



4
BJP TIGHTENS GRIP,
TOUGH BATTLE FOR OPPN



11
SOUTH KOREA'S RULING PARTY
SEEKS SUSPENSION OF YEOL'S
POWERS



16
AUSTRALIA IN FIRM
CONTROL AT ADELAIDE

RUCKUS IN RAJYA SABHA AS CASH FOUND AT SINGHVI'S SEAT

Mallikarjun Kharge: Singhvi should not have been named before investigation is completed
JP Nadda: Opposition showing eagerness on "some issues", wanting to cover up other issues.

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

A wad of Rs 500 notes found from the seat allotted to Abhishek Singhvi in the Rajya Sabha rocked the Upper House on Friday with the Opposition and ruling alliance MPs trading charges and the Congress MP demanding a probe into the 'security lapse'.
The Rajya Sabha was ad-

journed for the day within minutes of meeting after lunch as treasury benches were on their feet seeking answers from the Opposition.

Deputy Chairman Harivansh, who was in Chair, sought to pacify the members of the ruling party and urged them to sit down and allow the House to function. As unrelenting BJP members continued to raise slogans, he adjourned the

House for the day.

Soon after the official papers were laid on the table in the morning, Chairman Jagdeep Dhankhar said security staff had recovered a wad of Rs 500 notes from the seat allotted to Congress MP Abhishek Manu Singhvi, leading to an uproar in the House.

While Leader of Opposition Mallikarjun Kharge said the chairman should not have named the member



Leader of the House in Rajya Sabha JP Nadda speaks during the Winter Session of Parliament.

without an investigation being completed, Leader of the House J P Nadda accused the Opposition of showing eagerness on "some issues"



Leader of the Opposition in Rajya Sabha Mallikarjun Kharge speaks in the House.

while wanting to cover up other issues.

The notes were found from seat 222, allotted to

'If it wasn't tragic, it would be comical': Singhvi

NEW DELHI: Congress MP and Senior Advocate Abhishek Manu Singhvi on Friday expressed astonishment over a wad of cash found from his seat in Rajya Sabha. Singhvi clarified that he stayed in the House for three minutes on Thursday and called politics over this issue as "bizarre."

"I am quite astonished to even hear about it. I never heard of it. I reached the inside of the House yesterday at 12.57 pm. The House rose at 1 pm. From 1 to 1:30 pm, I sat with Ayodhya Prasad in the canteen and had lunch. At 1:30 pm, I left Parliament. So my total stay in

the House yesterday was 3 minutes and my stay in the canteen was 30 minutes. I find it bizarre that even on such issues politics is raised," Singhvi said.

He welcomed the probe ordered by Rajya Sabha Chairman Jagdeep Dhankhar, adding that if there is a failing in the security agencies that must also be completely exposed.



Farmers stopped at Shambhu border, march suspended

Minor injuries to some farmers after police uses mild force

NEERAJ MOHAN
CHANDIGARH

Farmers on Friday suspended their Delhi March for a day after the Haryana police prevented them from crossing the Shambhu border. The high voltage drama unfolded around 1pm when a group of 101 farmers started their Delhi March and tried to cross the multi-layered barricading put up by the police.

The police used tear-gas and mild force to disperse the farmers when they were trying to remove barricades, leading to minor injuries to around 10 farmers. The Haryana Police asked farmers not to proceed further and cited a prohibitory order clamped under Section 163 of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS).

After the repeated attempts the farmers failed to cross the barricades, farmer leader Sarvan Singh Pandher announced that protest march is suspended and the farmers were called back to



Police personnel fire tear gas shells to disperse farmers during their 'Delhi Chalo' protest march, in Patiala on Friday. ANI

the camps. According to reports, the farmers will wait for the response of Union Government to resume talks with the farmer leaders and they will hold another meeting on December 8 to take the next call.

"We will wait till tomorrow (Saturday) for talks with the government, otherwise, a 'Jattha' of 101 farmers will march towards Delhi on 8 December at 12 noon. If the government wants to resume talks they can send an invite to us by tomorrow evening," said Pandher during an interaction with media persons.

He said the Haryana police should not stop the farmers as it is right of the farmers to hold peaceful protest and

meet representatives of the elected government. "Why is the government treating us as if we belong to an enemy nation? We are citizens of this country and have made immense sacrifices for its welfare", said Pandher. "The entire world witnessed how the fifth-largest economy in the world inflicted atrocities and injured our farmer leaders. This is the moral victory of the farmers' protest. Prime Minister Modi has no justification for why we are being prevented from moving forward peacefully," he said.

Pandher, however, said farmers were ready to resume talks with the government.

RBI keeps repo rate unchanged; lowers growth forecast

TDG NETWORK
MUMBAI

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) decided to keep the repo rate unchanged at 6.5 per cent for the 11th consecutive period, marking a continuation of its neutral monetary policy stance.

Governor Shaktikanta Das announced that this decision was made by a 4:2 majority during the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) meeting on Friday. "As a result, the Standing Deposit Facility (SDF) rate remains at 6.25 per cent, and the Marginal Standing Facility (MSF) rate, along with the Bank Rate, stays at 6.75 per cent," Das added.

Reflecting on India's economic trajectory, the Governor disclosed a revised GDP growth projection for FY25.

He said, "Real GDP growth for 2024-25, that is the current year, is now projected at 6.6 per cent, with Q3 at 6.8 per cent and Q4 at 7.2 per cent. Real GDP growth for the first quarter of 2025-26 is projected at 6.9 per cent, and the second quarter of 2025-26 at 7.3 per cent."

The RBI Governor announced that cash Reserve Ratio or CRR was cut by 50 basis points from 4.5 per cent to 4 per cent.

Cabinet approves 28 new Navodaya Vidyalayas

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

The Union Cabinet on Friday approved the establishment of 28 new Navodaya Vidyalayas (NVs) in districts that are currently not covered by the Navodaya Vidyalaya Scheme.

According to Government

of India this initiative is with the aim, "to provide good quality modern education-including a strong component of culture, inculcation of values, awareness of the environment, adventure activities and physical education- to the talented children predominantly from the rural areas without regard to

their family's socio-economic condition."

Union Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw underlined the importance of this initiative in line with the New Education Policy. He stated, "To implement the New Education Policy, PM Shri was brought - all the Central Schools and Navodaya

Vidyalayas were designated as PM Shri schools to make them a model for other schools to follow."

In addition to the 28 new NVs, the Cabinet also approved the opening of 85 new Kendriya Vidyalayas (KVs) and the expansion of one existing KV. This expansion

Northeast neglected by previous govt due to fewer votes, seats: PM

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Asserting that previous governments weighed development to votes, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday said the progress of the northeast was not given much emphasis earlier due to fewer population and votes in the region.

Inaugurating the Ashtalakshmi Mahotsav here to celebrate the vibrancy of the northeast, he said the government of Atal Bihari Vajpayee was the first to create



a dedicated ministry for the region and also earmarked 20 per cent budget of every ministry for its development. "In the last decade, we have seen a wonderful jour-

ney of the development of the northeast but it was not easy. We have taken every possible step to connect the northeastern states with India's growth story.

"For a long time, we have seen how development was weighed against votes. Northeastern states had fewer votes and seats, so previous governments did not pay attention to the development of the region," he claimed.

Modi said he strongly believes the coming days are of eastern India and the northeast. Like Mumbai, Hyder-

abad, Chennai and Bengaluru, cities of the region such as Guwahati, Shillong, Imphal, Itanagar and Aizawl will be new beacons of growth, the prime minister said.

With its vibrant culture and dynamic people, the northeast holds immense potential to propel India's growth, he said.

The prime minister said during the last decade his government tried to mitigate the feeling among people about the gap of Delhi and 'Dil' with the northeast.

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Chief Guest Plenary Session

Sh. Arjun Ram Meghwal
Hon'ble Union Law Minister
Chief Guest Constitutional Session

Friday, 13th December, 2023
The Imperial Hotel, Janpath, New Delhi
Time: 9am onwards

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WHO SAID WHAT
IN PARLIAMENT

79 PROJECTS
SANCTIONED UNDER
TDF SCHEME: LS
INFORMED

KOLKATA: A total of 79 projects, costing Rs 334.02 crore, have so far been sanctioned to various industries under the Technology Development Fund (TDF) scheme for the development of defence technologies. Additionally, the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) has established 15 Industry Academia Centres of Excellence (DIA-CoEs) across the country, Minister of State for Defence Sanjay Seth informed in a written reply to Ananta Nayak in the Lok Sabha on Friday.

CENTRE WILL
PURCHASE ALL
FARM PRODUCE AT
MSP, SAYS MINISTER

NEW DELHI: The Narendra Modi government will purchase all farm produce at minimum support price, Union Agriculture Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan said in Rajya Sabha on Friday. He gave the assurance while answering supplementaries during Question Hour on the issue of MSP to farmers. The assertion came on a day when farmers are planning to embark on a foot march to Delhi with their demands. "I want to assure the house through you that all produce of farmers will be purchased at minimum support price. This is the Modi government and the guarantee to fulfil Modi's guarantee," Chouhan told the house.

GOVT SAYS 12
SMART CITY
PROJECTS GOT
NOD IN AUGUST

KOLKATA: The government has approved 12 new industrial smart city projects in August with a total project cost of Rs 28,602 crore (including land cost) for development of trunk infrastructure packages, Union Minister of Commerce and Industry Piyush Goyal in a written reply in the Rajya Sabha said Friday. As per the approved institutional and financial framework of Industrial Corridor Programme, State Govt provides land and Government of India through National Industrial Corridor Development and Implementation Trust (NICDIT) provides the equity for development of internal trunk infrastructure components.

STARTUPS CREATED
16.6 LAKH DIRECT,
GOYAL INFORMS
PARLIAMENT

KOLKATA: Kolkata startups recognised by the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) has reportedly created over 16.6 lakh direct jobs across more than 55 varied industries which include areas beyond technology, Union Minister of Commerce and Industry Piyush Goyal informed Rajya Sabha on Friday. Under the Startup India initiative, the government constantly undertakes various efforts for the development and growth of the startup ecosystem and to enhance job creation in the country.

LOK SABHA ADJOURNED TILL MONDAY AMID DIN

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI

The Lok Sabha as part of the Winter Session of the Parliament has been adjourned until 11:00 am on December 9, as announced by the Speaker on Friday.

The proceedings of the lower house were adjourned until 12 pm earlier in the day as disruptions continued for the ninth consecutive day of the winter session, with opposition members raising slogans and creating ruckus over various contentious issues.

Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla made a fervent appeal for order and cooperation during the winter session on Friday, as the proceedings were once again disrupted by opposition protests.

Before adjourning the House for the day earlier, Birla stressed the importance of maintaining the dignity and decorum of Parliament.

Despite his repeated requests for cooperation,

the disruptions persisted. Birla added, "I want you to cooperate in the question hour. If not--," and with that, he adjourned the session until 12 noon on Friday.

The winter session has seen frequent interruptions, with opposition parties vocally pressing for debates on various pressing issues.

Lok Sabha MP KC Venugopal alleged that the government was adopting a bulldozing attitude in the house.

"We are witnessing a bulldozing attitude of the government to suppress the move of the opposition. Yesterday one of the members gave a very derogatory remark against LoP and another member of the House and Congress party. Another member gave a derogatory remark outside parliament. Congress party has given a privilege motion against both of the leaders... While we are giving the complaint against derogatory remarks of the member, the same member is allowed to



Opposition MPs hold the Constitution in their hands and wear masks that said "Modi-Adani bhai bhai," symbolising their protest over the Gautam Adani indictment issue during the Winter Session, at Parliament premises on Friday. ANI

do the same thing today...The speaker is under the total pressure of the government," he said.

Gaurav Gogoi said that the government was afraid to discuss the Adani issue and were running away from it.

"The BJP does not want to run the parliament. We moved a privilege motion against BJP MP Nishikant Dubey and Sambit Patra. Today we wanted a ruling from the speaker but the question hour was

adjourned...The person against whom the privilege motion was moved, was again permitted to speak in the parliament...This is a part of a conspiracy to not let the parliament function. They are scared of the Adani issue

and are running away from it," he said.

Earlier, Opposition MPs including Lok Sabha Leader of Opposition Rahul Gandhi and Wayanad MP Priyanka Gandhi Vadra held a protest over the Adani matter, at the

Parliament premises in the national capital on Friday. Opposition MPs wore masks symbolising their protest over the Adani issue which mentioned, "Modi Adani, Bhai Bhai." Rahul Gandhi and Priyanka Gandhi were also seen holding a copy of the Constitution in their hand.

Both houses faced brief sessions in the past week following ruckus amid the opposition's demand to discuss Adani indictment.

The Adani Group denied the allegations made by the US Department of Justice and the US Securities and Exchange Commission against directors of Adani Green. While the BJP said the law will take its own course and slammed Congress leader Rahul Gandhi over his attack on Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

The first session of the winter Parliament commenced on November 25, with both Houses getting adjourned fairly early due to disruptions.

Cong moves privilege motion
against Dubey and Patra

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI

Congress MP Gaurav Gogoi on Friday said that the party has moved a privilege motion against BJP leaders Nishikant Dubey and Sambit Patra for their 'derogatory remarks' against Lok Sabha Leader of Opposition Rahul Gandhi.

"We moved a privilege motion against BJP MP Nishikant Dubey and Sambit Patra. Today we wanted a ruling from the Speaker but the Question Hour was adjourned...The person against whom the privilege motion was moved, was again permitted to speak in the Parliament...This is a part of a conspiracy to not let the parliament function. They are scared of the Adani issue and are running away from it," Gogoi said.

Congress MP KC Venugopal said that the central government is trying to suppress the move of the opposition.

"We are witnessing a bulldozing attitude of the government to suppress the move of the opposition. Yesterday one of the members gave a very derogatory remark against LoP and another member of the House and Congress party. Another member gave a derogatory remark outside parliament. Congress

'Modi ji sansad me aao':
Rahul seeks Adani probe

NEW DELHI: Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi took a jibe at Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday, asking him to attend the Winter Session of Parliament and not to be "afraid" of investigation on Adani.

Taking to social media platform Facebook, Rahul Gandhi wrote, "Modi ji sansad me aao, Adani par jaanch se mat ghabrao (Modi ji come

to Parliament, don't be afraid of investigation)." Congress along with their INDIA bloc allies have been persistent with their demand of discussing Adani's indictment by United States since the beginning of Winter Session.

Earlier in the day, Opposition MPs wore masks symbolising their protest over the Adani issue which mentioned, "Modi Adani, Bhai Bhai."

party has given a privilege motion against both of the leaders...While we are giving the complaint against derogatory remarks of the member, the same member is allowed to do the same thing today...The speaker is under the total pressure of the government," Venugopal said.

In a post on X while holding a copy of the Constitution and wearing a mask that bore the message "Modi Adani Bhai Bhai," the Congress leader said that "Adani deep state will not deter the Congress party."

On December 5, a war of words broke out between BJP leader Nishikant

Dubey and Congress leader Gaurav Gogoi after BJP alleged Congress' hand in 'attacks on national interest from abroad.

He raised questions over some of Rahul Gandhi's meetings in the US, amid constant sloganeering by opposition members.

"I want to ask the Leader of the Opposition only 10 questions about your relation with Salil Shetty of the Open Society Foundation who participated in the Bharat Jodo Movement. Did he give money to the Bharat Jodo Movement? Rahul Gandhi went to America and met Mushfiqul Fazal, who is responsible for the genocide of Bangladesh.



"This is a diversionary tactic to distract from the issues we are raising. We have raised the farmers' issue, and the Chairman (of Rajya Sabha) himself has raised that issue. So to distract from all of that they have pulled up new issues,"

— Jairam Ramesh



"If the Rajya Sabha chairman has made a statement then it means the matter is serious. The truth should come out."

— Anurag Thakur



The way BJP is systematically protesting against this, I wish they had shown even a tenth of this energy on the Adani issue. A lot more bundles of notes would have surfaced, and many things would have been revealed."

— Manoj Jha



A bundle of notes has been recovered from the bench. This is a matter of investigation. The Vice President of India has ordered an inquiry into the matter. I am surprised as to where the bundle of notes are being recovered from Congress leaders...

— MP Manoj Tiwari



Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar, Speaker Om Birla, Congress leader Mallikarjun Kharge and former president Ram Nath Kovind at Prerna Sthal during tribute paying ceremony on death anniversary of Dr BR Ambedkar. ANI

GLIMPSES FROM PARLIAMENT



Jaya Bachchan



Kangana Ranaut and Manoj Tiwari



Anurag Thakur with Priyanka Chaturvedi and Abhishek Manu Singhvi



Rajnath Singh



J.P. Nadda with Manoj Jha

Gaganyaan mission success will boost
India's global standing: Minister

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

The Minister of personnel, public grievances & pensions Dr Jitendra Singh said in the Rajya Sabha that the Gaganyaan mission, while primarily a scientific and technological effort, carries significant socio-economic benefits for India. He said the mission will inspire young minds to pursue careers in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics. He said it will enhance national pride and inspire a sense of achievement among the Indian populace. India's successful space programme will enhance its global standing and diplomatic influence, he added.

Replying to the question on the status of the progress of Gaganyaan programme, asked by Rajya Sabha MP Kartikeya Sharma, the min-

ister said that the ground testing of propulsion systems stages, including solid, liquid and cryogenic engine, towards human rating of the launch vehicle have been completed and the design and realization of five types of crew escape system solid motors have been completed. He also said that the static testing of all five types of solid motors has also been completed. Giving more details on the mission, the minister said the First Test Vehicle mission (TV-D1) for the performance validation of Crew Escape System has been successfully accomplished and the design of crew module and service module structure has been completed. Various Parachute Systems have been tested through integrated main parachute air drop test and rail track rocket Sledge Tests.

The Minister informed that the ground test programme towards human rating of crew module propulsion system has been completed and Service Module Propulsion System test programme is nearing completion. Characterization of Thermal Protection System has been completed. As for Gaganyaan Training two out of three semesters of the training programme completed. Independent Training Simulator and Static Mockup Simulators realized.

The Minister also informed House that the critical ground facilities such as Orbital Module Preparation Facility, Astronaut Training Facility (ATF) and Oxygen Testing Facility have been operationalized. Realization of Mission Control Centre Facilities and establishment of Ground Station Networks are nearing completion.

THE DAILY GUARDIAN SURVEY ON CHAMPIONS TROPHY CONTROVERSY

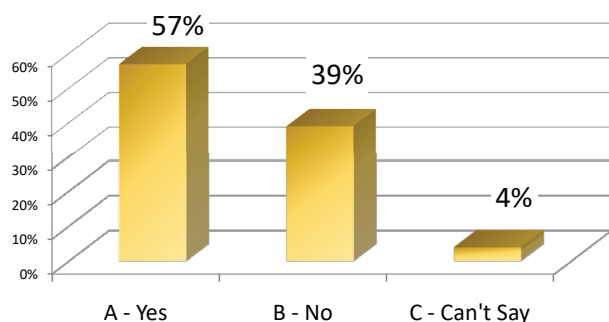
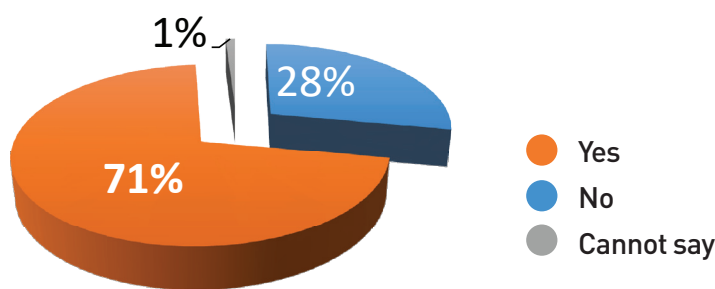
54% of people believe that other countries hesitate to play in Pakistan because of Fear of Terrorism

The ICC Champions Trophy 2025 faces uncertainty as the PCB resists a hybrid model proposed to accommodate India's refusal to play in Pakistan due to security concerns. While ICC considers offering financial incentives, PCB insists on hosting key matches, including India-Pakistan and the final, in Lahore, delaying the tournament schedule.

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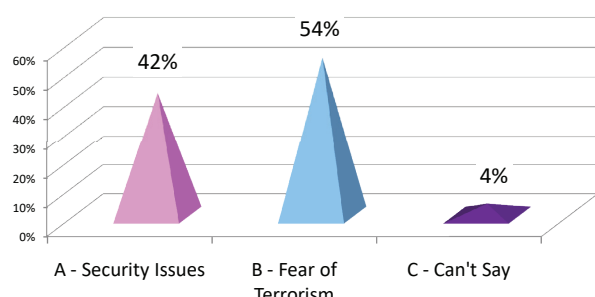
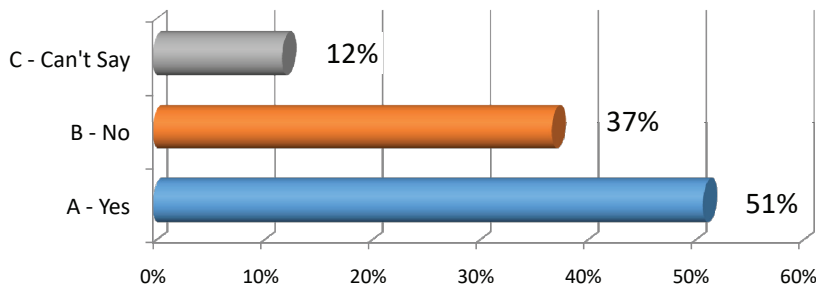
insists on hosting key matches, including India-Pakistan and the final, in Lahore, delaying the tournament schedule.

Q1. ▶
Should the Champions Trophy be held in Pakistan?



Q2. ◀
Will Pakistan agree to the hybrid model?

Q3. ▶
Is PCB using the Champions Trophy to challenge BCCI?



Q4. ◀
Why do other countries hesitate to play in Pakistan?

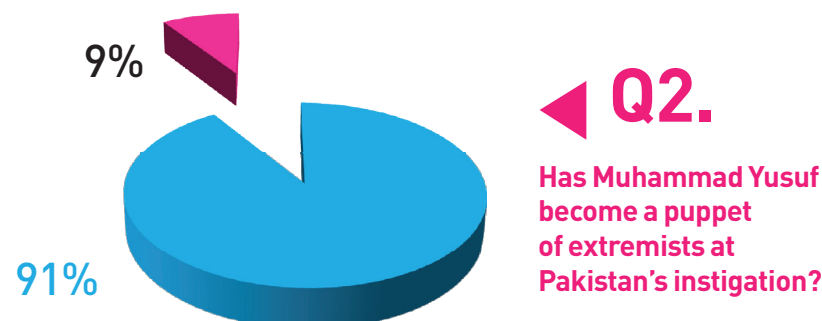
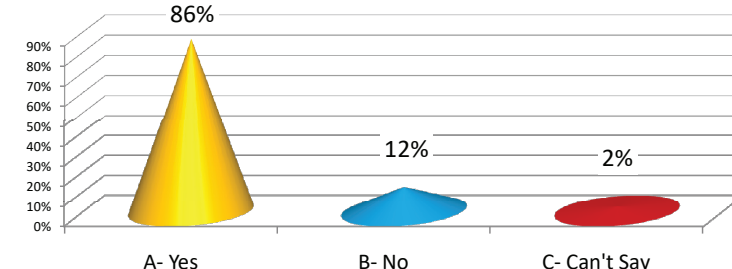
THE DAILY GUARDIAN SURVEY ON BANGLADESH POLITICAL CRISIS

86% believe Bangladesh has turned against India despite its help in 1971

Nobel laureate Muhammad Yunus, 84, has been sworn in as the head of Bangladesh's interim government after Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina resigned and fled following violent protests. Recommended by student protesters, Yunus will serve as chief adviser, overseeing fresh elections in the country of 170 million.

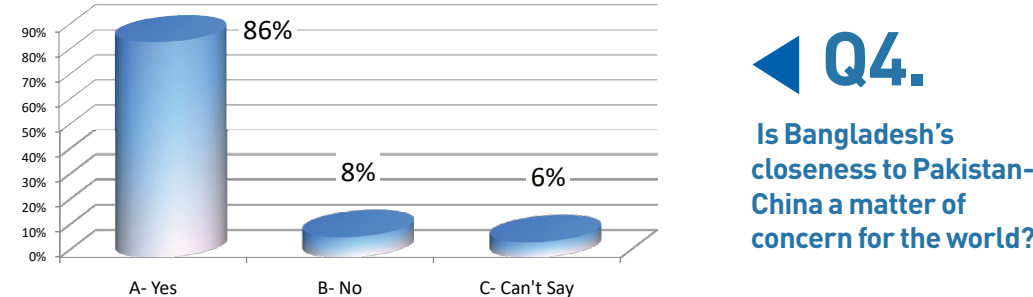
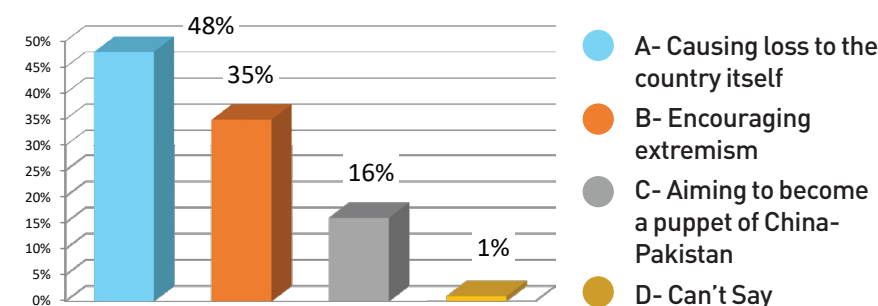
after Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina resigned and fled following violent protests. Recommended by student protesters, Yunus will serve as chief adviser, overseeing fresh elections in the country of 170 million.

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Q2. ◀
Has Muhammad Yusuf become a puppet of extremists at Pakistan's instigation?

Q3. ▶
What is Bangladesh trying to prove by rejecting Indian goods?



Q4. ◀
Is Bangladesh's closeness to Pakistan-China a matter of concern for the world?

Foreign Secy to visit Bangladesh

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri will make a visit to Bangladesh on December 9 and meet his counterpart there, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said on Friday.

Misri will lead the Foreign Office Consultations with Bangladesh and attend several other meetings during his visit.

This comes amid strained ties between New Delhi and Dhaka following reports of several attacks on minorities, especially

Hindus under the current interim government led by Muhammad Yunus.

"The Foreign Secretary is scheduled to visit Bangladesh on 9th of December. He will meet his counterpart and there will be several other meetings during the visit. Foreign Office Consultations led by Foreign Secretary is a structured engagement between India and Bangladesh. We look forward to this meeting," MEA spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said in the weekly press briefing on Friday.

Asked about the situation on ground in Ban-

gladesh and the arrest of Hindu monk Chinmoy Krishna Das, MEA affirmed hope that the legal rights of the concerned individuals are respected and the trial is conducted in a "fair and transparent" manner.

"As far as situation on ground regarding the individuals you want, we want to reiterate our position again that they have legal rights and we hope that these legal rights will be respected and that the trial will be fair and transparent. They will get a fair and transparent trial," Jaiswal further added.

'If it wasn't tragic,...

CONTINUED FROM P1

"Of course, there must be an inquiry as to how people can come and put anything anywhere in any seat. It means that each of us must have a seat where the seat itself can be locked and the key can be carried home by the MP because everybody can then do things on the seat and make allegations about this.

RBI keeps repo rate unchanged

CONTINUED FROM P1

This the Governor said will infuse Rs 1.15 lac crore of liquidity into the banking system

Inflation projection for FY25 has been hiked from 4.5 per cent to 4.8 per cent as per RBI.

The MPC also unanimously agreed to persist with a neutral stance and remain unequivocally focused on aligning inflation with the target on a

Nod for new Navodaya Vidyalayas

CONTINUED FROM P1

will provide educational opportunities to a larger number of students across the country. These moves are expected to benefit around 82,560 students through the new KVs and 15,680 students through the new NVs.

According to available data, a total of Rs 8,232 crore has been allocated for the establishment of these schools, with Rs 5,872 crore for the new KVs and Rs 2,360 crore for the NVs. The opening of these schools will also create around 6,700 job opportunities, including 5,388 regular posts for KVs and 1,316 posts for NVs. This will contribute to employment while strengthening educational

infrastructure across India.

Nearly all the new KVs and NVs have been designated as 'PM Shri' schools. These institutions will act as models for other schools, showcasing the government's commitment to implementing the goals of the New Education Policy (NEP) and setting a high standard for the rest of the education system. The new KVs and NVs will be distributed across several states. In the case of KVs, Andhra Pradesh will receive eight, Madhya Pradesh 11, and Uttar Pradesh five, among others. For NVs, Arunachal Pradesh will receive eight, Assam six, and Telangana seven, as part of this nationwide expansion effort. (ANI)

Farmers stopped at Shambhu border

CONTINUED FROM P1

"If the talks had commenced, a positive resolution to this movement could have been achieved. However, the government remains unwilling to engage in dialogue", he said adding that the Prime Minister Narendra Modi should have listened to the Vice President also.

Hours before the farmers were planning to launch their Delhi March, the Haryana police have tightened the security at the Sambhu border on the NH 44. The Haryana government had also suspended mobile internet and bulk SMS service in 11 villages of Ambala district till December 9. The farmers led by Samyukta Kisan Morcha (Non-Political) and Kisan Mazdoor Morcha, have given the call to launch the Delhi March to force the Centre for a legal guarantee for minimum support price for crops.

The talks with the farmers were suspended on February 18 after their last meeting with group of ministers remained inconclusive. They have been camping at Shambhu and Khanauri border points between Punjab and Haryana since February 13 after their march to Delhi was stopped by security forces. Meanwhile, Haryana, Home Secretary Sumita Misra said that the farmers were not given permission by the Delhi police and the farmers should avoid taking out the protest march. She has advised the farmer leaders to hold talks with the committee of experts formed by the supreme court to resolve the issues of the farmers.

Ruckus in Rajya Sabha

CONTINUED FROM P1

Singhvi, during an anti-sabotage check on Thursday, Dhankhar said.

"After the adjournment of the House yesterday, a wad of currency notes was apparently recovered by security officials from seat no 222 presently allotted to Abhishek Manu Singhvi, elected from the state of Telangana."

An investigation has been ordered in accordance with practice, he said, adding it was not clear if the currency notes were real or fake.

The chairman said the wad has Rs 500 currency notes and there appear to be 100 notes. "It was my duty and I'm obliged to inform the House. This is a routine anti-sabotage check which takes place," he said.

Dhankhar added he was expecting someone would claim the notes, but no one has so far. "Does it reflect the state of the economy that people can afford to forget it," he posed.

As a ruckus broke out, Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju asked, "Why should there be an

objection to the name being taken? The chairman has pointed out the seat number and the member who occupies that. What is the problem with that?"

He said carrying bundles of notes in the House is not appropriate and agreed that there should be a serious investigation into the matter.

Dhankhar added that the anti-sabotage check was done in view of the security challenges.

"I have been careful that anti-sabotage checks must be very severe because in these highly technological situations where chemicals are used, the first and foremost is security... From that perspective it was done," he said.

According to Nadda, the matter was serious and the opposition and treasury benches should not be divided as it is an attack on the dignity of the House. He also suggested that the Rajya Sabha should pass a resolution stating the proceedings of the House should never be disrupted.

Taking a jibe at opposition members, Nadda said, "On some issues, you show ea-

gerness, while you want to cover up other issues."

Kharge objected, saying, "Why is Mr Nadda saying we are trying to suppress the matter... You do that, we don't do that."

Union Minister Piyush Goyal said it is a serious issue. "We don't know what else may be found on that side," he said. Without taking any names, Goyal accused the opposition of stalling Parliament over 'fake narratives'.

The Rajya Sabha then proceeded with Zero Hour, which was followed by the Question Hour.

As the controversy spiralled, Singhvi termed the incident bizarre and added that politics on issues such as this showed the system in a bad light and "demeans our level".

The Congress MP clarified that he carries only one Rs 500 note when he goes to the Rajya Sabha. "I reached inside House at 12.57 pm yesterday and the House rose at 1 pm; then I sat in canteen till 1.30 pm with Ayodhya Rami Reddy then, I left Parliament!" he said in a post on X.

'Northeast neglected by previous govt'

CONTINUED FROM P1

Union ministers made 700 visits to the northeast in the last decade and the government was connecting the region with the trinity of emotion, economy and ecology, he said.

The first-ever Ashtalakshmi Mahotsav is being celebrated from December 6 to 8 at the Bharat Mandapam here. This festival aims to showcase the beauty, diversity, and promise of the eight states of northeastern states -- Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya, Manipur, Nagaland, Mizoram, Tripura, and Sikkim. Together they are known as the 'Ashtalakshmi'.

"Ashtalakshmi Mahotsav is a celebration of the better future of the northeast," Modi said.

The prime minister said in the last 100 to 200 years,

everyone witnessed the rise of the Western world and the Western region has had an influence on the world at every level - economic, social and political.

He said India too had incidentally seen the influence of the Western region and its role in its growth story.

However, the 21st century belongs to the East, that is Asia and India. Modi said, adding that he was of the firm belief that in the times to come, India's growth story also belongs to eastern India and the northeast in particular.

The prime minister said the northeast had also started to move forward in technology-related startups, service centres and industries like semi-conductors with thousands of youth working in these.

The region was becoming a major centre of education

and skills for the youth, he said.

Modi said there has been great enthusiasm for investment in the northeast now and in the last decade, everyone has witnessed an amazing journey of development of the region.

Termining the journey of the last one decade was not an easy one, he said the government had taken every possible step to connect the states of the northeast with India's growth story.

The prime minister said that in the last decade, many historic peace agreements have been signed in the northeast and the border disputes between the states had also progressed in a very cordial manner.

This reduced the cases of violence in the region to a great extent, the prime minister said.

The AFSPA had been removed from many districts, he said, adding "Together, we should write a new future for Ashtalakshmi and the government is taking every step for this."

The prime minister said the event had made the entire Delhi glisten with diverse shades of the northeast and it would display the potential of the entire northeast to the country and the world.

Speaking on various facets of the region, he said India was proud of Sikkim being the first fully organic state of the country, the rice, bamboo, spices and medicinal plants grown in the northeast bore witness to the power of agriculture there and the region had a major role to play in the solutions that today's India wants to give to the world related to healthy lifestyle and nutrition.

BJP TIGHTENS GRIP, TOUGH BATTLE FOR OPPN

AJIT MAINDOLA
NEW DELHI

The appointment of Devendra Fadnavis as the Chief Minister of Maharashtra, has clearly indicated the strong ties between RSS and BJP. The recent victories in Haryana and Maharashtra have demonstrated that the BJP and RSS are forming a powerful alliance that will dominate elections in the Hindi-speaking belt. This partnership seems unlikely to be challenged by any opposition party. To effectively counter this alliance, a strong coalition of dedicated and influential workers is necessary—something that no party has managed to form so far.

In contrast, many parties in Hindi-speaking states are focusing on family-based politics and personal praise, making their strategies difficult to comprehend. Regional parties are struggling to secure their own survival, while Congress has become a mere pawn in this political game. Congress strategists seem unable to grasp that, like in 2004, their previous tactics won't work again. The key to Congress' success lies in strengthening its organization and contesting elec-

POLITICAL DOMINANCE

- Fadnavis' appointment as CM signals strong BJP-RSS alliance dominance.
- BJP and RSS form powerful partnership in Hindi-speaking belt.
- Opposition parties struggle with family-based politics and lack strong coalitions.
- Congress needs to strengthen organization and contest independently.
- Sharad Pawar and Uddhav Thackeray face leadership challenges in Maharashtra.
- Fadnavis' patience and loyalty led to his return as CM after 2019 setback.
- Thackeray's reliance on Congress and NCP weakened his political position.
- Opposition parties need to adapt to changing political dynamics and strengthen organizations.



tions independently across the country.

In Maharashtra, both Sharad Pawar and Uddhav Thackeray's Shiv Sena are struggling for survival. The issue of EVMs is frequently raised, and Pawar is no longer the force he once was due to health and age. His daughter, Supriya Sule, is unwilling to step out of his shadow and build her own path, while his nephew, Ajit Pawar, attempted to lead but faced challenges. In Uddhav Thackeray's party, only two leaders remain: Uddhav himself and his son Aditya,

along with Sanjay Raut, who functions as a Congress-like advisor. This situation highlights the importance of facing reality and serves as a valuable lesson for the opposition. Fadnavis' patience has paid off with success. Fadnavis was the truly deserving candidate for the Chief Minister post in Maharashtra. In the 2019 elections, the BJP-Shiv Sena alliance, led by Fadnavis, won the majority. Technically, he should have become the CM. However, Uddhav Thackeray, obsessed with the CM position, left the BJP and joined

forces with opposing ideologies, such as Congress and NCP, to form a government. Thackeray believed that this alliance would strengthen his position, and he thought it would be easier for him to expand his influence, both among Hindus and non-Hindus. He underestimated the strength of the new BJP and its leadership. The outcome was predictable. While being CM, Thackeray failed to protect his party from splitting. Today, his party faces a crisis of survival, and Thackeray is struggling to maintain his political rel-

evance.

He realized that he could not rely on the Congress and NCP forever, especially with the upcoming Mumbai Municipal Corporation elections. Without the Muslim vote, he knows he needs to reconnect with Hindu voters to survive. This indicates that Thackeray's future in politics will be difficult and uncertain. On the other hand, Devendra Fadnavis showed patience and loyalty.

He respected the decision of the BJP high command and accepted the role of Deputy Chief Minister. Even though his position was reduced, he did not stop working and remained committed to his duties. His hard work and dedication did not go unnoticed, and he was the top choice of the Sangh and BJP high command. After the election results, Fadnavis was quickly given the Chief Minister position without any delay from the BJP leadership.

In this way, Fadnavis regained the CM position after five years, a position that had been taken away from him in 2019. His story is a reminder to the opposition parties about the importance of staying grounded in reality and not relying solely on family-based politics.

Many changes in Congress planned in coming days

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Even as Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge on Thursday night dissolved the Uttar Pradesh Congress unit with immediate effect, party sources on Friday indicated that more such decisions are on cards in wake of the recent assembly poll results and there are also changes in the organisation in coming days.

Kharge on Thursday night dissolved the entire Uttar Pradesh Congress committee including district and block presidents. The letter was issued by Congress general secretary (organisation) KC Venugopal.

According to party sources, the decision was taken on the recommendations made by state unit chief Ajay Rai and backed by state in-charge Avinash Pandey.

It is worth to mention that the party unit in Uttar Pradesh was appointed during the Congress Working Committee (CWC) and even Kharge mentioned it in his remarks.

Party sources indicated that there was clash among the team of Priyanka Gandhi with the new state unit chief and thus it was reason



Kharge dissolved the entire Uttar Pradesh Congress committee including district and block presidents.

committee will be formed will be discussed during the next CWC meeting in Karnataka between December 26 and 27.

The source also pointed out that as of now no action is decided till the time a proper discussion does not take place.

He, however, maintained that changes are on cards in several states looking at recent results and it may happen by the end of December end. The source also pointed out that many state in-charges, general secretaries are to be appointed and thus a detailed discussion has to take place on all such issues.

Kharge during the CWC meeting had cautioned that a favourable atmosphere ahead of polls does not always translate into victory and called on leaders to identify local issues important for state elections rather than depending on national leaders.

In his opening speech at the CWC held on November 29 at party headquarters, Kharge said, "The atmosphere was in our favour during the elections. But just the atmosphere being in our favour is not a guarantee of victory.

why he made recommendations to the party chief.

On the back to back losses in two states of Haryana and Maharashtra assembly polls and if any action is due, a party source said that all these issues were discussed during the Congress Working Committee (CWC) and even Kharge mentioned it in his remarks.

The source said that more deliberations is to happen on the poll defeat and what action will be taken or if a

Fadnavis assumes office

TDG NETWORK
MUMBAI

Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis assumed office after taking oath as the Chief Minister for the third time.

Deputy Chief Minister Eknath Shinde was also present on the occasion while Fadnavis was taking charge of the ministry on Thursday evening.

"Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis took charge of the ministry today evening after the swearing-in ceremony. Deputy Chief Minister Eknath Shinde was present on this occasion," wrote CMO Maharashtra in a social media post on X.

Soon after taking oath as CM, Fadnavis took his first step in office by approving monetary assistance of Rs5 lakh for a bone marrow



transplant patient.

According to the Chief Minister's Office, assistance from the Chief Minister's Relief Fund was sanctioned for Chandrakant Shankar Kurhade, a resident of Pune.

The newly sworn-in CM also directed the administration to expedite work processes and operate with increased vigour. He emphasised the need to work faster to meet public expectations.

Fadnavis urged officials to accelerate efforts, delve deeper into issues, and

prioritise sustainable development while making key decisions. The official X handle of CMO posted, "Before the first cabinet meeting chaired by Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis after taking oath as Chief Minister, the Chief Minister signed the file of Chief Minister's Assistance Fund for the first time.

He has instructed on the file to give assistance of five lakhs to Chandrakant Shankar Kurhade, a patient from Pune, from the Chief Minister's Medical Assistance Fund."

Earlier in the day CM Fadnavis paid tribute to Dr BR Ambedkar on the occasion of 69th Mahaparinirvan Diwas saying, "Everyone knows that our country is progressing rapidly...The most beautiful thing is the Constitution of India.

Maha cabinet portfolio allocation to be decided soon: Sources

DARRELL MIRANDA
MUMBAI

The suspense over who will be the next CM of Maharashtra finally came to an end yesterday evening when Devendra Fadnavis was sworn in as the Chief Minister for the third time. The grand event took place yesterday at Mumbai's historic Azad Maidan in the evening at 05:30 pm where all the VVIP's including PM Narendra Modi, Union HM Amit Shah and the Chief Minister's of the ruling NDA states were present. Eknath Shinde and Ajit Pawar were also sworn in as Deputy Chief Minister's.

But now the tensions might arise within the Mahayuti over the cabinet portfolio allocation. As per sources, the meeting to discuss the

cabinet portfolio allocation is set to take place this week among the top three leaders of the Mahayuti. Devendra Fadnavis, Eknath Shinde and Ajit Pawar together will decide the cabinet portfolio allocation. The formula of the allocation can be as follows BJP CM + 22 cabinet berths, Shivsena DCM + 12 cabinet berths and NCP DCM + 10 cabinet berths.

Sources have also said that the BJP might keep the key portfolios with them which includes Home Ministry, Revenue Ministry and the speaker's post which was already with them in the previous Mahayuti tenure under Eknath Shinde. On the other hand Eknath Shinde is insisting on the home ministry and the speaker's post.

BJP's Kolambkar takes oath as pro-tem Speaker

TDG NETWORK
MUMBAI

Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) MLA Kalidas Kolambkar on Friday took oath as a pro-tem speaker in Maharashtra. Kolambkar is a nine-term MLA and represents the Wadala constituency in Mumbai in the Maharashtra assembly.

The BJP MLA took oath in the Maharashtra Raj Bhawan administered by the state governor CP Radhakrishnan in the presence of the newly elected Maharashtra CM Devendra Fadnavis. Earlier today,



while speaking to media, Kolambkar said "I have received a message from the government to take oath as the pro-tem speaker of the Maharashtra assembly. The Chief Minister and the deputy CM will decide on the cabinet ministers.

Nobody is angry on Fadnavis: Shiv Sena leader

TDG NETWORK
MUMBAI

Shiv Sena leader Raju Waghmare on Friday dismissed the rumours of Deputy CM Eknath Shinde being angry about Devendra Fadnavis being chosen as the Chief Minister and said that all support has been given by the party. "Yesterday, the swearing took place and we are working on deciding the expansion of the cabinet also. The session is scheduled for the 17th and everyone will take oath before that. The discussion of the parties is also ongoing... Neither is Eknath Shinde angry nor is Shiv Sena, if he was angry, why would he come to the oath taking ceremony? This is all fake news... we have given our full support..."

Haryana: 2,606 cases relating to fake travel agents registered in 6 years

TDG NETWORK
CHANDIGARH

Haryana Police has implemented a robust strategy to break the network of fake travel agents who deceive people by promising them foreign trips. By the end of October 2023, Haryana Police had registered 650 cases in the state, while by the end of October 2024, 578 cases were registered. This data indicates a significant increase in public awareness regarding the dangers of illegal immigration. Haryana Police has also launched a helpline number - 8053003400 - to promptly address complaints related to illegal immigration, ensuring people don't fall victim to fraudulent travel agents.

Director General of Police

Shatrujeet Kapur shared that by the end of December 2023, 750 cases of illegal immigration were registered. The majority of these cases in Haryana originated from Karnal, Kurukshetra, Ambala, Kaithal, Yamunanagar, and Panipat districts. To expedite action on such cases, an SIT was formed in April 2023. Looking at the figures over the past 6 years, a total of 2606 cases related to fake travel agents and illegal immigration have been registered in Haryana. In 2019, 213 cases were registered, followed by 582 in 2020, 183 in 2021, 300 in 2022, 750 in 2023, and 578 by the end of October 2024. Karnal district has recorded the highest number of cases with 658 in the last 6 years. During this period, Kurukshetra

The majority of these cases in Haryana originated from Karnal, Kurukshetra, Ambala, Kaithal, Yamunanagar, and Panipat districts. To expedite action on such cases, an SIT was formed in April 2023.

saw 574 cases, Ambala 457, Kaithal 256, Yamunanagar 217, and Panipat 106 cases.

Recognizing the gravity of these cases, a helpline number - 8053003400 - has been established, and an officer of the DSP rank has been designated as the nodal officer in each district. Simultaneously, senior police officers, including Superintendents of Police, have been issued directives to tighten the noose on travel agents. Superintendents of Police have been instructed

to monitor, according to the SOP prescribed for fraud related to illegal immigration, the number of complaints received, FIRs registered, criminals apprehended, and the amount of recovery from criminals. He has also emphasized the need to enhance the investigation level in such cases. The new law also includes a provision to attach the house, shop, and other property of fraudulent travel agents who engage in illegal immigration activities. The Haryana Registration

and Regulation of the Travel Agencies Act-2024 and The Haryana Registration and Regulation of the Travel Agencies Rules-2024* has been prepared. This Act has been approved by the Haryana Government and the Haryana Legislative Assembly. Haryana Police is taking prompt action on complaints and cases received against travel agents.

He informed that in the last 18 months (April 2023 to October 31, 2024) after the formation of the SIT, 1014 accused have been arrested in 1245 registered cases related to illegal immigration in the state.

Often, after the individual pays the money and applies for a visa, they are informed that their visa has been rejected.



Mahaparinirvan Diwas

Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis pays tribute to BR Ambedkar on his 69th death anniversary, observed as Mahaparinirvan Diwas, at Chaityabhoomi (memorial park) in Mumbai on Friday. ANI

Haryana CM inaugurates International Gita Mahotsav in Kurukshetra

TDG NETWORK
KURUKSHETRA

Haryana Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini on Thursday inaugurated the International Gita Mahotsav in Kurukshetra. CM Saini also offered prayers on the occasion at Brahma Sarovar.

Speaking to reporters CM Saini said, that the Interna-

tional Gita Mahotsav will continue till December 11.

"International Gita Jayanti Mahotsav is starting today on the holy land where Lord Krishna gave the message of Gita. The festival will continue till 11th December. This is the pilgrimage site of our country in India. There are 182 pilgrimage sites here. PM Narendra Modi and our gov-



ernment together have renovated them and the work of taking them forward is going on continuously," CM Saini said on Thursday.

This year, the International Gita Mahotsav 2024 will be celebrated with great enthusiasm on the sacred land of Dharmakshetra-Kurukshetra, a site of profound significance in Indian culture and

of the Shrimad Bhagavad Gita will be shared with all of humanity.

Saini stated that the International Gita Mahotsav has achieved immense success and popularity over the past eight years, since year 2016. Lakhs of people from India and abroad attend the Mahotsav. Last year, approximately 45 to 50 lakh people

participated, and a similar turnout is expected this year.

The Chief Minister highlighted that for the first time in 2019, the International Gita Mahotsav was held in Mauritius and London, followed by celebrations in Canada in September 2022, Australia in April 2023, and Sri Lanka and England in 2024, as per Haryana CMO.

International Gita Mahotsav - Performance by Renowned Artists



7 December Sh. Ashutosh Rana & Group - Play (Humare Ram)	8 December Artists from Tanzania & Haryana - Choreography	9 December Manisha - Sand art (Mahabharata) Dr. Kumar Vishwas & others - Kavi Sammelan
10 December Dr. Ved Prakash Tandon - Performance of Sampurna Ramayana	11 December Meenakshi Sheshadri & Group - Performance of a Play on Mahabharata	

All are Cordially Invited



KEJRIWAL LEVELS FRESH CHARGE, SAYS BJP TRYING TO CUT NAMES FROM VOTERS' LISTS

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Aam Aadmi Party National Convener Arvind Kejriwal on Friday accused Bharatiya Janata Party of 'trying to cut votes' from the voter lists ahead of the Delhi Assembly election.

Kejriwal alleged that the BJP had submitted an application to Election Commission of India to cut votes of 11,000 people, citing that either these people have shifted or passed away. Kejriwal added that AAP randomly checked 500 people from the list and found that 372 people are still living there. "BJP has given application to cut votes in their letterhead. They had already given applications to cut votes of 11,000 people, in the last 1-1.5 months and that process is underway. In applications, it is said that these 11,018 people have either shifted or passed away. For us, to check all these 11,000 applications so we checked 500 randomly. Among



AAP national convener Arvind Kejriwal, left, with party leader Manish Sisodia addresses a press conference at party office, in New Delhi.

THE ALLEGATIONS

- BJP allegedly applied to remove 11,000 votes, claiming people have shifted or passed away.
- AAP checked 500 random names, finding 372 still residing at listed addresses.
- Kejriwal claims most affected voters are AAP supporters.
- He criticizes the Election Commission and BJP for undermining people's voting rights.
- Delhi Assembly elections expected in early 2025. AAP won 62 of 70 seats in 2020.

these 500, 372 were found to be staying there only (at their address). They haven't shifted anywhere."

Kejriwal claimed that most of the voters in the list are AAP voters.

"75 percent of their list is troublesome. When we inquired, maximum of these voters turned out to be AAP voters. If you get 6% of votes cut from one assembly constituency then what is the point of holding elections?" Kejriwal said.

Kejriwal emphasised that casting votes is fundamental rights of citizens which BJP and ECI is attempting to 'snatch away' from people.

"This is a threat to democracy, people's votes are being cut. It is the fundamental right of the people to cast their vote and choose their government but BJP and Election Commission are snatching this right of the people," Kejriwal said.

The Assembly polls in Delhi are expected to be held in early 2025. AAP won 62 out of the 70 seats in the 2020 assembly elections and BJP secured eighth seats.

MCOCA case: AAP MLA Naresh Balyan sent to police custody

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Delhi's Rouse Avenue court on Friday remanded AAP MLA Naresh Balyan in police custody till December 13. Balyan has been arrested in a case linked with fled gangster Kapil Sangwan, alias Nandu. Police have alleged that the role of Balyan was to identify the potential target for extortion for Kapil Sangwan and his gang.

Delhi police sought ten days of police custody to interrogate Balyan. However, senior advocates appearing for Balyan had opposed the custody remand on the ground that the MP/MLA court doesn't have the jurisdiction to proceed further with the case registered under the Maharashtra Control of Organized Crime Act (MCOCA), 1999, as there is no notification to this effect.

Special judge Kaveri Baweja granted 7 days of police custody of Balyan to the Anti Gang Squad. (AGS) unit of the Crime Branch that is investigating the case by the Assistant Commissioner of Police (ACP).

Special judge Kaveri Baweja ordered, "Thus, keeping in view the facts and circumstances of the case, the material on record and the relevant law on the subject, accused Naresh Balyan is remanded to police custody till 13 December. He is directed to be produced on the said date at 11 AM."

It further directed that his interrogation shall be conducted at some place having CCTV coverage in accordance with the guidelines laid down by the Supreme Court and also in accordance with all the other applicable rules, directions, and guidelines on the subject, and the said CCTV footage shall be preserved.

Cabinet approves Rithala-Kundli corridor of Delhi Metro

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI



The Union Cabinet approved on Friday the 26.463-km Rithala-Kundli corridor of the Delhi Metro's Phase-IV project that will further enhance connectivity between the national capital and neighbouring Haryana.

The entire stretch will comprise 21 stations, all of them elevated. The decision was taken at a Cabinet meeting chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Addressing a press conference, Union Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw said the project is scheduled to be completed in four years from the date of its sanction. With this expansion, Delhi Metro will become one of the largest three metro networks in the world, he added.

This line will be an extension of the operational Shaheed Sthal (New Bus Adda)-Rithala (Red Line) corridor and will boost connectivity in the northwestern parts of Delhi, such as Narela, Bawana and parts of Rohini.

6,230 crore. The stations that on this corridor would be Rithala, Rohini Sector 25, Rohini Sector 26, Rohini Sector 31, Rohini Sector 32, Rohini Sector 36, Bawana, Rohini Sector 35, Rohini Sector 34, Bawana Industrial Area - 1 Sector 3.4, Bawana Industrial Area - 1 Sector 1.2, Bawana JJ Colony, Sanoth, New Sanoth, Depot Station, Bhorgarh village, Anaj Mandi Narela, Narela DDA Sports Complex, Narela, Narela Sector 5, Kundli and Naphur.

The corridor will be Delhi Metro's fourth extension into Haryana. The Delhi Metro currently operates up to Gurugram, Ballabhgarh, and Bahadurgarh in Haryana.

The statement said construction of Phase-IV (three priority corridors) consisting of 65.202 km and 45 stations is underway. More than 56 per cent of the construction has been completed so far, it said.

Delhi riots: Khalid and Haider seek bail on parity and long incarceration

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court on Friday heard the arguments on bail of Umar Khalid and Meeran Haider. They have sought bail on the grounds of parity and delay in trial, long incarceration.

The division bench comprising justices Navin Chawla and Shalinder Kaur heard the arguments. Delhi police sought time to respond to submissions of the accused. The next date of hearing is December 12.

Senior advocate Tridip Pais appeared for Umar Khalid. He argued on Parity with other accused Natasha Narwal, Devangana Kalita, Asif Iqbal Tanha delay in the trial, and long incarceration in custody.

It was further argued that Delhi police have alleged



The division bench comprising justices Navin Chawla and Shalinder Kaur heard the arguments. Delhi police sought time to respond to submissions of the accused. The next date of hearing is December 12.

that Umar Khalid attended a Secret meeting in Seelampur. Delhi police got a photograph posted on Facebook as evidence. He argued that why a person would post the photos of a secret meeting on Facebook. Natasha Narwal, and Devangana Kalita attended

the meeting, there was no violence after the meeting.

He also claimed Parity with Natasha, Devangana, Asif and Ishrat Jahan for a grant of bail. Similar roles were assigned to all these Four.

Advocate Sri Singh appeared for Meeran Haider. He argued that he was a Student leader and fought election for a political leader.

He submitted that Delhi police have filed a main charge sheet and four supplementary. There is a delay in trial in this case.

He has been in custody for the last 4 and half years, his counsel argued. Umar Khalid was arrested in September 2020. Natasha Narwal, Devangana Kalita and Asid Iqbal Tanha were granted bail by the High Court. Ishrat Jahan was granted bail was granted bail by the trial court.

ASHTALAKSHMI MAHOTSAV



Prime Minister Narendra Modi visits a stall during the inauguration of the Ashtalakshmi Mahotsav exhibition, at Bharat Mandapam in New Delhi on Friday. Union Minister for Communications Jyotiraditya Scindia is also seen. (ANI)

Delhi wakes up to chilly morning

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

The national capital Delhi witnessed a dip in temperature on Friday with the minimum temperature dropping to 8.5 degree Celsius at 8:30 am.

The temperature fell almost by two degrees over the last 24 hours due to cold northwesterly winds that drive down temperatures and signal the start of winter.

There was also a shallow fog engulfing the national capital.

The Indian Meteorological Department has (IMD) predicted the minimum temperature to drop to 6 degree Celsius by December 10.

On December 4, the re-



corded minimum temperature in Delhi was 12 degree Celsius.

Meanwhile the Air Quality Index in Delhi improved to 'moderate' category after the national capital faced persistent air pollution since the last one month.

The overall Air Quality Index (AQI) recorded in

um, 195 at Patparganj, 115 at Aya Nagar, 124 at Lodhi Road, 137 at IGI Airport (T3) and 212 at Punjabi Bagh.

However areas such as Anand Vihar recorded an AQI of 246, Wazirpur 208, RK Puram 204, Rohini 217, Mundka 244, categorised as 'poor'.

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.

Delhi's AQI was reeling in 'very severe', 'severe', 'very poor' and 'poor' categories post Diwali. Residents in the region complained of breathing difficulties and several other medical problems.

AQI improves to 183, termed as 'moderate'

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Air quality index in Delhi improved to 'moderate' category after the national capital faced persistent air pollution since the last one month.

The overall Air Quality Index (AQI) recorded in Delhi was 183, categorised as 'moderate' as of 7 am on Friday, according to the data of the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB).

As per data of the CPCB, the AQI at Chandani Chowk stands at 183 as of 7 am, 183 at ITO, 168 at Okhla Phase 2, 159 at Jawaharlal Nehru Stadi-

um, 195 at Patparganj, 115 at Aya Nagar, 124 at Lodhi Road, 137 at IGI Airport (T3) and 212 at Punjabi Bagh.

However areas such as Anand Vihar recorded an AQI of 246, Wazirpur 208, RK Puram 204, Rohini 217, Mundka 244, categorised as 'poor'.

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.

In RK Puram, truck-mounted water sprinkler sprayed tiny droplets of water in an effort to mitigate the effects of air pollution.

Will not contest Delhi polls: AAP MLA Dilip Pandey

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI



Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) Leader and MLA from Timarpur, Dilip Pandey, on Friday announced that he will not contest the upcoming Assembly election, saying that it is now time to do something else while remaining in the party.

"After fulfilling the responsibility of building the organization and then contesting elections in politics, it is now time to do something else while staying in @AamAadmiParty. Who ever contests the election in Timarpur Assembly, @ArvindKejriwal will become the Chief Minister of Delhi, and all of us Delhiites will together ensure this," he said in a post on X.

"For me, the only satisfaction of being in politics is that, due to our government, the lives of many common people and poor people have become easier, and the possibilities of many children's lives becoming better have increased," he said in the post. Ahead of upcoming Delhi assembly elections scheduled to be held in the early months of 2025, Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) National Convener Arvind Kejriwal on Sunday said that there will be no alliance in the national capital.



“2014 के बाद से भारत नई सोच और अप्रोच के साथ TB के खिलाफ संघर्ष में Trace, Test, Track, Treat और Technology की स्ट्रेटजी के साथ काम कर रहा है जिसमें जनभागीदारी की भी अहम भूमिका है। भारत के प्रयास TB के खिलाफ वैश्विक लड़ाई का एक नया मॉडल है।”
-नरेन्द्र मोदी

Under National Tuberculosis Elimination Program (NTEP)

TB Mukht Bharat Abhiyaan

**Launch of
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Chief Guest

Sh. J.P. Nadda

Union Minister, Health & Family Welfare

August Presence

Sh. Nayab Singh Saini

Chief Minister, Haryana

and

Ms. Arti Singh Rao

Health Minister, Haryana

7 December, 2024

**Indradhanush
Auditorium,
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**JAN-JAN KA RAKHE DHYAAN
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MINISTRY OF COAL LAUNCHES 11TH ROUND OF COMMERCIAL COAL MINE AUCTIONS

These mines upon operationalisation will generate an annual revenue of Rs 1,446 crore.

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI


Union Minister of Coal and Mines, G. Kishan Reddy, on Thursday launched the 11th round of Commercial Coal Mine auctions with a total of 27 coal blocks on offer at New Delhi.

These 27 coal blocks are spread across the states of Jharkhand, Odisha, Chhattisgarh, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh and Arunachal Pradesh and include both fully explored and partially explored mines including one coking coal mine, said a press release from the Ministry of Coal.

The Ministry has also executed nine agreements with successful bidders of the 10th round of auctions.

KEY POINTS

- **11th Coal Auctions Launched:** Union Minister G. Kishan Reddy announced 27 coal blocks across six states, including one coking coal mine.
- **Boost to Economy and Jobs:** 10th round agreements to generate Rs 1,446 crore annually and 19,000 jobs.
- **Sustainable Reforms:** Protected areas excluded, and block boundaries revised for eco-friendly mining.



Union Minister For Coal and Mines G Kishan Reddy during the launch of 11th round of Commercial Coal Mine auctions, in New Delhi on Thursday. ANI

These mines upon operationalisation will generate an Annual Revenue of Rs 1,446 crores calculated at PRC of coal mines and will employ approximately 19,000 people, said the release. The Ministry of Coal has taken a series of reforms to ensure that the coal sector grows at a rap-

id pace and can meet the country's energy needs. For the 11th round also, Mines falling under protected areas, wildlife sanctuaries, critical habitats, having forest cover greater than 40 per cent, heavily built-up areas etc. have been excluded. The block boundaries of some of the coal mines

where there was the presence of dense habitation, high green cover or critical infrastructure etc.

have been revised to improve the attractiveness of the coal mines, the release added.

Addressing the gathering, Union Minister of Coal and

Mines, G. Kishan Reddy, emphasized that coal remains the cornerstone of India's energy landscape, asserting that power generation is unimaginable without it. He highlighted the transformative impact of coal block auctions in achieving energy security, fostering self-reliance, and reducing dependency on imports. Urging industry players to participate enthusiastically in the 11th round of auctions, he called for collective contributions toward realizing the vision of an energy-independent Aatmanirbhar Bharat, as envisioned by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the release mentioned.

"Today we are witnessing the reforms PM Narendra Modi has brought in the coal sector.

De-dollarisation not on agenda: RBI Guv

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Governor Shaktikanta Das on Friday said India has not taken any specific steps to move away from dollars, in what is often called de-dollarisation.

Responding to questions during the post-monetary policy press conference, the central bank governor said all that RBI has done is permit the opening of Vostro accounts to countries who wish to trade in local currency. This was a part of the de-risking of trade.

"So far as India is concerned, there is no step which we have taken, specifically wants to de-dollarise. All that we have done is that we have permitted the opening of Vostro accounts and we have entered into agreements with two coun-



tries by now to do local-currency-denominated trade. That is basically to de-risk Indian trade, dependence on one currency can be problematic at times due to appreciation or depreciation," Das said.

Vostro bank accounts typically enable domestic banks to provide international banking services to clients who have global banking needs.

"De-dollarisation is certainly not our objective. It's not on the table, I think it's more of a narrative in some sections of the media. Our effect is basically to de-risk our trade. No one is talking about or thinking

about de-dollarisation," he said.

Further, Das said that one of the BRICS member countries pitched a separate currency for BRICS, but no decision was taken. "The geographical spread of the BRICS countries is also a factor that has to be kept in mind, unlike the Eurozone which has a single currency as they have geographical contiguity. BRICS countries are spread all over, that also has to be kept in mind," he argued.

The commentary from the RBI governor comes at a time when US President-elect Donald Trump through an X post recently threatened BRICS countries that his administration would impose 100 per cent tariffs on all imports from those countries, should they dare to launch their currency.

PLI scheme for food processing industry generated over 2.89 lakh employment

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

The Production Linked Incentive Scheme for Food Processing Industry (PLI-SFI) has generated employment of over 2.89 lakh as of October, and an investment of Rs 8,910 crore has been made across 213 locations, according to the Ministry of Food Processing Industries.

In a press release, the Ministry stated that the scheme has significantly contributed to the country's overall growth and development by scaling up domestic manufacturing,

enhancing value addition, boosting the domestic production of raw materials, and creating employment opportunities.

Under the PLI scheme, a significant proportion of beneficiaries are MSMEs, with 70 MSMEs directly enrolled and 40 others contributing as contract manufacturers for larger companies. Collectively, these initiatives have strengthened SMEs by fostering innovation, improving competitiveness, expanding market access, generating employment opportunities, and supporting the broader value chain in the food pro-

cessing industry.

The scheme also supports large companies, millet-based products, innovative and organic products, as well as small and medium enterprises, while also promoting Indian brands globally.

By mandating the use of domestically grown agricultural products (excluding additives, flavours, and edible oils) in the manufacturing process, the scheme has substantially increased local raw material procurement, benefiting underdeveloped and rural areas while supporting farmers' incomes.

Asteria Aerospace enhances army's eyes in the sky with supply of AT-15 VTOL drones

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Asteria Aerospace has reached a major milestone by delivering its largest-ever contract of AT-15 Vertical Takeoff and Landing (VTOL) drones to the Indian Army. Asteria Aerospace stated that this achievement reflects its commitment to advancing India's Atmanirbhar Bharat initiative while meeting the stringent requirements of defence and homeland security operations.

Commenting on the accomplishment, Neel Mehta, Director and Co-founder of

Asteria Aerospace, emphasised its significance. "This delivery of Asteria's indigenously developed AT-15 surveillance drones to the Indian Ministry of Defence demonstrates our unwavering support for meeting the evolving needs of our defence forces," said Mehta. He added, "These man-portable drones are equipped with advanced features, including best-in-class flight performance in high-altitude areas, integrated high-resolution day and night cameras, and support for precision artillery targeting.

SFBs may be allowed to link pre-approved

MUMBAI: In its latest monetary policy announcement on Friday, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Governor Shaktikanta Das unveiled significant measures to enhance the financial ecosystem, focusing on payment systems and the responsible integration of frontier technologies like Artificial Intelligence (AI). The RBI proposed extending the scope of pre-sanctioned credit lines via the Unified Payments Interface (UPI) to Small Finance Banks (SFBs).

Initially introduced in September 2023, this feature allowed Scheduled Commercial Banks, except Payment Banks and SFBs, to link pre-sanctioned credit lines to UPI, enabling seamless funding for low-ticket, short-tenor credit products. SFBs, with their high-tech and cost-efficient operational models, are well-positioned to serve last-mile customers, particularly "new-to-credit" individuals. By integrating credit lines into UPI, the move aims to enhance financial inclusion and credit accessibility. Necessary operational guidelines for SFBs will be issued shortly, marking a milestone in the UPI ecosystem's evolution.

Collateral-free loan limit to farmers hiked to Rs 2 lakh

MUMBAI: In a big relief to small and marginal farmers the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on Friday has hiked the limit for collateral-free loans for agricultural farmers from Rs 1.66 lakh to Rs 2 lakh per borrower. In his address after the completion of the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) meeting, Governor Shaktikanta Das said that "taking into account the rise in agricultural input costs and overall inflation, it has been decided to increase the limit for collateral-free agriculture loans from rupees 1.6 lakh crore to rupees 2 lakh per hour; this will further enhance credit availability for small and marginal farmers."

The apex bank will issue a separate circular to notify the enhancement scheme of the collateral-free loan shortly. A collateral-free business loan is a financing system where the farmers do not need to pledge assets as security for getting loans. The last time the limit for collateral free agriculture loans was revised in 2019 by the central bank, when it was raised from Rs. 1 lakh to Rs. 1.6 lakh.

CRR cut to infuse Rs 1.15 lakh crore into system

MUMBAI: The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Governor Shaktikanta Das announced to cut the cash reserve ratio (CRR) for all banks by 50 basis points to 4 per cent of net demand and time liabilities (NDTL) in two tranches of 25 basis points each, effective from December 14 and December 28 respectively.

By this, Rs 1.15 lac crore of liquidity will be infused into the banking system. This will enhance liquidity in the economy substantially. RBI has also hiked the inflation projection for FY25 from 4.5 per cent to 4.8 per cent. Quarter-wise, inflation is forecasted at 5.7 per cent for Q3 and 4.5 per cent for Q4. For FY25-26, CPI inflation is projected at 4.6 per cent in Q1 and 4 per cent in Q2. "Despite some softening, lingering food price pressures will keep headline inflation elevated in the third quarter of FY24. However, a good Rabi season, supported by favourable soil moisture and reservoir levels, is expected to ease food inflation pressures. Seasonal winter corrections in vegetable prices and record Kharif production should also contribute to moderation," Das stated.

Maruti to increase car prices by up to 4 pc starting January 2025

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

In response to rising input costs and operational expenses, Maruti Suzuki India Limited announced a price increase across its car models effective January 2025.

The hike, which is expected to be up to 4 per cent, will vary depending on the model, according to a company statement released today.

The automaker emphasised its ongoing efforts to optimise costs and minimize the impact on customers. However, the company acknowledged that some portion of the increased costs must be passed on to



Tarun Garg, full-time director and COO of HMIL.

the market to sustain operations and maintain quality standards.

Maruti Suzuki, the country's largest carmaker, reported strong growth in total passenger vehicle sales, reaching 141,312 units during November. This marked an increase from 134,158 units sold in

HMIL attributed the increase to escalating input, logistics, and transportation costs, compounded by adverse exchange rates.

November 2023. However, the company's sales in October 2024 were higher at 159,591 units, indicating a month-on-month decline. In November 2024, Maruti Suzuki India Limited recorded total vehicle sales of 181,531 units. This included domestic sales of 144,238

units, sales to other original equipment manufacturers (OEMs) of 8,660 units, and exports of 28,633 units.

The announcement of a price increase from Maruti Suzuki India comes amidst similar moves by other leading automotive brands. On December 5, Hyundai Motor India Limited (HMIL) revealed a price hike of up to Rs25,000 across its Model Year 2025 vehicles, effective January 1, 2025.

HMIL attributed the increase to escalating input, logistics, and transportation costs, compounded by adverse exchange rates. Tarun Garg, full-time director and COO of HMIL stated that while the company

endeavours to absorb costs as much as possible, the adjustment is necessary to offset sustained cost escalations. Earlier, on December 2, Audi India also declared a 3 per cent price increase for its lineup, citing similar reasons. The luxury automaker highlighted the importance of this revision to ensure sustainable growth for the company and its dealer partners. Price adjustments at the start of the year have become an industry norm, allowing automakers to align pricing strategies with rising costs from the preceding year. These revisions aim to balance operational sustainability and market competitiveness.

PM Modi ensured 300% increase in Northeast budget in a decade: Sarbananda Sonowal

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

The Northeast region has received an increase of more than 300 per cent in the budget outlay since 2014, said Union Minister of Ports, Shipping, and Waterways, Sarbananda Sonowal, on Friday.

The Union Minister further stated that the budget outlay for the region has reached Rs 94,680 crore in FY2023-24, from Rs 36,108 crore in 2014.

He stated that a remarkable rise of 28 per cent in the expansion of National Highways has been registered. In addition, the region had 80 National Highways (NHs), which jumped to 103 NHs by 2023, from 2014, he stated.



ping 26 times increase in infra development scheme outlays from a meagre Rs 94 crores to Rs 2,491 crores.

He added that the railways have also expanded within the region, improving communications with more than 193 km of rail lines being commissioned every year.

The railway budget for the region has increased by 370 per cent, and the region has also achieved 100 per

Sonowal said that a whopping 26 times increase in infra development scheme outlays from a meagre Rs 94 crores to Rs 2,491 crores.

cent electrification of broad gauge in the region, he said.

In less than a decade under PM Narendra Modi, the region now boasts 17 operational airports, and as a result, the people from the region have boosted the aviation sector with a 113 per cent increase in flights per week, he added.

Going further, he stated that the region has also witnessed a healthy growth of 39 per cent increase in the

number of universities.

He added that more than 1.55 lakh hectares of land were utilised for organic farming to promote organic farming.

More than 4,016 km of road projects are ongoing while 4G connectivity has reached almost all parts of the Northeast, he added.

Highlighting the work done on the rejuvenation of the waterways, Sonowal said, "Prime Minister Narendra Modi has always given major importance to reviving the inland waterways of the country as a valuable alternative mode of transportation that is economical, ecologically better, and efficient. The Northeast, by its rich network of riverine systems, remains a major success story when it comes to inland waterways."

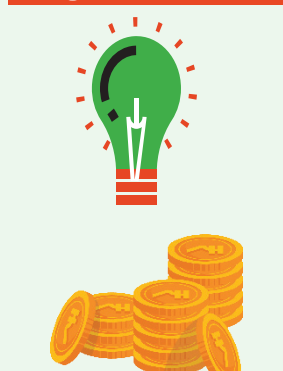
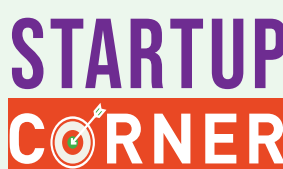
'Govt-recognised startups created 16.6 lakh direct jobs across sectors'

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

Startups recognised by the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) have reportedly created over 16.6 lakh direct jobs across more than 55 varied industries which include areas beyond technology, Union Minister of Commerce and Industry Piyush Goyal informed Rajya Sabha on Friday.

Under the Startup India initiative, the government constantly undertakes various efforts for the development and growth of the startup ecosystem and to enhance job creation in the country.

Agriculture, automotive, construction, education,



fintech, food and beverages, healthcare and life sciences, human resources, IT services, and professional and commercial Services, were among the key sectors



Union Minister of Commerce & Industry Piyush Goyal speaks in the Rajya Sabha during the Winter Session of Parliament, in New Delhi on Friday. ANI

where most of the jobs were created, the minister said in the written reply.

The flagship Schemes namely, Fund of Funds for Startups (FFS), Startup India Seed Fund Scheme (SISFS) and Credit Guarantee Scheme for Startups (CGSS) support startups

at various stages of their business cycle. The Government with an intent to build a strong ecosystem for nurturing innovation, and startups and encouraging investments in the startup ecosystem of the country launched the Startup India initiative in January 2016.

DEVA BHAI, NEW NAME OF ASPIRATIONS!

A new term as Chief Minister to fulfil unfinished tasks and unfulfilled dreams

OPINION

DR VIJAY DARDA



People in Maharashtra certainly hoped for a government led by the Mahayuti alliance, but even the most seasoned political pundits couldn't have predicted the sweeping victory with which the Mahayuti would return to power. Even more surprising was the BJP's performance, securing a remarkable 132 seats. Undoubtedly, the primary architect of this victory was none other than Devendra Fadnavis. Under the leadership of the simple and humble chief minister Eknath Shinde, the Mahayuti's flagship initiative, the

Ladki Bahin Yojana, turned out to be a masterstroke, securing their triumph. This success not only won them the election but also earned Devendra Fadnavis a new epithet: Deva Bhai.

The term Deva Bhai can be interpreted as 'Devendra Bhai' in a general sense, but I was astonished to hear some women referring to him as a "divine elder brother". When a person is revered with such respect and admiration, there are undoubtedly profound reasons behind it. Both interpretations of Deva Bhai reflect honour and respect, qualities that are never bestowed lightly but must be earned. I have known Devendra Fadnavis since the early days of his life and witnessed his journey from being a corporator and mayor to becoming the chief minister. As a deputy chief minister, he has mastered the art of governance -- how to get things done effectively. Now that he is returning as chief

minister again, Maharashtra has a lot of hopes pinned on him. Being a journalist and someone with a long experience in parliamentary politics, I can confidently say that leaders like Devendra Fadnavis, who are straightforward, genuine and dedicated to the common man, are rare. He understands the needs of ordinary people and knows how to fulfil them.

Now that people have bestowed upon him the title of Deva Bhai, revered him politically and offered him their blessings, handing him a resounding success, Deva Bhai is certainly delighted. While people have showered their love on Devendra, it is now his turn to reciprocate with kindness and action. For the people, he is both a Deva (god) and a Bhai (brother), making nothing impossible for him. Achieving a balanced development for Vidarbha and other underdeveloped regions is well within his reach.

Devendra Fadnavis' political journey began in Vidarbha, which is why I bring this region into focus as an example. While the developmental backlog has reduced significantly since 2014, it has not been completely removed. The backlog of basic amenities such



as electricity, water, industries, housing, schools and roads still existed in some areas. However, Deva Bhai has certainly made sincere efforts to address these issues. Through initiatives like the Jal Shivar Yojana, the Mahayuti government has revived thousands of dried-up ponds. Where shortcomings exist, they are primarily administrative in nature. I've previously mentioned in my columns how projects like the Samruddhi Expressway showcase Devendra Fadnavis' grand vision and strategic thinking. People now expect him to implement more such initiatives to elevate Maharashtra's pride. While constructing highways like Samruddhi Expressway in every village may not be feasible, it

is entirely possible to build roads that enable farmers to quickly transport their produce to local markets. From local markets, the goods can reach larger cities and markets, ensuring farmers fair prices for their crops.

Former President Dr A P J Abdul Kalam envisioned a similar scenario in his book Vision 2020. As we stand in the final months of 2024, expectations are high that Deva Bhai will realise Dr Kalam's vision in Maharashtra. It is heart-breaking to see farmers dump their surplus crops due to inadequate prices. So oh Deva... change this situation! Provide facilities to process farm produce into by-products so that farmers can benefit from their hard work. For a leader with vision and determination like Deva Bhai, nothing is impossible.

As new milestones in development are achieved, it is crucial to ensure region-wide balanced growth. Over-concentrating development in one area can lead to imbalances, much like overeating causes indigestion. Excessive focus on one region can create environmental risks and other issues. Distributing development projects evenly across regions maintains balance and harmony. So oh Deva...

please pay attention to this!

The flow of development must reach villages because the solution to urban problems lies in rural areas. If villages have small-scale industries, why would the youths migrate to cities? China offers a great example -- it transformed its villages into manufacturing hubs. India, too, has immense potential. What is needed is a comprehensive vision combined with determination and commitment. And yes, while empowering the state's Ladki Bahins (beloved sisters) economically, ensure their safety as well, Deva Bhai!

A word of gratitude for Eknath Shinde is also essential here. He will always be remembered as the people's chief minister. He ensured a steady flow of funds for development. While some officials may not have been pleased with his style, Shinde prioritised the welfare of those on the margins of society. His exceptional work, particularly in healthcare for the underprivileged, stands out. A government should truly be one that represents the common people!

The author is the chairman, Editorial Board of Lokmat Media and former member of Rajya Sabha.

PERSPECTIVE

DEVENDRA FADNAVIS, THE RISING STAR OF SANGH PARIVAR

Without any doubt, the newly elected Maharashtra Chief Minister, Devendra Fadnavis, is the new rising star of the Sangh Parivar. By ensuring that the Maha Yuti came to power with a convincing win in the recently concluded Assembly polls, Fadnavis, has proved his mettle as a political leader, who has a bright future and could be in contention for the leadership of the country at some point of time. He has a distinct advantage over many of his contemporaries since he has the blessings of the Rashtriya Swayamsewak Sangh, which played a pivotal role in his appointment, particularly when the Shiv Sena boss and former Chief Minister, now deputy CM, Eknath Shinde, seemed adamant at taking over the post. Several top BJP leaders at the Centre were willing to accommodate Shinde, but the RSS puts its foot down and refused to shift its stand. Fadnavis has been a Sangh loyalist since very early in life and has acquired his political skills from senior functionaries of the Sangh Parivar. He had been responsible for breaking both the Shiv Sena and the Nationalist Congress Party and agreeing to play second fiddle when the Maha Yuti government was formed. His sacrifice did not go unnoticed and the Sangh was simply waiting to reward him, and has done precisely that when the opportune moment came.

Many political pundits believe that the unfolding drama in the State is not over as yet and another round of politicking may take place in the not-too-distant future. What has become a cause of worry for some is that the optics of a Brahmin Chief Minister and two Maratha deputy Chief Ministers is something which could have its repercussions at some point of time. However, the arrangement shall remain undisturbed for the time being, at least till the municipal elections are over, and consequently each group would use its clout to assert its claim for bigger things. What has gone unnoticed is that the swearing in of the new government and its overwhelming victory in the Assembly polls, has sent alarm signals within the Maha Vikas Aghadi. Both, Sharad Pawar and Uddhav Thackeray may be concerned over the outcome and may have already got into damage control. When the BJP had secured 240 seats in the Lok Sabha elections, 63 less than 2019, there were doubts which were expressed over the longevity of the Central government in many quarters. The fallout of the Maharashtra polls is that many MPs, who had got elected on the Shiv Sena (Uddhav) and NCP (SP) may look for options other than their present parties. There is a possibility, that these MPs, at least the majority of them could shift to the BJP, and leave their leadership in the lurch. The MPs would be greatly concerned on how they would be re-elected the next time and thus may say good bye to their present leaders and gravitate towards Narendra Modi and Amit Shah. It is not without a reason, that some political analysts who have watched Modi and Shah operate had foreseen the possibility of the Prime Minister cobbling a majority of his own, without being dependent on both Chandrababu Naidu and Nitish Kumar, who can change their positions at a future date. Modi is unlikely to leave anything to chance and in the coming few months, would ensure that the BJP had the numbers of its own and was self-sufficient in running the Central government even in the eventuality (unlikely at this stage) of the two major allies shifting loyalties or having second thoughts over extending support. This is politics at its best and should also make Congress worried since many of its MPs, may do likewise, given that they are in touch with the BJP leadership quietly. The Congress has been hit by desertions in the past and could be affected in the future as well, since the mechanism to keep everyone together has proved inadequate on previous occasions.

As it is, the cracks within the INDIA bloc are getting more pronounced and the leadership seems oblivious of these developments. The insistence to push its own agenda at the cost of a joint program to keep the opposition unity intact, is proving to be suicidal. The need of the hour is to keep the flock together and not play the big brother since this is not the time nor the space with the BJP wrestling the initiative of setting the narrative once again. Modi and Shah have perfected the game of outwitting their opponents and shall not allow any opportunities to go waste. Coming back to Fadnavis, his showing has put him at par with those who are looking towards succeeding Modi as and when the time comes. He shall have to face the challenge from many aspirants within his own party including Shah and Yogi Adityanath. However, there is still time for this, and who knows what would happen by the time the next parliamentary polls come. Modi may declare himself to be available thus putting all other claimants in the background. For Fadnavis, the real test would be to keep the Maha Yuti intact, particularly in view of the fact that both Ajit Pawar and Eknath Shinde have played this game much longer, and can always change their positions to suit their politics. Fortunately for him, the BJP has enough numbers of its own and also the support of many independents. Moreover, Ajit Pawar and Shinde know at this point, that it was more important to prolong their political careers and wait for their turn, if at all it comes.

PANKAJ VOHRA

When air meets land: The '6E' trademark battle between IndiGo & Mahindra

OPINION

DR. DEEVANSHU SHRIVASTAVA



The aviation and automotive sectors have collided in an unexpected legal showdown, with IndiGo Airlines and Mahindra Electric Automobiles locked in a battle

over the use of the "6E" identifier. This clash highlights the increasing importance of brand identity and trademark protection in today's competitive marketplace.

The recent legal battle between IndiGo Airlines and Mahindra Electric Automobiles, centered on the use of the "6E" identifier, has brought to the forefront the complex issue of trademark infringement and brand protection in India. IndiGo, India's largest airline, has long been associated with the "6E" code, which has

become an integral part of its brand identity. However, Mahindra Electric's recent launch of its electric SUV, the "BE 6e," has led to a clash between the two industry giants. IndiGo argues that Mahindra's use of "6E" infringes on its trademark rights and could potentially mislead consumers. The airline contends that the similarity between the two identifiers could lead customers to associate Mahindra's electric vehicles with IndiGo, diluting the airline's brand equity. IndiGo further emphasizes that it has invested heavily in building brand recognition and customer loyalty around the "6E" identifier, and any unauthorized use of this mark could harm its reputation. On the other hand, Mahindra maintains that its use of "6E" is distinct and unlikely to cause confusion. The company empha-

sizes that "BE 6e" is part of a larger branding strategy for its electric vehicle portfolio and that the "6E" is not used independently. Mahindra further argues that the two industries are fundamentally different and that the target audience for an airline and an electric vehicle manufacturer is not overlapping. The company believes that there is no likelihood of confusion among consumers and that its use of "6E" is fair and legitimate. The legal battle between IndiGo and Mahindra raises several important questions about trademark law and brand protection in India. What constitutes trademark infringement? How should courts balance the rights of established brands with the need for innovation and new entrants in the market? These questions are particularly relevant in the digital age, where brand identity

can be easily replicated and misused online.

The outcome of this case could have significant implications for businesses across various sectors. A strong ruling in favor of IndiGo could set a precedent for protecting established brands from infringement, even when the infringing use is in a seemingly unrelated industry. However, a ruling in favor of Mahindra could encourage innovation and competition, but it could also weaken the protection afforded to established brands. As the legal battle unfolds, it is crucial for businesses to be mindful of their trademark rights and to take proactive steps to protect their brand identity. This includes conducting thorough trademark searches, registering trademarks in relevant jurisdictions, and monitoring for potential infringement. It is

also essential to have a robust brand protection strategy in place, including measures to detect and address infringement. The IndiGo-Mahindra case serves as a reminder that brand identity is a valuable asset that must be carefully protected. As businesses continue to compete in an increasingly globalized marketplace, the importance of strong brand protection will only grow.

Regardless of the outcome, the IndiGo-Mahindra dispute has significant implications for the broader business landscape. It highlights the importance of strong trademark protection and the need for businesses to consider their branding strategies to avoid potential conflicts carefully.

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

Some specialise in slow speed

FROWNING PROHIBITED

JAS KOHLI



The 'slow' movement is making slow progress. Most of us continue to be in the 'rat race' which has

a tantalising possibility of making us Richie Rich. Many modern gurus exhort us to give the much-needed rest to our adrenal glands. However, the laid-back people are already in that state. And they are as vital to the society as the ones with Type A personalities.

Those who find it difficult to counter the inertia of rest are allies of planet earth—they have minimal carbon footprint. Because of them, there are fewer traffic jams

and smog is kept at bay. Most of them have done extensive travels around the world—via travel channels on television. They also avoid domestic holiday trips with excuses like chances of bumping into an old enemy, risk of bomb blasts carried out by terrorists and risk of contracting swine flu. Even when persuaded to visit a tourist place with the aid of emotional blackmail, they end up watching television or playing cards.

The media & entertainment companies should be indebted to the couch potatoes who do binge watching of OTT and television channels. Many other segments of the economy are benefited including manufacturers of cushions, recliners, potato chips and instant popcorn. Energy

drinks have as much impact on them as criticism has on Donald Trump.

At home, they often use mobile phones to converse with their family members especially when living in a multi-storied building. Many join gyms, especially in the first week of January. But they attend for a few days and then do the workouts in their dreams.

The procrastinators go with the dictum—don't do today what can be put off till eternity. A friend of mine recently discovered a hand-written five-year old to-do list while cleaning a drawer. He found that seventy percent of his present to-do list resembled it—and he wasn't surprised. Whenever his domestic help goes on leave, he goes into clinical depression.

The ones who live in a

state of self-imposed house arrest, are favourites of online shopping and food delivery companies. Though inactivity may predispose them to health issues, this is offset to some extent by the low stress levels because of paucity of 'I want to fly high in the sky' type of feeling. Also, they are least likely to commit a crime or participate in rioting—another big plus for the society.

There is a chap in our colony who has acquired wealth in the easiest way—through inheritance. He has been aptly nicknamed Fursat Kumar. Once I was in the mood to poke him. So, I asked, 'What is your aim in life?' Pat came the reply. 'I have already achieved my ambition of living a heavenly life. While you guys look for-

ward to Sundays, for me, every day is a Sunday.'

Some live life in the slow lane by the dint of their smartness.

Many youngsters delegate their mundane tasks to the family members, especially the dotting parents and the time gained is utilized for gaming and social media. If the parents see through this and point it out to them, they are told to 'chill'. A teacher, who takes online classes, conveyed to me that at any particular time, approximately one third of her students report as sick. As for the favourite excuse, back pain has given way to flu and fever.

It is an irony that many motivational speakers who tell us to 'slow down' have hectic schedule for themselves!



Government of Haryana



Nation Salutes the Courage, Valour and Sacrifice of the Indian Armed Forces on Armed Forces Flag Day



On this occasion, we urge all the citizens of Haryana to contribute voluntarily towards the noble cause of the rehabilitation of the War Widows, Disabled Defence Personnel and needy ex-servicemen and make the 'Armed Forces Flag Day-2024' successful.



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Let us Celebrate Armed Forces Flag Day
Bow our Heads in Honour of the Heroes and Martyrs

“आज, सशस्त्र सेना झंडा दिवस के अवसर पर, हम अपने बहादुर जवानों के साहस, समर्पण और बलिदान के प्रति सम्मान करते हैं। हमारे राष्ट्र की रक्षा में उनका समर्पण अनुपम है। मैं आप सभी से सशस्त्र सेना झंडा दिवस कोष में योगदान देने का भी आग्रह करता हूँ।”

- नरेन्द्र मोदी



SUPREME COURT SETS ASIDE MANIPUR HIGH COURT'S DIRECTION TO CBI TO TRACE ABSCONDING RAPE CONVICT WITHIN 3 MONTHS

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court in the case Central Bureau Of Investigation Versus State Of Manipur observed and has set aside the suo moto directions which are passed by the Manipur High Court in October 23, wherein the court directed the Central Bureau Investigation, CBI to speedily track and produce Timothy Changsang, a Northeast child-home Administrator who is being convicted under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act, 2012, for raping minor

girls within the period of 3 months before the High Court.

The court in the case observed that the convict has been absconding since 2018 and is yet to be found.

In the present case, A criminal appeal was filed by the Central Bureau Investigation, CBI against the order dated October 4, 2023 and January 1, whereby the Central Bureau Investigation, CBI had sought that they may be impleaded as parties which was rejected and they were given 8 weeks to comply with the same.

The High Court passed the said order after taking



suo moto cognisance of the matter which is based on newspaper clippings.

In July 2024, the Supreme Court in the case had stayed the impugned

directions.

The Central Bureau Investigation, CBI stated that it was not even impleaded as a party but a direction was nevertheless passed.

The bench comprising of Justice B.V. Nagarathna and Justice NK Singh was hearing the present matter.

The bench in the case observed that the direction is-

The counsel appearing for Central Bureau Investigation, CBI submitted before the court that the agency is not susceptible to tracing an accused when its primary role is to investigate.

sued by the High Court was 'unnecessary'. The bench also stated that the request made by Central Bureau Investigation, CBI is genuine particularly when State Government has already constituted special teams to trace the convict. The court in its order stated that if required, the State Government can approach the Central Government for

assistance. The counsel appearing for Central Bureau Investigation, CBI submitted before the court that the agency is not susceptible to tracing an accused when its primary role is to investigate. It has also been stated by Central Bureau Investigation, CBI that as per the affidavit of State before the High Court, the convict was last seen leav-

ing the airport. The Central Bureau Investigation, CBI in the case that they may be relieved from this obligation. On the other hand, the counsel appearing for Manipur State's submitted before the court that best efforts have been made to trace the convict. In fact, special teams have been constituted and the same is monitored by the DGP to trace him.

The bench headed by Justice Nagarathna remarked, 'Where will you go all over the world?'

Accordingly, the Manipur High Court and the Supreme Court upheld the convict's sentence.

Himachal Pradesh High Court: Petition filed after expiry of limitation period under Section 34(3) of Arbitration Act cannot be entertained unless sufficient clause is shown

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

The Himachal Pradesh High Court in the case Chaudhary Sarwan Kumar Versus Himachal Pradesh Farmers' Forum observed and has held that once the court comes to the conclusion that it didn't have jurisdiction to entertain the application under section 34 of the Arbitration Act, it cannot go into the merits of the case.

The bench headed by Justice Jyotsna Rewal Dua was hearing the present matter.

In the present case, the appeal is filed under section 37



of the Arbitration Act arose out of an order passed by the District Judge by which objections preferred under section 34 of the Arbitration Act against the award were rejected.

However, the district court at Dharamsala returned a finding that the court

didn't have jurisdiction to entertain the application under section 34 as the arbitral proceedings which were conducted at Shimla and only the court having supervisory jurisdiction over the tribunal would be competent to entertain the application.

The court observed that agreement containing the arbitration clause was perused which only indicated the venue of Arbitration without specifying the seat of the Arbitration.

The court observed that agreement containing the arbitration clause was perused which only indicated the venue of Arbitration without specifying the seat of the Arbitration.

The court in an impugned order held that as per the law laid down by the Supreme Court in the

case Hindustan Construction Company Limited Vs NHPC, the venue would be considered as seat of Arbitration in the absence of any place to be designated as the seat of the Arbitration.

The court in the case observed that it should not have gone into the merits of the case.

Delhi High Court: Music producer Amandeep Singh Batra files protection plea after 'threat calls' from Lawrence Bishnoi, Goldy Brar

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court in the case Amandeep Singh Batra Versus State And Anr was hearing the petition filed by Music producer Amandeep Singh Batra after receiving threats and extortion calls from persons claiming to be from the gangs of gangsters Lawrence Bishnoi and Goldy Brar.

It has been alleged by Batra that the calls were being made to him at the behest of one Prateek Chaudhary, a businessman, who has a personal vendetta against him.

The bench headed by Jasmeet Singh in the case observed and has directed the Delhi Police to take appropriate action in the matter within 10 days.

The court in the case ordered that Batra's safety be ensured and to protect his life and fundamental rights.

It being the case of Batra



The bench headed by Jasmeet Singh in the case observed and has directed the Delhi Police to take appropriate action in the matter within 10 days.

that despite the registration of First Information Report, FIR and transfer of the matter to Delhi Police's Special Cell, no progress was made in the matter and that he was continuously receiving threats.

The plea states that, 'While keeping in view the recent rise in killings in the country targeting public fig-

ures such as Baba Siddique, Sidhu Moosewala and Nandir Shah, the Petitioner is in need of urgent and adequate police protection.'

The counsel, Senior Advocate Abhimanyu Bhandari, Advocates Arjun Syal, Mehaak Jaggi, Namisha Gupta, Nattasha Garg and Tanaya Aggarwal appeared for the Petitioner.

Supreme Court dismisses plea that politicians should not become office-bearers of Bar bodies: 'Nothing wrong in having political ideology'

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court in the case C.R. Jaya Sukin Versus Union Of India observed and has dismissed petition filed seeking directions that persons who are members of political parties should not hold become the office-bearers of Bar Associations and Bar Councils.

The bench comprising of Justice Surya Kant and Justice Ujjal Bhuyan was hear-

The petitioner's argument in the plea was that the independence of bar bodies would be compromised if persons with political ideologies became their elected leaders.

ing the present matter.

The bench in the case observed that there was nothing wrong in persons with political ideologies holding positions in the bar bodies.

The bench headed by Jus-

stice Kant asked that, 'If an office-bearer of the Bar has a political ideology, what is wrong with that?? You want to oust Mr Sibal as the President of SCBA? You want to oust Mr (Manan Kumar)

Mishra as the Chairman of the Bar Council of India, BCI?'

The petitioner's argument in the plea was that the independence of bar bodies would be compromised if persons with political ideologies became their elected leaders.

The bench headed by Justice Kant cited the example of Ram Jethmalani, who has served as the Chairman of the Bar Council of India, BCI as well as the President

of the Supreme Court Bar Association even while being active in politics.

The bench asked the petitioner that, 'Do you want the bar to be deprived of the services of such multi-talented persons.'

The bench while considering the facts and circumstances of the case observed and has granted the liberty to the petitioner to pursue representations.

Accordingly, the court dismissed the petition.

Supreme Court asks Chief Secretaries of states or UTs to designate senior officer to supervise compliance with RPwD Act

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court in the case Justice Sunanda Bhandare Foundation Versus Union Of India observed wherein the Public Interest Litigation, PIL is filed seeking implementation of the provisions of Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act.

The Supreme Court in the case called on non-compliant states or Union Territories to file their response or affidavits on further steps taken to comply with the provisions of the Act by February, 2025.

The bench comprising of Justice Hrishikesh Roy and Justice SVN Bhatti was hearing the present matter.

The bench in the case asked the Chief Secretary of each state or UT to designate a senior officer to supervise the process of compliance with the provisions.



The bench comprising of Justice Hrishikesh Roy and Justice SVN Bhatti was hearing the present matter.

The bench in the case asked the Chief Secretary of each state or UT to designate a senior officer to supervise the process of compliance with the provisions.

Singhal appearing for the petitioner, wherein it indicates non-compliance of the provisions of the Act by few states or UTs.

As per the said chart, the states or UTs of Andaman And Nicobar Island, Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Karnataka, Lakshadweep,

Odisha, Puducherry, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand have fully complied with the provisions of the Act.

On the other hand, the counsel except for those of Himachal Pradesh, Chandigarh and Jammu and Kashmir assured that necessary steps for full compliance would be taken for the non-compliance states or UTs.

BACKGROUND OF THE CASE

The writ petition has been filed by 'Justice Sunanda Bhandare Foundation', a charitable trust, wherein it seeks following relief:

The implementation of the provisions of the Persons with Disabilities (the Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and Full Participation) Act, 1995 (replaced by Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016);

The direction for reservation of 1% of identified teaching posts in faculties

and colleges of various Universities in terms of Section 33 of the 1995 Act, and The declaration that denial of appointment to visually disabled persons in faculties and colleges of various Universities in identified posts is violative of their fundamental rights guaranteed under Article 14 and Article 15 read with Article 41 of the Constitution of India.

In 2014, the court in the case observed that the 1995 Act had to be implemented in letter and spirit.

The court issued directions to the Central Government, State Governments and Union Territories in order to implement the provisions of the Act. In March 06, 2020, the court directed all State Governments to file their compliance affidavits. Though, some States filed their response, others did not. In January 2024, the non-compliant states or UTs were given the period of 8 weeks to do the needful.

TDG NETWORK
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court in the case Sami Ullah and others v. Zulfikar Nasir and others observed and has granted bail to the members of Uttar Pradesh Provincial Armed Constabulary, PAC personnel who were convicted by the Delhi High Court in the year 1987 Hashimpura massacre case.

The bench comprising of Justice Abhay S Oka and Justice AG Masih was hearing the present matter.

The bench in the case considering that the convicts have been undergoing imprisonment for over six years since November 2018.

Further, the bench directed that the convicts need to be produced before the Trial Court within a week for the execution of bail bonds.

The counsel, Senior Advocate Amit Anand Tiwari, appearing for the convicts, submitted before the court that the said incident was of 1987 and in October 2018, the Delhi High Court reserved their acquittal.

In the present case, the applications is filed by ten convicts namely, Sami Ullah, Niranjan Lal, Mahesh Prasad, and Jaipal Singh. Suresh Chand Sharma, Ram Dhyani, Hamir Singh, Kunwar Pal Singh, Budha Singh, and Mohkam Singh



The counsel, Senior Advocate Amit Anand Tiwari, appearing for the convicts, submitted before the court that the said incident was of 1987 and in October 2018, the Delhi High Court reserved their acquittal.

BACKGROUND OF THE CASE

In the case, 42 to 45 persons which belongs to Muslim community were allegedly abducted from Hashimpura in Meerut District, Uttar Pradesh by the armed personnel of the Provincial Armed Constabulary, PAC on May 1987, in the wake of communal riots in Meerut.

Out of these around 35 people were alleged to have been subsequently killed by the Provincial Armed Constabulary, PAC on that very date in the late hours and their bodies

were thrown in a canal.

In 2015, the Trial Court in the case acquitted all the accused. In October 2018, the High Court bench comprising of Justice S Muralidhar and Justice Vinod Goel reversed the acquittal and sentenced 16 persons to life imprisonment.

Therefore, the court termed the massacre 'targeted killing' of unarmed and defenceless people by the police. The Criminal appeals was filed against the order of the Delhi High Court which is being pending before the Supreme Court.

TOP OF THE DAY

SAUDI ARABIA
EXTENDS \$3 BILLION
LOAN TO PAKISTAN

ISLAMABAD: Saudi Arabia has extended the USD 3 billion debt repayment period with Pakistan for another year after the cash-strapped nation could not pay the debt, the country's central bank has said. The term of the deposit was maturing on Thursday. The State Bank of Pakistan stated that Saudi Arabia had placed the USD 3 billion deposit initially for one year in 2021 and subsequently rolled over it in 2022 and 2023, after the issuance of the royal directives that reflect the continuation of the close relationship between the two brotherly countries, the Express Tribune reported.

FREIGHT TRAIN LIKELY TO
LINK PAKISTAN, RUSSIA

ISLAMABAD: Russia and Pakistan are set to be linked by freight train line that will pass through Iran and Azerbaijan with the first trial run likely to take place in March next year, a Pakistan minister has said in an interview to Russia Today. The development comes after Islamabad and Moscow signed eight memorandums of understanding (MoUs) covering various sectors, including health, trade, industrial cooperation, and education on Wednesday. These agreements were reached during the meeting of the 9th Inter-Governmental Commission, which was established about a decade ago, at Moscow held from December 2 to 4.

IMRAN KHAN THREATENS
CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf founder Imran Khan has issued a stark warning to the government, vowing to launch a civil disobedience movement starting December 14 if his core demands are not addressed. The announcement follows the perceived failure of PTI's recent "do-or-die" protest aimed at securing his release and garnering public support for the party. The Express Tribune reported. In a statement shared on X, Khan revealed the formation of a five-member negotiation committee tasked with engaging the federal government on two critical issues: the release of "political prisoners" currently facing trial and the establishment of a judicial commission to probe the violent crackdowns on PTI supporters during the May 9, 2023, protests and the November 26 crackdown in Islamabad.

CHINA, INDIA AGREE
TO TAKE MEASURES TO
FURTHER EASE BORDER
SITUATION

BEIJING: India and China agreed to take measures to further ease the situation at the borders while continuing to implement the October agreement to resolve the standoff in eastern Ladakh comprehensively, the Chinese Foreign Ministry said a day after talks in New Delhi. China and India held the 32nd meeting of the Working Mechanism for Consultation & Coordination on China-India Border Affairs (WMCC) on Thursday in New Delhi, and the two sides agreed to maintain communication through diplomatic and military channels, and safeguard sustainable peace and stability in the border areas.

SOUTH KOREA'S RULING PARTY SEEKS SUSPENSION OF PREZ YOON'S POWERS

People Power Party (PPP) leader Han Dong-hoon, who had earlier expressed his opposition to efforts to impeach Yoon, stated "newly emerging facts" had tipped the scales against Yoon Suk Yeol.

AGENCIES
SEOUL

The head of South Korea's ruling party has called for suspending powers of President Yoon Suk Yeol, citing "credible evidence" that he sought the arrest of political leaders after the imposition of martial law, Al Jazeera reported. People Power Party (PPP) leader Han Dong-hoon, who had earlier expressed his opposition to efforts to impeach Yoon, stated "newly emerging facts" had tipped the scales against Yoon Suk Yeol.

Han said, "I learned last night the president ordered the defence counter-intelligence commander to arrest major political leaders, characterising them as antistate forces, and mobilised intelligence institutions in the process," according to Al Jazeera report. He further said, "I have said that to prevent this country from descending into further chaos, I would try to stop the impeachment bill from passing this time." PPP leader called it necessary to stop Yoon Suk Yeol from exercising his powers as South Korea's President. He said, "But based on what has been revealed, to protect South Korea and our people, I believe it is necessary to stop President Yoon from

POLITICAL CRISIS

- PPP leader Han Dong-hoon calls for suspending President Yoon Suk Yeol's powers, citing "credible evidence" of seeking political arrests.
- Han claims Yoon ordered the arrest of political leaders after declaring martial law.
- Yoon's martial law declaration lasted six hours, causing a scuffle with legislators and protesters.
- Han asserts Yoon could repeat the action, warning of risks if he remains in office.
- South Korea's President is under investigation for treason, along with other officials.
- Opposition Democratic Party pushes for impeachment vote, requiring support from ruling party members.
- Impeachment motion success would lead to review by South Korea's Constitutional Court.



exercising his powers as president promptly."

Han said that South Korea's President did not acknowledge that imposition of martial law was illegal and wrong and there was a "significant risk" that he could make similar move again if he continues to remain in office.

Martial law was declared in South Korea for about six hours on Tuesday after Yoon made the announcement in a televised address to the nation in which he cited threats from "anti-state forces" and North Korean sympathisers. The members of National

Assembly mobilised for reversal of Yoon's order in a 190-0 vote. South Korea's President lifted order at about 4 am (local time). However, he announced the decision after troops had descended on the National Assembly and scuffled with legislators and protesters.

Yoon, who is facing impeachment, is currently under probe for treason along with the South Korea's resigned Defence Minister Kim Yong-hyun. Army Chief of Staff General Park An-su and Interior Minister Lee Sang-min, Al Jazeera reported, citing local media reports.

The statement of Han, who is South Korea's Justice Minister and one of Yoon's top rivals in the PPP, marks a shift in the ruling party's response to the crisis.

The opposition Democratic Party has called for a vote on Saturday night to impeach Yoon. However, it requires at least eight votes from the ruling party to reach two-thirds majority in the 300-member National Assembly. If the motion is successful, South Korea's Constitutional Court will take a decision on whether to confirm Yoon's removal from office, Al Jazeera reported.

Gaza ceasefire talks have resumed after weeks long hiatus, says Hamas

AGENCIES
ISTANBUL

A Hamas official said Thursday that international mediators have resumed negotiating with the militant group and Israel over a ceasefire in Gaza, and that he was hopeful a deal to end the 14-month war was within reach.

Ceasefire negotiations were halted last month when Qatar suspended talks with mediators from Egypt and the United States because of frustration over a lack of progress between Israel and Hamas. But there has been a "reactivation" of efforts in recent days to end the fighting, release hostages from Gaza and free Palestinian prisoners in Israel, according to Bassem



Naim, an official in Hamas' political bureau who spoke with The Associated Press in Turkey.

Another official familiar with the talks confirmed the return of Qatari mediators. The official spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to discuss the negotiations with the media. Since the talks broke

down, there have been significant shifts in the global and regional landscape. Donald Trump won the US presidential election, and a ceasefire was declared last week between Israel and Hamas ally Hezbollah in Lebanon. Trump is a staunch supporter of Israel, but Naim said he believes the incoming administration could

"affect the situation positively" given that Trump had made halting wars in the region part of his campaign platform. Trump this week called for the release of all hostages held in Gaza by the time he takes office on Jan. 20, saying there would be "hell to pay" if that doesn't happen. Previous rounds of negotiations focused on variations of a proposal calling for a multiphased ceasefire — beginning with a preliminary six-week halt in fighting during which female, elderly and sick hostages would be freed in exchange for Palestinian prisoners.

During that time, Israel would pull back some forces, and displaced Palestinians would be allowed to return home.

Pak anti-terror court indicts Imran Khan in May 9 attack case

AGENCIES
ISLAMABAD

An Anti-Terrorism Court (ATC) in Rawalpindi has indicted Pakistan's former Prime Minister Imran Khan and other Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leaders in connection with the May 9 attack on the General Headquarters (GHQ) in 2023, The Express Tribune reported.

The attack took place during the protests that erupted in Pakistan after Imran Khan's arrest. ATC Judge Anjad Ali Shah conducted a hearing for the GHQ attack case at a makeshift court setup in Rawalpindi's Adiala Jail.

More than 100 individuals, including Omar Ayub, Sheikh Rashid Shafiq, Sheikh Rashid, Omar



The attack took place during the protests that erupted in Pakistan after Imran Khan's arrest.

Ayub, Raja Basharat, Zartaj Gul have been indicted in the case, according to The Express Tribune report.

After the judge announced his decision, opposition leader in the National Assembly, Omar

Ayub, was arrested, while Punjab's former law minister Raja Basharat was taken into custody immediately after leaving the jail.

Subsequently, the judge adjourned the case until December 10. Earlier, several PTI leaders including Sadaqat Abbasi, Musarrat Jamshed Cheema, Mohammad Ahmed Chatha, Omar Ayub, Zartaj Gul, Rashid Shafiq, Sadaqat Abbasi, Waseem Qayyum Abbasi, Javed Kausar, Sajid Qureshi, and Usman Dar, reached Adiala Jail for the hearing.

The court had summoned all accused in the GHQ attack case, with charges expected to be formally brought against 120 individuals, including Imran Khan. The Express Tribune reported.

Israel airstrike cuts border crossing point between Lebanon, Syria

AGENCIES
JERUSALEM

An Israeli airstrike cut a primary border crossing point between Lebanon and Syria, days after it was reopened, Lebanon's National News Agency reported Friday.

The airstrike on the Arida border crossing in the country's north caused heavy material damage and cut the road.

Al-Watan, a pro-government daily newspaper in Syria, also reported that the border crossing was closed in the early Friday airstrike.

Separately, Syrian insurgents entered two central towns early Friday just north of the central city of Homs, bringing them closer to Syria's third largest city, an opposition war monitor and pro-government media both reported.

The break into Rastan and Talbiseh came a day after opposition gunmen captured the central city of Hama, Syria's fourth largest, after the Syrian army said it



withdrew to avoid fighting inside the city and spare the lives of civilians.

Meanwhile, a Hamas official said international mediators have resumed negotiations with the militant group and Israel over a ceasefire in Gaza, and that he is hopeful a deal to end the 14-month war is within reach.

Israel's war against Hamas has destroyed vast areas of Gaza and displaced 90% of the population of 2.3 million, often multiple times. The war began when Hamas-

led militants stormed into southern Israel in October 2023, killing some 1,200 people, mostly civilians, and taking around 250 people hostage.

Israel's blistering retaliatory offensive has killed at least 44,500 Palestinians, more than half of them women and children, according to Gaza's Health Ministry, which does not say how many of the dead were combatants. Israel says it has killed over 17,000 militants, without providing evidence.

Direct flights between Pak, B'desh likely soon



AGENCIES
KARACHI

Direct flights between Pakistan and Bangladesh will resume soon, Dhaka's Deputy High Commissioner here S M Mahbul Alam has announced, a media report said on Friday.

Alam also extended an invitation to Pakistan's business community to participate in the Annual Trade Exhibition to be held in Dhaka in January 2025 and assured them that the visa process would be streamlined to facilitate their participation.

Last month, the first direct cargo vessel from Karachi docked at Chittagong port in Bangladesh in mid-November, which officials said marked a major step in bilateral trade.

The deputy high commissioner expressed these views during a visit to the Hyder-

abad Chamber. He said Bangladesh's interim Chief Adviser Dr Muhammad Yunus had emphasised the need for leveraging the potential to enhance trade with Pakistan.

He described Bangladesh as a highly attractive market and asked the HCSTSI to send a delegation to Dhaka. He committed to monitoring and expediting the visa process for traders.

Alam mentioned that Bangladesh was exporting its products to 80 countries, generating billions of dollars in revenue. However, he underscored the need for further expansion through stronger trade relations with Pakistan.

Speaking on the occasion, HCSTSI President Muhammad Saleem Memon remarked that Pakistan-Bangladesh relations were rooted in the shared history, culture and trade.

Pakistan faces escalating terrorism threat: 61 attacks in November

AGENCIES
ISLAMABAD

As many as 61 terrorist attacks took place in Pakistan in November, showcasing a 27 per cent rise from the previous month, Dawn reported. The number of fatalities rose by 69 per cent, jumping from 100 in October to 169 in November. Additionally, 225 people were injured in these attacks.

The banned Balochistan Liberation Army (BLA) carried out 12 attacks in November, including three significant or high-impact ones. These incidents resulted in 45 deaths, surpassing the fatalities caused by the prohibited Tehreek-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) attacks Dawn reported. These findings were disclosed by the Pak Institute for Peace Studies (PIPS), a think tank based in Islamabad that focuses on conflict and peace-related issues in Pakistan and the broader region, in its "Monthly Security Review of Pakistan." The report highlighted that seven incidents of sectarian violence were reported in the Kurram tribal district of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) in November.

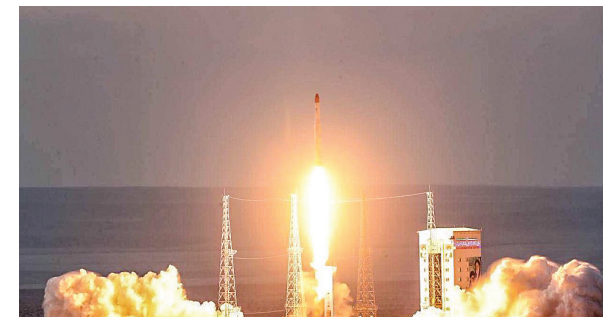
Iran launches domestically designed and manufactured space tug

AGENCIES
TEHRAN

Iran has launched a space tug domestically designed and manufactured by Iranian experts and technicians into space aboard a homegrown satellite launch vehicle (SLV), Press TV reported.

The Saman-1, along with a CubeSat and a research payload, was sent into space using a Simorgh launcher from the Imam Khomeini Space Launch Terminal on Friday. With an apogee of 410 kilometres and a perigee of 300 kilometres, the payloads were placed in an orbit around the Earth.

According to the report, Simorgh, developed by the Iranian Ministry of Defence, is a two-stage SLV. The Simorgh, in its eighth launch, has created a new



The Saman-1, along with a CubeSat and a research payload, was sent into space using a Simorgh launcher from the Imam Khomeini Space Launch Terminal on Friday.

record for the liftoff of payloads, Press TV reported. During the multi-phase mission, the Simorgh placed the Saman-1 orbital transfer block and two other research payloads, weighing nearly 300 kilograms, into orbit.

The Saman-1 system has been designed and developed by technicians from the Iranian Space Research Center (ISRC). The Saman-1 system has been created to place satellites in higher orbits, lowering costs and

removing the need for large launch vehicles with high fuel consumption. The space tug was test-launched in 2022.

Speaking about the system, Iran's space agency chief Hassan Salaryieh said that the system "means a quicker and smoother process of obtaining the orbital point synchronized with the Earth once a satellite elevates its orbital height from the geostationary orbit to the operational one," Press TV reported, test-launched

One of the payloads of today's launcher was the Fakhr-1 communication satellite, Press TV reported, citing Iranian media reports. The satellite, made by experts from the Ministry of Defense's Iran Electronics Industries, was placed into a 410-kilometer orbit.

THE AUSCHWITZ-BIRKENAU MEMORIAL



Esther Senot, a 97-year-old Holocaust survivor, sits among a French school group listening to a guide speaking at the Auschwitz-Birkenau memorial in Oswiecim, Poland.
Source: Wojtek Radwanski

US, Japan, Philippines join hands against China

AGENCIES
MANILA

The United States deployed a reconnaissance aircraft while Japan and the Philippines sent navy ships in a joint patrol in the disputed South China Sea on Friday, two days after the allied forces condemned actions by Chinese coast guard vessels against Philippine patrol ships. The US Indo-Pacific Command said the joint patrol was conducted in the Philippines' exclusive economic zone by allies and partners to "uphold the right to freedom of navigation and overflight" and "other lawful uses of the sea and international airspace."

Those phrases are used by the US, Japan and the Philippines to oppose China's increasingly aggressive actions in the disputed waters.

Two Philippine security officials said the patrol was staged about 40 nautical miles (74 kilometers) from Scarborough Shoal, a fishing area hotly disputed by Beijing and Manila off the northwestern Philippines. The two officials spoke on condition of anonymity because they didn't have authority to discuss such details publicly.

China claims the South China Sea virtually in its entirety and has guarded it assertively with its coast guard, navy and suspected militia fleets.

Indian-origin researcher to explore new technique to monitor Alzheimer's

AGENCIES
LONDON

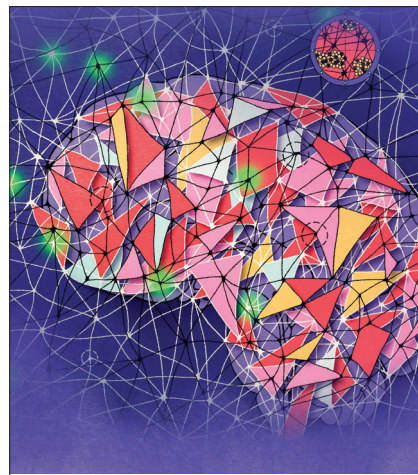
An Indian-origin researcher is to explore a system using light for non-invasive monitoring of Alzheimer's Disease as part of an international project at the University of Strathclyde in Scotland.

Dr Akhil Kallepalli will work on developing a combination of techniques with a team from Washington University in St. Louis, Missouri, led by Professor Joseph Culver. The new technique will use single-pixel imaging to measure activity in the brain, with the research team aiming to complement existing technology by enhancing its fidelity while also making the process safer and less expensive.

A technique currently used in brain imaging, known as diffuse optical tomography (DOT), works well in observing the brain's surface activity but has less capacity to measure electrical or deep tissue activity. The new research will investigate whether single-pixel imaging techniques could help augment DOT by capturing volumetric imaging, a type of imaging which DOT is unable to produce.

"The DOT technique examines the brain with the use of a wearable headset with several optical diodes. As there are types of brain activity which DOT does not measure, my proposal is to develop another technique which is capable of doing so," explained Dr Kallepalli, who is a Chancellor's Fellow at University of Strathclyde's Department of Biomedical Engineering and also a Leverhulme Early Career Fellow.

"With single-pixel imaging, you project light and record the returned optical signal after it interacts with an object. This measurement is made with a 'bucket' detector such as a photomultiplier tube or single-photon avalanche diode (SPAD); devices which measure an electrical value. We want to find out if we can use this in a DOT-compatible configuration to increase the fidelity of DOT for deep tissue imaging



and to combine two separate techniques to look at the brain differently," he said.

The senior researcher said his interest is in finding out where scientists can look deeper into the brain tissue to try and understand the haemodynamics of Alzheimer's Disease.

"Using light is safer and less expensive than many more complex techniques for exploring Alzheimer's, which is generalised to an abnormal build-up of proteins, called amyloid and tau and calcium in the human brain. We are at the early stages of developing this technique, but we believe it is highly promising," added Kallepalli.

He will work on the project at Professor Culver's laboratory at Washington University School of Medicine's Mallinckrodt Institute of Radiology, which contains a range of high-density DOT scanners. Researchers from Imperial College London will also participate in the project, where the Indian-origin academic holds an honorary visiting position.

According to the University of Strathclyde in Glasgow, Kallepalli began the development of the project idea while working at the University of Glasgow and has received an EPSRC Overseas Travel Grant to support the establishment of the collaboration.

Russia ready to use 'any means' to avoid 'strategic defeat', says Lavrov

AGENCIES
MOSCOW

Russian foreign minister Sergey Lavrov in an interview with US journalist Tucker Carlson has said that the new hypersonic missile used by his country to strike Ukraine showed that Russia is ready to use any means to prevent the West from achieving its goal of inflicting a "strategic defeat" on the country.

Russia is ready to send additional messages if the West does not draw the necessary conclusions after the use of the Oreshnik missile, Lavrov said in the interview to the American journalist as cited by Russian news agency TASS.

The top aide of Russian President Vladimir Putin noted that a peaceful settlement of the conflict in Ukraine is possible only if Kiev abandons its plans to join NATO, closes Western military bases in the country and cancels exercises involving foreign troops.

Russian President Vladimir Putin said that Russia had used its new Oreshnik hypersonic missile on its November 21 strike against Ukrainian city Dnipro.

Putin's spokesman Dmitry Peskov clarified that the Dnipro attack was an answer to the West's decision



to allow Ukraine to fire long-range conventional missiles into Russia.

As per reports, Ukraine had used the ATACMS of the US and Storm Shadow missiles given by UK to strike Russian territory.

Western thinking that Russia's "red lines" can be moved is a major blunder, Lavrov told Carlson in the interview.

"If they are following the logic which some Westerners have been pronouncing lately, that don't believe that Russia has red lines, they announced their red lines, these red lines are being moved again and again. This is a very serious mistake," the top Russian diplomat pointed out.

He also noted that state-

ments by some NATO officials about the possibility of preventive strikes on Russia cause concern.
Russian state media cited Lavrov telling Carlson, "We don't have any intention to exterminate Ukrainian people. They are brothers and sisters to the Russian people."
Meanwhile, the Russian minister in his over an hour-and-a-half long interview with Carlson as cited by TASS news agency stated that Russia wants normal relations with the United States and sees no reason why the two countries cannot cooperate.
The top Russian diplomat clarified that Russia will judge the administration of US President-elect Donald

Trump by concrete steps, but outgoing US President Joe Biden wants to leave Trump a heavy legacy.

Trump is a strong and friendly politician, but he is not pro-Russian, Lavrov was cited in the interview as per TASS.

The ball in Russia's contacts with the US president-elect is in Trump's court, as per Lavrov. President-elect Donald Trump had said that he will end the Russia-Ukraine war that had begun in the year 2022, without saying how, and has criticised billions of dollars in aid for Ukraine under Joe Biden.

Lavrov further said that many in Russia would like to make the lifting of sanctions a condition for an agreement on settling the crisis in Ukraine, but the country has withstood them and grown stronger.

"And we learned a lot after the sanctions started. The sanctions started under President Obama. They continued in a very big way under the first term of Donald Trump. And these sanctions under the Biden administration are absolutely unprecedented. But what doesn't kill you makes you stronger, you know. They would never kill us, so they are making us stronger," Lavrov pointed out in his interview with Carlson.

Russia, Belarus to sign pact on security guarantee

AGENCIES
MOSCOW

Russian President Vladimir Putin visited Belarus on Friday to sign a treaty offering security guarantees to Moscow's closest ally.

The planned signing of the document follows the publication of a revised version of Russia's nuclear doctrine, which for the first time placed Belarus under the Russian nuclear umbrella amid the tensions between Moscow and the West over the Ukrainian conflict.

Speaking alongside Belarus' President Alexander Lukashenko, Putin emphasised that the new document includes a potential use of Russian tactical nuclear weapons deployed to Belarus in response to an aggression.

"I'm sure that the treaty will ensure the security of Russia and Belarus," Putin said in televised remarks.

The revamped doctrine that Putin endorsed last month formally lowered the threshold for Russia's use of its nuclear weapons, a move that follows



US President Joe Biden's decision to let Ukraine strike targets inside Russian territory with American-supplied longer-range missiles.

The doctrine says Moscow could use nuclear weapons "in response to the use of nuclear and other types of weapons of mass destruction" against Russia or its allies, as well as "in the event of aggression" against Russia and Belarus with conventional weapons

that threaten "their sovereignty and/or territorial integrity."

Lukashenko, who has ruled Belarus with an iron hand for more than 30 years and has relied on Russian subsidies and support, allowed Russia to use his country's territory to send troops into Ukraine in February 2022 and to deploy some of its tactical nuclear weapons in Belarus. (AP) GRS

Nepal officially joins BRI; South Korea announces and retracts martial law

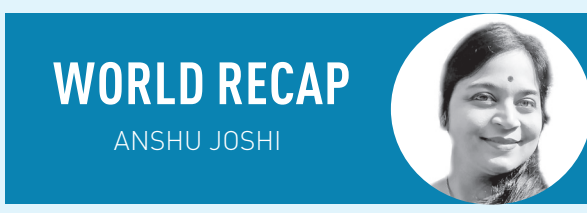
This week remained dynamic in the global affairs. Amid the intensification of conflict in the Levant region, India's security concerns amplified after the news related to Nepal officially becoming a participant in China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) broke. Also, the week observed announcement of Martial Law in South Korea that shocked the world; however, the law was lifted leaving the nation in a political chaos.

Nepal has officially become a participant in China's BRI Initiative. During Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli's visit to Beijing, an agreement was signed that allows Kathmandu to engage in Xi Jinping's flagship project. The discussions between Oli and Xi encompassed various topics, including connectivity, industrial growth, infrastructure development, as

well as trade and tourism. Prime Minister Oli's four-day official visit to China concluded this week, following a bilateral meeting with his Chinese counterpart, Li Qiang, in the capital city.

In a recent announcement on X, Nepal's foreign ministry confirmed, "The Government of Nepal and the Government of the People's Republic of China signed the Framework for Belt and Road Cooperation today."

Several agreements were formalized, including a correspondence exchange concerning the construction of the Tokha-Chhahari tunnel road in proximity to Kathmandu. Additionally, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was established to promote trade between Nepal and China, alongside the exchange of completion certificates for the renovation of the historic

WORLD RECAP
ANSHU JOSHI

nine-storey palace located in Basantapur, Kathmandu. Furthermore, MoUs were signed addressing development and construction projects, economic and technical assistance, Chinese language education, and collaboration in communication technology between Nepal Television and China Media Group.

Both parties reaffirmed their dedication to enhancing connectivity between the two nations in various sectors, including ports, roads, railways, aviation, power grids, and telecommunications, with the aim of assisting Nepal in its transition from a land-locked to a land-linked country, as stated in

the joint declaration. It has also been reported that the Chinese delegation opted to eliminate the term "grant" suggested by the Nepali representatives, proposing instead to use "investment" for initiatives associated with the BRI. Basically, following a thorough examination of the revised terms and conditions, Nepali officials incorporated the terminology of "aid" or "grant" and technical assistance for BRI implementation in Nepal. However, after reviewing the proposal from the Nepali side, the Chinese delegation opted to eliminate the term "grant" from the text and replaced it with "investment". This development repre-

sents a significant connectivity endeavour linking China with regions such as Southeast Asia, Central Asia, Russia, and Europe. However, this development raises questions and concerns for India as this decision of Nepal would strengthen Chinese presence in the South Asian region as Pakistan is already playing in the hands of China and Sri Lanka has already lost a major port (Hambantota) to China enabling it to play further against India in the South Asian region.

While this was happening in South Asia, President Yoon Suk Yeol of South Korea first announced and then retracted the martial law just hours after it incited thousands of demonstrators to take to the streets and led to demands for his resignation. This unprecedented declaration, which Mr. Yoon

claimed was necessary to combat an opposition he accused of attempting to undermine the nation's democratic framework, marked the first instance of a South Korean president invoking martial law since the conclusion of the military dictatorship in the late 1980s.

Mr. Yoon, who assumed the presidency in 2022, has faced ongoing political tensions with the opposition party that holds the majority in the National Assembly. Shortly after Mr. Yoon announced Martial Law, legislators, including some from his own political party, swiftly voted to revoke it. According to South Korea's constitution, the president is authorized to declare Martial Law when it is deemed necessary to address military exigencies or to ensure public safety and order through the mobilization of military forces

during times of war, armed conflict, or comparable national emergencies.

Army General Park An-su was designated as the martial law commander by Mr. Yoon who prohibited all forms of political engagement, encompassing activities by political parties and public demonstrations. General Park stated that all news media and publications were under the control of martial law command. His directive further extended to the prohibition of labour activities and the dissemination of what is deemed "fake news." Additionally, the command had mandated that all medical personnel, including trainee doctors who were participating in strikes, must resume their duties within two days. The decree also stipulated that individuals who contravene the martial law may be apprehended

without a warrant.

Under the legal framework of South Korea, the parliament has the authority to revoke martial law through a majority vote. The law stipulates that when the National Assembly seeks to lift martial law, the President is required to act promptly and make an announcement regarding the decision. However, approximately five hours following the initial declaration, President Yoon announced to rescind it. This situation has led to significant public pressure for his resignation.

All political decisions ranging from national to international must be taken in the interest of a better future, I believe. The leaders should not take any short-sighted decision that later become a burden on their nations or the society. I hope they understand this!
The author is Professor, School of International Studies, JNU

REVIEW: PUSHPA 2 - THE RULE *****

PUSHPA 2 - THE RULE



PRAVEEN NAGDA

Pushpa is a wildfire and not just fire is justified in this sequel of Pushpa - The Rising (2021) meets all expectations of the audience completely. Pushpa 2 - The Rule is full of enthralling adventure, alluring action, absorbing drama, intense acting, and passionate people to keep you engaged throughout the movie. With so many stories and sequences interwoven with each other, you can experience the excitement of probably 2 films and not just one, packed up in these 3 hours and 20 minutes of non-stop entertainment.

Produced by Sukumar, Mythri Movie Makers and directed by Sukumar, this wildfire cinema is packed with a powerful cast of Allu Arjun as Pushparaj aka Pushpa, Rashmika Mandana as Srivalli, Fahad Faasil as SP Bhawar Singh Shekhawat, and others, all doing absolute justice with every single character in the film. Based on the theme of red sandalwood smuggling, the film opens up with a brilliant action sequence in Japanese waters with Pushpa narrating Japanese phrases, chasing his money and simultaneously thrashing the bad guys out there. This scene makes Pushpa's grand entry in the film, which eventually turns out to be a dream leading him into a flashback of memories where he had once jumped into the lake without knowing how to swim but accepting the challenge to pick up the cricket ball.

There is a continuous cat-and-mouse game between Pushpa and SP Bhawar Singh Shekhawat with Pushpa always outwitting and outsmarting the cop. The lush green forests, large logs of red sandalwood, an army of lethal labourers, and a caravan of smuggling trucks all bring the memories of the first edition, Pushpa - The Rising.

There is a majestic grand-

ness to everything in the film from the tall mountains, huge temples with ancient architecture, sheer number of people whether a religious celebration or a funeral in the rains, splash of colours, fireworks & flames of torches, fleets of fishing boats, the assemblage of bullock carts or for that matter the show of swords and daggers. Just everything is a grand experience with many of the scenes being beautifully captured via aerial shots, including the songs and dances on similar lines bringing pure fun and entertainment and offering superb visual treat.

There are lip-smacking dialogues like, Pushpa is not just a name, Pushpa is a Brand, Pushpa is not a national player, Pushpa is an international player, Pushpa is not fire, Pushpa is wildfire, etc., establishing the style element around the lead character.

There are many dance performances, but the most eye-catching one is built around Goddess Kali, the destroyer of evil and demons, where Allu Arjun in Goddess Kali's attire puts up excellent dance moves, brilliant facial expressions, and action sequences that are simply superb.

It is not just action, but the film has a lot of family drama, emotions, sibling rivalry turning into sibling love, political-criminal nexus, and superfast storytelling that will keep you hooked on every part of it without a fuss. Some of the dance numbers have excellent action sequences built in, while others are pure gyrations to be enjoyed with the music. In the end, the film leaves a clue about the next sequel, Pushpa 3.

This brilliantly made film by Sukumar upscales the experience of the first edition of Pushpa and is a must-watch at a large screen theatre.

Praveen Nagda is Festival Director of KidaCINEMA and CultureCinema Film Festivals

AMBER HEARD IS EXPECTING SECOND BABY



AGENCIES WASHINGTON

Actress Amber Heard is basking in the glow of new beginnings, as a spokesperson for the actress has confirmed that she is expecting her second child.

This joyous announcement comes three years after the 38-year-old welcomed her first daughter, Oonagh Paige, into the world in 2021.

According to the spokesperson, while Heard's pregnancy is still in its early stages, the actress is thrilled with the news. The state-

ment expressed, "Suffice to say that Amber is delighted both for herself and Oonagh Paige," as per People Magazine. This pregnancy marks a new chapter for the 'Aquaman' star, who has kept her personal life largely private but still shared glimpses of her journey with fans over the past few years.

As the actress approaches motherhood for the second time, she reflects on how her life has changed since the birth of her daughter Oonagh, whom she has often described as the beginning of a new and fulfilling chapter.

PICTURE PERFECT

Ananya Pandey posing for brand integration on her social media page. (Instagram)



AAMIR KHAN RECEIVES HONOUR AT RED SEA FILM FESTIVAL

AGENCIES JEDDAH

Bollywood legend Aamir Khan was recently honoured at the 2024 Red Sea Film Festival, receiving one of the festival's most prestigious awards.

Taking place in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia from December 5 to 14, the event brought together some of the biggest names in global cinema.

Aamir Khan, celebrated for his iconic roles and filmmaking prowess, was among the three distinguished honorees of the evening, alongside Oscar-nominated actress Emily Blunt and Egyptian screen legend Mona Zaki.

The festival's opening night, which marked a star-studded gathering, saw Khan's acceptance of



the award, an acknowledgment of his remarkable contribution to the world of cinema.

"It's a real honour to be here and feel honored to have my work recognized over all these years," Khan said in his acceptance speech, as shared on the Red Sea Film Festival's official Instagram page.

The actor took the opportunity to express his gratitude to the many creative minds who have been part of his cinematic journey.

"I would like to take this moment to thank all the various creative people I have worked with, writers, directors, and a lot of creative minds who have been part of this journey over the last 3 decades with me," Khan continued, highlighting the collaborative nature of his success.

Abhishek, Aishwarya Rai make rare appearance at a starry event, check pics

TDG NETWORK MUMBAI

Aishwarya Rai Bachchan and Abhishek Bachchan made a rare public appearance together on Thursday night. The B-town couple, who usually keep their outings private, attended a starry event with Aishwarya's mother, Brindya Rai.

Taking to her Instagram account on Friday, film producer, Anu Ranjan shared pictures posing with the two along with a caption that read, "So much love warmth".

Aishwarya looked elegant in a traditional black outfit. Abhishek complemented her perfectly, as he opted for a tailored black suit. The couple were seen all smiles as they posed for the cameras.

Meanwhile, on the work front, Abhishek is currently seen in 'I Want to Talk'.



'I Want to Talk' is directed by Shoojit Sircar and stars Abhishek in the lead role. The story "explores complex emotional dynamics with Abhishek playing a pivotal character in the film grappling with deep emotional conflict.

Shoojit Sircar and Ronnie Lahiri have produced the project under Rising Sun Films. The film was released in theatres on November 22.

Aishwarya, on the other hand, was last in Mani Ratnam's 'Ponniyin Selvan: Part 2'. The actress won the Best Actress in a Leading Role (Critics) award for Ponniyin Selvan 2 at the South Indian International Movie Awards (SIIMA) 2024 in Dubai, which took place in September this year.

Ponniyin Selvan 2, directed by Mani Ratnam, is the sequel to the 2022 film of the same name.

'Harry Potter' series to begin filming at Leavesden Studios this summer

AGENCIES WASHINGTON

Warner Bros. Discovery announced that its much-anticipated "Harry Potter" series will begin filming this summer at Leavesden Studios, the iconic location where the original movies were shot, reported Variety.

During a presentation at the Warner Bros. Discovery headquarters in London, showrunner Francesca Gardiner and director Mark Mylod shared updates about the series.

They revealed that auditions for lead roles have involved over 32,000 children so far, with the casting team reviewing up to 1,000 audition tapes daily.



Final casting decisions are yet to be made, but shortlisted candidates will participate in workshops starting January.

The creators added that they are dedicated to accurately

portray the canonical ages of the characters. For instance, Severus Snape, potentially played by Paapa Essiedu, will appear in his 30s, while James and Lily Potter will be depicted as

21 years old, their age at the time of their death. Mylod expressed his intent to cast talented U.K. theater actors for adult roles, while the young cast will consist of newcomers.

BRAIN PICKING



I belong to a Bohra Muslim family, and for us, food is our biggest celebration. We are used to elaborate five- to six-course meals.



- NUSHRRATT BHARUCCHA (Indian Actress)

SHALINI PASSI ENTERS 'BIGG BOSS 18' AS WILD CARD CONTESTANT, PROMO OUT



TDG NETWORK MUMBAI

After stealing attention with her stint in Fabulous Lives vs Bollywood Wives, Shalini Passi has now made wild card entry in another reality TV show 'Bigg Boss 18'.

In a promo shared on the social media platforms of Colors TV, Shalini can be seen entering the Bigg Boss house with a bang. Other contestants especially Vivian Dsena wholeheartedly welcomed Shalini. They all presented her with a bouquet when she entered the house.

Shalini was seen dressed in a red mermaid gown, paired with matching pieces of jewellery and flaunting

her signature ponytail. Everyone also looked smitten by the beauty of Shalini.

In the promo, contestant Rajat Dalal could be seen asking Shalini the secret to her beauty.

"Apki sundarta ka raaz kya hain," he asked.

The socialite responded, "I try not to take stress."

The current line-up of contestants in the show includes Vivian Dsena, Karan Veer Mehra, Avinash Mishra, Shilpa Shirodkar, Rajat Dalal, Eisha Singh, Shrutika Arjun, Digvijay Singh Rathke, Edin Rose, Sara Arfeen Khan, Chum Darang, Tajinder Bagga, Yamini Malhotra, and Kashish Kapoor. Now Shalini is also a part of the lineup.

JAAVED JAAFERI, NEERAJ KABI OPEN UP ABOUT THEIR OTT SHOW 'MOHREY'



TDG NETWORK MUMBAI

Actor Jaaved Jaferi has launched an intriguing web show titled Mohrey.

Directed by Mukul Abhyankar, the show offers a gripping narrative set in Mumbai's crime world. The cast includes Neeraj Kabi, Gayatri Bhardwaj, Aashim Gulati, Suchitra Pillai, Pulkit Makol, Pradnya Motghare, Shailesh Datar, and Amit Singh. Now streaming on Amazon MX Player, Jaaved, along with Neeraj and Pulkit, shared their experiences working on Mohrey.

Speaking to ANI, Jaaved said, "It's an interesting show... It mainly revolves around gangster Bosco and veteran cop Jabbar. It's a story about the scars we carry and the lengths we go to for redemption."

Jaaved plays the role of Bosco, while Neeraj takes on the character of Jabbar.

"I hope the audience appreciates our work. I'm playing the role of a

special task officer... Can't reveal much right now," Neeraj shared.

Pulkit also expressed his excitement about the series, saying, "Mukul sir created the series... Bhaut kamaal series banaai hai. I hope the audience watches it and gives it all their love."

In a separate conversation with ANI, Jaaved revealed updates about the Dhamaal franchise, confirming that a fourth instalment is in the pipeline, with shooting scheduled to begin early next year.

Talking about his favourite film in the series, Jaaved said, "The first one was the best for me. Now they're coming up with a fourth one. We're going to start shooting sometime early next year."

He also reflected on how comedy and filmmaking have evolved over the years, stating, "Cinema changes as the world changes. In comedy, there's an old saying: art reflects life, and life reflects art."

HEARING THE SOUND OF THE DIVINE



ERIC LE RESTE

In an article last month (9 November 2024), we looked at the process of going within before being able to go beyond. It is difficult to go beyond before I have explored the noise within. As we take the first step of withdrawing and going within, there still remains an echo of what is happening outside. In the deeper level, the basement, we begin to see the connection between the past and what is happening outside. In the deeper level yet, the bunker level, there begins the deep connection with my true, original self. If I have not done at least some of that work, then go-

ing beyond is too difficult, and I will be taking some of the 'noise' with me. So going beyond, after doing some introspection, involves three different areas.

1. Going beyond the self
2. Going beyond the stories of others
3. Going beyond what is happening in the world

Going within helps me connect with the roots, the origins of my spiritual power, the virtues and wisdom, the tools that I have to enable me to be the best I can be at this moment. Going beyond is allowing me to experience something that does not come from within myself, something bigger than me. Rajyoga - 'Raja', the yoga that makes me a ruler of the self, and 'Yoga', the link that takes me beyond - is to experience the essence of greatness and beauty in myself.

Going within means exploring the mind. Going beyond makes me detached from my own thoughts. It is a re-aligning of my mind to catch the thoughts from God - to connect my mind



The purpose of meditation is to connect with God and experience what He is thinking.

with God's mind. I have great thoughts, but there are greater thoughts. I have great feelings, but there are greater feelings. If I do not go beyond myself, I will not catch those greater thoughts

and feelings. To really hear what another is saying - I have to stop the noise of my own mind.

This first ability to detach from the self is a big exercise and requires practice. Then

secondly, I must detach from what others are saying and doing. We need to reach a point where we are not affected by the actions and words of others. To reach the stage of remaining connected

with the deepest part of the self, especially in relationships, where all we feel is the original and eternal spiritual love for all.

Thirdly, we have to go beyond the game of life, the dra-

ma of life. We may have acquired an understanding that we are all spiritual beings operating in a physical dimension, but it is not always easy to apply that knowledge in a powerful awareness; that is when things are happening in the theatre of life that touch a still as yet sensitive part of our selves. It is more possible to do this if I have done the work of going within and realising my original identity. For example, if the world stage presents us with an individual who we feel might make a mess of things, then what do I want to be - one who joins in the barrage of criticism and fear, or do I want to help with a constructive flow of energy and bless the soul with goodness, not curse them and make things even worse?

Going beyond requires the powerful perspective of seeing three aspects of time; the past, the present, and the future. This also helps me with going within. These two trajectories are interconnected, just as the egg and the chicken - they always coex-

ist. They are the two wheels for moving forward, so as not to remain spiritually stuck in myself, others, or the world situation.

So, the two aspects of going beyond are detachment from the self, others, and what is going on, and connecting with a greater Being. The purpose of meditation is to connect with God and experience what He is thinking. If I feel bad about myself today, let me connect and see what the Supreme Being thinks about me. When I go beyond, I see beauty in the world, hidden behind the many scenes of darkness. Watching the world from a distance is what is offered in connecting with God. He will show me what is within me and show me the beauty and greatness He sees in each one of His children. That is going beyond and hearing the sound of the Divine.

Eric Le Reste was a producer for the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation for more than 35 years. He coordinates the Brahma Kumaris centres in Canada and is based in Montreal.

Take it easy!



AUGUSTO ZIMBRES

"Take it easy!" This phrase can be a great challenge, especially for young people full of passion, who see the world in the state it is in and believe they can make a difference. For a young idealist and dreamer who is in a constraining life situation; one whose family has difficulty providing them with the essentials, or is an indigenous person who cannot freely express their own culture, or who suffers discrimination for being part of a minority group, or is a refugee who has difficulty fitting in with dignity in a new country, or carries trauma from any type of extreme violence - thinking about taking it easy in transforming their reality can be very difficult.

Even for someone who is young and idealistic and not in

any way deprived, their idealism and inability to be indifferent to the suffering of others, whether they are known or not, fills them with a strong desire to do something. Being young does not mean that there is not a wealth of experience within the eternal energy, the soul that gives life to the body. It may be that there is a similar story recorded within, of some deprivation and suffering from another lifetime.

What is certain is that as someone who works avidly for the interests of young people, there is a deep identification with the challenges they face of containing their eagerness to do something for the common good; containing their enthusiasm to make a difference in their community and in the world, and containing their passion to create a new reality. Containing this intense energy that needs to be expressed is an intense challenge.

Despite the sense of urgency, maturity brings a clear recognition that yes, it is really necessary to take it easy. It is challenging, but it is necessary. Because experience shows that there is a great risk of putting one's foot in it! It shows that



Maturity brings a clear recognition that it is really necessary to take it easy.

without calm, everything can go wrong, and may need to be completely redone. So, yes, no matter how urgent it is, taking

it easy is very necessary. True peace is not passive. As a song says, "...peace without a voice is not peace, it is fear..."

The imperishable Source of peace cannot remain eternally with His arms crossed, without taking action, without shar-

ing the Light of His wisdom and power so that His sweet children can free themselves from their internal and external bondage. If we are not indifferent to the suffering in the world, much less can our Father be.

When I study and meditate, I strengthen my connection with the Source of peace, which fills me with calm. And so, my wishes for a better world become a certainty. It fills me with a determination that allows me not to give up, along with the wise patience to wait for the fruit of my actions to ripen in due time.

With such a balance, of maturity, understanding, and powerful good wishes, combined with the connection with the Supreme, it is possible to say to the young, the idealist, and the dreamer, "Just take it easy", because that is how you can really change things and fulfil your destiny, and how we all will fulfil our common destiny.

Augusto Zimbres is the host of the Brazilian YouTube channel 'Inspira Saude Plena' (Inspire Full Health) and leads the Brahma Kumaris youth movement for Latin America. He is based in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

A THOUGHT FOR TODAY

Chasing after a desire is like chasing after a mirage. It is impossible to catch a desire. When I have a desire, it owns me and I am compelled to run after it. Even if I touch it for a moment and feel temporarily fulfilled, it will quickly disappear. Then my life becomes a chase. When I allow myself to be quiet and still for a few moments, I discover I have what I need already. When I experience being content I can stop chasing mirages. Today let me be still long enough to discover and appreciate the deep fulfilment within.

Serving through the mind



B.K. DR. SAVITA

It is said that man is a social animal. This acknowledges the fact that we are inherently social beings who thrive in the company of others and depend on social interactions for survival, well-being, and development. From infancy, we rely on caregivers for physical and emotional support. As we grow, we continue to seek companionship, affection, and approval from others. Social interactions shape our self-identity and behaviour. Our relationships and the understanding that individuals con-

tribute to the well-being of the group, and in turn, the group supports the individual, form the bedrock of communities.

The sustenance we receive from others in terms of material help, services, and emotional and spiritual aid, fosters in us a desire to give something in return, to be of value to the society we live in. Doing this gives meaning to our life, uplifts others, and enhances our self-esteem.

But not everyone has the resources to serve society in a tangible manner. Charities and philanthropists can do it in obvious ways, but what about ordinary citizens? Those with some talent or expertise can contribute their knowledge, skill, and experience. But what avenues of service are available to the truly modest masses, and to those whose enfeebled condition does not allow them to serve? Can they even hope to serve?

Some of the most power-



Serving others shifts our focus from individual gain to collective well-being.

ful ways of service actually require neither money nor power - power as it is generally understood in the world.

Speaking words of encouragement to someone who is struggling; giving time, attention, and company to a dejected or lonely soul; bringing the light

is isolated and rarely gets to meet anyone. How do you do that? Simply have good wishes for everyone. When we become naturally benevolent in our thoughts and attitude, the goodwill radiating from our person uplifts all who come in contact with us. It soothes the forsaken, comforts the un-

The sustenance we receive from others in terms of material help, services, and emotional and spiritual aid, fosters in us a desire to give something in return, to be of value to the society we live in. Doing this gives meaning to our life, uplifts others, and enhances our self-esteem.

of friendship and joy into someone's loveless life; and merely offering a smile to others costs us nothing. Even the most indigent can do it.

One can serve even if one

happy, and gives strength to the dejected.

Such service can bridge divides - of culture, race, class, and ideology - by fostering a sense of shared humanity. That is not all.

When we help others, even through small acts - or just thoughts - of kindness, we contribute to a legacy of goodwill that inspires others to do the same. This creates a ripple effect that spreads positivity in communities.

We also grow in the process. Serving others shifts our focus from individual gain to collective well-being. After all, life is about more than just personal success - it is also about contributing to the welfare of others and the greater good. This is why several religious and philosophical traditions emphasise the importance of serving others as a moral or spiritual duty. Selfless service brings us closer to the ideals of kindness, justice, and solidarity that are essential for an enlightened life in a troubled world.

B.K. Dr. Savita is a Rajyoga teacher at the Brahma Kumaris headquarters in Abu Road, Rajasthan.

TECH FOR GOOD: WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS SOLVING GLOBAL CHALLENGES WITH TECHNOLOGY



MS PAYAL NAMBIAR

Technology as a powerful tool for change has evolved in past decades and with this evolution has budded a powerful workforce constituted of women. Earlier, women were bound by social norms, their family expectations, and responsibilities. In many societies, there's a pervasive pressure from parents to get their girl child married early, followed by childbearing expectations and post-marriage adjustments. These social norms often led to a difficult path for women to lead successful careers and enter fields like technology, which are traditionally mostly male-dominated.

Despite these obstacles, some women choose to surf against the water and they achieve ultimate success in their personal and professional lives. Women entrepreneurs face a huge setback in their careers during their early time but family,

including their husbands, in-laws, and children, plays a crucial role in their success.

In many parts of the world, technology is not the first career choice for women they are underrepresented in nearly every area of technology, especially in sectors like manufacturing, where they are rarely seen in leadership positions. Even when women possess the skills and capabilities to grasp complex technical concepts, women in these industries are often perceived as lacking the necessary knowledge or technical proficiency. This unfortunate stereotype creates additional barriers for women who wish to pursue or advance in tech fields.

THE UNIQUE PERSPECTIVE WOMEN BRING TO TECHNOLOGY

Traditionally women have been restricted to the various opportunities in sectors like sports, healthcare, fashion, technology, and more, where they have been either denied to participate or often underrepresented in leadership roles. Despite possessing strong skills in analytics and problem-solving abilities, women in tech face stereotypes regarding their technological expertise, particularly in sectors like manufacturing, where



Women entrepreneurs face a huge setback in their careers during their early time but family, including their husbands, in-laws, and children, plays a crucial role in their success.

they are rarely involved in tech implementation and management.

However, a gradual change in the landscape brings women entrepreneurs with a fresh perspective to tech, creating solutions that address both business and societal needs. Their unique insights, shaped by diverse life experiences

and the challenges they've navigated, lead them to design solutions that prioritize long-term, people-centered impacts. This empathy-driven approach fosters technologies that are not only functional but inclusive and sustainable.

ADDRESSING THE CHALLENGES WOMEN



FACE IN TECH ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Despite being addressed to progress sometimes women entrepreneurs face challenges such as limited access to funding, mentorship, and networks. Hence, gender biases in tech circles

can make it hard for women to scale their businesses. Therefore, we can see many are now building support networks, mentorship programs, and funding avenues to uplift others, creating a ripple effect that inspires more women to en-



ter tech fields.

TECHNOLOGY AS A CATALYST FOR SOCIAL IMPACT

Using technology for the well-being of society is a core commitment that women have utilized with their regular efforts.

Eventually, we have seen how healthcare has improved with access to promoting sustainability through women-led tech companies addressing global challenges with accessible, affordable, and user-friendly solutions. By streamlining manually operated traditional sectors, entrepreneurs help businesses adapt to modern demands, breaking down barriers for future generations of women in tech.

INSPIRING THE NEXT GENERATION

As we see more women in

the technology sector, a path is created for young girls to pursue these fields with confidence.

These trailblazing women demonstrate that with resilience and innovation, they can change the perspectives of societies and the work culture within various industries.

The contributions from women in technology are reshaping the industry in a meaningful way. Through their perseverance and a commitment to social good, women entrepreneurs are solving some of the world's most pressing challenges with technology. Their contribution to tech can reshape the industry, illustrating how inclusive innovation can create a brighter and more equitable future for all.

The author is the Founder & Director of B Square.

Benefits of marrying a working woman

JEEVIKA SHARMA

In today's modern society, marriage dynamics are shifting, with more couples choosing partnerships that emphasize mutual growth, equality, and shared responsibility. Marrying a working woman can bring unique advantages that contribute to a fulfilling and balanced relationship. Here's a look at some of the benefits:

1. FINANCIAL STABILITY AND SECURITY

One of the most apparent benefits of marrying a working woman is the dual-income advantage. With both partners contributing to household expenses, families can achieve better financial stability, save for future goals, and manage unexpected expenses with greater ease. This shared financial responsibility can also alleviate stress and allow for a more comfortable lifestyle.

2. EQUAL PARTNERSHIP AND SHARED RESPONSIBILITIES

A working woman often values equality and collaboration in relationships. This dynamic encourages shared decision-making, equitable division of household chores, and mutual respect for each other's time and commitments. Such a partnership fosters a balanced and supportive home environment.

3. INSPIRATION AND GROWTH

Working women bring diverse experiences, knowledge, and perspectives from their professional lives. Their ambition and drive can inspire their partners and children, creating an atmosphere of growth and motivation at



home. A spouse who works outside the home often models resilience and adaptability, qualities that enrich family dynamics.

4. INCREASED SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL SUPPORT

A working woman is often adept at navigating relationships and managing stress, skills honed through her professional interactions. This can lead to better communication, problem-solving, and emotional support in marriage. Her broader network can also introduce new social connections and opportunities for the family.

5. IMPROVED WORK-LIFE BALANCE

Contrary to popular belief, having two working partners can improve work-life balance when responsibilities are shared. Couples can plan time for family activities, personal pursuits, and relaxation without the burden falling solely on one person. A working woman's understanding of workplace challenges can also foster empathy and better time management between partners.

6. TEACHING VALUABLE LESSONS TO CHILDREN

When children see both parents contributing to household income and responsibilities, they learn important

lessons about gender equality, hard work, and the importance of mutual respect. This sets a positive example for future generations and challenges traditional stereotypes.

7. INDEPENDENCE AND CONFIDENCE

A working woman brings a sense of independence and self-confidence to the marriage. This reduces the likelihood of co-dependency and creates a healthy dynamic where both partners retain their individuality while growing together.

8. BETTER RETIREMENT PLANNING

Dual incomes can significantly boost savings and investments, leading to better retirement plans. This ensures financial security in the later years of life, allowing couples to enjoy their golden years without financial stress.

Marrying a working woman is not just a step toward financial stability; it's a commitment to shared growth, mutual respect, and equality. Such partnerships often thrive on understanding, collaboration, and a shared vision for the future, making the journey of marriage more rewarding and meaningful. Embracing this modern dynamic can lead to stronger, happier, and more balanced relationships.

Reimagining safety: Building peace through gender-inclusive urban policies



ELSA MARIE D'SILVA

Gender-based violence (GBV) is not just a social issue—it is a fundamental human rights challenge and an alarming global crisis that is a structural impediment to peace and development. In India alone, the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) reported over 4.45 lakh cases of crimes against women in 2022. These numbers reflect the alarming persistence of patriarchal mindsets, economic disparities, and systemic gaps in legal awareness and justice. Addressing GBV effectively will require a nuanced approach that tackles the root causes of violence, dismantles harmful societal norms, and fosters inclusive, participatory solutions.

Peacebuilding, in its most effective form, is about fostering environments where all individuals can thrive free from fear. It involves addressing the root causes of conflict—such as poverty, discrimination, and lack of education—while building trust, promoting inclusivity, and empowering communities to challenge harmful societal norms. The prevention of GBV is inextricably linked to this vision. Tackling such violence requires a holistic approach that goes beyond enforcement to engage stakeholders across sectors, driving cultural shifts and systemic change.

LOCAL INTERVENTIONS AS CATALYSTS FOR CHANGE

The connection between peacebuilding and GBV is best illustrated through targeted, data-driven interventions that prioritize community engagement and trust-building. Recent initiatives in Indian cities like Faridabad and Chennai highlight the potential for transformative change when local communities collaborate with authorities to address these challenges.

In Faridabad, the Red Dot Foundation worked with local law enforcement to collect and analyze data on incidents of sexual harassment and violence using its crowdmapping platform, Safecity. The findings identified hotspots of harassment, which enabled targeted interventions. Police officers underwent gender-sensitivity training to understand the lived realities of women in public spaces, fostering empathy and building trust.

The impact of these efforts extended beyond the immediate reduction of harassment. A participatory safety audit revealed deep-seated fears and frustrations among women, with one participant sharing her harrowing experience of enduring years of domestic abuse. Through the initiative, she gained access to resources and information that empowered her to reclaim agency over her life. The intervention demonstrated how community-focused peacebuilding efforts could break cycles of silence and create safer environments for women and girls.

In Chennai, similar efforts under the Gender Lab



initiative leveraged community reports of harassment to design systemic interventions. Practical measures such as improving street lighting, enhancing transport security, and running public awareness campaigns were implemented in collaboration with local authorities. These initiatives addressed safety concerns while fostering trust and dialogue between citizens and governance structures.

Both examples underscore the importance of aligning peacebuilding principles with actionable solutions for GBV. Trust-building, education, and advocacy are critical to empowering communities and fostering a culture of accountability and respect.

PEACEBUILDING AND THE FIGHT AGAINST GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

At its essence, peacebuilding is about addressing structural inequalities and creating conditions for lasting societal harmony. GBV directly undermines these efforts by perpetuating systems of oppression and fear. For peacebuilding to be successful, it must prioritize the safety and dignity of vulnerable populations, particularly women and girls.

In India, patriarchal norms, socio-economic disparities, and cultural

interventions.

The examples from Faridabad and Chennai serve as powerful blueprints for change. They demonstrate that combating GBV requires not only strong governance but also the active participation of communities. When citizens, law enforcement, and policymakers work together, they can create environments where women and girls feel safe, valued, and empowered.

Peacebuilding begins at the grassroots level, with small, meaningful actions that collectively transform societies. By addressing GBV through trust-building, education, and systemic change, we can move closer to a future where peace is not just an aspiration but a lived reality for all.

As a Rotary Peace Fellow, I see these initiatives as critical steps in peacebuilding. Safety is not just the absence of violence—it is the presence of trust, understanding, and shared responsibility. By addressing gender stereotypes, fostering dialogue, and equipping communities with resources, we can create environments where women and girls feel respected, valued, and, above all, safe. As we mark this global campaign against GBV, let us remember that lasting change begins when we reimagine safety not as an abstract ideal but as a lived reality built on collective action. The blueprint is clear—what remains is our commitment to making it a reality.

Elsa Marie D'Silva is a Rotary Peace Fellow, and the Founder of Red Dot Foundation (India) and President of Red Dot Foundation Global (USA).

AUSTRALIA IN FIRM CONTROL AT ADELAIDE

McSweeney-Labuschagne partnership gives Aussies edge in 2nd Test

TDG NETWORK
ADELAIDE

Right-hand batters Nathan McSweeney and Marnus Labuschagne's solid partnership put Australia in firm control over India at the end of Day 1 in the second Test at the Adelaide Oval on Friday. At stumps on Day 1, Australia are 86/1 with Nathan McSweeney (38*) and Marnus Labuschagne (20*) unbeaten on the crease.

The third and final session of the first day in the pink-ball Test started with Australian openers Usman Khawaja and McSweeney started the proceedings for the hosts. Both batters put on a partnership of 24 runs before Khawaja was sent back to the pavilion on the bowling of right-arm seamer Jasprit Bumrah in the 11th over of the inning. The left-hand batter went back to the dressing room after scoring 13 runs in 35 balls which came with the help of two fours in his innings. Following Khawaja's dismissal, right-hand batter Marnus Labuschagne



The third and final session of the first day in the pink-ball Test started with Australian openers Usman Khawaja and McSweeney started the proceedings for the hosts.

came out in the middle to bat along with McSweeney. The hosts completed the 50-run mark in the 21st over as the opener slammed a boundary on the bowling of right-arm seamer Mohammed Siraj. McSweeney and Labuschagne completed their 50-run partnership in the 26th over as Swee-

ney smashed a boundary on the bowling of right-arm pacer Harshit Rana. At the end of play on Day 1, both batters have built an unbeaten partnership of 62 runs off 133 balls. For the visitors, one wicket was snapped by Bumrah where he conceded just 13 runs in his spell of 11 overs where he owled

BRIEF SCORES

India: 180 (Nitish Kumar Reddy 42, KL Rahul 37, Mitchell Starc 6/48) vs Australia 86/1 (Nathan McSweeney 38*, Marnus Labuschagne 20*, Jasprit Bumrah 1/13).

four maiden overs too. Earlier, India started the second session at 81/4, with Rishabh Pant (4*) and skipper Rohit Sharma (1*) unbeaten. The Indian captain struggled against the Aussie bowling attack and was trapped leg-before-wicket by Scott Boland for a struggle-filled three runs in 23 balls. India was 87/5 in 25.5 overs. Pant was joined by Nitish Kumar Reddy, who had notched scores of 41 and 38* in the Perth Test and won hearts of many with his aggressive hitting. India reached the 100-run mark in 30.4 overs, thanks to a fine boundary towards mid-off by Nitish. In the 33rd over, Pant was dismissed by skipper Pat

Cummins, who removed him for 21 in 35 balls. Pant could not face the awkwardly high amount of bounce and Marnus Labuschagne caught him at wide gully as he tried to defend himself. India was 109/6 in 32.5 overs. Ravichandran Ashwin was next up and he tried to exert some pressure on Australian bowlers with some boundaries, giving some support to Nitish. He was however, trapped lbw by Starc on a fine delivery for 22 in 22 balls, with three fours.

India was 141/7 in 38.2 overs. Three balls later, Starc completed his five-wicket haul by removing Harshit Rana for a duck. India was 141/8 in 38.5 overs. Nitish provided some much-needed bonus runs to India, audaciously taking on Boland, smashing him for two sixes and a four. This made Boland's line and length really unstable and he delivered two no-balls. 21 runs came from his over. However, his fightback could not last for long as Cummins got Bumrah for a duck and Nitish was Starc's

sixth wicket for 42 in 54 balls, with three fours and three sixes. India was all out for 180 in 44.1 overs. Starc (6/48 in 14.1 overs) solidified his legacy as perhaps the greatest pink-ball Test bowler with a memorable fifer, his first against India in Tests and his fourth in day and night Tests, which is most by any bowler. Cummins and Boland also got two wickets. At Tea, India was 82/4, with Rishabh Pant (4*) and skipper Rohit Sharma (1*) unbeaten. After electing to bat first, India was off to a poor start as opener Yashasvi Jaiswal was trapped leg-before-wicket plumb on the first ball of the innings.

India was 0/1. Following that, Shubman Gill and KL Rahul were the pair at the crease which had to see off the new, shiny, pink-ball. On his return from a thumb injury, Gill made his attacking intentions clear with two classy boundaries against Mitchell Starc, who had just taken Jaiswal's wicket. Gill was targeting Starc really well, hitting him for an odd boundary.

Mitchell registers career best figures in Test

AGENCIES
ADELAIDE

Australia's pace spearhead Mitchell Starc reinstated his reign of dominance after he registered his best-ever Test figures in the history of the longest format of the game on Day 1 of the second Test of the five-match Border-Gavaskar Trophy series against India at the Adelaide Oval on Friday.

Starc bowled exceptionally well, continuing his dominance with the pink-ball. The speedster bagged six wickets in his spell of 14.1 overs where he conceded 48 runs and bowled two maiden overs as well in his spell. This was his 15th Test cricket five-wicket haul as Australian pacers ran through the Indian batting on Day 1 of the second Test in Adelaide. The fast bowler snapped three wickets each in the first two sessions of the pink-ball Test at Adelaide Oval, which included the wicket of Yashasvi Jaiswal on the first ball of the day.



Then the fiery left-arm quick went on to claim the wickets of KL Rahul, Virat Kohli, Ravichandran Ashwin, Harshit Rana, and top scorer-Nitish Kumar Reddy. This was Starc's maiden five-wicket haul against India in Tests, and his fourth with the pink-ball.

It is pertinent to note that no other bowler even has more than two five-wicket hauls with pink-ball. Starc also equalled the record of West Indies seamer Pedro Collins of taking wickets for the most times on the first ball of the Test match (thrice). Richard Hadlee, Geoff Arnold, Kapil Dev and Suranga Lakmal have achieved the same landmark during their Test career.

Bumrah joins rank of India's legend Test seamers

TDG NETWORK
ADELAIDE

Star pacer Jasprit Bumrah further established himself as one of the premium Indian seamers in red-ball cricket after becoming just the third quick to take 50-plus Test wickets in a calendar year. During the second Test in Adelaide against Australia, Bumrah forced an edge off Usman Khawaja to claim his 50th scalp in 2024. Before the 30-year-old, only former captain Kapil Dev and Zaheer Khan could feature in this exclusive club.

Kapil Dev is the only Indian pacer to achieve the feat of taking 50-plus wickets in a calendar year twice. He became the first Indian seamer to do so in 1979, with 74 scalps to his name.



Third Indian bowlers to take 50-plus Test wickets in a calendar year

He replicated his stunning form in 1983 with a whopping 75 wickets. In 2002, Zaheer entered the club after bagging 51 wickets in the year. 22 years later, Bumrah entered the club after Zaheer to feature in the exclusive list.

England secure 194-run lead over NZ in 2nd Test

Brook shines with counter-attacking ton

TDG NETWORK
WELLINGTON

An explosive counter-attacking century from Harry Brook and a relentless pace onslaught by pacers helped England secure a 194-run lead at the end of day 1 of second Test against New Zealand at Wellington's Basin Reserve stadium on Friday.

At the end of day's play, Kiwis were 86/5, with William O'Rourke (0*) and Tom Blundell (7*) unbeaten. In an effort to overcome England's first innings total of 280 runs, Kiwis came out with openers Devon Conway and skipper Tom Latham, but had to face an early setback with Conway being removed by Gus Atkinson for just 11 runs in 27 balls, with two fours. NZ was 18/1 in six overs. Kane Williamson joined



Harry Brook and Ollie Pope put up a 174 run partnership for the fifth wicket, unleashing a brilliant counterattack.

Latham and both tried to stitch a partnership. Kiwis reached the 50-run mark in 12.4 overs. However, skipper Ben Stokes struck for England, removing Latham for 17 in 32 balls, with a four. NZ was 53/2 in 14.2 overs.

Chris Woakes removed Rachin Ravindra for just three, while Brydon Carse got rid of Williamson (37 in 56 balls, with three fours) and Daryl Mitchell (6). NZ was 79/5 in 23.2 overs. Carse (2/28) was the pick of the bowlers for England.

Three Indian lifters to compete in world championship in Bahrain

TDG NETWORK
MANAMA

A three-member Indian team, all women, will be competing in the World Weightlifting Championship in Manama, Bahrain starting from Friday onwards. The tournament, scheduled to take place till December 16, will not witness Tokyo Olympics 2020 silver medalist Mirabai Chanu in action as she has an eye on long-term rehab from her injuries. She last played in 2024 Paris Olympics, where she missed out on a medal by finishing fourth. In her absence, the up and coming Gyaneshwari Yadav will be representing the tricolour in women's 49 kg category. She is also a silver medalist at the junior world championships level and secured a gold medal in the last year's Commonwealth Championships in the 49kg division, as per Olympics.com.

ISL: Kerala Blasters FC eye win against Bengaluru FC



AGENCIES
BENGALURU

Bengaluru FC (BFC) and Kerala Blasters FC (KBFC) are set to face off at the Sree Kanteerava Stadium in Bengaluru in the Indian Super League (ISL) 2024-25 on Saturday, December 7, at 7:30 PM IST.

The Blues aim to consolidate their impressive home form, while the visitors seek to overcome their struggles on the road and return to winning ways in this highly anticipated Southern Rivalry.

Notably, the match marks the 200th ISL appearance for Kerala Blasters FC - a milestone

they will be eager to celebrate with a victory. Bengaluru FC currently hold second place in the standings with 20 points from 10 games, courtesy of six wins and two draws. In contrast, the Kochi-based team, sitting in 10th place with 11 points from three wins and two draws, will look to climb up the table.

Bengaluru FC have earned 13 points from their first five home games this season (W4 D1). A win in this fixture would set a new record of 16 points after six home games, surpassing their best tally from the 2018-19 season, a campaign in which they secured the league title.

Anmol upsets defending champion Thailand's Chaiwan to reach semis

TDG NETWORK
GUWAHATI

India's rising women's singles star Anmol Kharb kept her cool under relentless pressure to pack off defending champion Lalinrat Chaiwan of Thailand in the quarter-finals of the Guwahati Masters Super 100 badminton tournament here on Friday.

Kharb had fought back from 11-16 and 16-20 in the second game to earn two match points only to miss out. She faced a similar situation twice in the decider but this time converted the second opportunity to win 21-13, 22-24, 22-20 in an hour and 14 minutes to advance to the semi-finals. She will now face Mansi Singh, who defeated Thailand's Yataweemin Kateklieng 22-20, 21-18, in an all-Indian semifinal. Other Indians making it to the semifinals included men's singles third seed Sathish Kumar Karuna-



Kharb had fought back from 11-16 and 16-20 in the second game to earn two match points only to miss out.

karan and mixed doubles fifth seeds Dhruv Kapila and Tanisha Crasto. Sathish Kumar defeated Saran Jamsri of Thailand 21-19, 21-13 while Dhruv and Tanisha got the better of K Sathwik Reddy and Vaishnavi Khadkekar 21-16, 21-14.

This is the second edition of the competition, organised jointly by the Badminton Association of India and the

Assam Badminton Association with the view of providing much-needed exposure to young Indian shuttlers. Top seeds and defending champions Ashwini Ponnappa and Tanisha Crasto were the only Indian pair left in the fray in women's doubles after beating China's fifth seeds Huang Ke Xin and Tang Rui Zhi 21-18, 21-13 in the quarterfinals.

Tennis Premier League: Battle for top 4 heats up

TDG NETWORK
MUMBAI

It was another gripping day of action in the Tennis Premier League Season 6 at the Cricket Club of India in Mumbai with saw all teams in action.

Thursday proved to be another resounding day for Hyderabad Strikers as they continued to dominate the league in terms of standings.

The battle for the top four is also heating up as the Rajasthan Rangers, Gujarat Panthers, and Punjab Patriots won their respective matches on the day. To get the proceedings underway on day three, it was Hyderabad Strikers taking on Yash Mumbai Eagles.

Harriet Dart gave Hyderabad Strikers an ideal start, beating Zeynep Sonmez 15-10 in the Women's Singles category. Karan Singh fought back for Yash Mumbai Eagles, getting the better of Benjamin Lock in a closely fought contest that finished 13-12 in the



Harriet Dart gave Hyderabad Strikers an ideal start, beating Zeynep Sonmez 15-10 in the Women's Singles category.

Men's Singles category. In the Mixed Doubles category, Yash Mumbai Eagles' Zeynep Sonmez and Jeevan Nedunchezhiyan secured the win against Harriet Dart and Vishnu Vardhan of Hyderabad Strikers, with a scoreline of 13-12.

Hyderabad Strikers had the last laugh in the Men's Doubles category, as Benjamin Lock and Vishnu Vardhan defeated Jeevan Nedunchezhiyan and Karan Singh by a scoreline of 13-12, giving Hyderabad Strikers a 52-48 victory against Yash Mumbai Eagles, as per a TPL press release. The second match of the day saw Chennai Smashers take on Rajasthan Rangers. It was a strong start for Conny Perrin, who got over the line against Cristina Dinu of Rajasthan Rangers with a scoreline of 14-11 in the Women's Singles category.

In Men's Singles, Rajasthan Rangers' Arthur Fery pulled off an exceptional result against Hugo Gaston of Chennai Smashers, winning 16-9. The pairing of Rohan Bopanna and Cristina Dinu clinched a thrilling game against Conny Perrin and Rithvik Choudary Bollipalli in the Mixed Doubles category, securing a 14-11 win.

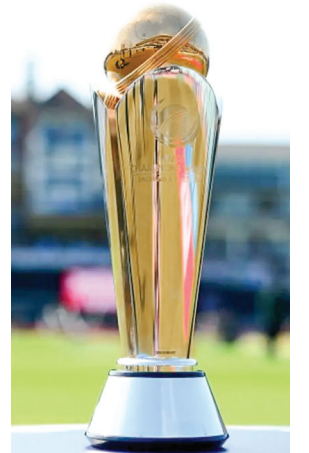
ICC, PCB agree on hybrid model for 2025 Champions Trophy

AGENCIES
DUBAI

A significant breakthrough has emerged regarding the hosting of the 2025 Champions Trophy.

The International Cricket Council (ICC) and the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) have reportedly reached an in-principle agreement to adopt a hybrid model for global tournaments hosted in Pakistan or India until 2027. This model would allow both nations to play their games at ICC tournaments hosted by the other country at a neutral venue.

Although sources confirmed the agreement to ESPNcricinfo, the PCB, the official host of the 2025 Champions Trophy, has not publicly commented, stating only that discussions are ongoing. It is still unclear whether the hybrid model will apply to both men's and women's tournaments. In the ICC's current commercial cycle (2024-27), there are three global events scheduled to be hosted in



either country, the Champions Trophy in Pakistan in February 2025, the women's ODI World Cup in India later in 2025, and the men's T20 World Cup in 2026, co-hosted by India and Sri Lanka.

According to ESPNcricinfo, the agreement was reportedly reached after meetings between new ICC Chair Jay Shah and PCB Chair Mohsin Naqvi in Dubai. These discussions took place alongside a courtesy board meeting arranged by Shah during his visit to the ICC headquarters in his new role.