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AMID POLL VIOLENCE ALLEGATIONS...

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 (YSRCP) 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 extending 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 proceedings 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

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

K Varaprasada Rao

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

US Secretary of State Marco Rubio, US Ambassador to India Sergio Gor, Executive Director of Reliance Industries Limited Anant Ambani with wife Radhika Merchant and others during the former's visit to Reliance Industries' giant oil-refining complex, in Jamnagar on Wednesday

Rubio pushes energy ties, Venezuelan crude

US Secretary of State visits Ambani's Jamnagar refinery

Jamnagar (Gujarat)

US Secretary of State Marco Rubio on Wednesday visited Reliance Industries' sprawling Jamnagar complex, bringing Washington's push to deepen energy ties with India into focus at a time when the Trump administration is seeking greater access to the country's refining capacity, more purchases of American energy and expanded investment by Indian companies in the United States. Rubio, accompanied by his wife, Jeanette Dousdebes Rubio, toured the world's largest single-site oil-refining complex, the Vantara wildlife rescue and conservation centre, and Reliance's emerging clean-energy manufacturing hub, people familiar with the visit said. Continued on Page 7

... dismisses India protests as internal matter

MUMBAI: US Secretary of State Marco Rubio on Wednesday refused to comment on the recent protests against the Election Commission, terming it an "internal political matter." Rubio, currently in India on an official visit, was also dismissive of the reference to UN experts' criticism of the protests. According to a release issued by the Department of State on Wednesday, Rubio also said that the UN "experts are the oxymoron." "It's a domestic political matter. I'm not going to get involved in their politics. This is a democracy.

Continued on Page 7

WINDOWS

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.

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?

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 focussing 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."

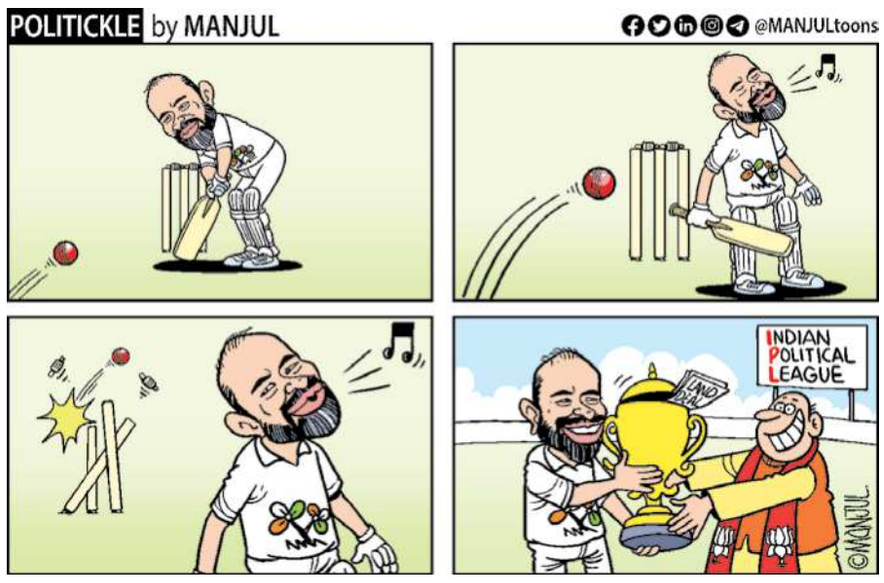
Earlier this month, Union Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal met US Trade Representative Jamieson Greer in Milwaukee and Washington to discuss the finer aspects of the trade deal. He recently said the first tranche of the India-US bilateral trade agreement had been finalised and was undergoing legal drafting, 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

POLITICKLE by MANJUL @MANJULtoons



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

Bhagwant Mann

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 sensitive 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

Dasara festivities conclude with Teppotsavam

Dasari Srinivasa Rao
Vijayawada

THE 10-day Dasara Sarannavaratri festivities at Sri Durga Malleswara Swamy Varla Devasthanam atop Indrakeeladri concluded on Tuesday with the traditional Teppotsavam (float festival) on Krishna river, marking the culmination of the annual celebrations. Maha Purnahuthi marked the culmination of the religious rituals associated with Sarannavaratri celebrations.

On the final day, Goddess Kanaka Durga appeared as Sri Rajarajeswari Devi, adorned in a green saree and traditional jewellery. Devotees thronged the hill shrine to have darshan of the presiding deity, while Bhavani devotees arrived in large numbers, adding to the spiritual fervour.

Teppotsavam of Sri Durga Malleswara Swamy Varla Devasthanam aboard Hamsa Vahanam on Krishna river in Vijayawada on Tuesday

As part of Teppotsavam, the processional deities of Goddess Kanaka Durga and Lord Malleswara Swamy were taken on a ceremonial ride aboard the illuminated Hamsa Vahanam on Krishna river. The float festival resumed this year after a two-year interruption caused by high flood levels in the river during 2024 and 2025.

Meanwhile, Governor S Abdul Nazeer visited the temple on Tuesday and offered special prayers to Goddess Kanaka Durga. Temple officials and Vedic scholars welcomed him with traditional honours. After darshan, the Governor received Vedic blessings at the Ashirvachana Mandapam.

Endowments Secretary K Kannababu, Commissioner K Ramachandra Mohan, temple chairman Borra Radhakrishna (Gandhi) and Executive Officer VK Seena Naik presented the Governor with the deity's sacred garments, prasadam and a portrait of the Goddess.

The temple authorities, district administration, police and other departments coordinated efforts to manage the heavy pilgrim turnout, with a focus on drinking water, sanitation, queue management and security. Police personnel, expert swimmers and officials from the Endowments and Irrigation departments were deployed along the riverfront and at bathing ghats to ensure devotees' safety during the float festival.

NTR district Collector Dr G Lakshmisha and Police Commissioner SV Rajasekhar Babu supervised the arrangements and ensured coordination among the departments concerned. On the final day, the police regulated traffic across Vijayawada to facilitate the smooth movement of devotees and prevent congestion. The celebrations concluded smoothly, with temple authorities expressing gratitude to all departments and personnel who contributed to the successful conduct of the annual festivities. Temple authorities thanked the departments and personnel who coordinated the arrangements throughout the festivities, which also witnessed a large influx of Bhavani devotees.

77.34% of MBBS seats allotted to SC, ST, BC students: NTR health varsity

1,213 open-category seats allotted to meritorious reserved-category students

Hans News Service
Vijayawada

Dr NTR University of Health Sciences has clarified here that 3,543 of the 4,581 MBBS convenor quota seats, accounting for 77.34 per cent, have been allotted to students belonging to Scheduled Castes (SC), Scheduled Tribes (ST) and Backward Classes (BC) after the completion of three rounds of counselling for the current academic year.

In a press release on Wednesday, university registrar Dr T Sai Sudheer explained the admission procedures and seat-allocation details, strongly refuting what he described as misleading propaganda regarding the allocation of MBBS seats to students from reserved categories.

He said there had been a significant increase in the number of meritorious reserved-category students securing seats under the open category in the 2026-27 academic year through NEET-UG.

Of the 2,026 seats available under the open category, 1,213 seats, or 59.87 per cent, were allotted to meritorious students from reserved categories after three rounds of counseling. In comparison, the corresponding figure for the 2025-26 academic year was 981 seats, accounting for 51.57 per cent.

Against this backdrop, the Registrar rejected claims that Government Order 102 issued this year had disadvantaged reserved-category students in MBBS admissions.

He explained that seats secured by meritorious reserved-category candidates under the open category and subsequently relinquished must be filled by candidates from the respective reserved categories in accordance with the prescribed rules. He added that admissions under the constitutional reservation provisions for SC, ST and BC communities were being implemented separately as required.

Dr Sai Sudheer clarified that merit-based seat allotments under the Meritorious Reserved Category (MRC) system were made in accordance with the web options submitted by reserved-category candidates and the applicable admission rules.

He said the university had also presented its position on the matter before the Andhra Pradesh High Court recently. Expressing concern over continued misinformation while the issue was under the consideration of the High Court, he urged those making such claims to refrain from spreading misleading information.

The registrar said the university was conducting MBBS admissions transparently and strictly in accordance with established rules and regulations. He regretted attempts to create confusion among students, parents and the public through what he termed deliberate misinformation, and appealed to all concerned to avoid such practices.

Bhavani devotees throng Durga temple

Dasari Srinivasa Rao
Vijayawada

VIJAYAWADA and Indrakeeladri hill turned into a sea of red as thousands of devotees observing Bhavani Deeksha thronged Sri Durga Malleswara Swamy Varla Devasthanam on Wednesday, the first day after the conclusion of Dasara Sharannavaratri festivities.

Clad in their traditional red robes, Bhavani devotees arrived from various places to have darshan of Goddess Kanaka Durga, who appeared as Sri Rajarajeshwari Devi on the hill shrine. The influx of pilgrims kept Indrakeeladri and One Town area bustling with activity from the early hours.

Devotees moved in an orderly manner through queue lines to reach the hilltop temple. The three holding areas, Seethamma Vari Padalu and the Municipal Corporation Office area also witnessed a heavy congregation of pilgrims dressed in red, creating a striking sight across the city.

Temple Executive Officer VK Seena Naik inspected the arrangements from the early morning and coordinated with police personnel to regulate the rush and ensure the smooth movement of devotees.

All darshan queue lines were kept open, including the VIP route from the small Raja Gopuram, to accommodate the large number of Bhavani devotees, the EO said. Arrangements were also made to ensure the uninterrupted supply of free annaprasadam to pilgrims throughout the day.

The Bhavani Deeksha is a traditional spiritual observance dedicated to Goddess Kanaka Durga. Devotees wear red attire and undertake religious vows before visiting the temple to offer prayers and conclude their Deeksha through the customary Deeksha Viramana rituals.

With the completion of Dasara celebrations and the traditional Teppotsavam on the Krishna river, the temple continues to receive large numbers of Bhavani devotees, requiring close coordination among temple officials and the police to manage the rush.

Bhavani devotees thronging Indrakeeladri temple in Vijayawada on Wednesday

VMC sets up model polling stations to educate voters

VMC Commissioner HM Dhyanachandra inspecting the model polling station set up at Varalakshmi Nagar in Vijayawada on Wednesday

Dasari Srinivasa Rao
Vijayawada

VIJAYAWADA Municipal Corporation (VMC) Commissioner HM Dhyanachandra on Wednesday inspected a model polling station set up at Varalakshmi Nagar and the vote-counting centre at Andhra Loyola College to review preparations for the second ordinary municipal elections-2026.

The model polling station has been designed to familiarise voters with voting process, including procedures to be followed at polling stations, duties of presiding officers and polling personnel, marking their choice on ballot papers and dropping the papers into ballot boxes.

Dhyanachandra said one model polling station had been established in each constituency within the VMC limits to create awareness among voters about the voting procedure.

He urged people to visit these centres and familiarise themselves with the process before casting their votes.

Later, the Commissioner inspected the counting centre at Andhra Loyola College and reviewed arrangements for transporting ballot boxes from polling stations, their secure storage, the placement of counting tables, the conduct of counting rounds and the deployment of personnel. He also reviewed the infrastructure and logistical arrangements required to ensure that counting was conducted smoothly and transparently in accordance with the directions and timelines prescribed by the Andhra Pradesh State Election Commission.

The Commissioner instructed officials to coordinate in advance on staff deployment, allocation of duties, seating arrangements, ballot box security and other counting-related requirements. He directed them to monitor every stage of the election process and complete all necessary arrangements in time to ensure the smooth conduct of polling and counting.

Chief City Planner Sanjay Ratna Kumar, Chief Engineer P Satya Kumari, Superintending Engineer Chandrasekhar, Assistant City Planner Mohan Babu and other officials accompanied him.

ABV promises corruption-free administration

Dasari Srinivasa Rao
Vijayawada

RETIRED IPS officer AB Venkateswara Rao, an independent candidate for the Vijayawada Mayor's post backed by CPI, CPM and Congress, promised transparent governance, improved civic amenities and a corruption-free administration if elected.

Addressing a press conference at Vijayawada Press Club on Wednesday, alongside CPM NTR district secretary DV Krishna and APCC vice-president Kolanukonda Shivaji, he appealed to voters to rise above party affiliations and caste considerations and choose their representatives based on their commitment to public service. Venkateswara Rao alleged that money was being demanded for corporator seats, with prices ranging from Rs 10 lakh to Rs 70 lakh. He said he would not distribute money to secure votes and would instead seek public support based on his vision for the city.

He promised to keep property tax rates at existing levels for three years, halt annual 15% hikes and ensure regular drinking water supply despite the Krishna River and Prakasam Barrage being nearby. He also pledged to protect wholesale and retail traders, small shopkeepers and street vendors by earmarking suitable vending zones without obstructing traffic. The independent candidate said he would work to rescue children living on the streets and those forced into begging, provide them with medical care and rehabilitate them through child-care institutions. He set a target of making Vijayawada free of children living on the streets within three years.

Retired IPS officer and independent Mayor candidate AB Venkateswara Rao addressing a press conference at Vijayawada Press Club on Wednesday

Questioning the incomplete underground drainage works, he alleged that around Rs 200 crore had been spent while the project remained unfinished and that the remaining funds had been diverted elsewhere. He also demanded an account of the Rs 600 crore in public donations reportedly received during the floods and details of permanent flood-mitigation measures.

Expressing concern over alleged personal attacks on social media and the limited time available to reach voters, Venkateswara Rao criticised the State Election Commission's handling of the election process.

He lamented that the Commission had not allotted him an election symbol so far and questioned how he could complete his campaign within six days without a symbol.

Expenditure limits fixed to ensure level playing field

Deekshitula Subrahmanyam
Kakinada

THE State Election Commission has prescribed expenditure limits for candidates contesting local body elections to curb the influence of money and muscle power and ensure a level playing field for all contestants, Kakinada District Election Expenditure Observer Garud Sanket Sunil said. Addressing a training programme for expenditure observers, Flying Squad Teams (FSTs) and Static Surveillance Teams (SSTs) at the Collectorate on Wednesday, he stressed the need for strict monitoring of election related expenditure to ensure transparency and impartiality in the electoral process. He directed the teams to coordinate with one another and ensure that candidates strictly adhere to the prescribed expenditure limits and election rules. Explaining the limits for various posts, Sunil said ZPTC candidates could spend up to Rs 8 lakh and MPTC candidates up to Rs 4 lakh. The expenditure limit for sarpanch candidates was fixed at Rs 4 lakh in major gram panchayats and Rs 2.50 lakh in minor gram panchayats.

VMRDA VISAKHAPATNAM METROPOLITAN REGION DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

PUBLIC NOTICE

Rc.No.11021/101/2026/L9 (E-3329821), Dt:21-10-2026

Application of M/s.JSW Industrial Park Limited, Authorised Person Sri. D.Victor Vinod Kumar requesting for approval of Industrial layout for an extent of Ac.305.7482 Cts., covered in Sy.No.6P, 7, 11, 13, 39P, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46,47, 48P, 49P & 50 of Cheedipalem (V) and Sy.No. 4, 5P, 10, 24P, 64, 65,66, 67, 68, 69P, 70, 76, 77, 78,79, 80, 81P, 82 & 83 of Chinakhandepalle (V), S.Kota (M), Vizianagaram District vide file Rc.No. 1167/0118/LP/VMRDA/2025 is under process in VMRDA.

Hence, the general public are hereby informed to submit their objections/suggestions any in this regard within 7 days from the date of publication to VMRDA pertaining to the above approval of layout application failing which it will be construed that there are no objections/suggestions etc., and the above approval of layout application will be processed as per rules.

Sd/- Metropolitan Commissioner, VMRDA

Hyderabad secures 267-run win over Andhra

Himateja and Tanay stitched together an unbeaten 93-run partnership for the eighth wicket, turning Hyderabad's strong position into a match-winning advantage

Dasari Srinivasa Rao
Vijayawada

LEFT-arm spinner Tanay Thyagarajan produced a match-winning all-round performance, claiming 11 wickets and scoring an unbeaten half-century to power Hyderabad to a 267-run victory over Andhra in their Ranji Trophy Elite Group B encounter at the Devineni Venkata Ramana Praneetha ACA Stadium grounds at Mulapadu near Vijayawada on Wednesday.

Hyderabad's second successive outright victory earned them six points, taking their tally to 12 and placing them at the top of Group B points table. The team had defeated Tripura in its opening match of the season.

Resuming their second innings at the overnight score of seven for two while chasing a formidable target, Andhra struggled against Tanay's left-arm spin. He dismissed Ricky Bhui (26), Seeram Venkat Rahul (11), Saurabh Kumar (4) and Revanth Reddy (14) in quick succession to reduce Andhra to 98 for seven.

Hyderabad's Kodimela Himateja, who scored an unbeaten 123 against Andhra

Hyderabad spinner Tanay Thyagarajan, who claimed 11 wickets for 98 runs against Andhra

Tanay returned impressive figures of six for 35 in 11 overs after taking five for 63 in the first innings. It was his third 11-wicket haul in first-class cricket and his 14th five-wicket haul in Ranji Trophy.

Left-arm spinner G Aniketh Reddy complimented him with three for 57 as Andhra were bowled out for 130 in 30.5 overs. Venkat Sasikanth (23) and A Lalith Mohan (17) offered only brief resistance.

Earlier, Hyderabad posted 275 in their first innings, while Andhra managed 184, with Shaik Rasheed scoring 61. Hyderabad consolidated their advantage in second innings, declaring at 306 for seven, with Kodimela Himateja remaining unbeaten on 123 off 202 balls.

Himateja and Tanay stitched together an unbeaten 93-run partnership for the eighth wicket, turning Hyderabad's strong position into a match-winning advantage. Tanay contributed an unbeaten 53 off 64 deliveries, providing valuable support to Himateja's century.

The comprehensive victory under captain Mohammed Siraj underlined Hyderabad's strong start to the season, with the side winning both its opening matches outright.

SCOREBOARD

Hyderabad — First Innings: 275 all out in 86 overs

Abhirath Reddy 67, Rahul Radesh Chigullapalli 58*, Tanmay Agarwal 42, Pragnay Reddy 31.

Andhra bowling: Tripurana Vijay 4/90, A Lalith Mohan 3/78, Saurabh Kumar 3/75.

Andhra — First Innings: 184 all out in 63 overs. Shaik Rasheed 61, Ricky Bhui 28, Seeram Venkat Rahul 27, Tripurana Vijay 25 not out.

Hyderabad bowling: Tanay Thyagarajan 5/63, G Aniketh Reddy 2/60, Mohammed Siraj 1/31.

Hyderabad — Second Innings: 306/6 declared in 95.3 overs

Kodimela Himateja 123* (202b, 10x4, 5x6), Tanmay Agarwal 49, Tanay Thyagarajan 53* (64b, 2x4, 3x6).

Andhra bowling: Kavuri Saiteja 4/40, Tripurana Vijay 2/119, KV Sasikanth 1/49.

Andhra — Second Innings: 130 all out in 30.5 overs M Hemanth Reddy 27, Ricky Bhui 26.

Hyderabad bowling: Tanay Thyagarajan 6/35, G Aniketh Reddy 3/57, Ruthick Mende 1/7.

Police sacrifices recalled on Commemoration Day

Hans News Service
Visakhapatnam

City Police Commissioner Shankhabrata Bagchi along with other police officials paying tribute to the martyrs in Visakhapatnam on Wednesday

CITY Police Commissioner Shankhabrata Bagchi said that 'Police Commemoration Day' is not just an occasion to honour the sacrifices of police personnel, who laid down their lives in the line of duty, but also a reminder of the responsibility to support their bereaved families.

Paying tributes to police martyrs at the Police Martyrs' Memorial Stupa at Beach Roadon Wednesday, Shankhabrata Bagchi mentioned that police personnel continued to protect society while confronting dangerous challenges, including terrorism and violent crimes. He stated that more than 35,000 police personnel have sacrificed their lives for the country's security since 1961.

Acknowledging that the loss suffered by the families of martyrs could never be compensated, he assured them of continued support from the government and the police department through various welfare measures.

Highlighting the evolving nature of crime, the CP stressed that police personnel must adopt advanced technologies to tackle emerging threats such as cybercrime, drug trafficking and financial fraud. He opined that initiatives such as friendly-policing, cybercrime prevention measures, Shakti App for women's safety and programmes for senior citizen protection are strengthening public trust in the city.

District Collector M Abhishikth Kishore, Visakhapatnam Port Authority Chairperson JS Bindra and Navy officials attended the commemorative programme.

Meanwhile, Police Commemoration Day was observed at CAH School premises in Paderu, Alluri Sitarama Raju district, where a parade was organised in honour of police martyrs.

District Collector T Nishanthi lauded the police for their commendable services in maintaining law and order.

She said the sacrifices of police martyrs continued to inspire both the police force and society, assuring that the government and the department would stand by their families. District Superintendent of Police Amit Bardar called upon police officers and personnel to draw inspiration from the martyrs and discharge their duties with honesty, discipline and dedication while providing better services to the public.

Financial assistance cheques were distributed to the families of police martyrs. Additional SP (Administration) Y. Shruti, other police officers and Armed Reserve Police personnel participated in the programme.

SCoR GM conducts comprehensive safety review meeting

Hans News Service
Visakhapatnam

Sandeep Mathur, General Manager of the South Coast Railway speaking at the safety review meeting in Visakhapatnam on Wednesday

SANDEEP Mathur, General Manager of the South Coast Railway (SCoR), convened a safety review meeting on Wednesday with principal heads of departments and DRMs of four divisions to evaluate and enhance operational protocols across the zone.

The high-level meeting primarily focused on strengthening railway safety measures, implementing effective crowd management strategies, and accelerating improvements in the Rail Madad complaint redressal system to ensure a secure and seamless passenger experience.

Addressing the officials, Sandeep Mathur reviewed the current crowd management action plans during the festival rushes, directing staff to ensure adequate deployments and proactive passenger facilitation.

The General Manager highlighted the need for prompt and effective resolution of passenger grievances through the Rail Madad portal.

Also, Sandeep Mathur felicitated four frontline staff, who demonstrated exceptional alertness and dedication to duty, with 'Employee of the Month' safety awards for September.

The awardees included T Suresh – loco pilot/Goods, Vijayawada Division, K Mary – tech-I/C&W, Guntur Division, SK Mukthiyar – pointsman, Guntakal Division and T Ram Prasad – track maintainer-I, Visakhapatnam Division.

The General Manager commended the awardees for their exemplary presence of mind and outstanding commitment to railway safety, stating that their dedication serves as an inspiration to the entire workforce.

Hans India Classifieds

CHANGE OF NAME

I ALBERT ELISABETH MARILYN (New Name) W/o. C.JABESH, Previously Called ADAPAKA ELISABETH MARILYN (Old Name), R/o.D. No-4-129/2/33,SUJTHA NAGAR, VISAKHAPATNAM A. P. Now changed my name from ADAPAKA ELISABETH MARILYN (Old Name) to ALBERT ELISABETH MARILYN (New Name) hence forth I will be Called as ALBERT ELISABETH MARILYN (New Name) for all purpose.

RAMESH-VSP

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Rasagjna National Multilingual Theatre Festival-2026 from today

City Police Commissioner Shankhabrata Bagchi, Rasagjna Samskruthika Seva Samstha founder-president Vemali Trinadha Rao launching posters in Visakhapatnam on Wednesday

Hans News Service
Visakhapatnam

THE 11thedition of Rasagjna National Multilingual Theatre Festival -2026 will be held at Kalabharathi Auditorium starting from Thursday (October 22).

'RepatiSatruvu' (Telugu drama), 'Death Calls' (English/Hindi drama), 'Waiting for Godot' (Malayalam playlet), 'Shikandi' (Telugu playlet), 'Amey Katha' (Telugu playlet), 'Raj Rakto' (Hindi/Bengali playlet) and 'Mantra' (Kannada drama) will be presented during the four-day multilingual theatre festival.

RasagjnaSamskruthika-SevaSamstha founder-president and guest faculty of Andhra University Vemali-Trinadha Rao said the festival aims to promote theatre arts and entertain theatre art admirers through a series of dramas and playlets in various languages.

City Police Commissioner ShankhabrataBagchi, Trinadha Rao, and Kalabharathi president MSN Raju among others, attended the festival's poster launch in Visakhapatnam.

The festival is organised in association with the Ministry of Culture, Government of India, and the Andhra Pradesh Department of Language and Culture.

Rail nursery promotes a healthier environment

Divisional Railway Manager of Visakhapatnam Division Lalit Bohra and president of South Coast Railway Women's Welfare Organisation Jyotsna Bohra visiting rail nursery in Visakhapatnam on Wednesday

Hans News Service
Visakhapatnam

LALIT Bohra, Divisional Railway Manager of Visakhapatnam Division, and Jyotsna Bohra, president, South Coast Railway Women's Welfare Organisation (SCoRWWO), visited the dedicated rail nursery at Railway Colony, Visakhapatnam on Wednesday.

The dedicated rail nursery was established to enhance greenery and promote a healthy, clean and eco-friendly environment across railway premises. The nursery supplies a variety of saplings for plantation in railway colonies and office premises, supporting the development of green spaces and improving the overall environment.

The initiative reflects Visakhapatnam Division's commitment to environmental sustainability and promoting plantation activities across railway establishments. The availability of different sapling varieties will facilitate plantation and encourage maintenance of greener surroundings for railway employees and their families. The initiative underscores the importance of environmental conservation and collective efforts towards building a greener and healthier railway ecosystem.

33rd edition of SIMBEX-2026 commences in Visakhapatnam

Hans News Service
Visakhapatnam

THE 33rd edition of the Singapore–India Maritime Bilateral Exercise (SIMBEX-2026), scheduled till October 26, commenced in Visakhapatnam.

Republic of Singapore Navy (RSN) Ship RSS Supreme arrived in Visakhapatnam on Wednesday to participate in the exercise.

The opening ceremony of 'SIMBEX-2026' was jointly hosted onboard INS Nilgiri and INS Kamorta. The ceremony was attended by the Chief Staff Officer (Operations) of the Eastern Naval Command, the Fleet Commander of the RSN and other senior officers from the Indian Navy and the Republic of Singapore Navy.

Commencing in 1994 as Exercise Lion King, SIMBEX has evolved into a significant bilateral maritime engagement between the Indian Navy (IN) and the RSN.

Over the years, the exercise has expanded in scope and complexity, strengthening professional ties, mutual understanding and operational interoperability between the two Navies.

The exercise will be carried out in two phases. The harbour phase, from October 21 to 23, includes professional interactions, subject matter expert exchanges (SMEEs), cross-deck visits, sporting engagements and planning conferences.

The sea phase, scheduled from October 24 to 26 in the Bay of Bengal, will feature maritime operations and tactical exercises, including Anti-Submarine Warfare (ASW), anti-surface and anti-air warfare drills, seamanship evolutions and tactical manoeuvres.

SIMBEX-2026 highlights the longstanding maritime partnership between India and Singapore and their shared commitment to enhancing interoperability, addressing common maritime security challenges, and promoting peace and stability in the Indo-Pacific.

CAPRI GLOBAL CAPITAL LIMITED
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CAPRI LOANS

Registered Address:
Capri Global Capital Limited (CGCL/The Company) 502, Tower A, Peninsula Business Park, Senapati Bapat Marg, Lower Parel, Mumbai, Maharashtra, India Pincode-400013
Contact Person: Mr. Anil Nagrani, Telephone : +91-9328009926, e-mail : anil.nagrani@capriglobal.in

GOLD AUCTION PUBLIC NOTICE

Notice is hereby given for the information of all concerned that the gold ornaments pledged with the under-mentioned branches of CAPRI GLOBAL CAPITAL LIMITED., which have become overdue for redemption and have not been redeemed so far despite repeated notices, will be auctioned on 27-October-2026

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

District: ANNAMAYYA Auction Centre Address: CAPRI LOANS, 3-145-C-5-5, KADIRI ROAD REVENUE FIRST FLOOR WARD NO 2 , MADANAPALLE ANDHRA PRADESH -517325
MADANAPALLE-KADIRI ROAD-AP : L301000411139800, L301000420061 12, L301000421405 49

District: NTR Auction Centre Address: CAPRI LOANS, D NO 4-1-34, GROUND FLOOR KT ROAD , BESIDE UNION BANK CHITTINAGAR ONE TOWN VIJAYAWADA, ANDHRA PRADESH -520001
VIJAYAWADA-AJITH SINGH NAGAR-AP : L301000409737 49, L301000413119 61, L301000414192 45, L301000419467 93, L301000419502 02 VIJAYAWADA-BHAVANIPURAM-AP : L301000417928 12, L301000419765 30, L301000419804 51, L301000420214 95 VIJAYAWADA-GANDHI NAGAR-AP : L301000416013 40, L301000416016 07, L301000416803 27
VIJAYAWADA-GOVERNORPET-AP : L301000418189 42 VIJAYAWADA-ONE TOWN-AP : L301000413425 62, L301000416120 13, L301000418436 01

District: SRI SATHYA 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 : L301000408513 70, L301000410439 12, L301000413101 13, L301000416494 74, L301000416619 64, L301000419608 71

District: TIRUPATI Auction Centre Address: CCAPRI LOANS, D NO 19-12-416, GROUND FLOOR, BAIRAGIPETTADA OPP RAMANAIDU HIGH SCHOOL TIRUPATI ANDHRA PRADESH -517501
SRIKALAHASTI-WARD 16-AP : L301000410187 01, L301000410649 71, L301000411114 03, L301000414269 52, L301000414456 34, L301000415475 80, L301000416462 90, L301000417711 421, L301000417439 69, L301000417440 80, L301000417864 63, L301000418154 91, L301000419373 60, L301000419390 86, L301000420415 10, L301000420698 57
SULLURPET-GNT ROAD-AP : L301000410023 77, L301000413729 60 TIRUPATHI-BAIRAGI PATTEDA-AP : L301000408649 77, L301000412610 21, L301000412696 21, L301000412803 80, L301000413084 93, L301000415135 23, L301000420725 84, L301000421997 90, L301000421236 82 TIRUPATHI-KORLAGUNTA-AP : L301000412937 73, L301000413349 19, L301000413650 49, L301000415407 92, L301000416236 50, L301000416976 82, L301000417197 64

District: Y.S.R Auction Centre Address: CAPRI LOANS, GROUND FLOOR, NO 42/1197-3-2, MRUTHYUNJAY-AKUNTA, REVENUE WARD,BHAGYANAGAR COLONY CUDDAPAH ANDHRA PRADESH -516002
CUDDAPPAH-BHAGYANAGAR COLONY-AP : L301000409656 77, L301000420119 25 RAYACHOTY-BOSE NAGAR-AP : L301000409851 61, L301000410123 92, L301000411028 41, L301000411029 01, L301000411093 23, L301000411110 21, L301000411150 98, L301000411410 01, L301000412931 22, L301000413675 65, L301000414178 64, L301000414331 42, L301000415111 12, L301000415408 42, L301000415474 13, L301000415688 80, L301000416691 33, L301000416695 67, L301000416729 43, L301000417295 62, L301000417547 21, L301000417864 44, L301000418448 60, L301000418690 40, L301000419790 94, L301000419826 22, L301000419928 02, L301000420325 37, L301000421320 95, L301000421332 37
SUNDUPALLI-RAYACHOTY-AP : L301000411055 02, L301000411252 00, L301000411253 28, L301000412274 00, L301000412886 61, L301000412903 69, L301000413003 28, L301000413733 80, L301000419445 18

The auction will be conducted branch-wise at district level through the authorized auctioneer, Shriram Automall India Limited (SAMIL), in compliance with applicable regulatory guidelines.

Interested bidders may visit https://gold.samil.in for registration, participation, and detailed terms & conditions.

Auction Timing: Between 2:00 PM to 5:00 PM on 27-October-2026.

The Company capri global capital limited is having the right to postpone the auction on subsequent dates on the same terms and conditions without any further notice.

In the event the auction remains unsuccessful due to any reason, the Capri Global Capital Limited reserves the right to conduct a subsequent auction through online mode via the authorized auctioneer's Shriram Automall India Limited (SAMIL)

Note: Borrowers may redeem/release their pledged gold ornaments by clearing all dues on or before the auction date, during business hours of the respective branch, failing which the ornaments will be auctioned without further notice.

Capri Global Capital Limited has the authority to remove any of the Loan account from auction list without prior information and has a right to cancel without prior intimation.

DATE: 22-October-2026.
PLACE: ANDHRA PRADESH
For Capri Global Capital Ltd (Gold Loan)

Parishad nominations begin amid widespread violence

- Obstruction, attacks and destruction of nomination papers; 39 ZPTC seats in YSR Kadapa district see no nominations
- Clashes reported in Palnadu, Punganur, Chittoor, Kadapa, Kakinada, Nellore and other districts; police impose restrictions and detain leaders
- SEC seeks reports on urban polls as Supreme Court stays final nomination lists for 19 ULBs

K Varaprasada Rao
Amaravati

THE first day of nominations for the second phase of local body elections in Andhra Pradesh on Wednesday was marked by widespread clashes, allegations of intimidation, destruction of nomination papers and police restrictions across several districts. The violence, reported from Rayalaseema to coastal Andhra, disrupted the nomination process in multiple constituencies, with the YSRCP alleging that its candidates were prevented from filing their papers.

TDP activists reportedly obstructing YSRCP leader and former Dy CM K Narayana Swamy's car in Chittoor on Wednesday

The elections cover 10,488 positions, including more than 9,900 Mandal Parishad Territorial Constituency (MPTC) seats, Zilla Parishad Territorial Constituency (ZPTC) seats, 659 mandal parishad president posts and zilla parishad chairperson positions. These are the first elections following the reorganisation into 28 zilla parishads. MPTC and ZPTC elections are being contested on party symbols, with webcasting introduced as part of the Election Commission's directions. Nominations will continue until October 23.

The situation was particularly tense in Palnadu district. Former YSRCP MLA Pinnelli Ramakrishna Reddy staged a protest at Macherla, alleging that candidates were being prevented from filing nominations and that papers had been torn up. Several former YSRCP MLAs, including Kasu Mahesh Reddy, Vidadala Rajini and Pindilli Ramakrishna Reddy, were reportedly placed under house arrest.

In Rompicherla, former MLA Gopireddy Srinivas Reddy clashed verbally with police while attempting to accompany YSRCP candidates to the nomination centre.

He staged a road protest for nearly three hours, demanding that his party's candidates be allowed to file nominations.

DSP Hanumantha Rao subsequently assured him that they could file their papers the following day under police protection. In Piduguralla, YSRCP ZPTC candidate Bharati and her husband Lakshma Reddy were allegedly attacked by unidentified persons, leaving Lakshma Reddy seriously injured. Punganur in Annamayya district witnessed some of the most serious violence. TDP and YSRCP supporters exchanged stones and blows near nomination centres, prompting police to resort to a lathicharge. A vehicle belonging to TDP leader Pavan Kumar Reddy was set on fire, while Mohan of Gopi Shetti Palle sustained critical injuries and was shifted to Madanapalle government hospital. Clashes were also reported in Sadum, where a vehicle was set ablaze.

YSR Kadapa district witnessed intense confrontations. YSRCP MP Y S Avinash Reddy and party leader Ravindranath Reddy were intercepted while arriving in a rally at the Zilla Parishad office. Stones were allegedly thrown at the group, triggering retaliation before police brought the situation under control.

Avinash Reddy staged a road protest for around six hours, while YSRCP candidates reportedly faced restrictions and could not reach nomination centres. The party claimed that not a single nomination was filed for any of the district's 39 ZPTC seats on the first day. An unidentified group also allegedly set a lorry on fire in Pulivendula.

In Kakinada district's Thondangi mandal, a confrontation involving former minister Dadisetti Raja and YSRCP candidates escalated into stone-pelting. The YSRCP alleged that its candidate Ganga Bhavani's nomination papers were snatched and torn up and that two supporters were injured.

Clashes were also reported in Railway Kodur, Srikalahasti, Pullalacheruvu, Singarayakonda, Raptadu, Chandragiri, Mantralayam, Gudur and Sullurpeta. CPM leaders in Kurnool alleged that TDP supporters obstructed their nomination for the Ulchala Mandal Parishad president's post and tore up documents.

In Chittoor, former deputy CM Narayana Swamy was allegedly attacked during nomination by party candidates at ZP office.

Meanwhile, the scrutiny of urban local body nominations concluded on Wednesday. The YSRCP approached the Supreme Court, which stayed the announcement of final nomination lists for 19 ULBs. The State Election Commission sought reports from district collectors and SPs and said it would examine the reports and webcasting footage before deciding on the matter. The SEC also held a video conference with collectors, police chiefs and commissioners, directing them to address law-and-order problems promptly.

Control prices of essential commodities, CM tells officials

Calls for faster implementation of PM Surya Ghar scheme, uninterrupted power supply

Hans News Service
Amaravati

CHIEF Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu directed officials to take effective measures to control the prices of essential commodities and ensure that the impact of El Niño-related conditions does not burden consumers across the country.

During a review meeting on the performance of various government departments through the Real Time Governance Society (RTGS) on Wednesday, the Chief Minister stressed the need for close monitoring of the prices of rice, red gram, onions, cooking oil and sugar to prevent unreasonable increases.

Reviewing the sale of rice through Rythu Bazaars, Chandrababu Naidu enquired about the public response to the government's initiative. Officials informed him that the programme had received a good response, with encouraging sales.

The Chief Minister directed officials to explore the possibility of making fine-quality rice available at affordable prices through Rythu Bazaars during festivals such as Deepavali and Sankranti. He also instructed them to increase onion supplies to ensure that common people do not face any difficulties.

Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu reviews performence various departments at RTGS at the Secretariat on Wednesday

Emphasising the importance of uninterrupted electricity supply, he directed the officials concerned to take stringent measures to prevent disruptions under all circumstances.

The Chief Minister called for accelerating the installation of rooftop solar panels under the PM Surya Ghar scheme. Observing that Andhra Pradesh was currently ranked fourth nationally in implementation, he said efforts should be intensified to improve the State's position.

He pointed out that another nine lakh connections needed to be installed to achieve the target and instructed officials to prepare and implement an action plan to complete the installations as quickly as possible.

Chandrababu Naidu also directed officials to ensure smooth sand supplies without disruptions. He stressed the need to make full use of technology in governance, identify administrative shortcomings and rectify them immediately.

The Chief Minister called for better coordination among various government departments to improve service delivery and ensure the effective implementation of government programmes.

Chief secretary G Sai Prasad and senior officials from various departments attended the review meeting.

SC gave SEC free hand to SEC, says TDP

Hans News Service
Vijayawada

THE Supreme Court has not pulled up the Andhra Pradesh government or the State Election Commission (SEC) over the ongoing urban local body elections, but has merely empowered the poll body to independently examine complaints and ensure free, fair and peaceful elections, TDP legal advisor Posani Venkateswarlu said on Wednesday.

Speaking on the final day of publication of nominations for municipal corporations and municipalities, Venkateswarlu dismissed reports suggesting the apex court had found fault with the election process. He clarified that the court's order only authorises the SEC to scrutinise complaints from candidates who allegedly could not file nominations due to local law and order issues.

According to him, the Supreme Court directed

the SEC to assess each complaint on merit and determine whether genuine disruptions prevented candidates from entering the fray. If such claims are found valid, the commission has been instructed to provide another opportunity for filing nominations. The SEC has been asked to take a decision within a day, while constituencies where renominations are permitted will get a two-day extension in the election schedule to facilitate a peaceful process.

Rejecting claims that the court reprimanded either the government or the SEC, Venkateswarlu said the apex court neither blamed any political party nor specified the number of constituencies that may require intervention. He noted that while reports have referred to disturbances in around 19 locations, including several in Kadapa district, the court's focus remains solely on verifying the complaints before it.

Accusing some sections of distorting the court's order for political gains, Posani urged the public not to be misled by speculative narratives. He maintained that compared to the violence-marred local body elections of 2021, the current election process has remained largely peaceful.

"The Supreme Court's order is a safeguard to protect democratic participation and address genuine grievances, not an indictment of the election machinery," he asserted.

NAVARATRI BRAHMOTSAVAMS

TTD distributes 22.60 lakh Anna Prasadam packets

Chairman B R Naidu says a total of 6.46 lakh devotees had Srivari darshan from October 12 to 19

Pradeep Vennelakanti
& Dusi Venkateswara Rao
Tirumala

TTD distributed 22.60 lakh Anna Prasadam packets and sold 34.34 lakh laddus during the Srivari Navaratri Brahmotsavams, which concluded successfully with sacred Chakrasnanam at Tirumala on Tuesday.

Addressing the media along with Executive Officer M Ravichandra and other officials at Annamayya Bhavan TTD chairman B R Naidu said, the mega event was conducted smoothly through the coordinated efforts of various departments. Devotees from across the world witnessed the Moola Virat and Vahana Sevas comfortably. Despite continuous heavy rain on Garuda Seva day, devotees participated in the sacred event with devotion, while officials and

TTD chairman B R Naidu along with EO M Ravichandra and additional EO Ch Venkaiah Chowdary speaking to the media in Tirumala on Tuesday

staff performed their duties wearing raincoats.

According to TTD, 6.46 lakh devotees had Srivari darshan between October 12 and 19, while hundi offerings amounted to Rs 25.79 crore. Around 2.44 lakh devotees offered tonsure during the period. The APSRTC operated 13,608 trips from Tirupati to Tirumala, carrying 4.01 lakh devotees, and 13,667 return trips, transporting five lakh devotees. TTD's transport wing deployed 39 electric buses and carried around seven lakh devotees in 6,900 trips over the ten-day period.

Naidu said the arrangements made for Garuda Seva received positive feedback from pilgrims. About 6,777 artistes from 252 troupes representing 26 states, along with Qatar and Dubai, presented cultural programmes before the Vahana Sevas. On Garuda Seva day, 863 artistes from 31 troupes representing 17 states performed. The TTD EO felicitated four outstanding cultural troupes every day.

He added that floral decorations in Tirumala used around 60 tonnes of flowers, five lakh cut flowers and 80,000 seasonal flowers. Electric illuminations in Tirumala and Tirupati attracted devotees, while 36 large digital screens helped pilgrims watch the Vahana Sevas. SVBC telecast the celebrations worldwide in enhanced quality, with commentary by eminent scholars.

Around 4,500 Srivari Seva volunteers rendered services during the nine-day festival. Medical arrangements included 75 doctors, 10 Srivari Arogya Seva doctors, 60 paramedical staff, 20 ambulances and four mobile clinics. Security was provided by 2,800 police personnel and 2,000 vigilance staff, with an additional 1,000 police personnel deployed on Garuda Seva day.

The chairman said TTD implemented safety measures for elephants, cows, horses and bulls participating in the Vahana Sevas. Devotees were prohibited from directly seeking blessings from elephants to ensure the safety of both pilgrims and animals.

Naidu said that around 600 TTD employees from various departments in Tirupati rendered special services during Garuda Seva. Sectoral and in-charge officers monitored pilgrim facilities round the clock. Additional EO Ch Venkaiah Chowdary, CVSO KV Murali Krishna and other officials were present at the media conference.

Don't turn local body polls into a farce: CPM to govt

Dasari Srinvasa Rao
Vijayawada

CPM state secretary V Srinivasa Rao warned the state government against turning local body elections into a farce, alleging that ruling coalition leaders had resorted to intimidation, attacks, kidnappings and destruction of nomination papers to prevent opposition candidates from contesting.

Addressing a press conference at Balotsav Bhavan here on Wednesday, along with CPM State secretariat members Y Venkateswara Rao and Central Committee Member D Ramadevi, he alleged that Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu was encouraging undemocratic practices. He also accused the police of supporting ruling party leaders instead of protecting candidates. Questioning the ruling coalition's claims of unanimous victories, Srinivasa Rao asked why opposition candidates were allegedly prevented from filing nominations if the victories reflected genuine public support.

He alleged that several unanimous victories had been secured through coercion and said the practices followed by the TDP-led coalition resembled those of the previous YSRCP government.

CPM state secretary V Srinivasa Rao, along with party state secretariat member Y Venkateswara Rao and Central Committee member D Ramadevi, addressing a press conference at Balotsav Bhavan in Vijayawada on Wednesday Photo: Ch Venkata Mastan

Low-pressure likely, heavy rain forecast in coastal AP

Hans News Service
Amaravati

A low-pressure area is likely to form over the southeast and adjoining east-central Bay of Bengal by Friday under the influence of a surface circulation entering the North Andaman Sea, Andhra Pradesh State Disaster Management Authority (APSDMA) Managing Director Prakhar Jain said on Wednesday.

He said the system was likely to move northwestwards and intensify further over the subsequent three days. Under its influence, heavy rainfall is likely in the coastal Andhra Pradesh region during the coming week.

Prakhar Jain advised fishermen not to venture into the sea from Sunday onwards. Those who had already gone fishing were advised to return to shore before conditions deteriorated.

Meanwhile, scattered light to moderate rainfall accompanied by lightning is likely in Prakasam, Nellore and Tirupati districts on Thursday, he said.

The APSDMA is monitoring the developing weather system and has urged fishermen to follow official advisories and take necessary precautions in view of the possibility of worsening weather conditions over the Bay of Bengal.

National Saras Mela logs Rs 5 crore sales in Vijayawada

OVER 70,000 VISITORS THRONG PUNNAMI GHAT ON VIJAYADASHAMI; SINGLE-DAY SALES TOUCH RS 1.27 CR

Hans News Service
Vijayawada

THE National Saras Mela–2026, being held at Punnami Ghat here from October 13 to 31, recorded total sales of Rs 5 crore, with two lakh products sold as of October 20.

The fair witnessed an overwhelming response on Vijayadashami, with more than 70,000 visitors thronging the venue to celebrate the festive occasion and shop for products made by women from self-help groups (SHGs) across the country.

On October 20 alone, the mela recorded sales worth Rs 1.27 crore, with 48,370 products sold. The festive atmosphere, coupled with the arrival of large numbers of families and visitors, added to the buzz at Punnami Ghat.

Vijayadashami holds special religious and cultural significance in Vijayawada, home to the Sri Kanaka Durga temple atop Indrakeeladri. During the Dasara festivities, devotees from across Andhra Pradesh and neighbouring states visit the city to seek the blessings of the presiding deity. The festive spirit and influx of pilgrims have also boosted footfall at the National Saras Mela.

The mela offers visitors an opportunity to combine festive shopping with support for rural women entrepreneurs. Women from SHGs across different parts of the country are showcasing a wide range of products, including regional specialties, traditional handicrafts, han-

Visitors shop at the Saras Mela at Punnami Ghat in Vijayawada

dloom garments, textiles, food items and other locally made goods.

The strong sales recorded on Vijayadashami reflect growing consumer interest in products made by SHG members. The response also highlights how festivals and large public gatherings can open up wider marketing opportunities for rural women and their enterprises.

By providing a platform for women to connect directly with consumers, the mela helps them expand their customer base, improve sales and increase their incomes.

The cumulative sales of Rs 5 crore and the sale of two lakh products by October 20 underline the importance of national-level marketing platforms in promoting women-led enterprises.

By bringing producers, SHGs and consumers from different parts of the country together, the mela is helping businesses grow, preserve traditional skills and strengthen sustainable rural livelihoods.

With the event scheduled to continue until October 31, participating women entrepreneurs will have further opportunities to reach new customers, explore markets and expand their businesses.

The National Saras Mela at Punnami Ghat has thus added an economic dimension to the spirit of Vijayadashami, bringing together devotion, cultural diversity, public participation and the achievements of rural women entrepreneurs on a single platform.

INDIA CHEM 2026

Majhi to lead Odisha's investment drive

Hans News Service
Bhubaneswar

TO attract fresh investments and project Odisha as an emerging industrial destination, Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi will lead the State's investment outreach at India Chem 2026, scheduled to be held in Mumbai on October 22.

According to a statement released by the CMO, Majhi will participate in the inaugural session and the CEO Roundtable, which will be chaired by Union Chemicals and Fertilisers Minister J P Nadda, during his two-day visit to Mumbai. The visit will focus on attracting fresh investments and strengthening Odisha's position as an emerging industrial destination in the chemical and petrochemical sectors. The State's participation will highlight its industrial strengths, investment-ready infrastructure, progressive policies and growing ecosystem for chemical and petrochemical manufacturing. The programme will provide an important platform for Odisha to engage directly with industry leaders, present new investment opportunities and explore partnerships for the next phase of industrial growth, the official said.

During the visit, the Chief Minister is scheduled to hold one-to-one meetings with leading representatives of the chemical and petrochemical industries, with discussions planned with more than 20 major companies. These interactions will focus on potential investments, industrial expansion, downstream manufacturing and opportunities to establish new industrial ventures in Odisha.

A key highlight of the State's participation will be a presentation on a coal gasification project, an emerging area of industrial opportunity for Odisha. The State government may also announce the establishment of a dedicated, large-scale chemical industrial park as part of its efforts to strengthen the industrial ecosystem, promote value addition, and attract investments across the chemical, petrochemical, plastics, and packaging segments. The event will provide Odisha with an opportunity to demonstrate its capabilities and strengthen engagement with domestic and international industry stakeholders. Odisha is positioning itself as a leading investment destination in the chemical and petrochemical sector, leveraging its rich resource base, industrial infrastructure, and supportive policy framework. The State's established strengths in mining and metallurgy provide a strong foundation for expanding into downstream chemical and petrochemical industries, promoting value addition, and attracting investments in higher-value manufacturing, the official said. The chemical and petrochemical sector is a priority area for Odisha as it seeks to diversify its industrial base, strengthen manufacturing value chains and attract investments in allied sectors, including plastics, packaging and other downstream products. In the chemical and petrochemical sector, Odisha has attracted 56 companies, representing proposed investments of Rs 1,93,087.94 crore and an employment potential of 1,12,324 people.

As part of its industrial development efforts, 27 projects in the sector have been grounded or inaugurated, representing investments of Rs 60,825.34 crore and an employment potential of 35,351 people. "Odisha has a strong industrial foundation, and we are now focused on expanding our presence in high-potential sectors such as chemicals and petrochemicals. Our participation at India Chem 2026 will provide an opportunity to engage directly with leading companies, present the State's investment opportunities and explore partnerships for future growth," said Additional Chief Secretary, Industries, Hemant Sharma.

BJP slams Naveen on CJP row

Hans News Service
Bhubaneswar

ODISHA'S ruling BJP has accused BJD chief Naveen Patnaik of seeking to create a "Bangladesh-like situation" in the country for political gains after he demanded the immediate release of two CJP leaders in Delhi.

In a post on its official X handle on Tuesday, the BJP alleged that Patnaik was supporting attempts at "regime change" after he called for the release of Cockroach Janta Party (CJP) leaders Saurav Das and Ashutosh Ranka, who have been in judicial custody since their detention during a march towards Jantar Mantar on October 13.

Patnaik, who supported the CJP's protest after the NEET question paper leak controversy, said hoisting the national flag, even in a prohibited area, should not warrant prolonged detention. Reacting to his remarks, the BJP said, "Patnaik wants to create a situation like Bangladesh in the country to shine in his own politics!"

The party also accused Patnaik of supporting what it described as "regime change" activities. You (Patnaik) were the CM of Odisha for 24 years and have now been out of power for barely 24 months, and you have already resorted to regime change acts? Your support for anarchists and foreign-funded anti-India forces wanting a Bangladeshi-style violent regime change is not surprising given your history of settling thousands of illegal Bangladeshi immigrants into the State. You not only allowed them to become voters, but you are also opposing the SIR process," the BJP said.

Claiming that people in Odisha had always been peace-loving and respectful of India's sovereignty, the party said, "The sovereignty of our nation is far more important than temporary political PR. Stop being operated by the Pandus of the world."

The BJP spokesperson, Anil Biswal, also criticised Patnaik, suggesting that the BJD president should not seek publicity like Congress leader Rahul Gandhi. "India is a democracy, not a mobocracy! CJP leaders Saurav Das and Ashutosh Ranka were remanded to further judicial custody until October 21 by an executive magistrate, citing apprehensions of a breach of peace and disturbance of public tranquillity," Biswal said.

"Naveen Babu appears to be attempting to put pressure on the judicial system, following a model similar to Rahul Gandhi's march towards the Supreme Court. Such conduct is not expected from a former CM. We cannot wait until India witnesses the kind of mobocracy and street unrest seen in France, Spain, Belgium and Italy," he said.

Biswal said India's democratic values allowed citizens to raise their voices, but added that democracy did not legitimise violent protests or give anyone the right to abuse institutions such as the Indian Army and Delhi Police. The BJP's remarks came after Patnaik called for the immediate release of Das and Ranka in a post on X.

"Jai Hind. The judicial custody of #AshutoshRanka and #SauravDas must be urgently reviewed and they must be released immediately. Hoisting the National Flag, even in a prohibited area, should not warrant such prolonged detention. The judiciary and the executive must rise to the occasion to ensure that the youth of this country do not lose faith in the rule of law and constitutional rights," Patnaik said. Dipke thanked the BJD chief for extending support to Das and Ranka.

3 drown in Luna river

Hans News Service
Bhubaneswar

THREE persons drowned while bathing in the Luna river in Kendrapada district on Tuesday, police said. Five persons from Gahaga village under Kendrapada Sadar police limits had gone to bathe in the river around 11 am, but three of them were subsequently swept away by strong currents, a police officer said.

Personnel from the fire services department and the Odisha Disaster Rapid Action Force (ODRAF) launched a search operation and fished out the bodies, he said.

The deceased have been identified as Himanshu Sekhar Satapathy, Sabyasachi Swain and Chiranjib Parida

Manikeswari's Chhatar Yatra celebrated

Satya Narayan Mahapatra
Bhabanipatana

THE famous Chhatar Yatra of Goddess Manikeswari was celebrated with deep spiritual fervour on Monday in Bhabanipatana, drawing over four lakh devotees who gathered to offer prayers to the deity's movable shrine. As part of the traditional rituals, thousands of animal and bird sacrifices are performed by devotees during the procession.

Following the sacred Mahashtami rituals on Sunday night, temple 'sevayats' carried the movable shrine of Maa Manikeswari's Chhatar to Jenakhal at midnight. The procession moved to the traditional, sacred beats of the 'jena badya' drums. Upon arrival, the Chhatar was placed in a temporary pandal, where secret rituals were solemnly performed.

The historic Chhatar Yatra festival commenced from Jenakhal at 5 am on Monday, with the sacred Chhatar Vijay Yatra proceeding along a 3 km route to the main temple. Devotees lined the streets to warmly welcome the deity throughout the spiritual procession. Senior district administration officials and Kalahandi SP Nagaraj Devarakonda were present on-site to closely monitor the event.

To ensure a peaceful Chhatar Yatra, 15 police platoons and 95 officers were deployed. The sacred Chhatar reached the temple at 7.40 am. In keeping with tradition, the Yuvraj of Kalahandi, Advait Pratap Deo, received the deity from the Chhatra Bahak and escorted it into the Garba Gruha (sanctum sanctorum). Thanks to these measures and community cooperation, the festival concluded peacefully.

CM greets people on Dasara

Hans News Service
Bhubaneswar

ODISHA Governor Braj Mohan Ram, Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi and Leader of Opposition Naveen Patnaik on Tuesday extended greetings to the people of the State on the occasion of Vijaya Dashami and Dussehra.

"Heartfelt greetings to the people of the State on the auspicious occasion of Vijaya Dashami. May the grace of Mother Durga, the creator of the universe, fill everyone's life with happiness, peace, and prosperity," the Governor said in a post on X.

Majhi, who is observing the festival in a subdued manner as a mark of solidarity with farmers affected by rains and floods, highlighted the festival's significance as a celebration of the victory of truth over falsehood, righteousness over unrighteousness, and justice over injustice.

"Heartfelt greetings and best wishes to all on the grand festival of the victory of truth over falsehood, righteousness over unrighteousness, and justice over injustice—the sacred 'Vijaya Dashami' also known as 'Dussehra'," Majhi said in a post on X.

Patnaik wished the people and, in a post on X, said: "May truth and justice be established. May Ma Durga's blessings bring happiness and prosperity into everyone's lives. My Sharadiya greetings to all, Jai Ma Durga."

MOTHER'S ALLEGED KILLER ARRESTED

Hans News Service
Puri

ODISHA Police on Tuesday arrested a 40-year-old man from Jamshedpur almost two months after he allegedly killed his mother and buried the body in the kitchen floor of their rented house here, an official said. Searching for the accused, police combed Odisha and also visited Jharkhand, Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu.

The woman's body was recovered on August 24 after the owner of the house in Puri's Kumbharpada area alerted police about a foul smell from a locked room rented by Gajapati district native Madan Gajanan Dalei (40) and his mother Annapurna, police said.

Dalei was arrested from Jharkhand's Jamshedpur, where he was working in a shop, Puri SP Prateek Singh said. He said for the past 57 days, Dalei was on the run. He frequently changed his place and rarely used mobile phones. The arrest followed sustained CCTV footage analysis and inputs from local sources, the police officer said.

Explaining the investigation, the SP said that based

on the complaint of the house owner in Puri, police opened the locked room and dug up Annapurna's body from the kitchen floor, which was freshly cemented. Police examined footage from CCTV cameras installed at the rented house and in the surrounding area that showed the accused and his mother leaving the house on August 20 morning and sitting near the Jagannath Temple, apparently seeking alms.

Police also found footage where the accused was seen procuring sand and cement on August 21, providing important clues during the probe, the SP said, adding that the woman might have been killed on August 20 night and that the accused subsequently buried her body in the kitchen. Asked about the motive of the crime, the SP said: "Though he has confessed to the crime, he is yet to reveal the reason behind the incident."

On the hunt for Dalei, Puri police visited their native place Paralakhemundi and came to know that the accused contacted his sister who lived in Kolkata. They later got a clue regarding his whereabouts in Jamshedpur. By the time police reached the industrial town in Jharkhand, he had fled. Police officials also visited Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu, announcing rewards at various places for his capture, the SP said. However, based on recent information, police nabbed Dalei from a snacks shop in Jamshedpur, he added.

Shallu Jindal 'CSR Person of the Year'

Hans News Service
New Delhi

SHALLU Jindal, Chairperson of the Jindal Foundation, has been named 'CSR Person of the Year' at the 19th India CSR Leadership Summit & Awards 2026 in New Delhi.The award recognises her community-led initiatives focused on upgrading women's health, maternal care, nutrition, and economic empowerment.

Under her leadership, the Jindal Foundation's #HerKadam initiative has served over 2,300 underserved villages by integrating healthcare, nutrition, safe motherhood, and economic empowerment. The programme has screened, treated, and counselled over 9 lakh adolescent girls for anaemia while providing vital antenatal and postnatal care to more than 8.9 lakh expectant and new mothers.

The #HerKadam initiative has delivered over 12 million health and nutrition supports, helping more than 90 per cent of identified severely malnourished children reach a healthy status.

Held under the theme 'CSR Enabling Innovation – Bringing Ideas, Technology, Capital and Partnerships Together to Scale Social Impact', the summit united corporate and development leaders to strengthen collaboration and expand social impact.

Pujari accuses BJD of failing to resolve Kotia issue

Hans News Service
Bhubaneswar

ANDHRA Pradesh's poll notification for three villages in Koraput district has sparked a political row in Odisha, with minister Suresh Pujari accusing former chief minister Naveen Patnaik of trying to cover up past mistakes by alleging that the BJP government was "silent" on the matter. The decades-old dispute involves both Odisha and Andhra Pradesh claiming their right over 21 of the 28 villages of Kotia gram panchayat on the borders of the two States. The matter has been pending before the Supreme Court, with a fresh suit filed by Odisha in January 2022 still under consideration.

A day after BJD president Patnaik demanded to know whether the BJP's "dependence" on NDA ally TDP was the reason for Odisha government's "silence" on the panchayat poll notification, Pujari on Tuesday accused the previous BJD dispensation of failing to resolve the border dispute.

The Odisha Revenue and Disaster Management Minister said, "We have been trying our best to resolve the Kotia issue. I visited Kotia four times in the past two years, and our

ministers are making regular visits to connect with the people there." "Several developmental works have been taken up in the area. However, the issue (border dispute with Andhra Pradesh) has escalated due to the negligence of the previous BJD government headed by Naveen Patnaik," Pujari told reporters.

The BJD chief's letter to Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi was an "eyewash, an attempt at covering up past mistakes", he added. Both the Opposition BJD and Congress have accused the BJP government of "double standards" and reneging on Odisha's territorial integrity and pride.

Patnaik, who is also the Leader of the Opposition in the Odisha Assembly, had sent a letter to CM Majhi, expressing concern over Andhra Pradesh's notification announcing polls in Phagunasineri, Ganjeipadar and Phatusineri villagers of Kotia gram panchayat. "What happened to the BJP's assurances that Kotia belongs to Odisha? What makes this even more troubling is that the Telugu Desam Party, which governs Andhra Pradesh, is a crucial ally of the BJP-led NDA government at the Centre," the former chief minister had said.

Pujari said he held five-time former chief minister Patnaik in high regard, but said the BJD president writing to Majhi on the matter was an attempt at staying in the limelight instead of giving constructive suggestions.

"We respect your experience. Come forward and let's resolve the issue together. I also call upon the BJD for an open debate over the Kotia matter," the minister said.

He held a meeting on Tuesday with Odisha's Advocate General, Revenue Divisional Commissioner (RDC), southern division, and Koraput District Collector to discuss the issue. "I have asked the RDC and the Collector to keep a close watch on the Kotia area and keep the State government updated," the minister said.

The BJD spokesperson, Lenin Mohanty, on the other hand, came down heavily on the State government and alleged that Odisha has been facing debacles ever since the BJP came to power in the State in June, 2024. "The BJP supported the MMDR Amendment Act, 2026, a black law under which Odisha lost its rights over mineral-bearing land, along with a pending amount of Rs 1 lakh crore and Rs 12,000 crore every year. For the BJP, the interests of a few industrialists mattered more than those of 4.5 crore Odias. It did not even consider the interests of our Gen Z," he said.

Bhagwat's Dasara message highlights Hindu undivided family

AHEAD 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 Ayodhya 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.

The agony and ecstasy in the high-stakes journalism career

TALKING OF MANY THINGS

DR MOHAN KANDA

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 which, while taken in good faith, created livelihoods for young unemployed people. It also, unfortunately, led to my being transferred as vested interests close to powerful political leaders were hurt by it.

It is time the high and the mighty pause, sit back and reflect upon the damage that can be caused to the fabric of good governance on account of their intolerant attitude towards the media. Like in every other profession, journalism also requires the ability to master the art of extracting information, real value incoming noise. A somewhat similar perception exists about the legal profession. There is a story about a young lawyer who began his career in the office of a senior colleague. The senior warned the new entrant that it would be tough to make both ends meet to begin with, the hours would be long, the clients and the judges sometimes uncooperative and even cantankerous and that even contemplating married life would be a thing of the distant future. Not to be put off, the youngster, with a brave smile, asked, "what next sir?". Oh, by then you will get used to it!" was the reply!

For the usual lighthearted end to my columns, here is a story used earlier, but highly relevant in the context of the present discussion.

An Italian Bishop was travelling to the United States as part of his missionary work. On the eve of his departure, he sought an audience with the Pope for a briefing on the proposed visit. His Holiness advised the bishop to be extremely cautious while dealing with the American media personnel, who were known to be aggressively intrusive and eager to sensationalise matters.

Upon arrival at LaGuardia airport, the bishop was besieged by media persons. Out of the blue a cub reporter asked him,

"Hey, Bishop! Will you be visiting any night clubs in New York?"

Somewhat startled by the unexpected and loaded question but remembering the Pope's counsel, his reply was quite guarded. Innocently he asked, "Are there any night clubs in New York?"

Any relief the bishop felt at avoiding potential embarrassment lasted only till the next morning when he read, with shock and alarm, the headlines that screamed at him in a local newspaper.

"Are there any night clubs in New York"? First question the Italian Bishop asks on arrival!"

Duly chastised by that experience, he started his sermon to a congregation in Boston that afternoon, first seeking to know whether any gentlemen of the press were around. A few hands went up. The bishop fervently pleaded with the reporters not to publish the contents of his address as that would make his messages stale even while he had to speak at several places across the country over the next few weeks. Confident, thereafter, that no further danger lurked ahead, he proceeded to deliver his speech.

And the headlines the next day were, "Italian Bishop tells many stories. All unprintable!"

They are really something else, the Paparazzi! Clearly there is no gaining the upper hand over them!

(The writer was formerly Chief Secretary, Government of Andhra Pradesh)

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:

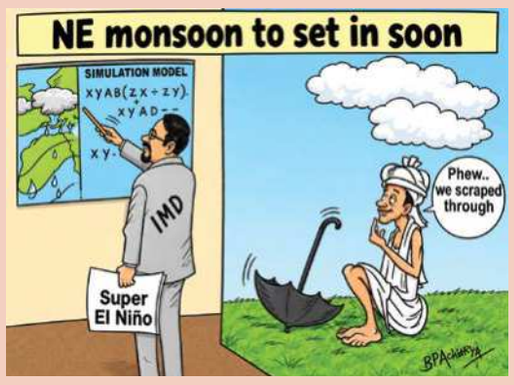
Regime change and deep states are underway in south Asia. In recent times, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and Nepal saw a surge in youth protests that created chaos and badly affected their economies. The disruption of a peaceful environment and political unrest will create negative economic consequences, such 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 Bhaarat 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)

MEDLEY



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, Sulur (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

APROPOS, "France protest fire singes 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.

M Barathi, Bengaluru-560076

thehansreader@gmail.com

BENGALURU ONLINE

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.

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

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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 exercise 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 Jamnagar 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 Jamnagar 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.

Foreign forces behind regime change narrative: BJP

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 demand 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 Bharadwaj also alleged that Mann was made to wait at the airport after travelling to Paris to promote Punjab's products. In a post on X, Bharadwaj 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 Bharadwaj 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.

Womenia

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 routine 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 treatment 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 account, 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."

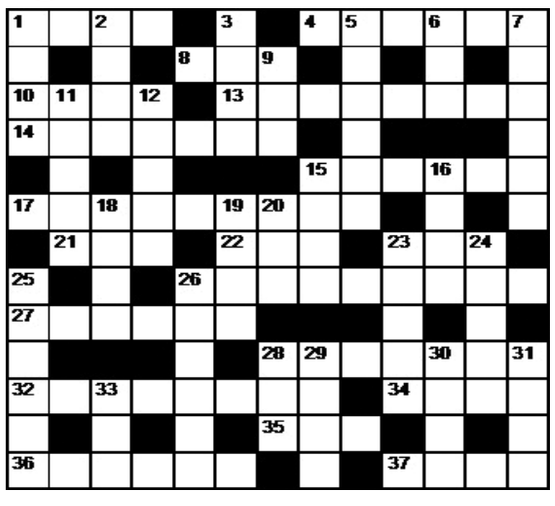
Pankaj also posted a video from the hospital as she underwent multiple medical tests. In the clip, she was seen sitting in a hospital robe with a medical cannula attached to her hand.

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. (IANS)

CROSSWORD



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)

Solution to October 20

SUDOKU

5				6				4
			8		7			
		9		1		5		
7		5				8		2
		6		7		3		
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		2		8		9		
			6		2			
4				9				7

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2	8	1	6	9	3	4	7	5
6	3	7	4	5	8	2	1	9
4	5	9	1	2	7	3	8	6
5	6	8	9	1	4	7	2	3
7	1	4	5	3	2	6	9	8
3	9	2	7	8	6	5	4	1

Solution to October 20

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." (IANS)

Young Hans

How commerce students can build a career pathway in global finance

Combining academic learning with professional qualifications and hands-on experience can help commerce students develop skills relevant to financial analysis, investment management, risk and corporate finance

Pratham Barot

India's study-abroad landscape is evolving as students increasingly assess international education through career outcomes, affordability, specialised skills and professional opportunities. While overseas universities remain an option for academic exposure, students are also examining how degrees and professional qualifications can work together to support their long-term career goals.

In an August 2026 parliamentary reply, the Ministry of Education, citing Bureau of Immigration data, reported that 6,19,264 Indians listed "study/education" as their purpose of travel abroad in 2025, compared with 7,60,060 in 2024 and 8,94,758 in 2023. These figures provide a snapshot of changing overseas travel for education, although they do not alone explain students' decisions or the factors behind the trend.

For commerce students, career planning increasingly involves understanding the skills required across financial analysis, investment management, corporate finance, risk management, auditing, compliance and financial technology. A conventional commerce degree provides a foundation in accounting, economics, business and finance, while specialised qualifications can help learners deepen their knowledge in particular areas.

Combining academic learning with professional qualifications

Global finance certifications are one option students may consider alongside university education. Depending on the qualification, they can provide structured learning in specific financial disciplines, professional practices and industry frameworks.

These certifications serve a different purpose from academic degrees. A degree generally offers broader theoretical and conceptual grounding, while a specialised professional qualification may focus on particular competencies relevant to a chosen field. The value of either depends on the course content, recognition, eligibility requirements, costs and the career path a student intends to pursue.

For students interested in international finance, understanding global business practices, capital markets, regulatory environments and technology-led financial services can be useful. However, qualifications alone do not guarantee employment or international mobility. Practical experience, communication skills, analytical ability and familiarity with the requirements of individual roles also matter.

The shift reflects a wider approach to education in which students assess how each learning opportunity contributes to their professional development, rather than viewing qualifications as isolated achievements.

International education opportunities within India

International education is also becoming more accessible through pathways that do not necessarily require students to relocate overseas. In June 2026, the Ministry of Education announced approvals for three international universities to establish campuses in India, with proposed programmes spanning areas including finance, economics and business management, alongside other disciplines.

Such developments add to the range of options available to students considering international curricula and learning environments. Prospective applicants still need to assess programme recognition, faculty expertise, fees, admission criteria and the opportunities available through each institution.

Building a career pathway

For commerce students, education can be viewed as a combination of complementary experiences: an academic degree, a relevant professional qualification, internships or projects, and exposure to different business environments.

Each element can address a different learning need. University study builds conceptual understanding; certifications may provide specialised knowledge; internships help students apply classroom learning; and international exposure can offer insights into varied professional practices.

This approach also requires students to be selective. Before enrolling in a certification, they should examine its relevance to their intended roles, the time and financial commitment involved, and whether employers in their chosen field recognise it. Comparing curricula and speaking with academic advisers or working professionals can help them make informed decisions.

A more outcome-oriented approach to education

The changing education landscape places greater emphasis on how students connect learning with their career objectives. For those pursuing commerce and finance, global certifications can be one component of that process, provided they complement rather than simply duplicate existing qualifications.

Ultimately, effective career planning is not about collecting the largest number of credentials. It is about identifying the knowledge and experience needed for a particular professional direction and choosing educational opportunities that address those needs. As students consider domestic and international options, the focus is increasingly on building a coherent pathway from academic learning to practical capability and long-term career development.

(The author is CEO & Co – Founder, Zell Education)

Drone racing, robot battles and AI innovations to take centre stage at BITS Pilani Hyderabad's ATMoS '26

Hans News Service

More than 20,000 attendees, over 100 student technology projects, combat robots and high-speed drone racing will feature at ATMoS '26, the national techno-management festival of BITS Pilani Hyderabad Campus, from October 23 to 25. Themed Augmented Ascension, this year's edition has Synchrony Financial as its title partner.

The three-day festival is expected to draw attendees from more than 60 institutions across India, including IIT Hyderabad, IIIT Hyderabad and BITS Pilani, Goa Campus. Organised annually since 2012, ATMoS stands for Assimilation of Technically Motivated Souls and aims to identify and nurture young talent in technology and management.

Artificial intelligence will be a major focus of the festival. The Computer Science Association will organise an AI Hackathon challenging student teams to develop AI-driven solutions to pressing social problems. Synchrony Financial will also host a workshop on AI in financial security, exploring applications in credit scoring and risk analysis.

The Tech Expo, organised by the campus Innovation Cell, will showcase more than 100 student projects in artificial intelligence, robotics and software development. Interactive demonstrations and expert judging will provide a platform for students to present their innovations.

RoboWars will bring more than 20 combat robots from across the country into the arena for head-to-head battles. The BITS Drone Racing League returns for its third edition, featuring more than 15 drones flown by professional first-person-view (FPV) pilots. Organisers describe it as the largest field on the South India circuit.

Engineering enthusiasts can also look forward to the SAE BPHC Auto Expo and Time Attack Race, where student teams will race custom-built all-terrain vehicles against the clock.

Beyond the technical competitions, ATMoS' national outreach initiatives include Innowave, a talent hunt that has attracted more than 5,000 participants from across India.

Polympiad, a STEM initiative for younger learners, aims to nurture scientific curiosity. Workshops, technical talks and recreational activities will take place throughout the festival. The entertainment programme will feature stand-up comedian Nishant Suri on October 23, followed by a live set by the Mysore Express band, DJ nights and a laser mapping show. Bollywood playback singer Amit Mishra will headline Artist Night on October 24, bringing a live musical performance to the campus.

Today is International Stuttering Awareness Day

Building confidence through understanding

Stuttering is a speech fluency disorder that affects the flow of speech, causing repetitions of sounds or words, prolonged sounds, or moments when a person finds it difficult to speak. Although it can occur at any age, it often begins during childhood, when language and communication skills are developing. Raising awareness about stuttering is important to create supportive environments in schools, colleges and communities.

For students who stutter, everyday situations such as answering questions in class, participating in discussions, giving presentations or speaking with unfamiliar people can sometimes become challenging. Fear of being interrupted, teased or judged may affect their confidence and willingness to participate. However, stuttering does not reflect a person's intelligence, knowledge or ability to communicate effectively.

The role of schools and educators

Schools play an important role in promoting understanding and inclusion. Teachers can support students who stutter by giving them enough time to express themselves, listening patiently and avoiding completing their sentences. They can also discourage teasing and bullying while ensuring that classroom activities provide equal opportunities for participation. Students should be encouraged to understand that people communicate in different ways. Awareness sessions, classroom discussions and activities promoting empathy can help reduce misconceptions and create a more accepting learning environment.

Creating a more inclusive future

Stuttering awareness is not about asking people to hide their speech differences. It is about ensuring that everyone can communicate without fear of embarrassment or discrimination. With patience, understanding and appropriate support, schools and communities can help people who stutter participate confidently in education and everyday life.

IIT Hyderabad trains MBBS students in AI applications in medicine and drug development

Hans News Service

The Indian Institute of Technology Hyderabad (IIT Hyderabad) conducted a 10-day academic training programme on 'AI in Medicine, Drug Development and Biology' for 15 final-year MBBS students from Apollo Institute of Medical Sciences and Research (AIMSR), Hyderabad. The programme introduced students to the applications of artificial intelligence (AI) in clinical practice, biomedical research and drug discovery.

Organised by the research group of Prof. G. Narahari Sastry, faculty member in the Department of Biotechnology and Dean (Sponsored Research and Consultancy) at IIT Hyderabad, the programme combined lectures, demonstrations, mentoring sessions and hands-on projects. The AIMSR delegation was led by Dr. K. Manohar, Dean; K. Aparna Reddy, Chief Operating Officer; Dr. Neetha Kundoor, Associate Dean (Academics); and Dr. Patchva Dorababu, Professor of Pharmacology and Research Coordinator.

The training aimed to familiarise medical students with computational methods and machine learning tools, which are not typically a central part of conventional medical education. Participants explored how data-driven approaches could help investigate clinical questions and support biomedical research.

As part of the programme, students worked on exploratory projects using existing open-access datasets. The topics included early cancer identification through long-term blood parameters, antibiotic prescription informed by antimicrobial resistance profiles, disease detection using medical images, and prediction of metabolic disorders based on clinical and demographic factors.

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The projects also highlighted the importance of medical expertise in interpreting data, evaluating model predictions and understanding the limitations of AI-based tools. Discussions identified gaps in the availability of open clinical datasets representing the Indian population, alongside potential areas for future research. These included personalised medicine using genomics, early detection of non-communicable diseases, medical image analysis, decision support during critical surgeries, and simulations and virtual reality for surgical training.

IIT Hyderabad Director Prof. B. S. Murty said interdisciplinary training and research involving emerging AI technologies were important for addressing complex challenges.

He encouraged medical students and practitioners to participate in campus training programmes and explore collaborative research opportunities.

Prof. Sastry said the programme included research-oriented projects culminating in presentations and three-minute videos, allowing students to investigate scientific questions, apply analytical thinking and communicate findings.

Dr. Manohar highlighted the potential of technology to complement clinical examinations and strengthen disease diagnosis, including earlier identification of conditions such as diabetes. Dr. Kundoor said exposure to IIT Hyderabad's research could help students contribute clinical perspectives to projects involving medical devices, clinical models and biochemical pathways.

Both institutions intend to continue their collaboration through foundational AI training and opportunities for joint research in diagnostics, drug development, biology and patient care.

> 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

Sports Nation

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 Rakeshbhai Bhatt (men's 100m T37) won a bronze each.

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.

India look to beat travel fatigue in T20 opener against Kiwis

Match starts 12.30 PM

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 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 Bhuvi 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).

Indian bowling has been lacking experience: Iyer

CHRISTCHURCH: India T20 captain Shreyas Iyer on Wednesday said the team's bowling attack had been lacking experience in recent past and veteran pacer Bhuvneshwar Kumar's return would help address this issue. The 36-year-old Bhuvneshwar has returned to the Indian T20I setup after four years after being named in squad for the five-match T20I series against New Zealand, beginning here on Thursday.

Bhuvneshwar Kumar

"Bhuvi brings a lot of experience to the team. And we were lacking that, especially after the IPL. We had a lot of new bowlers," Iyer said at the pre-match press conference. "But in T20, if you see his career graph, he has won the IPL in each of the last two years.

So, he has a very good idea of how to dominate this format." In the absence of pace spearhead Jasprit Bumrah, India's T20I bowling attack featuring fast bowlers Mayank Yadav, Prince Yadav, and Gurnoor Brar has faced scrutiny after repeatedly conceding big totals on flat tracks.

Bhuvneshwar, known for his ability to generate swing and seam movement, has collected 90 scalps across 88 T20Is. In the IPL, he played a key role in the Royal Challengers Bengaluru's back-to-back titles, taking 17 wickets in the 2025 season and 28 in 2026.

Harmanpreet breaks down after knock against Zim

RAIPUR: Former India captain Harmanpreet Kaur fought back tears after ending a prolonged lean patch with a blistering unbeaten 91 off 41 balls against Zimbabwe in the third and final T20I here but later regained composure to credit her turnaround to the hours she spent practising in the nets. Harmanpreet, who stepped down as India captain across formats earlier this month, had not scored a half-century in her last 10 matches. She did not have much success with the bat in the Women's T20 Asia Cup as well as the Asian Games, despite India winning both titles comfortably. "It feels great. Just wanted to enjoy myself, and great that I got some time in the middle and really enjoyed myself on the field," Harmanpreet told the host broadcaster during the innings break. The 37-year-old was not able to control her tears in a post-innings chat with the on-air commentators. WV Raman, who was also the head coach of the Indian women's team, was speaking with Harmanpreet when the latter broke down and left abruptly tossing the microphone away. "I just wanted to bat as long as possible, and glad that I was able to do that. I think I should give credit to you also (to WV Raman). "The moment we came, you stepped in and you said, 'Now you do what you want to do,' and that's what I want to do, and really want to enjoy myself. Thanks for those words." Harmanpreet said there is no pressure on her anymore, having resigned as captain.

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 checkup, 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 alias Roshan, originally from Begusarai in Bihar and living in Mumbai; and Phool Singh from Haryana, the official said.

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

The Kota city police had handed them over to Mumbai Police, which formally arrested 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 lives and left 25 people injured.

The stampede at the Chorbagan Durga Puja pandal in north Kolkata claimed 19 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 Borekheda 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 Minister 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 Hans India

Business

"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 ChinnaJeeyar Swamy and anchor Suma marking the brand's flagship branch opening in Hyderabad. Suhas 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, LiveNSense, LW3, Smaartbrand by Acquink Solutions, Fitsol, 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 3.19 crore shares.

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

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 retails 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 deferments 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.

Entertainment

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 holiday season complemented the attraction, making the film one of the highest-grossing.

It was not the first time, however, Vijay Deverakonda'sRanabaali 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 the holiday season comes to an end. Since the week will no longer have extended weekends, the number of viewers will play an essential role in films' further fortunes.

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 BVSN 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. AjaneeshLoknath, 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 VenuYeldandi, 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.

- S Suhas

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

Charming Star Sharwa's upcoming period action drama Bhogi has released the second single titled "AnnayyaPaanam Lo PoosinaPuvvulu," 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 BheemsCeciroleo, 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 Anee 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 HiralViradia while the Telugu version features lyrics by RakenduMouli and vocals by Devi Sri Prasad. The units are titled RavanaTandava in Kannada and RavanaTandavam 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 Pallavi 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 Rudrra'

Aadi Saikumar's upcoming big-budget mystery thriller has been named as 'Aadi Rudrra' 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 Navarrasan. The poster highlights Aadi wielding a trident with Goddess Durga's image towering in the background while crowds bearing flaming torches circle around a ritual ground.

Set in 1960s-1990s, Aadi Rudrra's film wants to create a unique period atmosphere while also delving into themes of faith, divinity, and supernatural forces. Motion video's background music, composed by B. AjaneeshLoknath, 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 Rudrra is set to hit the pan-Indian theatre in Telugu, Kannada, Tamil, Hindi, and Malayalam languages targeting a diverse audience.

-P Ravi Teja

'Donga NaaKoduku' teaser unveiled; promises a comedy ride

Mythri Movie Makers is all set to release the film Donga NaaKoduku, which stars MouliTanuj Prasanth as the lead actor on November 13. Mythri Movie Makers has released the teaser of the comedy entertainer directed by debutant SreenuKambala.

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 SinjithYerramilli.

-P Ravi Teja

Sumanth Prabhas' Gen Z entertainer 'Babloo XXL' unveiled

Sumanth Prabhas' yuppy new-age entertainer 'Babloo 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 SreeVenkateswara 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 SaailuKaampati'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 Mancherial'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