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PM to attend IAF's air show at Varanasi

NEW DELHI: Prime Minister Narendra Modi is scheduled to visit his parliamentary constituency, Varanasi, on October 25. During his visit, Modi will inaugurate a factory in Sevapuri and attend the Indian Air Force's (IAF) aerial display at Namo Ghat. Modi will attend the air show alongside Uttar Pradesh CM Yogi Adityanath and other officials. The event, titled 'Indian Air Force Aerial Display 2026', will showcase the force's combat capabilities, advanced technology and flying skills under the theme 'Wings Over Ganges'.

Putin agrees to resume trilateral talks on Ukraine war

MOSCOW: President Vladimir Putin agreed Wednesday to resume trilateral negotiations with Washington and Kyiv on ending the war in Ukraine, a Kremlin official said. The Russian leader has agreed "in principle" to resume the talks after November 10, Putin's foreign affairs adviser Yuri Ushakov told reporters following a meeting in St. Petersburg between Putin and US President Donald Trump's envoy Steve Witkoff. The trilateral talks will focus on "building a security system for Russia and Ukraine after the conflict ends," Ushakov said.

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eMudhra's security code compromised



NEW DELHI: Indian digital certification authority eMudhra has revealed that private keys associated with its certificates have been compromised, which verify trusted digital assets and ensure secure online data transmission, according to an advisory from the cybersecurity watchdog Cert-In. Noting that eMudhra operates its Indian services, including eSign, and a global certificate business, government sources said that the problem arose in the global business, and that the impact on India is expected to be "limited".

IRREGULAR by MANJUL

Believe me, the India-US trade deal is just weeks away. I've been telling you this for years. Don't you remember?

SEC HALTS POLL PROCESS IN ALL ULBs AFTER SC ORDER

- Commission to decide on extending nomination deadline
- Final list of candidates deferred to October 25
- Any extension must provide at least 48 hours for fresh nominations

K VARAPRASADA RAO
AMARAVATI

IN a significant late-night development, the Andhra Pradesh State Election Commission (AP SEC) on Wednesday ordered an immediate halt to the further election process in all 100 urban local bodies (ULBs) in Andhra Pradesh, reversing its earlier decision to suspend proceedings only in 19 municipalities. The decision has effectively put the municipal election process on hold across the State, pending a fresh assessment of allegations that candidates were prevented from filing nominations because of violence and law-and-order problems. The SEC issued the directive in compliance with the Supreme Court's interim order on Wednesday, which requires the Commission to examine complaints from the YSR Congress Party (YS-



RCP) and individual candidates and decide by Thursday (October 22), whether the nomination deadline should be extended in cases where obstruction is established. The Commission had issued notifications for elections to 13 municipal corporations and 87 municipalities and nagar panchayats. Nominations were received from October 16 to 18, and scrutiny was conducted on October 19. The next stage of the process has now been stopped across all 100 urban local

bodies until the SEC takes a decision in accordance with the court's directions. The Supreme Court on Wednesday directed the SEC to examine representations and supporting material, including video footage and other electronic evidence, to determine whether candidates were denied a genuine opportunity to contest. Where the Commission finds that candidates were unable to file nominations because of a breakdown in law and order, it must consider extend-

ing the deadline. The court also directed the SEC to postpone publication of the final list of candidates, originally scheduled for October 21, until October 25. Any extension of the nomination deadline must provide candidates at least 48 hours from the announcement of the decision to submit their nominations, with the election notification amended wherever necessary. The order does not provide for a blanket extension of nominations across the state. Instead, the SEC must assess the evidence and identify cases in which candidates were genuinely prevented from filing their papers. In its Wednesday-night order, the SEC said it would issue a further decision on October 22 after obtaining reports from collectors and district election authorities, as well as commissioners of police and superintendents of police. The Commission had initially halted further pro-

ceedings in 19 municipalities following the court's intervention while allowing elections elsewhere to continue. The latest directive extends the suspension to all 100 urban local bodies while the SEC completes its assessment. A special Supreme Court bench comprising Justices Joymalya Bagchi and V Mohana emphasised that the obligation to conduct elections within a prescribed timetable could not override the need to provide candidates a fair opportunity to contest. The matter is scheduled for a further hearing on October 27, when the SEC and the director general of police must submit compliance reports. The Commission's decision on Thursday will determine whether the nomination process is reopened in specific urban local bodies or wards and how the remaining election schedule will proceed.

YSRCP distorting SC verdict: Naidu

K VARAPRASADA RAO

- Warns rebels of suspension
- Directs TDP cadre to coordinate with Jana Sena, BJP
- Orders intensified grassroots-level campaigning

AMARAVATI: Chief Minister Nara Chandrababu Naidu on Wednesday accused the YSR Congress Party (YSRCP) of distorting the Supreme Court's verdict on

urban local body elections to mislead the public and gain political mileage. He alleged that YSRCP chief Y S Jagan Mohan Reddy was using litigation to obstruct elections, development, and welfare initiatives. **Continued on Page 7**



Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu participating in the Police Commemoration Day event in Mangalagiri on Wednesday

LAW & ORDER

Naidu calls upon AP Police to set nat'l benchmark

Political patronage must not shield criminals

K VARAPRASADA RAO
AMARAVATI

CHIEF Minister N Chandrababu Naidu on Wednesday called upon the Andhra Pradesh Police to set a national benchmark in maintaining law and order by combining technological advancement with professional efficiency, courage and compassion. He said security, development, employment and public well-being were closely interconnected, as investor confidence in law and order encouraged industrial growth and job

creation. Participating in Police Commemoration Day at the 6th Andhra Pradesh Special Police Battalion in Mangalagiri, Naidu paid tributes to police personnel who sacrificed their lives in the line of duty. He said maintaining law and order would remain his top priority whenever he was in office. The Chief Minister made it clear that crimes committed under political cover would not be tolerated and that political connections must never protect offenders. **Continued on Page 7**

PM reviews state of economy with FM, EAC-PM members

NEW DELHI: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday held a meeting with permanent members of the Economic Advisory Council to the Prime Minister (EAC-PM), Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman and Finance ministry officials to discuss the state of the economy, sources said. "The meeting was on the current state of the Indian economy. How to navigate the economy amid external uncertainties, enhance ease of doing business and revisit existing policies to attract more investment were some of the key topics of discussion," they said.

India, US trade deal to be much different: Trump

WASHINGTON

US President Donald Trump said that India and the US are "pretty close" to reaching a trade deal, which will be much different than the earlier pacts. Speaking to reporters at the Oval Office on Tuesday, Trump said India and the US were pretty close to making a trade deal. "They want to make a deal. We're going to make a deal. Pretty close, yeah," Trump said in response to a question. "It's going to be a much different kind of deal



than we've done," the President said. Trump's remarks came at a time Secretary of State Marco Rubio was visiting India and discussed further strengthening bilateral relations focusing on sectors such as trade, energy, technology, defence and people-to-people ties. Earlier, Rubio also said

Washington was "trying to finalise a trade deal with India" and was "very close to doing that." Earlier this month, Union Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal met US Trade Representative Jamieson Greer in Milwaukee and Washington to discuss the finer aspects of the trade deal. He recently said the first tranche of the India-US bilateral trade agreement had been finalised and was undergoing legal drafting, with the government hoping to complete the process soon.



Ashutosh Ranka (L) and Saurav Das,

Court orders CJP leaders' release

NEW DELHI: A Special Executive Magistrate (SEM) on Wednesday ordered the release of CJP leaders Saurav Das and Ashutosh Ranka following the expiry of their judicial custody in connection with the October 14 protest at Jantar Mantar. The two leaders were produced before the magistrate, where their surety documents were also submitted during the proceedings. **Continued on P7**

Punjab CM detained at Delhi airport, fined ₹50K

NEW DELHI: The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) on Tuesday alleged that Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann was detained for nearly three hours at Delhi's Indira Gandhi International Airport after returning from Paris, before officials issued him a challan of Rs 50,000, claiming they were under "tremendous pressure from above". The party has accused the Centre of deliberately



humiliating Mann and creating hurdles in Punjab's progress, linking the alleged incident to repeated denials of political clearance for the chief minister's foreign visits. **Continued on Page 7**

SBI probes suspected dark web exposure of 3,897 customer records

NEW DELHI

THE country's largest bank, SBI, on Wednesday said it is investigating the suspected exposure of 3,897 customer records containing personally identifiable information on the dark web, following alerts it received on October 16 from its threat intelligence service provider, the Defence Cyber Agency, and CERT-In. A preliminary analysis of around 3.75 lakh records available on the dark web identified 3,897 customer records containing sensi-

tive information, including registered mobile numbers, dates of birth, names, gender, email addresses and residential addresses, State Bank of India (SBI) said in the regulatory filing on Wednesday. The exposed information reportedly also included branch and Customer Information File (CIF) identifiers, lead IDs, and metadata associated with loan and lead records and other related files. It said a detailed investigation was required to establish the authenticity and completeness of the exposed



data, determine the potential source and extent of the exposure, and assess the associated risks to customers and the bank. SBI said it had promptly

activated its cyber incident response and containment protocols. It had also engaged an independent cybersecurity agency empanelled by CERT-In to conduct

a comprehensive assessment and investigate the alleged compromise. The incident has had no material impact on the bank's core business operations, financial performance or business continuity, the filing said, adding that its core business functions continued to operate normally without disruption. A detailed assessment is underway, and the bank is implementing appropriate remedial and preventive measures, it said.

HDFC probe finds senior execs leaked confidential info

NEW DELHI: HDFC Bank's internal investigation has found evidence that two senior executives disclosed confidential business strategies and potentially market-sensitive information to outsiders. The investigation is still underway, with the bank examining whether the information was misused, according to the report. The

executives, who oversee key businesses and functions at the lender, have been formally informed of the findings. It was not immediately clear what disciplinary action would follow. An HDFC Bank spokesperson acknowledged the internal review but declined to comment on its findings or identify the executives involved. **Continued on Page 7**

Violence erupts as ZPTC, MPTC nomination process begins

- Clashes between TDP and YSRCP workers marred first day of nominations in erstwhile Chittoor district

- Punganur witnesses confrontations, including stone-pelting and attacks with sticks, leaving several workers injured

PRADEEP VENNELAKANTI
TIRUPATI

CLASHES between rival political groups, alleged attacks on leaders and damage to vehicles marred the opening day of ZPTC and MPTC nominations in the erstwhile Chittoor district on Wednesday, forcing police to step up security at sensitive centres.

Tension prevailed at several locations in Annamayya, Chittoor and Tirupati districts as workers of the TDP and YSRCP accused each other of obstructing candidates from filing nominations.

The incidents included stone-pelting, alleged snatching and tearing of nomination papers, and confrontations involving party leaders and their supporters.

Punganur in Annamayya district witnessed multiple clashes, with the situation turning particularly tense at the municipal high school, where nominations



TDP and YSRCP cadre resorting to stone pelting in Punganur on Wednesday



Police dispersing the rival groups in Punganur

were being received for 16 MPTC seats and one ZPTC seat. Workers belonging to the two parties allegedly attacked each other with stones and sticks, leaving several people injured.

In another incident in Punganur town, former vice-MPP Eswaramma of Kamatampalli arrived with her supporters to file MPTC nominations. YSRCP leaders alleged that TDP supporters obstructed them and snatched their nomination papers, triggering protests and stone-pelting. The confrontation reportedly escalated, with sticks and liquor bottles being used during the clashes. Several cars and two-wheelers parked along the roadside were damaged. YSRCP workers

staged a protest, accusing TDP supporters of attacking them and raising slogans against the police over their handling of the situation.

Tension also prevailed in Valmikipuram, where police arrested Chintala Sai Krishna Reddy, son of former Pileru MLA Chintala Ramachandra Reddy, at the YSRCP office. Objecting to the arrest, Ramachandra Reddy staged a sit-in at the Gandhi bus stand, alleging that the police had not informed him where his son was being taken. Police subsequently arrested the former MLA and shifted him to the local police station. In Chittoor, the area outside the district Zilla Parishad office, where ZPTC nominations were being



Car set on fire in Punganur

received, witnessed further commotion.

Former deputy chief minister and senior YSRCP leader K Narayana Swamy allegedly faced an attack when he arrived to support the party's Penumuru ZPTC candidate.

His vehicle was reportedly targeted, and he left the premises amid the disturbance. YSRCP leaders also alleged that nomination papers belonging to their candidates were torn.

In a separate incident, Telugu Mahila president Karjala Aruna was reportedly attacked by an individual while accompanying a ZPTC candidate from Penumuru mandal to file the nomination. Chittoor town police personnel reportedly pursued the suspect.

Meanwhile, a motorcycle belonging to a YSRCP worker was allegedly set on fire in Thottambadu mandal of the Srikalahasti constituency. According

to reports, some persons stopped the worker while he was riding the vehicle before setting it ablaze. Tirupati MP Dr M Gurumoorthy condemned the alleged attacks on YSRCP leaders and candidates in the constituency. He accused coalition leaders and workers, allegedly acting with police support, of targeting former MLA and Srikalahasti constituency YSRCP incharge Biyyapu Madhusudhan Reddy,

MLC Sipai Subramanyam and other party members who had gone to support candidates filing nominations. In Chittoor, police had already imposed prohibitory orders under Section 144 to prevent further disturbances.

During security checks near Gangineni Cheruvu, police identified a group of bouncers from other states whose movements were considered suspicious and escorted them towards the district border.

150 cops take to streets in Nellore to instill confidence among voters



Police during a flag march in Nellore city ahead of local body elections, on Wednesday

HANS NEWS SERVICE
NELLORE

TO maintain law and order and instill voter confidence ahead of the upcoming local body elections, the SPSS Nellore district police conducted a high-visibility flag march in the Nellore Town Sub-Division on Wednesday night.

Around 150 police officers and personnel across various ranks participated in two separate routes covering key commercial and sensitive areas.

One march proceeded from Madras Bus Stand via Fish Market, Shaji Mandir, Kotamitta, Janda Veedhi Centre, and Chinnna Bazaar before concluding at Pedda Bazaar.

Another flag march was taken out from Gandhi Bomma Centre to Bose Bomma Centre, ending at the District Police Office (DPO). Through this exercise, the department sent a clear message that robust security arrangements are in place to ensure peaceful and trouble-free elections.

Simultaneously, police escalated surveillance on individuals involved in unlawful activities during past general and local body elections, specifically focusing on those flagged in 2013-14, 2019,

2020-21, and 2024. Preventive security measures are being actively executed across identified sensitive zones.

Superintendent of Police Dr Ajitha Vejendla issued a stern warning that strict legal action would be initiated against anyone violating the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita

(BNS), Panchayat Raj Act, or Model Code of Conduct.

Emphasizing zero tolerance for voter intimidation, inducement, or attempts to disrupt public order, the SP appealed to all political parties, candidates, and citizens to extend full cooperation to ensure elections are held peacefully.

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Branch-wise loan details, along with customer details are available with the respective branches / annexure.

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MADANAPALLE-KADIRI ROAD-AP : L30100040139800, L30100040200612, L30100040240549
District: NTR Auction Centre Address: CAPRI LOANS, D NO 4-1-34, GROUND FLOOR KT ROAD, BESIDE UNION BANK CHITTHINAGAR ONE TOWN VIJAYAWADA, ANDHRA PRADESH -520001
VIJAYAWADA-NTR SINGH NAGAR-AP : L30100040372349, L30100040482945, L30100040494573, L30100040505022, VIJAYAWADA-BHAVANIPURAM-AP : L30100040479261, L30100040497630, L30100040498043, L30100040520485, VIJAYAWADA-GANDHI NAGAR-AP : L30100040480340, L30100040486807, L30100040486837, VIJAYAWADA-GOVERNORPET-AP : L30100040489542, VIJAYAWADA-ONE TOWN-AP : L30100040434262, L30100040462033, L30100040484601
District: SRI SATYHA SAI Auction Centre Address: CAPRI LOANS, NO 17-3-627, FIRST FLOOR, PADVATHI TOWERS, PENUKONDA ROAD, KL ROAD CIRCLE, DHANALAKSHMI RD HINDUPUR, ANDHRA PRADESH -515201
HINDUPUR-DHANALAKSHMI ROAD-AP : L30100040485170, L30100040485392, L30100040431013, L30100040464974, L30100040464994, L30100040479687
District: TIRUPATI Auction Centre Address: CAPRI LOANS, D NO 19-12-416, GROUND FLOOR, BAIRACIPETTADA OPP RAMANAJU HIGH SCHOOL, TIRUPATI ANDHRA PRADESH -575051
SRIKALAHASTI-WARD 16-AP : L30100040481970, L30100040484097, L30100040484103, L30100040484104, L30100040484105, L30100040484106, L30100040484107, L30100040484108, L30100040484109, L30100040484110, L30100040484111, L30100040484112, L30100040484113, L30100040484114, L30100040484115, L30100040484116, L30100040484117, L30100040484118, L30100040484119, L30100040484120, L30100040484121, L30100040484122, L30100040484123, L30100040484124, L30100040484125, L30100040484126, L30100040484127, L30100040484128, L30100040484129, L30100040484130, L30100040484131, L30100040484132, L30100040484133, L30100040484134, L30100040484135, L30100040484136, L30100040484137, L30100040484138, L30100040484139, L30100040484140, L30100040484141, L30100040484142, L30100040484143, L30100040484144, L30100040484145, L30100040484146, L30100040484147, L30100040484148, L30100040484149, L30100040484150, L30100040484151, L30100040484152, L30100040484153, L30100040484154, L30100040484155, L30100040484156, L30100040484157, 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WINDOWS

CM congratulates para-badminton silver medalist

CHENNAI: Chief Minister C Joseph Vijay on Wednesday congratulated the Indian men's doubles badminton team and Tamil Nadu para-athlete Sivaraman Solaimalai for winning the silver medal at the ongoing fifth Asian Para Games in Japan. In a social media post, Vijay announced a substantial cash incentive of Rs 50 lakh from the Tamil Nadu Government to honour Solaimalai's remarkable achievement. Praising the athlete's dedication and perseverance, the government noted that this victory serves as a powerful inspiration for aspiring para-athletes across the state, wishing him continued success in bringing further glory to Tamil Nadu and India.

Govt puts 8,200 personnel on alert as N-E monsoon intensifies

CHENNAI: Tamil Nadu has placed around 8,200 fire and rescue personnel on alert as the northeast monsoon intensifies, deploying specialist teams in vulnerable areas and mobilising boats, emergency equipment and volunteers to respond to flooding. The Tamil Nadu Fire and Rescue Services Department has directed its 375 fire stations and three rescue stations at Hogenakkal, Kotagiri and Chennai's Marina Beach to remain operational round the clock. National and State Disaster Response Force teams have also been deployed in areas facing heavy rainfall. Police and fire personnel are monitoring approximately 4,400 locations identified by the State Disaster Management Authority as vulnerable to flooding. The fire department is separately maintaining surveillance over 1,343 low-lying locations across Tamil Nadu. Rescue teams have been positioned at 125 locations where previous floods caused significant casualties and property damage. Each deployment comprises 20 personnel equipped with rescue vehicles, rubber boats, drones and life jackets. District-level preparations include two commando teams, trained rescue swimmers and personnel specialising in rope operations. Equipment kept ready includes motorboats, rubber boats, power saws for removing fallen trees, pumps for draining floodwater, ropes and life jackets. Advanced devices, including rope launchers, rope riders and motion-imaging cameras, are available to help locate and rescue people trapped amid debris. Walkie-talkies have been readied to maintain communication if regular networks are disrupted, officials said.

Govt hikes contingency fund for police stations

CHENNAI: The Tamil Nadu government on Wednesday substantially hiked the monthly contingency fund for all police stations in the state, allocating over Rs 71 crore annually for the purpose. This hike will help "to prevent and eradicate corrupt practices," an official release from the government said. Chief Minister C Joseph Vijay announced the hike during the demand for grants for the police department for the year 2026-27 in Assembly, the release added. The initiative is designed to meet the rising day-to-day administrative and operational expenses of police stations. The government noted that enhancing these funds will reduce the stations' dependence on unofficial financial sources, thereby helping to prevent and eradicate corrupt practices. Under the revised structure, police stations across the state have been classified into three categories based on the volume of crimes registered. The monthly contingency fund allocation has been increased from Rs 3,750 to Rs 30,000 for the first category, from Rs 6,000 to Rs 40,000 for the second category, and from Rs 8,250 to Rs 50,000 for the third category.

Modi expresses grief over demise of Sengol craftsman Vummidi Ethiraj

CHENNAI

PRIME Minister Narendra Modi has expressed grief over the passing of Vummidi Ethiraj, remembering his role in crafting the historic Sengol presented to India's first Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru, and honouring his contribution to the country's cultural heritage. The master craftsman, who was born on November 25, 1926, passed away on Wednesday. In a condolence message issued in English and Tamil, PM Modi recalled Ethiraj's association with the sceptre, which was installed in the new Parliament building in 2023. He extended his condolences to the craftsman's family and admirers. The Prime Minister said Ethiraj belonged to a distinguished family based in Tamil Nadu and would be remembered for helping create an object closely associated with India's journey to Independence. PM Modi also recalled meeting Ethiraj when the Sengol received renewed national attention during preparations for the inauguration of the new Parliament



building. He said the meeting provided an opportunity to thank the veteran craftsman for his service to the nation and its culture. Describing the installation as an honour for his government, PM Modi said the decision gave the Sengol a prominent place in Parliament, bringing its history and craftsmanship before a new generation. His tribute highlighted the connection between tra-

ditional artistic skills and the country's national story, recognising Ethiraj's work as part of a cultural legacy that continued to resonate decades after the sceptre was made. The Sengol was crafted by the Chennai-based Vummidi Bangaru Chetty family and presented to Nehru in 1947. Its installation near the Lok Sabha Speaker's chair on May 28, 2023, brought renewed recognition to the family and the artisans associated with its creation. For Ethiraj, that recognition connected work undertaken around the time of Independence with a major event in contemporary parliamentary history. His meeting with PM Modi became part of the public acknowledgement of the family's contribution. The Prime Minister's message focused on both that historical association and the human skill behind the Sengol. He remembered Ethiraj as a craftsman whose life reflected the enduring relationship between India's traditions and its national development. The tribute also drew attention to the people behind historic objects, acknowledging how their skills can preserve cultural memory across generations. In recalling their meeting, PM Modi placed Ethiraj's personal contribution alongside the wider significance attached to the Sengol. PM Modi concluded by conveying sympathy to the bereaved family and those who admired Ethiraj, ending his message with the prayer, "Om Shanti".

EPS grip on AIADMK machinery could blunt fresh leadership challenges

CHENNAI

AIADMK General Secretary, Edappadi K Palaniswami, faces renewed questions over his leadership following the party's defeats in the Madurantakam and Dharapuram Assembly bye-elections, but his control over its organisational machinery could limit efforts to mount an internal challenge. Senior leaders S.P. Velumani and C Ve Shanmugam are reportedly seeking a leadership change amid dissatisfaction over the party's electoral performance. However, Palaniswami's earlier organisational changes are believed to have strengthened his position within the General Council, the body central to any leadership contest. The removal of dissenting functionaries from key posts has reduced their influence within the party and narrowed their ability to mobilise support. Changes affecting their representation and voting strength have also made it harder for disgruntled leaders to translate dissatisfaction into an effective challenge. Several functionaries associated with the Velumani faction reportedly lost organisational positions, weakening the group's district-level networks. Their reduced presence in the party structure has given Palaniswami an advantage as demands grow for a General Council meeting to review the bypoll setbacks. With around 2,300 members, the General Council has emerged as the principal arena for the unfolding struggle. Palaniswami's supporters are believed to command a majority, potentially allowing him to withstand criticism and retain control even if a meeting is convened. For the dissenters, a council meeting would provide an opportunity to question electoral strategy, organisational decisions and the leadership's response to successive setbacks. Their immediate task, however, would be to secure support beyond their existing circles and demonstrate that their concerns reflect broader sentiment. The defeats have supplied fresh grounds for demands for accountability, but electoral disappointment alone may not alter the internal balance of power. Any attempt to press for leadership change would require substantial backing within the council and among influential district functionaries. Palaniswami, meanwhile, must manage discontent while responding to concerns about the AIADMK's ability to regain electoral momentum. His organisational strength offers protection against an immediate revolt, although it does not resolve the political questions raised by the results. The coming weeks could test whether dissatisfied leaders can build a wider coalition or whether Palaniswami's command of the party structure will keep the challenge contained. For now, the balance appears to favour the general secretary, with his critics facing a considerable gap between expressing dissent and securing the numbers needed to act.



CM launches state-wide rainwater harvesting awareness campaign



CHENNAI

TAMIL Nadu Chief Minister C Joseph Vijay on Wednesday launched a state-wide awareness campaign to promote rainwater harvesting, unveiling a dedicated logo and a mascot named 'Thuli'.

During the event, Vijay inspected models of rainwater harvesting systems designed

to encourage water conservation among the public. The mascot, 'Thuli', which means a drop of water, is depicted as a blue water character carrying a house, highlighting the importance of rainwater harvesting in residential buildings. The campaign comes ahead of the Northeast monsoon, the state's pri-

Maiden Durga Puja celebrations at IIT Madras a big success

KOLKATA

THE first ever Durga Puja held with the campus of the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Madras turned out to be a great hit, with more than 2,500 people attending over the last four days. The Durga Puja has been organised by the IIT Madras Bengali community in association with Diganto. Diganto is an independent student body and cultural club under Sangam -- the institute's cultural club umbrella. It celebrates Bengali culture, language and festivals on campus. "The five-day festivities bring the vibrant traditions and cultural spirit of Bengal to the campus, from Sasthi evening to Vijaya Dashami," IIT Madras said in a statement. From Vedic chanting, Homam and Arati to the participation of IIT Madras Director V. Kamakoti, who joined the rituals and chanted chapters from the Durga Saptashati, the celebrations are filled with devotion, cultural heritage and community spirit," it said. The Puja was organised at the institute's community hall and everybody, including people from the neighbourhood were encouraged to participate. "It has brought together students, faculty, staff, campus families and visitors from across Chennai, reflecting the inclusive spirit of IIT Madras," the institute said. A professor said how attention was paid to every detail. There were some who got the opportunity to participate in a Durga Puja for a first time and all

the rituals were explained to them." It turned out to be a cultural melting point. Locals, as well as people from other regions in the country participated wholeheartedly. That is what made the effort a great success," he added. Chennai has about 8-10 prominent Durga Pujas organised by the Bengali community. The scale of the festivities draws people from the state to participate. Durga Puja is primarily celebrated in a big way in the country's eastern states, comprising West Bengal, Odisha, Bihar, Jharkhand, and the Northeastern states of Assam and Tripura. There are subtle variations across the states, though the primary theme remains intact. "By organising the Durga Puja for the first time on campus, the students, teachers, and staff have paved the way for an integration of culture. At the same time, Bengali students and families living on campus get a feel of being at home during this festive occasion," the professor noted. "The event was not only about religion, but an exchange of culture," he said. People got to learn of the traditional offerings made to the Goddess, such as the concept of Bhog. They got to learn about the significance of rituals like Sandhi Puja. "People got to know how the Goddess is treated as a daughter during Durga Puja. Tomorrow, they will witness her send-off, as she sets off for Lord Shiva's abode in Mt. Kailash with her children," the teacher said.

PMK urges govt to allocate adequate funds for rural employment scheme

CHENNAI

PMK president Anbumani Ramadoss on Wednesday urged the Tamil Nadu government to allocate sufficient funds for the rural employment guarantee scheme, calling the state's recent allocation of Rs 100 crore an ineffective gesture that falls drastically short of what is required to provide additional work days. In a statement, the PMK leader stated that while the Tamil Nadu government's objective to provide 150 days of employment annually under the Viksit Bharat-Guarantee for Rozgar and Aajeevika Mission (Gramin) (VB-G RAM G) scheme is commendable, the funds earmarked for the



initiative are grossly inadequate. "Although the initial announcement of providing 150 days of work featured in the TVK election manifesto, the central government recently modified the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS) to increase guaranteed work from 100 to 125 days per year," he said, adding, "to cover the remaining 25 days, the state government issued an order allocating Rs 100 crore."

Anbumani questioned the feasibility of implementing the poll promise with such a "minuscule" fund. Stating that 81.08 lakh families in Tamil Nadu have registered under the scheme, with 69.11 lakh families actively seeking and receiving work, Anbumani said the breakdown of daily expenses per worker includes a direct wage of Rs 271.38, material and skilled labour costs of Rs 208.64, and administrative costs of Rs 53. "Together, the daily cost per beneficiary amounts to Rs 532.02, shared by the central and state governments," he said and claimed that to provide employment for 69.11 lakh active families across the state, the government requires Rs 367.68 crore

per day. Pointing out that since the additional 25 days of employment are a state initiative, the entire financial burden must be borne by the Tamil Nadu government, he said providing 25 days of extra work would require at least Rs 9,192 crore, making the allocated Rs 100 crore merely 1.08 per cent of the required budget, which is a sum insufficient to fund even a single day of work for all beneficiaries. The former union minister called upon the state government to hold negotiations with the Centre to secure the required funds while simultaneously increasing its own budget allocation to uplift rural livelihoods.

Chennai Corporation's first food court delayed, opening pushed to 2027

CHENNAI

RESIDENTS will have to wait until 2027 to visit the Greater Chennai Corporation's first food court, with construction of the Rs 4.24-crore facility at Indira Nagar Third Avenue in Adyar progressing well behind its original schedule. Only about 40 per cent of the project has been completed, more than a year after it was announced. Initially scheduled to welcome visitors during Pongal 2026, the food court missed that deadline and a subsequent opening target in August. The Corporation is developing the facility on land occupied by an unused shopping complex belonging to the civic body. A portion of the old complex was demolished to make way for the project, with foundation and structural work beginning earlier this year. The food court will accommodate 30 shops in two sizes. Smaller outlets will measure 110 square feet each, while the larger units will cover 220 square feet. Announced on July 7, 2025, the project was expected to bring food outlets together at a single Corporation-owned location. However, the slow pace of construction has repeatedly pushed back the date on which residents can use the facility. Corporation officials attributed the delay to the 2026 Assembly election and the subsequent change in government. Structural work on the shops is now expected to be completed by December, according to a senior GCC official. Completion of the buildings, however, will not immediately pave the way for opening the food court. The Corporation must also select an operator through a tender process scheduled to begin in January 2027. The civic body has decided to adopt a revenue-sharing arrangement under a public-private partnership model. Instead of directly renting individual shops to restaurant brands, franchises or other food businesses, it will lease the entire facility to a single operator.



Political repression, says BJP chief on NTK leader Karthika's arrest

CHENNAI

TAMIL Nadu BJP president Nainar Nagenthiran has condemned the arrest of Karthika, the Naam Tamilar Katchi (NTK) candidate in the recent Dharapuram Assembly by-election, accusing Chief Minister Vijay's government of using the police to settle political scores. In a post on X, Nagenthiran alleged that the early-morning arrest on Tuesday of Karthika and other NTK

functionaries amounted to political repression. He said retaliatory action against opponents was incompatible with healthy politics and strongly condemned attempts to silence women participating in public life. Karthika, who contested the Dharapuram bypoll on behalf of the NTK, was arrested in connection with cases reportedly registered during the election period. The action has drawn criticism from opposition parties, which have accused the



ruling TVK government of targeting political rivals.

Questioning the circumstances of the arrest, Nagenthiran alleged that police entered Karthika's residence around 5 a.m. He asked why such an operation was necessary against a woman who is the mother of two daughters. "What kind of terrorist is Karthika that the police had to enter her house at five in the morning to arrest her?" he asked. The BJP president questioned why the police could not have issued a summons and asked her to

appear before investigators instead of taking her into custody in this manner. He also alleged that the operation violated restrictions governing the arrest of women between sunset and sunrise. His post did not indicate whether police had obtained judicial permission for the early-morning arrest or explain the precise charges against her. Nagenthiran asked whether the treatment of Karthika reflected the respect the Vijay government extended

to women in public life. He described the action as harassment and an attempt to suppress women who express political opinions. He further accused the government of concentrating on alleged wrongdoing by opposition members while overlooking allegations involving ruling-party functionaries. Referring to allegations of sexual offences and drug-related activities involving party members, he claimed that political hostility was

diverting the government's attention from its responsibilities. Nagenthiran urged the Chief Minister to stop using the law according to personal preferences and political dislikes and instead ensure that law enforcement agencies prioritised public safety. His criticism followed the AIADMK's condemnation of Karthika's arrest, adding to opposition pressure on the government over its handling of election-related cases against political opponents.

Bhagwat's Dasara message highlights Hindu undivided family

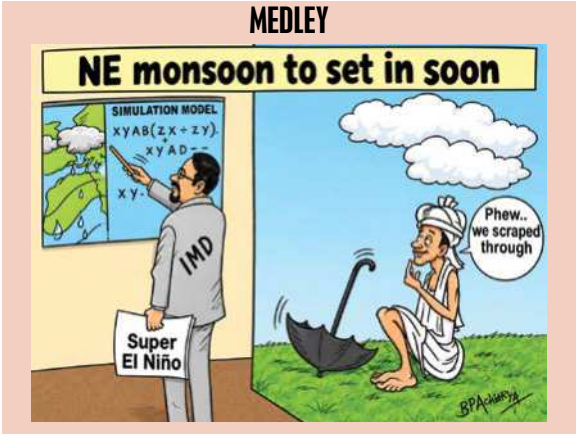
HEAD of RSS chief Mohan Bhagwat's annual Dasara speech on Tuesday morning, there were speculations among anti-government commentators and analysts that there would be hints of a rift within the saffron brotherhood. The invitation to former vice-president Jagdeep Dhankhar and the proprietor-editor of a prominent eight-leaning newspaper, whose ties with the government have recently reportedly been strained, kept the rumour mill churning. Dhankhar's unceremonious removal last year—though it was technically a resignation on health grounds—resulted in his complete marginalisation in the Sangh ecosystem. The newspaper has been publishing donation theft news in Ayo-

dhya very prominently, which was seen as an attempt to annoy the Narendra Modi regime. The speculation, however, seems to be the result of wishful thinking rather than information and intelligence. At least, Bhagwat has not said anything that can be called critical of the government. In fact, he has come to the rescue of the powers that be by trying to link the ongoing violent protests in France and other European countries, and the earlier ones in Bangladesh and Nepal, with the agitation in India, thus validating the government's narrative that the movement against Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Gyanesh Kumar is politically motivated. "A storm has blown in the west. Look at what transpired in France,

Bangladesh and Nepal. Regime change will not happen in India. Such attempts continue in India as well. India has moved forward with steadfast resolve, and the collective vitality (purushartha) of its society has grown," he said. This must be music to the government's ears. "Problems arise and movements take shape; however, these should be directed toward finding solutions. The primary objective must be a resolution. Our actions should not sow animosity, and the boundaries of propriety (maryada) must be respected," he said. RSS functionaries are known not to name persons or groups; in this case, the use of the term maryada must be seen as a rebuke to the Cockroach Janta Party (CJP). During its successful agitation

against the then education minister Dharmendra Pradhan in July, many activists used foul language (amaryadit bhasha, in RSS lingo). Whatever the RSS may be thinking, it doesn't look like regime change. The organisation may have its differences with the government, and its leaders may occasionally be displeased with the way the BJP functions, but such discontent should not be mistaken for a desire to dislodge the regime. The RSS has invested decades in building the political and ideological ecosystem of which the BJP is the principal beneficiary. Besides, Sangh functionaries, their friends and families have also benefited hugely. To expect that it would now seek to destabilise this symbiotic relationship will

be unrealistic. The Sangh may want the government to be more attentive to the concerns of Gen Z and even the demands of CJP, but it is unlikely to jeopardise saffron hegemony because of such issues. Indeed, the RSS has little to gain from destabilising a government led by a party that has brought its ideological project closer to the centre of national politics than ever before. Any serious confrontation would risk weakening not merely the BJP but the larger Sangh Parivar, while potentially creating political opportunities for its ideological adversaries. The RSS's preference has traditionally been to settle differences through organisational channels rather than advertise them in public domain.



LETTERS

A century of remarkable service

HAVING completed 100 years, the RSS stands at an important milestone in its journey. Its values of discipline, patriotism and selfless service, reflected in its work in education, disaster relief and community welfare, deserve appreciation. As it enters its second century, these contributions offer an opportunity to strengthen public trust further. Greater engagement with different communities, particularly minorities and disadvantaged sections, can broaden its social reach. Its efforts to promote national unity and preserve India's cultural heritage can become more meaningful through respect for diversity and constitutional values. Encouraging dialogue and mutual understanding will also help bridge social differences.

A Myilsami, Sullur (P O), Coimbatore-641402

India-US trade deal brings relief

THIS refers to "US close to finalising trade deal with India" (THI, Oct 21). The indication that the deal is "pretty close" comes as a timely relief. With the US being India's largest trading partner, any reduction in tariff uncertainty will help exporters, especially in textiles, pharma and IT, to plan better. It will also ease pressure on the rupee and support investor confidence. However, a quick deal should not mean a weak deal. India must ensure protection for sensitive sectors like agriculture and dairy, and secure clarity on H-1B and data issues.

S D Tejaswani, Bengaluru

EC data exposes Cong hypocrisy

THIS refers to news that the Election Commission has found over 30,000 voters as "ineligible" for final inclusion in the electoral roll. This means, out of the 92.65 lakh, who were issued notices for being ineligible, around 30,407 are 'fit to be removed from the rolls', including voters having no mapping and logical discrepancies. This information by the ECI should help demolish the mischievous campaign against the S I R and 'vote chori' propaganda of the Congress, INDIA block and the CJP. One hopes the rant for the resignation of CEC and the itch for regime change would end for the Congress as there are no takers for their stupid allegations and vicious propaganda.

Sakunthala K R, Hyderabad

Nip political dissent in the bud

PROPOS, "France protest fire sings Europe". Protests are a democratic right, but violence, vandalism and intimidation cannot be justified in the name of political dissent. The unrest spreading across European countries should concern governments and citizens alike. Governments must distinguish peaceful protesters from those who exploit public grievances to promote disorder. At the same time, dismissing every protest as politically motivated would be equally unwise. Authorities should address legitimate concerns about education, employment and the cost of living through dialogue and transparent action. Firm, impartial law enforcement, coupled with responsive governance, is essential to prevent peaceful dissent from becoming organised violence.

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Police department not a servant: Kharge asks RSS to seek permission

BENGALURU: KARNATAKA Home Minister Priyank Kharge on Wednesday launched a sharp attack on the Rashtriya Swamasevak Sangh (RSS), questioning whether the Police Department was subservient to the organisation.

Reacting to a letter submitted by the RSS informing the police about its proposed march, Kharge said the organisation had provided information rather than formally seeking permission for the event. "The letter says that they are informing the police, not seeking permission. Let them seek permission. Is the Police Department their domestic servant?" he asked. Kharge also questioned RSS chief Mohan Bhagwat's statements on changing the existing governments and politics, asking who had authorised him to speak about a change of regime and political matters.

"What regime change are they talking about? How can regime change happen? The Chief Election Commissioner is theirs, the EVMs are theirs, and the voter list is theirs. Can these be changed? Form 6 is theirs, and Form 7 is theirs. There is still no answer to the question: Why does the Chief Election Commissioner have judicial immunity?" he said, referring to Forms 6 and 7 associated with electoral rolls.

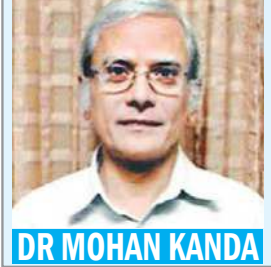
"There is a conspiracy to ensure that they remain in power permanently. This has already been exposed. Isn't the fact that people are taking to the streets today evidence of this?" he said.

He suggested that this was the reason some people were behaving with such confidence. Keeping up his attack on the organisation, he said: "Which evil force are we talking about? Who is the one developing links with Pakistan?"

He also called for an examination of the organisation's history and questioned what protests it had undertaken in the past. Kharge further said that protests taking place in foreign countries should not be compared with those in India, as the issues involved were different.

Read more at <https://epaper.thehansindia.com>

TALKING OF MANY THINGS



TODAY'S world offers young and qualified people many opportunities for rewarding and productive careers. From medicine or engineering, through law, accountancy, and the civil services or journalism to politics, there are innumerable choices.

Counting out politics, which has been described as the 'last resort of scoundrels' by Dr Samuel Johnson, journalism as a career offers an exhilarating mix of frontline storytelling and profound social impact; paired, however, with severe physical, digital, and psychological risks. Since it is all about uncovering the truth, bringing hidden stories about systemic corruption and unheard voices out into the open, and into the public eye: catalysing societal change, holding power accountable, and giving a platform to the resilient or marginalized. Journalism, thus, offers deep personal fulfilment and excitement through storytelling. The life of a journalist is heady and dynamic and is characterised by an ever-changing daily environment where no two days are identical.

Among the pleasurable things the profession offers is the joy of sharing an unspoken bond and deep solidarity with fellow reporters navigating high-pressure deadlines across

the globe.

The flip side, however, can hardly be ignored, as the occupation also comes with low starting pay and intense deadline stress. And those are just trivial concerns. Because exposure to hazards such as possible physical danger and, on occasion, even violence, especially in conflict zones, unstable environments, or targeted crackdowns, is not uncommon. Industry instability often poses issues. And, what with one having to navigate dwindling legacy newsroom budgets, deal with the relentless pressures of a 24x7 algorithmic news cycle, and handle rampant disinformation, especially in the form of fake news, a false, misleading, or fabricated information that is presented to look like a legitimate news report, it can be a severely trying job. Dealing with the chronic stress of tight deadlines, the vicarious trauma that invariably follows the covering of tragedies, and institutional or legal harassment can take their own severe toll on one's psychological reserves.

Meanwhile, despite growing numbers, women journalists often encounter deep-seated patriarchal structures, unequal assignments, a lack of representation in leadership, and the added pressure of balancing demanding news cycles with family expectations. They must balance the demands of reporting with the risks of working on the ground.

A well-known woman reporter says that, when she decided to pursue journalism, leaving behind what was considered a dream job for an engineering graduate, her mother worried that the profession was not safe for a woman. Even years later, the fear had not changed.

The flip side, however, can hardly be ignored, as the occupation also comes with low starting pay and intense deadline stress. And those are just trivial concerns. Because exposure to hazards such as possible physical danger and, on occasion, even violence, especially in conflict zones, unstable environments, or targeted crackdowns, is not uncommon. Industry instability often poses issues.

The mother still had only one question for her daughter after every assignment, "Did you get home safely?"

Studies have shown that a high percentage of female reporters face multiple forms of attacks, leading many to consider leaving the profession. For instance, when reporting from conflict zones, protests, or restrictive regions, such as under Taliban ruled Afghanistan or during volatile local protests, female reporters face heightened risks of assault, detention, and targeted violence.

Other issues they face include marginalization and undervaluation: Non-privileged or rural reporters often lack institutional backing to combat systemic harassment, while others face professional scepticism that forces them to constantly over-prove their competence

To mark this year's International Women's Day celebrations, a seminar themed 'Women in the Media: Pages from the Past,' was held in Karachi.

An effective and legally valid informal tool for exposing public corruption, known popularly as a 'sting' operation first appeared on the scene of investigative journalism in 2001.

By conducting 'Operation West End,' which is widely regarded as India's first major high-profile sting, journalists from 'Tehelka' posed as arms dealers to expose widespread corruption in defence deals, forcing the resignation of the

then-BJP president Bangaru Laxman and several military officials.

In my own experience, I had the privilege and honour of interacting with at least two eminent journalists. One was Anees Jung an Indian author, journalist and columnist, whose most known work, 'Unveiling India' was a chronicle of the lives of women in India, noted especially for the depiction of Muslim women behind the purdah. The other was Olga Tellis, a veteran Indian journalist and social activist best known for leading the landmark constitutional case, whose verdict remains one of the most significant judgments in Indian legal history. After authorities threatened to forcibly evict pavement and slum dwellers in Bombay, Tellis and the affected residents filed a writ petition while disposing of which the Supreme Court ruled that the Right to Livelihood is an essential part of the Right to Life guaranteed by the Constitution. I still cherish the memory of her interviewing me while I was assisting the District Collector of Guntur district in rescue, relief and rehabilitation operations in the aftermath of the cyclone and tidal wave that ravaged the East Coast of the state in 1977. While in service, I experienced the power and inference of the media on many occasions. One was when I was serving as Collector of Krishna district in Andhra Pradesh. A newspaper report spurred me into action

A strategy for nation building that should change the global order of consumption



DR KARNATI KIRAN KUMAR

THE global order of consumption has been changing over the years. New innovations have made some countries economically and politically strong besides changing the consumption patterns of developing and underdeveloped countries.

The wars of the 19th century to recent global conflicts have been intended to control resources and secure their procurement for technological or machine-made products, which are prominent in the process of economic development. Over the centuries, many countries were colonised. In the 18th and 19th centuries, western countries, such as Britain and Portuguese, among others, invaded and conquered various countries. As a result, crapping patterns and consumption habits in colonized countries changed in contrast to their traditional consumption patterns. Changes in people's consumption patterns led to occupational destruction and a sudden surge of unemployment in colonized countries. India was one of the colonized countries that was exploited immensely over the century.

A dominant strategy needed: The growth and development of the nation depend on the dominant perspective of the policymakers. Policymakers should opt for a policy suitable for the nation's progress, rather than simply adopting and imposing other nations' policies and ideologies. Sometimes, the origin of policymakers is a matter of concern. A policymaker from a rural area can understand rural issues and find solutions to resolve the issue. Furthermore, those from urban backgrounds can develop effective policies for urban development. Historically, we failed to understand this logic, tried to imbibe another ideology, and failed to implement it. As a result, it has led to the failure of many public welfare programs and caused the persistence of structural unemployment and poverty.

Break the misconceptions:

The thought process in the country should change from importing goods and services to exporting them, so the world should depend on Indian goods and services. The country's innovations should be adopted by other countries rather than confined to the nation's use. India's path-breaking innovations, such as EVM voting machines, came into existence in the 2004 Lok Sabha elections to ensure the smooth conduct of the electoral process in the largest democracy. Before 2004, the election process was chaotic, with the pouring of ink in the ballot boxes, firing, stealing

of them, crimes and physical attacks on officers. Since 2004, the electoral process in the country has undergone drastic changes, resulting in the election being conducted smoothly using indigenous technology. We failed to supply those innovations for introduction in other countries to ensure the smooth conduct of elections. Rather, our politicians are creating misconceptions about EVMs even after they have won elections. Moreover, the UPI digital payment system is another path-breaking innovation that we can use widely within the country, and the central government has also succeeded in introducing it in some countries to enable seamless transactions and benefit our fintech sector. By comparison, we failed to spread it across the world as other developed countries do with their Innovations.

In the world of competition and technological advancements, India happily adopted ATMs, credit cards, debit cards, digital technologies, and social media platforms from other countries without any misconceptions about their use. When it comes to Indian technological innovations, some political leaders create and endorse chaos without fact checking.

Getting into the details:

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Indian companies developed vaccines such as Covishield (Serum Institute of India), Covaxin (Bharat Biotech), and Corbevax (a heter-



ologous booster option) to protect people and prevent the spread of the virus. But again, misconceptions spread and caused many deaths during the second wave. The misconception is whether it is an Indian organ or of foreign origin; it should be cross-checked with the government, and a comment should be made on it. But some people always start a game to make the situation worse and want to make themselves better off at the expense of others. There are many other innovations in the country. We failed to make it a global product rather we confined ourselves to India, and some lost existence.

Lack of vision:

The nation's politics should not come at the expense of the country's growth and development. At the micro level, our politicians are more interested in getting into power and acquiring assets for themselves. At the same time, at the macro level, it lacks responsibility for national growth and development. If one political party says a developed economy can be achieved by following one growth model, and the other political party says the nation should adopt a strategy for growth and development by following another development model. However, it should

not undermine the economy's performance on either side. As competition between political parties exists, so too does competition among countries for control and command of markets and resources. Political parties and politicians need to craft their manifestos with national interest in mind rather than seeking power for its own sake. On the other hand, business tycoons in developed countries seek to expand their markets by dominating and controlling politics in developing and underdeveloped countries. Individuals or political parties (ruling and opposition) should not be their mouthpiece at the expense of domestic business and common people's lives.

Time for introspection:

Regime change and deep states are underway in south Asia. In recent times, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and Nepal saw a surge in youth protests that created chaos and badly affected their economies. The disruption of a peaceful environment and political unrest will create negative economic consequences, such as low FDI and Investment, unemployment, inflation, and low purchasing power, ultimately leading to poverty. As witnessed in Sri Lanka, Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Nepal.

Bangladesh is the best example for understanding the impact of the political unrest on the economy. As per reports, the Bangladesh economy was about to get middle income status, but it has fallen to lower

income status due to the political unrest in the country. Prior to that infrastructure building, the ready-made garment industry drove strong and consistent growth, averaging six to seven per cent, annually. According to a recent RBI report, "South Asia economic update" revealed that Bangladesh's overall GDP increased by an estimated 3.4 percent in FY2026-2027, which is the third year in a row that it has slowed down. Private investment shrank for the second year in a row as difficulties in the energy sector, banking sector weakness, tighter fiscal constraints, high production costs and subdued credit growth. The rate of inflation has continued to be higher than eight to 10 per cent. If anything is wrong in the system that can be corrected through the electoral process. No protest should disturb the smooth progress of economic progress.

India can become Viksit Bharat when Indian goods and services flood into the international markets with the absolute trade advantage. The business in the country should target the domestic and international markets. The Indian business community should collaborate with academia. That will bring new innovations to change the world order of consumption. At the same time, India must utilise own demographic dividend for nation-building.

(The writer is Assistant Professor (School of Economics), University of Hyderabad)

Enforce SC orders, stop TDP’s poll violence: YSRCP

- **Sajjala cites 76 incidents across 11 districts during nominations**
- **Seeks action against officials accused of favouring the ruling party**
- **Welcomes Supreme Court directives and demands free, fair polls**

HANS NEWS SERVICE
AMARAVATI

YSRCP state coordinator Sajjala Ramakrishna Reddy welcomed the Supreme Court’s intervention in Andhra Pradesh’s local elections and demanded that the State Election Commission exer-

cise its powers, protect candidates and remove officials serving the ruling party. Addressing the media at party central office on Wednesday, Ramakrishna Reddy highlighted 76 incidents across 11 districts during ZPTC and MPTC nominations, including attacks, arrests, house confinement, threats and destruction of nomination papers. YSR Kadapa district accounted for 22 incidents, Palnadu 18, Annamayya and Tirupati 11 each, with the remainder across seven districts. YSRCP would submit these developments to the Supreme Court and seek transfers or removal from election duties of responsible officials. Municipal nomination obstruction, arbitrary rejection during scrutiny and threats forcing withdrawals were now recurring in parishad elections. Candidates



YSRCP state coordinator Sajjala Ramakrishna Reddy speaking to the media at the party central office in Tadepalli on Wednesday

withdrew under police pressure and threats of fabricated narcotics and other criminal cases, rather than unwillingness to contest. Overlapping municipal withdrawal and parishad nomination schedules compounded confusion. Ramakrishna Reddy welcomed postponement of final candidate lists until October 25, a decision on nomination

complaints by October 22, CCTV coverage and compliance reporting by October 27. Merely forwarding complaints to the same police authorities was ineffective; the SEC must demand records from Collectors and SPs and enforce accountability. Citing stone attacks near YSR Kadapa’s zilla parishad office and papers torn inside

nomination centres in Narasaraopet and elsewhere, he challenged Chandrababu’s attempt to blame YSRCP. Ruling-party groups operated with police support, while victims faced cases and leaders faced confinement. He condemned the use of hired interstate groups, including workers brought from Bihar, to create violence and rejected attempts to equate them with licensed security personnel. YSRCP’s restraint reflected strength and democratic commitment. Expressing confidence in courts and constitutional institutions, Ramakrishna Reddy warned against distortion of the ruling and demanded immediate SEC action so candidates could contest freely without repeatedly seeking judicial intervention to protect electoral participation.

POTENTIAL FEDERAL HATE CRIME

US lawmakers urge FBI to probe temple shooting plot

WASHINGTON

A bipartisan-free Democratic-led group of 105 US lawmakers has urged the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) to investigate an attempted mass shooting at a Hindu temple in Aurora, Illinois, as a potential federal hate crime, citing concerns over anti-Indian, anti-Hindu and broader anti-South Asian hostility. Alexandros Paporakis, 19, was arrested on October 11 for plotting a mass shooting at the Sri Venkateswara Swami (Balaji) temple. Led by Indian American Congressman Raja Krishnamoorthi, the lawmakers sent a letter dated October 20 to FBI Director Kash Patel seeking details of the Bureau’s investigation into the alleged plot at the Sri Venkateswara

Swami (Balaji) Hindu temple. They also called for greater scrutiny of credible online threats against Indian Americans, Hindu Americans, Sikhs and other South Asian communities. Krishnamoorthi and his family were worshipping at the temple when the alleged attempted attack occurred on October 11, according to a statement issued by the congressman’s office. "The alleged combination of targeted racial hatred, a religious setting, and preparations for mass violence demands a comprehensive federal response," the lawmakers wrote, urging the FBI to ensure that potential hate-crime violations receive explicit attention. The letter was signed by members of Congress from across the country, including the entire Illinois House Democratic

delegation, every Indian American member of Congress, and senators Dick Durbin, Tammy Duckworth, Andy Kim and Chris Van Hollen. According to rosecutors, Alexandros Paporakis, a resident of Palatine, Illinois, drove to the temple on October 11 intending to carry out a shooting but fled after his rifle allegedly failed to fire. Statements from local police departments and the FBI’s Chicago field office said Paporakis was arrested that day and subsequently charged with making a terrorist threat and unlawful possession of weapons. Prosecutors allege that he authored an eight-page manifesto expressing white supremacist views and describing violence against people of Indian descent at a Hindu house of worship.

BLAMING MUSLIMS FOR FRENCH ARSON

Macron blasts Trump for stupid claims on riots

PARIS

PRESIDENT Emmanuel Macron said on Wednesday that foreign leaders - including those "on the other side of the Atlantic" - were seeking to exploit France’s tense social climate for political gain following a weekend of street violence and looting. Protests over soaring living costs have led to widespread rioting and looting that have drawn worldwide attention and shocked many French citizens. US President Donald

Trump has used the violence to rally his political supporters, making unsubstantiated claims that Muslim migrants are responsible for the unrest, and urging Macron to "close your borders and take control before it is too late!" Macron responded by saying there "has been foreign manipulation of information in the aftermath" of the looting in Paris and other French cities last weekend. "And that has led to comments that are as unacceptable as they are

stupid, from many people, including foreign leaders," he said. Asked by a reporter if he was referring to Trump, Macron replied: "Among others." He added that there have been "AI-generated images depicting scenes that never actually happened in France. We’ve had people claiming that we were invaded by hordes of migrants and Islamists, which is completely false." Macron did not specify which AI-generated images he was referring to, nor how he knew the content was false.

VIT open applications for VITEEE 2027

CHENNAI

THE Vellore Institute of Technology (VIT) opened applications for VITEEE 2027, inviting aspiring engineers to take the next step toward their dream careers. According to a press release, students can now apply online at <https://viteee.vit.ac.in> for admission to VIT’s flagship engineering programs offered across its campuses in Vellore, Chennai, Amaravati (AP) and Bhopal (MP). The VITEEE 2027 will be conducted in a single phase, scheduled from April 28 - May 2, 2027. The exam will be held in 133



test cities across India and at 9 international centres, providing opportunities for candidates from India and abroad to appear for the entrance exam, the release said.

Rubio pushes energy ties, Venezuelan crude

Continued from page 1

He spent a few hours in Jannagar before departing for the United States. Almost the entire Ambani family, led by billionaire Reliance chairman Mukesh Ambani, welcomed the US delegation. Those present included his wife, Nita Ambani, daughter Isha Ambani and her husband, Anand Piramal, and younger son Anant Ambani and his wife, Radhika Merchant, along with Reliance Industries Executive Director PMS Prasad and US Ambassador to India Sergio Gor. Akash Ambani, Mukesh Ambani’s eldest son and managing director of Jio Platforms, was overseeing

the opening of the telecom giant’s initial public offering (IPO). Rubio arrived in Jannagar a day after describing India as a crude-refining "superpower" and urging it to process more Venezuelan oil. Officials have described the Ambani-hosted programme as a "private visit", and neither side released details of the itinerary. The visit comes as Washington seeks to increase sales of American energy to India, encourage the processing of Western Hemisphere crude and strengthen commercial ties with Reliance, a major buyer of internationally traded oil and a leading exporter of refined fuels. It also coincides with pressure on US diesel prices ahead of the

midterm elections. Gor said American liquefied petroleum gas had risen sharply as a share of India’s imports. "Over the past year, India’s imports of US LPG have surged from under 10 per cent to 67 per cent, making the United States India’s largest LPG supplier," he said in a post on X. He also highlighted Reliance’s planned investment in a new refinery in Texas as an opportunity to expand US energy production and create jobs. Rubio told Reliance-owned Network18 that Washington wanted to work more closely with Reliance on refining energy from the Western Hemisphere, describing such cooperation as beneficial to both countries.

POTENTIAL FEDERAL HATE CRIME

‘NDA will abide by SEC decision on ULB polls’

K VARAPRASADA RAO
AMARAVATI

THE ruling NDA alliance in Andhra Pradesh on Wednesday night declared that it will abide by any decision taken by the State Election Commission (SEC) on the urban local body elections, even as it accused the YSR Congress Party (YSRCP) of attempting to obstruct the electoral process through repeated litigation and alleged acts of violence. In a joint statement issued in the names

of Chief Minister and TDP president N Chandrababu Naidu, deputy chief minister and Jana Sena president K Pawan Kalyan, and BJP state president PVN Madhav, the alliance reiterated its commitment to conducting elections in a peaceful, transparent and democratic manner. It said the three constituent parties would extend full cooperation to the SEC and respect its decision. The alliance stressed that conducting local body elections within the stipulated

timeframe was important not only for democratic representation but also for securing funds from the 16th Finance Commission and the Central government. The NDA leaders alleged that the YSRCP had been attempting to stall the elections from the outset and had approached various courts 59 times in pursuit of that objective. They further accused the opposition party of provoking violence at several places after the electoral process began, including attacks on police

personnel and the digging up of roads constructed for public use. The statement contrasted the current election process with local body polls held during the previous YSRCP government. It alleged that opposition candidates had then faced intimidation and obstruction while filing nominations, enabling the ruling party to claim unopposed victories. The alliance also referred to a letter reportedly written by the then state election commissioner to the Central

government regarding alleged irregularities in unanimous elections. It said central forces had been deployed following a request for protection from the then SEC. The NDA leaders said their parties had faith in democratic institutions and would support the election process in accordance with the Constitution. They maintained that voters should be able to elect their representatives freely and that local bodies should become effective instruments for delivering development and welfare.

NEW DELHI

THE BJP on Wednesday alleged that a "clear nexus" had emerged between forces within and outside India that were opposed to the country’s growing global influence. Party national spokesperson Sudhanshu Trivedi accused them of seeking to destabilise the country by creating social divisions and attacking its cultural and religious traditions. Addressing the media at the BJP headquarters, Trivedi said Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s Vijayadashami message had highlighted three defining characteristics of such forces: "loot after coming to power, division in

society and hatred towards Indian culture and Hinduism". He alleged that some groups were pursuing campaigns against Sanatan Dharma and "global Hindutva", while also questioning the credibility of Indian institutions. Trivedi cited repeated allegations concerning the SBI, SEBI, vaccines, EVMs and electoral bonds as examples of what he described as a pattern of attempts to discredit institutions. Using the imagery of Ravana’s multiple heads, Trivedi argued that such campaigns could not be understood merely through their individual demands. "Fulfil one demand and another de-

mand will emerge," he said, arguing that the "real source" behind different protests and campaigns had to be identified. He alleged that forces opposed to India’s progress were using different "disguises" and that their stated demands were not their ultimate objective. Referring to calls for "regime change", he alleged that some of these forces ultimately sought to promote violent conflict, political destabilisation and social fragmentation. The BJP spokesperson also invoked the Ramayana to underline his argument that the apparent form in which a threat presented itself could conceal its real objective.

Naidu calls upon AP Police to set nat’l benchmark

Continued from page 1

He directed the police to act firmly against rowdy elements disturbing public order and individuals harassing others through social media. Describing the khaki uniform as a symbol of responsibility and reassurance, he said criminals should fear the police, while victims should feel confident of receiving protection and justice. He recalled the force’s contribution to controlling factional violence, tackling Naxalism and preventing communal clashes, and congratulated the AP Counterintelligence wing for exposing recent conspiracies threatening national security. Stressing the need to modernise policing, Naidu said investigative methods must evolve alongside changing crime patterns. Cybercriminals were siphoning off people’s hard-earned savings through phone calls, links and messages, with even educated people falling victim to fraud. He called for wider use of CCTV cameras, data analytics, drones and artificial

intelligence to improve surveillance, crime detection and investigations. He expressed the aspiration that Andhra Pradesh Police should gain nationwide recognition for adopting advanced technologies. People approached police stations in distress, fear and tears, expecting solutions to their problems. Police personnel must listen patiently, treat complainants with dignity and resolve grievances promptly, he said. He also emphasised women’s safety, asserting that technology-driven policing would have little meaning unless women could live without fear. He assured the families of police martyrs and serving personnel of the government’s continued support and commitment to their welfare. Ensuring uninterrupted public safety, he said, would be the most meaningful tribute to fallen officers. Home Minister Vangalapudi Anitha, DGP Harish Kumar Gupta and other officials paid floral tributes at the police martyrs’ memorial.

YSRCP distorting SC verdict: Naidu

Continued from page 1

Naidu described Jagan and his associates as "criminal litigants" and alleged that the opposition leader was conspiring to create disturbances while the NDA was concentrating on selecting strong candidates. He claimed that the YSRCP approached courts whenever its attempts to disrupt the electoral process were thwarted, and urged people to reject "politics aimed at undermining democracy". Citing the YSRCP’s legal challenges over electoral rolls and the BC reservations, Naidu alleged that the party had filed nearly 60 petitions in the High Court and the Supreme Court. He accused its leaders of obstructing the Mega DSC recruitment process through hundreds of

petitions and attempting to stall projects such as Amaravati and Polavaram. In a series of teleconferences with party leaders, Naidu directed the TDP cadre to work towards the victory of NDA candidates in the local body elections. He stressed coordination with Jana Sena and the BJP at every stage, from candidate selection to the declaration of results, and called for disputes over seat-sharing to be resolved amicably. Warning rebels, Naidu said those filing nominations against officially selected alliance nominees should withdraw their payers; otherwise, they would be suspended. He assured party aspirants who had failed to secure tickets that they would be considered for nominated posts. He urged them to work collectively for the alliance’s success.

With only a week remaining for campaigning, Naidu asked leaders and workers to intensify outreach across all municipalities and explain the government’s welfare and developmental initiatives. He called on them to approach voters with the message, "We promised, and we have delivered." The Chief Minister also instructed the cadre to highlight the alleged excesses of the previous YSRCP government and communicate the NDA government’s achievements directly to people at the grassroots level. Naidu said the alliance had prioritised hardworking party workers while selecting candidates and called for sustained coordination to prevent internal differences from damaging the NDA’ electoral prospects.

... dismisses India protests as internal matter

Continued from page 1

They have elections here, so I’m not going to opine on their domestic political matters," he said in response to a question on protests from the opposition and students in India. Rubio said that even the US witnesses protests every day and that they are reflective of the political discourse and differences of opinion.

Court orders CJP leaders’ release

Continued from page 1

Earlier, CJP leaders withdrew their petition before the Delhi High Court challenging a special executive magistrate’s decision to extend their judicial custody. Das and Ranka were taken into custody on October 13 after they allegedly climbed over a locked gate to enter Jantar Mantar, which had

earlier been denotified as a designated protest site. CJP founder Abhijeet Dipke expressed solidarity with the group’s co-convenors, saying they could not be with their families during the festive season. Dipke said that while some people might "troll" him, he was getting emotional because he "cares for" Das and Ranka and considers them as his family.

HDFC probe finds senior execs leaked confidential info

Continued from page 1

"In line with our policies, an internal review into this matter is currently underway to gather and evaluate all relevant facts," the spokesperson said, according to Bloomberg. "Appropriate action will be taken based on the findings, once the review is complete."

Punjab CM detained at Delhi airport, fined ₹50K

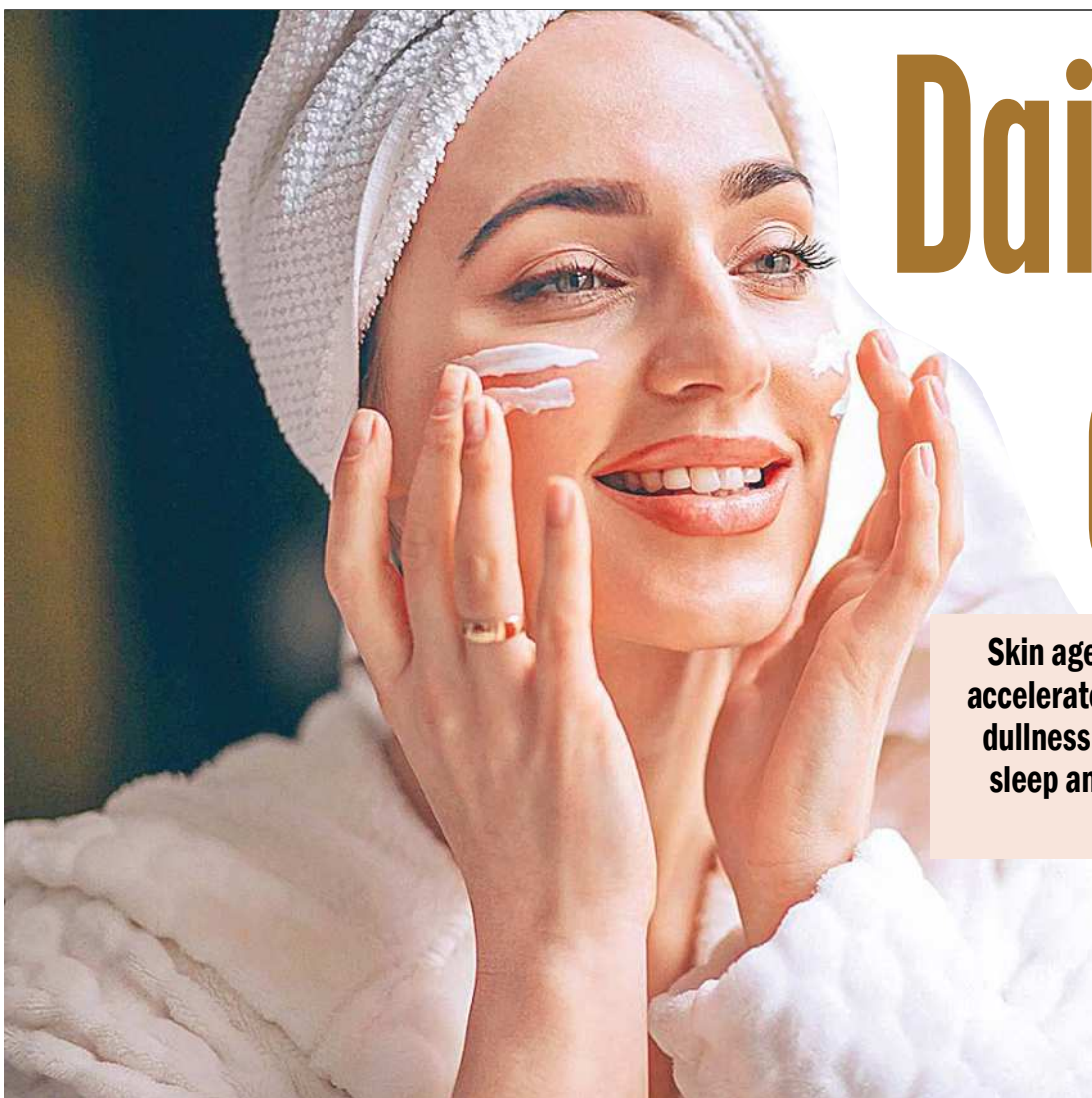
Continued from page 1

Baltej Pannu, AAP’s media in-charge in Punjab, alleged that Mann was kept waiting at the airport under the pretext that his luggage was still arriving and being checked. "When Mann returned from Paris and arrived at the Delhi airport, he was deliberately detained for three hours. Excuses were made that 'your luggage is still arriving' and 'your luggage is still being checked'," Pannu said in a statement. He further claimed that officials approached Mann just as he was about to leave the airport after loading his luggage into a vehicle. "After three hours, when Mann was allowed to leave and was about to depart after placing his luggage in a vehicle, officials came running after him and said that they were under 'tremendous pressure from above'," Pannu alleged. AAP leader Saurabh Bhavadwaj also alleged that Mann was made to wait at the airport after travelling to Paris to promote Punjab’s prod-

ucts. In a post on X, Bhavadwaj said the chief minister’s visit came after he challenged the Centre’s decision to deny him political clearance for the trip. "Mann Saab stopped at Indian Airport for around 3 hours. Punjab CM Bhagwant Mann went to Paris to launch Punjab’s products at Paris. This was after he challenged Centre’s not granting him the NOC. This arrogance of Centre must end. Even Ravan’s arrogance ended on Dussehra," Saurabh Bhavadwaj said in the post. According to the AAP leader, officials subsequently issued a challan of Rs 50,000. He argued that their alleged admission of pressure indicated that the episode had been carried out under instructions from higher authorities. "Has any chief minister of an Indian state ever been detained at an airport for three hours in this manner? Has any chief minister of a state ever been disrespected by being issued a challan of Rs 50,000?" Pannu asked, calling the incident an insult to Punjab.



W



Daily habits that quietly damage your skin

Skin ageing is a natural process, but certain everyday habits can accelerate the appearance of wrinkles, fine lines, pigmentation and dullness. From smoking and excessive sugar consumption to poor sleep and hot showers, small lifestyle choices can have a lasting impact on your skin's health and radiance



SHAHNAZ HUSAIN

Skin ageing is a natural process, but certain lifestyle choices can accelerate visible signs of ageing. Fine lines, wrinkles, age spots, dryness and loss of elasticity may develop over time, influenced by genetics, sun exposure, diet and everyday habits.

While a good skincare rou-

time is essential, healthy skin also depends on how we care for our bodies. Habits such as smoking, taking excessively hot showers, poor sleep and consuming too much sugar can affect skin health. Here are five common habits that may contribute to premature skin ageing and simple ways to minimise their impact.

1. Smoking

Smoking is strongly associated with premature skin ageing. Tobacco smoke contains harmful chemicals that contribute to oxidative stress and damage collagen and elastin, the proteins responsible for keeping skin firm, smooth and supple.

Smoking also constricts blood vessels near the skin's surface, reducing the supply of oxygen and essential nutrients to skin tissues. This can

interfere with the skin's natural repair processes and contribute to a dull complexion.

Over time, smokers are more likely to develop deeper wrinkles, particularly around the mouth and eyes, along with uneven pigmentation, dryness and reduced skin firmness.

What you can do: Quitting smoking is one of the most effective ways to protect your skin and overall health. Combine this with a balanced diet, adequate hydration and regular sun protection.

2. Taking Hot Showers and Baths

Long, hot showers may feel relaxing after a tiring day, but excessive heat can strip the skin of its natural oils. These oils help maintain the skin barrier and prevent moisture loss. When this protective

layer is weakened, the skin may become dry, tight, rough and more susceptible to irritation. Repeated exposure to hot water can also aggravate existing skin conditions and make fine lines more noticeable. The scalp and hair may be affected too, as excessive heat can contribute to dryness, itching and hair breakage.

What you can do: Choose lukewarm water instead of very hot water and keep showers reasonably short. Apply moisturiser while the skin is still slightly damp to help retain moisture. Use a gentle cleanser and avoid excessive scrubbing.

3. Excessive Screen Time

Smartphones, laptops and tablets have become essential parts of modern life. However, spending long hours in front of screens can indirectly affect

skin health by disrupting sleep and encouraging a sedentary lifestyle.

Digital devices emit blue light, also known as high-energy visible light. Some research suggests that blue light can contribute to oxidative stress and pigmentation under certain conditions. However, the extent to which everyday screen exposure causes premature skin ageing remains uncertain.

Late-night scrolling can also interfere with sleep, leaving the skin looking tired and dull. Poor sleep may affect the body's normal recovery processes and overall well-being.

What you can do: Take regular screen breaks and maintain a consistent sleep schedule. Reduce device use before bedtime if it interferes with your rest. Apply broad-spectrum sunscreen with SPF 30 or higher daily, particularly when spending time outdoors, to protect against established causes of premature skin ageing.

4. Sleeping Position

The way you sleep may influence the development of certain facial lines. Sleeping

on your side or stomach can press the face against a pillow, creating repeated compression and friction. These pressure-related lines are known as sleep wrinkles.

Initially, they may disappear shortly after waking. However, as the skin naturally loses elasticity with age, some lines may become more persistent. Side sleepers may experience pressure-related lines on their cheeks, while stomach sleepers may place additional pressure on their forehead and face.

Although sleeping position is only one possible contributing factor, reducing repeated pressure may help minimise sleep-related creases.

What you can do: If comfortable, try sleeping on your back to reduce direct pressure on your face. Use a clean, smooth pillowcase and change it regularly. Most importantly, aim for seven to nine hours of sleep each night to support overall health and the skin's natural recovery processes.

5. Excessive Sugar Consumption

Consuming too much added sugar may affect skin health through a process



called glycation. This occurs when sugars bind to proteins such as collagen and elastin, forming compounds known as advanced glycation end products. Over time, these compounds can affect the structure and flexibility of collagen, potentially contributing to reduced skin firmness.

A diet high in sugary foods and refined carbohydrates may also contribute to metabolic problems and inflammation. High-glycaemic foods may worsen acne in some individuals, although responses vary from person to person.

What you can do: Limit sugary drinks, sweets and foods containing excessive added sugar. Choose a balanced diet rich in fruits, vegetables, whole grains, pulses, nuts and adequate protein. These foods provide nutrients that support normal skin function. Occasional treats are not a cause for concern; consistency and overall dietary

balance matter more.

Build Healthy Habits for Healthy Skin

Healthy skin requires more than expensive products or elaborate beauty treatments. Everyday choices, including avoiding smoking, using lukewarm water, maintaining healthy sleep habits and eating a balanced diet, can support skin health over time.

Sun protection is particularly important. Use a broad-spectrum sunscreen with SPF 30 or higher, reapply as directed and seek shade when outdoors.

Ageing is natural and cannot be stopped. However, by making thoughtful lifestyle changes and following a consistent skincare routine, you can help maintain your skin's health, comfort and radiance at every stage of life.

(The author is an internationally fame beauty expert and is called the herbal queen of India)

Pankaj Bhadouria returns to gym after cancer treatment: "Can't wait to snatch back myself from my sickness"



"MasterChef India" winner Pankaj Bhadouria, who was undergoing treat-

ment for cancer, is back at the gym as she looks to reclaim her strength and fitness after battling the illness.

Sharing an optimistic update on her Instagram stories section, Pankaj said she is determined to take back control of her body and promised a "new" version of herself.

She posted a video of herself doing the Bhujangasana in the gym and wrote: "I am back to the gym now! I can't wait to snatch back myself, my body from my sickness. And I will! You and I will meet the 'new' Pankaj very soon!" It was in May, when Pankaj revealed that she has been diagnosed with breast cancer.

Taking to her social media ac-

count, on May 28, Pankaj shared a picture of herself from the hospital where she was seen lying on a hospital bed dressed in a patient gown with medical wires attached to her.

Sharing the post, she wrote, "I have been diagnosed with Breast Cancer. Need your prayers and support."

Pankaj also posted a video from the hospital as she underwent multiple medical tests. In the clip, she was seen sitting in a hospital robe with a medical cannula attached to her hand.

The text on the video read, "Going for tests and more tests.....not a happy place to be."

"I just wanted to share with you all that I have been diagnosed with breast cancer. Since all of you are like an extended family to me, I wanted to share this with you personally. Right now, I truly need your prayers and support. As they say, prayers work miracles. So please keep me in your prayers," said Pankaj.

Pankaj rose to fame after winning the first season of 'MasterChef India' in 2010, becoming the country's first-ever MasterChef winner. Before entering the culinary world, Pankaj worked as an English teacher and reportedly left her 16-year-long teaching career to participate in the cooking reality show. (HANS)

Anushka Sen on representing India globally: Our stories deserve to be heard across the world

Actress Anushka Sen opened up about representing India on a global platform after being named the country's Global Brand Ambassador for the 2026 Newport Beach Film Festival.

Reflecting on the honour, she said, "Our stories deserve to be heard across the world," emphasizing the importance of bringing Indian stories and talent to international audiences. Speaking about the appointment, Anushka said, "Being named the Global Ambassador representing India at the Newport Beach Film Festival is a moment that means more to me than words can express. For me, this is about so much more than a title; it is about the stories we carry, the boundaries we break, and the doors we open for those who come after us."

Emphasising the importance of believing in one's roots and ambitions, she added, "India has incredible talent and stories that deserve to be heard across the world. I want every young Indian to know that you don't have to fit into a certain mold to make your country proud. Where you come from can be your greatest strength, and your dreams should never be limited by your circumstances."

Anushka, who continues to explore opportunities across international entertainment, hopes her journey encourages more young Indians to pursue their ambitions and represent the country on global platforms.



"I feel incredibly fortunate to be experiencing this, and I hope more young Indians get the chance to represent our country on global platforms. If my journey can encourage someone to believe in themselves and take a step towards their dreams, that would mean a lot to me," she shared.

"For me, the real achievement is seeing Indian talent find its place on the global

stage. I feel truly proud to represent my country, and I hope to make this moment count for something bigger than myself," Anushka further explained.

Anushka Sen has been named the Global Ambassador representing India at the 2026 Newport Beach Film Festival. The recognition comes after Anushka became the only Indian to debut in a Korean film project, "Jeju Olle." (HANS)

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ACROSS

1 Slow-growing trees (4)

4 Writhe (6)

8 I am telling you for the ____ time.... (3)

10 South Indian snack (4)

13 Daring (8)

14 Meaning the same as (7)

15 Fit for farming (6)

17 In a dull and boring manner (9)

21 Military inits., 1946-92 (3)

22 Cavity (3)

23 Bashful (3)

26 Tried or essayed (9)

27 Gambling house (6)

28 Honours gained (7)

32 Seven-sided object (8)

34 Experimental (4)

35 Desire to get money in Japan ? (3)

36 Least feral (6)

37 Sharp-sighted (4)

DOWN

1 Japanese sashes (4)

2 Potter's oven (4)

3 ____ put : do nothing, in a way ? (4)

5 Prey (6)

6 Three for Tiberius (3)

7 Violent confusion (6)

9 Sing wordlessly (3)

11 Units of force in CGS system ? (5)

12 Classical Greek style (5)

15 Der ____ (Adenauer) (4)

16 Thailand money (4)

18 Platform (4)

19 As many as (2,2)

20 Take a chair (3)

23 Spout (5)

24 Shouts (5)

25 Old time classic movie ____ Kanya (6)

26 Records (6)

28 Myrna of movies (3)

29 Again (4)

30 Like congers (4)

31 River of Hades (4)

33 Pamela's nickname (3)

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Solution to October 20

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Solution to October 20

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Yatnal rules out reconciliation with Vijayendra

VIJAYAPURA: Expelled BJP MLA Basanagouda Patil Yatnal has ruled out any reconciliation talks with Karnataka BJP president BY Vijayendra, dismissing speculation that their recent meeting could pave the way for his return to the party.

Yatnal clarified that the two had not discussed any political settlement and asserted that further developments would depend on a change in the state BJP leadership.

His remarks come after their appearance at a private gathering triggered speculation about a possible rapprochement.

Explaining the meeting, Yatnal said he had attended a private event and was invited to a person's house. Vijayendra arrived while he was having coffee there, and they exchanged routine pleasantries. He denied that any negotiations had taken place.

Yatnal accused Vijayendra of causing him considerable personal and political harm.

He alleged that when Vijayendra's father, former chief minister BS Yediyurappa, was in power, his letters were torn up and funds meant for his constituency were withheld. He also claimed that efforts were made to suppress him because he was seen as a political rival. According to Yatnal, there was personal hostility between him and Vijayendra, making reconciliation difficult under the present leadership.

The expelled MLA also clarified his plans for his proposed Delhi visit. He said Union Minister V Somanna had invited him to attend an event marking the unveiling of a statue of Kittur Rani Chennamma in Parliament. Yatnal said he intended to raise issues concerning sugarcane farmers with ministers but had no plans to meet national BJP leaders to discuss rejoining the party.

Yatnal said he would consider returning to the BJP only if he received an appropriate position and the state leadership changed. Otherwise, he indicated that he would continue his political fight independently.

IMD forecasts rains intensified from today

BENGALURU: The India Meteorological Department (IMD) has forecast that rain may intensify further in various districts of the state in the coming days. Rain accompanied by thunder is expected especially across several places in the coastal and southern interior regions.

From 22 October, the quantity of rainfall is likely to increase significantly in most districts of the state, and the weather department has issued a forecast of heavy rain in some areas.

In certain parts of coastal Karnataka's Dakshina Kannada, Udupi and Uttara Kannada districts there is a possibility of moderate rain with lightning and thunder. Cloudy conditions are expected throughout the day in this region, with intermittent showers anticipated.

When thunder and lightning activity is high, the public is advised to strictly avoid moving about or standing in open areas. Officials have appealed that, when lightning is seen, people should not take shelter under trees but should take shelter inside safe buildings free of any danger and exercise caution.

18-yr-old Soumya wins gold at Asian Para Games

BHARATH ANJANAPPA
BENGALURU

SOUMYA, an 18-year-old para-athlete from Kollegala in Chamarajanagar district, has brought pride to Karnataka and India by winning a gold medal in the women's 1,500-metre T12 category at the 5th Asian Para Games 2026 in Aichi-Nagoya, Japan.

Adding to Karnataka's achievement, Radha Ven-

An Athlete from Chamarajanagar district wins gold, while Radha Venkatesh from Chitradurga clinches silver in the women's 1,500m T12 category

katesh from Chitradurga won the silver medal in the same event and category, marking another significant accomplishment for the state's para-athletics contingent.

Representing India, Soumya's gold-medal performance highlights the talent

and determination of para-athletes from Karnataka on the international stage. At 18, her achievement is a proud moment for her home district and the country. Soumya is associated with the Indian Athletic Academy and is reported to have studied at Sir M. Visvesvaraya

Government Pre-University College in Gandhinagar, Bengaluru.

The athletes were trained at the Indian Athletic Academy in Jayanagar, Bengaluru, under the guidance of international athlete and coach Roshan Bachchan, with support from coach Vikram, a

former state and national-level athlete.

The gold and silver medals won by Soumya and Radha Venkatesh are significant achievements for Karnataka's para-sports community and are expected to inspire more young athletes to pursue excellence in sports.



Kharge calls Modi's rule 'Hitler-like', says people fed up with NDA govt

HANS NEWS SERVICE
KALABURAGI

AICC president Mallikarjun Kharge on Wednesday accused the Narendra Modi-led NDA government of running what he described as "Hitler-like rule" in the country, claiming that people were increasingly dissatisfied with the government and that its allies were gradually distancing themselves from the coalition.

Speaking in Kalaburagi, Kharge alleged that the government was undermining democratic institutions and concentrating power. He also criticised Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar, accusing him of favouring the BJP and the Modi leadership. Kharge alleged that irregularities in voting had taken place and claimed that



complaints about the Election Commission's functioning had not received adequate attention.

Kharge said political parties and leaders who had supported the NDA were now reconsidering their positions. Referring to Andhra Pradesh politics, he cited YS Jagan Mohan Reddy and claimed that leaders who had earlier supported the alliance were expressing regret. His remarks came

amid the Congress's continuing allegations concerning electoral practices and the functioning of constitutional institutions.

The Congress president also targeted the BJP over its criticism of Rahul Gandhi, the Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha. He alleged that Prime Minister Modi and Union Home Minister Amit Shah had made attacking Rahul Gandhi a regular political

strategy, similar to the BJP's earlier criticism of former Prime Minister Indira Gandhi.

Kharge further accused the government of failing to address problems in the education sector. He pointed to vacancies in universities and alleged that inadequate attention was being given to education and the concerns of young people. He claimed that the government's policies were weakening the confidence of the youth in the Prime Minister. Kharge said the Congress was fighting to protect democracy and the future of citizens. The BJP and the Union government have faced repeated criticism from the opposition over electoral transparency and institutional independence, though the allegations made by Kharge remain political claims.

"Madhvacharya's teachings advocated a caste-free, harmonious society"



HANS NEWS SERVICE
BENGALURU

THE central message of Madhvacharya, the philosopher and social reformer, was the creation of a caste-free and class-free society founded on universal human values, senior scholar VyasanakerePrabhanjanacharya said on Wednesday.

He was speaking at a Madhvacharya Jayanti programme organised at the Karnataka Brahmin Development Board office. Prabhanjanacharya said Madhvacharya emphasised that human values were superior to all other religious distinctions.

Wishing well for all living beings was the path through which people

could realise the divine, he said.

Those who opposed superstitions stood for truth, he said, adding that Madhvacharya upheld a broad vision of social harmony and peaceful coexistence. He had also inspired the traditions of Dasa Sahitya and Vyasa Sahitya and authored more than 37 works, the scholar said.

Brahmin Development Board chairman Asagodu Jayasimha welcomed the state government's decision to celebrate Madhvacharya Jayanti across Karnataka every year on October 21.

The decision was appropriate and would carry forward Karnataka's tradition of honouring religious and cultural contributions, he said.

PULAKESHINAGAR BUILDING BLAST

Home Minister says FSL report will establish cause

Two injured in explosion at under-construction building; police probe possible explosive materials

HANS NEWS SERVICE
BENGALURU

AN explosion at an under-construction building in Pulakeshinagar on Tuesday afternoon has triggered concern, with police investigating the circumstances surrounding the incident and examining suspected materials recovered from the site.Two people, identified as Suraj and Allaudin, sustained burn injuries in the incident and were shifted to Victoria Hospital for treatment. Police have registered a suo motu case against the building owner and contractor and intensified their investigation.

According to preliminary information, a bag had been kept on the fourth floor of the under-construction building. A battery-like object inside the bag reportedly exploded, injuring the two men. Suspected materials potentially linked to an improvised explosive device (IED) were also found at

the site, prompting investigators to examine the possibility of an explosive device.

Reacting to the incident, the Home Minister said the case was under investigation and urged the public not to believe rumours. He said the exact cause of the explosion was expected to become clearer after the forensic examination. It was yet to be established whether the blast resulted from a chemical reaction or an actual IED explosion, he added. Police have sent the samples collected from the scene to the Forensic Science Laboratory (FSL) for analysis. Investigators are also examining the possibility that the suspected explosive materials had been brought to the building two days before the incident.

The probe is focusing on who placed the bag inside the building, what the object contained, how the explosion occurred and whether it was brought there for a specific purpose.



Govt allows third-party agencies to conduct departmental inspections

Move aims to clear inspection backlogs and ensure timely regulatory checks and certification

HANS NEWS SERVICE
BENGALURU

THE government has directed various departments to engage authorised third-party agencies to carry out scheduled inspections, audits and certification activities in areas where staff shortages have delayed regulatory checks.

The move is aimed at addressing delays in routine inspections, particularly in departments facing a shortage of field-level personnel, and ensuring that regulatory requirements are completed within the stipulated timelines.The new arrangement will initially prioritise departments such as Legal Metrology, Food Safety and Drugs Administration, and the Department of Factories and Boilers.

Under legal metrology, third-party agencies may be engaged to conduct annual inspections and stamping of weights and measuring instruments. In the Food Safety and Drugs Administration sector, the arrangement will cover annual inspections of food businesses, restaurants, medical stores and pharmacies. Agencies may also be assigned safety inspections and annual certification of industrial boilers.



The government has clarified that outsourcing inspection work will not mean transferring statutory enforcement powers to private agencies. Legal and regulatory powers will remain entirely with government officials. Powers relating to the collection of food and drug samples, seizure of goods and prosecution will continue to rest with authorised government officers. Officials will use the reports and audit findings submitted by the agencies to focus their attention on establishments identified as high-risk. This risk-based approach is intended to help departments deploy their limited staff more effectively.To ensure the reliability of inspections, departmental officials will also conduct random spot checks to verify the findings submitted by third-party agencies.

The government has

warned that agencies found guilty of negligence, irregularities or misconduct will face stringent action, including blacklisting.As part of the implementation process, the departments concerned have been asked to submit time-bound action plans covering empanelment procedures, eligibility criteria and the steps required for speedy implementation. The issue will also be reviewed at the KDP progress review meeting chaired by the Chief Secretary.

The government order was issued by Harsha Gupta, Principal Secretary of the Department of Personnel and Administrative Reforms, based on recommendations made by the Karnataka Administrative Reforms Commission-2 (KARC-2).

He has directed the principal secretaries of all departments to prepare the necessary action plans.

Re-investigation to be conducted on Soujanya case

HANS NEWS SERVICE
MANGALURU

THE reinvestigation of the Soujanya murder case has been ordered and a Special Investigation Team is expected to intensify it. After the Supreme Court directed a fresh probe on 21 September, the matter acquired importance.

The SIT team has now completed preparations to begin the field investigation officially within the next two days.

Examination of the

important documents related to the case has already been finished. The SIT has reportedly fully examined the investigation reports and documents obtained from the CBI, the court and the local police stations.

The team led by IPS officer Lokesh Jagalasar will visit the crime scene in the next stage. Preparations have also been made to interrogate members of Soujanya's family, the PSI and other staff.

Father, 10-yr-old son drowned at Ballari Fort

HANS NEWS SERVICE
BALLARI

A father and his 10-year-old son drowned in a water-filled pit atop the historic Ballari Fort on Wednesday while visiting the site during the Dasara holidays.The deceased have been identified as Ramesh and his son Honnurawaswamy, natives of Kanekal village in Andhra Pradesh.According to preliminary information, three families had visited Ballari Fort during the Ayudha Puja holiday. While exploring the hilltop, Honnurawaswamy reportedly slipped and fell into a pit while watching fish in the water. Seeing his son struggling, Ramesh jumped into the pit in an attempt to rescue him. However, neither father nor son knew how to swim, and both drowned. On receiving information, personnel from Kaul Bazaar police station and fire and emergency services rushed to the spot and retrieved the bodies.

Police department not a servant: Kharge asks RSS to seek permission

BENGALURU

KARNATAKA Home Minister Priyank Kharge on Wednesday launched a sharp attack on the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), questioning whether the Police Department was subservient to the organisation.

Reacting to a letter submitted by the RSS informing the police about its proposed march, Kharge said the organisation had provided information rather than formally seeking permission for the event.

"The letter says that they are informing the police, not seeking permission. Let them seek permission. Is the Police Department their domestic servant?" he asked.Kharge also questioned RSS chief



Mohan Bhagwat's statements on changing the existing governments and politics, asking who had authorised him to speak about a change of regime and political matters.

"What regime change are they talking about? How can regime change happen?

The Chief Election Commissioner is theirs, the EVMs are theirs, and the voter list is theirs. Can these be changed? Form 6 is theirs, and Form 7 is theirs. There is still no answer to the question: Why does the Chief Election Commissioner have judicial

immunity?" he said, referring to Forms 6 and 7 associated with electoral rolls.

"There is a conspiracy to ensure that they remain in power permanently. This has already been exposed. Isn't the fact that people are taking to the streets today evidence of this?" he said.

He suggested that this was the reason some people were behaving with such confidence.Keeping up his attack on the organisation, he said: "Which evil force are we talking about? Who is the one developing links with Pakistan?"

He also called for an examination of the organisation's history and questioned what protests it had undertaken in the past.Kharge further said that protests taking place in

foreign countries should not be compared with those in India, as the issues involved were different.

Citing France as an example, he said protests there were being held over price rise and education-related issues, whereas demonstrations in India were being organised against the Election Commission.

His remarks come amid a political controversy over the RSS's proposed march and the procedure for obtaining police permission. The issue has triggered a debate over the organisation's activities and the conditions applicable to public processions.

Priyank Kharge on Tuesday urged the RSS to follow the prescribed procedure and obtain formal permission

from the competent authorities before conducting route marches in the state on the occasion of Vijayadashami.

The move has triggered a controversy.

In a statement addressed to RSS volunteers, Kharge had said that merely informing the Home Department or asking it to cooperate and make necessary arrangements did not amount to obtaining permission.

He urged the organisation to submit an application in accordance with the prescribed procedure applicable to all organisations and await formal approval from the competent authorities.

Kharge also referred to the RSS Akhil Bharatiya Pratidinhi Sabha Annual Report 2025-26, saying that the or-

ganisation had conducted 562 route marches across Karnataka involving 2,21,963 uniformed participants.

He said that if lakhs of RSS volunteers intended to march through the streets of Karnataka on a single day at the same time, the Police Department would have to make considerable preparations.

These arrangements would include the deployment of police personnel, transportation, food, traffic management, security and other logistical requirements, Kharge added.

Emphasising the need for proper planning, the Karnataka Minister noted that such large-scale events required manpower and public resources.



If he (Sooryavanshi) gets a chance in this series, we've seen what he can do and opponents have found it quite hard to stop him. I know in England, they went quite short and hard at a lot of the Indian batters. I think we've seen him in the IPL and how aggressive he can be. So we've got some plans for him if he happens to play

-Mitchell Santner

Gavit leads India's gold-silver finish in men's 100m T47 event

Medal rush continues in para-athletics; Ayush, Praveen, Khilari add to gold tally

NAGOYA: India's Dilip Gavit won the men's 100m T46/47 combined event gold medal at the Asian Para Games while compatriot Mohammed Morssinganakath Basil clinched the silver in the same event here on Wednesday. The 23-year-old Gavit, a T46 athlete, clocked 10.69 seconds to finish on top. Basil, a T47 athlete, clinched the silver with a Games record time of 10.72 seconds.

China's Kangjun Shi (T46) won the bronze, clocking 10.80 seconds. Athletes of two or more classifications can be clubbed together in a combined event to ensure that there are enough number of participants. T46 and T47 categories are for athletes



with upper limb impairment. The primary difference between T46 and T47 comes down to the severity and location of the upper limb impairment.

T46 applies to athletes with a more severe unilateral or bilateral impairment affecting the shoulder or elbow -- roughly equivalent to an above-elbow amputation -- whereas T47 is for

athletes with a less severe impairment affecting the wrist or below the elbow -- roughly equivalent to a below-elbow amputation. Gavit had won a 400m gold at the previous Para Asiad in China, besides a 100m gold in the Glasgow Para Commonwealth Games earlier this year.

There was no stopping the Indian juggernaut as

10 more medals, including three gold, were added to the tally on the third day of competitions here on Wednesday. Ayush Verma gave India the first para-athletics gold of the day in the men's shot put F53 event, followed by Praveen Kumar (men's high jump T44/64) and Sachin Khilari (men's shot put F46). India also grabbed four silver medals in the morning session through Banti (men's high jump T44/64), Bhagyashri Jadhav (women's shot put F34), Mohd Yasser (men's shot put F46) and Manjeet (men's javelin F12/13). Anubhav Choudhary (men's 100m T35), Parveen (men's shot put F46) and Rakesh-hai Bhatt (men's 100m T37) won a bronze each.

India look to beat travel fatigue in T20 opener against Kiwis

CHRISTCHURCH: Unbeaten in their last two T20 series here, the Shreyas Iyer-led India would rely heavily on their batting firepower to outwit New Zealand even though the relatively inexperienced tourists have got barely two days to rest, acclimatise and train for the five-match rubber beginning here on Thursday. Their most recent T20 clash on New Zealand soil was in 2022 in Napier where the rain-interrupted match ended in a tie via the Duckworth-Lewis method.

The series, however, was claimed by India who managed to win the only game that was not wrecked by inclement weather.

In the line-up of batters chosen for the upcoming assignment, only four have previously played T20Is in New



Match starts 12.30 PM

Zealand. That includes skipper Iyer, Ishan Kishan, Sanju Samson, and Shivam Dube. Therefore, even though the likes of Abhishek Sharma, Tilak Varma and 15-year-old sensation Vaibhav Sooryavanshi are known marauders, the nippy and seaming conditions in this part of the world would need some adjustment.

For Iyer, the challenge would be to prove himself in a challenging away assignment after his tenure began with

back-to-back losses in Ireland and England.

Mitchell Santner's New Zealand would be eager to make it as difficult as possible for Iyer, who is coming here after India's second successive gold-winning run at the Asian Games and a drawn hard-fought home series against the West Indies.

However, if the New Zealand series follows the script that unfolded in the UK earlier this year, pressure will only mount on Iyer, who is expected to lead India in the T20 World Cup to be held in Australia and New Zealand in two years' time. A confident Iyer said his team is used to playing in different conditions, having taken a long flight from India hours after sharing the home series against the West Indies.



We have plans for Sooryavanshi: Santner

CHRISTCHURCH: New Zealand captain Mitchell Santner conceded that Vaibhav Sooryavanshi would be "quite hard to stop" if he plays for India in the five-match T20 International series beginning here on Thursday, but his team has some plans to deal with the young batting sensation.

Sooryavanshi has been used sparingly since being picked for the tour of UK earlier this year, largely because regular openers Abhishek Sharma and Sanju Samson have done the job quite well.

Santner said should the 15-year-old make the playing XI in the series here, some research has been done to figure out his game. "He (Sooryavanshi) did not play in the last series (against West Indies), but we know how good he is, in IPL. We know other players like Abhishek are doing very well. But he (Sooryavanshi) has a huge part to play for India, whether it's in this series or not, but in future," Santner said. "If he does get a crack at this series, we've seen what he can do and guys have found it quite hard to stop him. I know in England, they went quite short and hard at a lot of the Indian batters. I think we've seen him in the IPL and how aggressive he can be. So we've got some plans for him if he happens to play."

Santner was also asked about the return of veteran pacer Bhuvneshwar Kumar in the Indian T20I team after a nearly four-year absence. The home skipper said he expects Bhuvneshwar to love the conditions here. "I think Bhuvu will love these conditions in New Zealand. If there's anything in the wicket, he finds something out of it. On some flat ones in India, he still managed to nip the ball and swing the ball, so I think with the new ball out here, especially, it'll be a challenge (for New Zealand).

Simran grabs second gold

NAGOYA: Indian sprinter Simran collected her second gold medal by winning the women's 100m T12 competition with a Games record time of 12.02 seconds here on Wednesday. Simran had also won the 200m gold with a new Games record. On Wednesday, she once again finished ahead of Iran's Hajar Safarzadeh, who clocked 12.30sec. Indonesia's Made Ni Putri finished third with a timing of 12.51sec. T12 classification covers athletes with moderate visual impairment. The 26-year-old Simran, who won a bronze in the 2024 Paris Paralympics, is on a comeback trail with her new guide Shivam after her previous guide Umar Saifi was banned for a doping violation. Simran had won silver medals in both her events in the 2023 Hangzhou edition of the Games.



Sheetal-Payal pair wins silver

NAGOYA: The teenage Indian pair of Sheetal Devi and Payal Nag clinched a silver medal after losing the compound women's doubles final on Wednesday, while Swati Chaudhary and Adil Mohamed Nazir Ansari won bronze in the mixed team W1 recurve event Sheetal, who was born without arms, and Payal, a quadruple amputee, went down 141-150 to China's Xu Xueqing and Zhao Jing in the gold-medal match. The 19-year-old Indians struggled to keep pace with their Chinese opponents after the opening end, playing catch-up for the remainder of the contest. Paris Paralympics bronze medallist Sheetal was more consistent, shooting four 10s, but Asian Games debutant Payal could not match her partner's accuracy, managing just 9s and 8s before finishing with a 7 on her final arrow.



SUKHCHAIN BAGS BRONZE

NAGOYA: India's Sukhchain settled for bronze in the men's javelin throw F55 event after managing a modest 29.94m throw in a competition dominated by China's Zhou Feifei. The 32-year-old was well below his best as Zhou clinched gold with a throw of 37.63m, breaking the 22-year-old world record of

35.30m. Zaker Zafar of Iran took silver with a personal best of 36.00m, leaving Sukhchain trailing the top two by a considerable margin. Indian swimmer Himanshu Nandal clinched his second bronze medal, finishing third in the men's 100m breaststroke S11 event. The 22-year-old from Rohtak, Haryana, who

has been completely visually impaired since birth due to an optic nerve failure, clocked 1:20.72 seconds. China's Yang Bozun won the gold in a Games-record time of 1:12.69, while Japan's Keiichi Kimura took silver in 1:12.72. Himanshu had opened his medal account on Tuesday, clocking 5:10.91 to



finish third in a four-swimmer field in the men's 400m freestyle S11 event.

Tiger Shroff firing: 3 accused sent to police custody till Oct 31

MUMBAI

A Mumbai court remanded three accused in the Tiger Shroff firing case to police custody till Oct 31.

Three key accused apprehended in connection with the firing at actor Tiger Shroff's car were brought to Mumbai from Kota in Rajasthan early on Wednesday, police said.

Police brought them by

road from Kota to Mumbai and, upon arrival, immediately took them to GT Hospital for a mandatory medical examination, an official said. Following the medical check-up, the accused were escorted to the Mumbai Crime Branch's Anti-Extortion Cell (AEC) office for interrogation. The accused have been identified as Rehan alias Sukka, from Sonipat in Haryana; Ritik Kurmi

The apprehended accused were brought to Mumbai from Kota in Rajasthan early on Wednesday

alias Roshan, originally from Begusarai in Bihar and living in Mumbai; and Phool Singh from Haryana, the official said. The Kota city police had handed them over to Mumbai Police, which formally arrest-

ed them and produced them before a magistrate there. The court granted transit remand to take them to Mumbai. Meanwhile, advocate Ajinkya Mirgal arrived at the AEC office in Mumbai on Wednesday

morning, informing officials that he would represent the accused as their defence counsel in the case. At least two men fired gunshots at Shroff's car in Mumbai's Juhu area on Sunday evening before speeding away on a motorcycle. The actor escaped relatively unhurt, while his driver and a bystander were injured. According to Mumbai Police, five to six rounds were fired

at the car. A motorcycle, allegedly used by the shooters, was found abandoned in Andheri. The accused fled to Surat and once there, boarded a Jaipur-bound train. The three were supposed to go to Delhi on a bus and then flee to Nepal. The Mumbai Police have registered a case under the provisions of attempt to murder and the Arms Act. According to the police, Rehan was



in touch with Anil Pandit, an alleged associate of the Lawrence Bishnoi gang, which

claimed responsibility for the attack in an unverified social media post.

Suvendu blames Oppn for Durga puja stampede

KOLKATA

WEST Bengal Chief Minister Suvendu Adhikari on Wednesday accused Opposition parties of using the Chorbagan Durga Puja stampede for political gain instead of reaching out to the victims and those injured in the tragedy.

Adhikari made the remarks while visiting the family of Priya Samaddar, one of the 19 people killed in the stampede, at their home in New Barrackpore in North 24 Parganas district. He handed over Rs 25 lakh in compensation to the bereaved family on behalf of the state government.

The stampede at the Chorbagan Durga Puja pandal in north Kolkata claimed 19



The stampede at the Chorbagan Durga Puja pandal in north Kolkata claimed 19 lives and left 25 people injured

lives and left 25 people injured.

When asked about criticism regarding the government's response and the police arrangements at the pandal, Adhikari questioned whether opposition leaders had done enough to support the victims.

"Which opposition is there? Only the Leader of the Opposition, Ritabrata

Banerjee-led faction exists," he said.

He also questioned whether the Trinamool Congress, the CPI(M) and other opposition parties had visited the families of the victims or those injured in the incident.

"Did any such opposition party go to the Kolkata Medical College morgue or the Medical College Hospital after the stampede?" he asked.

Another book stall vandalised, members assaulted: CPM

KOLKATA: Several books were damaged in an alleged attack on their book stall at Islampur, West Bengal, on Tuesday, the CPM has alleged.

The CPM said that Jayanta Deb, a local party member, was among those who were injured in the incident.

However, the police said the situation was under control.

Every year, several book stalls are installed near Durga Puja pandals in West Bengal by the CPM. These book stalls have been facing attacks in the last few days, while some have been dismantled citing the lack of requisite permission.

BJP state president Samik Bhattacharya has reiterated that his party does not support acts of vandalism by its members.

West Bengal chief minister Suvendu Adhikari had earlier directed Durga Puja committees to deny permission to CPI-M book stalls if they used the term "Sharodotsav" (autumn festival) instead of "Durga Puja" on banners and hoardings.



Boat capsizes during idol immersion in Kota; 2 dead

KOTA: The bodies of two young men were recovered after a boat carrying seven people capsized during a Durga idol immersion ceremony in a canal in Rajasthan's Kota, with rescue teams resuming the search operation on Wednesday morning. The bodies of Suraj Singh (22) and Vikas Verma (22), both Kota residents, were recovered during the search operation that resumed at 5.30 am, ASP Kota City Subhash Chandra Mishra and SDRF officials Ekta Mahipal confirmed.

The search is underway for the two remaining missing youths, Rahul Joshi (18) and Ashu Joshi (19), who are cousins and residents of Sanjay Nagar in Kota city. The boat capsized near Steel Bridge under the Borekhabda police station limits around 5.30 pm on Tuesday during a Durga idol immersion ceremony.

Of the seven people aboard, three -- Deepak, a woman identified as Maankanwar, and the boatman, Suresh -- managed to swim to safety and were rescued by passersby. The search operation was called off at 11.30 pm on Tuesday in accordance with standard operating procedures (SOPs) and resumed at 5.30 am on Wednesday, Mishra said. The two recovered bodies were found close to each other, around 200 to 300 metres from the accident site, he said, adding that they were sent to a mortuary for post-mortem.



Naxal menace ended in MP because of brave soldiers: CM

BHOPAL: Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Mohan Yadav on Wednesday hailed the "vital role" played by the police and armed forces in maintaining national security, and said because of courageous soldiers, the state succeeded in ending the Naxal menace which it endured for over three decades. He also praised the police for enhancing Madhya Pradesh's reputation through their efficiency. "It is a moment of great pride for us that our state has now succeeded in overcoming the scourge of Naxalism, which it had been enduring for nearly 35 years. It was a difficult period, fraught with many challenges. However, our brave and courageous soldiers made the state proud with their indomitable courage, valour, and dedication," Yadav said. Under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the guidance of Union Home Min-



ister Amit Shah, the state has successfully tackled and overcome the serious challenge of Naxalism, he said. The country observes the Police Commemoration Day on October 21 to remember the sacrifices of the police personnel, Yadav added. This day reminds us how important the role of our police force and armed forces is in maintaining national security, peace, and social order, according to him. "The police and the armed forces have a special significance in our history. In our eternal culture, bearing arms does not merely mean a display of power, but rather a pledge to protect society and the nation.



"The vegetable oil and oilseed sector is navigating a changing global environment shaped by biofuel policies, shifting trade flows, price volatility and growing demand. Colombia, the world's fourth-largest palm oil producer, offers promising opportunities for deeper trade engagement,"
-Angshu Mallick, President,
Solvent Extractors' Association of India

BIZ BRIEFS

RUDHRA gets recognition

Lingampalli Himaja, a 20-year-old student at Shri Vishnu Engineering College for Women, reached the James Dyson Award 2026 global top 20 with RUDHRA, a tool enabling visually impaired people to create Braille documents independently. Winners, announced November 4, receive ₹30,000 for further development and commercialisation. HimajaLingampalli, creator of RUDHRA, said: "I feel incredibly grateful and proud to have this opportunity through the James Dyson Award. Representing India on an international platform is a meaningful milestone for me."

Organic Creamery opens store in Hyd

Organic Creamery by Iceberg has unveiled Craft House, its flagship store in Khajaguda, here. The store spread across 5,000 sq. ft. was inaugurated by Chinnaleeyar Swamy and anchor Suma marking the brand's flagship branch opening in Hyderabad. Subas B Shetty, CEO, Organic Creamery, said, "With Craft House, we wanted to create a space that gave people more reasons to come together over ice cream."

Schneider Electric expands initiative

Schneider Electric has kicked off Services Xpress in South India, bringing its mobile service innovation hub to five states and 20+ cities in over 120 days. Damini Chaudhari, VP - Services, Schneider Electric India., said: "Services Xpress gives us an opportunity to take our services capabilities closer to industry and demonstrate their relevance in real-world operating environments. By bringing together condition-based maintenance, digital monitoring and lifecycle services."

Amazon's festive sale goes live

Amazon's Great Indian Festival Reloaded begins Wednesday midnight, offering deals across smartphones, electronics, fashion, beauty, home and essentials, plus faster festive deliveries and exclusive Prime savings. Shoppers can access bank discounts, 5% Amazon Pay ICICI cashback, 10% Amazon Pay Later cashback, No-Cost EMI and exchange offers. AI tools Rufus and Lens simplify personalized product discovery, visual search and price tracking, while Review Highlights, Quick Learn, Buying Guides and tailored homepages support more informed shopping decisions.

JSW MG Motors announces winners

JSW MG Motor India announced eight winners of the sixth MG Developer Program, its flagship startup initiative promoting automotive innovation and mobility technologies. Selected under the "Innovation in Automotive" theme were Nayan Technologies, Technod8.AI, LiveN-Sense, LW3, Smaarbrand by Acquink Solutions, Fit-sol, Cautio, and Meta Materials Circular Market. Anurag Mehrotra, MD, JSW MG Motor India, said: "We are entering an era where the boundaries between mobility, data, and artificial intelligence are rapidly converging."

Record 100-minute sellout: Jio Platforms IPO subscribed 3x times

DRAWS ₹66,500 CR BIDS AFTER RECORD-FAST START

NEW DELHI

JIO Platforms Ltd's Rs 30,213-crore initial public offering attracted a combined demand of about Rs 74,610 crore, including its anchor allocation, after becoming India's fastest-ever IPO to achieve full subscription within 100 minutes of opening on Wednesday.

The public issue was subscribed 3.01 times by 5 p.m., with investors bidding for 59.44 crore shares against 19.75 crore shares on offer, according to exchange data.

Public bids were worth approximately Rs 66,500 crore, calculated at the upper end of the Rs 1,119 price band, while the anchor allocation added another Rs 8,110 crore to total demand.

The portion reserved for qualified institutional buyers was subscribed 9.02 times, with bids for 44.22 crore shares against 4.90 crore shares on offer. Domestic financial institutions, including banks and insurers, bid for 25.02 crore shares, while foreign institutional investors sought 15.14 crore shares. Mutual funds bid for



IPO DRAWS MASSIVE DEMAND

- Jio Platforms IPO subscribed 3.01 times by 5 pm
- Public issue attracts Rs 66,500 cr in bids
- Total demand, including anchor allocation, reaches Rs 74,610 cr
- Non-institutional investor segment subscribed 1.58 times
- Retail investor portion subscribed 0.68 times, remaining undersubscribed

3.19 crore shares.

Demand from non-institutional investors reached 1.58 times the shares reserved for them. The retail investor segment remained under-subscribed at 0.68 times, with bids for 5.78 crore shares

against 8.50 crore shares on offer. Employee and shareholder reservations were subscribed 1.30 times and 1.38 times, respectively.

The strong institutional response follows an equally robust anchor-investor book.

Jio allotted shares worth about Rs 8,110 crore to 212 anchor investors at Rs 1,119 apiece on Monday. Demand for the anchor allocation exceeded Rs 2.5 lakh crore, according to people familiar with the matter.

It took just 100 minutes for shares on offer to be lapped up by investors when the IPO opened for subscription on Wednesday, stock exchange data showed.

The early pace sets Jio apart from other large Indian offerings. Bajaj Housing Finance's IPO was fully subscribed by 2 p.m. on its opening day, while LG Electronics India's offering reached full subscription by the end of Day 1 in 2025. Hyundai Motor India's Rs 27,870-crore IPO, which held the previous record for India's largest public offering, was subscribed just 18 per cent by the end of its first day in 2024.

Jio's offering is also structurally different from those of Hyundai and LG Electronics, both of which were entirely offers for sale by existing shareholders. Jio is issuing up to 27 crore new shares, meaning the proceeds

will go to the company rather than to shareholders selling their holdings.

Priced at Rs 1,065 to Rs 1,119 a share, the IPO would value Jio Platforms at about \$108 billion at the upper end of the range. The offering is set to surpass Hyundai Motor India's record and marks a landmark public-market test for the digital and telecom business of Reliance Industries Ltd, controlled by billionaire Mukesh Ambani.

The IPO is a major test of investor appetite for Jio's ambition to expand beyond telecom connectivity into digital services, cloud computing and artificial intelligence. The company has cited a customer base of 533.3 million as a foundation for these businesses, seeking to convert its scale in connectivity into higher-margin enterprise and technology revenue.

The latest figures show institutional investors continuing to drive the offering, while retail demand is building more gradually. The final subscription figures could change before the offer closes on Friday.



Stock markets extend losses on banking, financial shares sell-off

MUMBAI: Equity benchmark indices extended their losses for a second straight session, with the Sensex dropping 143 points as selling in power, banking and financial stocks and elevated crude oil prices weighed on investor sentiment. Besides, rising US bond yields and persistent FII selling also dampened the trading scenario. The 30-share BSE Sensex declined 143.21 points, or 0.19 per cent, to close at 73,709.69. The index opened in the green and surged 829.29 points, or 1.12 per cent, to hit an intraday high of 74,682.19, before paring early gains to hit a low of 73,229.45. The 50-share NSE Nifty dropped 77.60 points, or 0.34 per cent, to end at 22,811.35. It had climbed to a high of 23,120.90 in early trade before sliding to an intraday low of 22,702.85.

Among the Sensex constituents, Bajaj Finance, Eternal, Trent, Axis Bank, NTPC,

Maruti Suzuki India, IndiGo, Kotak Mahindra Bank, Bharat Electronics Ltd, Bajaj Finserv, Tata Steel, Titan and State Bank of India were the major laggards. HCL Technologies, Infosys, Tech Mahindra, Tata Consultancy Services, UltraTech Cement, Bharti Airtel, PowerGrid, Reliance Industries, ITC, ICICI Bank and Sun Pharmaceuticals were among the gainers.

Meanwhile, the Rs 30,213-crore Jio Platforms IPO was subscribed nearly 3 times on the first day of bidding on Wednesday. The largest public offer so far in India became the fastest-ever IPO to achieve full subscription within 100 minutes of opening. "Indian equities gave up strong early gains as elevated crude prices and continued FII selling overshadowed optimism surrounding India-US trade negotiations," said Vinod Nair, Head of Research, Geojit Investments Ltd.

Centre inks ₹770-cr radar deal to help Army fight drone threats

NEW DELHI

THE Ministry of Defence has signed a contract with Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL) to procure Improved Low-Level Lightweight Radar (LLLR-I) at a cost of approximately Rs 770 crore to boost the air defence capability of the Indian Army. The LLLR(I) system has the capability of detecting and tracking fighter jet-sized targets as well as mini and micro drones. It has the additional capability of prioritising aerial targets. This will enable the Army to successfully counter the threat of Unmanned Aerial Systems (UAS), the statement said.

The contract with the defence PSU was signed in the presence of Defence Secretary Rajesh Kumar Singh.

Aligning with the government's vision of Viksit Bharat @2047, the procurement is a significant step towards indigenisation of air defence



platforms with a boost to India's Defence manufacturing ecosystem, including Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) and building a resilient, self-reliant and globally competitive defence industry, the statement added.

India's defence sector has undergone a transformational change over the past decade to emerge as a stronger, more self-reliant and globally credible force, with the country's production of military hardware recording an over

fourfold increase to touch Rs 1.78 lakh crore in 2025-26 compared with a mere Rs 4,746 crore in FY 2013-14, according to official figures.

While production from public-sector entities accounted for 76 per cent of this output, the private sector contributed the remaining 24 per cent. Defence exports rose from a mere Rs 686 crore in FY2013-14 to Rs 38,424 crore in FY2025-26, with the country's military hardware finding markets in over 80 countries.

SEA eyes Colombia for palm oil supplies

NEW DELHI: Colombia could become an alternative palm oil supplier for India as top producers Indonesia and Malaysia step up biodiesel blending, which threatens to restrict supplies for food use, the edible oil trade body said on Wednesday.

"Colombia, the world's fourth-largest palm oil producer, offers promising opportunities for deeper trade engagement," Angshu Mallick, president of the Solvent Extractors' Association of India (SEA), said in a statement. Colombia has supplied about 2,00,000 tonnes of palm oil to India in the recent past, Mallick said, adding that the country could help broaden India's sourcing base. India is the world's biggest importer of vegetable oils. SEA plans to send a high-level delegation to Colombia early next year. It also expects to sign a memorandum of understanding with Fedepalma, Colombia's national federation of oil palm growers, to provide a framework for closer engagement.

Rupee settles at six-week high

MUMBAI: The rupee surged 48 paise to close at 94.43 (provisional) against the US dollar on Wednesday, supported by foreign currency inflows linked to Reliance Industries' Jio Platforms IPO and RBI intervention to contain dollar demand. However, forex trade analysts said weak domestic markets and higher crude oil prices were putting pressure on the rupee.

At the interbank foreign exchange market, the rupee opened at 94.78 against the dollar. In intraday trade, it touched a high of 94.41 and a low of 94.82 against the American unit. It eventually settled at 94.43 (provisional) against the greenback, up 48 paise from its previous close. The Indian currency earlier recorded a similar closing level on September 4.

On Monday, the rupee settled lower by 2 paise at 94.91 against the US dollar. Forex markets were closed



on Tuesday on account of Dussehra. "The rupee rose to a six-week high on IPO-driven foreign inflows and a relatively weak US dollar. However, weak domestic markets and elevated crude oil prices capped sharp gains," said Anuj Choudhary, Research Analyst, Mirae Asset Sharekhan. He further said that the rupee is expected to trade with a positive bias on overall weakness in the dollar and softening of US treasury yields. "USD-INR spot price is expected to trade in a range of Rs 94.20 to Rs 94.80." According to analysts, a stronger rupee can ease imported inflation and reduce currency-related costs for companies importing crude, electronics and other raw materials.

vivo unveils four new devices, Origin OS7

HANS BUSINESS
HYDERABAD

vivo India has launched the V80, X Fold6 and S2 FE, OriginOS 7, and a preview of its Mixed Reality (MR) headset, the Vision Discovery Edition. Together, these launches take vivo beyond individual flagship successes towards a more differentiated portfolio across smartphones, foldables and software. Paigham Danish, CTO, Head of Product & GTM at vivo India, said, "Technology is at its best when it gives people more freedom to create, more ways to express themselves, more possibilities to get things done, and more ways to experience the world around them. That belief sits at the heart of vivo. The V80 is built around the creator and the joy of capturing everyday moments; the X Fold6 brings the power to do more, wherever you are; the S2 FE brings a more expressive and contemporary experience to a new generation; and OriginOS 7 makes technology feel more intuitive and effortless."

Gas fuelled ammonia, urea plant to run on RE fuel

NEW DELHI

INDIA will convert an existing natural gas fuelled ammonia and urea plant to run on renewable power, creating one of the world's largest green ammonia plants with an annual output target of about 1.1 million tonnes, a new report has said.

The report from Singapore-based Asian Power (AP) said the project will be developed by AM Green Ammonia (India) Private Limited and is backed by financing from the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and Japan.

It marks their first joint investment under the Action for Creating Energy Security for Long-term Resilience (ACCEL).

ACCEL was launched by the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the Government of Japan in May 2026 as a joint initiative that helps Asia-Pacific nations and businesses handle high energy costs, fuel swings, and supply limits.

The financing includes a \$100 million loan from the

Leading Asia's Private Infrastructure Fund 2, financed by the Japan International Cooperation Agency and administered by ADB, the report said.

"By using renewable energy instead of fossil fuels, India can produce it with far lower emissions and at a scale that can help reshape this industry," the publication cited ADB President Masato Kanda.

"The initiative has two tracks: short-term support for corporate liquidity, particularly for small and medium-sized enterprises, and longer-term support for more diversified and sustainable energy systems," the report said.

ACCEL brings together financial support and investment to help countries manage immediate shocks and build stronger energy systems for the future, a statement from ADB said.

India has crossed 300 GW of installed non-fossil fuel-based electricity generation capacity as of July 2026, with around 55.29 GW of non-fossil fuel capacity during FY26.

Navratri sees sales of 11 lakh automobiles in 10 days: FADA

NEW DELHI

THE nine days of Navratri saw sales of nearly 11.23 lakh auto units over 10 days, telling a fundamentally healthy story of the Indian automobile market, the data released by the Federation of Automobile Dealers Associations (FADA) showed on Wednesday. The retail sales were up close to 27 per cent over 2024 Navratri — the last truly comparable festive period — with passenger vehicles higher by over 10 per cent and two-wheelers by more than 32 per cent.

"The marginal 6.52 per cent dip versus Navratri 2025 is largely optical: last year Navratri ran 11 days against 10 and coincided with the GST 2.0 roll-out, which pulled a wave of pent-up demand into one extraordinary window," said FADA President Sai Giridhar.

The real standout is electrification — EV retail sales grew 26.78 per cent and now account for close to 10.5 per cent of festive sales, up from about 7.7 per cent a year ago,



showing that India's EV shift has become self-sustaining.

"As we enter the Dhanteras-to-Diwali wave, we remain cautiously optimistic: affordability is strong, aspiration is rising, and auto retail continues to mirror the enduring momentum of the India Growth Story," said Giridhar. Meanwhile, domestic automobile retail sales rose 31.82 per cent year-on-year to a record 25,36,920 units in September helped by festive demand and a low base, according to FADA data.

As per the data, retail sales rose 4.69 per cent from August. However, September marked the industry's best-ever month. The headline annual growth should

be viewed with caution as September 2025 sales were impacted by purchase deferrals ahead of the implementation of GST 2.0, FADA said. Moreover, the industry recorded its best-ever September across five of the six vehicle categories, while the first half of FY27 also saw record retail sales of 1,55,12,319 units, up 20.77 per cent year-on-year, it added. Segment-wise, two-wheeler sales rose 33.08 per cent year-on-year to 17,90,188 units, while passenger vehicle sales increased 32.10 per cent to 4,27,213 units. Commercial vehicle sales grew 37.62 per cent to 1,03,557 units, crossing the one-lakh mark in September for the first time.

AI boom could add up to \$100 bn in market value through IPOs

NEW DELHI

INDIA'S fast-growing artificial intelligence (AI) ecosystem could add between \$50 billion and \$100 billion to the country's listed market capitalisation over the next two to five years as a growing number of AI startups tap public markets, according to a report.

A report by Goldman Sachs showed that between 25 per cent and 50 per cent of nearly 70 mid-to-late-stage private AI companies in India could pursue initial public offerings over the period with listings potentially occurring at valuations averaging about four times their current estimated worth.

"The listings could broaden India's listed AI universe, bringing several under-represented segments of the AI value chain into the public markets," said Timothy Moe, co-head of Asia macro research and chief Asia-Pacific equity strategist at Goldman Sachs.

Private equity funding for Indian AI startups has tripled since 2024, while AI's share



of total private equity allocations has increased fourfold to account for about one-fifth of all private capital invested in the country.

The report highlighted that India is now among the top six destinations globally for private AI funding and among the top four countries for newly funded AI companies. It also identified 84 private firms as 'Private AI Contenders' with a combined estimated value of \$55 billion.

These companies have accounted for nearly 40 per cent of all AI-related private capital raised in India since 2025 and represent businesses across the AI value chain, the report added.

The largest opportunity lies in upstream AI enablers which the report values at around \$35 billion.

Dasara 2026 brings box-office cheer for Tollywood

SUHAS SISTU

Telugu cinema had a pleasant Dasara 2026 as Jailer 2, Ranabaali and Garividi Lakshmi had a decent opening during the festival season.

Even though the movies were completely different in terms of genre and target audiences, all of them seem to have performed in the same way. It was Rajinikanth's film Jailer 2 that had a massive success during the holiday season. Rajinikanth's movies are always in demand, but the dubbed Telugu version of Jailer 2 seems to be exceptionally popular for some reason. The film has a considerable audience due to the superstar's vast following, and the season complemented the highest-grossing. It was not the time, however,

Deverakonda's Ranabaali has done better than expected on the first Sunday of the holiday season. Even though the film got mixed reviews, it still has a decent audience that keeps it on the charts in the middle of the festive season. It will be essential to see how Ranabaali performs on weekdays after the holiday season since it will demonstrate the film's true value. The most surprising success of Dasara 2026 appears to be Garividi Lakshmi. Since it did not have any star power, the film's steady increase in ticket sales comes as a pleasant surprise. Word of mouth about Garividi Lakshmi has apparently been growing throughout the holiday season. All three films have shown box-office results comparable to those of first Sunday shows. It will be interesting to see how the money earned compares to the number of viewers throughout the entire length of the holiday season. It seems unlikely that anything would surpass Jailer 2 in terms of Rajinikanth's starrer. However, Ranabaali did well on weekdays when combined with the holiday season. Overall, Garividi Lakshmi is proving to be a pleasant surprise in terms of box-office performance. On the other hand, the true trial awaits these films when season comes to an end. Since the week will no longer extended weekends, the of viewers will play an role in films' further



New 'Vrushakarma' poster creates curiosity

Yuva Samrat Naga Chaitanya's upcoming mythological thriller Vrushakarma is set to release globally in theatres on 4 th December 2026. Directed by Karthik Dandu, the film that blends mythology, mystery and suspense promises to give a unique cinema experience to the movie buff.

As the film readies for the Diwali Cine Season, the makers have come up with a special poster unveiled ahead of Dussehra. In the poster we see Naga Chaitanya as a fierce persona with a thick beard and red tilak, as he stands in a dark background, while a grand multi-armed goddess idol holding a golden spear is also present.

Reportedly, it will be the biggest budget film for Naga

Chaitanya till date. Meenakshi Chaudhary and Sparsh Shrivastava are playing the roles of heroine and antagonist respectively. It has been produced by BVS N Prasad under SVCC in association with Sukumar Writings and presented by Bapineedu and Co-produced by IVY Entertainments. As their shoot concludes, the makers are working on the post-production work which involves technical team comprising of cinematographer Ragul D. Herian, music composer B. Ajaneesh Loknath, production designer Sri Nagendra Tangala and editor Naveen Nooli. They are also expected to come up with more promotional material as the release date nears.

- S Suhas

'Yellamma' locks March 2027 release

Music composer Devi Sri Prasad is all set to make his acting debut with an upcoming devotional rustic action drama Yellamma, which will hit the theatres worldwide on March 5, 2027. The makers of the film unveiled the release date.

The National Award-winning filmmaker Venu Yeldandi, who recently bagged the coveted Balagam, is directing the film. It is presented by Dil Raju while Shirish is producing the film under Sri Venkateswara Creations.

Apart from playing the lead role, Devi Sri Prasad (DSP) will also be seen composing the music of the film. The music maestro's transition from music to acting has drawn immense attention. The first-look poster of DSP as Parshi was released on his birthday, which went viral as he was seen sporting the character in a humble get-up.

The team is currently busy with the preparations as the film is gearing up for its release on the scheduled date. With Yeldandi and DSP on board, the film promises to give an altogether different experience to the audience. Yellamma will release in Telugu, Tamil, Hindi, Malayalam, and Kannada, making it one of the most awaited pan-India films this year.



Sharwanand's 'Bhogi' unveils heart-warming second single

Charming Star Sharwa's upcoming period action drama Bhogi has released the second single titled "Annayya Paanam Lo Poosina Puvvulu," which highlights the bonding of brother with his five sisters.

The movie directed by Sampath Nandi is set in the early 60s on the Maharashtra-Adilabad border. The latest single also provides a peek into the romance between Sharwa and Anupama Parameswaran, who plays the role of one of the sisters alongside Dimple Hayathi.

The song has been composed by Bheems Ceciroleo, who has created an earthy melody, while an Oscar winner Chandra Bose has written beautiful lyrics to depict the bonding between the siblings. Furthermore, the singer Sri Krishna has given a soulful voice to the



track, which has been choreographed by Aneer Master. The video includes village footages and family moments. While Sharwa looks charming in the rustic avatar, Anupama also fits right into the set-up. Moreover, the single follows "Egilivaranga", which had showcased

the music style of the film. The movie has been produced by KK Radhamohan under Sri Sathya Sai Arts and presented by Lakshmi Radhamohan. It has been captured by Kishor Kumar's lens, and the makers have yet to unveil its theatrical release date.

- P Ravi Teja

Yash impresses with 'Ravana Tandav' from 'Ramayana'

Rocking Star Yash stars as Ravana in a special musical reveal from Ramayana: Rise of a Legend unveiled on Dussehra ahead of the film's worldwide theatrical release on November 5, 2026.

Titled Rise of Asura in Hindi, the sequence spotlights the superstar's striking on-screen presence and stature as Ravana, the powerful and pious king, with an intense devotion and larger-than-life aura. The musical unit takes inspiration from the popular folklore of Ravana and Lord Shiva's Tandav, and draws on the character's mythological moorings.

The Hindi version features vocals by Vishal Dadlani, lyrics by Dr Kumar Vishwas, and music direction by A. R. Rahman and Hiral Viradia while the Telugu version features lyrics by Rakendu Mouli and vocals by Devi Sri Prasad. The units are titled Ravana-



Tandava in Kannada and Ravana Tandav in Tamil and Telugu. Directed by Nitesh Tiwari and produced by Namit Malhotra's Prime

Focus Studios, alongside DNEG and Yash's Monster Mind Creations, the two-part epic stars Ranbir Kapoor as Rama, Sai Pal-

lavi as Sita, Sunny Deol as Hanuman and Ravie Dubey as Lakshman. The sequel is slated to release on Diwali 2027.

- P Ravi Teja

Aadi Saikumar's divine mystery thriller titled 'Aadi Rudra'

Aadi Saikumar's upcoming big-budget mystery thriller has been named as 'Aadi Rudra' with the film's makers releasing an intriguing title poster and motion video on Dussehra. The movie promises to deliver a blend of spirituality, supernatural forces, and suspense.

Reportedly, the project has been produced by Prashanth G Rudrappa under Trishul Entertainments and is written and directed by Navarasan. The poster highlights Aadi wielding a trident with Goddess Durga's image towering in the background while torches bearing flaming crowches circle around a ritual ground.

Set in 1960s-1990s, Aadi Rudra's film wants to create a unique period atmosphere while also delving into themes of faith, divin-



ity, and supernatural forces. Motion video's background music, composed by B. Ajaneesh Loknath, heightens its spiritual and suspenseful feel, while cinematography is handled by AJ Shetty.

They intend to start the shoot in January and have more details about the film's star cast and schedule in the coming days. It is expected to be a noteworthy addition to Aadi Saikumar's career.

Aadi Rudra is set to hit the pan-Indian theatre in Telugu, Kannada, Tamil, Hindi, and Malayalam languages targeting a diverse audience.

- P Ravi Teja

'Donga Naa Koduku' teaser unveiled; promises a comedy ride

Mythri Movie Makers is all set to release the film Donga Naa Koduku, which stars Mouli Tanuj Prasanth as the lead actor on November 13. Mythri Movie Makers has released the teaser of the comedy entertainer directed by debutant Sreenu Kambala.

Mouli plays the role of Eeshwar, a B-Tech dropout who prioritizes money over relationships. However, the comical twist of the story is that the elements of robbery and crime get mixed in with romance and suspense. The humorous tiffin incident at the beach between Eeshwar and his girlfriend provides a comic relief to the climax of



the teaser. After his successful debut in Little Hearts, Mouli displays his comic skills with a loads of screen energy. Sushmitha Shetty plays the love interest of the protagonist while Ali and Rajitha play the role of his parents. Raghubabu, Priya

and Gundu Sudharshan play the other key roles in the film.

Produced by Naveen Yerneni and Y Ravi Shankar, the film has been shot by Suriya Balaji and the music has been composed by Sinjith Yerramilli.

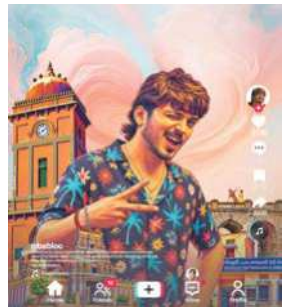
- P Ravi Teja

Sumanth Prabhas' Gen Z entertainer 'Bablu XXL' unveiled

Sumanth Prabhas' yuppy new-age entertainer 'Bablu XXL' created a splash on the social media today with the makers unveiling the title and a vibrant first-look poster of the film which is being produced by Sree Venkateswara Cinemas on Dussehra.

Presented by Puskur Ram Mohan Rao, Bharat N Narang produces and Sonali Narang is the presenter, the film marks writer cum director Saailu Kaampati's comeback after a Rs. 200 crore blockbuster 'Raju Weds Rambai'.

In the poster, young star Sumanth Prabhas is seen in a happy mood with a victory symbol on his right hand and a vibrant floral shirt, with Mancherla's clock tower, an ancient stone bridge and the temple as the backdrop, an Instagram Reels like picture with social media icons as the picture



frame with the hero and heroine seen in a romantic pose on the ancient stone bridge is the first-look image of the film. Gahazy SK plays the leading lady while the film has the presence of superstar names like Radhika Sarathkumar, Jayalalitha and Sivaji Raja among others. Wajid Baig has been roped in for cinematography, Vijay Bhulganin has scored the music, Naresh Adupa has edited the film while Pawan Kalyan Yellapu has designed the Art. The film is currently in the shooting phase.

- S Suhas