

# AKHAND BHARAT SANDESH

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UNIQUE GIFT OF KRIYAYOGA ASHRAM AND RESEARCH INSTITUTE TO GIVE IMPETUS TO WORLD BUILDING AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT.

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## Bangladesh minorities' body expresses concern over safety ahead of puja

**DHAKA:** Amid a number of incidents of attacks, the Bangladesh Hindu Buddhist Christian Unity Council has said there is growing concern and anxiety among devotees regarding the Sharidya Durga Puja celebrations that begin on Sunday. The organisation said that though devotees are being assured by the highest levels of the govt, including the chief adviser, army chief and home affairs adviser, about the smooth conduct of the Sharidya Durga Puja festivities, the overall situation on the eve of the festival has only fed their apprehensions and anxiety. A statement of the central committee, signed by Manindra Kumar Nath, acting general secretary of the Bangladesh Hindu Buddhist Christian Unity Council, on Friday highlighted attacks on at least nine puja mandap and temples and vandalism of idols from Sept 2 to Sept 23. Muhammad Yunus, who is now in New York, on Saturday conveyed his greetings to the Hindu community of Bangladesh. Emphasising Bangladesh's tradition of communal harmony, he said, "This country belongs to all of us. It is a safe abode for all people." He noted that the destruction of evil forces and the triumph of truth.

## Wankhede sues Aryan Khan's show for defamation

**NEW DELHI:** IRS officer and former Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) zonal director Sameer Wankhede has filed a defamation suit in Delhi high court against the makers of the Netflix drama series 'The Ba\*\*\*ds of Bollywood'. The suit filed on Thursday seeks an injunction and Rs 2 crore in damages for misleading and negative portrayal of anti-drug enforcement agencies and maligning his reputation. The series, directed by Aryan Khan, son of actor Shah Rukh Khan, was released on Sept 18. Wankhede is known for arresting Aryan Khan in a drug case in 2021.

# Major international attacks traced to Pakistan: EAM

"Those who condone nations that sponsor terror will find it comes back to bite them".

## Self Help

❑ **Sonam Wangchuk was arrested by a Ladakh police team**

**Washington:** Without naming any country, India's foreign minister S Jaishankar warned the United Nations on Saturday that "those who condone nations that sponsor terror will find it comes back to bite them". In his address before the UN General Assembly, Jaishankar implicitly took aim at Pakistan, calling it an epicentre of global terrorism and pointing out that for decades, major international terrorist attacks



are traced back to that one country and UN lists of terrorists are replete with its nationals. The most recent example of its cross-border barbarism was the murder of innocent tourists in Pahalgam earlier this year, following which, he said, India "exercised its right to defend its people and brought its organisers

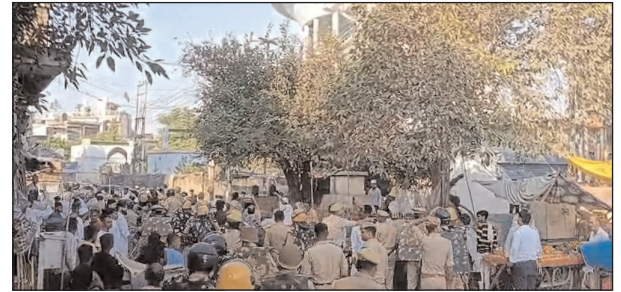
and perpetrators to justice". Since terrorism is a shared threat, he called for much deeper international cooperation. "When nations openly declare terrorism a state policy, when terror hubs operate on an industrial scale, when terrorists are publicly glorified, then such actions must be unequivocally con-

## Pakistan is welcome to enjoy it

**New Delhi** asserted that it was Pakistani military that "pleaded with us directly for a cessation to the fighting", and if Islamabad is sincere about peace, it must "immediately shut down all terrorist camps and handover to us terrorists wanted in India". In a sharp riposte to Pakistan PM Shehbaz Sharif's "absurd theatrics".

demned," he told the UN body. Earlier on Friday, India lampooned Pakistan's claim that it had won the recent conflict with India, telling the UN that "if destroyed runways.

## 'Have neighbour that is epicentre of terrorism': Jaishankar hits out



**NEW DELHI:** In a veiled attack on Pakistan, external affairs minister S Jaishankar on Saturday hit out at the nation and called it the "epicentre of global terrorism." Addressing the 80th session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), Jaishankar said, "Countering terrorism is a particular priority because it synthesises bigotry, violence, intolerance, and fear. India has confronted this challenge since its Independence. Having

a neighbour that is an epicentre of global terrorism." At the UN, he also recalled the Pahalgam incident, where 26 tourists lost their lives, and said that is the recent example of cross border barbarism. "For decades now, major international terrorist attacks are traced back to that one country. The US-designated list of terrorists is replete with these nationals. The most recent example of cross border barbarism was the murder of innocent tourist in Pahalgam.

## BSF sends back mentally unstable intruder to Pakistan

**JAMMU:** Border Security Force (BSF) has repatriated a mentally unstable Pakistani national who inadvertently crossed into Indian territory in Jammu's R S Pura sector Thursday. "No incriminating material was recovered from Mohd Akram, a native of Pakistan's



Sialkot. BSF contacted

Pakistani Rangers and handed him over to them at a flag meeting late Friday," an official said. Earlier, in a goodwill gesture, BSF had handed over the body of an intruder to Pakistan Rangers on Aug 13, after he succumbed to his injuries during treatment at AIIMS Jammu.

## Won war? Enjoy destroyed runways and burnt-out hangars

## Lampooned

❑ **"A country long steeped in the tradition of deploying and exporting terror**



**Washington:** India on Friday lampooned Pakistan's claim that it had won the recent brief war with India, telling the United Nations that "If destroyed runways and burnt-out hangars look like victory...Pakistan is welcome to enjoy it." New Delhi also asserted that it was the Pakistani military that "pleaded with us directly for a cessation to the fighting" and if Islamabad is sincere about wanting peace, it must "immediately shut

down all terrorist camps and handover to us terrorists wanted in India." In a sharply-worded riposte to Pakistan Prime Minister Shabbaz Sharif's "absurd theatrics" that included pretensions of seeking peace and presenting the country as a bulwark of terrorism in his speech, India reminded the UN that Pakistan sheltered Osama bin Laden for a decade, even while pretending to partner in the war against terrorism.

Poll Do you think India's response to Pakistan's Prime Minister's speech was justified? Absolutely, it's a direct rebuttal. No, it escalates tensions. "A country long steeped in the tradition of deploying and exporting terrorism has no shame in advancing the most ludicrous narratives to that end," India's First Secretary Petal Gahlot said while exercising New Delhi's right to reply to the Pakistan PMs speech.

## Stampede-like situation at Vijay's Karur rally; at least

A stampede like situation occurred at actor-turned-politician Vijay's campaign rally in Karur where at least 10 people died and other 30 were left injured. Chief minister M K Stalin instructed the Karur District Collector to reach the spot immediately and arrange medical sup-



port, including help from neighbouring districts. The Additional Director General of Police

(Law and Order) Davidson Devasirvatham has also been asked to rush to the scene.

## Stampede

❑ **Stampede-like situation at Vijay's Karur rally; at least 10 dead**

The CM further directed the health minister and the school education

minister to proceed to Karur without delay. Meanwhile, all available doctors in Karur GH have also been asked to report for duty at Accident and Emergency Care Initiative ward of Karur govt hospital. According to hospital sources, the toll may rise further.

## India's forest cover expanded by mere 2.5% in 10 yrs but 'very dense' cover

## Increased

❑ **India's forest cover increased by merely 2.5% between 2010-11 and 2021-22**



**NEW DELHI:** India's forest cover increased by merely 2.5% between 2010-11 and 2021-22, but the 'very dense forest' component of it grew by 22.7% during the period, indicating effective regen-

eration and conservation efforts, claimed the central govt's first-ever dedicated publication on forest accounting. It recorded a decline only in the 'moderately dense forest' category. Released on Thursday, the physical asset

accounting showed that forest cover (very dense, moderately dense and open forest) increased from 6,97,898 sq km in 2010-11 to 7,15,342 in 2021-22, adding 17,444 sq km (2.5%) in 10 years. During the same 10-year period, 'very dense forest' (VDF) increased by 19,000 sq km (from 83,502 sq km in 2010-11 to 1,02,502 sq km in 2021-22), whereas 'moderately dense forest' (MDF) decreased.

## Nitish goes off script; 'reveals' what led to JD(U)-BJP split

**NEW DELHI:** Bihar chief minister Nitish Kumar on Monday pinned the blame for his exit from the alliance with Bharatiya Janata Party in 2022 on "some leader" from his party. While speaking at a rally in Bihar's Purnea, Nitish Kumar said that some of the leaders who created rift between JD(U) and BJP are present on the stage. He also vowed that he will never break alliance with BJP.

## Standing here with deep sorrow': Tamil Nadu CM consoles Karur stampede

**TAMIL NADU:** Tamil Nadu chief minister MK Stalin reached Karur in the early hours of Sunday to meet the families of those who died and were injured in a stampede during a campaign event for TVK leader and actor-turned-politician Vijay, held about 400 km from Chennai. Reflecting on the tragedy, the chief minister expressed deep sorrow. After meeting the



bereaved and injured, CM Stalin addressed the press, saying, "I am standing here with deep sorrow. I am unable to

describe the horrific accident that took place in Karur. Yesterday, around 7:45 pm, while I was in Chennai speak-

ing with officials, I received the news that such an incident had occurred in Karur. As soon as I received the information, I called former Minister Senthil Balaji, asked him to inquire, and instructed him to go to the hospital. When I heard the news about the death toll, I instructed the nearby ministers to go to Karur." He added, "So far, 39 people have died.

## TVK rally tragedy: Long delay, overcrowded what we know so far

**Actor-turned-politician** Vijay was holding a campaign rally in Karur on Saturday, which attracted a huge crowd as the TVK chief's vehicle made its way slowly through thousands of supporters.



According to reports, the rally was delayed by 6 hours. However, he was forced to pause his speech briefly after several party workers fainted in the crowded rally, with two ambulances rushing them to hospi-

tal. As tension grew in the overcrowded crowd, Vijay personally handed out water bottles to supporters. "Police please help," he reportedly said after a child went missing in the crowd.

## 'Satyameva Jayate': Sameer Wankhede reacts amid 'Ba\*\*\*ds of Bollywood' row

**NEW DELHI:** Former Mumbai zonal director of the Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB), Sameer Wankhede, on Saturday declined to

comment on the "Ba\*\*\*ds of Bollywood"\* series, offering only a cryptic response. Also Read | Ba\*\*\*ds of Bollywood row: Ex-

NCB officer Sameer Wankhede files defamation case against Shahrukh Khan production company Red Chillies Entertainment.



## Amit Shah sets 160+ target for NDA in Bihar elections

**PATNA/ARARIA:** Union home minister Amit Shah set on Saturday an ambitious target of winning over 160 of total 243 seats in upcoming Bihar assembly elections, and urged BJP workers to visit every household and publicise NDA govt's achievements. Addressing a gathering of party workers from 10 Seemanchal districts at Forbesganj in Araria on the second day of his Bihar visit, Shah attacked RJD-Congress combine, claiming their campaigns aimed to protect voting rights of infiltrators. "BJP will kick out each and every infiltrator from the state and the country," he asserted, while insisting no bona fide Indian citizen's name had been removed in the special intensive revision of Bihar electoral rolls. Boosting the morale of party workers, Shah addressed them as "malik" and said: "Unlike other parties, in BJP, it's the workers who win elections for



**In Mahagathbandhan, Congress might gain more than 50 seats, while the RJD would keep the same amount in 2020**

**Delhi:** Members of the Mahagathbandhan coalition in Bihar informed The Indian Express that the two parties are getting close to an agreement on who will share seats in the state assembly in the upcoming elections. The Congress has been demanding 70 seats, the same amount it sought in the 2020 elections, but the RJD is unwilling to allocate more

the party." He said in last elections, NDA was number one in the dis-

tricts of Seemanchal and Kosi regions, except in Kishanganj. According to insiders, a compromise could be struck in the end, with the Congress gaining 58-60 seats. Assembly seats in Bihar number 243. The Congress, CPI(ML), CPI, and CPI(M) were all members of the Mahagathbandhan alliance in the 2020 elections, which was led by the RJD. The Congress party contested in 70 seats, the RJD in 144.

tricts of Seemanchal and Kosi regions, except in Kishanganj.

## EC gears up for Bihar poll dates, announcement likely on October 6-7

**NEW DELHI:** With the final electoral roll for Bihar set to be published on Sept 30, the Election Commission will immediately start the warm-up for announcement of assembly poll dates, starting with a meeting with poll observers on Oct 3 and a visit by the full commission to the state on Oct 4 and 5. This is likely to be followed by a meeting with the Union home secretary to finalise the logistics relating to deployment of central forces for poll security. Given that the aforesaid engagements are penultimate formalities before announcement



of the poll dates, the EC may hold the press conference soon after to release the Bihar poll schedule, possibly as early as Oct 6 or 7. There have been precedents when the meeting with the home secretary was done on the same as the poll announcement. The upcoming Bihar poll is likely to be held

over fewer phases as compared to 2020. There were three rounds of polling in the state in 2020, which was held under the shadow of Covid pandemic. The term of the current Bihar assembly expires on Nov 22, 2025. EC usually completes polls with sufficient time to spare for govt formation.

## RLJP and JMM are expected to join the INDIA group in the state

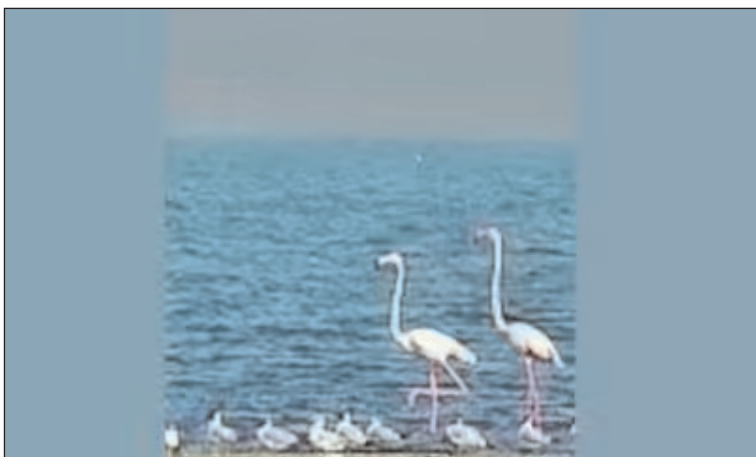
**Delhi :** The Rashtriya Lok Janshakti Party (RLJP) under Pashupati Kumar Paras and the Jharkhand Mukti Morcha under Jharkhand Chief Minister Soren are expected to join the opposition alliance "soon" to contest the upcoming assembly elections in Bihar, poten-

tially extending the INDIA bloc. Held at the official residence of RJD leader Tejashwi Prasad Yadav, the issue was discussed during a crucial meeting of INDIA bloc leaders. "Two more parties are expected to be part of the INDIA bloc soon and we all have to sacrifice

our share of seats to accommodate the new partners." He went on to say that the 243 constituencies were all being worked on by the coalition. The bloc's initial gathering following the successful two-week Voter Adhikar Yatra. was this meeting.

## Two Bihar wetlands join global list of Ramsar sites

**NEW DELHI:** Two more wetlands - both in Bihar - have been included in the global list of Ramsar Convention sites and categorised as wetlands of international importance. It brings the total number of such sites in India to 93, continuing the country's top position in Asia and third in the world after the UK (176) and Mexico (144) in terms of total number of Ramsar sites. The additions are Gokul Jalashay in Buxar district and Udaipur Jheel in West Champaran district, bringing the total number of such wetlands to five in Bihar. Environment minister Bhupender Yadav said the additions underscored India's resolve to safeguard its rich wetland ecosystems



for biodiversity, climate resilience, and sustainable livelihoods. Gokul Jalashay is an oxbow lake located on the southern edge of Ganga. During flooding events, the wetland acts as a buffer for nearby villages. Over 50 bird species are found at the site and its

surroundings. Local communities rely on the wetland for fishing, farming and irrigation. Udaipur Jheel is also an oxbow lake which surrounds a village. Over 280 plant species are found in the wetland, including Alysicarpus Roxburghianus, a perennial herb endemic to India.

## 59K applicants affected by technical difficulties will be able to retake the SSC exam

**Delhi :** S Gopalakrishnan, the chairman of the Staff Selection Commission (SSC), stated that over 59,000 applicants who experienced technical difficulties during the examination will be given a special re-exam in three sessions. In order to "resolve the matters, retest the solution and improve operational matter," he said, the SSC Combined Graduate Level (CGL) exam, which was originally planned for August 13, has been pushed back to mid-September. He announced that three special exam shifts would be held after a thorough log analysis had uncovered

## Kashmiri Pandit teacher left Valley in body, but never in spirit

**SRINAGAR:** Beloved teacher. Exiled soul. Hirdey Nath Koul, former principal of Islamia High School in Srinagar, is gone. He died Sept 10 in Hyderabad at the age of 93. He was once of Bana Mohalla near the Jhelum, but carried Kashmir with him until the end. Tributes poured in, led by Hurriyat Conference chairman Mirwaiz Umar Farooq, who wrote a detailed obituary. "His contribution in nurturing generations of students at Islamia School with a keen sense of commitment



to them will always be remembered and respected," Mirwaiz said. He recalled the legacy of Kashmiri Pandit teachers in Anjuman Nusratul Islam schools, "who even marked attendance for Muslim boys for afternoon prayers to Jama Masjid — a tes-

tament to our bond and shared values". Koul's family said he was a resident of Bana Mohalla, underscoring his "deep love and emotional attachment" to Srinagar. Born in old Srinagar, Koul graduated from Gandhi Memorial College, earned a BED.

## HP cold desert now on Unesco's list of biosphere reserves

**NEW DELHI:** Unesco on Saturday designated India's Cold Desert Biosphere Reserve, located in western Himalayas and spread over 7,770 sq km of windswept plateaus, glacial valley and high-altitude desert in Lahaul and Spiti district of Himachal Pradesh, as one of the biosphere reserves of its global network. India has a total 18 biosphere reserves, of which 13 are now in the Unesco's world network with the latest addition of the Cold Desert Biosphere Reserve in the list. The global designation helps these sites adopt comprehensive measures to foster harmony between people and nature for sustainable development. "These globally recognised areas are more than just protected land - they are living laboratories



where communities, scientists, and govts collaborate to find sustainable ways of living in harmony with nature," said the UN body while announcing the list of 26 newly designated biosphere reserves from 21 countries. Established in 2009, the Cold Desert Biosphere Reserve is home to many rare and endangered species including snow leopard, Tibetan antelope and Himalayan wolf. It also has a variety of flora.

## Govt allocates 12,952 crore for public transport system

**The BJP government,** led by Chief Minister Rekha Gupta, presented its maiden budget on Tuesday, March 25. Gupta presented 1 lakh crore budget for 2025-26, a 31.56% increase from last year. In the budget for the financial year 2025-26, the government has allocated 12,952 crore to improve Delhi's public transport system. It has allocated 1,000 crore to improve the connectivity of Delhi with the NCR region.

**NEW DELHI:** Instances of malpractice brought to notice of Staff Selection Commission (SSC) during the first tier of the computer-based Combined Graduate Level Examination (CGLE) 2025 completed Friday include submission of fake documents to qualify as 'persons with benchmark disabilities' (PwBD) and attempts at remote access. Around 13.5 lakh candidates spread over 126 cities appeared in tier-1 of CGLE, which was conducted over 15 days that ended Friday. The



exam for one shift at a Mumbai centre was disrupted on Friday due to a fire incident. Some candidates who produced fake PwBD documents were apprehended.

Regarding detected attempts at remote access, an analysis is underway. "Such vigi-

lance to tackle attempts at remote takeover will continue by deploying relevant technical solutions," SSC said Friday. Candidates against whom there is clear evidence of malpractice will be debarred. However, where the evidence is insufficient

## Himachal Pradesh has become the fifth fully literate State

**Delhi:** Himachal Pradesh has become the fifth fully literate State/Union Territory after Tripura, Mizoram, Goa and Ladakh, Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan said highlighting that the achievement reaffirms the power of collective effort by the government, socie-



ty and volunteers. In a virtual address at an event to mark the International Literacy Day, Mr Pradhan reiterated Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of education as the foundation of civilisation and called for renewed commitment to building a literate, self-reliant and

developed India. The theme for this year's celebration was "Promoting Literacy in the Digital Era", highlighting the pivotal role of digital technology in enabling reading, writing, numeracy, and lifelong learning skills across the country.



# A program was held at Amar Shaheed Chandrashekhar Azad Park to commemorate the birth anniversary of Shaheed-e-Azam Bhagat Singh

## Homage

□ The Divisional Commissioner, District Magistrate, and other attendees paid homage to Amar Shaheed Bhagat Singh

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Soumya Agarwal, District Magistrate Manish Kumar Verma, and other guests present at the event first offered garlands and floral tributes to the portraits



of Amar Shaheed Bhagat Singh and Amar Shaheed Chandrashekhar Azad and paid homage to them. On this occasion, the police guard fired a 21-

Saumya Agarwal, while paying homage to the immortal martyr Bhagat Singh, said that we should all remember the sacrifices of the freedom fighters who laid down their lives to liberate the country. She said that every corner of Prayagraj holds historical significance and is connected to history. She emphasized that we must preserve this heritage. It is crucial for our new generation to learn about the contributions of our country's brave martyrs. To ensure that such programs continue, we must inspire more children to participate in such programs. On this occasion, he

expressed his pleasure at the patriotic program presented by the school children and thanked everyone present. On this occasion, District Magistrate Manish Kumar Verma, while paying his respectful homage to Sardar Bhagat Singh on his birthday, said, "I also salute all those brave martyrs who sacrificed their lives to liberate this country. That is why we all remember their sacrifice today." He said that Bhagat Singh's entire life was dedicated to the country and at a very young age, smilingly, he kissed the noose and died for the country.

## Review Meeting on Electoral Roll Revision: SDM Issues Strict Instructions to BLOs



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**Ghazipur :** A review meeting on the progress of the comprehensive survey for electoral roll revision was held on Saturday at the Muhammadabad Tehsil auditorium under the chairmanship of Sub-Divisional Magistrate (SDM) Dr. Harshita Tiwari.

During the meeting, the SDM gave strict instructions to all Booth Level Officers (BLOs) and supervisors, directing them to complete the door-to-door survey within the stipulated time frame without fail. She specifically emphasized the need to carefully examine duplicate names recorded in the de-duplication list and submit reports promptly on cases where voter names were found to be repeated or entries appeared suspicious. Dr. Tiwari further clarified that the names of eligible individuals must be

## Electoral

□ The SDM gave strict instructions to all Booth Level Officers

immediately added to the electoral roll, while the names of deceased or relocated voters should be removed in a timely manner. She laid special emphasis on expediting the overall process of inclusion and deletion of names. The SDM also instructed supervisors to regularly monitor the timeliness and quality of the work being done by each BLO to ensure that no errors remain in the electoral rolls. On this occasion, Block Development Officer (BDO) of Muhammadabad Yashwant K. Rao, ADO (Panchayat) Ashok Kumar, BDO Barachawar Seema, along with other officials and staff members, were present.

## Mission Shakti Campaign Phase-5: Special Event Organized on Thana Samadhan Diwas

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**Ghazipur :** At present, the Mission Shakti Campaign is being actively implemented across the district. In this series, under the jurisdiction of Thana Kotwali Muhammadabad, a special event was organized today on the occasion of Thana Samadhan Diwas as part of Mission Shakti Campaign Phase-5, operated by the Government of Uttar Pradesh, with the objective of strengthening the safety and self-reliance of women and girls. On this occasion, Sub-Divisional Magistrate Dr. Harshita



Tiwari and Circle Officer Sudhakar Pandey jointly listened to the problems and complaints of the people present and issued necessary directions for their redressal. Students of the Government Girls' School also participated in the program. They were made aware

of the functioning of the government and administration. As part of a special initiative, one student was seated alongside the officers and given the opportunity to understand the intricacies of administrative work. It is noteworthy that at present, the Mission Shakti Campaign is being carried out vigorously throughout the state, under which various programs are being organized continuously to promote the safety, respect, and self-reliance of women. All police personnel and officers of Thana Kotwali were also present on this occasion.

## An awareness campaign was launched under Mission Shakti Phase 5.0, under the theme "Empowered Women, Prosperous State."

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**Tharwai :** Women are not safe when they go out of their homes. They face problems like street thugs and domestic harassment. In light of this, the government has placed special emphasis on women's safety and dignity. Currently, every woman is exercising her



rights and freely venturing out and focusing on her education. In line with this, campaigns are being conducted under Mission Shakti Phase

5.0, with the theme "Empowered Women, Prosperous State." On Saturday, Mission Shakti launched an awareness campaign at Springer

Public School, a renowned educational institution near Gomti No. 40 in the Tharwai police station area. Children performed a melodious program. ACP Tharwai Chandrapal Singh, who was the chief guest on the occasion, was honored with a bouquet of flowers by school principal Neeraj Kumar Mishra. ACP Tharwai

Chandrapal Singh, placing special emphasis on Mission Shakti, raised awareness among women and girls, highlighting the importance of education. He advised them not to be deprived of their education and to pursue it. He also emphasized the importance of dialing 112 for emergency services if harassed by any hooli-

gans. He also explained the government's welfare schemes in detail. He also explained that if anyone obstructs girls' education, action will be taken upon receiving a complaint. He also emphasized the need for a complaint box in the school, stating that if any girl has a problem, she can drop a complaint letter in the box.

## Grand Closing Ceremony of Rajesh's Vision Solo Art

**Prayagraj.** Organized by Narayan Art Academy, Prayagraj, the five-day painting exhibition, "Rajesh's Vision," was held at the Gandhi Vithika North Central Zone Cultural

Center, Prayagraj. Chief Guest Dr. Zaheda Khanum, Director of Khanam Art Gallery, and Special Guest Eminent Artist Talat Mahmood, and Narayan Art Academy

Director and Exhibition Coordinator Senior Artist Ravindra Kushwaha, concluded the exhibition with a grand ceremony by unveiling a painting by the remarkable artist

Rajesh Nishad. Exhibition artist Rajesh Nishad welcomed the Chief Guest and Special Guests with a garland. Chief Guest Dr. Zaheda Khanum also purchased.

## An e-rickshaw headed for Chitrakoot collided with a loader, killing a mother and son



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**Mahevwaghat, Kaushambi.** An e-rickshaw carrying eight passengers from the West Sharira police station area, heading to Chitrakoot for darshan, collided with a loader pickup near Shahpur village in the Mahevwaghat police station area. Following the collision, the e-rickshaw overturned. All passengers were injured after falling to the ground. A mother and son died tragically on the spot. Six people were injured in the accident. Following the accident, people from the vicinity rushed to the scene and informed the police and ambulance. Police officers and the station staff arrived at the scene to begin rescue and relief operations. The injured were sent to the district hospital in

Manjhanpur for treatment, and the bodies of the deceased mother and son were taken into custody and sent for post-mortem. Upon receiving the information, family and relatives of the victims also arrived weeping at the scene, creating chaos. According to reports, eight people from Palra and Sengraha villages in the West Sharira police station area were traveling in an e-rickshaw to visit Chitrakoot's Kamtanath Swami temple at around 12:00 noon on Saturday. As soon as the e-rickshaw reached near Shahpur on Bairagipur West Sharira road of Mahewa Ghat police station area, the e-rickshaw collided with a loader pickup vehicle. After the accident, the e-rickshaw along with the passengers overturned on the road.

## The event marked the formal announcement and swearing-in of the new student officebearers

## Durgawati International School Hosts Grand Investiture Ceremony for 2025 -26

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(Tehsildar.Meja), Abhinax Upadhyay (Chauki Incharge, Meja), Anil Pandey (Chauki Incharge, Sirsa), and Tulsi Das Tiwari, former President of the Bar Association, advocate and social worker. Chairman Sir Mr. Shushil Kumar Mishra, accomplished politician of BJP, ady High Court delivered a warm welcome speech, followed by a melodious welcome song

by the school choir. The arrival of office bearers in full ceremonial attire during the march past was a moment of pride and inspiration for all. The ceremonial lighting of the lamp was done by Manager Dr. (Mrs) Swatantra Mishra, Psychologist which signified the school's commitment to knowledge and integrity, followed by the much-awaited Badge and

Sash Pinning Ceremony, where newly appointed student leaders were adorned with symbols of their responsibilities.

The oath-taking ceremony was done by the academic coordinator Mr. Ankur Singh instilled a sense of duty and purpose in the newly formed council. **Key Appointments for 2025-26: Head Boy:** Prateek Keshari (Class XI) **Head Girl:** Rishika Modanwal (Class IX) **Sports Captain:** Ayush Singh (Class XI) **Sports Vice Captain:** Dheeraj Yadav (Class XI) **OF INPOF INSTITUTIONS Cultural Club President:**

Ashutosh Mishra (Class X) **House Captains and Vice Captains:**

**Red House: Captain:** Arya Pandey (Class VIII) **Vice Captain:** Shristy Jaiswal (Class IX) **Blue House: Captain:** Om Pandey (Class XI) **Vice Captain:** Anya Keshari (Class IX) **Yellow House: Captain:** Aryan Patel (Class XI) **Vice Captain:** Anukriti Singh (Class X) **Green House: Captain:** Anushka Singh (Class X) **Vice Captain:** Anubha Yadav (Class VIII) The academic report was presented, highlighting the school's scholastic achievements over the past year. The Chief Guest's speech

motivated students to embrace their leadership roles with honesty, commitment, and enthusiasm. This was followed by inspiring addresses by Chauhan Sir (Teacher Representative), the Manager Ma'am, and the Chairman Sir. The ceremony concluded with a vote of thanks delivered by Vice Principal Mr. Srijan Mishra, followed by the retreat of the march past and distribution of refreshments. The school community looks forward to the positive contributions of the new student council in strengthening the institution's values and spirit in the upcoming academic session.



## Editorial

## Total capex outlay for 2024-25

The Union government's capital expenditure (capex) continues to be a cause for concern. Of course, the extent of its decline has reduced somewhat — from 35 per cent at the end of the first quarter of the current financial year to 15 per cent at the end of six months. But the latest number for the April-November 2024-25 period shows that the Union government's capex was still 12 per cent lower than what it was in the same period of 2023-24. Instead of aiming for the targeted 17 per cent growth to ~11.11 trillion in capex for 2024-25, the government will have to strive hard to at least cross the figure of ~9.48 trillion reached last year. What has led to this decline? A widely held view is that the seven-phase general elections, which began on April 19 and ended on June 1 last year, caused a slowdown in capex. But if that indeed is the reason, the decline in capex in the first quarter should have been reversed in the second quarter of 2024-25. And certainly, the first two months of the third quarter should have raised the trajectory of capex growth to a higher level. There has been some improvement, but a 12 per cent decline in the April-November 2024-25 period is no comfort. Look at the slightly different trajectory seen in the Union government's revenue expenditure growth during the same period. The Budget for 2024-25 had projected a rise of over 6 per cent to ~37.1 trillion in revenue expenditure. At the end of June 2024, the growth was just about 2 per cent, but it has been rising since then, reaching 4.2 per cent by the end of the first six months of 2024-25 and climbing even higher to 7.8 per cent during April-November 2024-25. So, if revenue expenditure has gained momentum, why has capex failed to follow suit? A close analysis of the government's capex numbers presents an interesting picture. Over 90 per cent of the Centre's total capex during 2024-25 was accounted for by just six sectors — roads, railways, defence, telecom, transfer to states and new schemes. Their share in total capex in 2023-24 was a little less at 87 per cent. But the 12 per cent decline in the first eight months of 2024-25 is primarily the result of a marked slowdown in only two of these six areas — roads and defence, which accounted for over 40 per cent of the total capex outlay for 2024-25. Capex on the construction of roads and highways fell by 16 per cent, while defence saw a decline of 15 per cent. This is serious and has worrying implications for both infrastructure and defence. The problem of slowing expenditure in these two areas should not have been difficult to fix. Either effective monitoring of spending is lacking, or there are serious problems with project execution, reflecting the poor expenditure-absorbing capacity of these two sectors. This is borne out by a relatively good performance of the Indian Railways, which accounts for over 22 per cent of this year's capex. At ~1.68 trillion, the Indian Railways' capex is just about 1 per cent lower than its spending during April-November 2023. With regard to the transfer of special assistance as loans to states for their capex and additional central assistance for their externally aided projects, the Union government's performance was slightly better. In the April-November 2024-25 period, these transfers rose by about 5 per cent, although much lower than the budgeted increase of 41 per cent.

In contrast, such transfers during the entire 2023-24 had risen sharply by about 24 per cent to ~1.15 trillion. It appears that these transfers will take a hit in the current year and for the first time since this initiative

**Extension** of the Production Linked Incentive (PLI) scheme for solar energy value chain, increased allocation towards PM Suryaghar Muft Bijlee Yojana, and greater thrust to distribution and transmission infrastructure are likely to be the key features of the upcoming Budget, as far as the energy sector is concerned. Sources said these proposals figured not only in the budget wish lists of the industry, but also in the respective recommendations from the ministries of power and renewable energy to the finance ministry, ahead of the Budget. "Given the success of PM Suryaghar scheme with almost 600,000 installations in just nine months since its launch, one could probably see additional allocation to target more households," said Ashwin Jacob, partner at Deloitte India. "As far as evacuation of power from offshore wind projects is concerned, we would want to see the VGF or budgetary support to continue or get enhanced," he added. "We hope to see a decisive increase in funding to accelerate the green energy transition. Priorities must include scaling renewable energy by addressing grid and transmission challenges, advancing Battery Energy Storage Systems (BESS) for grid stability and reliable power, doubling energy efficiency and digitalizing the energy sector through AI, smart meters, and data-driven solutions. Streamlining rooftop solar



programs with simplified approvals, financing, and monitoring is equally vital," said Saurabh Kumar, Vice President — India, Global Energy Alliance for People and Planet (GEAPP). Sharat Goyal, CEO of Impact Infracap also expects the government to remove restrictions on state wise caps on roof top capacity for net-metering for industrial establishments. "Further, adoption of batteries to substitute use of diesel generators for back-up power should receive incentives and policy support given their role in reducing dependence on imports," he said. While the government is increasingly working towards enhancing the country's RE capacity, the distribution and transmission infrastructure for its evacuation still needs to be strengthened. With the peak demand for power growing at a rate of 8-9% annually, the industry is looking forward to strengthening of climate

resilient infrastructure augmentation. "One can expect new allocations towards augmentation of power distribution infrastructure, especially in high density/ urban load centres, in view of the sharp rise in peak demand over the last few years," said Anujesh Dwivedi, Partner at Deloitte India. He noted that there may be some allocation towards supporting the preparatory work especially on the listing of power utilities, or some incentive mechanism for promoting initiatives on private sector participation or listing of utilities at the state level because they are increasingly being seen as the much needed structural reforms the sector needs. The industry is optimistic of a wider coverage of the Revamped Distribution Sector Scheme by including smart metering in infrastructure definition.

"This would direct more financing for a sector which seeks to bring down India's

transmission and distribution losses to 12% and improve recovery for state utilities," Goyal said. Goyal also noted that power transmission despite significant potential has not seen any notable monetisation events which could address the latent investor demand. "Government should announce a time-bound privatisation programme for assets owned by PGCIL," he said. The sector also sees the PLI scheme for solar value chain to continue with possible reduction in the duty structures for solar equipment. Jacob highlighted.

that there may be some rationalisation of duties on capital goods required for solar upstream manufacturing could be seen so that overall that industry can really take off. "We expect continuation and maybe broadening of the PLI support towards the solar module value chain. We already have a few interventions there, which are likely to be extended deeper," Dwivedi said. Similarly, on the battery manufacturing front, the industry expects localization of the value chain given competing countries have already advanced beyond India. In the green hydrogen segment, the industry believes the government may bring in hydrogen purchase for specific sectors like (green) steel. On the EV front, the industry seeks more support towards building public charging infrastructure given the anticipated

increase in the EV penetration. "Under the PM E-drive, we already have an allocation of about Rs 1,100 crores for FY26. Given that the final guidelines have not been released until now, I think even the allocation under FY25 may get added and FY26 budget may be increased as the country expects an acceleration in EV adoption in FY26," Dwivedi said. While the government has already launched a rooftop solar scheme and announced viability gap funding for offshore wind projects, industry players expect increased allocations, particularly towards solar and wind, along with higher budgetary capital expenditure in green hydrogen and battery storage infrastructure. Along with this, the sector also expects the government to increase its coverage of households under PM Suryaghar. "Under the Atmannirbhar Bhart scheme, there should be a scheme for the home grown EPCM companies to create indigenous technical capabilities in the country and reduce the foreign exchange outflow. We would also like to see a reduction on GST for engineering equipment and a reduction in import duties on chemicals in India," said Umesh Sood, CEO Simon India Ltd. Sunil Singhvi, President, Indian Electrical and Electronics Manufacturers Association noted that there is a need for strong policy support to fos-

## The rigging thereafter Post-poll fixing is not that easy

Post-poll fixing is not that easy, though there were no shortage of attempts. The most widely discussed case is that of Nawaz Sharif himself, whose win at the Lahore seat (NA-130) and the Mansehra seat are both highly suspicious. In the first, the numbers don't match on Form 47, which the Election Commission of Pakistan issues, and in the latter, a fact check seems to conclude that Nawaz bagged 80,382 votes to PTI's Gushtap Khan, who secured 105,249 votes and won the seat. There's more, which this author noticed while watching emerging numbers. In Multan, where PTI leader Shah Mehmood Qureshi's family has been winning for decades given his spiri-

tual background in the 'city of saints', his daughter Meher Bano, who was leading comfortably in the count (as reported), followed by a Pakistan People's Party candidate, suddenly lost to the son of former Prime Minister Yousaf Raza Gillani, who was trailing third—in another much delayed count. On the other hand, there were notable wins that were 'allowed'. That includes Latif Khosa of the PTI, who won against veteran Pakistan Muslim League leader Khwaja Asif. Khosa left the PPP in a huff and joined the PTI at a time when almost everyone was leaving it. Another win for Zartaj Gul in DI Khan, who had earlier a dramatic escape from being arrested for mul-

tiple cases and then granted protective bail.

Then were the charges (not allegations) by one of the most respected politicians, Jibran Nasir, who testified to a huge run for PTI, but that polling stations were making excuses by not giving the final form to polling agents. Then there are videos in Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, which are usually the most courted because they're pretty much open to 'selection', where voters are throwing out ballot boxes, not to mention terrorist attacks to prevent polling. All in all, the end verdict. The Pakistani army is terrible at this. The degree of blatant effort smacks either of desperation or inadequacy, or both.

## India's focus on its land borders has historically stemmed from past learnings from medieval-era

India's focus on its land borders has historically stemmed from past learnings from medieval-era invasions and in the current era, involved conflicts over land borders or around states contiguous to its boundaries. It is only in the last few decades that the role of the Indian Navy has gained prominence, as India aims to step up to a larger role in the global power hierarchy. In 2020, as India and China clashed in Galwan, several analysts pointed towards the need to use India's natural maritime advantages in its regional rivalry with China and in more effective power projection as an emerging and responsible global force. Keeping in mind India's ambitions in steering regional geopolitics, the role of the Indian Navy emerged from the shadows of India's arsenal to take on a more prominent role. Aside from developing its capabilities, India has recently played an active role in humanitarian and rescue missions, thus stamping its growing reputation as a responsible and capable maritime power. In the process, the navy has become a chief instrument in providing teeth to the country's aspirations outside the region. The Indian Navy is increasingly being

seen as a capable and confident naval power that can be relied upon to make the seas a safer zone. "I think the scale of India's naval deployment is quite unprecedented, and in some ways this represents the confidence the Indian Navy has in its own abilities and the requirement to be seen as a benevolent regional player that is not simply looking after its own interests but also the interests of the global common," says Harsh Pant of the Observer Research Foundation in New Delhi. As the war wages in Gaza and with the Yemen-based Houthi rebels attempting to broaden the war by mounting attacks against passing ships, the US has retaliated by striking the Houthis. The war occasionally threatens to spill over to other parts of the region aside from the environmental risks that sinking of ships pose to the coral reefs in the region. Amidst this, India has made its presence felt by deploying warships and surveillance east of the Red Sea against any attack by the Houthis and pirates. In this context, it must be said that the Indian naval presence has made it safe for the conduct of commercial trade in the region.

With the states around India possess-

ing limited capacity to use naval capabilities in the high seas, there has been a regular concern around the lack of law enforcement in the seas as pirates have continued to enjoy the largesse of terrorist groups, smuggling contraband, trafficking and attacking commercial vessels and affecting trade. "Maritime power is more than a matter of policing the commons or accumulating and projecting military force in the littorals. Sea power is equally about creating prosperity for the people and meeting the needs of national development," writes Abhijit Singh, Head of the Maritime Policy Initiative at the Observer Research Foundation. It was China that sent its naval ships to the Gulf of Aden two decades ago to ensure that commercial vessels were safe from pirates. Over the years, China has muscled its way into the Indian Ocean Region and in doing so, has raised concerns about its intent of colonial expansion. On the other hand, an expanding Indian role in protecting waters is building its credibility as a naval power that has both the capacity and the willingness to deploy naval assets to protect the sea lanes of communication, without attracting.

## Russia-Ukraine war: How Zelenskyy's sacking of his General shows brewing conflict in the Kyiv regime

The Ukrainian forces under General Zaluzhnyi had contained the initial Russian onslaught. Image courtesy: Reuters On 8 February, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy announced that he was removing General Valerii Zaluzhnyi from command of the military and promoting General Oleksandr Syrskiy, the Commander of the Ukrainian Ground Forces, to replace him. "I thanked him for two years of defence of Ukraine," President Zelenskyy said on social media, adding: "We also discussed who could be in the renewed

leadership of the Armed Forces of Ukraine." General Zaluzhnyi had gained enormous credit for spearheading the successful effort by Ukraine's forces to halt and then reverse Russia's initial attack launched on 24 February 2022. He was appointed Commander-in-Chief in July 2021, just half a year before Russia launched its all-out invasion. The Armed Forces of Ukraine, under his leadership, had succeeded in pushing back initial Russian advances near the capital, Kyiv, and then led successful counteroffensives later in 2022,

freeing parts of eastern and southern Ukraine. Both General Zaluzhnyi and General Syrskiy played key roles in those campaigns. The dismissal ended weeks of speculation about the fate of General Valery Zaluzhnyi, whose relationship with President Zelenskyy had deteriorated, and there were strong rumours regarding his exit.

## Brewing friction

The Ukrainian forces under General Zaluzhnyi had contained the initial Russian onslaught. That was a great achievement, because almost

everybody expected the Russian forces to steamroll their way across the plains of Ukraine. But lately, his record has been tarnished by the failure of last year's counteroffensive, which ran into well-prepared Russian defences. Last year's highly anticipated Ukrainian counteroffensive, using soldiers trained by NATO allies and Western weapons and equipment, reclaimed little territory, falling far short of expectations. General Zaluzhnyi and his American counterparts disagreed sharply over tactics.



## Hurt religious sentiments': Image of Jesus Christ replaced by Lord Krishna

**NEW DELHI:** An image of Jesus Christ inside a 'Vatican City-themed' Durga Puja pandal in Ranchi was replaced on Friday with that of Lord Krishna. The development came following objections raised by the Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP). The VHP alleged that the marquee, organised by R R Sporting Club at Ratu Road, was made to "hurt the religious sentiments of Hindus" and encourage conversion. The organisers had rejected these charges earlier on Thursday. The club's patron Vicky Yadav said the decision was taken by the puja committee members and not due to protests by any section, reports news agency PTL. "It was not due to the protest by a certain section but by our committee members to show all religions on the same platform," he said. He said that European-style statues placed outside the pandal were retained. Yadav claimed that the design aimed to promote peace and brotherhood.



## When oil prices drop every month, US stocks go up

**Delhi:** Wall Street indexes rose in choppy rises as in-line European markets ended flat, continuing their 10-week winning streak. The Federal Reserve is expected to decrease interest rates twice this year, according to U.S. inflation figures. Crude prices fell 1%, the first monthly decline since November, as markets braced for fresh levies from Washington and crude exports from Iraq's Kurdistan region.

Narendra Modi visiting churches abroad during official trips. He said the idea was inspired by India's multi-faith culture and that the club promotes Sanatan Dharma.

According to a White House source, President Volodymyr Zelenskyy of Ukraine will depart the Oval Office early Friday after a contentious meeting with Trump. Following reports of falling yearly inflation and sluggish consumer spending in the latest statistics tracked by the Federal Reserve, U.S. Treasury rates hit multi-month lows. A drop of 2.93 points, or 0.34%, was recorded by MSCI's global stock index.

Narendra Modi visiting churches abroad during official trips. He said the idea was inspired by India's multi-faith culture and that the club promotes Sanatan Dharma.

## HC rules deportation illegal: Centre told to bring back families from Bangladesh

**Calcutta**

Calcutta High Court on Friday struck down Centre's decision to deport two women and their families from Birbhum, West Bengal, to Bangladesh.

The court said the deportation was illegal and ordered that all six people, including three children, be brought back to India within a month. The court also dismissed the Centre's request for a temporary stay on



the order. Petitions were filed by family members of Sonali Bibi and Sweety Bibi, both from Paikar in Murarai, Birbhum. The women said their husbands and children had been living and working in Delhi for over 20 years as daily wage

earners. On June 18, Delhi Police detained them on suspicion of being Bangladeshi nationals. Nine days later, on June 27, they were deported across the border. Reports said they were later arrested by the Bangladesh police.

## Gadkari says Mercedes-Benz wants to export 'made in India' cars

**Delhi:** According to Nitin Gadkari, India's minister of road transport and highways, Mercedes-Benz has told the government that it plans to increase production at its plant outside of Pune in order to fulfill its goal of exporting "Made in India" automobiles to

markets worldwide. The chairman of Mercedes, according to Gadkari, informed him that the production quality in India is strong, which has led the company to consider increasing manufacturing in the nation to fulfill the demands of worldwide

markets. "The chairman of Mercedes was telling me that they are going to look at increasing the productivity of Mercedes in India... and they want to export Mercedes from here to (markets) all over the world," Gadkari said. at the Auto Retail

## Ladakh DGP explains why Sonam Wangchuk was arrested

**NEW DELHI:** Around 5,000-6,000 protesters poured into Leh's streets this Wednesday, their anger spilling over into arson and stone-pelting. Government buildings were damaged, a BJP office was attacked, and vehicles set ablaze as the agitation over Ladakh's demands for statehood turned violent. Security forces responded with tear gas, baton charges, and even firing, leaving 17 CRPF personnel injured and more than 70 civilians hurt. In the aftermath of the chaos, Ladakh's director



general of police SD Singh Jamwal defended the arrest of climate activist Sonam Wangchuk, saying his protest platform provided space for violence to erupt. Jamwal said investigators were probing a possible Pakistan link, pointing to

Wangchuk's prior visits across the border and alleged interactions with Islamabad-based officials. "Planning and coordination was done beforehand," the DGP claimed, insisting the arrest was necessary to prevent further escalation.

## India, UAE set \$100 bn non-oil trade goal by 2030

**Delhi :** India and the United Arab Emirates are targeting \$100 billion in trade by 2030, excluding oil and precious metals, India's commerce ministry said in a statement. The target was decided during a meeting between Union commerce and industry minister Piyush Goyal and the UAE's minister of foreign trade, Dr. Thani bin Ahmed Al Zeyoudi, in New Delhi last week. They were reviewing bilateral trade between the two countries under the Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) that came into effect in 2022. Both leaders stressed deeper cooperation in emerging sectors renewable energy.

## Adani will spend 70,000 crore in Maha; govt. inks five MoUs for 1.08 lakh

**Delhi:** Adani Enterprises Limited would invest 70,000 crore in Nagpur, Maharashtra, to establish a coal gasification and downstream derivatives complex. This MoU was signed with the state government. Project is projected to enhance state energy and industrial output and create 30,000 jobs. The Maharashtra government signed five MoUs worth 1.08 lakh crore. Adani's investment tops. The com-



pany develops high-growth enterprises and spins them off as independent companies in mining, infrastructure (airports, roads, data centres, water management), solar manufacturing, defence, and edible oils. Adani Enterprises

would invest ₹70,000 crore in the Integrated Surface Coal Gasification and Downstream Derivatives Project in Linga, Kamleshwar, Nagpur to provide next-generation energy solutions for Maharashtra.

## BMW accident case: Delhi court grants bail to Gaganpreet Kaur

**NEW DELHI:** Delhi's Patiala court on Saturday granted bail to accused Gaganpreet Kaur in connection BMW accident case which killed Navjot Singh, deputy secretary in the ministry of finance on September 14. The court granted bail to Kaur on a bond of Rs 1 lakh and two sureties of the same amount. The court also directed Gaganpreet Kaur to surrender her passport. Before pronouncing the bail order, the Court said that an ambulance reached there within seconds, and it remained there for 30 seconds. But did not take the injured to the hospital. Even though they did not have any emergency assignment and were going to the Army Base Hospital, the nearest hospital. "What should be done with this



## Govt allows companies to display revised MRP on old unsold packs

**Delhi:** As a comfort to packaged goods makers who were waiting for labelling and packaging clarity to figure out how to pass the GST gains on to customers, the government has authorized them to display revised MRPs on unsold old packets of items. But before the end of the

year, businesses must sell off their old inventory. The consumer affairs ministry announced on Tuesday that until December 31 or until supplies run out, whichever comes first, makers, packers, or importers of pre-packaged goods can show amended MRPs. The government has

## EU to Give a Hand to India's Seafood Exports Following US Tariff

**Delhi:** After suffering under the US's harsh tariff regime, Indian seafood exporters are about to receive a vital lifeline in the EU. Shrimp exports, which were struck particularly hard by Washington's recent 50% tariff on Indian goods, could see an immediate 20%



increase, according to the Commerce Ministry. The European Union (EU) cleared

102 new Indian fishing operations for export this month, effectively eliminating all pending permissions, marking a significant milestone. With the listings in place, which encompass aquaculture units, sea-caught processing factories, and cold storage facilities,

all of India's main seafood exporters can now begin shipping to the EU. India sent \$1.1 billion worth of seafood to the European Union in FY24, making it the country's second-biggest seafood export market. The ministry anticipates that

## Record 24 judges picked for Allahabad HC in one go

**NEW DELHI:** A record 24 judges have been appointed to Allahabad high court in one order notified by law ministry Friday, bringing down the vacancies of judges in the country's largest high court from 74 to 50 against a sanctioned strength of 160 judges. Ten of the new appointees are advocates who have been elevated as judges while 14 are judicial officers promoted on HC bench. The law ministry also notified appointment of two judges for Himachal Pradesh HC and three for Karnataka HC among 29 judges appointed on Friday. The new appointees in



Allahabad HC include advocates Vivek Saran, Vivek Kumar Singh, Garima Prashad, Sudhanshu Chauhan, Abdhesh Chaudhary, Swarupama Chaturvedi, Siddharth Nandan, Kunal Ravi Singh, Indrajeet Shukla and Satya Veer Singh. The 14 judicial officers

appointed as judges in Allahabad HC include Ajay Kumar-II, Chawan Prakash, Divesh Chandra Samant, Prashant Mishra-I, Tarun Saxena, Rajeev Bharti, Padam Narain Mishra, Lakshmi Kant Shukla, Jai Prakash Tiwari, Devendra Singh-I, Sanjiv Kumar.

## Amazon eyes bumper sales

**Delhi:** Amazon is preparing for an even greater surge in festive sales this year as a result of the reorganization of GST slabs, which would lower the prices of many consumer goods. This will increase spending by the salaried class, many of whom look for online offers when purchasing products, especially for expensive ones. Outside of ethnic clothing, which is the norm for festivals, the most purchased items during festivals tend to be smartphones, gadgets,

and durables. We anticipate a greater increase in holiday sales compared to previous year. Regardless, consumers typically wait for sales to begin before making large purchases; however, this time around, the trend has quickened thanks to the GST cuts. Customers can expect to save a ton of money this holiday season because to merchants' enticing bargains and a drop in GST on millions of products, according to Saurabh Srivastava, VP of categories at Amazon India.



## Army issues tender for highly mobile air defence system

**NEW DELHI:** India kicked off the acquisition process for three highly mobile regiments of indigenous quick reaction surface-to-air missile (QRSAM) systems that can detect and destroy aircraft, attack helicopters, drones, rockets and missiles at ranges of over 30km, at a cost of about Rs 30,000 crore. The Army this week issued the tender or 'request for proposal' for the three regiments of the system named "Anant Shastra". QRSAM offers 360° radar, jamming shield, mobile launchers. Anant Shastra has been developed by DRDO and will be co-produced by defence PSUs Bharat Electronics



and Bharat Dynamics. The move comes after the intense cross-border hostilities with Pakistan from May 7 to 10 under Operation Sindoor. The Army Air Defence (AAD) has projected a requirement of 11 such QRSAM regiments in the long term, each with nine firing units, while the IAF at present is looking to induct three QRSAM squadrons, as was first reported by TOI. With missile launchers, 360-degree radars, automated command and control

systems and all-weather tracking systems mounted on high-mobility 8x8 vehicles, the QRSAM systems are designed to provide air defence cover to tanks, infantry combat vehicles and artillery guns. "With their search, track and fire at short halt capabilities, the QRSAM systems will be able to operate on the move with mechanised columns across plains, deserts and mountains both on the western (Pakistan) and northern (China) fronts.

## Putin praises India's highest economic growth rate in world

**MOSCOW:** Russian President Vladimir Putin held a telephone conversation with Prime Minister Narendra Modi, reaffirming the strong and time-tested nature of relations between Moscow and New Delhi last week. Putin disclosed details of the exchange during a meeting with members of the Russian govt, according to the official website of the Kremlin. Putin underlined the stability of Russian-Indian relations, describing them as "based on a national consensus." He went on to commend India's achievements in governance and economic growth under Modi's leadership. "Under the leadership of Prime Minister



Modi, India is pursuing a completely independent, sovereign policy and, most importantly, is achieving very good results in the economic sphere. India is demonstrating the highest economic growth rates among the world's major economies," Putin said. As reported by TV BRICS, the call came shortly after Putin sent a congratulatory telegram to Modi on his 75th birth-

day. In his message, he emphasised the Indian leader's personal contribution to strengthening bilateral ties. "You (Narendra Modi) are making a great personal contribution to strengthening the special privileged strategic partnership between our countries and developing mutually beneficial Russian-Indian cooperation in various areas," Putin noted.

## Health and wealth benefit from flexible work hours

**Delhi:** The Economic Survey supports allowing manufacturers to average legally capped working hours over three weeks or longer rather than week-by-week. Industry captains want larger hours. It claims that agile regulations will assist management satisfy production

demands and grow."New Labour Laws are an improvement. With flexible legislation and competent implementation, firms may develop and create more jobs. "They protect labor rights and boost wages," it stated. The Survey complained that labor laws like the

Factories Act (1948) limit working hours to 48 per week, whereas other nations "allow these caps to be averaged over multiple days and weeks". It said India's working hour laws impede manufacturers from satisfying demand and competing globally.

## AAP slams Rahul's silence on activist's arrest

**NEW DELHI:** The Aam Aadmi Party and Congress crossed swords on Saturday, with AAP questioning the silence of Rahul Gandhi over the detention of climate activist Sonam Wangchuk under the stringent NSA and Congress hitting back by saying AAP was on the verge of collapse. In a post on X, AAP said, "India's renowned social worker and scientist Sonam Wangchuk has been imprisoned by Modi's dictatorial govt on a false charge of sedition, and the country's so-called opposition leader has maintained silence on the issue." The Arvind Kejriwal-headed party further said, "Rahul Gandhi, who asks how many of our aircraft were lost in Operation Sindoor, why is he silent on Sonam Wangchuk



now? Is Rahul Gandhi a BJP agent."Hitting back, Congress social media head Supriya Shrinate said in a post on X, "Arvind Kejriwal ji, your party is on the verge of collapse. Do you know why? Because the foundation of your party was laid by the RSS from behind the scenes. You managed to

seize power by levelling fabricated accusations against the Congress, but the very entity that created you has now swallowed you up." Meanwhile, Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge on Saturday condemned Centre's "pathetic handling" of the situation and arrest of Wangchuk.

## Foreign insurers gain ownership via 100% FDI

**Delhi:** 100% FDI will attract new capital, as multinationals can now invest without worrying about control or Indian partners. The capital gains tax rate of 12% applies to ULIP proceeds, which do not benefit from tax exemptions, instead of the higher marginal tax rate of 30%. Crop cover reinsurance is exempt from service tax, and the threshold for tax deduction at source on insurance commission has risen from Rs 15,000 to Rs 20,000. M Nagraju, financial services secretary, said the FDI relaxation was one of the suggested insurance measures.

## BJP objects to Kaaba song at Bengal pandal in CM presence

**NEW DELHI:** BJP Saturday objected to the singing of a song with reference to Kaaba and Madinah at a Durga pandal in West Bengal in the presence of CM Mamata Banerjee, slamming it as a "deep shadow of extremist and appeasement politics" over Hindu traditions. BJP spokesperson Sudhanshu Trivedi also raised the issue of Booker prize-winning author Banu Mushtaq inaugurating the Dasara festival in Mysuru recently, and wondered if it was all a part of INDIA bloc's



efforts to "eradicate" Sanatan Dharma. Trivedi asked critics of the waqf law brought by Modi govt, who have objected to the provision on the presence of non-Muslims in managing waqf assets, if they consider the rendition of a song glorifying another religion in the Durga pandal as "sweet, secular music". There is nothing

wrong in eulogising a religion but doubts grow as it is being done in a Durga pandal in the presence of the state's CM, he told reporters. BJP's IT department head and its co-incharge for West Bengal, Amit Malviya, also slammed Banerjee for the choice of song in the pandal.

## Public infrastructure spending rises, but private sector participation falls

**Delhi:** The 2024-25 Economic Survey delivered to Parliament found that India still struggles with infrastructure development despite government efforts. The union government's capital investment on major infrastructure sectors grew 38.8% from FY20 to FY24, although private sector participation in core areas remained low, according to the survey. "India needs a continued step-up of infrastructure investment over the next two decades to sustain a high rate of growth," the research says. The National Monetisation Pipeline (NMP) program has met its FY22-24 objective of 4.30 lakh crore with transactions totaling 3.86 lakh crore. In Q1 FY25, average monthly capital spend-



### The National Critical Mineral Mission gets 16,300 crore from the cabinet

**Delhi :**The Union Cabinet, led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, launched the National Critical Mineral Mission (NCMM) with a 16,300 crore expenditure and a projected 18,000 crore investment from PSUs and other businesses. "Several crucial decisions have created new scientific and technology prospects for our children, future generations, and the economy. Minister told a Cabinet briefing that PM Modi the National Critical Minerals Mission today.

ing dropped to 0.60 lakh crore from 0.66 lakh crore in July-November 2024. Railway network expan-

sion remained constant at 2,000 kilometers, with 17 Vande Bharat train pairs and 228 carriages added.

## Price pressure caps senior citizen health premium hikes at 10%

**As medicare** policy rates skyrocket for seniors over 60, Irdai has ordered insurers not to raise senior people's health premiums by more than 10% without approval. Before canceling senior health coverage, insurers must get regulator clearance. As healthcare prices rise, insurers are



advised to standardize hospital empanelment and negoti-

ate package rates like the government's PM Jan Arogya Yojana. Irdai reported a large increase in prices for various health insurance policies for subscribers over 60. Premium rates depend on projected claims, administrative expenditures, and acquisition costs, the regulator said. Private

insurance doesn't standardize hospitalization expenses, unlike PMJAY, which negotiates consistent package rates, which drives these rises. Seniors have reported virtually doubling their costs when entering a higher age category during an insurer's pricing change.

## Ladakh unrest: Sonam arrest sparks outcry

**SRINAGAR:** Authorities in Ladakh allowed Saturday a four-hour curfew relaxation in Leh amid public outrage over the arrest of climate activist Sonam Wangchuk and police defending the use of force that left four people dead and about 80 wounded during clashes on Sept 24. Magsaysay Award winner Wangchuk was held Friday under NSA and shifted to Jodhpur central jail in Rajasthan, a prison known for housing gangsters, terrorists, film stars, and convicts like Asaram. Sources said he has been placed in a sepa-



rate cell, kept in complete isolation, and attended to directly by jail staff. Authorities refused to disclose reasons for his transfer to the high-security desert facility. Police accused Wangchuk of making "provocative" remarks

during his Sept 9-24 hunger strike for Sixth Schedule status and statehood for Ladakh, and of derailing talks with govt. The curfew was clamped after violence during a shutdown called by Leh Apex Youth, part of the Leh Apex Body — an

### Norms to stop annoying calls and surrogate advertisements next month

**Delhi:** Thirteen businesses, including significant producers of alcohol, tobacco, and paan masala, have received notifications from the Central Consumer Protection Authority (CCPA) for using surrogate advertising. The dishonest practice of using the

same brand name to promote products that are prohibited from direct advertising is known as "surrogate advertising." Pralhad Joshi, the union minister of consumer affairs, stated that the CCPA is creating regulations to control the issue.

countered: "Security forces fired in self-defence to stop the attack... CRPF deployment was not pre-planned. They helped save lives as some protesters tried to set security quarters.



## Draft bill to strengthen statistical institute unveiled

**NEW DELHI:** The central govt has released a draft bill which aims to strengthen the Indian Statistical Institute by putting in place a revamped governance structure, making the board a leaner and more empowered body for policy, administrative and financial matters. As the institute approaches its centenary in 2031, the vision is to make it not only one of the best in country but one of the foremost institutes in the world. An official statement said the proposed draft bill is founded upon guiding principles of 'Excellence: promoting academic rigour, global competitiveness, and innovation'. The draft bill also aims to establish clear institutional structures, streamline decision-making, uphold integrity in leadership and administration, and



grant the institute greater decision-making powers in its day-to-day functioning and planning. The draft bill also aims to ensure transparency, oversight, and responsiveness to stakeholders, according to the statement released by statistics ministry. "The proposed reforms are aimed at unlocking the institute's full potential in 21st century. By aligning it with legal and governance framework of other institutions of national importance, govt intends to strengthen its capacity to deliver world-class education,,"

### Hindu University establishes public policy institute

**Delhi:** Hindu College at Delhi University has set itself apart from other Indian universities by creating a public policy lab. Officials have stated that the goal is to include real-world policymaking into both undergraduate and graduate programs. With the goal of democratizing and decentralizing the process of knowledge generation, the lab is designed to serve as a hub for policy simulations, applied research, and field-based insights. This will bring

## 'Swachh Shehar Jodi' launched to help 200 cities manage solid waste

**NEW DELHI:** In an initiative aimed at helping around 200 cities effectively manage and process their municipal solid waste, govt on Saturday launched 'Swachh Shehar Jodi' (SSJ) programme. The initiative officially pairs mentor cities with mentee cities, allowing the latter to directly learn from and replicate best practices of well-performing cities. Rolling out the first such structured mentorship and collaborative action programme, involving 72



mentor cities and 200 mentee cities, housing and urban affairs minister Manohar Lal Khattar said the aim is to ensure that "every city benefits from the collective knowledge pool of Swachh Bharat Mission". The

minister said, "Swachh Shehar Jodi is not just a ceremonial partnership. It is one of the largest structured, time-bound and outcome-driven mentorship arrangements in urban waste management sector."

## Assess UV technology in sewage treatment, NGT directs IIT Delhi

**Delhi :** National Green Tribunal (NGT) asked IIT Delhi to examine the effectiveness of UV technology in sewage treatment and directed the DPCC to take punitive action against 14 STPs, which, as per a report, failed to meet the standards.

A tribunal

bench, headed by NGT chairperson Justice Prakash Shrivastava, in an order took notice of a report by Delhi Jal Board (DJB).

The report stated that of 37 STPs in the city, seven were yet to be installed with a disinfection system, four had not installed any sys-

tem, while among others, 15 had deployed UV and 11 had chlorination-based disinfection systems to treat bacteria in sewage before discharging the treated water into drains. For those yet to be installed, the process was initiated or tenders awarded.

## Delhi dominates India's top college list

**Delhi :** Delhi University's Hindu College has topped the National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF) 2025 list, followed by Miranda House, Hans Raj, Kirori Mal and St Stephen's, emerging as the top five colleges in the country. Delhi University (DU) also recorded its best-ever performance in the Universities category, rising to fifth position from last year's sixth. It advanced to 12th place in the Research Institutions list and retained the 15th spot overall. Vice Chancellor Yogesh Singh called the achievement "a landmark moment", crediting the collective efforts of faculty, students, alumni and staff. Hindu College Principal Anju Srivastava said the recognition reflected the college's focus on holistic education. "We have created an ecosystem where students get opportunities for research, innovation and practical exposure. Under NEP reforms, they are pursuing interests beyond the classroom with flexibility and industry linkages," she told. Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) secured the second spot among universities. Vice Chancellor Santishree Dhulipudi Pandit said the ranking was a matter of great pride, highlighting JNU's model of "excellence with equity and innovation with inclusion".

## CBSE and NCB to Raise Drug Abuse Awareness

**Delhi :** Together, the NCB and the Central Board of Secondary Education are working to eliminate drug use from schools and raise public awareness about the dangers of substance misuse. The CBSE board headquarters hosted an agreement signing event. The CBSE announced in an official statement that the two organizations have reached an agreement that will allow them to work together on various projects. These projects will include community outreach, counselling services for students and parents, e-modules on drug prevention, capacity-building workshops for teachers and counsellors, and quarterly awareness programs.

## VHP to govt over AIMPLB's stir against waqf law

**NEW DELHI:** Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP) urged on Saturday Centre and state govt to stay alert against possible violence during nationwide protests announced by All India Muslim Personal Law Board (AIMPLB) and other Muslim bodies against Waqf Amendment Act. VHP said it was "strange" that while challenging the law in court, the organisations were simultaneously launching street agitations instead of waiting for Supreme Court's verdict. VHP president Alok Kumar cited recent incidents of violence during Milad-un-Nabi processions to caution that fresh mobilisations could "disrupt law and order, invite



conflicts and promote violence." He called upon society, particularly Hindus, to remain "vigilant and prepared" in coordination with local authorities.

According to Kumar, AIMPLB's four-page "road map" for the second phase of its 'Save Waqf Campaign' calls for a nationwide bandh on Oct 3, when Muslims

have been asked to shut shops and offices between 8am and 2pm, barring medical establishments. The plan also includes marches towards Rashtrapati Bhavan in Delhi, Raj Bhavans in state capitals, and mass courting of arrests. "This is being promoted as Bharat Bandh on social media," Kumar said. VHP also appealed to SC.

### Companies in the electronics industry are the most welcoming to LGBTQIA+ apprentices.

**Delhi :** A whopping 71% of businesses in the electronics sector have shown a great desire to hire LGBTQIA+ apprentices, making it one of the most welcoming sectors for this demographic. Overall, 64 percent of Indian companies are welcoming of LGBTQIA+ apprentices, so this is just one more example of a larger trend. The January-March TeamLease Degree Apprenticeship Outlook Report emphasizes this change. The majority of electronics and telecom firms (71%) are eager to hire LGBTQIA+ apprentices.

## Supreme Court asks Centre, NCERT on transgender-inclusive

**Delhi :The** Supreme Court notified NCERT, the Union government, and six states to respond to a plea to integrate transgender inclusive sex education in school curricula. Chief Justice of India (CJI) Bhushan R Gavai and Justice K Vinod Chandran sent notices to the Centre, NCERT, and Maharashtra, Punjab, Karnataka, and Tamil Nadu on the case brought by 16-year-old Delhi student Kaavya Mukherjee Saha.

Class 12 student from Vasant Valley School in Delhi filed the case, com-



plaining about the lack of transgender-inclusive Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) in NCERT and SCERT textbooks. The student wants binding gender sensitisation and transgender-inclusive CSE rules in all schools nationwide. Senior advocate Gopal Sankaranarayanan, representing Saha,

told the bench that NCERT had recently admitted in a Right to Information (RTI) reply that it had "no information" on integrating CSE into school education, despite a 2024 Supreme Court order. Saha's petition claimed that NCERT and most state councils of educational research and training (SCERTs) have failed to include structured or examinable content on gender identity, gender diversity, and sex and gender despite Sections 2(d) and 13 of the Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act, 2019.

## Pradhan Mantri Kalyan Yojana relies on NCERT

**Delhi :** Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan voiced his faith in NCERT's ability to push educational reforms and bring about a paradigm change in teaching and learning, despite the fact that the council has been criticized for its textbook updates. In his support of NCERT's initiatives to implement the reforms proposed in NE, Pradhan compared it to a "Gyan Kumbh" that has had a profound impact on the lives of many Indians. At its 65th Foundation Day, Pradhan emphasized that NCERT needs to take the lead in transforming India's education system by adopting a reform-oriented and tech-driven role. It has come a long way since its start, especially in terms of education's role in nation-building. He emphasized that



the organization needed to "don a new avatar" that was reform-oriented, tech-driven, and focused on best practices in order to embrace its role as a change leader. With unwavering conviction, Pradhan declared that NCERT will "bring a paradigm shift in teaching and learning and play a key role in actualising the goal of Samridhh Bharat." "Confident that NCERT will continue shaping critical and creative thinking in the 'Amrit Peedhi'," stated the professor.

### DU teachers raise issues of unoccupied reserved seats

**Delhi:** Teachers from Delhi University brought up issues with professor recruitment in front of a Parliamentary Committee, claiming that the SC/ST populations were marginalized on a systematic level. Committee on the Welfare of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. They paid a visit to DU and had in-depth interviews with eighty people, including faculty, stu-

## IIT Madras, IISc B'loru, IIT Bombay top 3 in NIRF 2025

**Delhi :** The Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Madras has topped the National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF) 2025 for the seventh consecutive year, and also emerged the top engineering college in India for the 10th year since the rankings were introduced in 2016. Like last year, the Indian Institute of Science (IISc) Bengaluru is ranked second in the overall ranking, and IIT Bombay third. The first non-engineering institution in the Top 10 of the overall ranking is the All India Institute of Medical Sciences, Delhi at eighth (seventh last year); the IITs at Delhi, Kanpur, and



Roorkee (which swapped places with AIIMS) hold the fourth, fifth, sixth and seventh places. Jawaharlal Nehru University (New Delhi) and Banaras Hindu University (Varanasi) have moved up to the ninth and tenth spots, respectively. Union education minister Dharmendra Pradhan and minister of state for education Sukanta Majumdar

announced the overall rankings and rankings across 17 categories for higher education institutions (HEIs).

The categories include engineering, management, medicine, university, law, research, and agriculture. There is also a category just for colleges. A total of 14,163 higher education institutions participated in the 10th edition of NIRF Rankings.

## BCCI to hold AGM on Sept 28 to elect president, secretary, other office bearers

**Delhi :** The Board of Control for Cricket in India will conduct elections for the post of all its office-bearers - president, vice-president, secretary, joint secretary and treasurer, in Mumbai on September 28. In a notice, seen by to all the state associations, BCCI secretary Devajit Saikia stated, "Notice is hereby given that the 94th Annual General Meeting (hereinafter referred to as "AGM") of the Board of Control for Cricket in India ("BCCI"), which will be held at 11.30 AM on September 28, 2025, at BCCI headquarters at Mumbai, to transact the business as per the agenda provided below." "The minutes of the 93rd Annual General Meeting held on September 29, 2024, the minutes of the Special General Meeting held on January 1, 2025, and the minutes of the Special General Meeting held 2025, are attached herewith. Rest of the agenda papers will follow shortly. You are kindly requested to attend the meeting," Saikia concluded.

## NMC asks medical colleges to deploy PG students in flood-affected areas

**Delhi :** The National Medical Commission (NMC) has asked all medical colleges across the country to deploy post-graduate medical students in flood-affected areas. The deployment would be a part of the district residency programme, according to its recent directive. The directive states: "In view of recent floods/disaster-like situations in northern states/UTs, there is an urgent requirement for healthcare professionals as part of the ongoing relief measures.



## Low affordability hits car demand: Kia India MD

**NEW DELHI:** With car prices going up between 35-50% over the past 3-4 years, owing to safety and emissions mandates, affording a vehicle has become difficult for mass consumers and sales are likely to see a moderate growth of 3-4% in the coming year, Kia India MD Gwanggu Lee said on Thursday.

To generate demand, Lee suggests, govt can look at reducing taxes on cars from the current levels where mid-sized cars and bigger ones have a GST rate of over 45%, while smaller ones (under 4-meters) are taxed at over 28%.

As the company prepares to launch affordable EVs as well as other mainstream cars, Lee said that the increase in car prices came at a time when incomes for many middle-class users did not go up at the same pace. As part of its strategy to perk up demand in the volume-laden entry SUV market, Kia drove in the all-new Syros mini offroader, which will stand besides its Sonet



model, also an under 4-meter car.

Lee said that the boxy Syros, which will come with a 1-litre petrol engine and a 1.5-litre diesel, will also be offered with an electric version over the next one year. The company has developed the new vehicle after taking into account the customer preferences here, something it also did during the development of the Seltos and Sonet SUVs and the Carens MPV. But while the company expects to generate healthy volumes from the new model, whose price will be revealed at a later date, the Syros also comes in a segment that is crowded.

### Amazon's cloud unit bets on new models

**LAS VEGAS:** Amazon's cloud unit AWS unveiled new AI models and chips to take on rivals like Microsoft, which has had an edge due to its ties with ChatGPT-maker OpenAI. Exactly two years ago, the launch of ChatGPT forced tech giants to redraw plans, wiping out billions from market caps of companies that were slow to adapt pioneered renting out data infrastructure, was seen to be losing grip on its cloud dominance over the past two years.

## Government plans law to ban unregulated lending

**NEW DELHI:** The Centre has circulated a draft legislation to ban lending by unregulated entities, including by platforms, with violators facing imprisonment of up to seven years. Lenders, who harass and use unlawful means for recovery, face up to 10 years in jail, with those promoting such lending facing a term of up to five years.

The move comes amid several complaints of borrowers taking loans from digital lending platforms, including those operated by Chinese entities, at exorbitant rates. And these platforms often harass cus-



tomers by blackmailing them in case of defaults. There have been instances of borrowers committing suicides due to harassment, prompting the Centre and the regulator to step in. The plan is to notify certain activities as "unregulated lending" with a

"competent authority" tasked with regulating the segment and also maintain a database on lenders. The authority headed by a secretary-rank officer will have powers to provisionally attach the accounts of the lender and call for data.

## Private Equity and Venture Capital investments surge 156% year-on-year

**NEW DELHI:** Private Equity and Venture Capitalist funds invested \$4 billion in November, according to a joint report by IVCA and EY released on Wednesday. This shows a 156 per cent year-on-year increase while a 15 per cent decline from the

previous month. The month recorded 87 transactions, up 47 per cent from 59 deals in November 2023. "While 2024 had started off on a strong note, geopolitical tensions, uncertainty over US elections outcome, and inflation weighed on the markets,

as did the bid-ask spread between seller expectations and buyer valuations," EY's Vivek Soni said. He further said that pure-play PE/VC investments showed significant growth, reaching \$3.5 billion in November, representing a 297 per cent rise.

## Sensex tanks nearly 1,000 pts on US Fed's cautious stance

**MUMBAI:** Hawkish statements from the US central bank chief on Wednesday night led to a global sell-off in stocks that also weighed on investor sentiment on Dalal Street. Sensex opened weak, remained in the red through the session and closed 964 points down at 79,218 points.

This was the first time since Nov 29 that the index closed below the psychologically important 80K mark, BSE data showed.



In the last four sessions the sensex has lost a little over 2,900 points, translating to 3.6%.

On the NSE, the nifty too followed a similar path and closed 247 points lower at 23,952 points. This was nifty's first close below the 24K mark since Nov 28, NSE data showed. In Thursday's session selling was across the board with foreign funds again leading. At close, net selling by foreign portfolio investors (FPIs) was Rs 4,225 crore. In comparison, domestic funds were net buyers at Rs 3,943 crore, data from BSE showed. According to Prashanth Tapse, Senior VP (Research), Mehta Equities, domestic markets tanked tracking negative global cues as benchmark indices slipped below their psychological levels. There was broad-based selling as the US Fed's hawkish stance raised concerns over further rate cuts next year. "Rising US bond yields have pushed global currencies, including the rupee to new lows while renewed foreign fund outflows from domestic equities could prompt investors to turn risk averse," he said. So far in the month, foreign funds are still a net buyer. But this came mainly on the back of their investments in IPOs, market players said. Combined data from NSDL and BSE showed that in Dec.

## SME IPO mania: Infrastructure company's Rs 10cr offer gets Rs 14k crore bids

**MUMBAI:** The IPO mania in the SME space reached a new high on Thursday. NACDAC Infrastructure, a Ghaziabad-based construction company eyeing to raise Rs 10 crore from the market, got bids totalling Rs 14,386 crore, a subscription of 1,976 times (excluding the Rs 2.7 crore anchor part). This made the IPO the most subscribed one in India's capital market history, data from primary market analytics company Chittorgarh showed. Bidding data on BSE showed that the non-institutional (high net worth investors') part of the offer was subscribed 2,635 times while the retail part was subscribed 2,504 times. In comparison, the portion reserved



**"Cardholders will enjoy welcome privileges of complimentary doorstep visa services, lounge access, and concierge support through OneVasco with visa fee waivers via Atlys, a luxury stay gift card via EaseMyTrip, discounts and event access through The Quorum Club"**

for institutional investors like mutual funds, insurance companies, foreign funds etc, was subscribed a decent 236 times. The company is set to list on BSE's SME platform.

### KKR invests in Behrouz Biryani parent

**MUMBAI:** Private equity giant KKR has invested in cloud kitchen startup Rebel Foods, which owns brands like Behrouz Biryani and Faasos.

The deal amount was not disclosed but it is understood to be a secondary transaction conducted at a lower valuation of around \$800 million. KKR said it will back the firm's expansion.

**Nuvama** recommends holding Ambuja Cements, anticipating growth after its merger with Shanghai Industries and Panna Cement. Kotak advises reducing Indiamart Intermesh holdings due to high churn. Yes Securities initiates coverage on Hyundai Motor India with a buy rating, citing the company's evolving tech landscape. JP Morgan gives Swiggy an overweight rating, expecting growth in food delivery and quick commerce. Stocks on brokerages' radar for December 20



Ambuja Cements with a target price of Rs 667 (+19%). The company is merging Shanghai Industries and Panna Cement with itself for operational efficiencies and to improve efficiencies. Analysts feel this decision to streamline the structure of the company is a welcome move. Kotak Institutional Equities has given a 'reduce'

reco on Indiamart Intermesh with a target price of Rs 2,350 (-0.5%). Analysts believe that there is no easy fix for the high churn that the company is facing that is leading to lower collection. Yes Securities has initiated coverage of Hyundai Motor India with a 'buy' rating and a target price of Rs 2,194 (+23%).

## The timeless taste of tradition: Mattanchere spice

**As the festive season draws near,** one name resonates with connoisseurs of fine cakes – Mattanchere Spice Matured Plum Cake. A true embodiment of time-honoured tradition and meticulous craftsmanship, this cake is more than a treat; it is a rich legacy passed down through generations. The Mattanchere Spice Matured Plum Cake is



available globally. Customers in India can order through Amazon, while those in the UAE can find it via Fresh to Home, in Singapore available in Dolly aunty. With worldwide shipping, cake lovers in Europe and North America, New Zealand can also enjoy this traditional holiday delight. The Mattanchere Spice Matured Plum Cake has its roots in centuries-old recipes, perfected with care and expertise. Its distinctive flavor comes from the thoughtful maturation process, where an abundance

### 'No impact of suspension of MFN status'

**NEW DELHI:** Swiss major Nestle said suspension of MFN (most favoured nation) status given to India by Switzerland will have no impact on the company. Switzerland recently suspended MFN status under the Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement. A Nestle India spokesperson said: "The matter is not a Nestle specific issue."

of hand-picked fruits and spices.

## 'Indian tech sector to grow to \$350 billion from \$254 billion by 2030'

**BENGALURU:** India's tech industry is poised to expand to \$350 billion by 2030, up from \$254 billion in the 2023-24 financial year, Nasscom's president Rajesh Nambiar told TOI. The sector's expansion reflects a CAGR of 6.4%. "We will work towards getting to about a \$350-billion mark by 2030. Of course, the growth rate came down significantly in the last two years. But even with all of that, we are seeing a lot of green shoots. I believe that we are in a pivotal moment. The emergence of GenAI has transformed the global landscape. Our focus must transition from AI PoCs to achieving measurable return on investments that we can put together on the board," said Nambiar. He succeeds his predecessor Debjani Ghosh, who completed her term in Nov. Prior to that,



**"Nasscom initially forecasted the tech sector's revenues of \$350 billion for FY26, driven by demand for advanced technologies such as cloud computing and analytics. However, the IT industry body had to reset these growth"**

Nambiar was chairman and MD of Cognizant India. Nasscom initially forecasted the tech sector's revenues of \$350 billion for FY26, driven by demand for advanced technologies such as cloud computing and analytics. However, the IT industry body had to reset these growth estimates, extending the timeline by five years to achieve the targeted figures. The Indian IT

services sector faces a significant slowdown in the last fiscal, with minimal expansion in both revenue and employment. IT exports grew a modest 3.3% in constant currency, reaching \$199 billion in FY24. This represents a substantial decline from the previous year's 11.4% growth, marking one of the sector's lowest growth rates.

## \$11.3 billion: Startup funding sees marginal rise in 2024

**MUMBAI:** After two years of funding slump, investments into India's startups are seeing some revival. Investors infused about \$11.3 billion into startups this year, a slight improvement from funding worth \$10.7 billion recorded last year, data sourced from market research firm Tracxn showed. In the coming year, companies are expected to see a sizeable amount of funding cheques but the deployment of capital will be cautious, keeping in line with the trend seen for quite sometime now and late-stage deals (over \$100 million) will take time to close, venture capital (VC) firms said. Not to say that there's a lack of capital-VC firms raised an estimated \$2.5 billion in funding in 2024 alone compared to less than \$2 billion in 2023 and some of them plan to raise new funds in 2025; but investors want to ensure they make the right bets. "As investors, we are very clear that we need to see a company's path to profitability, we need to see good governance structures, assess firms' go-to market strategies deeply and figure out founders' ability to deliver. When you diligence all of these, it takes some time and investing capital takes longer," Padmaja Ruparel, co-founder at IAN (Indian Angel Network) Group told. Quick commerce player Zepto led startup funding this year having bagged \$1.4 billion in investments alone amid a surge in investor appetite for rapid deliveries. A clutch of companies including PhysicsWallah, Rebel Foods, Eruditus and Purple also managed to raise funD.

