV restrictions imposed by the Commission for Air Quality Management (CAQM), the entry of trucks is prohibited to Delhi-NCR to combat air pollution.

The apex court was hearing the case relating to the pollution in Delhi-NCR.

## Gopal Rai writes to Chief Secretary, urges strict GRAP enforcement

TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

Delhi Environment Minister Gopal Rai wrote to Chief Secretary Dharmendra on Friday, urging strict enforcement of the Graded Response Action Plan (GRAP) to address the worsening air quality in the national capital. The minister highlighted the need for coordinated efforts in all departments to implement the Winter Action Plan-2024 and achieve sustained improvements in air quality.

"I feel that we have to ensure strict implementation of GRAP guidelines and all departments must rigorously implement the measures outlined under GRAP without exception. This included restricting vehicular emissions, controlling construction dust, and curbing industrial pollution and all other actions as proposed and directed during various meetings taken in order to implement Winter Action Plan-2024," read the letter by the Delhi Environment Minister.

Rai directed that all de-



groups like market associations, residents and citizen groups should be involved and be made aware of their role in tackling pollution. "All the departments of Delhi government be directed to actively engage in spreading awareness among citizens through Resident Welfare Associations (RWA), Trade and Market Associations, Citizens group and NGOs etc regarding their role in reducing pollution, such as limiting vehicle use, avoiding open burning of materials, and adopting eco-friendly practices," the letter read.

He stressed the importance of strict enforcement mechanisms to penalize violators of air pollution norms.

## Smog blankets Delhi, air quality remains 'very poor'

TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

A thick layer of smog engulfed the national capital on Friday while the air quality index in Delhi remained in the 'very poor' category, according to the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB).

At 7 am on Friday, the CPCB recorded Delhi's AQI at 371, which placed it in the 'very poor' category.

According to the CPCB data, the AQI measured at Chandni Chowk till 7 am was 359, IGI Airport (T3) 357, ITO 344, Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium 342, RK Puram 372, Okhla Phase 2 374, Patparganj 379, Sonia Vihar 400 and Aya Nagar 359.

However, several places in Delhi are still in the 'severe' category for air pollution, with Anand Vihar recording an AQI of 410, Bawana 411, Mundka 402, and Wazirpur at 413.

An AQI between 0-50 is considered good, 51-100 is satisfactory, 101-200 is moderate, 201-300 is poor, 301-400 is very poor and 401-500 is severe.

At 7 am on Friday, the CPCB recorded Delhi's AQI at 371, which placed it in the 'very poor' category.

Suryakant, who was out for a morning walk on Lodhi Road, said the pollution situation in Delhi is very bad and the number of people coming for morning walks has reduced.

"The pollution situation in Delhi is very bad. It is unfortunate. Schools have started online classes. The number of people coming for morning walks has also reduced. Eyes are burning," he said.

Prakash Kumar Singh, a Class 12 student, informed his classes have also gone online, due to the high AQI.

"Pollution has increased. When the weather changes, pollution always increases in Delhi. We are youngsters, so it doesn't affect us much, but the condition of the elderly is getting worse. I am also a student and my classes have gone online, so it is very good because the AQI is very high," he told.

Gaurav a tourist who had come to visit India Gate said that the pollution is causing itching in the throat, sore throat, and a burning sensation in the eyes.

"Pollution is causing itching in the throat, sore throat, and burning sensation in the eyes. The only solution for this at the moment is to wear a mask and stay at home. The government should reduce the sources of pollution. Pollution is causing trouble for the elderly," he told.

Meanwhile, the situation is slightly better in Uttar Pradesh, as Lucknow recorded an AQI of 268 at 7 am on Friday, which has been categorised as poor by the CPCB.

In Noida, a thin layer of smog engulfed the city, where the AQI was recorded at 262, which is categorised as 'poor' according to

the CPCB.

In Agra, the iconic Taj Mahal looked ethereal amid a thin layer of fog. According to the Central Pollution Control Board, the air quality in the region is in the 'moderate' category. The India Meteorological Department (IMD) reported that the city witnessed 'light fog' today.

Stephanie, a tourist from London, said that the Taj Mahal is absolutely amazing, but there is a lot of pollution in the air.

"I think the Taj is absolutely amazing. It is very beautiful, especially in the morning when there is a lot of fog and the river water is rising. It looks very beautiful. But I think there is a lot of pollution in the air; you can smell the smoke. But it makes for a very beautiful picture," she told ANI.

Delhi has been battling severe air quality and thick smog for the past few weeks. At 8 am on Thursday, the city's AQI was recorded at 379, categorised as 'very poor' by the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB).

TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

In an effort to curb pollution levels, the New Delhi Municipal Corporation (NDMC) carried out night cleaning and sweeping of roads at several locations in the national capital early Friday morning.

Vice Chairman of the New Delhi Municipal Council (NDMC) and Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leader Kuljeet Singh Chahal was present during the cleaning drive and stated that the initiative aims to achieve a "garbage-free NDMC."

During the drive, he said, "We have started night cleaning... We are in Khan Market, one of the most famous markets in the world. People visiting Khan Market will now see clean roads and areas near shops. We draw inspiration from our Prime Minister and Home Minister to transform the city into a healthier, more vibrant, and more beautiful place."

He added that NDMC staff have taken a resolu-



tion to begin this initiative from Khan Market and extend it to other parts of Delhi.

He further noted that market associations are supporting the initiative, emphasising that night cleaning will bring significant improvements to the city.

Kuljeet Singh Chahal also criticised the Aam Aadmi Party-led Delhi government, accusing it of failing to take adequate measures to clean Delhi.

Meanwhile, according to data from the Central

Pollution Control Board (CPCB), Delhi's Air Quality Index (AQI) stood at 379 as of 8 am on Thursday, categorised as 'very poor.'

At 8 am, CPCB data revealed the AQI levels at various locations: Chandni Chowk recorded 338, IGI Airport (T3) 370, ITO 355, Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium 354, RK Puram 387, Okhla Phase 2 370, Patparganj 381, Sonia Vihar 394, and Aya Nagar 359 -- all classified as 'very poor.'

However, several areas in Delhi remained under the 'severe' category, with

Anand Vihar recording an AQI of 405, Ashok Vihar 414, Bawana 418, Dwarka Sector-8 401, Mundka 413, and Wazirpur 436.

In response to the alarming pollution levels, the Commission for Air Quality Management (CAQM) has enforced Stage IV of the Graded Response Action Plan (GRAP) in Delhi-NCR, effective from November 18. Stage IV of GRAP includes measures such as banning the entry of trucks and suspending public construction projects.

## HC directs Centre, Delhi govt action on fake medical signatures

TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court on Friday directed the Central and Delhi governments to consider a representation calling for clear guidelines to prevent the illegal use of fake and scanned signatures (such as jpeg, bmp, png files) being misrepresented as digital signatures.

The petition highlighted their use in authenticating medical reports, prescriptions, certificates, and other documents in medical labs, hospitals, clinics, and healthcare facilities.

It was submitted that despite the petitioner submitting representations to the Health Department, GNCTD via email on August 4, and to other respondents via email on August 13, the respondents have neither acknowledged nor addressed the representation.

The matter was heard on



Friday by a bench led by Chief Justice Manmohan, with Justice Tushar Rao Gedela. The court granted the respondent authorities additional time to decide on the representation.

It stated that the issue raised in this petition concerns the unauthorized use of scanned images or JPG files of an individual's inked signature, facsimile seals, or hand signatures (made on a tablet using a finger or stylus) for authenticating lab reports, prescriptions, medical certificates, notifications, and similar documents in medical diagnostic laboratories, hospitals, clinics, and other clinical establishments.

## LG lauds CM Atishi, calls her better than Kejriwal

TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

In a rare praise for Delhi Chief Minister Atishi, Lieutenant Governor V K Saxena on Friday said she is "a thousand times better" than her predecessor Arvind Kejriwal.

At the seventh convocation ceremony of the Indira Gandhi Delhi Technical University for Women here, Saxena said, "I am happy today that Delhi's CM is a woman, and I can confidently say that she is a thousand times better than her predecessor." While

## Cloud seeding not feasible, says CPCB amid pollution crisis

TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

The Central Pollution Control Board has said the feasibility of cloud seeding as an emergency measure to battle winter pollution in northern India will be limited, citing insufficient moisture and reliance on pre-existing clouds, an RTI



Delhi Lt. Governor Vinai Kumar Saxena and Chief Minister Atishi during the 7th Convocation of the Indira Gandhi Delhi Technical University for Women (IGDTUW), in New Delhi. PTI

making the comment, he took a glance at Atishi who attended the convocation ceremony and addressed the students.

In his speech, Saxena told

the students, "As you move ahead, you have four guiding stars. First is your responsibility towards yourself, the second is your responsibility towards your parents

and family while the third responsibility is towards the society and nation building."

"The fourth responsibility is to prove yourself as women who have broken the glass ceiling of gender and stand on par with others in all fields," he said.

The AAP and BJP have been at loggerheads over a range of issues, including governance and control of bureaucracy after Kejriwal tendered his resignation in September and said that he would seek a "certificate of honesty" from the public in light of the corruption charges he faced.

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## Delhi court stays defamation case against CM Atishi

TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

A Delhi court on Friday stayed proceedings against Chief Minister Atishi in a defamation case filed against her by the BJP. The court also stayed the summons issued against her by the magisterial court in con-

*A Delhi court on Friday stayed proceedings against Chief Minister Atishi in a defamation case filed against her by the BJP.*

nection with the case. Hearing Atishi's plea challenging magisterial court's order, Special Judge Vishal Gogne stayed the proceedings of the lower court until further directions. "It is directed that the proceedings before the trial court shall remain stayed till further orders. List for submissions on

December 2, 2024," PTI reported quoting Judge Gogne's verdict.

A defamation case was registered against the Delhi chief minister on Bharatiya Janata Party leader Praveen Shankar Kapoor's complaint, accusing her of making false accusations against the party.

BJP spokesperson Praveen Shankar Kapoor accused Atishi as well as former Delhi chief minister Arvind Kejriwal of defaming him through her reported claim that several AAP MLAs were approached by the saffron party with offers of cash to bring down the AAP government, PTI reported.

# DELHI POLLS: AAP LAUNCHES 'REVDI PE CHARCHA' DRIVE

This campaign will take place across Delhi and people will be asked if the govt should provide facilities to the people or not

TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

Delhi Minister Gopal Rai announced on Friday that the Aam Aadmi Party's (AAP) 'Revdi Pe Charcha,' campaign will be held across Delhi ahead of the forthcoming assembly elections.

Speaking about the campaign, Delhi Minister Gopal Rai said, "Earlier the people used to pay the taxes and the politicians enjoyed the facilities. Arvind Kejriwal's government decided that the people should also get the facilities like the politicians. We gave various facilities to the people and the BJP said that these were 'revdi' and should be stopped. The AAP is launching the 'Revdi Par Charcha' campaign."

"This campaign will take place across Delhi and people will be asked if the government should provide facilities to the people or not,"

said Rai.

The Delhi Environment Minister also spoke on pollution in Delhi and said, "The pollution level is improving gradually. However, we are monitoring the situation and making sure that GRAP is implemented effectively."

Taking to his official handle on X, AAP supreme Kejriwal posted, "The public's money, the public's Revdi, so the public has the right over it. Aam Aadmi Party is starting a 'Revdi Par Charcha' with the public across Delhi from today."

AAP convenor launched the "Revdi Par Charcha" campaign on Friday, targeting the BJP and underlining his government's welfare schemes ahead of the Delhi Assembly elections.

Speaking at the AAP headquarters in the presence of senior leaders, Kejriwal announced that the campaign will reach peo-



Aam Aadmi Party National Convenor Arvind Kejriwal with Delhi Environment Minister Gopal Rai, party MPs Sanjay Singh, Raghav Chadha, party leaders Manish Sisodia, Satyender Jain and others launches the "Revdi Par Charcha" Campaign, at party office in New Delhi. ANI

- AAP begins a campaign defending its welfare schemes, holding 65,000 public meetings across Delhi.
- The AAP chief accused BJP of copying policies without delivering similar benefits in BJP-ruled states.
- The campaign seeks feedback on whether governments should prioritize citizen welfare schemes.
- AAP released its first list of 11 candidates for the 2025 Delhi Assembly elections.
- Party leaders met to finalize strategies as AAP aims to repeat its 2015 victory.

ple across Delhi through 65,000 meetings, where party workers will distribute pamphlets explaining six key welfare schemes of

the AAP government.

Taking a dig at the BJP, Kejriwal said, "Three days ago, one of their leaders said, 'Vote for us, and we will do

everything Kejriwal is doing.' If they want to replicate our work, why not vote for the original instead of the duplicate?"

## Cong starts the third leg of Delhi Nyay Yatra from Palam

TIKAM SHARMA  
NEW DELHI

The Delhi Congress has launched the third phase of its Delhi Nyay Yatra campaign, resuming the journey on Friday, November 22, 2024, from Valmiki Mandir in Palam Village. On the 14th day of the yatra, Delhi Congress chief Devender Yadav criticized the ruling parties, stating that while ordinary people are struggling with unemployment, inflation, air pollution, unsafe drinking water, high electricity bills, delayed pensions for senior citizens and widows, and the denial of new ration cards for the poor, the wealthy allies of the BJP, like Adani, continue to thrive.

The Nyay Yatra covered the Palam, Brijwasan, and Mehrauli Assembly constituencies before concluding at Andheria Mode, Mehrauli. Prominent Congress leaders accompanying Yadav included ex-MP Ramesh



Kumar, AICC secretary Sukhwinder Singh Teni, ex-MLA Vijay Lochav, senior leader Jagpravesh Kumar, and district presidents Rajesh Chauhan and Satbir Sharma, among others.

During his visit to Palam Village, Yadav interacted with representatives from 365 villages, who expressed their dissatisfaction with both the AAP and BJP governments for failing to resolve longstanding issues. Farmers complained about being deceived over compensation for acquired land. Yadav stated that the strong public support for the Nyay Yatra sends a clear message

to the AAP and BJP that their time in power is nearing its end. He claimed that Congress is the only viable alternative to restore Delhi's glory and provide effective governance, a legacy people still associate with the party's 15 years in power.

Yadav shared that during the yatra, he met thousands of people, including street vendors, small traders, shopkeepers, housewives, unemployed youth, and business owners. He noted that most are struggling to make ends meet due to what he described as the AAP and BJP's failures and broken promises.

## HC orders GNCTD, PWD to act on foot overbridge near Delhi Zoo

TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court on Friday directed the Government of NCT of Delhi (GNCTD) and Public Works Department (PWD) to decide a representation requesting for the constitution of a Foot Overbridge near Delhi Zoo, Mathura Road.

The bench led by Chief Justice Manmohan also comprising Justice Tushar Rao Gedela directed the respondents to decide the representation within a time frame.

The petition was filed by practising advocate Chandan Kumar Singh, highlighting traffic issues near the Delhi Zoo bus stop (Sher Shah Mathura Road intersection).

A plea stated that previously, a red light at the location helped regulate pedestrian crossings, allowing people to cross the road safely during high-traffic hours. However, when the signal was re-

moved during the 2023 G20 Summit, pedestrians began crossing while vehicles were speeding, leading to safety concerns. The petitioner further emphasized the adage, "Prevention is better than cure," pointing out that, on a daily basis, both advocates and court staff are forced to risk their safety by crossing the road due to the absence of a foot overbridge or underpass. With no safe crossing options, pedestrians are left with no choice but to take the risk of crossing a busy road, putting them in danger of accidents.

The petitioner also highlighted that residents of Delhi pay heavy taxes to the government, and cannot remain silent in the face of such safety risks.

The situation worsens during the winter months, particularly from December to January, when dense fog significantly reduces visibility at the Zoo red light on Mathura Road.

## Kailash Gahlot meets JP Nadda to discuss Delhi poll strategy

TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

Former Delhi Minister and AAP leader Kailash Gahlot, who recently joined the BJP, met Union Health Minister and BJP chief JP Nadda on Friday and discussed the preparations regarding Delhi assembly polls expected early next year.

Delhi BJP Chief Virender Sachdeva was also present during the meeting.

Gahlot described it as "courtesy meeting". "During the discussion, guidance was received on various issues related to the organization and public service," Kaikash Gahlot said in a post in hindi on X.

"It was also discussed during the meeting that a BJP government should be formed in Delhi so that the national capital gets world class development and people get very good public services," he said.

Gahlot later said that they discussed the upcoming Delhi assembly elections



BJP leader Kailash Gahlot calls on Union Minister and party National President JP Nadda, in New Delhi. ANI

and ways to strengthen the BJP in the national capital.

On AAP releasing the first list of 11 candidates for the upcoming 2025 Delhi elections, he said that names of six of the eleven candidates are not from the AAP cadre.

"This is a sign of a lack of leadership in the AAP," he said.

Kailash Gahlot resigned as Delhi Transport Minister and also from AAP on November 17 and joined the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) next day.

After leaving the party, Gahlot said that he reached

the decision to quit AAP over a prolonged period of time.

"It doesn't happen overnight, it happens over a prolonged period. It takes time to understand a few things. I am repeating this again and again that we are connected to some values and principles. If we see some dilution in the same, I think I mustered the courage to quit. Several others like me are unable to muster courage. I think they will continue," Gahlot told ANI. AAP won 62 out of the 70 seats in the last assembly polls.

## BJP slams AAP govt over 'freebie politics' and failures

TIKAM SHARMA  
NEW DELHI

The Delhi unit of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) has criticized the Arvind Kejriwal-led Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) for failing to implement central government schemes in the capital. Delhi BJP President Virender Sachdeva responded to Kejriwal's focus on "freebie" politics, stating that BJP-governed states have effectively implemented central welfare programs, contributing to societal progress. However, Delhi has lagged due to what he termed a "corrupt" AAP government that has blocked these schemes for political reasons. He asserted that if the BJP comes to power in Delhi, it will ensure the implementation of central schemes and expand welfare initiatives.

Sachdeva highlighted key central schemes such as Ayushman Bharat, Vishwakarma Yojana, Ujjwala Yojana, and Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana, emphasizing their nationwide success. He lamented that Delhi residents



Delhi Jal Board, promising that the BJP would revamp the water board and ensure tap water for every household if elected.

Turning to education, Sachdeva accused the Kejriwal government of corruption in classroom construction and failing students, with 1.5 lakh failing in grades 9 and 11. He claimed that Delhi government schools lack science and commerce streams after grade 10. On healthcare, he questioned the so-called free services, alleging long waits for diagnostic tests, the distribution of expired medicines, and poor facilities.

Sachdeva also questioned the Kejriwal government's electricity policies, noting that while it claims to offer free electricity, subsidies are not extended universally. He criticized the high electricity rates in Delhi, which burden industries at 18 per unit, along with additional surcharges. Similarly, he called out the government for its failure to provide clean drinking water. Citing government data, he alleged that 21,000 deaths in recent years were caused by contaminated water. He also pointed to a 73,000 crore scam in the

## Mother strangles minor son, daughter in Noida

TDG NETWORK  
NOIDA

A woman was arrested for killing her six-year-old daughter and four-year-old son, police said on Friday.

The incident took place Thursday in Kheda Dharampur village under the Badalpur Police Station jurisdiction, they said.

Deputy Commissioner of Police (Zone II) Shakti Mohan Awasthi said the woman, Sonam, first strangled her daughter and son to death and then tried to kill



herself, but her neighbours stopped her and called police.

"During interrogation, the woman told police that she had married a man named Sahil in 2017 against the

wishes of the family members. She had two children from Sahil, whom she killed," the officer said.

In 2021, Sahil was arrested in a murder case and sent to jail, after which she started

living with another person, Sonu, in Kheda Dharampur village, with whom she has a son.

When Sahil came out of jail three months ago, he started pressuring the woman to live with him.

"That is why Sonam strangled both the children to death and wanted to commit suicide," Awasthi said.

He said Sonam was arrested and was going to be produced in a court.

The siblings' bodies were sent for postmortem, he added.

## Man stabs wife to death, injures son, attempts suicide

TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

A man allegedly stabbed his wife to death and injured his son in east Delhi and later attempted to commit suicide, police said on Friday. The accused was identified as Sanju, a resident of the Khichripur area, they said.

According to police, the incident occurred on November 19, when Sanju re-

turned home in an inebriated state. He demanded money from his wife, Geeta (35), to buy more alcohol.

"When she refused, he stabbed her in a fit of rage. Raj, his 14-year-old son, tried to intervene but was also attacked. He received stab wounds on his chest," Deputy Commissioner of Police (east) Apoorva Gupta said.

The victims were rushed

to the Lal Bahadur Shastri Hospital, where Geeta, who suffered a deep abdominal injury, was operated upon and put on ventilator support. She later succumbed to her injuries, Gupta said.

Raj was discharged after receiving preliminary treatment, she said.

Based on Raj's complaint, an FIR was lodged and a manhunt was launched to arrest Sanju who fled

and discarded his mobile phone.

"His whereabouts were traced to his native village in Aligarh where he attempted to commit suicide to evade arrest. He was rescued by the locals and hospitalised," the DCP said.

Sanju remains under medical observation in the hospital and will be taken into custody upon his discharge, she added.

TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Friday proposed to set up a committee of experts and said it would direct that the permission granted for felling of trees in Delhi would not be implemented without the panel's nod. Referring to the depleting tree cover in the national capital, the apex court observed the committee of experts would look into the permission granted by the tree authority and the tree officers appointed under the Delhi Preservation of Trees Act, 1994.

"We are going to pass an order that permission granted for felling of trees will not be acted upon unless the committee vets it. It will be subject to the suggestions made by the committee," a bench of Justices Abhay Soka and Augustine George Masih said, adding that the court would also lay down a related criteria.

"We propose to constitute a committee of experts," it said.

The bench was hearing

an application seeking to restrain the Delhi government from allowing felling of trees without the apex court's permission.

"We want to know how the tree authority is functioning," the bench, at the outset, remarked.

Additional Solicitor General Aishwarya Bhati, appearing for the tree authority, informed an affidavit was filed in the matter.

The bench referred to Section 7(b) of the 1994 Act which says the tree authority shall be responsible for carrying out the census of existing trees and obtaining, whenever considered necessary, declarations from all owners or occupants about the number of trees in their lands.

"Whether this activity has been undertaken? This is the duty of the tree authority. This has to be undertaken first," asked the bench.

While one of the lawyers appearing in the matter said from 1994 till now, such an activity had never been carried out, another advocate said the tree census was a



must and drones and satellite imaging could be used for it.

"Now we have to examine how the tree authority is functioning. What is the procedure followed for grant of permission," the bench said.

Another issue the bench wanted to examine in the light of the diminishing tree cover was whether a body of experts could be constituted to look into the permission granted for tree felling and without whose permission nobody would fell trees.

The bench said a similar order was passed for Bengaluru, where if the tree authority granted permission for felling trees, it went to a body of experts to look into it.

The hearing will take place

on November 29 when the bench is likely to examine the affidavit filed by the tree authority and issue directions for the strict implementation of the provisions of the 1994 Act.

The application, which stated that five trees are felled in Delhi every hour, also sought to restrain the Union Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change from permitting diversion of forests in Delhi without the top court's nod.

On Friday, the apex court also dealt with another application, which raised a grievance that several trees were sought to be cut for the construction of a foot over bridge.

The bench agreed to hear the application and said the respondent authorities would ensure no tree was felled for the purpose of construction of the foot over bridge.

It said the station house officer of police station concerned will visit the site and ascertain whether any tree was felled or felling was in progress.

# MANOHAR LAL REVIEWS WORKING OF DEPTS

Timely DPR preparation ensures smooth project implementation, boosting development and improving quality of life in Leh and Kargil.

**TDG NETWORK**  
NEW DELHI

Union Minister of Power and Housing and Urban Affairs Manohar Lal, on Friday reviewed the working of the power and housing departments of the Union Territory of Ladakh at Leh, the Ministry of Power said in a release.

Speaking to the media after the meeting, the Union Minister said that Ladakh aims to achieve 100 percent processing of waste material and a detailed report of the project was presented to him on Thursday.

He added that the Ministry is keen to improve the working conditions of Safai Mitras so that they do not face any occupational hazards while performing their duties.



Union Minister Manohar Lal Khattar tries his hands on drums on his arrival to review the working of the power and housing departments, in Leh on Thursday. ANI

The Minister has instructed that under the Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (AMRUT) 2.0, the Detailed Project Reports (DPRs) for water supply and Sewage Treatment Plant (STP) projects in the regions of Leh and Kargil should be finalized at the earliest. The timely preparation

and approval of the DPRs will ensure the smooth implementation of these vital projects, which will contribute to the overall development and quality of life in both Leh and Kargil.

The Minister expressed satisfaction at the working of the departments and assured of all possible help in overcoming shortcomings

- Ladakh waste, housing, and homelessness: Manohar Lal reviewed Ladakh's departments, emphasized 100% waste processing, improved Safai Mitra safety, and PM Awas Yojana surveys to end homelessness.
- AMRUT 2.0 DPR push: Urged swift finalization of water and sewage project plans in Leh and Kargil for timely execution under AMRUT 2.0.
- Solar and winter power solutions: Progress on a 13 GW solar plant to meet energy needs; winter power ensured via extra central government quota.

and difficulties being faced by the departments here owing to the tough terrain of the region.

Manohar Lal said that a survey of all homeless people would be conducted in the UT so that they can avail benefits of PM Awas Yojana.

He said that the Ministry will ensure that no person remains homeless in Lada-

kh. He added that financial assistance has been provided to all street vendors under the PM Swanidhi scheme and all efforts will be made to ensure that no one is left out.

The Minister said that Ladakh has a huge potential for development of solar power owing to its huge area.

# 'Real estate investments surge 87% of 2023 levels'

**TDG NETWORK**  
NEW DELHI

The institutional investments in Indian real estate in the current year (2024) are poised to surpass 2023 level, stated a report by Colliers.

Colliers' Asia Pacific Report, 2025 Global Investor Outlook stated that the growth is supported by robust investments in office, industrial and warehousing, and residential sectors.

In the first three quarters of 2024 alone, investments have reached \$ 4.7 billion, accounting for 87 per cent of the inflows in the entire year of 2023. This momentum also sets a promising tone for institutional investments across real estate asset classes in 2025, the report added.

Since 2021, institutional inflows have totaled \$ 19



*The office sector is likely to have its best year in India, with record absorption fueled by GCCs and domestic demand.*

billion, with investment volumes rising each passing year. This growth is fueled by surging demand across core real estate segments. While office assets have driven over 40 per cent of inflows during the last four years (2021-24), both industrial and warehousing and residential sectors are now seeing accelerated momentum

in recent years, the report added. "The office sector is likely to have its best year in India, with record absorption fueled by GCCs and domestic demand. The residential sector is witnessing strong end-user sales. Equity capital in Indian real estate is now more diversified, with an increasing share of domestic capital."

# India's semiconductor market set to surge \$115.6 billion by 2030

**TDG NETWORK**  
NEW DELHI

India has the opportunity to increase its global supply chains in sectors like artificial intelligence (AI) and semiconductors, amid potential shifts in U.S. trade policies, according to a report by Motilal Oswal.

The report analyzed the potential impact of Donald Trump's protectionist policies in his second term in office.

While Trump's policies could pose challenges, such as stronger tariffs and a robust U.S. dollar impacting Indian exports, they also present significant opportunities. India, with its "China+1" strategy and past investments in key industries, could play a crucial role in reshaping global supply chains.

"India could bolster its position in global supply chains, particularly in technology sectors like AI and semiconductors, due to previous investments and policy shifts such as the



"China+1" strategy" said the report.

The report highlighted that the technology-related sectors, especially AI and semiconductors, are expected to benefit the most as global players look for alternatives to diversify away from China.

It also stated that the Indian businesses in pharmaceuticals and defense may also find new growth opportunities, particularly if U.S.-India collaborations deepen in response to an enhanced Indo-Pacific defense strategy. A stronger strategic partnership could help Indian firms tap into U.S. markets and align with the country's evolving economic priorities.

It said "Indian businesses

in sectors such as pharmaceuticals and defense might also find new opportunities, especially if U.S.-India collaboration strengthens"

On the other hand, the report also warned that emerging markets like India face challenges due to higher U.S. tariffs and a stronger dollar, which could increase export costs, especially in IT and pharmaceutical sectors.

However, countries like Mexico might benefit as companies shift manufacturing from China to other low-cost regions.

The report added "Some countries could see increased costs for exports due to a stronger dollar and higher tariffs, particularly affecting IT and pharmaceutical sectors".

# Jio's active subscriber surge continues; BSNL's growth slows down: Report

**TDG NETWORK**  
NEW DELHI

Reliance Jio has emerged as the clear leader in India's telecom market for the second consecutive month, adding a 1.7 million active subscribers in September 2024, according to the latest data from the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) as quoted by a Morgan Stanley research report.

This continued surge contrasts sharply with the losses faced by Bharti Airtel and Vodafone Idea (Vi),

which lost 1.3 million and 3.1 million active subscribers, respectively.

The overall telecom industry saw a decline of 1.5 million active subscribers, marking the third consecutive month of subscriber losses. This drop brings the total active subscriber base to 1.06 billion.

The trend suggests potential SIM consolidation, particularly in B and C circles, where subscriber counts fell by 3.2 million and 0.9 million, respectively.

Meanwhile, metropolitan



*This drop brings the total active subscriber base to 1.06 billion.*

and A circles saw gains, with 1.8 million and 0.7

million subscribers added, indicating stronger tariff absorption in urban markets. Jio's success is attributed to its strategic decisions to avoid tariff hikes, particularly in the feature phone segment, which has proven to be highly appealing to price-sensitive customers.

According to Morgan Stanley, "Reliance Jio tweaked some of its geographic-specific ISD (International Subscriber dialling) plans, launched last month, although other TSPs do not have any geo-

graphic-specific ISD plans. It reduced price of its ISD Pack (Bangladesh) from Rs49 to Rs47 (seven-day validity, 20 minutes ISD calling).

"Reliance Jio increased the price of its ISD Pack (Australia, New Zealand) from Rs69 to Rs75 (seven-day validity, 15 minutes ISD calling). It also expanded the coverage of its ISD plan of Rs79 (seven-day validity, 10 minutes ISD Calling, for UK, Spain, Germany) to now cover France," added Morgan Stanley.

# SEBI probes Adani bribery disclosures

**TDG NETWORK**  
NEW DELHI

India's Securities and Exchange Board (SEBI) is scrutinizing Adani Green Energy Ltd. for potential disclosure lapses concerning a U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) bribery investigation. The probe focuses on whether Adani Green adequately informed investors about the DOJ's inquiry, especially regarding the involvement of individuals associated with the Adani Group.

SEBI has approached stock exchange officials to determine if Adani Green failed to properly disclose the DOJ's investigation into bribery allegations. This fact-finding mission is expected to continue for two weeks, after which SEBI may decide on initiating a formal investigation.

The inquiry stems from a March 15 Bloomberg News report indicating that U.S. prosecutors were investigating whether an Adani entity or individuals linked to the company, including its billionaire chairman Gautam Adani, were involved in bribing Indian officials for favorable treatment on an energy project. In response, the Adani Group stated it was not "aware of any investigation against our



*SEBI has approached stock exchange officials to determine if Adani Green failed to properly disclose the DOJ's investigation into bribery allegations.*

chairman" and affirmed its compliance with anti-bribery laws in India and elsewhere. Subsequently, on March 19, Adani Green filed a statement to stock exchanges acknowledging awareness of an investigation into potential violations of American anti-corruption laws by an unrelated third party.

On November 20, U.S. prosecutors charged Gautam Adani with orchestrating a \$250 million bribery scheme to secure solar energy contracts in India, alleging that the conglomerate concealed

this plan while seeking funds from U.S. investors. A spokesperson for the Adani Group denied these allegations.

The indictment also claims that Adani's denial to Bloomberg in March was a false statement intended to further the alleged fraud, noting that Adani's nephew, Sagar Adani, had received a grand jury subpoena and search warrant a year earlier. Sagar Adani serves as the executive director of Adani Green, India's largest renewable energy developer.

In response to the U.S. indictment, shares of Adani's flagship firm plummeted by as much as 23% on Thursday before recovering some losses on Friday.

SEBI, which can act on complaints from stock exchanges, has previously investigated the Adani Group for issues such as disclosure norms, including following allegations by short-seller Hindenburg Research last year, though findings have yet to be disclosed. SEBI's authority allows it to file civil charges, with disclosure violations typically resulting in monetary penalties.

Neither SEBI, the Bombay Stock Exchange Ltd., nor the National Stock Exchange Ltd. responded to requests for comment.

# Vaishnav: India, trusted partner, to see 6-8% growth

**TDG NETWORK**  
NEW DELHI

Union Minister Ashwini Vaishnav, on Thursday, stated that India remained a trusted partner offering both political and economic stability in a time when many democratic countries faced turmoil, highlighting India's achievement in retaining political stability, which helped the country to establish itself as a trusted trading partner.

Speaking at the News9 Global Summit, the Union Minister of Information and



Broadcasting, Railways, and Electronics and Information Technology, Vaishnav, underscored India's strength and resilience of the economy.

"The success of our government reflects the fact that good economics can also

make good politics. While many democratic nations have faced turmoil, India remains a trusted partner, offering both political and economic stability," the minister said.

The Union Minister highlighted the 6-8 percent growth rate of the economy, adding that the growth is poised to continue this trajectory for many years to come. The Union Minister also underscored the government's commitment to sustainability and the environment. He said, "While we continue to grow, we are conscious of our en-

vironmental footprint. I am pleased to report that India is on track to meet its commitments under the Paris Agreement."

Vaishnav added that about 45 percent of India's total power generation capacity comes from renewable sources.

He added that the government is establishing the world's largest renewable energy with a capacity of 40,000 MW at an investment of 1.2 billion euros.

Pointing out the changes in global order, the union minister asserted that we are liv-

ing through one of the most transformative phases. In the last five years, the world has experienced a global pandemic and witnessed two major geopolitical conflicts, he added.

Referring to the significance of India amid the changes in global order, he stated that the country offers trust, talent, and stability and is uniquely positioned to thrive in this changing environment. We firmly believe in democracy, multilateralism, and a rules-based international order, he added.

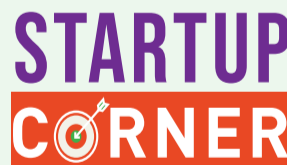
# Tech Media Startup Expo 2024 opens in Goa

**TDG NETWORK**  
PANAJI

The Tech Media Startup Expo 2024 commenced on November 20 at the Film Bazaar, IFFI Goa, organized by the Department of Information Technology, Electronics, and Communications (DITE&C), Government of Goa. This five-day event, running until November 24, aims to position Goa as the Creative Capital of India by showcasing the intersection of technology and media.

## PARTICIPATING STARTUPS AND INNOVATIONS

- The expo features eight startups from Goa, India, and abroad, each presenting unique innovations:
- **Fandora:** A platform enabling users to invest in and co-own content intellectual property across films, sports, and OTT series.
  - **PostMyAd:** Allows users to manage digital billboard advertisements remotely, enhancing advertising flexibility.
  - **PYC AI:** A global plat-



form offering artists and businesses the ability to license voices, avatars, and personas, facilitating creative collaborations.

- **Behind The Scene:** Focuses on providing insights and services related to film production and media content creation.
- **Rapid Rush:** Offers solutions aimed at accelerating media content delivery and distribution.
- **RecoBee:** Specializes in personalized content recommendations, enhancing user engagement across media platforms.



*The expo provides networking opportunities for startup founders, filmmakers, technologists, investors, and media enthusiasts, fostering collaboration and innovation in the TechMedia sector.*

- **Zeno Saviour:** An AI-powered characters-as-a-service platform that empowers creators to build immersive experiences and games with ease.
- **Goan Narrative Live Streaming and Documentary Production:** Showcases live streaming services and documentary production, highlighting Goan culture and stories.

## INAUGURAL DAY HIGHLIGHTS

The first day featured sessions exploring the transformative synergy between media and technology, attracting filmmakers, technologists, and investors interested in the evolving media landscape.

Raj Kapoor, Founder and CEO of the India Blockchain Alliance (IBA), discussed the future of media-tech convergence, stating, "Creativity doesn't come from a laptop; it comes from within. What

matters is how tools make our tasks simpler. Technology has brought significant changes to our lives, and this is just the beginning. In the next 10 years, we will witness a fully digitalized world, reshaping how we live and interact. The possibilities ahead are limitless, driven by innovation and adaptability."

A panel discussion on future challenges and opportunities for media creators included:

- **Ganesh Kaushic:** COO, IBA
  - **Jaydeep Biswas:** CEO, Rocky Films
  - **Sharad Patel:** Founder, Chairman & MD, SP Cinecorp
  - **Gayathri Guliani:** Founder & CEO, Kleos Entertainment
  - **Saurabh Malhotra:** Co-Founder, CF Cinema
  - **Jivika Sharma:** Actress and CEO of SP CineCorp
- The panelists shared insights on navigating the evolving media landscape, emphasizing the importance of adaptability and innovation.

# HERITAGE UNDER THREAT: WHY INDIA MUST PROTECT ITS TRADITIONAL KNOWLEDGE

## OPINION

DEEVANSHU SHRIVASTAVA  
& SANYA KAPUR



The protection of Traditional Knowledge (TK) in India is an urgent and necessary endeavor that requires immediate attention from policymakers, communities, and stakeholders. Traditional Knowledge encompasses the wisdom, practices, and innovations developed by indigenous and local communities over generations. It plays a crucial role in preserving cultural heritage, promoting biodiversity, and contributing to sustainable development. However, the increasing threats from globalization, biopiracy, and the commodification of indigenous resources have put this invaluable knowledge at risk. India is home to a rich tapestry of cultures and tradi-

tions, each with its unique forms of knowledge. This includes agricultural practices, medicinal uses of plants, handicrafts, folklore, and more. The diversity of TK not only reflects the cultural identity of various communities but also offers solutions to contemporary challenges such as climate change and food security. For instance, indigenous agricultural techniques can enhance soil fertility and crop resilience, while traditional healing practices can complement modern medicine. Therefore, safeguarding TK is not merely a matter of preserving culture; it is essential for the survival and well-being of future generations. The current legal framework in India for protecting TK

is inadequate. While there are some provisions under intellectual property laws, these often fail to recognize the communal nature of TK and the rights of indigenous communities. The absence of a robust system for documentation and protection leaves traditional knowledge vulnerable to exploitation by corporations and individuals who may seek to patent or commercialize these resources without proper consent or compensation. This not only undermines the rights of indigenous peoples but also threatens the sustainability of their cultural practices. Moreover, the lack of awareness among communities about their rights regarding TK further exacerbates the situation. Many practitioners of traditional knowledge are unaware that their contributions can be protected legally. This ignorance can lead to a loss of control over their knowledge and resources, resulting in economic disadvantages for these communities. Therefore, it is imperative to implement educational programs that inform communities about their rights and the importance of protecting their traditional knowledge. Internationally, there has been a growing recognition of the need to protect TK. The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) have initiated discussions on how to safeguard indigenous



knowledge systems. India has been an active participant in these dialogues; however, translating international commitments into national legislation remains a challenge. The government must take proactive steps to create a comprehensive policy framework that recognizes and protects TK while ensuring that benefits arising from its use are shared equitably with the communities that hold this knowledge. In addition to legal protections, fostering partnerships between traditional knowledge holders and researchers can enhance the conservation of TK. Collaborative research initiatives can help document traditional practices while respecting the rights and interests of indigenous communities. Such partnerships can also facilitate the integration of traditional knowledge into modern scientific research, leading to innovative solutions for pressing global challenges. Furthermore, promoting

awareness about the value of traditional knowledge among consumers can drive demand for products that are ethically sourced and produced using traditional methods. This can create economic opportunities for Indigenous communities while encouraging sustainable practices that respect cultural heritage. For instance, promoting organic products cultivated through traditional agricultural methods can appeal to environmentally conscious consumers. The role of technology in protecting TK should not be overlooked. Digital platforms can serve as repositories for documenting traditional knowledge, making it accessible while ensuring that proper credit is given to its custodians. However, careful consideration must be given to how this information is shared to prevent misuse or appropriation by entities seeking to exploit it for profit. In conclusion, protecting Traditional

Knowledge in India is not just about safeguarding cultural heritage; it is about recognizing the rights of Indigenous communities and ensuring their voices are heard in discussions about their future. A multifaceted approach involving legal protections, community education, collaborative research, consumer awareness, and technological innovation is essential for preserving this vital aspect of human heritage. As we move forward in an increasingly globalized world, we must honor and protect the wisdom embedded in Traditional Knowledge systems—an invaluable resource for sustainable development and cultural identity.

\* Dr. Deevanshu Shrivastava, Associate Dean, School of Law, GD Goenka University, Gurugram.

\*\* Ms. Sanya Kapur Wadhwani, Assistant Professor, School of Law, GD Goenka University, Gurugram.

## Understanding eastern Nagaland's journey towards equity and growth through Constitutional reforms

## OPINION

DR. ANIRUDDHA BABAR\*



The Human Development Index (HDI) and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) represent global benchmarks for human progress, emphasizing equality, sustainability, and individual well-being alongside economic growth. However, these aspirations remain elusive in Eastern Nagaland, a region characterized by systemic neglect and governance failures despite being part of a sovereign state under India's federal structure. The glaring underdevelopment in this region, evident in persistent poverty, inadequate infrastructure, and poor access to essential services, underscores deeper constitutional and developmental injustices that violate the principles of equity and justice enshrined in the Indian Constitution.

Eastern Nagaland, comprising Mon, Tuensang, Longleng, Kiphire, Noklak,

and Shamator districts, is one of India's most underdeveloped regions. Despite Nagaland's special constitutional status under Article 371A, which accords autonomy to safeguard its social and cultural/traditional practices, the governance structure has failed to address the disparities within the state. Marginalized Naga tribes in the eastern region face severe deficits in health, education, civic amenities, and infrastructure, starkly contrasting the relatively developed central and urban districts. The failure to bridge these gaps raises critical questions about the state's adherence to constitutional obligations under the Directive Principles of State Policy (DPSPs), particularly those mandating the promotion of social and economic justice for all citizens.

The principle of "leaving no one behind," central to the SDGs, has yet to be realized in Eastern Nagaland. Basic rights such as access to healthcare, education, electricity, and potable water-guaranteed by the Constitution as components of a dignified life-remain inaccessible to large segments of the region's population. This neglect reflects systemic inequality, challenging the state's commitment

to achieving both constitutional and international development goals.

The Eastern Naga people through their Frontier Nagaland Territory movement, seeks to address these injustices by demanding legislative, executive, and financial autonomy within a separate territorial framework well-within the state of Nagaland. Rooted in the region's unique socio-political-economic and cultural realities, the demand reflects a quest for constitutional justice-the equitable distribution of resources and governance powers to ensure the region's inclusion in India's developmental journey. Proponents argue that the creation of Frontier Nagaland Territory would operationalize localized, people-centric governance, empowering marginalized communities and fostering accountability. By leveraging the autonomy provisions of Article 371A, Frontier Nagaland Territory could institutionalize mechanisms for more effective resource allocation and policy implementation, tailored to the region's distinct needs within the sphere of Article 371A and Constitutional boundaries of proposed Frontier Nagaland Territory.

The persistent underdevelopment of Eastern Nagaland highlights failures in governance, resource distribution, and political will. Allegations of corruption, mismanagement, and policy bias have compounded the challenges, leaving the region excluded from Nagaland's broader development narrative.

This neglect constitutes a breach of the fundamental constitutional principle of equality, enshrined in Articles 14 and 21, and the DPSPs' mandate to reduce inequalities and improve the standard of living in rural and backward regions. The Frontier Nagaland demand is not merely a political movement but a constitutional assertion: a call to fulfill the guarantees of justice, equity, and opportunity promised to every citizen under the Constitution. The movement underscores the importance of recognizing marginalized communities' rights to participate in governance and development decisions that directly impact their lives.

While the establishment of Frontier Nagaland Territory may provide an immediate remedy to the region's grievances, it cannot be the sole solution. A comprehensive approach that integrates constitutional justice with participatory development is essential. Beyond autonomy, systemic reforms are needed to strengthen grassroots governance, empower local communities, and enhance accountability and transparency to address corruption and ensure that development funds from the central government reach their intended beneficiaries. A robust development strategy aligned with the SDGs and the constitutional mandate is crucial, emphasizing poverty alleviation, education, healthcare, and infrastructure improvements. Reforming federal policies to ensure equitable resource

distribution and targeted investments for historically marginalized regions is also critical.

The Frontier Nagaland movement highlights the gap between constitutional promises and on-ground realities in marginalized regions. Addressing these disparities is not just about fulfilling development goals; it is about upholding the fundamental principles of justice and equality that form the bedrock of India's Constitution. Proponents of "Frontier Nagaland Territory" believe that, overlooking regions like remote regions of Eastern Nagaland poses challenges to national unity and integrity, while also hindering India's Constitutional commitment to inclusive growth, justice and development.

The path forward requires a dual focus: providing immediate redress through constructive Legislative, Executive and Financial autonomy within the Constitutional perimeter of the proposed Frontier Nagaland Territory under the watch and guidance of a special "Task Force" created by the Central Government and implementing long-term reforms that tackle structural inequalities.

A collaborative effort by the Government of India, the Government of Nagaland, local stakeholders and policy experts in the proposed Frontier Nagaland Territory is essential to create a framework for inclusive development that respects the constitutional rights of Eastern Nagaland's citizens. This involves acknowledging

the distinct socio-cultural, economic, and geographical challenges of the region, while aligning with the Eastern Naga way of life and national development priorities, all in the spirit of Justice, Equality, Liberty, and Fraternity-values that lie at the heart of our Constitution.

The demand for Frontier Nagaland Territory is a call for constitutional justice-a reminder that development must be equitable, inclusive, participatory and sustainable. It underscores the urgent need for India to honour its constitutional commitments by addressing historical neglect and ensuring a sustainable and just future for Eastern Nagaland and its "forgotten" people.

Dr. Aniruddha Babar, based in Nagaland, is a renowned academician, researcher, lawyer, and policy analyst, widely regarded as an authority on the 6th Schedule, Part VIII, and Article 371A of the Constitution of India. With extensive expertise in Nagaland state affairs and Borderland Affairs, particularly along the Indo-Myanmar Border; Dr. Aniruddha is the Founder and Director of "Project Constitutional Justice" in Tuensang, Nagaland. This initiative is dedicated to advancing constitutional awareness, governance, and social justice. Through education, advocacy, and academia, Dr. Aniruddha's work empowers marginalized communities and plays a pivotal role in shaping legal and academic discourse in the region. He is currently a senior faculty member at Tetsu College, Chumoukedima, Nagaland.

## PERSPECTIVE

# AAP AIMS FOR THE HAT-TRICK

Aiming for a hat-trick in Delhi, the Aam Aadmi Party has made its intentions clear by declaring its first list of nominees for the Assembly polls, thus sending a clear signal to its opponents that it was fully prepared to take them on. The first AAP list has mostly the names of those who joined the party and were being fielded against their former colleagues. There is a two-fold objective behind this early declaration, the first being that the AAP is conscious of the BJP's Operation Lotus plans and thus has shielded its top leaders while giving tickets to new entrants, who have no other place to go. It is most unlikely that anyone of the nominees shall defect to any other party at this stage, and the list includes the son of former Congress strongman, Chaudhury Matin, who shall be the AAP candidate from Seelampur, a pre-dominant Muslim seat. Most political pundits had believed that the minority dominated seats would be won by the Congress since going by the voting pattern of the Parliamentary elections, the Muslims had voted for the grand old party. However, by inducting Matin's son, the AAP is now going to be a serious challenger and could even win.

The Muslims by and large have been of the view that it was important to beat the Saffron brigade and whichever party was most suitable in achieving this objective, they would support it. Although things have changed over the past few months, the Muslim votes cannot be taken for granted by anyone, particularly the Congress whose Delhi president Devendra Yadav seems busy with his padyatras rather than focusing on the strategy. The Congress should have ensured that defections to AAP should have been prevented. It is a costly mistake which would influence the outcome, if strong remedial measures are not taken on time. The AAP has been wary of BJP's designs, after Kailash Gehlot, a minister in the city government recently resigned from the party and joined the BJP, the following day. This kind of activity concerning other key leaders is also not ruled out, and therefore, the AAP leadership has to be extremely cautious from now onwards. The BJP has expressed surprise that the AAP list does not include the names of known leaders including Chief Minister Atishi Singh and some others. The exclusion of sure shot names has given rise to speculation that some of the top functionaries of the party could be changing their constituencies. For instance, Atishi had won by a small margin from Kalkaji in 2020 and needs to win big to send a message across the parties. Manish Sisodia, is a key player in AAP and may find the going tough in Patparganj where the BJP is quite strong. There is no such issue with Arvind Kejriwal who shall represent the New Delhi seat and is likely to sail home comfortably. However, there is a question mark over the winnability of some other leaders and the party shall have to take a view on the seats which would be most suitable for them. While the general opinion is that the AAP was in a pole position to once again form the government, notwithstanding the scams that have rocked its government and impacted its image, it is to be seen whether it can repeat its outstanding performances during the past two elections.

The AAP may lose seats and its tally could come down, particularly since the BJP is all geared up to take the AAP on in order to overcome the jinx of defeats since its victory in 1993. The Congress which had collapsed after it supported Arvind Kejriwal during his brief stint as the CM in 2013, is also hoping to bounce back and open its tally which was nil both in 2015 and 2020. In the triangular contest that is likely to take place, the AAP's chances would be dependent on the performance of the Congress. If the Congress is not able to catch the imagination of the people, it would help AAP win easily. However, if the Congress does well, the BJP shall be the ultimate gainer. Unfortunately for the BJP, there is no clear face who can be projected for the Chief Ministership. There are many leaders, but no one is charismatic enough and who can take on the AAP challenge head on. Same is the case with the Congress which has tired functionaries seeking tickets for either themselves or their sons or daughters. The current party chief is working hard but the party may have to think clearly on whether he can be projected as the CM face. Congress treasurer Ajay Maken, is from a known political family and could have been the face. However, he is the treasurer and now has his ambitions nationally rather than in Delhi. In the BJP, it would have been a good idea to showcase Arvinder Singh Lovely, who had defected from the Congress to the Saffron Brigade during the parliamentary elections. But he is a reluctant participant in day to day activities and has been maintaining a low profile. Lovely is a Punjabi face who can click with both Hindus and Sikhs. It is a complex situation that has emerged and the contest is likely to be fought on the issue of statehood of Delhi, a demand supported by the BJP earlier and could be the main plank of the AAP. The question would be on whether the elected representatives should be subservient to those who are appointees of the central government. The elections are eagerly awaited.

PANKAJ VOHRA



**TDG**  
**EXPLAINER**

An Intercontinental Ballistic Missile (ICBM) is a powerful weapon system designed to deliver nuclear or conventional warheads over extremely long distances, typically exceeding 5,500 kilometers. These missiles are central to the strategic defense and deterrence policies of nations with nuclear capabilities. Here's an in-depth look at their history, design, and strategic role.

**HISTORY AND DEVELOPMENT**

ICBMs trace their origins to the V-2 rockets developed by Nazi Germany during World War II. After the war, advancements in rocket technology by both the United States and the Soviet Union during the Cold War led to the development of the first ICBMs. The Soviet Union's R-7 Semyorka, deployed in 1957, was the world's first operational ICBM. This was closely followed by the United States' Atlas missile.

Over decades, the race for technological superiority saw the development of more advanced ICBMs with higher payload capacities, longer ranges, and greater accuracy.

**DESIGN AND COMPONENTS**

ICBMs typically have three main stages:

- 1. Boost Phase:** The missile's engines propel it into the upper atmosphere, requiring immense thrust and stability.
- 2. Midcourse Phase:** The missile travels through space along a suborbital trajectory. At this stage, warheads are often released from the missile body.
- 3. Reentry Phase:** The warheads reenter the Earth's atmosphere and proceed toward their targets.

**KEY FEATURES:**

- **Payload:** Modern ICBMs can carry Multiple Independently Targetable Reentry Vehicles (MIRVs), allowing them to strike multiple targets simultaneously.
- **Guidance Systems:** These rely on inertial navigation, GPS, or celestial navigation for precision targeting.
- **Fuel:** ICBMs may use liquid or solid fuels. Solid-fuel systems are preferred for their reliability and rapid deployment capabilities.

**DEPLOYMENT AND USAGE**

ICBMs can be launched from:

- **Land-based silos:** Often buried deep underground for protection.
- **Submarine-launched ballistic missiles (SLBMs):** Carried by nuclear submarines, providing a stealthy second-strike capability.
- **Mobile launch platforms:** Increasing survivability by making them harder to target.

**STRATEGIC ROLE**

ICBMs play a pivotal role in nuclear deterrence. Their ability to strike targets across continents makes them a cornerstone of the doctrine of Mutually Assured Destruction (MAD), wherein the threat of catastrophic retaliation prevents nuclear conflict.

**GLOBAL DISTRIBUTION**

- **United States:** Minuteman III and upcoming Sentinel systems.
- **Russia:** RS-28 Sarmat and Topol-M.
- **China:** DF-41, known for its extensive range.
- **Others:** India (Agni-V), North Korea (Hwasong-17).

**EMERGING TRENDS**

Recent developments include the integration of hypersonic glide vehicles and improved counter-defense capabilities, making

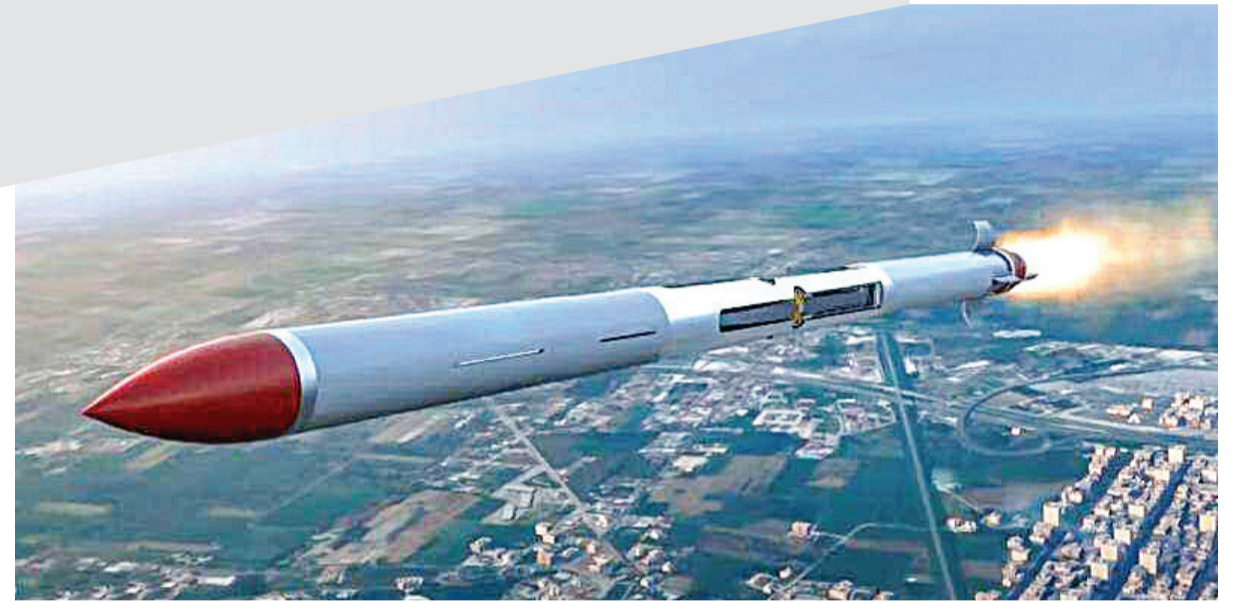
# IRBMs & ICBMs

## STRATEGIC POWER ACROSS CONTINENTS

*Oreshnik IRBM targets Ukraine; ICBMs like Minuteman III and Sarmat intensify global nuclear deterrence, signaling heightened geopolitical tensions and arms race.*



Ukraine's Defense Intelligence [GUR] reports that Russia launched a Kedr ICBM, not the Oreshnik MRBM, on Dnipro on November 21. The missile covered the distance from Astrakhan to Dnipro in just 15 minutes. X



Oreshnik missile test succeeds! Putin announced hypersonic rocket reaching Mach 10, showcasing Russia's advanced defense technology. X



The Oreshnik missile boasts a range of approximately 6,000 km and is equipped with 6 to 8 MIRVed warheads, each capable of carrying a 150 kt charge. This recent deployment demonstrated its potential to carry a nuclear warhead. The "Oreshnik" is now officially on combat duty. X

interception by missile defense systems significantly harder. Such advancements represent a new chapter in global strategic competition. Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles remain one of the most significant and sophisticated weapons ever created, symbolizing both the pinnacle of human engineering and the ongoing challenges of global security and peace.

**ORESHNIK - INTERMEDIATE-RANGE BALLISTIC MISSILE (IRBM)**

On November 21, 2024, Russia conducted a significant military operation by launching the previously undisclosed "Oreshnik" intermediate-range ballistic missile (IRBM) at the PA Pivdenmash facility in Dnipro, eastern Ukraine. This event marked the missile's first known operational deployment, introducing a new element into the ongoing conflict.

**Advance notification and international communication**

Prior to the missile launch, Russia provided the United States with a brief advance warning through established nuclear risk reduction channels. Defense Department Deputy Spokesperson Sabrina Singh confirmed this communication, stating, "The United States was pre-notified briefly before the launch through nuclear risk reduction channels." Kremlin spokesperson Dmitry Peskov corroborated this, noting that the warning was issued approximately 30 minutes before the missile's launch. This preemptive notification aligns with international protocols aimed at preventing unintended escalations during military operations.

**Missile specifications and capabilities**

The Oreshnik missile



is a mobile, solid-fueled IRBM with an estimated range between 2,500 and 5,500 kilometers. It is equipped with Multiple Independently Targetable Reentry Vehicles (MIRVs) capable of traveling at hypersonic speeds, reportedly reaching up to Mach 10. This velocity significantly challenges existing missile defense systems, as hypersonic missiles can maneuver mid-flight, making interception exceedingly difficult.

According to the U.S. De-

partment of Defense, the Oreshnik is based on the RS-26 Rubezh design, a solid-fueled intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) derived from the RS-24 Yars ICBM. The RS-26 underwent a series of tests between 2011 and 2015 but was excluded from Russia's 2018-2027 State Armament Program. The current status of the RS-26 was previously uncertain, but its apparent evolution into the Oreshnik suggests a renewed focus on intermediate-range capabilities.

**Historical context and treaty implications**

The development and deployment of the Oreshnik occur against the backdrop of the dissolution of the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty. Signed in 1987, the INF Treaty eliminated all ground-launched ballistic and cruise missiles with ranges between 500 and 5,500 kilometers. However, both the United States and Russia withdrew from the treaty in 2019, each accusing the other of viola-

moved previous constraints on the development of intermediate-range missile systems, potentially paving the way for the introduction of weapons like the Oreshnik.

**Strategic implications**

The deployment of the Oreshnik has significant strategic implications. Its range enables it to target a wide array of locations across Europe and parts of Asia, extending Russia's strategic reach. The missile's hypersonic speed and maneuverability render existing missile defense systems less effective, potentially altering the strategic balance in the region.

In response to the missile launch, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky condemned the attack, labeling it a severe escalation. The United States, while acknowledging the advance notification, expressed concern over the introduction of such advanced weaponry

into the conflict. NATO allies have also voiced apprehension, with some member states calling for increased defensive measures to counter potential threats posed by hypersonic missiles.

**Production and deployment considerations**

While President Putin referred to the November 21 missile strike as a test, U.S. officials have suggested that Russia likely possesses only a limited number of these experimental missiles. However, reports from the International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS) indicate that over the past six months, Russia has significantly expanded its capacity to produce solid-propellant rocket motors. Satellite imagery analysis suggests increased activity at multiple facilities related to the production of solid rocket fuel, indicating a potential scaling up of missile production capabilities.

**Development and design**

The Oreshnik missile is believed to be derived from the RS-26 Rubezh intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) program. The RS-26 was a modification of the Topol ICBM, intended to provide a more versatile and mobile missile system. However, development of the RS-26 was reportedly frozen in 2018 to prioritize other systems, such as the Avangard hypersonic glide vehicle. The Oreshnik appears to have revitalized aspects of the RS-26 design, incorporating modern technologies to enhance its capabilities.

The missile is a two-stage, solid-fueled system, allowing for rapid deployment and reduced maintenance compared to liquid-fueled counterparts. Its design enables it to carry multiple independently targetable reentry vehicles (MIRVs),

each capable of being directed toward separate targets. This feature significantly increases the missile's effectiveness against dispersed or hardened targets.

**Capabilities**

One of the most notable features of the Oreshnik is its hypersonic speed. Traveling at Mach 10, or approximately 12,350 kilometers per hour, it can reach targets swiftly, reducing the window for interception. This speed, combined with its ability to maneuver during flight, makes it a formidable challenge for existing missile defense systems.

The missile's range is estimated to be between 3,000 to 5,000 kilometers, classifying it as an intermediate-range ballistic missile. This range allows it to target a wide array of locations across Europe and parts of Asia, extending Russia's strategic reach.

**Operational use**

The Oreshnik was first used in combat on November 21, 2024, during the Russo-Ukrainian War. It targeted the PA Pivdenmash facility in Dnipro, Ukraine, marking the first combat use of an intermediate-range missile by Russia. The missile was launched from the Astrakhan Oblast, likely from the Kapustin Yar training ground. Unverified footage of the attack suggests the use of MIRV payloads, indicating the missile's capability to strike multiple targets simultaneously.

The Oreshnik missile represents a significant advancement in Russia's missile technology, combining speed, range, and versatility. Its development underscores Russia's commitment to enhancing its strategic capabilities in the face of evolving global security dynamics.

*Compiled by Ruchira Talapatra*

COMPARISON OF ORESHNIK IRBM AND INTERCONTINENTAL BALLISTIC MISSILE (ICBM)		
FEATURE	ORESHNIK MISSILE (IRBM)	INTERCONTINENTAL BALLISTIC MISSILE (ICBM)
Type	Intermediate-Range Ballistic Missile (IRBM)	Intercontinental Ballistic Missile (ICBM)
Range	2,500 to 5,500 kilometers	Over 5,500 kilometers
Fuel Type	Solid-fueled	Can be solid-fueled or liquid-fueled
Mobility	Mobile launch platforms	Deployed via silos, mobile launchers, or submarines
Primary Role	Regional strike capability, focused on tactical and strategic regional targets	Global strike capability, capable of hitting targets across continents
Payload	Multiple Independently Targetable Reentry Vehicles (MIRVs) with potential hypersonic capability	MIRVs or single warheads, some include hypersonic glide vehicles
Operational Use	Designed for intermediate-range regional conflicts	Primarily for nuclear deterrence and long-range strategic strikes
Deployment Platforms	Land-based mobile systems	Land-based silos, submarines (SLBMs), and mobile launchers
Notable Example	Oreshnik	RS-24 Yars (Russia), Minuteman III (USA)
Strategic Implications	Threatens regional adversaries with limited defense options	Alters global strategic balance through nuclear deterrence
First Operational Use	November 21, 2024, in the Russo-Ukrainian War	First operational deployments in the 1950s and 1960s during the Cold War

# DELHI AIR POLLUTION: SUPREME COURT EXPRESSES DISSATISFACTION WITH ENFORCEMENT OF BAN ON TRUCKS, APPOINTS 13 LAWYERS TO INSPECT ENTRY POINTS

TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court in the case appointed 13 members of the Bar as court commissioners to visit the entry points to Delhi and verify whether entry of trucks is being stopped on November 22, 2024.

The court observed that as per the GRAP-IV restrictions imposed by the Commission for Air Quality Management, the entry of trucks is prohibited to Delhi-NCR to combat air pollution.

The court in the case expressed dissatisfaction with the compliance.

The bench comprising of Justice Abhay S Oka and Justice Augustine George

Masih in the case stated that, 'So far as compliance is concerned, we are not satisfied. Government has not stated clearly as to at how many entry points there are officers present to comply with measures of STAGE IV.'

The counsel, Amicus curiae Senior Advocate Aparajita Singh stated that there are 113 entry points but the counsel for the Delhi Government stated that vigil is maintained primarily at 13 major entry points.

Further, the court in the case observed that this meant that for the other 100 points, there is no restriction on vehicles which is banned under STAGE IV.

The bench in its order stated that, 'This court direct



the Delhi Government and Delhi Police to ensure that check posts are immediately set up at all 113 entry points.' The court while appoint-

ing 13 Advocate Commissioners asked the Additional Solicitor General to forward their names to the Delhi Police Commissioner

to facilitate their visit to the entry points. They can take photographs and file a report to the Court.

The bench in the case ob-

*The bench in the case observed that, 'Out of 113, almost 100 entry points are unmanned in the sense that here are nobody to check the entry of trucks, we asked members of the bar to go and check those points. This court is happy to note that 13 young members of the bar have volunteered to act as commissioner of this court.'*

served that, 'Out of 113, almost 100 entry points are unmanned in the sense that here are nobody to check the entry of trucks, we asked members of the bar

to go and check those points. This court is happy to note that 13 young members of the bar have volunteered to act as commissioner of this court.' The court passed the

said direction in the MC Mehta case, wherein the court is monitoring the air quality of Delhi-NCR.

The bench headed by Justice Oka orally stated during the hearing that as far as entry of trucks is concerned there is no implementation. 100 entry points are unmanned. There is no implementation of fireworks ban, construction nothing was being implemented. Somebody has to be answerable. The percentage of pollution caused by these trucks is a very large percentage. This is the look out of the police and the Delhi government.

Accordingly, the court listed the matter for further consideration on November 25, 2024.

## Punjab and Haryana High Court: 'Flooded with litigations where innocent families are financially exploited on promise of sending children abroad'

TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

The Punjab And Haryana High Court in the case Devinder Singh Gill v. State of Punjab observed and has rejected the bail petition of a man who is being accused of cheating to the tune of Rs.77.89 lakh on the pretext of sending complainants abroad and to procure study visas and work visas.

The court in the case noted that the accused person neither sent the complainants abroad nor did they return the advance money.

The bench headed by Justice Kirti Singh stated that, 'In recent times the Courts have been flooded with similar litigation where



innocent families have been financially exploited on the promise of sending their children abroad. The courts have often flagged the seriousness of such offences due to the financial and emotional harm caused to the families.

In the present case, the court was hearing the petition filed under section 439 of Code of Criminal

Procedure, CrPC for grant of regular bail to the petitioner in case under Section 406, Section 420 and Section 120-B of Indian Penal Code, IPC and Section 13 of the Punjab Travel Professions (Regulation) Act, 2014.

The counsel appearing for the petitioner submitted before the court that the students had signed

the contract after duly admitting the terms and conditions of the contract and after acknowledging their rights and duties.

The petitioner in the plea stated that it being an admitted case of the complainant that she was a student and has enrolled herself for the purposes of completion of the course through online mode and the accused never promised to her vide any offer letter or any other document that she would be sent abroad.

The court while considering the submissions noted that the petitioner has been specifically named in the in the FIR and there are serious allegations levelled against him that he along with co-accused had

cheated the complainants to the tune of Rs.77,89,000 on the pretext of sending them abroad and to procure study visas and work visas for them, however, they neither sent the complainants abroad nor did they return their aforesaid money.

The court while considering the facts and circumstances of the case observed and has rejected the petition and has stated that It does not deem it appropriate to grant the concession of regular bail to the petitioner.

The counsel, Mr. Abhinav Gupta, Advocate, for the petitioner. Mr. R.S. Thind, DAG, Punjab.

The counsel, Mr. B.S. Bhalla, Advocate, for the complainant.

## Supreme Court Seeks TN Govt Response On Petition Challenging Savukku Shankar's Preventive Detention

TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court in the case A. Kamala vs. State Of Tamil Nadu observed and has issued notice to the State of Tamil Nadu wherein the petition is filed challenging the recent detention of YouTuber Savukku Shankar under the preventive detention law.

The bench comprising of Chief Justice of India DY Chandrachud and Justice JB Pardiwala and Justice

Manoj Misra was hearing the habeas corpus petition filed by his mother.

The counsel, Advocate Balaji Srinivasan appearing for the petitioner stressed that Shankar had been subjected to physical torture and solitary confinement.

It has been stated that, 'I am roughed up in custody, my hands are broken, no action is being taken.... now they have kept me in Madurai where I am kept in solitary confinement.'

In July, the Supreme Court

in the case ordered the interim release of Savukku Shankar from his previous preventive detention which was subsequently being quashed by the High Court on August 09, 2024.

The counsel appearing explained that on August 12, Shankar was granted bail, who was scheduled to be released from jail at 5PM. On the same day at 5:45 PM, he was again detained indefinitely in connection with an Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act, 1985

NDPS case in which he was granted bail 4 months ago. It may also be noted that the petitioner was detained under Tamil Nadu 'Goondas' Act 1982 (the Tamil Nadu Prevention of Dangerous Activities of Bootleggers, Drug Offenders, Goondas, Immoral Traffic Offenders, Forest Offenders, Sand Offenders, Slum-Grabbers and Video Pirates Act).

The counsel appearing before the court also requested that the petitioner at least be transferred to

Chennai Jail.

The bench of Chief Justice of India DY Chandrachud reverted saying that the court would await the reply of the State on this.

On August 14, the Court in the case issued notice on a writ petition filed by Shankar, stayed coercive proceedings against him in 16 FIRs filed against him over an interview given by him on a YouTube Channel.

Accordingly, the court listed the matter for further consideration on August 27, 2024.

## Karnataka High Court dismisses suspended Janata Dal (S) leader Prajwal Revanna's anticipatory bail plea in sexual assault case



TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

The Karnataka High Court in the case Prajwal Revanna v/s State by CID Police observed and has dismissed the anticipatory bail plea of Suspended Janta Dal (S) leader Prajwal Revanna who has been arrested on the allegations of rape and sexual assault.

A single judge bench of Justice M Nagaprassana while pronouncing the order stated "Dismissed". The petitioner in the plea prayed before the court that in the event of his arrest, Revanna be released on bail.

In the present case, Revanna is charged for various offences which

*A single judge bench of Justice M Nagaprassana while pronouncing the order stated "Dismissed".*

*The petitioner in the plea prayed before the court that in the event of his arrest, Revanna be released on bail.*

includes Indian Penal Code, IPC section 376(2)n (commits rape repeatedly on the same woman, section 376(2)k (rape while being in a position of control or dominance over a woman), section 506 (criminal intimidation), section 354(a) (Sexual harassment), section 354b (Assault or use of crimi-

nal force to woman with intent to disrobe), section 354c (Voyeurism) and Section 66E (Punishment for violation of privacy) of Information Technology Act. Earlier, the Session Court had rejected the bail petition of Revanna's in a similar FIR on June 12. Accordingly, the court dismissed the petition.

## Delhi High Court asks authorities to remove illegal activities at Chandni Chowk redevelopment project area: 'Shocking state of affairs'

TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court in the case Chandani Chowk Sarv Vyapar Mandal v. Govt. Of NctOfDelhi&Ors observed and has directed the city authorities to remove the deficiencies and illegal activities at the Chandni Chowk redevelopment project and surrounding areas.

The Division bench comprising of Chief Justice Manmohan and Justice Tushar Rao Gedela was hearing the present matter. The bench in the case observed that prima facie, the illegal activities and deficiencies in the area must be attended to and removed by the MCD and Delhi Police in accordance with law, as expeditiously as possible.

Further, the court asked the concerned DCP as well as



DC to remain personally present in court on the next date of hearing.

In the present case, the court was hearing the Public Interest Litigation, PIL filed by Chandani Chowk Sarv Vyapar Mandal seeking directions on the city authorities to ensure that all the damage and illegal activities in the area is removed in a time bound manner.

The counsel, Senior Advo-

cate Sanjeev Ralli appearing for the petitioner organization submitted before the court that the area of Chandni Chowk redevelopment project is totally neglected by the authorities including the MCD, Delhi Police and Traffic Police. He also stated that the state of affairs was causing inconvenience to the public at large specially residents, those who visit Chandni Chowk as well as those

*It was also contended before the court that the lack of concern by the city authorities was leading to alarming deterioration in cleanliness and maintenance of the Chandni Chowk road and surrounding areas.*

working there.

It was also contended before the court that the lack of concern by the city authorities was leading to alarming deterioration in cleanliness and maintenance of the Chandni Chowk road and surrounding areas.

Ralli also submitted before the court that drug addicts and vagabonds have started assembling at the main Chandni Chowk road and that the maintenance agency's contract has expired without any arrangement, leading to

unhygienic condition of the area.

It was submitted before the court that the illegal encroachment in no vending zone by the hawkers etc is left unchecked by the authorities.

The bench in the case directed the MCD, PWD, Shahjahanabad Redevelopment Corporation (SRDC), Delhi Police and Traffic police to file their status report in the matter within two weeks. Accordingly, the court listed the matter for further consideration on January 09, 2025.

## Supreme Court seeks TN govt response on petition challenging Savukku Shankar's preventive detention

TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court in the case A. Kamala vs. State Of Tamil Nadu observed and has issued notice to the State of Tamil Nadu wherein the petition is filed challenging the recent detention of YouTuber Savukku Shankar under the preventive detention law.

The bench comprising of Chief Justice of India DY Chandrachud and Justice JB Pardiwala and Justice Manoj Misra was hearing the habeas corpus petition filed by his mother.

The counsel, Advocate Balaji Srinivasan appearing for the petitioner stressed that Shankar had been subjected to physical torture and solitary confinement.

It has been stated that, 'I am roughed up in custody, my hands are broken, no action is being taken.... now they have kept me in Madurai where I am kept in solitary confinement.'

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ers, Goondas, Immoral Traffic Offenders, Forest Offenders, Sand Offenders, Slum-Grabbers and Video Pirates Act).

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# 42 DEAD AS GUNMEN OPEN FIRE ON VEHICLE IN NORTHWESTERN PAKISTAN

Thousands of Shiite Muslims protest on the streets in various cities of Pakistan

AGENCIES  
PESHAWAR

Gunmen have opened fire on convoys of Shia pilgrims in northwestern Pakistan, killing at least 42 people, according to authorities in the restive province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Women and children were among the fatalities in the attacks in the Kurram tribal district on Thursday, police said on Friday.

Sectarian violence has escalated since July in Kurram, a region bordering Afghanistan, between Shia and Sunni tribes over land disputes.

Gunmen opened fire on two separate convoys of Shia pilgrims travelling with police escorts in Kurram. No group has claimed responsibility for the attacks.

Javedullah Mehsud, the deputy commissioner of Kurram, said the attacks



took place when the convoys were on their way from the district headquarters of Parachinar to Peshawar.

Mehsud told Al Jazeera on Friday that all the bodies had been recovered and burials would be conducted later in the day.

Police said 20 people were wounded.

"We also managed to recover 26 people belonging to the Shia community last night, including women and children, who were kept hostage by Sunni groups," Mehsud said.

Ajmeer Hussain, 28, survived the attack.

"Gunfire suddenly erupted and I started reciting my prayers, thinking these were my final moments," Hussain told the AFP news agency.

"I lay down at the feet of the two passengers sitting next to me. Both of them were struck by multiple bullets and died instantly," he said.

"The shooting lasted for about five minutes."

Meanwhile, thousands of Shiite Muslims took to the streets in various cities

## SECTARIAN BLOODBATH

- 42 killed in Kurram, northwest Pakistan, including women and children.
- Violence between Shia and Sunni tribes escalates in Kurram region.
- Two Shia pilgrim convoys, escorted by police, were targeted in the attack.
- 20 wounded; 26 Shia pilgrims rescued after being held hostage.
- Outrage over security failures, with protests planned in Parachinar.

of Pakistan on Friday, correspondents said, a day after sectarian attacks in the northwest killed 43 people, including women and children.

Gunmen opened fire Thursday on two separate convoys of Shiite Muslims travelling with police escorts in Kurram, a district of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province near the Afghanistan border with a history of bloody sectarian violence.

Several hundred people demonstrated in Lahore, Pakistan's second city, an

AFP photographer there saw.

"We are tired of counting the bodies. How long will this bloodshed continue?" Khanum Nida Jafri, a 50-year-old religious scholar protesting, told AFP.

"Do our officials not consider Shiites as part of their own population? When will they wake up?" he said. "We are demanding peace for our children and women. Are we asking too much?"

Hundreds also demonstrated in Pakistan's commercial hub Karachi.

# Heavy clashes between Israel, Hezbollah in south Lebanon: UN

AGENCIES  
JERUSALEM

Israeli troops fought fierce battles with Hezbollah fighters on Friday in different areas in south Lebanon, including a coastal town that is home to the headquarters of U.N. peacekeepers.

A spokesman for the U.N. peacekeeping force known as UNIFIL told The Associated Press that they are monitoring "heavy clashes" in the coastal town of Naqoura and the village of Chamaa to the northeast.

UNIFIL's headquarters are located in Naqoura in Lebanon's southern edge close to the border with Israel.

"We are aware of heavy shelling in the vicinity of our bases," UNIFIL spokesman Andrea Tenenti said. Asked if the peacekeepers and staff at the headquarters are safe, Tenenti said: "Yes for the moment."

Several UNIFIL posts have been hit since Israel began its ground invasion of Lebanon on Oct. 1, leaving a number of peacekeep-



*The warrant marked the first time that a sitting leader of a major Western ally has been accused of war crimes and crimes against humanity by a global court of justice.*

ers wounded.

The fighting came a day after the International Criminal Court issued arrest warrants for Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, his former defense minister and a Hamas military leader, accusing them of war crimes and crimes against humanity over their 13-month war in Gaza and the October 2023 attack on Israel respectively.

The warrant marked the first time that a sitting leader of a major Western ally has been accused of war crimes and crimes against humanity by a global court of justice.

Israel's war has caused heavy destruction across Gaza, decimated parts of the territory and driven almost the entire population of 2.3 million people from their homes, leaving most dependent on aid to survive.

# China expands visa-free entry for 9 more nations

TDG NETWORK  
BEIJING

China announced Friday that it will expand visa-free entry to citizens of nine more countries as it seeks to boost tourism and business travel to help revive a sluggish economy. Starting Nov 30, travelers from Bulgaria, Romania, Malta, Croatia, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Estonia, Latvia, and Japan will be able to enter China for up to 30 days without a visa, Foreign Ministry spokesperson Lin Jian said. That will bring to 38 the number of countries that have been granted visa-free access since last year. Only three countries had visa-free access previously, and theirs had been eliminated during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The permitted length of stay for visa-free entry is being increased from the previous 15 days, Lin said,



and people participating in exchanges will be eligible for the first time. China has been pushing people-to-people exchange between students, academics, and others to try to improve its sometimes strained relations with other countries.

China strictly restricted entry during the pandemic and ended its restrictions much later than most other countries. It restored the previous visa-free access for citizens of Brunei and Singapore in July 2023 and then expanded visa-free entry to six more countries — France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Spain, and Malaysia — on Dec 1 of last year.

# COP29 draft deal proposes rich countries give \$250 billion in climate finance

AGENCIES  
BAKU

A new COP29 draft finance deal on Friday proposes rich countries commit USD 250 billion a year to help vulnerable nations cope with the warming planet and to accelerate the global switch to renewable energy.

The new draft outcome text called for the overall climate financing goal to reach at least USD 1.3 trillion by 2035.

Sharing a post on X, the COP29 wrote, "As a first reflection of parties indications, the New Collective Quantified Goal decision contains a call on all parties to work together to scale up financing to developing countries for climate action from all public and private sources to at least USD 1.3 trillion per year by 2035."

"Further, reflecting the submission of developed



*The new draft outcome text called for the overall climate financing goal to reach at least USD 1.3 trillion by 2035.*

country parties, it includes a decision to set a goal in extension of the goal of jointly mobilising USD 100 billion per year, with developed country parties taking the lead, to USD 250 billion by 2035 for developing country parties for climate action," the post added.

The COP29 draft text further stated, "We will further

engage with parties to collectively agree final adjustments to the few outstanding yet important issues. We will continue to work hard, inclusively and transparently, to press all sides for the highest ambition outcome possible."

Meanwhile, United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres called on

the nations to come together at the ongoing COP29 summit to deliver climate justice.

Sharing a post on X, Guterres wrote, "International cooperation - centred on the #ParisAgreement - is indispensable to #ClimateAction. Amidst geopolitical divisions, the world needs countries to come together at #COP29 to deliver climate justice and move us closer to securing a decent world for all humanity."

The 29th Conference of the Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP29) kicked off in the Azerbaijani capital Baku on November 11. Leaders worldwide, including India gathered in Baku for the event until November 22 for negotiations, dynamic discussions and global collaboration, all focused on tackling the climate crisis with urgency and ambition.

# Japan passes \$250B economic package meant to lift wages, spur growth

AGENCIES  
TOKYO

Japan approved a 39 trillion yen (\$250 billion) economic stimulus package Friday centered around initiatives it said were aimed at boosting individual incomes.

The broad plan passed by the Cabinet is the centerpiece of Prime Minister Shigeru Ishiba's recently installed administration. It provides support for digital innovation in the world's fourth largest economy, subsidies to defray for rising energy costs and help



for low-income households.

The plan is designed to instill a sense of "well being" in the Japanese people, the

government said, using the English phrase.

Although Japan has managed weak growth in recent

quarters, the long-term outlook for the economy and for the country's standing in the world is uncertain. The plan includes measures to address the country's falling birthrate, which is one of the lowest among developed nations, help for working women and for the elderly.

The plan also calls for raising the annual tax-free salary threshold from the current 1.03 million yen (\$6,640). The new ceiling is not yet decided. But a level of 1.78 million yen (\$11,500) has been proposed.

"During the past 30 years,

our nation has overcome various challenges, including deflation and confusion that followed the burst of the 'bubble economy,' the global financial crisis, various natural disasters and the difficulties stemming from the coronavirus pandemic," documents provided by the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry said.

The government says signs of growth are evident, but Japan must avoid a negative spiraling of lower prices similar to an earlier protracted bout of deflation and attain sustainable wage in-

creases to support growth.

The package promised help for small and medium-size businesses, for regional economies, farms and creative content like animation.

The ruling Liberal Democratic Party and its coalition partner lost their majority in the lower house of Parliament last month in an election.

They face the challenge of maneuvering for support among various opposition parties. Some analysts already are projecting that Ishiba's premiership will be relatively short-lived.

*Pointing towards China's Belt and Road Initiative, Oli clarified he was not in a position to ask for a loan from China during the visit.*

has not yet officially announced the visit and the prime minister's itinerary.

Addressing a grand rally organised by the ruling Nepal Communist Party-United Marxist Leninist here, the prime minister and CPN-UML Chairman Oli said the government is firmly progressing towards its commitment to development, prosperity, and good

character assassination, and obscenity is unacceptable, the prime minister said.

Addressing what is claimed to be the awareness campaign of the party, Oli urged the investors to invest with confidence as the government is on a mission to create a 'Prosperous Nepal and Happy Nepali' by maintaining peace and security.

some 1,200 people, mostly civilians, and abducting another 250.

The death toll in the Gaza Strip from the 13-month-old war has surpassed 44,000, local health officials said Thursday. The Gaza Health Ministry does not distinguish between civilians and combatants in its count, but it has said that more than half of the fatalities are women and children.

The Israeli military says it has killed over 17,000 militants, without providing evidence

# Aid workers death high in 2024 amid West Asia crisis

AGENCIES  
GENEVA

More aid workers, health care staffers, delivery personnel and other humanitarian workers have been killed in 2024 than in any other single year, the United Nations reported Friday.

Bloodshed in the Middle East has been the single-biggest cause of the 281 deaths among humanitarian workers globally this year, according to the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs.

"Before the year is even

over, 2024 has become the deadliest on record for humanitarian personnel worldwide, OCHA spokesman Jens Laerke said. He told reporters in Geneva the figure surpassed the previous record of 280 deaths for the whole of last year.

Humanitarians "are working courageously and selflessly in places like Gaza, Sudan, Lebanon, Ukraine and so on. They show the best humanity has to offer, and they are getting killed in return" in record numbers, he said.



"These numbers will send shockwaves around the humanitarian community, especially on the front lines of the response," he added.

The UN said the figures come from the Aid Worker Security Database, a US-funded project run by a Britain-based group called

*A total of 268 of the humanitarian workers killed including from non-UN organisations like the Red Cross and Red Crescent were national staff, while 13 were international staff.*

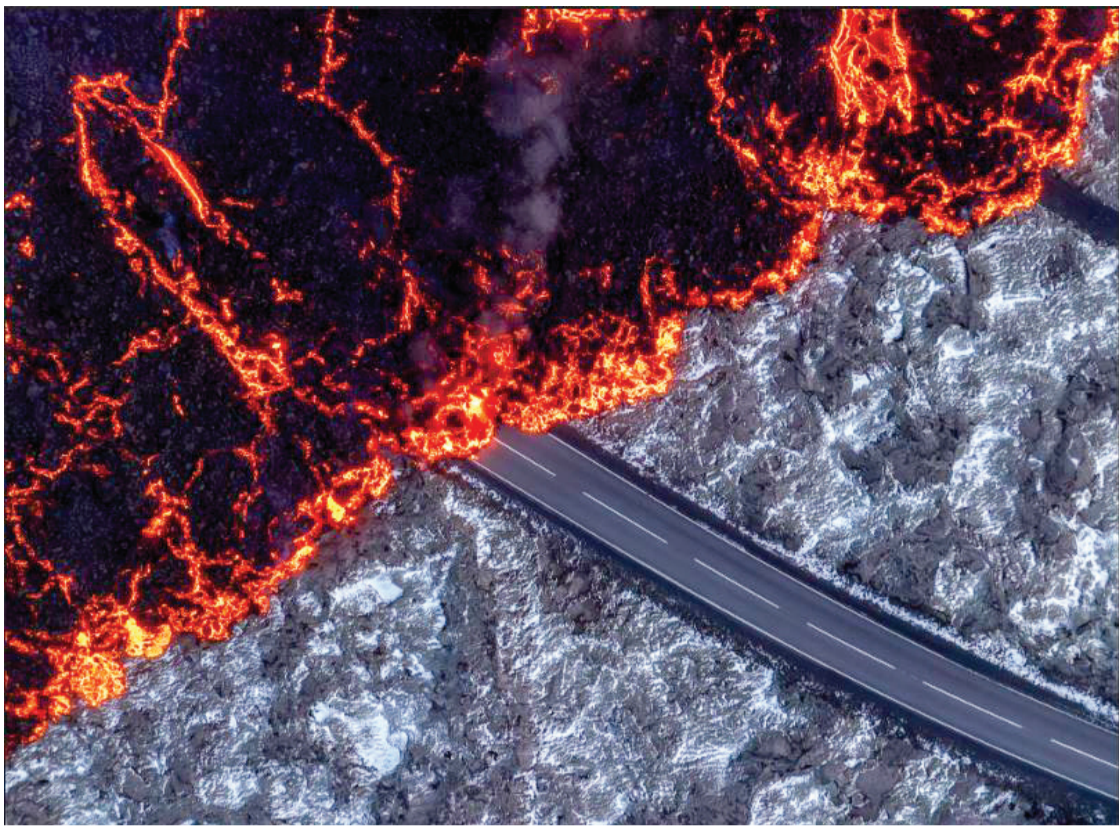
Humanitarian Outcomes.

A total of 268 of the humanitarian workers killed including from non-UN organisations like the Red Cross and Red Crescent were national staff, while 13 were interna-

tional staff.

Some 230 aid workers have been killed in occupied Palestinian areas, the database showed Friday. It did not break out whether that was Gaza or the West

## ICELAND ERUPTION



Molten lava flows on a road to the Blue Lagoon after a volcanic eruption that started on Wednesday in Reykjanes peninsula, Iceland

## US rejects ICC warrants against Netanyahu, Gallant

AGENCIES  
WASHINGTON

The United States on Friday rejected the International Criminal Court's (ICC) decision to issue arrest warrants for Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and former Defence Minister Yoav Gallant, who are accused of "crimes against humanity and war crimes."

White House Press Secretary Karine Jean-Pierre expressed concern over the decision in a press briefing, stating, "We fundamentally reject the court's decision to issue arrest warrants for senior Israeli officials." She criticised the prosecutor's haste in seeking the warrants and pointed out troubling process errors that led to this outcome.

Jean-Pierre also added that the United States has been clear about the ICC's lack of jurisdiction over this matter. "Whatever this



prosecutor might imply, there is no evidence, none between Israel and Hamas, there's just none," she said. The White House is working closely with its partners, including Israel, to discuss the next steps. Jean-Pierre reaffirmed, "We fundamentally reject that the ICC has jurisdiction over the situation, and so that's something that we've been pretty clear about and we'll continue to."

This statement comes as the US continues to show support for Israel amid the ICC's charges against its leaders.

Meanwhile, the ICC in The Hague on Thursday issued arrest warrants for Netanyahu and Gallant, accusing them of "crimes against humanity and war crimes." The charges include allegations of targeting civilians and enforcing policies of starvation in Gaza.

Prime Minister Netanyahu condemned the ICC's decision in a statement on his social media platform, calling it "antisemitic" and comparing it to the infamous Dreyfus trial. In a video posted on his X handle, Netanyahu said, "The antisemitic decision of the international court in The Hague is a modern Dreyfus trial, and it will end the same way."

Netanyahu drew parallels between his situa-

tion and the false treason charges against French Jewish officer Alfred Dreyfus over 130 years ago. Referring to Emile Zola's famous essay 'J'accuse', which defended Dreyfus, Netanyahu said, "Now an international court in The Hague, also headed by a French judge, is repeating this outrageous offence. It is falsely accusing me and former Defence Minister Yoav Gallant of deliberately targeting civilians."

He defended Israel's military actions in Gaza, claiming that the measures implemented were necessary to minimise civilian casualties. "We issue millions of text messages, phone calls, and leaflets to warn the citizens of Gaza to get out of harm's way, while Hamas terrorists do everything in their power to keep them in harm's way, including using them as human shields," Netanyahu said.

## PM Modi gives traditional gifts to world leaders

AGENCIES  
NEW DELHI

Displaying India's rich cultural diversity, Prime Minister Narendra Modi during his five-day tour presented world leaders with eight gifts from Maharashtra, five from Jammu and Kashmir, three each from Andhra Pradesh and Rajasthan, two from Jharkhand and one gift each from Karnataka, Tamil



Nadu, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Odisha and Ladakh.

Officials said the gifts from Maharashtra included a Silofar Panchamrit Kalash (pot) -- a stunning example of traditional craftsmanship from Kolhapur -- given to the Nigerian president and Warli paintings -- a tribal art form rooted in the Dahanu, Talasari and Palghar regions of the state -- given to the Brazilian president.

Jammu and Kashmir's vibrant culture was represented through a pair of papier-mache gold work vases, which was given to the UK prime minister. A pashmina shawl in a papier-mache box was given to the First Lady of Guyana and Kashmiri saffron in customised gift hampers was presented to the leaders of CARICOM countries.

## TRUMP PICKS FLORIDA'S PAM BONDI FOR A-G AS GAETZ WITHDRAWS

Bondi, 59, was the top law enforcement officer of Florida from 2011 to 2019

AGENCIES  
WASHINGTON

U.S. President-elect Donald Trump said on Thursday he would nominate former Florida Attorney General and loyalist Pam Bondi to be U.S. Attorney General, moving swiftly to replace his former nominee Matt Gaetz after the embattled former congressman withdrew from consideration.

Gaetz was the subject of a House Ethics Committee probe into allegations of having sex with an underage 17-year-old girl and illicit drug use. He has denied wrongdoing.

Bondi, 59, was the top law enforcement officer of the country's third most populous state from 2011 to 2019, and served on Trump's Opioid and Drug Abuse Commission during his first administration.

She was also part of Trump's defense team dur-



## BONDI ASCENDS

- Trump nominates former Florida AG Pam Bondi as U.S. Attorney General, replacing Matt Gaetz.
- Bondi, a loyal Trump ally, served as Florida's AG and defended Trump during his impeachment trial.
- Trump claims Bondi will end partisan prosecutions and praised her tough-on-crime record.
- Bondi faced criticism over a \$25,000 Trump Foundation donation linked to Trump University.
- Bondi is expected to focus on immigration, religious freedom, and challenging diversity programs.

ing his first impeachment trial, in which he was accused of pressuring Ukraine to conduct a corruption investigation into his rival, now-President Joe Biden,

by withholding military aid. Trump was later acquitted by the Senate.

Most recently, Bondi helped lead the legal arm of the America First Policy

Institute, a right-leaning think tank whose personnel has worked closely with Trump's campaign to help shape policy for his incoming administration. Bondi's resume contrasts with that of Gaetz, who has little of the traditional experience expected of an attorney general and who was expected to face opposition from Senate Democrats and some Republicans. "She is certainly qualified for the position on paper," said David Weinstein, a former federal prosecutor in Florida who now works as a defense attorney with Jones Walker.

"She spent her life prosecuting cases. She has a resume, as compared to the last nominee."

Trump announced his pick of Bondi on social media, praising her for her prosecutorial experience and saying she was tough on crime as Florida's first female attorney general.

## Putin hints at strikes on West in 'global' Ukraine war

AGENCIES  
DNIPRO, UKRAINE

Russian President Vladimir Putin said Thursday that the conflict in Ukraine had characteristics of a "global" war and did not rule out strikes on Western countries.

The Kremlin strongman spoke out after a day of frayed nerves, with Russia test-firing a new generation intermediate-range missile at Ukraine -- which Putin hinted was capable of unleashing a nuclear payload.

Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelensky branded the strike a major ramping up of the "scale and brutality" of the war by a "crazy neighbour", while Kyiv's main backer, the United States, said that Russia was to blame for escalating the conflict "at every turn".

Intermediate-range missiles typically have a reach of up to 5,500 kilometres (3,400 miles) -- enough to make good on Putin's threat of striking the West.

In a defiant address to



the nation, Russia's president railed at Ukraine's allies granting permission for Kyiv to use Western-supplied weapons to strike targets on Russian territory, warning of retaliation.

In recent days Ukraine has fired US and UK-supplied missiles at Russian territory for the first time, escalating already sky-high tensions in the nearly three-year-long conflict.

"We consider ourselves entitled to use our weapons against the military facilities of those countries that allow their weapons to be used against our facilities,"

## UKRAINE'S PARLIAMENT CANCELS SESSION AFTER ATTACK

KYIV: Ukraine's parliament canceled a session on Friday as security was tightened after Russia deployed a new ballistic missile that threatens to escalate the nearly three-year war.

NATO and Ukraine will hold emergency talks next Tuesday, the alliance said, following a request from Ukraine. The meeting will be held at the level of ambassadors and will most likely address the new missile threat.

Russian troops also struck Sumy with Shahed drones overnight, killing two people and injuring 12 more, the regional administration said

Friday morning. The attack targeted a residential district of the city.

Ukraine's Suspilne media, quoting Sumy regional head Volodymyr Artiukh, said the Russians used Shaheds stuffed with shrapnel elements for the first time in the region. "These weapons are used to destroy people, not to destroy objects," said Artiukh, according to Suspilne.

Separately, Czech Foreign Minister Jan Lipavsky arrived on a visit to Kyiv. He posted a photo from Kyiv's railway station on his X account Friday morning.

ever say Moscow informed Washington of the missile's launch half an hour before it was fired through an automatic nuclear de-escalation hotline, in remarks cited in state media.

He earlier said Russia was doing everything to avoid an atomic conflict, having updated its nuclear doctrine this week.

## NARENDRA MODI'S HISTORIC THREE-NATION TOUR; RUSSIA LAUNCHES A BALLISTIC MISSILE ATTACK ON UKRAINE

As the G-20 Summit unfolded in Brazil and the Indian Prime Minister embarked on a diplomatic journey through Nigeria, Brazil, and Guyana, this week, Russia made headlines by launching a new intermediate-range ballistic missile at Ukraine. This action was reportedly a reaction to Ukraine's deployment of British and American missiles, which have the capability to reach deeper into Russian territory, according to statements made by President Putin. On one side, India is inspiring hope within the international community by advocating for dialogue and cooperation to address various global challenges, on the other hand, the escalating conflict between Russia and Ukraine presents a significant obstacle to achieving global peace and security, complicating efforts to foster sustainable solutions.

This week, Russia launched a new intermediate-range ballistic missile

targeting Ukraine, a move attributed to Kyiv's recent deployment of American and British missiles that have the capability to reach deeper into Russian territory, as stated by President Vladimir Putin. He stated that the missile, launched this week, successfully targeted a prominent missile manufacturing facility in Dnipro. He further indicated that Russia would provide advance notifications for any future strikes using the missile against Ukraine, allowing civilians the opportunity to evacuate to safety, an approach that has not been previously adopted by Moscow during earlier aerial assaults.

In a televised address, the Russian leader also emphasized that US air defence systems would be ineffective against this new missile, which he described as traveling at ten times the speed of sound and referred to as the "Oreshnik", meaning hazelnut tree in Russian. In addition, President Putin indicated that this missile could also be uti-

## WORLD RECAP

ANSHU JOSHI



lized to strike any Ukrainian ally that employs missiles to attack Russia. This development underscores the escalating tensions between the two nations and highlights the ongoing military exchanges that have characterized the conflict.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy characterized the missile's deployment as a "clear and significant escalation in the scale and brutality of this war, representing a cynical breach of the UN Charter," in a post on Telegram. This escalation occurs amid a period of heightened tensions, marked by the US relaxing its restrictions on Ukraine's deployment of American-made long-range missiles within Russian territory, while President Putin has simultaneously reduced the criteria for the potential

use of nuclear weapons. According to a statement from the Ukrainian air force, the attack on Dnipro originated from Russia's Astrakhan region, located by the Caspian Sea. This attack highlights the ongoing volatility in the region and highlights the psychological dimensions of the conflict, as both leaders navigate the complexities of military engagement and international diplomacy. The situation remains precarious, with both sides poised to respond to the evolving dynamics of the conflict.

While the world is shocked at this new intensification of Russia-Ukraine war, Prime Minister Narendra Modi successfully completed his three-nation tour, departing from Georgetown, Guyana, on Thursday en route to Delhi. This journey represented the concluding segment of a

significant diplomatic mission that commenced in Nigeria, proceeded to Brazil for the 19th G20 Summit, and culminated in a landmark State visit to Guyana. During the G20 summit hosted by Brazil, India emphasized the principle of 'Vadudhaiv Kutumbakam' -- the idea of the world as one family -- while advocating for the themes of 'one earth, one family, one future' during its presidency the previous year. On the other hand, Brazil's focus during the summit was on creating a more equitable and sustainable planet, concentrating on three primary areas: the eradication of poverty, hunger, and inequality; the promotion of sustainability across economic, social, and political dimensions; and the reform of multilateral platforms. The alignment of Brazil's objectives with India's philosophical approach was evident, as both nations underscored the importance of these critical goals in their discussions.

At the conclusion of the

G20, Brazil Leaders' Summit held on November 19 in Rio de Janeiro, in which President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva presented a summary of the significant accomplishments achieved during Brazil's presidency of the forum. Among the notable achievements he emphasized were the establishment of the G20 Social Summit, the development of a strategic framework for enhancing the Multilateral Development Banks (MDBs), discussions surrounding Africa and its external debt, the formation of the Women's Empowerment Working Group, and the incorporation of Sustainable Development Goal 18, which focuses on ethnic-racial equality.

Furthermore, President Lula highlighted the formulation of principles related to trade and sustainable development, alongside a pledge to boost renewable energy production by the year 2023. He also commended the coalition for the local and regional production of

vaccines and medicines, as well as the initiatives aimed at fostering investments in public policies designed to enhance access to water and sanitation services.

Following his participation in a notable summit, the Prime Minister of India arrived in Guyana, marking the first visit by an Indian leader to the South American country in over half a century. During this visit, he addressed the Guyanese parliament, which represented his 14th address to a national congress worldwide. In recognition of his significant contributions to the global community, he was honoured with the highest award from the Guyanese government. This visit was particularly important as India not only entered into more than ten strategic agreements with Guyana but also enhanced its relationship with Nigeria and engaged with other nations, including Brazil, during the G-20 summit. India reaffirmed its commitment to bolstering cooperation

among the Global South and contributing to global welfare, peace, economic growth, sustainable development, and effective governance. This three-nation tour highlighted India's expanding global presence, featuring crucial discussions in Nigeria, active involvement in the G20 Summit in Brazil, and the strengthening of ties with the Caribbean during this historic visit to Guyana.

During his time in Guyana, PM Modi co-chaired the second India-CARICOM Summit, engaging with leaders from the Caribbean region to strengthen India's relations with CARICOM nations. The Prime Minister participated in various cultural and diplomatic engagements during his Guyana visit.

I always look forward to happy endings. I hope the world engages and collaborates for positive developments to accomplish global objectives.

The author is Professor, School of International Studies, JNU

REVIEW: I WANT TO TALK \*\*\*\*

## I WANT TO TALK



PRAVEEN NAGDA

Encountering severe ailments and ill health of anyone in the family and having instilled the fear of death by the doctors is not very uncommon. Here is a story of sheer grit and survival, which is interwoven pretty well with a father-daughter relationship that evolves after an emotionally painful divorce of the parents.

Written by Ritesh Shah and directed by Shoojit Sircar, "I Want to Talk" captures the pain and trauma, both physical and mental, undergone by patients suffering from severe ailments. Arjun Sen (Abhishek Bachchan) is living his Great American Dream, but now his married life is shattered via an ugly divorce. He can only spend Tuesdays, Thursdays, and alternate weekends with his daughter Reya (Naivedhi Pearle Dey), who sees him only in the 8th circle in her life.

He is diagnosed with Laryngeal cancer along with a few tumours, cancer through the colon and rectal parts, and is advised an immediate surgery, without which he is told that he has only 110 days left to live. Death stares in the face of this brilliant marketing man, and the threat of death keeps looming again and again all through the film.

Initially, Arjun is frustrated and sends Goodbye Gifts to all his friends, well-wishers, and acquaintances and plans suicide, however, his caregiver Nancy figures this out and motivates him to choose to live. While he turns around, life brings him more and more serious health issues including a heart attack, leading him to have as many as 20 surgeries.

He survives every surgery, but never tells his daughter about it and only says good-

bye to her every time he visits the hospital for any procedure. Reya keeps coming closer to her father Arjun but never has the courage or an opportunity to speak up openly. In a flash, one would see the transformation of little subdued Reya, who decides to come and be with her father for good to the grown-up Reya (Ahilya Bamroo).

The emotions of the sufferings that come in handy being a child of divorce are very well presented by Ahilya Bamroo, as good as the physical pain being made visible by Abhishek Bachchan.

Dr. Deb (Jayant Kripalani), his doctor often manipulated by him in his fight for survival becomes a good friend more and less a doctor for him. The film shows an interesting way for Arjun to shed his fear by understanding the surgical cuts on a diagram via his surgeon, something any audience will appreciate and relate well to. And what an irony, his caregiver Nancy, who had once saved him from committing suicide, succumbs herself to suicide. Arjun's sheer grit is fabulous as he prepares himself for a Marathon even after having gone 20 surgeries, and in the course of this he shares with his daughter that he is running it for Nancy. When he is almost about to give up before the finishing line, Reya comes in and supports him by encouraging him to reach the finishing line.

Abhishek and Ahilya exhibit an excellent father-daughter chemistry helping you remain attached to the characters of this beautiful film based on a real-life cancer survivor, who even makes a guest appearance on the screen just before the film ends.

Praveen Nagda is Festival Director of KidzCINEMA and CultureCinema Film Festivals

## ANGELINA JOLIE MOVIE 'STITCHES' CASTS ELLA RUMPF, LOUIS GARREL



AGENCIES  
LOS ANGELES

Hollywood star Angelina Jolie will be seen sharing screen space with actors Ella Rumpf and Louis Garrel.

As per Variety, Anyier Anei, Garance Marillier and Finnegan Oldfield have also come on board for the project.

"Stiches" follows American filmmaker Maxine (Jolie) on a "life and death journey as she arrives in Paris for Fashion Week," reads an official logline of the movie.

The shooting for the project is currently underway in Paris.

The production team includes cinematographer Andre Chemetoff, costume designer Pascaline Cha-

vanne, and production designer Florian Sanson. Charles Gillibert of CG Cinema is producing alongside Zhang Xin and William Horberg of Closer Media, Bob Xu is serving as an executive producer. Pathe Films, which previously collaborated with Winocour on her Cannes Directors' Fortnight premiere "Revoir Paris," will handle distribution in France.

Meanwhile, Jolie's most recent project, "Maria," has earned the Oscar winner awards of late opera great Maria Callas. The Pablo Larrain-directed drama, about the last days of the opera singer's life before she died of a heart attack at age 53 in 1977, premiered at the Venice Film Festival.

PICTURE PERFECT

Film director Rahul Dholakia, actors Pratik Gandhi, Divyenndu, Jitendra Joshi, Saiyami Kher, Sai Tamhankar, and Udit Arora pose for a picture during the trailer launch of their upcoming film 'Agni', in Mumbai on Thursday. (ANI)



## EKTA KAPOOR TALKS ABOUT DOING DEEP RESEARCH FOR FILM 'THE SABARMATI REPORT'

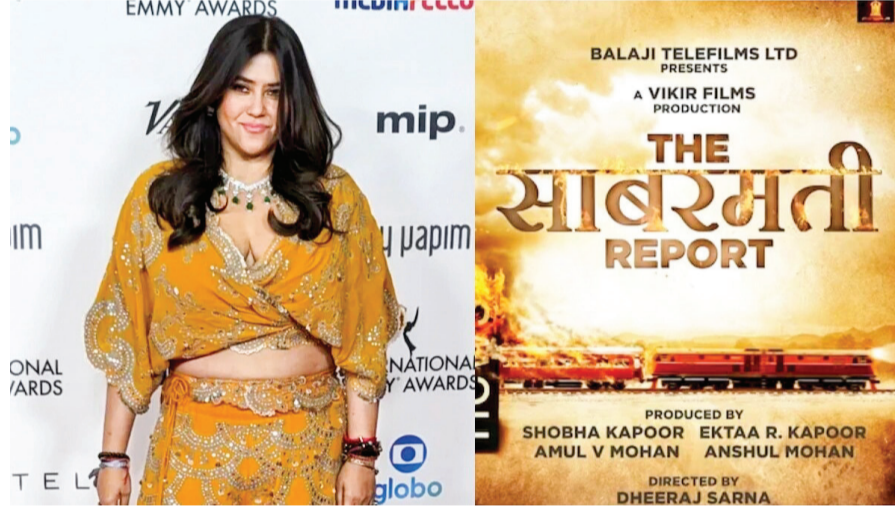
TDG NETWORK  
RAIPUR

Filmmaker Ekta Kapoor shared details on Thursday about the extensive research that went into making the film 'The Sabarmati Report'.

Speaking to ANI, Ekta Kapoor said, "We researched this incident for a year. I asked my friends about the accident, but no one knew much about what had happened in Sabarmati."

She added, "We spent a year reviewing previous research and fact-checking those findings. Only after that did we proceed to make the film. That's why I am proud to have made this movie, unveiling the truth behind it."

"The film is a factual piece. I am overwhelmed by the positive response from the



public," she concluded.

The recently released 'The Sabarmati Report' has been creating waves nationwide, with high-profile screenings and endorsements from prominent political figures and film industry veterans.

On Thursday, Rajasthan Chief Minister Bhajan Lal

Sharma watched the film with his cabinet ministers, while Uttar Pradesh Minister Nand Gopal Gupta 'Nandi' also attended a screening.

Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Vishnu Deo Sai and Deputy Chief Minister Arun Sao watched the film during a special screening in Raipur.

The film has also been declared tax-free in Uttar Pradesh.

On Thursday, Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath attended a screening with the cast. Speaking to the media afterwards, he shared his views and provided an update.

## 'New actors bring new energy to film': Manoj Bajpayee at IFFI

TDG NETWORK  
PANAJI

Ace actor Manoj Bajpayee loves to work with new talent.

According to him, his creativity is enhanced when he collaborates with new artistes.

"We should wholeheartedly welcome different artistes, especially new people. A new actor adds new energy to the film and gives a refreshing touch to the project...Working with new talent even pushes me to do up my game and uniquely tell stories," Bajpayee told ANI on the sidelines of the 55th International Film Festival of India (IFFI).

In the upcoming film 'Despatch', Bajpayee will be seen sharing screen space with young artist Arrchita.

Produced by Ronnie Screwvala's RSVP Movies and directed by Kanu Behl, the crime investigative



drama is set to premiere on 13th December, exclusively on ZEE5.

The 'Despatch' team recently unveiled the teaser of the film at IFFI.

On attending the film festival, Manoj Bajpayee said, "It was so good to return

to IFFI and this time with a film like 'Despatch' and with a director as passionate as Kanu Behl. We have given this film our all, so it was exciting and nerve-wrecking to wait for audience's raw and unfiltered feedback on the film, but we are elated

with the love and response received at IFFI. It was also our pleasure to unveil the teaser of the film among the beloved media at IFFI. This festival has always been special and lucky for me, and I hope it is true for 'Despatch' as well."

## KAREENA KAPOOR KHAN ELEVATES POWER DRESSING IN OLIVE BLAZER, DENIM COMBO

TDG NETWORK  
MUMBAI

Hollywood star Kareena Kapoor Khan never misses a chance to impress her fans with her style.

On Friday, she stepped out in the city in full stylish mode. She was snapped by the paparazzi at the Uniqlo store launch in Mumbai.

Dressed in an olive blazer and denims, Kareena rocked a casual chick look like a pro.

Meanwhile, on the work front, Kareena has been in the spotlight for her latest project, 'The Buckingham



Murders', directed by Hansal Mehta. 'The Buckingham Murders' was released in theatres on September 13.

The mysterious drama revolves around sergeant Jasmeet 'Jass' Bhamra (Kareena) dealing with the loss of her young son Ekam (Mairaj Kakkar). She is assigned a case of a missing boy, Ishpreet, roughly as old as Ekam. The film's ensemble also includes Ash Tandon, Ranveer Brar, and Keith Allen.

The film's ensemble also includes Ash Tandon, Ranveer Brar, and Keith Allen.

BRAIN PICKING



I avoid junk food and love vegetables, salads, and fruits.



- RAASHI KHANNA  
(Indian Actress)

## AJAY DEVGN COMPLETES 33 YEARS IN INDUSTRY, RECALLS HIS ENTRY IN 'PHOOL AUR KANTE'



TDG NETWORK  
MUMBAI

Bollywood star Ajay Devgn on Friday completed 33 years of being an actor.

His debut film 'Phool Aur Kante' marked its 33rd anniversary today, and he could not be more grateful.

Taking to Instagram, Ajay penned a note filled with nostalgia.

He wrote, "From the entry in Phool aur Kante (my fav but scary) to everything I stand for today, this journey has been nothing short of extraordinary. For every clap, cheer and moments full of love, thank you always #33Years."

He also shared a picture of a showpiece which showcases his iconic entry scene from the film 'Phool Aur Kante'.

Released in 1991, 'Phool

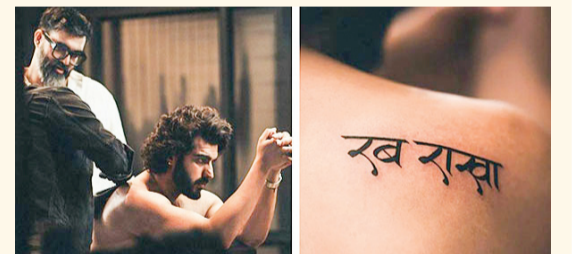
Aur Kante' also featured Madhoo, Aruna Irani, Jagdeep and Amrith Puri. Kuku Kohli directed it. Ajay has since created a special place for himself as an actor as well as a director.

Most recently he was seen in Rohit Shetty's directorial 'Singham Again', which has been performing exceptionally well at the box office.

In the film, he reprised the role of police officer Bajirao Singham whom he first essayed in the first part in 2011 and then again in 2014 in the second instalment of the 'Singham' franchise.

Ajay in a candid conversation with ANI expressed gratitude to the audience and also talked about how the 'Singham' franchise changed the narrative around police portrayals in Bollywood films.

## ARJUN KAPOOR DEDICATES HIS NEW 'RAB RAKHA' TATTOO TO HIS LATE MOTHER



TDG NETWORK  
MUMBAI

Actor Arjun Kapoor recently got a new tattoo, and the inspiration behind it is his late mother Mona Shourie Kapoor.

Taking to Instagram, Arjun, who is basking in the success of 'Singham Again', shared pictures and videos of him flaunting the tattoo with the words 'Rab Rakha' (May God be with you) written on his shoulder.

"Rab Rakha - May god be with you. My mother always said this - in good times and bad. Even today, it feels like she's right here with me, guiding me, watching over me," he captioned the post.

Arjun also revealed that he got inked on the eve of the 'Singham Again' release.

"I got this tattoo on the eve of the 'Singham Again' release, and now, as I stand on the brink of this new chapter, I feel like she's got my back, reminding me that the universe has a plan. Thank you Ma, for teaching me faith. Rab Rakha, always," he added.

Arjun's post garnered

loads of love from the netizens.

His sister Anshula Kapoor commented, "Rab rakha (red heart emoji)."

Actor Parineeti Chopra dropped a string of heart emojis in the comment section.

Arjun recently made a successful comeback in showbiz with his powerful performance in Rohit Shetty's directorial 'Singham Again', which also features Ajay Devgn, Kareena Kapoor Khan, Tiger Shroff, Ranveer Singh, Akshay Kumar, Jackie Shroff and Deepika Padukone.

In the multi-starrer film, Arjun Kapoor truly outshone his co-stars with his portrayal of the villainous character 'Danger Lanka'.

Recently, Arjun shared a series of memes and posts celebrating his role as a fierce villain in 'Singham Again', and the positive reactions from both fans and critics.

He wrote, "Here's to turning non-believers into believers! Every question and doubt only fuelled my determination to work harder and come back stronger."

# MYTHOLOGY OF LOVE

## Exploring love means discovering the seven myths about love



MIKE GEORGE

### 1 Love is Required

Are you sure? We often hear it said, "We all need to be loved and know that we are loved." But true love is never incomplete. It cannot be added to. It, therefore, seeks nothing nor needs anything. Love is not an object. It is not something separate for you. It is you. To give love simply means to give of oneself because love is what each one of us is! We have just temporarily lost our awareness of it.

### 2 Love is Acquired

Is that true? The only real energy in life that cannot be acquired is the energy of love. Why? Because you are that energy. You cannot acquire your own self. You cannot acquire your spiritual heart. You cannot acquire what you already are.

### 3 You fall in Love

Why not? This is tough to 'see' as this myth has permeated almost all forms of romance for centuries. But the truth is you cannot ever 'fall' in love. True love is never a fall; it can never be a descent. Infatuation, obsession, and attachment are usually what happens in reality, and then given the term 'falling in love'. You cannot 'fall in love' as you are already, and always 'in' love, because you always are already 'in' yourself!

### 4 Love is Exclusive

How can this be? This is the belief that, some-



Love is what you are, and you can never lose yourself.

where out there, there is 'a' special 'one' for me, my 'soulmate', the one who I am fated to be with for the rest

of my life. This is truly the stuff of Hollywood movies. We learn to limit the idea of love to one other special

person or to some very exclusive relationships. We make love small and appropriate only to those whom

we believe and perceive as special people in our life and therefore more deserving of our love.

### 5 Love is Attachment

If not, what is it? One of the most common mistakes that stalks the world today is the idea that love means attachment. What is seldom 'noticed' is that where there is attachment there is fear. Fear of loss or damage to the object of attachment. And fear is not love. Fear is love distorted by attachment. Whenever you are attached to anything, an object, person, place, or just an idea, your heart is blocked. That is why detachment is essential to 'healing the heart'. You cannot love unless you are detached.

### 6 Love hurts

How could it? The opposite is true. If it hurts, it is not love. You may experience a 'lover's tiff' and think it is love, but anger is not love. Anger is anger, like fear, anger is a sign that love is absent. Anger is emotional pain. It is true to say relationships will have their ups and downs. There will be mo-

ments of conflict and personal suffering, but this has nothing to do with love and more to do with judgement and blame, expectation and attachment, dependency and jealousy. Love cannot create hurt; it is the healer of hurt.

### 7 Love is Lost

If so, where could it go? Love is what you are, and you can never lose yourself. The illusion that love is 'lost' simply occurs when you forget your self and believe you are some thing other than your self. This tends to happen every time you mistake your self for what you see in the mirror. You wear a face and you inhabit a body, but true loveliness cannot be reflected in a mirror. True loveliness is invisible to the naked eye.

Mike George is an author of 16 books around emotional and spiritual intelligence, including 'The 7 Myths about LOVE'.

## Achieving emotional freedom



MARGARET BARRON

"Feelings are pure – emotions are not"

Many of us think that strong emotions, the highs and lows, are all part of being alive and show that we care. In fact, strong emotions keep us trapped in a kind of roller-coaster ride – stimulating at the time but ultimately stifling and exhausting. Once we have experienced the real depth of feeling that lies at the core of our being; the feelings of stillness, peace, love, and a sense of joy, everything changes. This springs from the recognition that we are eternal spiritual beings – and that we will always survive whatever happens to us in the physical and emotional realms.

Once we have tasted this depth of feeling, everything changes, and we constantly want to return to that place of stillness. We begin to enjoy life without all the drama and emotional exhaustion, and the old patterns of thinking stop running our lives. This requires us



Accepting our emotions and understanding their origins helps us find emotional freedom.

to be open and learn about ourselves and what it is that brings up, or triggers, all the emotional reactions. Even well into the journey of spiritual awakening, we can be travelling along quite well and then suddenly, a strong emotion is triggered. This is an excellent opportunity to have a close look at what is really going on.

The spiritual journey is a little like the transformation of a caterpillar into a butterfly.

First of all, we need to consume more and more spiritual knowledge. The most important understanding is that I am a being of light, having a human experience. When we have consumed our fill, then it is time to contemplate – build the chrysalis – to go into solitude inside until the knowledge is fully digested and becomes a state of being. Then we will see that spiritual peace will manifest or be expressed

as calmness, patience, tolerance, quietness, and relaxed stillness. Love will be shown as compassion, empathy, friendliness, kindness, and joy will reveal itself as happiness, enthusiasm, motivation, jolliness, and cheerfulness. This is like becoming the butterfly – flying on the wings of joy and bliss of being emotionally free of ego, of masks, and of desires.

There is one quality that en-

compasses all of this, and that is contentment. The aim is for that inner contentment to be experienced no matter what happens. But life has triggers, because people behave in unexpected ways, and that is when we can see how far we have come towards that stage of inner contentment and the power it holds. These triggers show us how much more is yet to be healed. It is meant to be revealed and the drama of life

aids us in this uncovering – it is a part and parcel of the spiritual journey. However, as it is not always easy to experience the pain we have held inside, we often make the mistake of continually letting the old patterns of suppressing or projecting strong emotions to take over. It takes patience and courage to sit with the strong feelings and resolve the wounds and understand that the journey and the hurdles we face are all about 'me' – no one else. The most powerful state of mind at these times is acceptance. Feel and accept the emotion, witness it, allow it, and release it. Once there is this acceptance, there is an open door to return to the self, to understand and to heal – and on the other side of that is freedom.

Meditation and a connection of the self, the spiritual being, with the Divine and Supreme Spiritual Being, is the key. Nothing is too big for the Divine. This healing energy is the energy that is going to change the world. My change will change the world. This is the doorway to freedom and now is the time for this to happen – to become true, beautiful beings, emotionally free, and full of love, peace, and compassion.

Margaret Barron has a BA in Adult Education and Training, and helps coordinate the Education Department at the Brahma Kumaris International centre in London.

### A THOUGHT FOR TODAY

A rose is fragrant whether it is in a garden or a garbage heap. The surroundings do not change the inherent nature of the rose. Do I allow my surroundings to change my fragrance? Fragrance is the energy that emanates from me, created by my attitude. I keep my attitude clean by using the art of reframing to generate positive thoughts, even in negative situations. My deep faith that there is benefit to be found in everything, allows me to hold this positive energy and keep my attitude fresh. Today let me remain fragrant in all surroundings.

## Three keys to inner calmness



BILL SIMO

It must be obvious to most, that life has become complicated, noisy and full of more information that we can take in. It should be clear then, that a state of calmness will not be found out there – but needs to come from within. It is our inner calmness that refreshes us and helps us to enjoy each moment. Even though a

state of peace is a quality that is intrinsic to the soul, we need some practical help to rediscover that. There are three keys that may help us unlock that inner state of peace and calm.

**The first key is - recognise** that peacelessness is of the mind. I am the creator of my thoughts – not the victim. It is a very simple thing to understand but it is in realisation that we are then able to re-educate our own minds to think in a more peaceful way. We have to observe the self and the thoughts we have. Habits of criticising, analysing, and judging play out automatically in our minds, and we can learn how to change these habits. Meditation, of course, is a key practise to focus and train our mind. It is one of the ways, but we also need to take hold of the

reins of the mind and learn how to guide the mind, and change the direction it is taking. We need to slow down during the day and even stop completely for a few seconds. A very useful practice, and something we can do anytime during the day, is simply say to the mind - 'stop!' Then we can do this simple exercise – As we breathe we can inhale with the thought, 'peace', and then exhale, and think 'silence'. Our thoughts immediately slow down.

**The second key is - address** the source of agitation – find out where the peacelessness is coming from. The two main sources are attachments and desires. Those desires that concern the outer world, based on the idea that the desires will make me internally fulfilled, will always cause agitation.



Distancing the self from the 'noise' of the mind brings deep inner calm.

For example, engaging sensual pleasures, or trying to gain emotional satisfaction through recognition, praise, appreciation - these desires will fill the mind with peacelessness, depending on how strong the desire is. Living a simpler life, while counterproductive for the consumerist society, brings a sense of calm, because we have fewer desires.

**The third key is - inner strength** and power. This comes from deep meditation. Through connecting with the deeper spiritual self that I am, and my innate inner qualities, I become deeply peaceful. We also need to connect to the source of all spiritual power and strength, the Supreme Soul. To be able to open the mind to the stream of that supreme spiritual energy and power, gives us the ca-

capacity to practice the first two keys with success.

It is the power of silence that can be achieved by deep meditation, distancing the self from the 'noise' of the mind, that brings deep inner calm. Silence does not mean a blank mind – but in meditation, all the noise of mundane external thoughts is discarded and the focus is on very powerful, elevated, spiritual thoughts that nurture the inner self. For example, the thought that 'I am a spiritual being of light and peace', is a thought for contemplation, not for analysis but for experiencing, and experiencing this brings powerful inner calm.

Bill Simo is a coach and trainer, and teaches Rajyoga with the Brahma Kumaris, based in Madrid, Spain.

# RAISING FINANCIALLY SAVVY DAUGHTERS: LESSONS PARENTS CAN TEACH FOR A SECURE FUTURE

VLA AMBALA

Financial independence is the key to achieving personal freedom, especially in a rapidly developing world. This is why empowering daughters with financial literacy is one of the finest gifts parents can provide. Today's girls are not only excelling within the workforce but are also leading businesses, managing households, and making a significant contribution to the economy. According to the Indian Economic Survey, the gender gap in enrolment under the Atal Pension Yojana (APY) has significantly narrowed. The survey found that the number of female subscribers increased from 37% in March 2016 to 44% in September 2021, reflecting a shift towards gender equality in finance. Here are a few valuable lessons that parents can impart to their daughters at an early age so that they can become financially savvy.

## STRATEGIC INVESTMENTS TO ACCUMULATE WEALTH

Traditional saving instruments such as fixed deposits



(FDs) and savings accounts are effective means to build the habit of saving. However, they often do not offer inflation-adjusted returns. This is why parents should encourage their daughters to explore goal-based investments that align with their aspirations, whether it's higher studies, establishing a business, or buying a house. To begin with, parents can educate their daughters about the perks of investing in short-term or long-term mutual funds through the SIP route or adopting the SWP strategy. By investing in popular financial instruments, she could create an inflation-adjusted corpus and systematically acquire wealth over time.

## IMPORTANCE OF BUILDING CREDIT SCORE

Financial knowledge is incomplete without an understanding of credit scores. Teach your daughter to maintain a good credit score (670 to 739) from an early age, as it reflects borrowers' creditworthiness. Teaching how to build and increase credit scores could prove helpful when applying for a loan, especially if your daughter wants to become an entrepreneur. TransUnion CIBIL data shows that demand for business loans by women has grown 3.9X in the last five years. Additionally, make it a point to teach them how to use credit cards responsibly and the importance of pay-

ing EMIs on time to maintain creditworthiness.

## PERKS OF HAVING ADDITIONAL SOURCES OF INCOME

Help your daughters explore the perks of having an extra source of earnings like freelancing gigs or investing. NSE data revealed that in 2024 the stock market has witnessed a surge in investors, with 22% of them being female, showcasing a growing trend of financial participation. However, make sure to teach them the basics of the stock market so that they can understand their risk appetite and explore suitable investment options among stocks, bonds, mutual funds, and ETFs.

## A LESSON ON OVERSPENDING

The most important factor to understand while becoming financially stable is to differentiate between needs and wants. Parents must teach their daughters to prioritize value-added assets like insurance, bonds, and mutual funds, over flashy items. Simultaneously, they should be taught the importance of maintaining emergency funds for medical or financial crises.

## UNDERSTANDING TAXATION

Understanding taxes is an essential skill for managing your finances. Always teach your daughters about how taxes work along with showing her ways to save on them using legal methods such as investing in ELSS mutual funds, PPF, or life insurance plans. The money saved on taxes can further be used to fund long-term goals like purchasing a first home or a car or starting a startup. Furthermore, re-investing the savings could help your daughter accumulate her wealth and build a reliable corpus.

Raising financially savvy daughters is not just about teaching them to save, but also about giving them the charge of their personal financial journey. By explaining goal-orientated investments, discussing the significance of credit scores, parents can equip their daughters with the tools to become financially secure. Such lessons can help them turn unforeseen financial challenges into stepping stones for a brighter future. *The author is the co-founder of Stock Market Today.*

# Women empowerment through entrepreneurship: Importance of work-life balance

PROF. ANITA TRIPATHY LAL

Women in India are making significant progress in the field of entrepreneurship. Icons like Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw of Biocon, who started with just Rs. 10,000, at age of 25 and Falguni Nayar of Nykaa, who began her venture at the age of 50, exemplify the potential to lead and innovate in business. During the pandemic, many entrepreneurs such as Payal Khandwala of Kizo, Srila Chatterjee of Baro Market, Mansa Anand of Patrika, and Astha Suri of Naso Profumi made remarkable strides. Their stories embody success, resilience, vision, and breaking barriers.

Empowering women involves allowing them to shape their futures free from traditional gender roles. Providing women with the necessary tools to realize their dreams benefits not just individuals but society as a whole. Studies indicate that countries with higher gender equality experience stronger economic growth, as women drive productivity and innovation, contributing significantly to economic development.

Prominent figures like Malala Yousafzai emphasize the critical importance of education and economic independence for women. Researchers such as Amartya Sen highlight that empowering women is essential for sustainable development. Their work shows that investing in women is an investment in the future (Business Today, 2024). As Yousafzai (2013) succinctly puts it, "We cannot all succeed when half of us are held back".

Entrepreneurship is a powerful way for women to achieve empowerment, offering financial independence and the flexibility to balance work and personal life. According to India's Start-up Ecosystem Report 2023, women entrepreneurs operate more than 8 million firms in India, representing 20% of the 633.9 lakh MSMEs in the country. This reflects a global trend where women are increasingly taking the lead in various industries, including technology, health & personal care, and fashion.

Many women, despite being highly qualified, have struggled to take up jobs or resume their

careers after maternity leave. Helping them start their own businesses can provide the opportunity to pursue their career dreams and achieve financial independence. The New Age Mompreneurs platform, started by Ankita Gupta in 2020, has created a community of over 300 Moms who have taken the leap of faith to start-up, network, promote and expand the

ring achievement orientation by supporting employees with adequate workforce coupled with the provision of the flexibility to take regular breaks.

Communicating Effectively: Having a climate of open communication by maintaining transparency and encouraging dialogue within the teams & the stakeholders to have a win-win strategy.



reach of their businesses. Women who could not pursue higher education because of societal pressures can also set up their own ventures based on their skill sets. One such example is Shri Mahila Griha Udyog Lizzat Papad founded by Jaswantiben Jamnadas Papat and her sisters in 1959 which now provides employment to more than 45,000 women across India.

For women, entrepreneurship offers the freedom to decide when and how to work, a significant advantage over traditional corporate roles. Achieving work-life balance can be further facilitated by implementing the following strategies:

**Scheduling Plan of Action:** Crafting a flexible schedule that aligns with their professional and personal needs.

**Having a Competent Team:** Building a capable team that delivers quality products and services within the required timeframe to beat competition.

**Setting SMART Goals:** Defining specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and time-bound goals that align with the organization's vision.

**Adopting Technology and AI Tools:** Leveraging technology for financial planning, project management, and other tasks to save time and improve efficiency.

**Hiring Smart:** Bringing in the right people who understand the business and can strategically leverage technology.

**Working 24/7:** Empow-

Developing Emotional Competencies: Building self-awareness and emotional regulation to motivate oneself - others and network effectively.

**Recognizing Excellence:** Implementing best practices such as flexible work timelines & remote work options, and acknowledging the achievements with rewards garners support from the employees

**Asking for Help:** Achieving perfection is a myth, as and when required the entrepreneur should readily seek guidance from the pool of mentors and be open to advice with gratitude.

**Balancing the 6Qs:** Working on enhancing the six wheels of wellness - intellectual, financial, emotional, social, spiritual and physical quotients to take care of oneself and others.

**Celebrating life:** Starting an enterprise is not an end in itself. Taking interesting breaks by acknowledging failures & successes and moving ahead.

Women-empowerment through entrepreneurship drives both economic and social progress. This also caters to the psychology of the wellbeing of women entrepreneurs. Hence creating a conducive entrepreneurial ecosystem and supportive environments will foster work-life balance and more women can live their career goals & contribute to a diverse, equitable, and inclusive society!

*The author is the Professor at FORE School of Management.*

# Navigating menstrual stigma: Is menstrual leave really required for the new age workforce



PRACHI KAUSHIK

As the healthcare ecosystem and awareness for women health expands, new policies for women are taking shape across workspaces. One of the most debatable policy is the period leave which has garnered mixed opinions. While some agree to offer period leaves, some disregard it from the productivity lens. Largely, the sole purpose of menstrual leave is to allow a person to take time from work when period symptoms make it impossible to complete job tasks. Pelvic pain can be severe for some people and have an impact on their productivity at work. As per multiple research analysis, significant discomfort prohibits 5-20% of menstruators from performing

work-related activities, reducing their productivity significantly. Taking a day or two off work during one's menstrual period may help them recuperate physically and emotionally during a period of reduced productivity at work. Menstrual leave can provide time for recovery, but it also has the potential to reinforce sexist views and contribute to menstrual stigma.

## NAVIGATING MENSTRUAL STIGMA & WORKPLACE DISCRIMINATION:

Discussions regarding menstruation in the workplace contradict cultural norms that encourage nondisclosure. As a result, some people believe that increased transparency may exacerbate stigma rather than eliminate it. Menstruation is often a private topic, so some people may object to non-private references to it in the workplace. If someone wishes to take menstrual leave, they must at the very least notify their manager that they are menstruating. They may be uncomfortable with this admission, which could result



in implicit, if not outright, discrimination.

It is important to understand that menstrual health and hygiene are improving in India. It has reached the point where the debate is largely on menstrual hygiene, sustainable quality products and accessibility. Workplaces can potentially compensate for menstrual leave needs by improving infrastructure and management tools in the workplace and public spaces.

## IDENTIFYING HEALTH ISSUES VIA PERIODS:

While periods are generally painful, the severity varies from person to person, subject to their eating habits, health measures etc. Painless periods are an indicator of a woman's overall health; if the woman exper-

iences pain during every menstrual cycle, she should check her iron, calcium, or overall health. In the long run, the ignorance can lead to health-related issues. Menstrual pain is caused by a variety of factors that must be addressed by medical professionals as and when required.

## SIDE EFFECT OF MENSTRUAL LEAVE:

Menstrual leave is likely to violate women's reproductive health privacy and may lead to workplace harassment. This will result in inappropriate debate and harassment during menstruation leave by other staff. Furthermore, having periods twice a month might have a negative impact on a woman's mental health at work.

## POTENTIAL SOLUTIONS:

- Medical Assistance Room directed to women's menstrual health
- Accessibility to Sanitary Napkins in common toilets
- Conduct Menstrual Health awareness and work productivity workshop for women to understand the practical challenges of women employee during periods.
- Curation of period friendly infrastructure at workplace
- Additional Work from Home Allocations during periods

Families and coworkers ought to be considerate of women at all times, not just when they are menstruating. There is a dire need to have positive conversation on periods and workplaces will be required to take an all-encompassing approach. Similarly, it is important to encourage female employees to utilize common areas to unwind while effortlessly be available at the same time.

*The author is the Founder & Director of VYOMINI Social Enterprise.*

# Keeping the foetus happy while his real-world journey begins



AIR - ATMAN IN RAVI

We think we are born on our birth date, our 'birthday', but the reality is that we are born in the moment of conception, when two cells of our parents fertilize to become a zygote, and when the Soul gives it life. Over nine months, the cells multiply

to form the body till a baby is born.

As the new life grows in a mother's womb, it becomes important for a mother to not only look after herself but also the baby within her. Scientific studies indicate that an unborn child is able to absorb a mother's emotions, thoughts, feelings and energies, and that babies in the womb have the capability to sense their parents' love.

Therefore, while nutrition, physical fitness, strength and endurance are critical both for the mother and foetus, mental wellbeing and happiness of the mother and the environment around, play an equally significant role in the happiness of



the foetus. Stress, anxiety, unhappiness can manifest in physical problems in a mother, causing imbalances or illnesses, which may need medication, which in turn, can also affect the baby. So, it becomes important to ensure that the environment the unborn child is growing up in, is full of love, peace and happiness.

There are spiritual practices that a mother-to-be can follow to ensure that she remains calm and relaxed. Incorporating meditation as a regular practice can be very helpful. Meditation stills the mind. It makes it silent. It leads to peace and tranquility, a sense of wellbeing. All this transmits to the unborn child.

Practicing Yoga Asanas can help both the body and the mind, the mother and child. Of course, Yoga is much more than this, it is union with the Divine. But doing Asanas and Pranayama promotes overall wellness. Living with faith, hope, trust, meaning and purpose imparts happiness. Remaining positive and optimistic, cheerful and joyful can likewise permeate to the child in the womb.

Other things a mother can do is to listen to soothing music, connect with nature, spend time with nature, chant mantras, talk to her baby - all this will have a positive impact on her and thereby, on the growing foetus. The role of the father is

pivotal in creating a loving and harmonious environment for the mother and the unborn baby.

Once the child is born, parents must continue nurturing the child by instilling values, morals, and truths that can lead to a life of fulfillment and happiness. It is the parents responsibility to ensure a joyful, purposeful atmosphere for their toddler to grow up in. There is nothing better than a loving home, nothing better than parents who can set an example by being caring, happy, positive, calm and compassionate.

*The author is the Happiness Ambassador, Author, Spiritual Mentor and Philanthropist*

# INDIA'S PACERS WRECK AUSTRALIA 67/7

**TDG NETWORK**  
PERTH (AUSTRALIA)

The Indian pace trio of Jasprit Bumrah, Mohammed Siraj, and debutant Harshit Rana brought back India in the game with a stellar performance leaving Australia reeling at 67/7 on the first day of the 1st Test of the Border-Gavaskar Trophy at Perth's Optus Stadium.

After bundling out India at 150, the Australian innings started on a shaky note with debutant Nathan McSweeney, becoming the first to fall, bowled by Indian captain Jasprit Bumrah at the score of 10. The scoreboard read 14/1 at that point.

A moment came when India could have drawn the second blood soon after and Labuschagne would have been in pavillion for a duck, but Virat Kohli dropped a reflex catch at slip after almost taking it.

Usman Khawaja was the next to depart, scoring just 8 runs before being taken out by Bumrah, which left Australia at 19/2. The troubles compounded for the Aussies as Bumrah struck again, this time claiming the prized wicket of Steve Smith for a first-ball duck, reducing the visitors to a precarious 19/3.

Travis Head tried to counter-attack against the fiery



Indian attack, hitting two boundaries, but his stay was cut short at the score of 11, as Harshit Rana, rattled his stumps, making his debut memorable. Australia were now 31/4.

Mitchell Marsh followed soon after, contributing just 6 runs before falling to Mohammed Siraj, pushing the score to 38/5. Marnus Labuschagne, who had displayed grit for much long couldn't pose much of a scare and was dismissed for just 2 off 52 balls by Siraj, further plunging Australia into trouble.

Australia's fifty came up in 23.4 overs, a clear indication of the dominance

of the Indian bowlers. The last wicket of the day was the Australian captain, Pat Cummins, who managed just 3 runs before being sent back to the pavilion by Indian skipper Bumrah.

At stumps on Day 1, Australia was teetering at 67/7. Alex Carey (19\*) and Mitchell Starc (6\*) were the unbeaten batters at the crease, facing an uphill battle on Day 2.

Captain Jasprit Bumrah was the star of the day with exceptional figures of 4/17. He was well supported by Mohammed Siraj, who claimed 2/17, and Harshit Rana, who took 1/33 on his debut.

two fours. Mitchell Marsh got his first wicket. India was 59/5.

Marsh soon removed all-rounder Washington Sundar, who was caught behind by Alex Carey for just four runs. India was 73/6.

Nitish joined Pant in the middle. Nitish was fine against spinner Nathan Lyon, smashing him for boundaries. India reached the 100-run mark in 39.2 overs.

The entertaining 48-run stand between the duo ended with Pant being caught by Steve Smith for 37 in 78 balls, with three boundaries and a six. India was 121/7. Skipper Pat Cummins got his first wicket.

Also, Harshit Rana was removed by Hazlewood for seven, thanks to a fine catch by Nathan McSweeney in slips. India was 128/8.

Skipper Jasprit Bumrah was Hazlewood's fourth scalp for eight, caught behind by Carey. India was 144/9.

India was skittled out for 150, with Nitish being the final wicket, removed by Cummins for 41 in 59 balls, with six fours and a six. Usman Khawaja took a fine catch at midwicket.

Hazlewood (4/29) was the pick of the bowlers for Australia. Starc, Cummins and Marsh got two each.

## KL Rahul completes 3,000 runs in Test cricket

**TDG NETWORK**  
PERTH (AUSTRALIA)

India batter KL Rahul completed 3,000 Test runs on Thursday. Rahul accomplished this milestone during the first Test of the highly-anticipated Border-Gavaskar Trophy against Australia.

During the first innings, KL played a short, but a patient knock of 26 in 74 balls, with three boundaries. However, his knock was cut short by a controversial decision. Mitchell Starc did get his wicket after being caught behind by wicketkeeper Alex Carey. However, the question was if the sound in the snickometer came due to ball hitting the bat or his bat hitting the pad. The third umpire Richard Illingworth judged him to be out, with the ball hitting his bat.

In 54 matches, KL has scored 3,007 runs at an average of 33.78, with eight centuries and 15 fifties in 92 innings. His best score is 199.

His classy centuries in Australia, South Africa and England have made him a reliable option in overseas

conditions, but his inconsistent run has often turned the odds against him. This year has been an up-and-down one for him in whites, having made 260 runs in six matches and nine innings at an average of 32.50. He has scored two fifties, with his best score being 86.

Coming to the match, India won the toss and opted to bat first. They ended the first session with 51/4 on the board, with Rishabh Pant (10\*) and Dhruv Jurel (4\*) unbeaten. Starc and Josh Hazlewood took early wickets of Yashasvi Jaiswal (0), Devdutt Padikkal (0), Virat

Kohli (5) as well. India (Playing XI): KL Rahul, Yashasvi Jaiswal, Devdutt Padikkal, Virat Kohli, Rishabh Pant(w), Dhruv Jurel, Nitish Reddy, Washington Sundar, Harshit Rana, Jasprit Bumrah(c), Mohammed Siraj

Australia (Playing XI): Usman Khawaja, Nathan McSweeney, Marnus Labuschagne, Steven Smith, Travis Head, Mitchell Marsh, Alex Carey(w), Pat Cummins(c), Mitchell Starc, Nathan Lyon, Josh Hazlewood.



## 'It's gonna be a great series to watch': David Wiese on Border-Gavaskar Trophy

**TDG NETWORK**  
ABU DHABI (UAE)

In an insightful discussion about the upcoming Border-Gavaskar Trophy and the ICC World Test Championship (WTC) final, David Wiese, who has represented both South Africa and Namibia, shared his thoughts.

Wiese expressed his excitement for the Border-Gavaskar Trophy, highlighting the quality and competitive nature of the series between India and Australia.

"Yeah, I think it's gonna be a great series to watch first of all. You know, India against Australia is always a quality series. India has had a lot of success in Australia over the last couple of years. They have won their last series there, so you know it's gonna be very interesting to see how the teams line up at the start of the series. It's going to be difficult for them to win all of those games. Australia is a tough team to play at home, but India has some quality players. Australia's got quality batters and a strong lineup, so it's going to



*It's gonna be tough for them. I know they're gonna have to win all of their games coming in, but they've got a young side and a keen, eager side. It's great to see them performing well.*

be a really interesting series to watch," Wiese remarked. When asked about South Africa's prospects in the WTC final, Wiese acknowledged the challenges but remained optimistic about the team's potential.

"Yeah, it's always exciting when the team has that opportunity. It's gonna be tough for them. I know they're gonna have to win all of their games coming in, but they've got a young side and a keen, eager side. It's great to see them performing well. It's a team that many people probably wrote off at the start because there are a lot of young players coming through, but it's great to see them stepping up and performing so well,"

he said. Wiese believes South Africa has a strong chance of making the finals if they continue their current form and avoid injuries.

"Yeah, I think so. If they keep playing the type of cricket that they are at the moment and the players remain fit and strong without injuries hitting the team, I think they've got a very good chance. Especially since those games are all in home conditions, you'd like to back yourself against teams from the subcontinent," he noted.

The Proteas will be playing two Tests against Sri Lanka, and three against Pakistan, they will have the home advantage.

## Chelsea, Lyon, Real Madrid secure quarters in UEFA Women's Champions League

**TDG NETWORK**  
NEW DELHI

Chelsea secured their place in the UEFA Women's Champions League quarter-finals with a commanding 3-0 victory over Celtic at Stamford Bridge on Wednesday. The win maintains Chelsea's perfect record in Group B, marking their fourth consecutive triumph.

The match began with a bang as England international Lucy Bronze opened the scoring in the second minute, delivering a precise volley that set the tone for the evening. Midway through the first half, Dutch midfielder Wieke Kaptein extended the lead with a well-placed header. The victory was sealed in stoppage time when Eve Périsset converted a penalty, capping off a dominant performance by the Women's Super League leaders.

Reflecting on the match, Chelsea manager Sonia



Bompastor expressed her satisfaction: "A great result. Really happy with the win, the three points, we are top of the table. It was really important to score the first goal especially early in the game. We scored three goals, clean sheet, so a perfect night again."

Since taking the helm in May after a successful tenure at Lyon, Bompastor has led Chelsea to 11 consecutive victories, underscoring her impactful leadership.

In the same group, Real

Madrid also advanced to the quarter-finals with a hard-fought 3-2 win over Twente. The Dutch side took an early lead through Jaimy Ravensbergen, but Real Madrid's Linda Caicedo equalized just before halftime. The momentum shifted in Madrid's favor as Signe Bruun and substitute Alba Redondo added goals, with Redondo's coming in added time. Twente managed a late goal from Sophie Te Brake, but it wasn't enough to alter the outcome.

## IPL announces dates for 2025-2027

**TDG NETWORK**  
NEW DELHI

The Indian Premier League (IPL) has announced the schedules for its next three seasons, marking a first in the tournament's history. The 2025 season is set to commence on March 14 and conclude with the final on May 25. The 2026 season will run from March 15 to May 31, and the 2027 season is scheduled between March 14 and May 30. These dates, communicated to franchises via email, are expected to be finalized as the official tournament windows.

The 2025 season will feature 74 matches, maintaining the format used in the previous three editions. This is fewer than the 84 matches initially proposed in the 2022 media rights tender for the 2023-27 cycle. The tender had outlined a progressive increase in matches: 74 for 2023 and 2024, 84 for 2025 and 2026, and up to 94 in 2027.

In a significant development, cricket boards from major Test-playing nations have granted their players permission to participate in the IPL for the next three seasons, with the exception of Pakistan, whose players have been absent from the IPL since its inaugural season in 2008 due to political tensions.

**Country-wise availability of overseas players for the next three IPL seasons:**

**Australia:** Cricket Australia has approved participation for its international and domestic players starting in 2025. In 2026, Australia will play a three-match ODI series against Pakistan, concluding by March 18. Players involved in this series or resting after the T20 World Cup (scheduled for February-March 2026) will join the IPL post-series. In 2027, Australian players participating in a commemorative Test match against England



in March will join the IPL after this fixture.

**England:** The England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) has listed 18 centrally contracted players available for the next three seasons, excluding all-rounder Ben Stokes, who did not register for the upcoming mega auction. The list includes: Jofra Archer, Gus Atkinson, Jonny Bairstow, Jacob Bethell, Harry Brook, Jos Buttler, Brydon Carse, Zak Crawley, Sam Curran, Ben Duckett, Will Jacks, Liam Livingstone, Ollie Pope, Matthew Potts, Adil Rashid, Phil Salt, Olly Stone, and Reece Topley. The ECB noted that some players may be out of contract during the 2025-27 period; while contracted, they will be available for the IPL. Non-contracted players will have full availability for the next three seasons.

**South Africa, New Zealand, West Indies, Afghanistan, Zimbabwe:** Players from these countries will be fully available for the next three seasons.

**Sri Lanka:** Sri Lanka Cricket (SLC) has confirmed full availability of its players for the 2025 season. Those retained for the 2026 and 2027 seasons will also be available.

**Bangladesh:** The Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) has provided a list of 13 players with varying availability over the next three years, including Taskin Ahmed, Litton Kumar Das, Mahedi Hasan, Shakib Al Hasan, Rishad Hossain, Towhid Hridoy, Shoriful Islam, Shohidul Islam, Hasan Mahmud, Mehidy Hasan Miraz, Mustafizur Rahman, Nahid Rana, and Tanzim Hasan Sakib.

## IPL 2025 auction begins Sunday

**TDG NETWORK**  
NEW DELHI

The Indian Premier League (IPL) 2025 mega auction is scheduled to commence on Sunday, November 24, and continue through Monday, November 25, in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. This highly anticipated event will feature a staggering 1,574 players—1,165 Indian and 409 overseas—vying for selection across the ten franchises.

### DEEPAK HOODA'S BOWLING ACTION UNDER SCRUTINY

In a surprising development ahead of the auction, Indian all-rounder Deepak Hooda has been placed on the Board of Control for Cricket in India's (BCCI) suspected bowlers' list due to concerns over

his bowling action. This inclusion raises the possibility of Hooda facing a ban from bowling in future matches.

According to a report by Cricbuzz, Hooda, along with Saurabh Dube and KC Cariappa, has been flagged by the BCCI for potentially illegal bowling actions. The report states: "Manish Pandey (KSCA, 157) and Shrijith Krishnan (KSCA, 281) have been banned from bowling while Deepak Hooda, an off-spinner from Rajasthan Cricket Association (RCA), is in the suspect bowling list. Saurabh Dube (344, VCA) and KC Cariappa (381, CAM) are also in the suspect list."

Hooda, who represented the Lucknow Super Giants (LSG) in the IPL 2024 season, was released by the franchise ahead of the upcoming auction. His perfor-



mance in the previous season was modest, scoring 145 runs in 11 matches without claiming any wickets.

### INTERNATIONAL CAREER OVERVIEW

On the international stage, Hooda has featured in 10 One Day Internationals (ODIs) for India, amassing 153 runs. In the Twenty20 International (T20I) format, he has played 21 matches, scoring 368 runs, including a century. His most recent appearance for India was in

a T20I against New Zealand in February 2023, where he contributed 30 runs.

### IPL 2025 SEASON SCHEDULE

The BCCI has announced that the IPL 2025 season will run from March 14 to May 25. In a strategic move to aid franchise planning, the board has also disclosed the schedules for the subsequent two seasons:

- IPL 2026:** March 15 to May 31
- IPL 2027:** March 14 to