

'Jolly LLB 3' races ahead at box office, collects Rs 32.50 cr in two days



Israel kills 34 people in Gaza say health officials ahead of UN meeting

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PM Modi's Swadeshi pitch as GST 'Bachat Utsav' begins today

■ Modi said a 'GST bachat utsav' will begin from the first day of Navratri, and coupled with the income tax exemption, it will be a "double bonanza" for most people.

New Delhi
A day before reduced GST rates came into effect, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday made a strong pitch for promoting 'swadeshi' goods and asserted that the next generation GST reforms will accelerate India's growth story, increase ease of doing business and attract more investors.

In his address to the nation, Modi said a 'GST bachat utsav (savings festival)' will begin from the first day of Navratri, and coupled with the income tax exemption, it will be a "double bonanza" for most of the people.

PM Modi stressed



PM addressing the gathering at 'Samudra se Samridhhi' programme on the sidelines of the inauguration and laying the foundation stone of multiple development projects at Bhavnagar, in Gujarat.

all states will be equal stakeholders in the development race and urged them to give pace to manufacturing with 'Atmanirbhar Bharat'

and swadeshi campaigns in mind.

"On the first day of Navratri, the country is going to take an important and big step for Atmanirbhar Bharat. With the sunrise tomorrow, the next generation GST reforms will come into effect. A 'GST bachat utsav (savings festival)' will begin tomorrow.

"You will be able to buy things you like more easily. The poor, middle class, neo middle class, youths, farmers, women, traders and shopkeepers will benefit from this," he said.

In this season of festivals, everyone's happiness will increase, Modi said.

CONTD ON PAGE-2

EC sets Sept 30 deadline for voter list cleanup prep ahead of SIR



New Delhi
The Election Commission has asked its state election officers to be ready for the SIR by September 30, in an indication that the poll authority could launch the voter list cleanup exercise as early as October-November.

According to officials, at a conference of state chief electoral officers (CEOs) in Delhi earlier this month, the EC top brass asked them to be ready for the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) rollout in the next 10 to 15 days.

But for the sake of greater clarity, the deadline of September 30 was set.

The CEOs have been told to keep voter lists of their states, published after the last SIR, ready.

CONTD ON PAGE-2

UK, Canada, Australia recognise Palestine state



London
British Prime Minister Keir Starmer confirmed Sunday that the UK is formally recognising a Palestinian state despite vociferous opposition from the US and Israel.

His announcement follows those from Canada and Australia.

Starmer said the move is intended "to revive the hope of peace for the Palestinians and Israelis."

Though the move is largely symbolic, it is a historic moment as the UK arguably laid the groundwork for the creation of the Israeli state when it was in control of what was then known as Palestine in 1917.

The announcement was widely anticipated after Starmer said in July that the UK would recognise a Palestinian state unless Israel agreed to a ceasefire in Gaza, allowed the UN to bring in aid and took other steps toward long-term peace.

The UK is not alone in recognising a Palestinian state. More than 140 countries have already taken that step and more are expected to do so at the UN General Assembly this week, including France.

The UK's recognition of a Palestinian state comes just days after a state visit from US President Donald Trump, during which he voiced his disapproval of the plan.

"I have a disagreement with the prime minister on that score," Trump said.

Critics, including the US and the Israeli government, which has shown no interest in a two-state solution, have condemned the plans, saying it rewards Hamas and terrorism. As well as arguing that recognition is immoral, critics argue that it's an empty gesture given that the Palestinian people are divided into two territories — the West Bank and Gaza — with no recognised international capital. Agency

Ahead of polls, Nitish govt announces series of schemes

Patna
Ahead of the assembly polls, the National Democratic Alliance government in Bihar has announced a series of schemes, prompting the opposition to claim that after remaining in power for 20 years, all that Chief Minister Nitish Kumar could offer was a copy of promises made by the



INDIA bloc.

Among several promises of the opposition was 200 units of free electricity, which the longest serving CM has sought to neutralise by announcing, notwith-

standing his earlier anti-freebies stands, that consumers will not have to pay for 125 units in a month.

Kumar on Sunday announced that over 10,000 'Vikas Mitras', who work in villages to make SC and ST people aware of government schemes and convert them to beneficiaries, would be given a one-

time allowance of Rs 25,000 each for purchasing tablets so that they can do their work effectively.

Their transportation allowance will also be increased from Rs 1,900 to Rs 2,500 per month, and their stationary allowance will be hiked from Rs 900 to Rs 1,500 per month.

Agency

संस्कृतम् चक्रम्
दिल्ली सरकार

समस्त दिल्लीवासियों को
शारदीय नवरात्रि की
हार्दिक शुभकामनाएं

नवरात्रि के पहले दिन से
GST में कटौती की सौगात।

जीएसटी बचत उत्सव

दिल्ली में पहली बार
पारदर्शी और सुलभ व्यवस्था

सिंगल विंडो अगुवत: रामलीला व दुर्गा पूजा समितियों को सभी अनुमति अब सिर्फ जिला मुख्यालय से।

1200 यूनिट सुपुत्र विजली: प्रतिदिन हर समिति को 1200 यूनिट तक बिजली नि:शुल्क; कनेक्शन पर सिर्फ 25% डिपॉजिट।

पारदर्शी व्यवस्था: कैबिनेट मंत्रियों की अध्यक्षता में उच्च स्तरीय समितियाँ, समस्याओं का त्वरित समाधान।

स्वच्छता व सुरक्षा: रैफिक प्रबंधन, एंबुलेंस, मोबाइल टॉयलेट दमकल वाहन और पुलिस तैनाती सुनिश्चित।

संस्कृति का उत्सव – आस्था का सम्मान
हमारी दिल्ली की नई पहचान

33 kv power substation to be set up in Dadri

Noida: A 33 kv power substation will be constructed at Badalpur in Dadri, Greater Noida, at a cost of ₹14 crore. The electricity department has made this decision in light of the growing population and the needs of the area.

This power substation will directly benefit the residents of the Achheja and Sadpur areas. Currently, these areas face a serious power supply problem. During the summer season, power outages often last for two days, disrupting people's daily routines.

The situation became so dire that local residents protested several times. They staged a sit-in at the substation, locking the main gate, and holding officials hostage. The tender process for the new substation has now been completed, and construction will begin soon.

Woman found hanging at home in east Delhi suicide suspected

New Delhi: A 32-year-old woman was found hanging at her residence in east Delhi's Ghazipur with police suspecting it to be a case of suicide, officials said on Sunday.

According to police, a PCR call was received on September 17 about a suspected suicide at Rajbir Colony in Ghazipur Extension.

A police team rushed to the spot and found the woman hanging from a ceiling fan with a saree inside a locked room. "The door was forcibly opened and the woman was immediately taken to the Lal Bahadur Shastri Hospital, where doctors declared her dead," a senior police officer said.

Man stabbed to death in Bawana clash one apprehended

New Delhi: A 27-year-old man was stabbed to death while another was injured during a clash between two groups at the JJ Colony in the Bawana area, police said on Sunday.

The incident occurred at around 9 pm on Saturday near Dholak Wali Masjid in E-block of the colony, where the two groups confronted each other over a dispute related to work, they said. During the clash, the victim, identified as Mohammad Raja alias Badsha (27), sustained multiple stab injuries on his head and waist.

"He was rushed to Maharishi Valmiki Hospital in Pooth, where doctors declared him brought dead. Another man, Mohammad Akbar (23), also suffered injuries in the clash and was admitted to the same hospital. His condition is reported to be stable," Deputy Commissioner of Police (Outnorth) Harehwar Swami said in a statement.

Following the incident, a police team reached the spot and collected evidence. Raja's body was later shifted to BJRM Hospital for post-mortem examination.

Chief Minister Rekha Gupta declares India's future bright

Staff Reporter
New Delhi:

Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta on Sunday expressed optimism for India's future during the Viksit Bharat Art Camp—Seva Pakhwada' event in Mehrauli.

She stated that India is on the path to becoming a global leader and emphasized the importance of preserving historical monuments, aligning this effort with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision.

The art camp involved around 1,000 children and 75 young artists who showcased their creativity, and it was a collaborative effort between the Delhi Government's Department of Art, Culture, and Language and the Sahitya Kala Parishad.

CM Gupta highlighted the event as a celebration of India's culture and art, coinciding with Prime Minister Modi's birthday. She



CM Rekha Gupta declares India's future bright

mentioned that four recently restored monuments were dedicated during the program. The Chief Minister underlined the importance of preserving heritage alongside national development and noted that 14 monuments are currently being preserved for future generations.

Gupta shared her personal memories associated with the Mehrauli area, reiterating the government's commitment to beautifying historical sites in accordance with the Prime Minister's vision. She praised the artwork created by the children and emphasized

At the 'Viksit Bharat Art Camp - Seva Pakhwada' in Mehrauli, CM Witnesses Creativity of Artists and Children

that these pieces reflect the future of India. Gupta encouraged collective efforts to advance both the nation and Delhi, commending the Ministry of Art, Culture, and Language for organizing the event.

Minister of Art, Culture, and Language, Kapil Mishra, stated that the Mehrauli Archaeological Park has undergone significant restoration and is evolving into a notable tourist attraction. He mentioned ongoing projects to restore 14 historical monuments, four of which have already been completed, showcasing the evolution of these sites through an exhibition.

Noida Authority to construct new road in sector 145

Noida: The Noida Authority is developing sector 145, a residential area. Parks, and Language for organizing the event.

The road construction work will begin by the end of next month. This road will facilitate commuters. Noida Authority officials stated that a tender for the road was issued last month. The technical bids for this tender have been opened. The financial bids are now to be opened.

The Noida Authority is developing sector 145, a residential area. Parks, and Language for organizing the event.

According to the Noida Authority officials concerned, financial bids will be opened within the next week. The agency offering the lowest bid will be awarded the responsibility for building the road. This process will be completed within 15-20 days of the opening of the financial bids.

The construction of this 18-kilometer-long road will cost approximately ₹24 crore. It is expected that once work begins, the road will be completed within the next four to five months. The land in sector 145 where the authority is now planning to build a road and carry out other work was previously occupied by people. In June of this year, the authority took major action and removed encroachments from approximately 31 hectare of land.

There is a proposal to give 5 percent land to over 2,200 farmers here. They have been demanding five percent land in exchange for land acquisition for a long time. The case related to this land was decided in favour of the Noida Authority.

The construction of the drain will cost approximately ₹63 crore. Sewage pumping stations will be built. The officials concerned said that in addition to the road and drain, a sewage pumping station and line are also proposed. This work will cost ₹9.85 crore.

Gupta govt's "MLA on Wheels" plan is a gimmick, says Delhi Congress

Staff Reporter
New Delhi:

Delhi Pradesh Congress Committee president Devender Yadav here on Sunday said that "MLA on Wheels" plan is a latest gimmick launched by CM Rekha Gupta after failing to address the many pressing issues affecting the people over the past seven months.

The Delhi government launched the "MLA on Wheels—Rekha Sarkar Aapke Dvaar"—a mobile office that will travel across the 70 assembly segments to "resolve public grievances". However, Yadav said that the vehicle flagged off from Old Panka Road in the Janakpuri assembly constituency, represented by Delhi home and education minister Ashish Sood, was a mere publicity stunt.

Yadav said that it was ironic that the vehicle was launched from minister Sood's constituency in Janakpuri where residents have been battling with contaminated drinking water issue for the past many months, with the NGT overseeing the issue in Janakpuri's A-1



Block where sewage has been found mixed with drinking water. He said that the residents welfare association of the colony had filed a petition with the NGT in March, complaining about contaminated drinking water, but neither CM Rekha Gupta nor local MLA and minister Sood solved this problem for over the past six months.

The BJP had promised to solve the many issues affecting the capital as soon as it came to power, but over the past seven months, people have been fed only with promises and not solutions for their problems by the Gupta government, and the launch of the mobile office will make no difference in solving their problems, he further said. Yadav said that BJP had promised ₹2500 per month to every woman head of a family in its election manifesto, and even PM Narendra Modi had promised that this promise will be implemented in the very first cabinet meeting of the new BJP government, but the poor women are still waiting for this amount.

Delhi Govt. Launches study on "Smog-Eating" coatings to tackle pollution

Diksha
New Delhi:

The Delhi Government has rolled out a 24x7, year-round environmental action plan to strengthen the city's fight against air pollution through technology-driven interventions and scientific validation.

In a recent directive, Environment Minister Manjinder Singh Sirsa instructed the Environment Department to conduct a focused study on "smog-eating" photocatalytic coatings. These coatings, which can be applied on roads, concrete, and tiles, are designed to neutralise harmful pollutants such as nitrogen dioxide and hydrocarbons in areas where citizens live, travel, and work.

"Delhi will evaluate and adopt the best of proven photocatalytic technologies, prioritising safety, sustainability and measurable results to deliver cleaner air faster," said Sirsa. He stressed that the fight against pollution is personal and directly linked to the health of children, seniors, and



workers. The Environment Department has been tasked with selecting a reputed scientific partner within 30 days, conducting field trials on real city stretches, and releasing monthly updates. A final report will be delivered within six months. Based on the findings, the government will consider scaling up the technology across busy corridors, markets, and public spaces if it proves effective and affordable.

Sirsa also highlighted the role of the Delhi Innovators Challenge in driving people-powered solutions. The challenge has attracted students, startups, and experts with fresh ideas

for tackling pollution. "Bring your best ideas—Delhi will test them, fund what works, and take it citywide so every family can breathe easier," he said.

The government has committed to transparency and accountability at every step, keeping citizens at the heart of its pollution-control strategy.

3 injured in stabbing during robbery attempt in Amar Colony; 2 held

New Delhi:

Three people, including a law student and a boxer, were injured when they were stabbed during a robbery attempt in southeast Delhi's Amar Colony area, an official said on Sunday.

The incident occurred at around 10.15 PM on Saturday when a PCR call alerted police that some men had tried to rob a person and attempted a robbery with a knife. "The caller also mentioned that two accused had been caught by locals," Deputy Commissioner of Police (South-east) Hemant Tiwari said in a statement.

According to police, the complainant, identified as Mithoo, was returning home when he was pushed from behind near Sheela Mata Mandir. "Four people surrounded him, restrained him, and one man robbed his mobile phone. On his cries for help, local residents in-



3 injured in Amar Colony robbery stabbing, 2 arrested - File Photo

tervened. "In the scuffle, one of the accused attacked with a knife, injuring Mithoo and two others — 20-year-old Bhavishya alias Nakul, a first-year LLB student, and Taksh, a practising boxer," said the DCP.

The officer said the injured were immediately rushed to AIIMS Trauma Centre for treatment. Mithoo sustained lacerated wounds and abrasions, Nakul suffered a stitched lacerated wound on his thigh, while Taksh had a lacerated wound on his buttock. "The public managed to overpower two of the accused — identified as Akaash alias Baccha (21), a resident of Gadhvi

lage with a previous theft case against him, and a 16-year-old juvenile from Okhla. Both were handed over to the police," said the DCP.

While the two accused were nabbed on the spot, two of their associates managed to flee. Efforts are being made to trace and apprehend them, he said.

The police said Akaash has been formally arrested, while procedures under the Juvenile Justice Act are being followed for the apprehended minor. Both have undergone medical examination.

A case was registered at the Amar Colony police station under relevant provisions of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita. The matter is under investigation, and raids are being conducted to trace the remaining accused, police said.

Police verified the background details of the injured. Nakul had played football at the school level in Mussoorie in Uttarakhand, said the DCP.

Boy 4 bludgeoned with stone by teenage neighbour in central Delhi

New Delhi:

A four-year-old boy was allegedly kidnapped and bludgeoned with a stone by a teenage neighbour out of revenge in central Delhi's Anand Parbat area, police said.

The boy had gone missing on Friday, when after returning home from tuition, he went out to play in the Baljeet Nagar area near his house, police said.

A missing person case was filed at the Anand Parbat Police Station at the boy's mother's complaint.

"During the investigation, CCTV footage from the locality was analysed, and the boy was seen with a neighbour, later identified as a 15-year-old school dropout. He was apprehended from his residence," an officer said.

Upon interrogation, the teenager disclosed that both families lived in the same premises on rent and there had been quarrels between them, police said.

On Friday afternoon, he had taken his land-



Teen neighbour kills 4-year-old boy with stone in Central Delhi - File Photo

lord's motorcycle and abandoned it in another locality. When the victim's mother informed the landlord, his father scolded and beat him. He decided to kill the younger boy to avenge the beating, the officer said.

Around 6.30 pm, the juvenile lured the child to a secluded space in Ramjans Park, where he pushed him from a cliff, about 30 feet high. He then struck the child on the head with a stone. The boy did not die and

was found in critical condition. He was rushed to Lady Hardinge Medical College Hospital and later shifted to Kalawati Saran Hospital, where he remained in the ICU for two days and then died, the officer said.

A tense atmosphere prevails in the area since the killing. Scores of locals gathered when the boy's father carried his body to Anand Parbat Police Station and shouted for justice.

Amrit Bharat Express: India's People's Train Driving a New Era of Connectivity

Indian Railways has been also known as the lifeline of the country. It accommodates more than 2.3 crore passengers a day and it is neither just a transport system but a socio-economic support system. The Amrit Bharat Express has become a game-changer in this large ecosystem - a low-cost, modern and inclusive venture that is changing the way Indians travel. Although it addresses the hopes of the whole country, its transformational effects are especially notable in Bihar, a government where the destinies of its inhabitants were always largely dependent on the connection via rail.

Amrit Bharat is the real people train unlike premium trains which just serve a small number of people. The trains are non-AC superfast trains and are designed to be offered at a price close to that of traditional mail and express trains, but offering the comfort of the modern day. A sleeper ticket of Patna-Delhi Amrit Bharat only runs around 560, which is not very expensive compared to normal trains but the ride is jerk free, seats are better, bio-vacuum toilets, LED lighting and even mobile charging point. They have such features as fire detection systems, semi-automatic couplers and onboard condition monitoring without sacrificing on the affordable aspect.

Amrit Bharat trains are growing rapidly at a nation level. There are already over a dozen routes in operation, and the Railways are already planning to introduce as many as 200 of such traintsets within the next few years. They are all manufactured in India as part of the Make in India program, and are not only a breakthrough in passenger service, but also an industrial one. Individual rakes of the trains cost approximately 65 crore to manufacture, whereas the train manufactures employment in the factories, supply chains, and maintenance facilities as well as enhancing India self-reliance in terms of railway technology.

In no other state is the social and economic effect more evident than in Bihar. Amrit Bharat services have opened the first 14 services and 10 of them directly relate to Bihar - a key point which brings out the centrality of the state in this new connectivity era. Darbhanga, Patna, Saharsa, Motihari, and Sitamarhi as well as Gaya now have direct services to Delhi, Mumbai, Lucknow, Amritsar and even Bengaluru.



By OM PRAKASH



IRTS (Rtd), Ex PCCM NR and Ex PCCM WCR.

ru. The new 3,129-km Joghani-Erode Amrit Bharat Express also connects the north-eastern extremity of Bihar with the south, Tamil Nadu, in one weekly service, binding two ends of the country together. To students, employees and families, this translates to less time of travelling, easier commuting, and a sure

bridge to the opportunities in metropolitan India.

The fiscal spillovers are high. Rural supply chains are reinforced by small traders and farmers sending their goods to big city markets within a short time because these trains were equipped with parcel vans. Better connectivity contributes to local business in and around the stations, such as rickshaw pullers and tea sellers, hotels and handicraft traders. These advantages are further enhanced by the Amrit Bharat Station Scheme by the government which is modernizing over 1300 stations (98 in Bihar) to provide modern marketplaces where artisans could market their goods directly to travelers (Madhubani paintings or the local sweets).

Tourism, too, is set for a boost. Bihar has been plagued by inaccessibility due to its heritage treasures such as Bodhi Gaya, Nalanda and Patna Sahib among others. It is now much easier to visit the state with direct cheap trains to Gaya, Sitamarhi, and Patna allowing pilgrims and other international visitors to explore the state. On the contrary, Bihar will have an easier time traveling to such tourist destinations as the Golden Temple in Amritsar or Haridwar in Uttarakhand, which contributes to the further culture exchange and inter-state tourism.

Finally, Amrit Bharat is not merely a steel on wheels, but indicative of the inclusive development. It is changing the way millions of people move by bringing modern technology and cost-effectiveness together and is driving the expansion of industries, tourism, and livelihoods. It is a move towards the future-ready railways to India; it is a new chapter where the connectivity will be the driving force of aspiration, opportunity, and pride to Bihar.

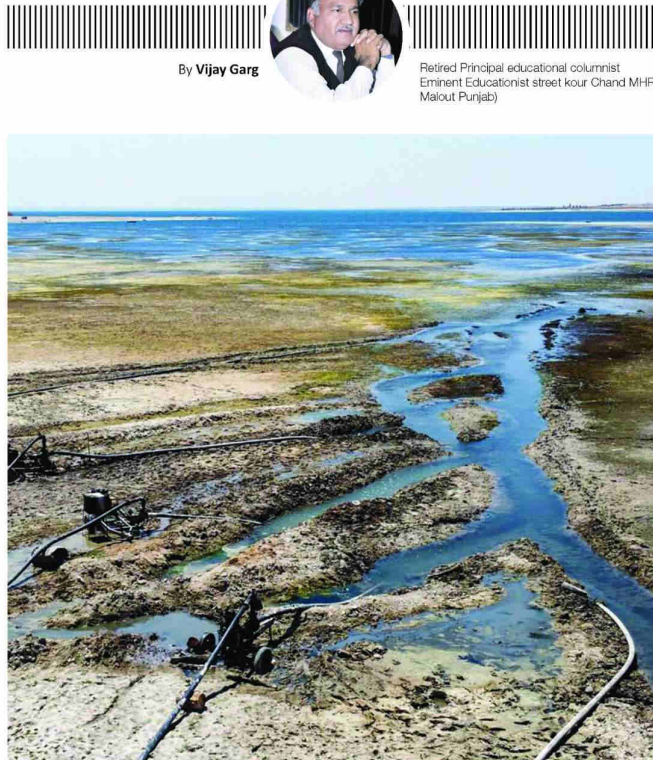
Encroachment crisis threatens ecology, food and water security

The forest resources of India have always been a victim of encroachments ever since India attained freedom in 1947. Because of land hunger and involvement of politicians and social activists, the encroachments on forests have been given different colour and explanation by different groups. It is a well-known fact that India's food and water security is dependent on a healthy forest resource. The forest land encroachment has evolved into a chronic environmental and socio-political crisis, eroding biodiversity, exacerbating climate vulnerability, and displacing tribal and rural poor communities. Driven by population pressures, economic demands, and weak institutional frameworks, this issue has been significantly worsened by political actions - ranging from populist policies to regulatory dilutions - that prioritise short-term gains over sustainable conservation.

As on March 2024, according to the report submitted by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change in the National Green Tribunal, a figure of over 1.3 million hectares of forest land remains encroached across 25 States and Union Territories. These States and UTs are Andaman & Nicobar Islands, Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Chandigarh, Chhattisgarh, Dadra & Nagar Haveli and Daman & Diu, Kerala, Lakshadweep, Maharashtra, Odisha, Puducherry, Punjab, Tamil Nadu, Tripura, Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, Jharkhand, Sikkim, Madhya Pradesh, Mizoram and Manipur. States and UTs still to submit the data and details on forest encroachment are Bihar, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh and Rajasthan, Telangana, West Bengal, Nagaland, Delhi, Jammu and Kashmir, and Ladakh. Assam (3,620.9 sq km) and Madhya Pradesh (5,460.9 sq km) are worst affected, followed by Karnataka and Maharashtra. This represents a continuation of trends where India has lost significant forest cover, including 18,200 hectares of natural forest in 2024 alone, according to Global Forest Watch.

There have historically been various reasons for the encroachments on forests. Driven by land hunger, many communities cleared the forest for farming and housing, especially in tribal areas. Large chunks of forests are legally diverted for developmental purposes like dams, irrigation, roads, railway and mining projects, and other developmental works. Urban expansion and illegal mining have also taken a great toll on the primary forests. Since 2014, over 1.73 lakh hectares of forest land have been approved for diversion for non-forestry purposes in India under the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980, between 1 April 2014 and 31 March 2024, as per the figures presented in Parliament. Illegal felling of trees by villagers, smugglers and poachers is also a very serious problem.

Forest reservation after the establishment of the Indian Forest Department in 1864 has always been a subject of debate and discussion, even among the British. Baden Powell, the British civil servant who also worked as Conservator of Forests in Punjab, had always espoused the cause of totalitarian control of forests due to ecological and economic reasons. Compared to him, the German forester Dietrich Brandis who was appointed as Inspector General of Forests from 1864 to 1883, adopted a pro-people line and



By Vijay Garg



Retired Principal educational columnist Eminent Educationist street kour Chand MHR Malout Punjab)

because of him, while the reservation of forests was done, two-thirds of forests were left for the people's use.

However, in many places there were clashes, but by and large the scientific management of forests ensured better fire protection and soil and moisture conservation. The 1894 forest policy of the colonial regime subordinated forestry to agriculture and large tracts of forests were diverted for agriculture for food production, but it also gave more control to the State for commercial exploitation, especially for expansion of the railway network. A lot of protection forests

were created for soil, moisture, and water conservation which boosted agriculture.

However, this policy went topsy-turvy because of the First World War during 1914 to 1918 when the British Navy needed timbers. The British tried to improve things by creating forestry training institutions and the Forest Research Institute, but the two World Wars heavily impacted the sound management of forests. After independence, the ex-princely states incorporated as reserve and protected forests were mostly degraded and also the cause of friction in many places. This friction continued, on the one hand, by the activists who claimed that the reservation process

was bulldozed on people by the government.

This helped promote encroachments under political patronage until the Forest Conservation Act was enacted in 1980 after the 42nd Constitutional Amendment Bill brought forest and wildlife as current subjects.

Forest and its biodiversity cannot speak for itself. Whatever the history, it is a fact that forests and forests are treated as road blockers by most of the political parties who rule, as the concept of conservation clashes with the interests of voters and priorities for development. The situation becomes grim as the mineral, tribal and forest maps overlap. Even after enactment of the Forest Rights Act in 2006, the encroachment problem has not subsided; rather, the degraded forests have increased to 28 million hectares.

The FSI report of 2023 clearly shows that more than 50 per cent of the natural forests have deficient regeneration. When this writer was IGF in the Ministry, only 3.5 lakh hectares of land were under encroachment before 1980 when the government agreed to regularise these encroachments, and around 13 lakh hectares were after 1980 in 2001. Now under the Forest Rights Act (FRA) 2006, the Ministry of Tribal Affairs website states that 59,75,983.51 acres of forests under individual rights have been vested to 23,86,670 families. Similarly, 181,98,863.89 acres of forests were vested as community rights to 1,21,705 communities. Naturally, the Act, at the behest of Gram Sabha, distributed and bartered away forests which were not encroached. The process is still going on despite nineteen years of enactment of the Act.

The Act is becoming a political tool to garner votes in the name of issuing land parcels to tribal families. There are reports of heavy encroachments all over and unless a last date is fixed for application submission, the medicine for correcting historical injustice is gradually becoming a 'poison' for the forests and the people dependent on forests.

It is high time that the RSS affiliate Vanvasi Kalyan Ashram, which has been single-mindedly supporting this Act, realises and gives leadership so that genuine tribals do not suffer in the long term and must root for a deadline for filing applications. The Ministry of Tribal Affairs is oblivious of the serious repercussions that are unfolding for the country's ecological, food, and water security.

The mandarins in government must not fall prey to concerted attempts by foreign-funded NGOs to criticise the forest departments unfairly for meeting their vested agenda. The community rights can only become productive if they are made part of a sound working plan prescription. Planting trees is simple, but manning forests needs professional inputs. Indian forests are crying hoarse to stop further legal or illegal degradation of forests. Nature has started taking revenge, as witnessed in this monsoon. Time to think and think again.

Haryana CM inaugurates Rabi agriculture fair in Hisar

Hisar:
Haryana Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini on Sunday called upon farmers to adopt agricultural diversification and give priority to the production of coarse grains.

He said the Haryana government always stands firmly with farmers and is continuously taking concrete steps to make agriculture more profitable and sustainable.

Encouraging farmers to embrace new opportunities, the Chief Minister said by adopting activities such as medicinal plant cultivation, beekeeping, mushroom production, and vegetable, flower, and fruit farming, farmers can multiply their income.

He assured that the state government will continue to provide all possible facilities, incentives, and support to farmers in this direction. The Chief Minister was addressing a gathering after inaugurating the Rabi Agriculture Fair organised by Chaudhary Charan Singh Haryana Agricultural University, here.

Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini flags off 'Namo Yuva Run' in Kurukshetra

Komal Ramola Chandigarh:

Haryana Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini on Sunday flagged off the "Namo Yuva Run" marathon at the Dronacharya Sports Stadium in Kurukshetra, an event organized to mark the birthday of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Saini not only inaugurated the run but also joined the participants on the track, sharing in the enthusiasm of the young runners.

Addressing the gathering, the Chief Minister said the marathon was more than just a five-kilometer race, calling it a symbol of the energy, determination, and commitment of the youth to nation-building. He stressed that the initiative by the Skill Development and Industrial Training Department was a meaningful step toward shaping a brighter future for young people.

Saini underlined that the government has honoured the dignity and merit of youth by ensuring transparent



recruitment processes, with 1.80 lakh jobs provided without influence or bribery. He added that the marathon embodied a larger vision of progress, unity, and inspiration, while praising Prime Minister Modi's leadership for instilling the dream of a "New India."

He highlighted na-

tional initiatives such as Make in India, Digital India, Startup India, and Skill India, noting that true development requires collective effort. "Skills are the real strength of young people," he said, urging them to focus equally on health, fitness, and continuous learning.

The Chief Minister

pointed to efforts in Haryana to expand opportunities for youth, including the establishment of Shri Vishwakarma Skill Development University in Palwal, training for over 1.10 lakh young people under the Haryana Skill Development Mission, and a new Startup Policy that has already supported

nearly 9,500 ventures. He also emphasized the role of the newly created MSME Department in boosting job creation and the Department of Foreign Cooperation in protecting youth seeking opportunities abroad.

Saini praised Haryana's athletes for their remarkable performances in international competitions, including the recent Paris Olympics where the state's players contributed four of India's six medals. He noted that medal winners are being rewarded with cash prizes of up to Rs 6 crore, government jobs, and monthly honorariums.

Calling India the "mother of democracy," Saini urged the youth to actively engage in politics to foster modern, progressive leadership and move away from dynasty-driven practices. He said Haryana is steadily advancing toward a future where young people are empowered with self-respect, self-reliance, and meaningful employment.

Chowkidar union protests recovery of salary hike



Rajan Panchhi Mandi:

The Panchayat Chowkidar Union in Mandi has strongly opposed the government's move to recover the ₹25 daily wage increase that was granted last year.

In March 2024, the state government had announced the increment for daily-wage Panchayat Chowkidars, and many had already begun receiving the revised pay. However, a year later, recovery orders have been issued. According to the department, the payments were released without proper notification, and are now being withdrawn.

The decision has left the Chowkidars furious. On Sunday, the Mandi District Panchayat Chowkidar Union held a

meeting at the Mata Bhimkalki Temple complex under the leadership of district president Ghanishyam Thakur. Members expressed anger over the rollback and demanded the government immediately stop the recovery process.

Ghanishyam also called for the retirement age of Chowkidars to be raised from 58 to 60 years, and for the regularization of workers who have completed 12 years of service. Union secretary Rajkumar questioned whether the state was being run by the Chief Minister or by officials of the Panchayati Raj Department who "issue such orders at will."

He warned that if the government does not address their demands, the union will move to court and begin a large-scale agitation.

Mandi boosts relief work with ₹446 Cr MNREGA projects

Rajan Panchhi Mandi:

Mandi district administration has intensified efforts to restore normalcy in disaster-hit areas, with ₹6.63 crore already spent under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MNREGA). The scheme is being used to rebuild damaged infrastructure and revive farming activities disrupted by heavy rains and landslides.

Deputy Commissioner Apoorv Devgan said that 26,481 works worth ₹446.09 crore have been approved for the financial year 2025-26. Of these, 1,498 projects are already underway. The works include rebuilding rural roads, repairing drains, restoring cultivable land and reconstructing washed-out footbridges. So far, nearly 150 footbridges and blocked roads have been reopened, easing access to remote villages. Clearing mud and debris from agricultural land is also helping farmers return to cultivation.

To ease recovery,



both the state and central governments have introduced special provisions. The state has amended MNREGA rules to exempt gram panchayats from the mandatory 20-work requirement and raised the limit for land reform projects from ₹1 lakh to ₹2 lakh. This has led to the approval of 7,846 works worth ₹120.30 crore. The Centre has also extended MNREGA benefits, allowing

170 days of work per job card holder, including 50 additional man-days, which will directly support thousands of families in the district.

Devgan noted that with the monsoon season receding, the pace of work is gathering momentum. He said these initiatives will not only compensate for disaster losses but also strengthen livelihoods and help villages move towards self-reliance.

Fight cancer with knowledge and courage, says Prof. G.K. Rath at Gorakhpur Symposium

Staff Reporter Gorakhpur:

Gorakhpur witnessed a significant medical gathering as a major scientific symposium on oncology, titled "CME on Oncology," was organized at a hotel in Mohaddipur. The event was held under the joint aegis of Hanuman Prasad Poddar Cancer Hospital & Research Institute and the Indian Medical Association (IMA), Gorakhpur, drawing leading experts and healthcare professionals from across the region.

The symposium was graced by the esteemed presence of Prof. (Dr.) G.K. Rath, Head of the National Cancer Institute, AIIMS New Delhi, and Head of the Department of Radiation Oncology at DRBRIRCH, who served as the chief guest. In his inspiring address, Dr. Rath urged attendees, "Do not fear cancer, fight it," emphasizing that timely check-ups, accurate information, and a positive mindset are essential tools in overcoming the



disease. The gathering featured detailed discussions on a range of cancer-related topics. Dr. Reena, former Head of Department at BRD Medical College, spoke about cervical cancer and the importance of HPV vaccination. Dr. C.P. Awasthi, Radiation Oncologist at Hanuman Prasad Poddar Cancer Hospital, highlighted the district-level cancer awareness campaign, while Dr. Faraz Khan, DM Medical Oncology, provided insights into lung cancer, chemotherapy, symptoms, man-

agement, and prognosis. Prof. Rath shared his extensive knowledge on cancer control strategies in India, drawing on AIIMS's 50 years of experience and providing both national and international perspectives. Dr. Mustafa Khan, MHA, MPH, explained the role of doctors in cancer data management, detailing processes for HBCR, PBCR, and UDSP portals.

The symposium brought together a wide range of participants, including doctors and medical students

and the importance of timely screening and vaccination. Experts provided detailed guidance on cancer prevention, tobacco control, and the significance of accurate cancer registration and data management to inform government policies and future initiatives.

The program concluded with an interactive Q&A session, allowing participants to engage directly with the experts and clarify their queries. Mr. Rasendu Fogla expressed gratitude to all guests, speakers, and participants, emphasizing that the symposium would serve as a milestone in spreading cancer awareness and promoting modern treatment techniques across Gorakhpur and the Purvanchal region. The primary objective of the event was to raise public awareness about cancer, encourage timely screenings and vaccinations, and empower doctors with the latest knowledge and practices in oncology.

Youth inspired as Suryakiran stuns at Hisar Air show

Chandigarh:

Haryana Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini on Sunday said that today's youth will become the pride of the Indian Armed Forces and bring glory to the nation. He was speaking at the first-ever air show organized in Haryana at the Maharaja Agrasen Airport Complex in Hisar, jointly hosted by the GOC Dot Division and the Hisar District Administration.

The Chief Minister described the event as a source of inspiration, stressing that with hard work, dedication and discipline, any dream can be achieved. He hailed the Indian Air Force as a vital pillar of national security and noted that under Prime Minister Narendra Modi's leadership, the Air Force had been strengthened with modern fighter aircraft including Rafale jets. He said Indian pilots flying Rafale, Sukhoi and Tejas aircraft are fully capable of defeating any adversary, adding that the force's valor was proven during Operation San-



dur, which won global recognition.

The air show, headlined by the Indian Air Force's Suryakiran Aerobatic Team, captivated thousands with daring maneuvers and formations performed at speeds ranging from 150 kmph to 650 kmph. The team also paid tribute to Hisar's martyr, Wing Commander Sahil Gandhi, who lost his life in 2019.

Saini said the show sent out a strong message of teamwork, dis-

cipline and patriotism, with each performance embodying the Suryakiran motto, "Sadaiv Sarvottam" (Always Excellence).

He also underlined the state government's welfare initiatives for the families of martyrs and freedom fighters, announcing that pensions for freedom fighters and their widows had been raised to Rs 40,000 per month and that ex-gratia for families of war martyrs had been increased to Rs 1 crore. He added that

the state had also decided to provide 10 percent job reservation for Agniveers.

Hisar Deputy Commissioner Anish Yadav said the purpose of the event was to encourage youth to aspire to join the Indian Air Force. The massive turnout included people from Hisar and neighboring districts, officers and soldiers from the Army Cantonment, their families, and students from Army Public School and the NCC.

Lakhs take holy dip in Ganga on Pitru Paksha Amavasya

Hapur/Bulandshahr Avnish Tyagi:

The banks of the Ganga turned into seas of faith on Sunday as lakhs of devotees gathered at Brijghat in Hapur and Anupshahr in Bulandshahr to mark Pitru Paksha Visarjani Amavasya. From the break of dawn, men, women, and children performed age-old rituals of pind daan, tarpan, yajnas, and immersions before stepping into the river for the sacred bath believed to bring peace to the souls of ancestors.

Pilgrims had begun arriving at the ghats late Saturday night, and by sunrise the crowd had swelled into the lakhs. Brijghat saw the largest congregation, where the chants of mantras mingled with the sound of temple bells and conch shells. Despite diversions set up on National Highway-9, heavy congestion persisted on the



Delhi-Lucknow route, with long traffic jams reported on the Ganga bridge. Authorities deployed a massive security and safety apparatus to manage the crowd. Hapur District Magistrate Abhishek Pandey and Superintendent of Police Kunalwar Gyanraj Singh inspected arrangements on site, issuing directions to

ensure smooth conduct of the rituals. Teams of NDRF, PAC, and police personnel, supported by Garhmukteshwar Municipality staff, remained on high alert. Divers patrolled the river in boats, while local SDMs, tehsildars, and circle officers monitored the proceedings closely. In Bulandshahr's Anupshahr, devotees thronged Babster Ganj

Ghat, Baba Mastram Ghat, Bhagwanpurvillage ghat, and several temporary ghats set up along the river. Many also gathered at Siddh Baba Ganga Ghat and Avantika Devi Ghat in Ahar tehsil. At every spot, people offered prayers, lit lamps, and sought blessings for prosperity and family well-being after performing rituals for their forefathers.

Skipper Mhatre fails but Kundu, Trivedi shine as India U-19 trounce Australia

Brisbane: India U-19 centered to a landmark seven-wicket victory over Australia U-19 in the first youth ODI, courtesy of Abhigyan Kundu, leading the charge with an unbeaten 87 in Brisbane on Sunday.

After skipper Ayush Mhatre and Vihan Malhotra failed to create the desired impact, Kundu took centre stage with a swashbuckling performance. At the other end, Venant Trivedi played the second fiddle with his composed 63 off 69 deliveries as the duo steered the tourists to a commanding win.

While pursuing a 226-run target, India got off to a blistering start with top-order sensation Vahab Suryawansi punning seven fours and a towering maximum in the powerplay. Suryawansi, a talent unearthed in recent years, continued with his high-risk and high-reward approach, harrying the attack at every available opportunity.

He walloped 38 off 22 deliveries, striking ferociously at 172.72, before persisting against Hayden Schiller on the final delivery of the fifth over. In the next over, Charles Lachmann dismissed Mhatre cheaply on 6(10) and returned to sting India back by claiming Vihan Malhotra's (9 off 10) wicket on the penultimate delivery of the powerplay.

With India reduced to 75/3 and early momentum slipping, Kundu and Trivedi lit up the stadium by forging an unbeaten 152-run stand. The left-right combination worked wonders as Australian players scratched their heads while trying to conjure a partnership-breaking delivery.

Boundaries cascaded at a consistent rate as Kundu and Trivedi tormented the hosts. Trivedi brought up his half-century by completing a single in the 24th over. Kundu was more stylish with his approach and smacked the ball past the boundary rope for a six to celebrate his half-century.

Kundu upped the ante and decimated Schiller with four, six and four in the 20th over and went on to produce the winning boundary to wrap up the contest with more than 117 deliveries to spare.

Real Kabaddi League goes global with inaugural Dubai edition



Real Kabaddi League kicks off global journey with Dubai edition

Dubai: To make Indian Kabaddi a global phenomenon and provide a platform for grassroots talent, the Real Kabaddi League (RKL) is set to host its first-ever international edition in Dubai in December 2025.

RKL, India's premier Kabaddi platform, has been nurturing grassroots talent since its inception. With an ambitious vision that blends domestic growth with global aspirations, the league is now poised to take a historic step by entering the international arena.

Founded by Shubham Chaudhary, RKL has evolved into a movement dedicated to showcasing rural and regional Kabaddi talent. The league will continue strengthening its presence across India while expanding abroad with its inaugural international edition.

League Ambassador and Co-founder Ranvijay Singh, a celebrated youth icon and sports enthusiast who has been a part of this journey from the very beginning, brings unmatched recognition to RKL's vision by lending his global influence to the journey.

"Kabaddi, India's most iconic Kabaddi players,

has given me everything - identity, respect, and love from millions of fans. Through the Real Kabaddi League, I see a powerful platform that gives young and hidden talent the chance to rise and shine. Taking our indigenous sport from villages to the global stage in Dubai is historic, and I am proud to be part of this journey."

The league also enjoys strong support from both national and international patrons who are instrumental in expanding Kabaddi's reach.

Abhishek Verma, Chief National Coordinator of the Shiv Sena-NDA alliance and elections, who is the Chief Indian Patron of RKL, stated, "Kabaddi is India's pride - a true symbol of our indigenous culture, resilience, and teamwork. Through RKL, we are not only empowering hidden talents but also taking India's sporting spirit to the world stage."

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10-man FC Bengaluru United come from behind to hold Kodagu FC 1-1



Bengaluru: Ten-man FC Bengaluru United (FCBU) showed grit and resilience to fight back and secure a 1-1 draw against Kodagu FC in their ISIFA Super Division clash.

After being reduced to ten men early in the first half and conceding from a set piece, FCBU staged a spirited second-half comeback, capped off by a stunning late free-kick from Ribhav in stoppage time.

The first half was a struggle for FCBU, who were dealt a major blow when Lijo received a red card in the 26th minute.

The numerical disadvantage allowed Kodagu to press higher, and they took the lead in the 34th minute, heading home from a corner. FCBU found themselves on the back foot for much of the half, forced to defend deep while Kodagu looked to capitalise on their advantages.

The second half saw a transformed FCBU which refused to sit back despite being a man down. Altav almost created an equaliser right after the restart with a driving run into the box and a dangerous ball across goal, but the Kodagu defence cleared.

Nikhil fired just over in the 57th minute, and Ribhav later spurned a golden chance from close range. In the dying minutes, Junain nearly turned in a loose ball that bounced awkwardly in front of the keeper, only to be denied.

the ingredients to be a global sport and we are going to help it get its rightful place with the RKL - International in Dubai," said Singh.

Further boosting the league's sporting credibility, Rahul Chaudhari, one of India's most iconic Kabaddi players,

has been named Kabaddi Ambassador of RKL. His presence bridges the gap between grassroots talent and professional excellence, inspiring the next generation of players.

Rahul Chaudhari, on his association with RKL, shared, "Kabaddi

is a developed India." His gesture of naming with the participants drew loud cheers and further energized the atmosphere.

The event also welcomed special guests including Balder MLA Purnakashi and Mint MLA Rajesh Chaudhary, who extended their support to the initiative. Senior party members and youth leaders such as former Metropolitan President Chetan Swaroop Parashar, BJP State Minister Pawan Hiddi Chaudhary, Gaurav Rajawat, Yuva Morcha President Yagadati Kashtik, District General Secretary Yashendra Pandey, Lalit Gautam, Ankur

Gurjar, Ankur Agrawal, Nitin Kashtik, Dharmesh Hoolwar, Anil Pathak, Nitin Chaturvedi, Lokesh Nishad, Hakim Singh, Ajay Rajawat, Dharej Sharma, Nathu Pandit, Dinesh Pradhan, and Ashok Yadav also marked their presence.

The marathon turned into a show of strength and unity as thousands of enthusiastic young runners carried banners and slogans that echoed the call for a drug-free society.

For many, the event was not just a run but a step towards aligning themselves with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of a developed India.

Namo Yuva Run Carries the Spirit of a Drug-Free India

Staff Reporter

Mathura

Mathura witnessed an energetic morning as thousands of young participants joined the "Namo Yuva Run Marathon," organized by the Bharatiya Janata Party and Yuva Morcha, Mathura Metropolitan, on the occasion of Sero Pakhwada. The run was dedicated to spreading awareness about de-addiction and encouraging youth to contribute to the vision of a stronger, healthier nation.

The marathon was flagged off by BJP Mathura Vice President and former Member of Parliament Rekha Verma, along with BJP District President Harishankar Raju Yadav. Their presence set the tone for the event, which aimed to inspire collective resolve against addiction and for nation-building.

BJP District Minister Kunz Bihari Chaturvedi not only addressed the youth but also ran alongside them, motivating participants with his words: "Step forward, youth friends, remove addiction, join Modi ji in building



Namo Yuva Run spreads the spirit of a Drug-Free India

Breaking Time

What to do
Fill in the grid so that every row, every column, and every 3x3 box contains the digit 1 to 9. Every puzzle has only correct solution.

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

Solution, Sudoku

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

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Ever-improving India take on Australia in second AFC Futsal Asian Cup qualifier

Ardiya: India may have begun the AFC Futsal Asian Cup 2026 Qualifiers with a defeat to Kuwait, but the Futsal Tigers are on the right track, according to head coach Reza Kordi.

Now having taken charge of three games so far, the Iranian believes that the boys have shown improvement with every game, and the first-ever international futsal win is not far away.

India will face Australia in the second Group A qualifier on Monday, at the Qushehan Al Mutairi Hall in Ardiya at 18:30 IST. The match will be streamed live on the 5i Kuwait app and 5i.com.kw.

The 1-4 defeat to the hosts on Saturday was no blemish on the young careers of the Indian futsal squads. Not many gave India, the lowest-ranked team (195th) in the group, a chance against Kuwait, the best-ranked side (43rd). Still, the home crowd, which had set



India face Australia in 2nd AFC Futsal Asian Cup qualifier

four Futsal Asian Cup qualifier matches India has played so far. While India failed to register a win in the previous qualifiers, he grabbed eyeballs with six goals, only two less than top scorer Saied Ahmadabast of IR Iran.

"In the first half, we played very, very well.

opened with the third and fourth goals."

Ultimately, Kuwait, one of the most experienced futsal teams on the continent with 13 Asian Cup appearances to their name, scripted the comeback and ran away with the three points. Despite conceding four, India's Ozen Vivian Silva, who was the goalkeeper of the tournament at the AFF Futsal Club Championship 2023-24 for Am-bulim SC, had a terrific outing, making as many as 20 saves.

After the game, Kordi said, "I would like to apologise to all our Indian fans and supporters. The federation has supported us very well for this tournament. Congratulations to the Kuwait team, but in my opinion, we didn't lose to them. We lost first to our lack of experience and also to the goalkeeper (Pawad Al Khawan), who made a lot of saves. Both the goalkeepers were in top

Dominant Verstappen wins Azerbaijan Grand Prix

Baku: Red Bull's Max Verstappen exuded dominance and engineered a lights-to-flag victory in the Azerbaijan Grand Prix at Baku City Circuit on Sunday ahead of George Russell and Carlos Sainz.

Verstappen wasn't displaced from the pole position throughout the race, clocking 1:33:26.408 to take the top honours. He led all 51 laps and won by over 14 seconds from Mercedes' Russell and Saenz, securing the first podium finish for Williams since 2021.

"This weekend has been incredible for us. Monza was already great, but for us to win here is fantastic. The car was working really well on both compounds. We had clean air all the time, so you could look after your tyres, and it was pretty straightforward. It's never easy around here; it's very windy today, so the car was moving really well. I'm incredibly happy with this performance," Verstappen said after his



Verstappen dominates to win Azerbaijan Grand Prix.

win, as quoted from Sky Sports.

Verstappen's success in Baku was his second successive win after he clinched the Italian GP earlier this month. He isn't sure about Red Bull's capacity to continue with a massive opportunity to change the momentum, but, for sure, the last two weekends have been amazing for us. Singapore is a challenge again with the high downforce."

Meanwhile, Lando Norris cut down the deficit to the rival Oscar Piastri from 31 to 25 points.

After uncharacteristically crashing out of qualifying on Saturday, Piastri surprisingly repeated his error on the opening lap in Baku and crashed out on the opening lap.

Piastri's costly mistake has presented Norris with a massive opportunity to change the momentum, but, for sure, the last two weekends have been amazing for us. Singapore is a challenge again with the high downforce."

Taliban reject Trump's bid to retake Bagram Air Base in Afghanistan

Jalalabad (Afghanistan) — The Taliban government on Sunday rejected US President Donald Trump's bid to retake Bagram Air Base, four years after America's chaotic withdrawal from Afghanistan left the sprawling military facility in the Taliban hands.

It is unclear what conversations the US has had with Afghan officials about returning to the country. But Trump hinted that the Taliban, who have struggled with an economic crisis, international legitimacy, internal rifts and rival militant groups since their return to power in 2021, could be open to allowing the US military back.

The chief Taliban spokesman, Zabihullah Mujahid, rejected Trump's assertions and urged the US to adopt a policy of "realism and rationality." Afghanistan had an economy-oriented foreign policy and sought constructive relations with all states on the basis of mutual and shared interests, Mujahid posted on X.

It had been consistently communicated to the US in all bilateral negotiations that Afghanistan's independence and territorial integrity were of the utmost importance, he said.

"It should be recalled that, under the Doha Agreement, the United States pledged that it will not use or threaten force against the territorial integrity or political independence of Afghanistan, nor interfere in its internal affairs," he said. The US needed to remain faithful to its commitments, he added.

Israel kills 34 people in Gaza say health officials ahead of UN meeting

Qatar — Israeli strikes killed at least 34 people in Gaza City overnight, including children, said health officials on Sunday, as Israel presses ahead with its offensive in the famine-stricken city and several countries prepare to recognise a Palestinian state.

Health officials at Shifa Hospital, where most of the bodies were brought, said the dead included 14 people killed in a late-night strike on Saturday, which hit a residential block in the southern side of the city. Health staff said a nurse who worked at the hospital was among the dead, along with his wife and three children.

Israel did not comment on the strikes.

The latest Israeli operation, which began this week, further escalates a conflict that has roiled the Middle East and likely pushes any ceasefire further out of reach. The Israeli military, which has told Palestinians to leave, hasn't given a timeline for the offensive, but there were indications it could take months, Israel says.



Israel's strikes kill 34 in Gaza, say health officials ahead of UN meet

The operation is meant to pressure Hamas into freeing hostages and surrendering.

Saturday night's strikes come as some prominent Western countries prepare to recognise Palestinian statehood at the gathering of world leaders at the United Nations General Assembly on Monday.

Ahead of the UN assembly, peace activists in Israel have hailed the planned recognition of a Palestinian state. On Sunday, a group of more than 60 Jewish and Arab organisations representing about 1,000 activists, including some veteran organisations promoting peace and coexistence, known as It's Time Coalition, called for an end to the war, the release of the hostages and the recognition of a Palestinian state.

The latest Israeli operation, which began this week, further escalates a conflict that has roiled the Middle East and likely pushes any ceasefire further out of reach.

"We refuse to live forever by the sword. The UN decision offers a historic opportunity to move from a death trap to life, from an endless messianic war to a future of security and freedom for both peoples," said the coalition in a video statement.

On Saturday night, tens of thousands of people in Israel protested, calling for an end to the war and a hostage deal.

Yet a ceasefire remains elusive. Israeli bombardment over the past 23 months has killed more than 65,000 people in Gaza, destroyed vast areas of the strip, displaced around 90 per cent of the population and caused a catastrophic humanitarian crisis, but also of great significance to the world," Li said.

US lawmakers push for military dialogue in rare China visit



Bangkok — A bipartisan group of US lawmakers pushed for more military-to-military dialogue in a meeting Sunday with China's Premier Li Qiang, a rare congressional visit since the US-China relations soured.

The last trip by a group of senators was in 2023, and Sunday's delegation was the first from the House of Representatives to visit Beijing since 2019.

Li welcomed the delegates led by Rep Adam Smith and called it an "icebreaking trip that will further the ties between the two countries."

"It is important for our two countries to have more exchanges and cooperation, this is not only good for our two countries, but also of great significance to the world," Li said.

Smith, a Democrat on the House Armed Services Committee, said both sides were in agreement on the overarching aim of the visit.

"Certainly, trade and economy is on the top of the list ... (but also) we're very focused on our military-to-military conversations," he said in opening remarks. "As a member of the Armed Services Committee, I'm deeply concerned that our two militaries don't communicate more."

The delegation also included Michael Baumgartner, a Republican member of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, as well as Ro Khanna and Chrissy Houlahan, both Democrats on the House Armed Services Committee. The lawmakers are in China until Thursday.

BUSINESS

Pvt companies have capital must invest in India's growth journey: EAC-PM



New Delhi: According to a recent Reserve Bank of India (RBI) article, capital investment by the private sector is likely to rise 21.5 per cent to Rs 2.57 lakh crore in 2025-26, aided by robust macroeconomic fundamentals, and a 100-bps policy rate cut.

Dvs noted that India's young workforce and digital technology are its strengths.

Noting that Viksit Bharat means inclusive growth, he said, "extreme poverty in India has declined significantly."

The EAC-PM said there is a need to improve state capacity and focus more on decentralisation.

He also pointed out that India is on track to achieve net-zero target and the country needs to reduce dependence on coal.

India has not significantly advanced its CBAM preparedness GTRI

New Delhi: With just 100 days left for the European Union to impose a carbon tax on several products, including metals, the government and the Indian exporters both have not yet taken significant steps to address this barrier, think tank GTRI said on Sunday.



Indian exporters of steel and aluminium are staring at a fresh cost shock as the European Union (EU) begins collecting its Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM) levy from January 1, 2026.

The CBAM Regulation notified in May 2023, will initially cover iron and steel, aluminium, cement, electricity, hydrogen, and fertilisers.

Over the next few years, the EU plans to extend CBAM to cover all major industrial products.

It is designed to equalise carbon costs between EU-made and imported goods.

From January 2026, the EU will charge a carbon tariff on selected imports, using the EU Emissions Trading System (ETS) price and adjusting for any carbon price already paid in the exporting country.

"Despite having a two-year transition period since October 2023, India has not significantly advanced its CBAM preparedness. Exporters, especially MSMEs, lack clarity on emissions reporting and verification processes," the Global Trade Research Initiative (GTRI) said.

No major policy initiative has been launched to support capacity-building or subsidise compliance costs, it said.

Exports are kicking in from January 2026, the risk of further export contraction looms large," GTRI Founder Ajay Srivastava said.

He suggested that India should study the CBAM flexibilities reportedly offered to the United States under their trade framework and demand comparable treatment as part of ongoing India-EU trade pact talks.

India's steel and aluminium exports to the EU fell 24.4 per cent from USD 7.71 billion in FY24 to USD 5.82 billion in FY25.

Steel was hit hardest, with iron and steel exports plunging 35.1 per cent to USD 3.05 billion, while articles of iron and steel fell 6.8 per cent and aluminium exports declined 9.8 per cent, it said, adding, "this sharp fall, even before CBAM tax collection begins, highlights the heavy compliance burden on Indian industry."

For their first bond issuance, ULBs can receive incentives of up to Rs 13 crore for every Rs 100 crore raised, with a maximum cap of Rs 26 crore under the AMRUT 2.0.

For subsequent bond issuances, the bonds must be categorised as green bonds, focusing on sectors like water, sanitation, renewable energy, or urban resilience. In such cases, ULBs would be eligible for incentives of Rs 10 crore per Rs 100 crore raised, capped at Rs 20 crore.

UK set to recognise Palestinian state despite opposition from US



David Lammy, who was foreign secretary until earlier this month, said the announcement of a Palestinian state will come later Sunday from Prime Minister Keir Starmer.

London: The UK is expected to recognise a Palestinian state later Sunday despite opposition from the US, after judging that Israel has not met conditions it set over the war in Gaza.

Though the anticipated move is largely symbolic, the UK hopes that it could increase diplomatic pressure for an end to the conflict in Gaza as well as an announcement of a Palestinian state will come later Sunday from Prime Minister Keir Starmer.

"Any decision to recognise a Palestinian state, if that were to take place later on today, does not make a Palestinian state happen overnight," he told Sky News.

He suggested that recognition would help keep the prospect of a two-state solution alive, and stressed that identifying the Palestinian people with Hamas was mistaken.

In July, in the wake of intense pressure within his governing Labour Party, Prime Minister Keir Starmer said the UK would recognise a Palestinian state unless Israel agreed to a ceasefire in Gaza, allowed the UN to bring in aid and took other steps toward long-term peace.

The anticipated move comes ahead of the UN General Assembly this week, where other nations, including Australia, Canada and France, are also readying to recognise a Palestinian state.

The UK's recognition of a Palestinian state comes just days after a state visit from US President Donald Trump, during which he voiced his disapproval of the plan.

"I have a disagreement with the prime minister on that score," Trump said. "It's one of our few disagreements, actually."

Critics, including the US and the Israeli government, which has shown no interest in a two-state solution, have condemned the plans, saying it rewards Hamas and terrorism.

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Delhi CM pushes Plastics Industry to drive Zero-waste vision

TSN/New Delhi: Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta called on the plastics industry to play a pivotal role in transforming the capital into a zero-waste city, highlighting plastic waste as one of the biggest obstacles to Delhi's growth.

Speaking at the launch of the PlastIndia 2026 campaign in Delhi, organized by the PlastIndia Foundation, Gupta said the industry must accelerate efforts in recycling and sustainability. "Plastic is one of the major hindrances in Delhi's growth. The industry manufactures so many products that are part of daily life, but it is high time to focus on technologies that make the city clean and address pollution-related issues. Plastic products, including medical waste, wrappers and packaging, are a major contributor to Delhi's landfills," she said.

The Chief Minister also praised the industry for adopting "Bharat Next" as the theme of PlastIndia 2026, which emphasizes Viksit Bharat and Make in India. "Along with Viksit Bharat, we must also work towards Viksit Delhi. Our goal is to position Delhi as a major tourist hub, a city every international traveler must visit just like Paris or London," she added. Gupta further became the first registered



visitor for the upcoming exhibition, which will be held in Delhi in February next year.

Ravish Kamath, President of PlastIndia Foundation, highlighted the growing strength of the Indian plastics industry. "Valued at about USD 2.30 lakh crore in 2025, the sector is projected to grow at a CAGR of

10.88%, reaching nearly USD 3.8 lakh crore by 2030. Packaging alone, driven by the e-commerce boom, commands a 42% share, underscoring the industry's importance to modern commerce," he said.

Kamath also noted India's strong export performance, with plastic exports touching USD

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10.34 billion in early 2025. "This includes a wide range of products such as plastic films, industrial parts, and specialty polymers. The Delhi-NCR region alone accounts for nearly 23% of India's plastics consumption," he added.

PlastIndia 2026 is being projected as a zero-waste exhibition that will reflect the industry's commitment to sustainability, innovation, and global competitiveness. "The event will showcase India's rise as a global leader in plastics, aligned with the Prime Minister's Swachh Bharat Mission," said Alok Tiwari, Chairman of the National Executive Committee, PlastIndia 2026.

In a bid to promote issuance of municipal bonds, the government is considering a proposal to hike interest subvention from the present Rs 26 crore per urban local body (ULB).

Considering immense scope for expansion of municipal bond markets in a bid to develop world class urban infrastructure, there is a need to increase the ceiling of interest subvention from existing Rs 26 crore per urban local body, sources said.

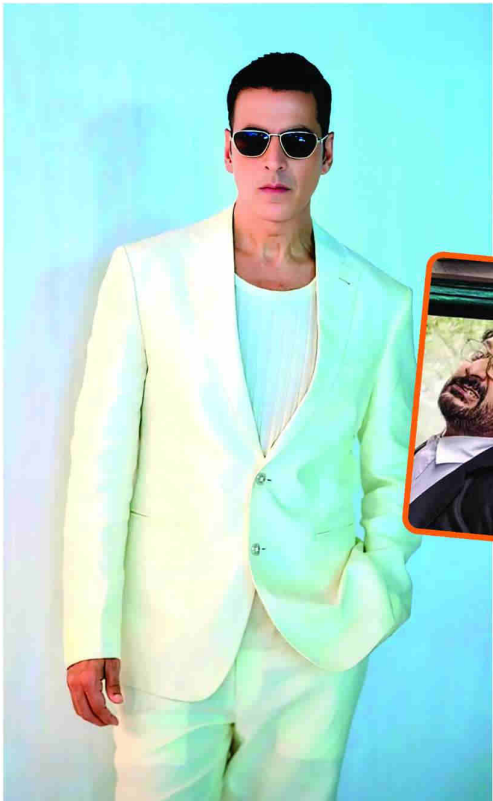
The interest subvention is provided to municipal bodies under Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (AMRUT) to make such municipal bonds or muni bonds more attractive. The Rs 26 crore is the maximum interest subvention an ULB can receive from the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA) for issuing municipal bonds.

The central government has extended the facility of 2 per cent interest subvention on such bond issues in order to incentivise this market and facilitate participation of more civic bodies. This interest subvention is on the total size of the bond issue by an ULB.

For their first bond issuance, ULBs can receive incentives of up to Rs 13 crore for every Rs 100 crore raised, with a maximum cap of Rs 26 crore under the AMRUT 2.0.

For subsequent bond issuances, the bonds must be categorised as green bonds, focusing on sectors like water, sanitation, renewable energy, or urban resilience. In such cases, ULBs would be eligible for incentives of Rs 10 crore per Rs 100 crore raised, capped at Rs 20 crore.

'Jolly LLB 3' races ahead at box office, collects Rs 32.50 cr in two days



Mumbai Akshay Kumar and Arshad Warsi's courtroom drama, 'Jolly LLB 3', seems to be off to a decent start at the box office.

Directed by Saurabh Shukla, the film, which hit theatres on Friday, September 19, has shown strong growth in numbers.

According to trade analyst Taran Adarsh, the film earned Rs 12.50 crore on Friday and Rs

20 crore on Saturday, taking its two-day total to Rs 32.50 crore nett in India.

This marks a nearly 60 per cent growth on Day 2, suggesting that moviegoers are responding positively to the third instalment of the popular franchise.

Adarsh also noted that Sunday's collections might be impacted due to the India vs Pakistan cricket match; however, he estimated the film's opening weekend to close around Rs 54 crore.

The first film in the franchise made Rs 7.35 crore in its first two days, while 'Jolly LLB 2' grossed Rs 30.51 crore. With Rs 32.50 crore already in hand, the third instalment has raced ahead of both its predecessors.

The third film in the popular franchise pits two Jollies against each other in a courtroom battle, both trying to win their cases through technical loopholes, bending the rules, and debating

over who is the "real Jolly" in the legal world.

This time, the story revolves around a case involving struggling farmers whose lands are being seized by a corrupt businessman, played by Gajraj Rao. Akshay Kumar's character finds himself in trouble when he ends up on the wrong side of the case, leading to a series of witty and chaotic exchanges with Arshad Warsi.

Alongside the lead duo, the film features Huma Qureshi, Saurabh Shukla, Amrita Rao, Seema Biswas, Ram Kapoor, Gajraj Rao, Shilpa Shukla, Brijendra Kala, and others in pivotal roles.

'Jolly LLB 3', presented by Star Studios 18, was released in theatres on September 19, 2025.

In 2017, Akshay and Huma Qureshi starred in 'Jolly LLB 2', a spiritual sequel to 'Jolly LLB', which was released in 2013. The first film featured Arshad and Saurabh Shukla in the lead roles, with Amrita Rao also starring.

Karisma Kapoor wishes "precious sister" Kareena on her birthday

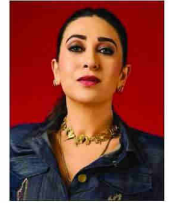
Mumbai Bollywood star Kareena Kapoor on the occasion of her birthday on Sunday received a special wish from her sister Karisma Kapoor.

Karisma shared an adorable picture with "precious sister" Kareena and wrote, "Best sister, Best friends and Beyond. Happy birthday to my most precious sister. Love you mostest"

After her post, several other celebrity friends, family members and fans extended heartfelt birthday wishes.

While Saba Patwadi, Riddhima Kapoor, and Bhumi Pednekar dropped heart emojis, one of the social media users wrote, "Favourite Kapoor sister forever ever ever happy Birthday to the one and only my favourite Kareena Kapoor Khan gorgeous lady in the world"

Kareena Kapoor, daughter of actors Randhir Kapoor and Babita, made her Bollywood debut in 2000 with the film Retugee and has since established herself as one of the leading actresses of the industry



with hits like Jab We Met, 3 Idiots, and Tanu Weds Manu.

She will be next seen sharing screen space with Prithviraj Sukumaran in Meghna Gulzar's 'Daarya'. In April, they all met for a brief meeting and officially announced the film.

Excited to work with "dream team", Kareena on Instagram wrote, "I've always said that I'm a director's actor... and this time I cannot wait to work with one of the finest director's we have, @meghnaulzar and alongside the magnificent @therajprihvi, whose work I deeply admire. To my dream team, #Daarya (red heart emoji) let's do this."



Filmmaker Christopher Nolan becomes new president of Directors Guild of America

Washington Oscar-winning director Christopher Nolan was elected as the president of the Directors Guild of America on Saturday, reported Variety.

Nolan, an Oscar winner and one of the most successful helmers of his generation, succeeds Lesli Linka Glatter, who served two terms at the helm and was first elected in 2021. He has been active in

the DGA for some time and at present is a member of its national board of directors, according to the outlet. "The director called it one of the greatest 'honours' of his career. He expressed his gratitude to the former director for her leadership in the Directors Guild of America."

"To be elected President of the Directors Guild of America is one

of the greatest honours of my career. Our industry is experiencing tremendous change, and I thank the Guild's membership for entrusting me with this responsibility. I also want to thank President Glatter for her leadership over the past four years. I look forward to collaborating with her and the newly elected Board to achieve important creative and economic protections for our members," said Nolan as quoted by Variety.

Nolan's election marks a rare example of an A-list player taking the helm of the union at the peak of their professional career. Nolan earned two Oscars for his directorial 'Oppenheimer' in 2023.

He's proven himself to be one of filmdom's most versatile and most bankable helmers with his track record of directing critically acclaimed films, including 'Batman Begins', 'The Knight', 'Inception', 'Memento', 'Tenet', 'Dunkirk' and 'Oppenheimer'.

Nolan's next big-screen swing is 'The Odyssey', an epic adventure story set for release in July from Universal Pictures, the studio that scored Oscars and global box office for Nolan's 'Oppenheimer'.

The Odyssey features a large cast, including Anne Hathaway, Zendaya, Lupita Nyong'o, Charlize Theron, Elliot Page, and more. Matt Damon is set to play the lead role in the movie. The film is still in production and is the first big-budget movie to be shot entirely with IMAX cameras.



Amul pays moving tribute to singer Zubeen Garg with special doodle

Dispur Indian dairy brand Amul has paid tribute to ace singer Zubeen Garg, who breathed his last on September 19.

The brand shared a caricature-style picture celebrating Zubeen's immense contributions to the Assamese, Hindi, and Bengali music industries.

"Bin Tere, Tere Bin," the poster read, paying an ode to Zubeen and his hit song 'Bin Tere, Tere Bin'.

In the caption, the brand further wrote, "Tribute to Indian musician and singer who worked and sang in Assamese, Bengali and Hindi film and music industries."

Meanwhile, the Assam government has announced a three-day state mourning in the wake of the death of singer Zubeen Garg. The Assam CM stat-

ed that there will be no official entertainment, ceremonial programs, or public celebrations during this period.

The 52-year-old icon of Assam died in Singapore on Friday after a swimming accident. His body was flown to Delhi and later transported to Assam on a commercial flight that landed in Guwahati on Sunday morning.

Garg was in Singapore for the Northeast India Festival. The festival organisers also issued a statement, saying that Zubeen Garg suffered breathing difficulties during scuba diving.

"He was immediately given CPR before being rushed to Singapore General Hospital. Despite efforts to save him, he was declared deceased in the ICU around 2:30 PM IST," the statement added.



Tamil film 'Bad Girl' set to be released in Hindi

New Delhi The makers of 'Bad Girl' are all set to release the Hindi version of the Tamil feature film.

The film will be released in Hindi on September 26.

Anurag Kashyap, who has come on board as a presenter, described 'Bad Girl' as "one of the most original stories" he has encountered.

"When I first read it, it reminded me of how as a young filmmaker I wanted to tell bold stories, and Varsha has gone beyond all my expectations and made an excellent film out of it. She's a voice to watch out for and we're happy to release the film in Hindi, as we know that it's a story that will relate to every girl growing in country," he said, as per a press note.

Helmed by Varsha Bharath and backed by Vetrimaaran's Grass Root Film Company, with Ranjan Singh as the Executive Producer, 'Bad Girl' stars Anjali Sivaraman and Shanthi-

ipriya. Varsha mentioned that the film was born out of a need to tell a story that felt honest to the world she sees around her.

"Through the film, I wanted to question the very idea of labels and how easily they are used to diminish women. For me, directing this as my

debut has been both liberating and daunting, but the journey has been worth every step. I'm thrilled that the film will now speak to Hindi audiences, and I hope it connects with them in unexpected ways. Having Anurag Kashyap and Vetri Maaran back the film is a rare privilege,

their faith reminds me why it is important to take risks and stay true to one's vision," she said.

For Anjali Sivaraman, previously seen on Netflix's Class, being a part of 'Bad Girl' was one of the most "challenging and rewarding experiences" of her career.

"The role pushed me to confront a lot of questions about identity, freedom, and the judgments women face every day. It's not often that you get to inhabit a character who is unapologetically herself, even when the world refuses to accept her. I'm truly excited that the film will now reach Hindi audiences - I believe its themes are universal, and I hope viewers see a bit of themselves in her journey," Anjali shared.

With music composed by Amit Trivedi, 'Bad Girl' debuted with unprecedented acclaim at the 54th International Film Festival Rotterdam, winning the prestigious NETPAC award.



Dhanush battles Arun Vijay to protect his father's idli shack

Mumbai The trailer of Dhanush's upcoming film 'Idli Kadai' has finally been released, giving fans a glimpse into what they can expect from the actor's fourth directorial venture.

The film follows Murugan (played by Dhanush), a young man passionate about building a career in hotel management. However, his dreams create a rift with his father, who runs a humble idli shack beloved by the community. When betrayal strikes, Murugan is forced to return home and defend the family's legacy.

The two-minute trailer opens with Murugan asking his father to buy an idli grinder to make the work easier. But his father, rooted in tradition, refuses, believing the taste would not be the same. This clash between tradition and change forms the emotional core of the story.

Directed by Dhanush, 'Idli Kadai' stars him in the lead, alongside Nithya Menen. The film also features 'Maharaj' fame actress Shalini Pandey.

Dhanush and Nithya Menen previously worked together in the 2022 hit 'Thiruchittabalam'.

The film is set to hit theatres on October 1. Dhanush was last seen in Kuberaa, co-starring Nagarjuna, Rashmika Mandanna, and Jim Sarbh. Directed by National Award-winning filmmaker Sekhar Kammla, Kuberaa released on June 20, 2025, and was shot in both Tamil and Telugu. The socio-drama explored themes of greed, ambition, and redemption through the journey of a beggar's transformation.

The actor will also be seen in Tere Ishk Mein alongside Kriti Sanon. Production for the Aanand L. Rai directorial concluded in July. Described as a spiritual successor to Raamjhanana, the film is scheduled to release in theatres on November 28, 2025.