

Mann Ki Baat

PM Modi warns about
‘digital arrest’

AGENCIES

NEW DELHI: Prime Minister Narendra Modi warned the nation on Sunday about the 'digital arrest' scam, clarifying that no government agency threatens individuals over the phone or demands money.

In his address during the 115th episode of 'Mann Ki Baat,' Prime Minister Modi detailed the modus operandi of the 'digital arrest' scam.

"Under digital arrest fraud, callers pose as officials from the police, CBI, RBI, or narcotics departments, speaking with great confidence. People asked me to address this in Mann Ki Baat, as everyone needs to understand. The first step involves collecting your personal information. Step two is creating an atmosphere of fear, instilling so much anxiety that you can't think clearly. Step three is applying time pressure... Victims of digital arrest come from all backgrounds and ages. Many have lost substantial sums of their hard-earned money. If you ever receive such a call, don't be afraid. Be aware that no investigative agency conducts such interrogations over the phone or video call. The three steps to



digital security are: stop, think, and act. If possible, take a screenshot or record the call. No government agency issues threats over the phone or demands money," PM Modi said in his Mann Ki Baat address.

He further stated that investigative agencies are working in partnership with state governments to combat the scam being carried out in the name of digital arrest.

"There is no legal system called digital arrest; it's purely fraud, deceit, a criminal enterprise by those who are enemies of society. Various investigative agencies, in col-

laboration with state governments, are actively working to address this scam. The National Cyber Coordination Centre has been established to foster coordination among these agencies," he said.

PM Modi also encouraged schools and colleges to engage students in the campaign against cyber scams. "We can only fight this challenge through collective efforts in society," he added.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi urged people to strengthen the campaign of 'Atmanirbhar Bharat' this festive season during his monthly radio program Mann Ki Baat on Sunday.

"Self-reliance has not only become our policy, it has become our passion. It was not very long ago, just 10 years ago, when if someone said that some complex technology was being developed in India, many people would not believe it and many would ridicule it," the PM said during the programme.

"But today the same people are amazed to see the success of the country. India, which is becoming self-reliant, is doing wonders in every field," he added.

He further highlighted the technological and scientific advancements of the country by talking about the Major Atmospheric Cherenkov Experiment (MACE) Observatory in Hanle village of Ladakh.

"Now the Self-reliant India campaign is becoming a mass movement. This month we inaugurated Asia's largest 'imaging telescope MACE' in Hanle, Ladakh. It is located at an altitude of 4300 meters...In a place where the cold is less than -30 degrees, where there is even a lack of oxygen, our scientists and local industry have done what no other country in Asia has done.

BJP's next big target is to form govt in
West Bengal in 2026: Amit Shah in Kolkata

AGENCIES

KOLKATA: Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Sunday accused the TMC government in West Bengal of engaging in "state-sponsored infiltration" and declared that the Bharatiya Janata Party's (BJP) "next big target" is to form a government in the 2026 West Bengal Assembly elections.

Speaking at the launch of BJP's membership drive in Kolkata, the Union Home Minister noted that Syama Prasad Mukherjee founded the Bharatiya Jana Sangh, which has since grown into the world's largest political party.

"We are all proud to be members of the world's largest party. I have faith in the Bengal workers that we will not lag in membership numbers. The party has set a target of one crore members. If we examine the history of political parties today, most are run on caste or family lines. The Bharatiya Janata Party is unique, with a National President and Prime Minister who are ordinary workers, without any other background," Shah stated.

He further emphasised that the BJP's next major goal is to establish a government in West Bengal in 2026.

"In Bengal, state-spon-



sored infiltration must be stopped. Joining the BJP in Bengal means joining the mission to free the state from the grip of communists and Mamata Didi. This is a border state, and with the way infiltration is being supported at a state level, there is only one solution: a BJP government in 2026. To combat cow and coal smuggling, we need to enlist one crore BJP members in West Bengal," he added.

Shah also criticised the Mamata government over the RG Kar rape-murder case on August 9, stating that the safety of women is at risk in Bengal.

"The dignity of mothers and sisters is being violated in Bengal. Incidents like Sandeshkhali and RG Kar must be stopped, which will only happen if the BJP forms

Commenting on the BJP's membership drive, BJP leader Roopa Ganguly mentioned that actor Mithun Chakraborty was also honoured at the event.

"As per BJP rules, a membership drive is conducted in each state every few years. Today, Amit Shah ji has officially launched this programme in West Bengal, and Mithun Chakraborty was honoured as part of it," Roopa Ganguly shared.

Following the membership drive, BJP leader Dilip Ghosh expressed confidence that the workers would engage fully, helping the party reach its one-crore membership target.

"Last time, we enrolled over 88 lakh members. Today, the party has grown with more MPs and MLAs. We aim to surpass one crore members. With around seven crore votes in Bengal and 2.33 crore votes from the Lok Sabha, we are setting this goal. I believe our workers will take up this challenge and achieve it. We won't stop until it's accomplished," Dilip Ghosh affirmed.

In addition to the membership drive, the Union Home Minister inaugurated the Passenger Terminal building and the Maitri Dwar at Land Port, Petrapole, in West Bengal on Sunday.

"There was an attack on this city
and there was no response":
Jaishankar on 26/11 Mumbai attack

AGENCIES

MUMBAI : External Affairs Minister, S Jaishankar on Sunday said that Mumbai has become a powerful symbol of counter-terrorism globally.

He further stressed that the country must not repeat the mistakes of the past and India should take a stance against terrorism.

The remarks by Jaishankar came while addressing a press conference in Mumbai.

Addressing the reporters, Jaishankar said, "Mumbai is a symbol of counter-terrorism for India and the world. When we were a member of the UNSC, we were president of the counter-terrorism committee. We held the security council meeting for the first time in the hotel where a terrorist attack took place, in Mumbai. When the world sees - who is standing firm in front of this challenge of terrorism,



people say - India." He further said that Mumbai faced a terrorist attack and there was no response from the Indian side. He said, "Today, we are leaders in fighting terrorism... We should not have a repeat of what happened in Mumbai. There was an attack on this city and there was no response. That is not good for us..."

He added, "When we talk of zero tolerance against terror, it is clear that when somebody does something, there will be a response. We also have to expose. It is not acceptable that you are doing

business during the daytime and indulging in terror during the night and I have to pretend that everything is okay. This India will not accept it. This is what has changed. We are very clear, we need to expose terrorism."

Jaishankar has been vocal about India's stance on terrorism, emphasising the need for zero tolerance. At the 16th BRICS summit in Kazan, Russia, he reaffirmed India's commitment to combating terrorism.

He had said, "Addressing conflicts and tensions effectively is a particular need of the day. Prime Minister Modi has emphasised that this is not an era of war. Disputes and differences must be settled by dialogue and diplomacy. Agreements, once reached, must be scrupulously respected. International law should be adhered to, without exception. And there should be zero tolerance for terrorism."

PWD vehicles
sprinkle water
in Delhi to
reduce dust
amid rise in air
pollution

AGENCIES

NEW DELHI: Public Work Department vehicles on Sunday sprinkled water in parts of the national capital to reduce the dust amidst the rise in air pollution.

The Commission for Air Quality Management (CAQM) has invoked the Stage II GRAP Action Plan across the National Capital Region. This includes carrying out mechanical/vacuum sweeping and water sprinkling of the identified roads on a daily basis. Meanwhile, the AQI level in Delhi today was recorded as 352, categorized as 'very Poor', according to the System of Air Quality and Weather Forecasting and Research (SAFAR).

Moreover, AQI in Anand Vihar area crossed the 400 mark, being recorded as 405 at 7 AM, categorized as 'severe', worse than the AQI of 367 recorded on Saturday.

"Example of crumbling infrastructure...": LoP
Rahul Gandhi over stampede in Bandra terminus

AGENCIES

NEW DELHI: Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha, Rahul Gandhi, on Sunday described the recent stampede at Mumbai's Bandra Terminus station as an example of 'India's crumbling infrastructure,' asserting that the country requires "international-class infrastructure."

"Inaugurations and publicity hold value only when backed by a foundation that genuinely serves the public. When lives are lost, and bridges, platforms, or statues collapse after ribbon-cutting ceremonies due to poor maintenance and neglect of public property, it raises serious concerns," Rahul Gandhi posted



on X.

The Congress leader said that the stampede at Bandra Terminus highlights "India's crumbling infrastructure."

"The Balasore train accident in June last year claimed 300 lives, yet instead of compensating the victims, the BJP

concern for public safety," the LoP said.

"Today, the nation needs world-class infrastructure that also addresses the local needs of the poor--facilitating business, easing travel, and ensuring safety," he added.

He further stated that India is capable and competent, requiring only an "effective and transparent system" dedicated to public service and building a strong future for the country.

Meanwhile, Dr. Sushil, CMO of Bandra Bhabha Hospital, reported that ten people were injured; of these, five were admitted, three were discharged, and two with serious injuries were transferred to KEM Hospital for further treatment.

Folk singer Sharda Sinha's
condition stable, under
constant monitoring



AGENCIES

NEW DELHI: Professor incharge of media and professor in the Department of Anatomy AIIMS Delhi, Dr Rima Dada on Sunday said that renowned folk singer Sharda Sinha is stable and is under constant monitoring.

"Sharda Sinha ji is Hemodynamically stable (Hemodynamic stability means that the blood pressure and heart rate of a person are stable) but under constant monitoring. She has been suffering from multiple

myeloma since 2018," Dr Rima Dada said. The folk singer was admitted to the All India Institute Of Medical Science, Delhi on October 21. Recipient of Padma Bhushan, Sharda Sinha is a Maithili-language folk singer from Bihar. She also sings in Bhojpuri and Magahi languages. Her Maithili version of the Chhath Puja-themed song 'Ho Dinanath' is widely appreciated by many. In 2018, Sinha was awarded Padma Bhushan, India's third-highest civilian award, on the occasion of the 69th Republic Day.

Border states must remain vigilant
about Rohingya infiltration: Assam
CM Himanta Biswa Sarma

AGENCIES

GUWAHATI (ASSAM): Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma said on Sunday that every border state must remain vigilant about the infiltration of Rohingya Muslims into the country through the Indo-Bangladesh border.

The Chief Minister said 138 infiltrators had been detected in the last two months in the state, adding that almost all of them were Rohingya Muslims.


"In the last two months, we have detected 138 infiltrators and we have pushed them back. But one thing I must repeat is that contrary to the expectation that Hindus will come inside India because of the instability in Bangladesh. We are finding only the Rohingya Muslims, not Hindu Bengalis who are coming into our country," Sarma told reporters.

He clarified that the initial



assumption about Hindu Bengalis seeking refuge due to Bangladesh's internal instabilities was inaccurate, as data suggests primarily Muslim Rohingya are crossing over.

"First, the perception of Hindu Bengalis is wrong, that is what the data says. Second, the Rohingya Muslims are still trying to come into the various states of our country. Every state government must remain vigilant and they must work very closely with the BSF," he said. "Assam and Tripura we are working very closely; we are detecting people. If the Bengal government also start detecting people, I think this will be a good orchestra and this will be a systematic effort," he added.



बिहार सरकार

संदेश

मुख्यमंत्री
बिहार

दिनांक 28.10.2024 (सोमवार) से 03.11.2024 (रविवार) तक राज्य में
“सतर्कता अभिचेतना सप्ताह” का आयोजन किया जा रहा है।

निगरानी विभाग भ्रष्टाचार के विरुद्ध लड़ाई में सतत् प्रयत्नशील है। इसके लिए
सरकार ने भ्रष्टाचार के विरुद्ध “जीरो टॉलरेन्स” की नीति अपनाई है। परिणाम स्वरूप राज्य में
सदाचार एवं नैतिकता को बढ़ावा देते हुए राजकीय आत्मसम्मान एवं गौरव की वृद्धि में निगरानी
विभाग का योगदान उल्लेखनीय है।

भ्रष्टाचार जहाँ भी होता है समाज को खोखला कर देता है एवं समाज चाहकर भी
विकास की राह पर आगे नहीं जा पाता है। यद्यपि शीघ्रतापूर्वक दी गई शास्ति एवं दंडात्मक
कार्रवाई भ्रष्टाचार के लिए प्रभावी निवारक है, तथापि भ्रष्टाचार के कारण होने वाले गंभीर
परिणामों एवं उत्पन्न खतरों के प्रति जनता में जागरुकता की भी आवश्यकता है।

मैं “सतर्कता अभिचेतना सप्ताह” की सफलता के लिए अपनी हार्दिक शुभकामनाएँ
देता हूँ एवं राज्य की जनता से यह अपेक्षा रखता हूँ कि जो व्यक्ति जहाँ-कहीं भी जिस रूप में
सेवा दे रहे हैं, वहाँ स्वच्छता, तत्परता एवं ईमानदारी को प्राथमिकता दें एवं भ्रष्टाचार के विरुद्ध
लड़ाई में सहयोग प्रदान करें।

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(नीतीश कुमार)

Sita breaks down over Cong minister's derogatory remarks

JAMTARA: BJP leader Sita Soren on Sunday broke down while speaking about the derogatory remarks allegedly made by Congress minister Irfan Ansari regarding her.

Soren, who is contesting the Jharkhand assembly polls from the Jamtara seat, was addressing the press a day before filing her nomination papers.

Ansari, the Congress candidate in the seat, allegedly made the derogatory remark about Soren after filing his nomination on Thursday.



"Ansari has been targeting me since my candidature from the seat was announced. But, the derogatory remarks he made after filing his nomination are not acceptable. It is an insult to women of the tribal community. The tribal community will never forgive him," she said.

"Since my husband is not alive, he (Ansari)...," she said, breaking down.

Sita Soren, the wife of JMM chief Shibu Soren's eldest son Durga Soren, joined the BJP earlier this year following a fallout with

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the family over the chief minister's chair after Hemant Soren resigned from the post and went to jail in a money laundering case. Hemant Soren is Shibu Soren's younger son.

As she broke down, BJP's Nawada MP Vivek Thakur, who was accompanying her, tried to handle the situation.

Criticising the remarks made by the Congress leader, he said the BJP will protest over it not only in Jamtara but across the state.

The National Commission for Scheduled Tribes (NCST) on Saturday took cognisance of Ansari's remarks and issued a notice to the Jharkhand government, seeking a report within three days.

Making baseless allegations against CEO is a sign of petty political mentality: Pratul Shahdeo

RANCHI: BJP state spokesperson Pratul Shahdeo said that seeing its defeat certain Jharkhand Mukti Morcha has become so disheartened that it is now making a series of excuses. Pratul said that the opposition habitually blames the investigating agencies for everything. But they forget that ED has seized illegal assets and money worth more than Rs 1,30,000 crore so far during the NDA rule.

Pratul said "accusing the Chief Electoral Officer of the state is a sign of poor political mentality. The election campaign has not even started in full swing and a flurry of allegations from JMM has started. JMM is doing all this under political pressure but the Election Commission is known to work impartially. The irony is that by accusing honest officials holding high positions in their own government, they are showing their distorted thinking. These same officers worked in this government for 5 years. Till then everything was fine. So an attempt is being made to divert attention by making baseless allegations against these officers."

"On the lines of a detective novel JMM is cooking the story of kidnapping of Hemant Soren's approver. In that too, the name of the Chief Electoral Officer is being dragged unnecessarily," Pratul said and he demanded from the Election



Commission to take action against Jharkhand Mukti Morcha for making such allegations without facts.

Pratul said that Bharatiya Janata Party is a family. JMM is a private limited company of corruption. That is why if any worker associated with our party is contesting the elections, we try till the last moment that not even a single vote goes waste.

He reiterated that everyone's aim is to overthrow the most corrupt government in the history of Jharkhand. He said that the JMM alliance came to power in 2019 in the elections conducted by the same Election Commission and paramilitary forces and police personnel. Today, seeing its definite defeat in the upcoming elections, JMM is making baseless allegations against these institutions. Apparently, JMM has gone all out in inventing excuses to be presented after the defeat.



THE YOUTH OF GOMIA HAVE UNDERSTOOD VERY WELL THAT ONLY NDA WILL DO GOOD: DR. LAMBODAR MAHATO

Youths of Jharkhand Mukti Morcha and Jharkhand Loktantrik Kranti Morcha join AJSU Party in large numbersGomia MLA Dr. Lambodar Mahato said that the youth of Gomia assembly constituency have understood very well that only NDA can do good for them and the region. The youth have faith in the policies and programs of NDA. He said these things today at the Milan Samaroh on the occasion of a large number of youth of Jharkhand Mukti Morcha and Jharkhand Loktantrik Kranti Morcha joining AJSU Party. He put the AJSU Party's badge on these youth who came to Tikahara Panchayat of Gomia block in the Milan Samaroh.

GARHWA POLICE ARRESTED A YOUTH WITH COUNTRY MADE PISTOL

GARHWA: Garhwa Police have arrested one youth from Achala Navadih village of Garhwa police station area and recovered two country-made pistols and two live cartridges. ASP Campaign Rahul Dev Baraik gave this information at Garhwa police station. Arrested youth has been identified as Rahul Kumar Dhar Dubey, son of late Kamlesh Dhar Dubey, resident of Achala Navadih under Garhwa Police Station area. ASP told that on Friday, Superintendent of Police Deepak Kumar Pandey had received information that an youth in Achala Navadih village was roaming around with illegal weapons. Later SP formed a police team led by SDPO Neeraj Kumar.



Women voters hold key in CM's constituency 31, other seats

RANCHI: Women voters may play a decisive role in 32 assembly constituencies, including the seats of Chief Minister Hemant Soren and former CM Champai Soren, as they outnumber male voters in the electoral roll.

Out of 32 constituencies where women voters are more than men, 26 are reserved for scheduled tribes.

The elections to the 81-seat Jharkhand assembly are scheduled to be held in two phases on November 13 and November 20.

The counting of votes is slated for November 23.

Jharkhand Chief Minister Hemant Soren has filed his nomination papers from the Barhait assembly constituency, where the number of women voters is higher than male voters.

The constituency enrolled more than 2.25 lakh voters, including 1.15 lakh women and 1.09 lakh male voters.

Similarly, the Saraikela assembly constituency registered over

3.69 lakh electors, including 1.83 lakh male and 1.85 lakh female voters.

Former chief minister and BJP nominee Champai Soren is contesting from the Saraikela seat. Soren joined the BJP on August 30 citing "insult" and "humiliation" at the hands of JMM leaders.

Barhait and Saraikela are among the 32 assembly seats where women voters outnumber male voters.

Jharkhand has 28 tribal reserved seats, nine scheduled castes and the rest are general category seats out of the total 81 constituencies.

Majhgaon assembly constituency in West Singhbhum district registered the highest number of women voters compared to their male counterparts. The constituency registered 1.21 lakh women voters against 1.12 lakh men voters as per the electoral roll.

Jharkhand has around

2.60 crore electors, including 1.31 crore male and 1.29 crore female voters, compared to 2.23 crore in the 2019 assembly elections.

There are 11.84 lakh first-time voters and 1.13 lakh people with disabilities, third-gender individuals, and senior citizens over 85, who are expected to vote.

In a bid to woo women voters in the state, political parties are leaving no stone unturned.

The BJP has pitched Gogo Didi Yojana to counter the JMM-led alliance government's Maiyan Samman Yojana to attract female voters.

Under Maiyan Samman Yojana, Rs 1,000 per month is credited to the accounts of over 50 lakh women in the state.

Jharkhand chief minister Hemant Soren said that the amount would be increased to Rs 2,500 monthly from December, if voted to power.

Out of 32 constituencies where women voters are more than men

Hemant Soren should immediately remove Irfan Ansari from the cabinet: Babulal Marandi

RANCHI: BJP State President and former Chief Minister Babulal Marandi, while talking to the media on Sunday said that Prime Minister Narendra Modi has told many things in his 'Mann Ki Baat'. He mentioned about two great men whose 150th birth anniversary is beginning. One of them is Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel and the other is Lord Birsa Munda. The birth anniversary of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel is celebrated

as National Unity Day. That day is also Diwali. This time Sardar Patel's birth anniversary has to be celebrated with more pomp and show.

Marandi said that November 15 is the birth anniversary of Lord Birsa Munda. His 150th birth anniversary is also starting. That too has to be celebrated with great pomp in the entire country.

The State President said that the need of the hour in

Jharkhand is to form a government under the leadership of Bharatiya Janata Party so that we all can save Jharkhand. Today, Jharkhand is trapped in the hands of brokers and middlemen who are busy looting everything. This election is to save Jharkhand from robbers, brokers and middlemen. We appeal to all the people of Jharkhand and request them to vote for Bharatiya Janata Party to save Jharkhand. The hand of

the country's Prime Minister Narendra Modi has to be strengthened.

Marandi said "it has become very clear that Hemant Soren is helpless. They can stoop to any extent for the sake of votes. The party may be different but Sita Soren is his sister-in-law. Durga is the wife of his agitator brother Durga Soren. Jamtara MLA Irfan Ansari uses this bad word about Sita Soren. We cannot use that

word. If Hemant Soren has even a little self-respect left in his heart then Irfan Ansari should be removed from the cabinet for using such filthy and derogatory words about a woman who is also Shibu Soren's daughter-in-law and his sister-in-law and yet Hemant Soren is silent and is not even removing him from the cabinet, then you can think how can the mothers and sisters of Jharkhand be protected?"

Niru Shanti Bhagat will win poll by huge margin: Jitendra Kr. Singh

QUAIYUM KHAN

LOHARDAGA: AJSU Party's Central Secretary cum election in-charge of Lohardaga assembly constituency Jitendra Kumar Singh while addressing the journalists in a press conference on Sunday said that this election is important for the identity and future of Jharkhand. NDA is committed to take the state on the path of development keeping intact its unity. He said that we all will together complete the blueprint for the development of

Lohardaga which was prepared by late Kamal Kishore Bhagat. We have a road map for rapid development of Lohardaga and Jharkhand. Singh said that Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Home Minister Amit Shah will come to the Lohardaga election campaign as star campaigners to ensure the victory of NDA candidate from AJSU Neeru Shanti Bhagat from Lohardaga assembly seat. Other leaders of NDA constituents will also come.

After the withdrawal of

names of the candidates, the list of star campaigners will be released after discussion under the leadership of AJSU supreme Sudesh Mahato. Jitendra Singh said that Neeru Shanti Bhagat will win the election this time by 75 thousand votes. Since the last elections, she has worked hard along with the party workers and has remained close to the people. This time AJSU has even made Chulha Pramukh. We will get votes from all sections of people. AJSU's 21-member con-



venor group has worked with full dedication. Any leader or star campaigner of the NDA constituents who will come to campaign

in Lohardaga will present the road map for the development of Lohardaga and Jharkhand in front of the public.

He Said that Hemant Soren's government brought Maiyyan Samman Yojana in the last period of its tenure to mislead the public. The nine resolutions of AJSU include respect and thinking towards women and youth, which the public will see once the NDA government comes to power. Migration is a big issue in Lohardaga. Neeru Shanti Bhagat will work to improve employment, roads and electricity systems. Go to Silli and see that there is employment in every house. After victory, we will work

on the road map of development at a fast pace, which has not been done till date.

While giving information about the padyatra starting from 28th, Assembly in-charge Jitendra Kumar Singh told the media that AJSU Party leader Neha Mahato along with Lohardaga candidate Niru Shanti Bhagat will reach every house of the assembly constituency and will fulfill the dreams of late Kamal Kishore Bhagat. At the same time, with BJP's Panch Pran and AJSU's nine resolutions, work will

be done to illuminate Lohardaga and every house in the state. On the occasion, NDA candidate Niru Shanti Bhagat, AJSU Party Central Secretary Suraj Aggarwal, Lal Guddu Nath Shahdev, Central Spokesperson Anju Devi, District President Omprakash Bharti, Women District President Anita Sahu, Minority President Shahid Ansari, Election co-in-charge Lakhan Prasad Sahu, Mahendra Mahato, Chairman of the convener group, Kanwaljeet Singh and others were present.

Bharatanatyam by Dr. N. Vijayalakshmi and vocal classical music by Rajneesh Kumar at Department of Art, Culture, and Youth

OUR CORRESPONDENT

PATNA: Cultural evening was organized by Department of Art, Culture, and Youth at Bhartiya Nritya Kala Mandir here on Sunday evening. The event featured performances by renowned Bharatanatyam dancer Dr. N. Vijayalakshmi, Principal Secretary, Animal and Fisheries Resources Department, as well as famous Indian classical music vocalist Rajneesh Kumar.

The programme was inaugurated by lighting lamp by former senior IAS officer Dr. Vijay Prakash, former Chief Secretary and current Chairman of Bihar Electricity Regulatory Commission, Amir Subhani, former Chief Secretary, Bihar and current Information



Commissioner of Bihar, Brajesh Mehrotra, Additional Chief Secretary, Education Department, Dr. S. Siddharth, Principal Secretary of Animal and Fisheries Resources Department and renowned Bharatanatyam dancer Dr. N.

Vijayalakshmi, Secretary, Department of Art, Culture, and Youth, Dayanidhan Pandey, senior litterateur Mamta Mehrotra, Mridula Prakash, famous Indian classical music vocalist Rajneesh Kumar, and other distin-

guished guests

The programme began with Ganesh Vandana composed by Tulsidas, performed by renowned Bharatanatyam dancer Dr. N. Vijayalakshmi. The lyrics were "Gaiye Ganpati Jagvandan Shankar Suvan Bhavani Ke Nandan." Following this, she presented enchanting "Mahishasura Mardini" composed by Adi Guru Shankaracharya. Bharatanatyam dance programme concluded with 'Mahalakshmi Stotra.'

Second performance of cultural evening was by Bihar's famous classical and semi-classical music vocalist Rajneesh Kumar, who presented a large and small Khayal in Raag Yaman, along with Thumri. Thumri lyrics were "Nadaan Jiya

Gum Gayo Re" and second Thumri was "Rang Rangeeli Raseeli Chhavi Brajnar Ki." He was accompanied by Dr. Shyam Mohan on tabla, Sudhir Kumar on harmonium, and Arthav Mans and Hemant Kumar on tanpura.

During the event, Director, Cultural Directorate Ruby, Deputy Secretary, Anil Kumar, Administrative Officer, Bhartiya Nritya Kala Mandir, Sushant Kumar, along with music lovers, litterateurs, famous personalities, and artists from Patna, and officials from the Department of Art, Culture, and Youth, participated. The audience numbered around 400 people. The programme was anchored by Soma Chakravarty.

Mahavir Cancer Institute made people aware about breast cancer by organizing Pink rally

OUR CORRESPONDENT

PATNA: Mahavir Cancer Institute organized Pink rally to make people aware about increasing number of breast cancer patients. Hundreds of doctors and hundreds of cancer patients and their families participated in this rally. During the programme, Dr. Manisha Singh and Dr. L. B. Singh jointly released hundreds of pink balloons in the sky and gave a clear message that they should spread awareness about breast cancer in their respective areas. Institute Medical Superintendent Dr. L. B. Singh said that number of breast cancer cases in women is continuously increasing in the whole world including India and breast cancer is the highest in women. People should be aware so that they can save their lives by getting timely tests done, he added.



Medical Director Dr. Manisha Singh said that if breast cancer is detected in the beginning, then it can be treated properly and there is a possibility of complete recovery, later on, when the disease spreads, it becomes incurable. She said that lot of time is wasted by irresponsible doctors in remote areas. People reach Mahavir Cancer Institute or other cancer hospitals when the disease spreads. She briefly mentioned chemotherapy for the treatment of breast cancer.

Dr. Vinita Trivedi, Head of

Radiation Department, gave information on various methods of cancer treatment.

Dr. Richa Chauhan, Dr. Rita Rani, Dr. C. Khandelwal, Dr. Subodh Kumar Sinha and many other doctors expressed their views. At end of the programme, hundreds of doctors, medical staff and hundreds of patients and their families present participated in the "Pink Walk" and the awareness campaign concluded by walking from the campus of the institute to National Highway 139.

Use of any type of firecrackers is completely banned in Patna urban area: DM

OUR CORRESPONDENT

PATNA: Patna DM Dr. Chandrashekhar Singh and Patna SSP Rajiv Mishra directed all SDOs and SDPOs to run a campaign against illegal firecracker business. Both officers said that illegal firecracker manufacturing, storage and sale should be strictly banned.

In light of order of Supreme Court and National Green Tribunal (NGT), use of any type of firecrackers has been completely banned in four urban areas of the state namely Patna, Gaya, Muzaffarpur and Hajipur, where the ambient air quality index (AQI) was found to be poor, very poor or severe last year. Violation of the above order is punishable. Department of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Government of Bihar and Bihar State Pollution Control



Board have also issued orders for its compliance.

District administration, Patna appeals to all residents of district to celebrate eco-friendly Diwali. Do not use firecrackers as smoke emitted from firecrackers, which contain harmful chemicals, causes serious damage to our health and environment. Use of gunpowder and heavy metals and chemicals used in fireworks/crackers increases air pollution significantly. This can cause health problems to all living beings, apart from posing a threat to children,

elderly persons and heart patients. Do not use kerosene oil in lighting diyas, as smoke emitted from its burning can damage our lungs and can cause irritation, tears and blurred vision in our eyes.

Both officials directed all SDOs and SDPOs within district to keep the raid team continuously active to stop sale of illegal firecrackers and take legal action against the culprits. Patna DM Dr. Singh and SSP Mishra have directed officers for effective control. They asked that Intelligence should be collected from police station level regarding illegal manufacture, sale, storage and transportation of firecrackers. Action should be taken after investigation of identified persons or establishments on the basis of intelligence. The investigation of persons or establishments for the manufacture, sale, transportation and storage of firecrackers should be done as per the conditions.

The stock register and distribution register of the establishments of the sellers of licensed explosive materials should be verified from time to time by the competent authority so that its illegal trade can be stopped. 5. Ensure that the manufacturing, storage and sale centres of firecrackers should never be in densely populated areas. It is necessary to find out the sources of availability of chemical substances used for the manufacture of firecrackers and take appropriate legal action to stop it. Ensure the arrest of wanted accused under the Explosive Substances Act.

Dr. Singh and Mishra have directed all SDOs and SDPOs to form teams and conduct intensive raids. They said that violation of Explosive Substances Act will not be tolerated. Strictest action will be taken against those who disobey the instructions, they added.

Seventh National Conference of Bipcon - 2024 concluded successfully, more than 500 doctors discussed pulmonary medicine

OUR CORRESPONDENT

PATNA: Two-day seventh national conference Bipcon - 2024 organized by Indian Chest Society, Bihar Chapter concluded successfully here on Sunday. More than 500 doctors, scientists, pharmaceutical companies and national and internationally renowned speakers participated in this conference held at Gyan Bhawan on October 26 and 27.

This conference brought science and service on one platform and provided an opportunity for unprecedented collaboration between chest disease specialists, scientists and general physicians. Dr. Sudhir Kumar, Dr. Prashant Kumar Singh, Dr. Dipendra Kumar Rai, Dr. Pawan Kumar Agarwal, Dr. Ashish D Sinha, Dr. Vaibhav Shankar, Dr. Praveen Kumar Shahi and Dr. Pranay Vinod of the organizing committee



made a commendable contribution in making this conference a success. They described this conference as very important for the medical world of Bihar.

The conference gave the message that this joint effort of science and service will definitely establish a new direction in the field of pulmonary medicine. The closing ceremony started with Dr. Satyajit

Kumar Singh, Dr. Prof. Vijay Prakash, Dr. Bibha Singh, Dr. Rashmi Singh, Society Patron Dr. Kamlesh Tiwari, Dr. A.S. Singh, Dr. D.P. Singh, Dr. TRBPN Singh and Dr. Mahendra Kumar jointly lighting the lamp. On the last day of the program, presentations, workshops, scientific sessions as well as quiz were organized by experts. At the end of the program, doctors

from Bihar and other states of India were honored. Also, delegates and pharmaceutical companies were also awarded by the society for better presentation.

Giving detailed information about the program, the organizing committee said that the objective of Bipcon - 2024 is to bring pulmonary experts on a common platform, where we can discuss the latest achievements and techniques of science. One of the main objectives of this conference is to ensure that pulmonary treatment is not only effective but also accessible and affordable to every section of society.

When all of us experts work together, we can make a real difference in the lives of patients. Bipcon - 2024 has brought together all these experts and provided a platform where we can all work together in the interest of patients.

Former Siwan MP Mohd. Sahabuddin's wife Heena Sahab and his son Osama Shahab joined RJD

ALOK MISHRA

PATNA: Former Siwan MP Mohd. Sahabuddin's wife Hina Sahab and his son Osama Shahab took membership of RJD in presence of RJD supremo Lalu Prasad and Leader of Opposition Tejashwi Yadav at residence of former chief minister (CM) Rabri Devi here on Sunday. Others who were present on the occasion included former CM Rabri Devi, State RJD President Jagdanand Singh, National Principal General Secretary Abdulbari Siddiqui and Rajya Sabha MP Sanjay Yadav.

On this occasion, RJD supremo Lalu Prasad said that family of late Shahabuddin was never far from them and after his family joined RJD and it has come closer to them.

Leader of Opposition Tejashwi Prasad Yadav said



that National President has given RJD membership today, along with them hundreds of supporters have also taken membership of the party. He said that their joining will strengthen social justice and secularism. The government running in Bihar under leadership of Nitish is spreading hatred and weakening peace in the society, he pointed out, adding that due to which there is no talk of development in Bihar and destructive forces are being strengthened. Everyone has to stand united

against this with full strength and resolution, he added.

State RJD spokesperson Ejaz Ahmed said that Hina Sahab and Osama Sahab were given RJD membership receipt, party symbol Gamchha and cap. He said that among those who joined him were former MLC Paramatma Ram, Lilavati Devi, Nutan Verma, Munna Shahi, Rama Ji Chaudhary, Imtiaz Ahmed, Habibur Rahman, Vivek Sharma and hundreds of others who joined RJD with him.

BJP and RSS are promoting hatred and violence: Pandey

OUR CORRESPONDENT

PATNA: State CPI Secretary Ram Naresh Pandey charged BJP and RSS with promoting hatred and violence. The kind of decisions taken in Mathura meeting of RSS are completely going to divide the society and end mutual brotherhood, he pointed out.

Pandey said that RSS's statement of 'Batinge to Katenge' is completely frightening Hindu society. When President, Vice President, Prime Minister and Supreme Court Judge of the country are Hindus, then how did Hindus come under threat, he asked, adding that when BJP's ground is slipping, then from RSS to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, everyone has started giving statements promoting communalism.

CPI State Secretary said that BJP always does politics in name of religion.

Union ministry of Tourism carried out Patna 4.0 Cleanliness Programme in Buddha Smriti Park and Kumhrar Museum



OUR CORRESPONDENT

PATNA: India Tourism Patna Office, Ministry of Tourism, Government of India organized a special Abhiyan 4.0 cleanliness programme at Buddha Smriti Park and Kumhrar Museum, Patna. The event was organized in Patna in collaboration with Yuva Tourism Club and Tourism Stakeholders of Bihar. The initiative was aimed at promoting environmental sustainability and increasing the attractiveness of these beautiful tourist destinations.

During the programme, participants carried out cleaning, hygiene activities at tourist sites and created awareness among the people about importance of conservation of natural habitats, sustainable tourism and community participation.

Also during this programme, under promotion of Dekho Apna Desh Abhiyan, students visited Kumhrar Museum and saw ancient sculptures which made them aware of rich art and culture of ancient India. In this way the programme was conducted very successfully.

Council of Magadh Women Empowerment" Kujapi (Gaya) organised a pre-Diwali celebration in the "Old Age Home



SURESH PD NIKHAR

GAYA: The voluntary organization "Council of Magadh Women Empowerment" Kujhapi (Gaya) organised a pre-Diwali celebration in the "Old Age Home" i.e. old age home "Sahara" Manpur. T

In the same way the organisation distributed woolen shawls, candles, sweets and other items of daily use to the elderly in the old age home "Sahara". Patron of the organization Praveen Ranjan Gandhi said that through this program, Diwali was organized to bring happiness on the faces of elderly people living in the old age home away from their families and to provide them mental peace. However the Secretary

of Council of Magadh Women Empowerment" Ms. Tamkanat said that this occasion is a spiritual experience for us before the festival of Diwali. However the Chairman Naveen Ranjan said that on this occasion, the elderly were seen rejoicing despite losing everything in the old age home. On this occasion, researchers Manoj Kumar, Ravi Kumar, Krishna Kumar, Shivam Kumar, social worker Sudhir Kumar, Pawan Nandvanshi, Sushil Kumar etc were present from South Bihar Central University. Dr. Mozaffar Iqbal, Prashant Kumar, Satish Kumar, Dr. Rajiv Ranjan Pandey, Ajay Kumar, Purushottam Kumar, Vikash Kumar helped in this program with financial donations.

Four pairs of special trains to be operated

OUR CORRESPONDENT

PATNA: In view of extra rush of passengers during Diwali and Chhath, many special trains are being operated by Railways for their convenience. In this episode, four more pairs of special trains are being operated.

Train number 09803/09804 Kota-Danapur-Kota Special-Train number 09803/09804 Kota-Danapur-Kota Special train will be operated between Kota and Danapur via Guna, Sagar, Katni, Prayagraj Chheoki, Pandit Deen Dayal Upadhyay Jn. This special train will have 19 coaches of third AC class. This special will run from Kota every Sunday and Thursday from 27.10.2024 to 10.11.2024 and from Danapur every Monday and Friday from 28.10.2024 to 11.11.2024. Train No. 09803 Kota-Danapur Special will leave Kota at 21.25 hrs on Sunday and Thursday

and reach Danapur at 20.00 hrs the next day. In return, train no. 09804 Danapur-Kota Special will leave Danapur at 21.30 hrs on Monday and Friday and reach Kota at 22.25 hrs the next day.

Train No. 05739/05740 Patna-Newjalpaiguri-Patna Special- This special train would run between Patna Junction and Silliguri via Kishanganj, Katihar, Barauni, Mokama. This special train will have 01 coach of first AC class, 02 of second AC class, 06 coaches of third AC class, 01 coach of third AC economy class and 06 coaches of sleeper class. This special will run from Newjalpaiguri and Patna Jn. on every Saturday from 02.11.2024 to 30.11.2024. Train no. 05740 Newjalpaiguri-Patna special will leave Newjalpaiguri at 05.00 hrs on Saturday and reach Patna Jn. at 17.40 hrs on the same day. In

return, train no. 05739 Patna-Newjalpaiguri special will leave Patna Jn. on Saturday. It will depart from Katihar at 19.30 hrs and reach Newjalpaiguri at 09.30 hrs the next day.

Train No. 07541/07542 Katihar-Dauram Madhepura-Katihar Special- Train No. 07541/07542 Katihar-Dauram Madhepura-Katihar Special train will be operated between Katihar and Dauram Madhepura via Purnia, Banmankhi, Janakinagar, Murliganj. This special will run between Katihar and Dauram Madhepura daily from 28.10.2024 to 30.11.2024. Train No. 07541 Katihar-Dauram Madhepura Special will depart from Katihar daily at 19.00 hrs and reach Dauram Madhepura at 22.00 hrs. In return, Train No. 07542 Dauram Madhepura-Katihar Special will leave Dauram Madhepura daily at 22.45 hrs and reach Katihar at

02.30 hrs late night.

Train No. 05744/05743 Katihar-Chhapra-Katihar Special- Train No. 05744/05743 Katihar-Chhapra-Katihar Special train will run between Katihar and Chhapra via Navgachiya, Mansi, Khagaria, Barauni, Shahpur Patori, Hajipur Sonpur. This special will run from Katihar every Thursday, Sunday and Monday from 27.10.2024 to 28.11.2024 and from Chhapra every Friday, Monday and Tuesday from 28.10.2024 to 29.11.2024. Train No. 05744 Katihar-Chhapra Special will depart from Katihar at 16.00 hrs and reach Chhapra at 00.20 hrs late night. In return, 05743 Chhapra-Katihar Special will depart from Chhapra at 04.30 hrs and reach Katihar at 12.30 hrs on the same day. This train will have 01 AC 2nd class, 03 AC 3rd class, 12 sleeper class and 05 general class coaches.

BCCI organizes free cataract operation

OUR CORRESPONDENT

PATNA: Bihar Chamber of Commerce and Industries (BCCI) organized a free cataract operation camp at Shri Balaji Netralaya, Bahadurpur, Patna, on Sunday afternoon. The camp was inaugurated by former Governor of Sikkim and Meghalaya Ganga Prasad and chief guest of the programme was former Union minister Ram Kripal Yadav. Praising social upliftment work being carried out by Chamber, he said that in past too, Chamber has taken an active part in helping people during disasters in the state from time to time.

Chamber President Subhash Patwari said that Chamber has not only been actively participating in



works for business welfare but is also always ahead in discharging social responsibilities. He further said that in same sequence, on the occasion of World Sight Day, Bihar Chamber of Commerce and Industries, in collaboration with Shri Balaji Netralaya, organized a free eye check-up camp for the general public in the Chamber premises.

A large number of people got their eyes checked in the camp, most of whom were from the same age group. People were advised to take medicines and keep their eyes safe but there were 25 people among them who needed immediate operation but due to financial weakness they were unable to bear the expenses of the operation.

Keeping this in mind, Chamber had decided to identify such people in the check-up camp and get their eyes operated, he pointed out.

Patwari told that in Chamber's operation camp, cataract operation of eye patients was carried out by Dr. Shashi Mohanka, Director of Shri Balaji Netralaya and his team and Chamber itself bore all expenses on this and also provided medicines and glasses to the patients.

Others who were present on the occasion included Vice President Ashish Shankar and Pradeep Chaurasia, general secretary, Pashupati Nath Pandey, former Vice President Mukesh Kumar Jain and Executive Member Ajay Gupta and other members.

Dana doom: Hundreds of families rendered homeless, twice in a month

MI News Service, Tamluk: In a little over a month, hundreds of families in a cluster of south Bengal districts have been driven out of their homes a second time.

When floods struck last month, destroying or damaging homes weeks before the Durga Puja, these families had to shift to government shelters.

On Friday, Cyclone Dana blew away or submerged the makeshift dwellings in which most of them have since been living, often protected by mere tarpaulin sheets, forcing them to move again — to makeshift government camps or relatives' homes.

"Our one-storey house was washed away in last month's flood. We set up a tent-like structure on the embankment of the Dwarakeshwar river," said Manas Bag of Talit village in Khanakul, Hooghly.

"But the temporary shelter was damaged by the rain and gusts early on Friday. So, we had to leave again for a relative's home."

Bag said at least six families in his village had lost their homes on the night of September 17 when a large stretch of the embankment gave way to floodwaters.

Most south Bengal districts had recorded between 56mm and 95mm of rain in the past 24 hours, the Met office in Calcutta said at 8am on Friday. With heavy rain continuing to lash south Bengal through the day, Saturday's weather bulletin is expected to contain a much higher figure.

Saheb Porey, a resident of Dhanyaghor village in Hooghly whose house was destroyed in the September floods, has taken shelter at a local high school with his wife and two children.

"We don't have the money to rebuild our home anytime soon. I fled and took shelter in the school, fearing another round of flooding," the 35-year-old van driver said.

Heavy rain and the release of huge volumes of water from the DVC's barges had caused massive flooding in parts of Hooghly, Howrah, Bankura, East Burdwan, and East and West Midnapore in September, leaving at least 4,000 people homeless. River embankments had caved in at 65-odd locations.

Just when these families' lives were limping back to a semblance of normalcy, around 500 of them from various parts of Arambagh and Khanakul in Hooghly had to be shifted to camps on Friday.

"If the rain persists on Saturday, more families may need to be brought to temporary flood centres," an official in Hooghly said.

Hundreds of families in Howrah and the two Midnapores too had to abandon their homes a second time in successive months.

Pulok Roy, state PWD minister and Trinamool leader from Howrah, said Dana had forced the administration to relocate on Friday 1,700 people who had already been rendered homeless once during last month's floods.

"Though there was no severe cyclonic storm today, the relentless rain has brought fresh hardship to people in areas such as Udaynarayanpur and Amta in my district that were badly affected in the September floods, too," he said.



Artist gives finishing touches to an idol of Goddess Kali at the reverse side of the earthenware plate ahead of Kali Puja festival in Kolkata on Sunday.

World Stroke Day: The Neglected Role of Speech Pathologists in India's Stroke Care System

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Stroke is one of the most pressing health challenges globally, affecting over 15 million people annually. In India, nearly 1.8 million new stroke cases occur each year, according to The Lancet Neurology (2019), making it a leading cause of death and disability. Despite advancements in medical technology and critical care, the crucial role of speech-language pathologists (SLPs)—who treat communication and swallowing disorders—remains severely overlooked in India's healthcare system. This editorial highlights the importance of integrating SLPs from ICU admission to post-hospitalization care, outlines legal gaps, and compares India's situation with global best practices.

The Essential Role of SLPs in Stroke Care

Stroke survivors frequently suffer from aphasia, dysarthria, apraxia of speech, and dysphagia (difficulty swallowing). SLPs play a key role in diagnosing and managing these conditions, preventing serious complications. Research in the American Journal of Medicine (2021) found that early assessment and treatment of dysphagia by SLPs reduced the risk of aspiration pneumonia—a leading cause of death in stroke patients—by 45%. Furthermore, timely speech therapy re-

stores communication abilities, significantly reducing the psychological burden of speech loss and improving quality of life. Countries like the United States, Australia, and the United Kingdom integrate SLPs into stroke care teams from the first day of ICU admission. The American Stroke Association (ASA) and NHS Guidelines mandate speech therapy assessments within 24-48 hours of stroke onset, ensuring continuous care throughout recovery. However, India's healthcare system continues to underutilize SLPs, compromising patient outcomes and quality of care.

Systemic Neglect and Legal Gaps in India

In India, stroke patients rarely receive early speech therapy, with only 25% of hospitals with stroke units employing full-time SLPs (Indian Stroke Association, 2020). The Rehabilitation Council of India (RCI) oversees SLP training, but no healthcare policy mandates their inclusion in ICUs or stroke care teams. The National Health Policy (2017) and Disability Act (2016) fail to address communication disabilities common among stroke survivors, leaving patients vulnerable to preventable complications and prolonged recovery.

International Models: Best Practices and Outcomes

Countries with strong healthcare policies integrating speech therapy

into stroke care achieve superior outcomes. In Australia, stroke guidelines require speech therapy within 24 hours of ICU admission, resulting in a 30% reduction in ICU stays (Medical Journal of Australia, 2021). In the UK, mandatory SLP involvement has led to lower stroke-related disability rates and reduced healthcare costs. Comparatively, India's lack of early intervention contributes to 40% higher rates of permanent speech disabilities in stroke survivors (Indian Journal of Public Health, 2018).

The Economic and Social Impact the economic burden of stroke in India is substantial, with the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) estimating that stroke-related healthcare costs amount to 1.5% of the GDP annually. Hospital stays are longer due to preventable complications, with families spending over INR 1.5 lakh per admission. Timely speech therapy could reduce these expenses by shortening hospital stays and preventing readmissions. Additionally, untreated communication disorders often result in depression and social isolation, with 60% of stroke survivors developing severe depression when speech therapy is delayed (Journal of Neuropsychiatry and Clinical Neurosciences, 2021).

Policy Recommendations

for India

To improve stroke outcomes, comprehensive policy reforms are needed:

- Mandate SLP Inclusion:** Legislate the inclusion of SLPs in all stroke care teams, particularly in ICUs and rehabilitation units.
- Insurance Coverage:** Expand public and private insurance schemes, such as Ayushman Bharat, to cover speech therapy as an essential healthcare service.
- Clinical Guidelines:** Develop national stroke guidelines mandating SLP involvement within 24-48 hours of stroke onset, aligned with global best practices.
- Awareness Campaigns:** Launch campaigns to educate healthcare providers and the public on the importance of speech therapy in stroke recovery.

Conclusion: Bridging the Gap in Stroke Care

On World Stroke Day, India must recognize the essential role of speech-language pathologists in stroke recovery. Their timely intervention saves lives, prevents complications, and restores independence to stroke survivors. By adopting policy reforms and following global best practices, India can improve patient outcomes, reduce healthcare costs, and enhance the quality of life for millions of stroke survivors. The time to act is now—speech pathologists are not optional; they are essential for comprehensive stroke care.

Harmonics' Vijaya Sammilani

Nurul Islam Khan

The Harmonics' Vijaya Sammilani was held on Saturday at the Bholagiri Kalamandir stage in Howrah. The chief guest of the program was the eminent musician Shri Prashant Dhara and the eminent vocal artist Smt. Sheba Gupta. The program began with the lighting of the lamp. Then, the opening music was performed by Mallardhavani under the direction of Shri Pratik Chakraborty. The guests and artists were welcomed with Uttariya, flower hymns, and certificates of appreciation. Solo music was performed by - Sanjay Sen, Abhilasha Saha, Tapan Pal, Mamata Maiti, Purabi Chatterjee, Swarnali Chakraborty, Papiya Sen and others. Recitation was performed by Sheba Gupta, Navnita Kundu, Shamita Chongdar, Snehideep Roy. The special at-



traction was the musical performance by Shri Prashant Dhara and Shri Pratik Chakraborty. The play 'Gandhajale' was performed by the Sandhani Shilpi Gosthi of the program. The director was Shri Devadeep Gangu. Abhijit Nag, Arijit Bhattacharya and Tanmay Das contributed to the instrumental music. The program was conducted by Saikat Nandi. The program was planned and directed by Aheri Das and Pratik Chakraborty.

Participants of World Meet Indonesia to Join King's Birthday Celebration



MI News Jakarta/Kolkata: HRH Princess Mufida Rayya Mubarak, Chairperson of the upcoming 6th World Meet 2025, announced that participants of the highly anticipated World Meet in Jakarta on 28th January 2025 will have the esteemed honor of attending the birthday celebration of His Majesty King Sany Wijaya Natakusuma SH of the Padjadaran Kingdom, Indonesia. This grand celebration, scheduled for 30th January 2025 at the Royal Palace, will welcome over

2,500 members of international royal families from around the world. The previous World Meet took place in Manchester, UK, and set a high standard for cultural exchange and unity. M.A. Ali, Director of World Meet, shared his excitement, stating, "We are on the verge of making history in Indonesia. This World Meet will bring together participants from across the globe, and the 2025 International Awards will honor our unsung heroes from various fields." The event will feature karate and martial arts showcases, a vibrant cultural program, and other activities aimed at fostering peace and humanity on a global scale. With representation from diverse nations, the 6th World Meet promises to be a milestone gathering that strengthens bonds of unity and celebrates shared values.

Sale of minor by orchestra team after Facebook friendship then rape



MI News Service, Hooghly: A minor girl went missing from a village under Tarkeshwar police station. The girl's father filed a complaint at Tarkeshwar police station. During the investigation, it was found that a boy named Rahul had raped the girl and sold her to an orchestra team in East Champaran Bihar. After that with the support of Chiraya Police Station of East Champaran, Bihar Motihari Child Welfare Committee. The girl was recovered on July 19. After rescuing the girl, he gave details that the girl went to meet a boy named Tahir Ali Moula at Howrah station and there she met an unknown boy named Rahul. The boy promised her marriage, lured her into a love trap and took the girl to Bihar, raped her several times and sold her to an orchestra team. After thorough investigation, it was found that the boy's real name is Mizanur Mandal and he belongs to Ishwari Gacha Sehra Police Station, Ashok Nagar District, North 24 Parganas. On August 7, the accused Tahir Ali Moula was arrested from his own house in Tal Tala of South 24 Parganas district. Since then, the rest of the accused kept fleeing sometimes to Bihar and sometimes to Nepal. On October 25, it was learned that the accused Mizanur Mandal alias Rahul had come to Singur along with his associates to take a girl, immediately after receiving this information, the main

accused of Singur with the help of the SOG cell of Singur Police Station and Hooghly Rural District Police was arrested. Mizanur Mandal alias Rahul and Sri Ram Rai of Taratala police station of South 24 Parganas district were arrested by Tarkeshwar police station. After questioning the two accused, it was found that Nand Kishore Kumar, whose house was in Darpa, East Champaran, had taken the girls from West Bengal to Bihar and involved them in anti-social activities. Nand Kishore was now staying at his in-laws' house under Krishnaganj police station of Nadia district in Majdia area. As soon as the information was received, the accused was arrested from Majdiya of Krishnaganj police station under the leadership of the police officer of Tarkeshwar police station. The case is being investigated and the accused have been remanded 7 days after appearing in court for questioning. During their interrogation, it came to light that Mizanur Mandal i.e. Rahul and Sri Ram Rai were working as agents of Nanda Kishore Kumar. Their job is to lure the girls and sell them in the hands of Nanda Kishore through various social media like Facebook, WhatsApp or phone calls. After that, Nanda Kishore would sell these girls to some of his orchestras and orchestra teams, where he would make them dance in scantily clad clothes or engage in other anti-social activities.

Mumbai court directs Darjeeling filmmaker to repay over Rs 3 crore borrowed from financier

MI News Service, Siliguri/Darjeeling: A court in Mumbai has directed a Darjeeling-based filmmaker to deposit over 3 crore that he had borrowed from a person in Portugal for making a film, in court.

Shenpenn Khymnar, a film producer and director from Darjeeling, had made the bilin-

gual (Hindi and Nepali) film, Broken Wings, which is a tragic love story set in the backdrop of the 1986 Gorkhaland agitation "inspired by true events".

"He had taken a sum of CAD 5,00,000 (Canadian dollars) or around 3.31 crore from Frank Telghani, a businessman in Por-

tugal, in three installments as a loan for making the film. He had promised Telghani that once the film is released, he would repay the money," said Kshitij Pal, an advocate in Mumbai, who represented Telghani in the case.

According to him, Khymnar, who made

the first full-fledged film, Broken Wings, from Darjeeling and runs the Monk and the Warrior Productions, had taken the money in 2019 and 2020.

The film had Vinay Pathak of Bheja Fry fame in the cast, along with other actors such as Mrinal Singh, Sunakshi Grover and

Neetu Pandey.

"However, the filmmaker didn't return the money to Frank Telghani, nor did he apprise the latter of the earnings made from the film," Pal said, adding that Telghani eventually filed a case with the city civil and sessions court of Greater Bombay.

PM to inaugurate Tata-Airbus C295 aircraft plant on today; facility set to bag orders for 12 more planes soon

NEW DELHI : The Tata-Airbus aircraft facility set to be inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his Spanish counterpart Pedro Sanchez in Vadodara on Monday is expected to roll out the first Made in India C-295 transport plane by September 2026 and complete delivery of all 40 of them by August 2031.

India had signed a contract with Airbus in 2021 to buy 56 C-295 transport aircraft of which 16 were to be directly sent from Spain while 40 had to be manufactured in India at Tata facility in Vadodara. Official sources on Sunday informed that the plant is set to get orders for 12 more of the 15 aircraft that are going to be used by

the Indian Navy and Indian Coast Guard for surveillance requirements.

The Defence Acquisition Council has cleared a proposal to buy 15 C-295 planes of which three will come in fly-away condition from Spain.

Ministry of Defence in September 2021 signed the Rs 21,935-crore contract under which the first aircraft was delivered in September 2023."As of date, IAF has already inducted 6 x C295 ac in its 11 Squadron based at Vadodara. The last of the 16 flyaway aircraft will be delivered by August 2025," sources said. "Of 40 aircraft to be made in India, first C-295 will roll out of the Vadodara facility in September 2026 and the



remaining 39 by August 2031. Along with the aircraft, a Full Mission Simulator has also been installed at IAF's Agra station," the official sources said.

They said that other than the aero engine and avionics, which are sourced by Airbus from other equipment manufacturers, the other structural parts will mostly be made in India. "Of 14000 detailed parts used in one aircraft, 13,000 would be made in India from raw material. A total of 37 companies have already been identified by Airbus, of these 33 are medium and small enterprises," they said. The sources said that the value addition by TASL will gradually increase indigenous content from 48

per cent in the first 16 aircraft to 75 per cent in the last 24 aircraft. "All 56 aircraft will be equipped with an Electronic Warfare Suite that will be indigenously manufactured by Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL) and Bharat Dynamics Limited (BDL)," they said.

On the employment generation by the project, the sources said that the number of man-hours that Airbus employs to manufacture an aircraft in Spain, will be gradually transferred to India. "Initially it will be 78% for first 5 aircraft, which will increase to 96% for remaining 35 aircraft. The project is expected to generate 600 highly skilled jobs directly, over 3,000 indirect jobs and

an additional 3,000 medium-skill employment opportunities with more than 42.5 lakh man-hours of work within the aerospace and defence sector," they said. Commenting on the programme, Air Marshal Sanjeev Kapoor (Retired) said that best part of the project is creation of an aircraft manufacturing ecosystem in the country.

"37 industrial partners have been shortlisted by Airbus to support their program in Baroda...It is envisaged that by 2030 the indigenous component will increase to 78%...The increase in the Indigenous component will help the Air Force improve in a way as we will not be dependent on OEM or any other agency to provide us with service or space for that matter," he said.

Mumbai: Nine injured in stampede at Bandra Terminus station



MUMBAI : At least nine people were injured following a stampede at Mumbai's Bandra railway station on Sunday morning, Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) said.

The stampede occurred due to a rush on platform number 1, where a crowd gathered for Bandra-Gorakhpur Express at Bandra Terminus station.

Following the incident, the injured passengers have been shifted to the hospital, the BMC further said.

Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha, Rahul Gandhi, on Sunday described the recent stampede at Mumbai's Bandra Terminus station as an example of "India's crumbling infrastructure," asserting that the country requires "international-class infrastructure."

"Inaugurations and publicity hold value only when backed by a foundation that genuinely serves the public. When lives are lost, and bridges, platforms, or statues collapse after ribbon-cutting ceremonies due to poor maintenance and neglect of

public property, it raises serious concerns," Rahul Gandhi posted on X.

The Congress leader said that the stampede at Bandra Terminus highlights "India's crumbling infrastructure."

"The Balasore train accident in June last year claimed 300 lives, yet instead of compensating the victims, the BJP government has embroiled them in lengthy legal battles. Just think--when even the statue of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj collapsed within just nine months, it clearly indicates that the intent was merely publicity, with no respect for Shivaji Maharaj or concern for public safety," the LoP said.

"Today, the nation needs world-class infrastructure that also addresses the local needs of the poor--facilitating business, easing travel, and ensuring safety," he added.

He further stated that India is capable and competent, requiring only an "effective and transparent system" dedicated to public service and building a strong future for the country.



Bengaluru-Ayodhya Akasa flight receives hoax bomb threat

AYODHYA : Ayodhya's Maharishi Valmiki International Airport was the scene of heightened security on Sunday following a bomb threat on a flight arriving from Bengaluru.

The aircraft, operated by Akasa Airlines, was carrying 173 passengers and landed safely amid urgent safety protocols.

Upon landing, authorities initiated a thorough inspection of the plane and its occupants. The incident, while concerning, has been managed effectively, with passengers remaining safe and cooperative throughout the ongoing checks.

Maharishi Valmiki Airport Director Vinod Kumar confirmed that all checks have been completed and nothing suspicious was found.

"There was a bomb threat call concerning the Akasa flight from Bengaluru to Ayodhya. The checks have been conducted successfully, and it appears the call was a hoax. There were 173 passengers on board," said Airport Director Vinod Kumar.

"Around 1:30, we received information about a bomb being planted on the flight, prompting an immediate landing. The passengers, their luggage, and the aircraft were thoroughly checked, but nothing suspicious was found. We received a similar hoax call on Wednesday as well. All passengers are safe now," Kumar added. As investigations continue, airport officials have assured the public that all necessary precautions are in place to ensure safety at the airport.

Earlier this month, an Air India Express flight (IX-196) from Dubai to Jaipur also received a bomb threat via email.

According to Jaipur Airport Police SHO Sandeep Basera, the plane, carrying 189 passengers, made an emergency landing at Jaipur International Airport at 1:20 am on Saturday. After a thorough check by security forces, nothing suspicious was found, confirmed the police officer.

Release of the book "Perspective in Fictional Criticism with Special Reference to EM Forster and Edwin Muir" written by DK Sinha



RANCHI : Former Union Minister Subodh Kant Sahai said that in the present times, the effort to generate interest in reading books, especially among the youth, is highly commendable. Good books are very helpful in building a healthy, prosperous and educated society. Books serve as our life's guides as well. At his residence (E-39 Sector 3, Dhurva) in HEC campus, Mr. Sahai on Sunday unveiled a book authored by Prof. Dharendra Kumar Sinha, a distinguished educationist

and former head of the English department at HD Jain College, Ara, (Bihar). The book was published by Value Publication. "Good books are like true friends," he added. According to him, social empowerment is strengthened via information acquisition and sharing. Considering the mindset of today's youth, Prof. Sinha's drafting of these books is praiseworthy.

Dr. Suresh Prasad Singh, a well-known education expert and former vice chancellor of

Veer Kunwar Singh University in Ara (Bihar), noted that the publication of the book mentioned above, which is devoted to youth empowerment, is a positive step. He claimed that this novel does a great job of portraying human values.

Building a rich and clean society will be made much easier with the help of Prof. Sinha's book. "Keep your spirits high, life is not a destination, keep moving" was his advice to the author.

Former Ranchi University

DSW Dr. Prakash Verma gave the welcoming speech and provided an overview of the subject at the book release ceremony.

Amarendra Vishnupuri gave the vote of gratitude. On this occasion, Sunil Kumar Sahai and other dignitaries were in attendance. Professor Dharendra Kumar Sinha, author of "Perspective in Fictional Criticism with Special Reference to EM Forster and Edwin Muir", did his post graduation in English from Patna University in 1969. Thereafter he received a UGC Fellowship. He obtained his PhD degree from Tilka Manjhi, Bhagalpur University in 1988. After this, he taught English language and literature at HD Jain College, Ara (Bihar) for about 25 years. He was the Head of the Department of English at Veer Kunwar Singh University, Ara (Bihar) from 2000 to 2008. He participated in various seminars/symposia organized at national and international level. Prof. Sinha has published many research papers, which have been published in various research journals.

This Dhanteras, Gujarat set to get new lion safari at Barda to ease burden on Sasan

BARDA : Enhancing Gujarat's wildlife tourism offerings, the inauguration of the Barda Wildlife Sanctuary and Phase-1 of the Barda Jungle Safari will take place on Dhanteras, October 29, at Kapurdi Check Post in Devbhumi Dwarka aiming to ease the burden on Sasan.

The ceremony will be led by Forest and Environment Minister Mulubhai Bera, with Jamnagar MP Poonam Madam and other esteemed dignitaries gracing the event, announced Gujarat Wildlife PCCF, N Srivastava.

'Barda Jungle Safari' Phase-I, spread over approx. 192 square kilometres of the Barda region, with its high and low hills, is designated as a sanctuary.

Barda Jungle Safari includes some of the most picturesque areas of Bhanwad-Ranavav and the Barda Wildlife Sanctuary. This safari offers visitors an exhilarating experience of the sanctuary's rich biodiversity.



sity. The safari trail traverses the vicinity of the Kilganga River, providing a unique opportunity to observe the sanctuary's abundant flora and distinctive fauna.

Additionally, travellers are required to book their tickets in advance to obtain a safari permit. Soon, online booking facilities for these permits will also be made available, allowing tourists to plan their visits more conveniently and in advance.

The sanctuary is home to 368 plant species, with

shrubs making up the highest proportion at 54 per cent. The sanctuary serves as a vital habitat for a diverse array of mammals, encompassing 22 species including Asiatic Lions, leopards, jungle cats, hyenas, mongooses, jackals, foxes, hares, and various other wildlife animals.

Moreover, the sanctuary consists of 269 species of birds, enriching the remarkable avian diversity. The notable species include peacocks, Partridge, Indian paradise flycatchers, Painted

Stork, bulbul, drongos, Indian rollers, and white-throated kingfishers.

Gujarat Wildlife PCCF, N Srivastava said "Under the guidance of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the leadership of Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel, the conservation and preservation of wildlife has been a priority. As a result, citizens and tourists will now have the opportunity to witness Gujarat's pride, the Asiatic lion, within the hills of Barda.

Currently, Gujarat is home to approximately 674 Asiatic lions and now Barda Wildlife Sanctuary in Devbhumi Dwarka district will also be established as a secure and natural habitat for them."

There are 368 plant species in the varied ecosystems of Barda Wildlife Sanctuary, including 26 vine types, 59 trees, 83 herbaceous plants, and 200 shrubs. The majority, 54 per cent, is composed of shrubs, followed by trees (16 per cent), vines

(9 per cent), and herbaceous plants (23 per cent). Of them, Rayan is regarded as one of the most important species at Barda.

The picturesque safari spread across the large vicinity of the Kilganga River, providing the exhilarating experience of the sanctuary's rich biodiversity. The sanctuary is open during the winter season from October 16 to February and in the summer season from March 1 to June 15. Additionally, the Barda Jungle Safari is closed each year from June 16 to October 15.

The visitors can book the tickets in advance to obtain a safari permit. Soon, online booking facilities for these permits will also be made available. The famous attractions located near the sanctuary are Navlakha Temple, Modpar Fort, Jambuvan Caves, Sudama, Kirti, and the famous Nageshwar and Dwarkadhish Temples.

Bangalore Metropolitan Transport Corporation wins National Award of Excellence

BENGALURU : Bangalore Metropolitan Transport Corporation (BMTTC) has been honoured with the prestigious Award of Excellence in Urban Transport in the category of "City with Best Record of Public Involvement in Transport," officials said on Sunday. According to officials, this award was presented by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, Government of India. The award ceremony was held on October 27, 2024, at the Mahatma Gandhi Mandir Convention Center in Gandhinagar, Gujarat. Ramachandran R., Managing Director of BMTTC, received the award from Manohar Lal, the Minister of Housing and Urban Affairs. This prestigious recognition.

"By 2030 Indigenous component will increase to 78 pc, will help Air Force improve in a way": Air Marshal Sanjeev Kapoor (Retd)

NEW DELHI : Ahead of Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurating the Tata Advanced Systems Ltd's (TASL's) final assembly line facility for the C295 aircraft in Vadodara, Air Marshal Sanjeev Kapoor (Retd) on Sunday said that by 2030 the Indigenous component will increase to 78 per cent which will help the Air Force improve in a way.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will visit Gujarat on Monday, where he along with his Spanish counterpart Pedro Sanchez will jointly inaugurate the TATA Aircraft

Complex for manufacturing C-295 aircraft.

Speaking to ANI, Air Marshal Sanjeev Kapoor (Retd) in the national capital on Sunday said that the deal was signed in September 2021 with Airbus. "The Spanish company CASA has been overtaken by Airbus...56 aircraft were agreed by the government as replacements for HS 748 Avro aircraft. The agreement so stipulates that 16 aircraft will come in the fly-away condition and the rest 40 will be manufactured here. Six aircraft have already

arrived...The remaining aircraft will join us by the middle of next year...The best part is the creation of an ecosystem to develop the industry to increase the indigenous portion of the remaining 40 aircraft...37 industrial partners have been shortlisted by Airbus to support their program in Baroda...It is envisaged that by 2030 the indigenous component will increase to 78%...The increase in the Indigenous component will help the Air Force improve in a way as we will not be dependent on OEM or any

other agency to provide us with service or space for that matter," the Air Marshal said.

He further said that the aircraft (Airbus C295) could carry about 50 paratroopers, and 72 troops and could lift about 7.5 tons of load.

"This is much better than the AN32 (Antonov An-32 aircraft) performance...The best part and the difference which will help the services is that in the Avros, the getting in and getting out is from the side doors like any commercial aeroplane, but here in C295 there is a ramp. So getting in and getting out of

things, loading equipment, para assault landing, short field landing, high altitude operations, valley flying, and rescue becomes very easy," he said. "The ambitious program of PM Modi wherein the UDAN scheme is linking the small and austere airfields in the far-flung areas of island territories Andaman, Nicobar, Lakshadweep, Northeast and high altitudes. We would need a platform which has this capability. So C295 aeroplane can land in short strips as short as about 3,000ft," he added. Tata Advanced Systems Ltd is

responsible for making these 40 aircraft in India. This facility will be the first private sector Final Assembly Line (FAL) for military aircraft in India. It will involve the full development of a complete ecosystem from the manufacture to assembly, test, and qualification, to delivery and maintenance of the complete lifecycle of the aircraft.

Apart from Tatas, leading defence public sector units such as Bharat Electronics Ltd. and Bharat Dynamics Ltd. as well as private Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises will contribute.

EDITOR'S PICK

‘Real threat to democracy is people who accuse Trump of endangering it’

LANCASTER: Tech mogul Elon Musk, speaking at a town hall Saturday night in Pennsylvania to support Republican Donald Trump, played down the January 6 attack on the US Capitol and exhorted supporters to cast votes early in the presidential swing state while describing mail ballots as a “recipe for fraud.”

The freewheeling session inside a ballroom at a hotel in downtown Lancaster touched on a dizzying range of topics, from space exploration and the Tesla cybertruck to immigration and the efficacy of psychiatric drugs. The town hall was part of Musk’s efforts through his super PAC to help boost Trump in swing states ahead of the November 5 presidential election against Democrat Kamala Harris.

Musk, whom Trump has vowed to give a role in his administration if he wins next month, spent nearly two hours taking questions from town hall participants. While most were laudatory and covered a variety of topics, one was particularly pointed: A man wanted to know what Musk would say to concerns from voters that Trump’s election could lead to democracy backsliding in the US considering his role in the January 6, 2021, insurrection.

While calling it a fair question, Musk also said that the January 6 attack by Trump’s supporters has been called “some sort of violent insurrection, which is simply not the case” — a response that drew applause from the crowd. More than 100 law enforcement personnel were injured in the attack, some beaten with their own weapons, when a mob of Trump supporters who believed his lies that the 2020 election was stolen from him stormed the Capitol to stop the certification of votes.

Musk also claimed that people “who say Trump is a threat to democracy are themselves a threat to democracy,” a comment that was also cheered by the crowd of several hundred people packed tightly into the ballroom. Many more watched the event on X, the social media platform Musk purchased two years ago.

Trump, he said, “did actually tell people to not be violent.” While Trump did tell the crowd on January 6 to protest “peacefully and patriotically,” he also encouraged them to “fight like hell” to stop Democrat Joe Biden from becoming the president.

Musk, the world’s richest man, has committed more than USD 70 million to boost Trump in the election and, at events on behalf of his super PAC, has encouraged supporters to embrace voting

THE FREEWHEELING SESSION INSIDE A BALLROOM AT A HOTEL IN DOWNTOWN LANCASTER TOUCHED ON A DIZZYING RANGE OF TOPICS, FROM SPACE EXPLORATION AND THE TESLA CYBERTRUCK TO IMMIGRATION AND THE EFFICACY OF PSYCHIATRIC DRUGS. THE TOWN HALL WAS PART OF MUSK’S EFFORTS THROUGH HIS SUPER PAC TO HELP BOOST TRUMP IN SWING STATES AHEAD OF THE NOVEMBER 5 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION AGAINST DEMOCRAT KAMALA HARRIS.

early. Still, echoing some of Trump’s misgivings about the method, Musk raised his own doubts about the process. He said that, in the future, mail ballots should not be accepted, calling them a strange anomaly that got popularised during the COVID-19 pandemic and raising the prospect of fraud.

There are a number of safeguards to protect mail-in ballots, with various ballot verification protocols, including every state requiring a voter’s signature.

The question about January 6 was an outlier during the back-and-forth with the crowd in which Musk was repeatedly praised as a visionary and solicited for advice and thoughts about education, arm wrestling, tax loopholes and whether he’d buy the Chicago White Sox. (He said he was a tech guy and had to pick his battles.)

Musk said he was in favour of “not heavy handed” regulation of artificial intelligence and railed against “woke religion” as “fundamentally an extinctionist religion.” He said the US birth rate is a significant concern.

He said he believes Jesus was a real person who lived about 2,000 years ago and, when asked for the best advice he’s ever received, replied: “I recommend studying physics.”

He also called a woman to the stage to give her a large USD 1 million cheque, part of his promotion to give away USD 1 million a day to a voter in a swing state who has signed his super PAC’s petition backing the US Constitution.

The giveaways are fine with Josh Fox, 32, a UPS driver from Dillsburg, Pennsylvania.

“That’s cool,” Fox said, waiting to get into the rally earlier Saturday. “It would be nice to have it.”

Fox, who plans to vote for Trump, dismissed any suggestion the money may violate federal election rules.

“It’s about driving in support and driving in people who are in support of the Constitution,” Fox said.



People buy lanterns and decorative items at a market ahead of Diwali festival, at Malleshwaram, in Bengaluru on Sunday.

ANI

BIRTHDAY SPECIAL

People always fear change. People feared electricity when it was invented, didn't they? People feared coal, they feared gas-powered engines... There will always be ignorance, and ignorance leads to fear. But with time, people will come to accept their silicon masters.



Bill Gates

THOUSANDS OF KINDERGARTENS CLOSED ACROSS CHINA AMID SHARP DECLINE IN BIRTH RATES

BEIJING: Hit hard by China’s deepening demographic crisis, thousands of famed kindergartens have been closed as enrolment of children dropped sharply across the country due to a significant decline in birth rates, according to an official report.

In 2023, the number of kindergartens fell by 14,808 to 274,400, the annual report by the Chinese education ministry stated. It is the second consecutive annual decline in the latest indicator of China’s falling birth rates.

The number of children enrolled in kindergarten declined for a third consecutive year – dropping by 11.55 per cent, or 5.35 million, last year to 40.9 million, the Hong Kong based South China Morning Post reported on Sunday, quoting the ministry’s report.

The number of primary schools also dropped by 5,645 to 143,500 in 2023, a 3.8 per cent fall.

The decline reflects a broader demographic shift in China – where both birth rates and total population continue to dwindle – posing a serious threat to future economic growth, which is already slowing, the Post report said.

Last year, China’s population dropped for the second year in a row, to 1.4 billion, a decline of over two million. Only nine million births were reported in China in 2023, the lowest figure since records started in 1949.

As a result of declining birth rates, China last year conceded its long-held status as the most populous country to India, whose population has overtaken that of China’s.

China faced a twin crisis. While on one hand the birth-rates and fertility rates dropped, there is also a sharp rise in the old age population.



China’s population aged 60 years and above approached 300 million by the end of 2023. Projections suggest it will exceed 400 million by 2035 and reach 500 million by 2050, the state-run Xinhua news agency reported early this month.

An increasing number of kindergartens have been converted into care centres for senior citizens and many of their staff members have switched jobs to care for the elderly, according to the Post report.

The rising numbers of the Chinese elderly, who had to endure the strictly enforced decades old one-child policy are mostly dependent on state social security support putting pressure on the state finances amid the flagging economy.

Officials attribute China’s serious demographic crisis to decades-old one-child policy which was scrapped in 2016 after

which China permitted all couples to have two children.

As it failed to make an impact, China revised the population policy in 2021, allowing people to have three children in an attempt to address the reluctance of couples to have more kids due to mounting costs.

As the costs of pensions and geriatric care mounted, China last month raised the retirement age of men from 60 to 63 and for female office workers from 55 to 58 years.

“The burden of elder care is intensifying, all amid economic stagnation,” said He Yafu, an independent demographer based in Guangdong province.

“Kindergarten operators need to adjust strategically to meet new challenges, such as expanding early childhood education to include children under three and establishing an integrated care-education system,” He told the

Post. National Health Commission data from 2021 showed that more than 30 per cent of Chinese families with infants and toddlers in China need child care, but only 5.5 per cent have enrolled their children in nurseries or pre-kindergartens.

China wants to make it easier to marry, harder to divorce amid shrinking and ageing population.

Meanwhile, Syed Nazar Abbas Kazmi, the President of the Awami Action Committee, has raised critical concerns regarding the protection of local community rights related to mining leases in Pakistan-occupied Gilgit-Baltistan (PoGB).

He emphasized the urgent need for greater transparency and fairness in the management of mining resources, asserting that local residents should be the primary beneficiaries of the wealth generated from their lands, the Pamir Times reported.

Kazmi specifically addressed a mining lease in Salingh under the name of Rupal Enterprises, which is authorized to extract placer gold.

However, he alleged that other valuable resources are currently being illicitly extracted from the site, with the involvement of a Chinese company and powerful local figures, Pamir Times noted.

He stated, “Today I would like to tell you about a lease in Salingh under the name of Rupal Enterprises. There is a lease to extract placer gold, but something else is being extracted there at the moment. Some powerful people are behind this, and a huge amount of mining resources is being looted.”

His statements resonate with a broader movement advocating for sustainable resource management and local governance in PoGB. As the demand for minerals continues to rise, the potential for conflict over land and resources has intensified in the region.

According to the report, Kazmi further criticized the terms of mining leases, noting that while local communities should receive 20 per cent of the revenue, current leases are made under terms that only allocate 6 per cent.

“When a mining lease is taken, the right of the people should be 20 per cent, but a lease has been made on 6 per cent. They do not have the authority to loot other mining resources,” he argued.

Kazmi expressed his frustration over the pressures placed on local communities to remain silent about these issues. “We should not be forced to take the names of those people. We should not be compelled to bring the work being done there to the media. This illegal act that is being done, we will stop it through the people.”

Will urban consumption recover with more middle-class spending?

From recent consumer trends, word on the ground is that the middle class in India has stepped up their consumption due to the higher retail appetite due to social media trends and fast deliveries by online retailers. However, major players in the street say otherwise when it comes to urban markets, which are a time when more and more premium products are launched each week.

Major fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) companies from Nestle to Hindustan Unilever-warned of slow demand in urban

markets. This directly contradicted the premium market trends. A Nielsen study found that premium FMCG brands are growing twice as fast as their non-premium peers.

Urban premium spending has also increased due to a shift of the working population to Tier-1 cities post the corporate move to resume office locations, cutting work-from-home roles. This move, which also became expensive to many, cut spending on fast-moving goods. The urban middle class is fighting between aspirational buys and essen-

tials-not spending for essentials regularly and instead pouring money into bigger premium purchases fueled by social media and the need to have cash in hand. This has also created a certain distress among the young urban spenders, driving the overall FMCG markets down.

Will a policy change help?

The IMF forecast for India’s GDP growth is 7 per cent for FY2025 and 6.5 per cent for FY2026. Goldman Sachs’ GDP outlook for FY2025 is just 6.5 per cent, 40 basis points below the general consensus. This also reflects in people’s spending



going forward, so a policy change would really help matters. But in India, urban spending is not really a priority.

The Centre and policy-makers do not ideally see consumption of the middle class as a major issue, given that their focus is on the upliftment of the underprivileged. And even if middle-class consumption is put to the fore, it usually lies with local governance, especially given the impending assembly polls in many states.

“State governments are already slipping on their fiscal targets, most likely,”

Madhavi Arora, chief economist at Emkay Global, told NDTV. However, local governments focus more on industrial policy rather than consumption.

With the urban middle class, the private FMCG sector is more of an active player that can bring change, cutting costs and leading recovery. However, Suresh Narayanan, CMD of Nestle, opined that the middle class of the country is shrinking. “The ones who are offering reasonable value in the middle segment are finding their fortunes temporarily shrinking,” he told media.

Modi 3.0 “science push” aimed at realising Viksit Bharat: Jitendra Singh

NEW DELHI : Union Minister of State for Science and Technology Jitendra Singh on Sunday laid out the government's bold and strategic vision for the country's science and technology sectors and said that Modi 3.0 "science push" is aimed at realising 'Viksit Bharat'.

From launching a Rs 1,000 crore venture capital fund to support Space StartUps to introducing the Bio E3 policy aimed at creating a bioeconomy, the Modi government's major initiatives in the first 100 days of its third term signify its commitment to advancing India's role on the global innovation stage, the Minister said, according to a release.

The Minister highlighted that these initiatives not only bolster India's scientific prowess but also contribute to a sustainable, self-reliant economy that can withstand global shifts in industry and resources.

Emphasizing the speed at which India has embraced major reforms in science and technology, Singh said, "In the first 100 days of Prime Minister Modi's third term, we have laid the groundwork for transformative changes in science, technology, and innovation," he said.

The MoS (Independent Charge) pointed out that the



Prime Minister's vision prioritises long-term, out-of-the-box initiatives to ensure India's leadership in critical domains like space exploration, biotechnology, and meteorology.

Singh also highlighted the Union Cabinet's announcement of a Rs 1,000 crore venture capital fund exclusively for the space sector. This fund, approved by the Cabinet, is part of a broader plan to leverage India's growing base of nearly 300 space startups. In the span of just a few years, India has seen a remarkable shift in its space ecosystem, following the government's decision to open the sector to private players, the release said.

According to Singh, this decision has helped unlock

India's potential, allowing it to grow from a single-digit startup presence to an ecosystem with hundreds of space tech companies today.

"India's space economy will play a critical role in our country's growth," Singh noted, referencing the global recognition India has garnered from achievements like the Chandrayaan-3 mission. He further highlighted the Gaganyaan mission, India's first human crewed space mission which will include a female robot test flight as a final dress rehearsal before sending human astronauts into space. "Our advancements are not just about joining the ranks of other space-faring nations, but also about leading with innovation, precision, and reliability," he added.

With the Bio E3 policy, Singh underscored a vision for a "bio-driven" future, asserting that the next industrial revolution will stem from bioeconomy initiatives rather than traditional manufacturing. The policy, which covers Biotechnology for Environment, Economy, and Employment, is designed to create self-sufficiency in resources while reducing dependency on imports. A key objective, he explained, is the shift from petroleum-based resources to biofuel alternatives, enabling waste-to-fuel transformations and other sustainable practices.

"Our natural resources, including rich bioresources along the Himalayas and a 7,500-Kilometre coastline, position us uniquely to drive this revolution," Singh said. "We're tapping into the biotechnology potential of the regions, ensuring economic growth that is both inclusive and environmentally sustainable."

Jitendra Singh also announced significant updates on Mission Mausam, an initiative launched within the first 100 days of Modi's third term, aimed at enhancing the accuracy of meteorological forecasts. The mission, which integrates space and IT technologies, allows

Madhya Pradesh CM Mohan Yadav visits Chitrakoot Dham, prays for welfare of people



SATNA : Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Mohan Yadav paid a visit to Satna's Chitrakoot Dham with his family on Sunday and prayed for the welfare of all the people of the state.

In a post on X CM, Yadav shared pictures of the Lord Kamatnath temple at Chitrakoot and wrote, "This morning, along with my wife, I visited and worshipped at the Lord Kamatnath temple at Chitrakoot, the holy place of penance of Lord Shri Ram, and prayed for the welfare of all the people of the state."

"With the grace of Lord Kamatnath ji, may there be happiness, peace, and prosperity in everyone's life; this is my prayer," he added.

Speaking to media persons while at Chitrakoot Dham, Mohan Yadav said, "Since Diwali is now 2 days later, I have come to visit Chitrakoot Dham today with my family. Lord Ram spent the most time during the exile period in Chitrakoot Dham...The government has started construction work on 13 different pilgrimages. I am hoping that it will be completed very soon. We will celebrate Govardhan Puja together at different places, at the government level...My congratulations to the people of the state once again."

He further said that on the 29th, Prime Minister Narendra Modi is going to

Republic of Fiji honours Sri Sri Ravi Shankar with its highest Civilian Award



BENGALURU : The South Pacific nation of Fiji has conferred its highest civilian honour upon Sri Sri Ravi Shankar, the global spiritual master and humanitarian leader, for his tireless contribution to the upliftment of the human spirit and bringing diverse communities together in peace and harmony, according to a press release.

Sri Sri Ravi Shankar was given the title of 'Honourary Officer Of The Order of Fiji' by the President of the Republic of Fiji, HE Ratu Wiliame M Katonivere, it added.

Fiji becomes the sixth country in the world to confer the highest civilian award upon Sri Sri Ravi Shankar, recognizing the vast scope of his humanitarian work globally through The Art of Living

which has been spreading happiness and harmony for the last 43 years, through its multifarious service initiatives in areas of mental health, education, environment, women and youth empowerment, and stress relief and meditation programs.

During his visit to Fiji, Sri Sri Ravi Shankar also had interactions with state dignitaries including the Deputy Prime Minister of Fiji, Viliame Gavoka and Dirk Wagener, UN Resident Coordinator in Fiji.

The leaders discussed how The Art of Living can contribute to the holistic progress of the island nation by empowering the youth; improving the mental health of the local communities, and introducing them to the timeless wisdom of Ayurveda.

"Whoever loses election sits in opposition, whoever wins takes oath as PM": Amit Shah takes a dig at Rahul Gandhi



KOLKATA : Union Home Minister Amit Shah has taken a swipe at Rahul Gandhi, Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha, implying that the Congress party's optimism about their performance in this year's Lok Sabha elections is misplaced.

Shah essentially said that winners take the oath of Prime Minister, not sit in the opposition chair, emphasizing that true success is measured by securing the top spot, not settling for opposition leadership.

"Rahul 'Baba' and his company (INDIA alliance) which also includes Mamata Banerjee. They were daydreaming and BJP won the elections in Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Chhattisgarh and Odisha. BJP formed the government in Haryana for the third time in a row and we will also form the government in Jharkhand and Maharashtra. After the results of the Lok Sabha elections, Rahul 'Baba' was saying in Parliament that we had defeated them (BJP) in the Lok Sabha elections. I want to tell 'Rahul Baba' that whoever loses the election sits in

the opposition and whoever wins takes oath as the Prime Minister of the country... They were mocking us after we won 240 seats, even if they combine the seats they won in 2014, 2019 and 2024, their total is less than 240," Shah said, speaking at the inauguration of BJP's membership drive in Kolkata.

He further asserted that from 2026, every poor of Bengal will get the benefits of the Ayushman Bharat Yojana.

"Today, I went to the border and some people told me

there that they don't get the benefits of the Ayushman Bharat Yojana. I told them to not worry and wait till 2026. From 2026, every poor of Bengal will get the benefits of Ayushman Bharat Yojana. The youth will not have to pay any bribe for jobs and education," he said.

Shah outlined the party's objective to secure a two-thirds majority in the next assembly elections.

"We have to form the next government in Bengal in 2026 with a two-thirds majority," he added.

Taj Mahal engulfed in thick haze, tourists complain of low visibility



AGRA : The iconic Taj Mahal in Agra, Uttar Pradesh was engulfed in a thick layer of haze on Sunday as pollution levels continued to rise.

Manoharpur area in Agra recorded its Air Quality Index (AQI) at 190, categorized as 'moderate'. Whereas Shahjahan garden area recorded an AQI of 113 as of 9 AM. The average AQI recorded of Agra for October 26 was 106, categorized as 'moderate' too.

An AQI between 0-50 is considered good, 51-100 is satisfactory, 101-200 is moderate, 201-300 is poor, 301-400 is very poor, and 401-500 is severe.

According to a visitor at the Taj Mahal, the situation in the area has worsened over the years due to the industrial areas traffic increasing.

"I am here on a trip, I wanted to see the sunrise. 14 years ago, I was here and the sky was clear back then. Industrial areas are increasing towards Agra side and vehicle load is also increasing here, I think these are the reasons behind the rise in

pollution..." he told ANI.

Another visitor to the iconic site said that due to all the smog it has become difficult to see the monument properly.

He told ANI, "It feels good to see the Taj Mahal early in the morning, but it's been hazy, which creates problems in view, in the morning due to the pollution." Moreover, Aligarh city was engulfed in a thick haze too. The Yamuna river also had its thick toxic

sludge persisting in the Kalindi kunj area in Delhi.

Taj Mahal is one of the UNESCO world heritage site, standing majestically on the river banks of the Yamuna.

A popular tourist attraction, many state guests and dignitaries are often taken to the Taj Mahal to have them experience the beauty of the mausoleum of white marble.

Recently on October 8, Maldives President Mohamed Muizzu accompanied by wife

First Lady Sajidha Mohamed paid a visit to Taj Mahal, while the president was on an inaugural bilateral visit to India from October 6-10.

Earlier on Friday, the Health ministry also urged states and union territories to curb stubble burning amid the rising pollution levels across the country.

Additionally, the ministry also urged people to use public transport and 'minimise exposure.'

Assam Cabinet approves 3 pc hike in Dearness Allowance for state government employees

GUWAHATI : Assam Cabinet headed by Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Sunday approved the proposal to increase the Dearness Allowance (DA) for the state government employees by three per cent from the current 50 per cent to 53 per cent of their basic salary.

The increase in the DA will be retroactively effective from July this year, Chief Minister Sarma announced in the press conference.

The employees will receive their DA arrears starting from December to March, with the government providing 25 per cent of the amount each month.

The Chief Minister said the DA increase is a Diwali gift of the government to the employees.

The Cabinet also decided to celebrate Bhasha Gaurav Saptah (language pride week) from November 3 to November 9, 2024, to honour the Assamese language and its recent status as a classical language approved by the Union Cabinet, the Chief Minister said.

This is the second time this year that the Assam Government increased the DA for its employees.

In March, the state government implemented a four per cent increase in the Dearness Allowance, raising it from 46 per cent to 50 per cent.

The Chief Minister also said in the last two months 138 infiltrators had been detected in the state, adding that all of them were Rohingya Muslims.

"In the last two months, we have detected 138 infiltrators and we have pushed back them. We are only finding Rohingya Muslims," said Sarma.

Centre approves development plan for Kerala's Muthalapozhi Fishing Harbour

NEW DELHI : The Union Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry, and Dairying has approved a comprehensive development plan for the Muthalapozhi Fishing Harbour, with a project budget of Rs 177 crore based on the Kerala government's revised Detailed Project Report (DPR).

The funding will follow a 60:40 ratio, with Rs 106.2 crore provided through the Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana (PMMSY) and Rs 70.8 crore as Kerala's contribution, the Ministry said.

The expansion will enable 415 mechanized fishing boats to operate out of the harbour, facilitating an annual landing of approximately 38,142 metric tonnes of fish. This project is expected to directly benefit around 10,000 people and indirectly support an equal number through increased employment and economic opportunities.

The plan includes extensive civil, mechanical, and electrical works, covering upgrades such as wharf expansion, internal road improvements, drainage and loading areas, parking facilities, an auction hall, overhead water tanks, worker rest areas, shops, a dormitory, and landscaping.

The facility will also be equipped with modern amenities such as electrical systems, yard lighting, navigation lights, pressure washers, cleaning equipment, and security monitoring systems. An additional Rs 13 crore has been allocated for creating a "smart green" harbour and coastal protection initiatives.

The expansion has been meticulously designed based on scientific studies to mitigate recurring hazards in the region.

The Central Water and Power Research Station (CWPRS) conducted an in-depth scientific and mathematical study, examining wave patterns, coastal changes, hydrodynamics, and sedimentation in Muthalapozhi, and submitted a report to guide the project.

Kerala conducted an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) to ensure sustainable development of the harbour.

Alongside providing essential infrastructure for local fishing vessels and fisherfolk, the Muthalapozhi project is expected to boost fishery-related industries, enhance the fishing trade, and create significant employment opportunities in the region.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's administration has invested approximately Rs 38,572 crore in fisheries development over the past decade, accelerating infrastructure projects and job opportunities in the sector.

Gardeners can help to identify possibly invasive plants

WASHINGTON DC [US] : Researchers from the University of Reading and the Royal Horticultural Society have discovered that gardeners play a vital role in identifying 'future invaders' - ornamental plants that could become invasive species.

Looking to draw from the experience of Britain's millions of gardeners, the team created an online survey where gardeners reported ornamentals that showed 'invasive behaviour' in their gardens.

Based on reports from 558 gardeners, 251 different plants were identified as potential invaders, reflecting the extensive variety and potential risks in domestic gardens. The team analysed the results, considering both domestic and global invasive status, and prioritised ornamental plants of concern. The result was a shortlist of plants which need their invasive potential in Britain and Ireland assessed.

The shortlisted plants include, for example: Mexican fleabane (Erigeron karvinskianus); cypress spurge (Euphorbia cyparissias); chameleon plant (Houttuynia cordata); Himalayan honey-suckle (Leycesteria formosa); and purple top (Verbena bonariensis).

The results, published in the open-access journal NeoBiota, highlight the critical role of gardeners in the early detection of invasive species, a key factor in the global nature crisis. Such proactive identification could prove invaluable for future risk assessments and



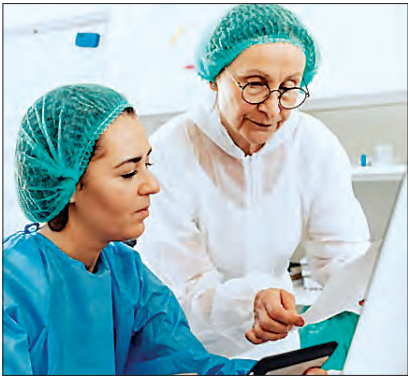
prevention strategies.

Lead author Tomos Jones said: "The simple yet structured scheme we developed was used to prioritise which of the around 70,000 ornamental plants available to buy in the UK could be future invaders. This is crucial for focusing research efforts and resources, such as conducting formal risk assessments to explore the invasive potential of those shortlisted." John David, RHS Head of Horticultural Taxonomy, said: "It's important to

Based on reports from 558 gardeners, 251 different plants were identified as potential invaders, reflecting the extensive variety and potential risks in domestic gardens. The team analysed the results, considering both domestic and global invasive status, and prioritised ornamental plants of concern.

remember that these short-listed plants are not yet officially invasive, and that many non-native plants that occur in the wild present no threat to our native biodiversity."

Gardeners are encouraged to get involved in helping identify future invaders. Ornamental plants showing 'invasive behaviour' can be reported by gardeners through an ongoing project called Plant Alert. This is run by the Botanical Society of Britain and Ireland and Coventry University.



RESEARCHERS GIVE INSIGHT INTO NOVEL THERAPEUTICS DEVELOPMENT FOR METASTATIC TUMOR ADVANCES

NEW YORK: Researcher Paul Dent of Virginia Commonwealth University's Department of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology found that tumours that have metastasized to distant locations, such as the brain, are most often impossible to treat and cure, despite recent successes in some tumour types such as NSCLC and cutaneous melanoma.

There is, however, substantial evidence that immune therapy may cause hyper-progression in some NSCLC patients, perhaps including Dr. Blagosklonny, whose tumour contains METex14 and MDM2 amplification, as well as melanoma and NHSCC patients.

A new editorial paper was published in Oncoscience (Volume 11) on February 9, 2024, entitled, "A very long and winding road: developing novel therapeutics for metastatic tumors."

"There are several issues that presently preclude more effective control of solid tumors both in situ and as metastatic disease."

The first is that the mutations which drive a cancer phenotype are generally the combination of subtle alterations in cell biology, any one of which, if targeted, if it can be targeted, will only have modest effects on tumor growth and survival. Conceptually, this calls for an immediate use of two- and three-drug combinations blocking key signaling pathways to achieve effective tumor control regardless of whether resistance mechanisms evolve. Second, a corollary of altered cell biology, and highlighted in the article, is that fewer tumors have a single recognizable driving oncogene to which the tumor cell is specifically addicted for growth and survival, e.g., mutant RAS proteins, mutant EGF receptors and other mutant receptors of MET, RET, and HER2.

"And even under these circumstances based on a large body of evidence from the past 20 years is that such tumors also require treatment with two- and three-drug combinations that simultaneously interdict the primary driving oncogene, block signaling from the primary evolving resistance mechanism and even block signaling from a secondary survival pathway."



Prime Minister Narendra Modi praises 70-year-old Gori Nath from Udhampur, J&K, for preserving Dogra heritage through his century-old sarangi in his monthly radio programme 'Mann Ki Baat', on Sunday. (ANI Photo)

How reminders can eliminate age-related memory loss

ARLINGTON: A recent study from UT Arlington showed that setting reminders can reverse some age-related memory deficits. The findings represent a significant breakthrough in tackling the cognitive issues that older persons confront, particularly in the context of prospective memory, which is the ability to remember to complete an intended activity at the appropriate time, such as taking medication or attending appointments.

"Prospective memory is essential for daily living and maintaining independence, especially as people age," said Hunter Ball, associate professor of psychology at UTA and lead author of the study. "Failing to remember these forward-looking tasks can lead to serious consequences, and previous research has shown that prospective memory tends to decline with age."

Conducted with psychologists at UTA and Arizona State University, the study involved two experiments that tested prospective memory performance in younger and older adults under varying conditions with or without the aid of reminders. Participants were asked to remember specific tasks while completing ongoing activities, and their performance was measured in both high-load (more items to remember) and low-load conditions (fewer items to remember).

In the first experiment, participants were given specific tasks to



remember, such as responding to certain words, and some were provided with reminders displayed on-screen. The results showed no significant age-related decline in prospective memory without reminders under low load, but under high load, both younger and older adults benefitted equally from using reminders. This suggests that reminders can help reduce cognitive strain by making memory retrieval less reliant on internal memory processes.

The second experiment intro-

duced more complex, nonspecific tasks that required participants to recognize categories, such as animals or fruits, rather than specific words. Older adults experienced more difficulties in remembering these nonspecific tasks under high memory load without reminders, but these age-related performance gaps were eliminated entirely when reminders were available. This finding was critical as it highlighted the potential for reminders to counteract the deficits associated with more

cognitively demanding tasks that typically strain older adults' memories.

Ball and his colleagues suggest that the effectiveness of reminders for older adults stems from their increased tendency to check reminders more frequently when faced with high cognitive demands. This compensatory behavior likely helps older adults manage tasks that would otherwise be too taxing on their internal memory resources.

The study's implications extend beyond the laboratory, as prospective memory is a crucial cognitive function in real-life settings. As the population ages, finding practical solutions to memory problems is becoming increasingly important. The authors highlight that digital tools like smartphone apps, personal assistants like Amazon Alexa, or even simple reminder notes can serve as valuable aids for older adults in managing their daily tasks effectively and maintaining their independence. "This new study demonstrates that cognitive offloading, specifically using reminders like cell phone calendars, can effectively mitigate these declines," said Ball. "While our study was conducted in a controlled setting, these findings can easily be applied in real-world environments as a way to provide easy and effective way to alleviate the burden of prospective memory challenges in older adults."

BOOK EXPLORES KERALA'S FOLK ART TRADITION THEYYAM

NEW DELHI: A new book delves into the folk art tradition of Theyyam, tracing its journey and also explaining how it highlights the pluralistic nature of Kerala's society.

One of the highly captivating folklore arts traditions of India, Theyyam is a colourful and religiously deep-rooted Dravidian ritual and pantheistic form. It is derived from and still sustained in the northern villages of Kerala, the present-day Kasaragod and Kannur districts.

While a temple festival places the Brahmin (in Kerala, the Namputiri) at the centre and reinforces the existing social order, Theyyam in total contrast places the lower caste as the main performer and worshipped as a manifestation of a temporarily incarnated divine power, perhaps providing an outlet for protest in the name of god.

Both interestingly co-exist. Irrespective of caste or creed difference, all of them attend Theyyam performances and pay their obeisance.

K K Gopalakrishnan looks at this folk-art tradition with all the experience and expertise of an insider. He hails from the Hindu matrilineal family Kamballoor Kottayil which has patronised Theyyam for over three centuries, including a Muslim Theyyam.

He points out that when lower-caste protagonists manifest into the supernatural beings as Theyyam, even their upper-caste proprietors bow their heads before them in devotion. The Theyyam interrogates and criticizes any impropriety they had committed earlier, showing recrimination. On the other side, the devotees enjoy the mighty presence of their favourite god or goddess communicating with them directly in the ecstasy of delivering oracles.

"During those fleeting moments, it is not the performance of a physical body but the dance of the performer's soul identifying with the form's spirit. It transports the devotees to a blissful cosmos; they can feel it as if they have got bound to the performer. Such rare instances make the performer feel out of sorts, physically."

Butterflies mimic each other's flight patterns to evade predators

LOS ANGELES: Researchers have discovered that inedible butterfly species that replicate one other's colour patterns have developed similar flight habits to warn predators and avoid being eaten.

It is well known that many inedible butterfly species have evolved nearly identical colour patterns that serve as warning signals to predators, allowing the butterflies to avoid being eaten.

Researchers have now demonstrated that these butterflies have developed not only identical colour patterns but also comparable flight habits, resulting in a more effective warning signal to

predators.

The article is published in the journal Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences (PNAS)

Using high-speed video footage to record the flight of wild butterflies in South America, researchers at the University of York measured the wing beat frequency and wing angles of 351 butterflies, representing 38 species each belonging to one of 10 distinct colour pattern mimicry groups.

Using this dataset they investigated how the flight patterns of butterflies are related to factors such as habitat, wing shape, temper-

ature and which colour pattern mimicry group the butterfly belongs to see which elements most heavily affected flight behaviour. Although the species habitat and wing shape were expected to have the greatest influence on flight behaviour, the researchers found that in fact, the biggest determinant of flight behaviour was the colour pattern mimicry group a butterfly belonged to.

This means that distantly related butterflies belonging to the same colour pattern mimicry group have more similar flight behaviour than closely related species that

display different warning colouration. To a predator, the butterflies would not only look the same through their colour patterns but would also move in the same way.

Edd Page, PhD student from the Department of Biology at the University of York and one of the lead authors of the study, said: "From an evolutionary perspective it makes sense to share the colour pattern between species, to reduce the individual cost of educating predators to the fact that they don't taste nice!"

"Once a predator has tasted one, the visual clues on others indicate that they

too are also inedible, but flight patterns are more complex and are influenced by several other factors such as the air temperature and the habitat the species fly in.

"We wanted to see whether flight corresponded to colour - could predators be driving the mimicry of flight as well as colour patterns? We were surprised to find just how strong and widespread the behavioural mimicry is." The team looked specifically at a tribe of butterflies called the Heliconiini, which have around 100 species and subspecies distributed around the Neotropics, each belonging

to one of several distinct colour pattern mimicry groups.

They also investigated a few species from the ithomiine butterfly tribe, which split from the Heliconiini about 70 million years ago, yet some of whom have very similar 'Tiger' colour patterns.

Edd said: "Sharing flight behaviour across multiple species seems to reinforce this 'don't eat me' message. It is fascinating that this behaviour has evolved between distant relatives over a long period, but we can also see flight behaviour diverging between differently

It is well known that many inedible butterfly species have evolved nearly identical colour patterns that serve as warning signals to predators, allowing the butterflies to avoid being eaten. Researchers have now demonstrated that these butterflies have developed not only identical colour patterns but also comparable flight habits, resulting in a more effective warning signal to predators.

patterned populations within a species over a relatively short time too.

Professor Kanchon Dasmahapatra, from the University of York's Department of Biology, said, "The extent of flight mimicry in this group of butterflies is amazing. It is a great example of how evolution shapes behaviour, with selection from predators driving subtle changes that enhance the survival of individuals."

"The challenge and interest now is to identify the genes causing these changes, which will tell us how such behavioural mimicry evolves."

Israel soldiers cut off Yahya Sinwar's finger, how IDF's Bislamach Brigade shot, shelled Hamas chief to death

It was not a typical planned, stealth operation by the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) that killed Hamas political chief Yahya Sinwar. Instead, the mastermind of the October 7 attacks was killed in a "chance encounter" with IDF soldiers on patrol duty, who had no idea that were engaging one of the most-wanted men in their country's recent history!

Although the picture is not fully clear about the circumstances that led to the elimination of Yahya Sinwar, it is a tank shell that ultimately claimed his life after a gunfight with IDF units on the ground left him injured.

Who killed Yahya Sinwar? It was the IDF's 828th Bislamach Brigade that engaged Sinwar and two other Hamas fighters while on patrol duty in Tal al-Sultan of Rafah on Wednesday.

While the circumstances in which the encounter erupted remain unclear, the three Hamas reportedly fighters tried to evade their rivals by running from building to building. As the Bislamach Brigade closed in, they tried to split up as a last resort, BBC said in a report. However, all three were spotted and eventually eliminated.

The drone and a tank It was after they split up

that a man who hid his face with a scarf was found resting on a sofa inside a building by an Israeli drone. The visibly tired man tried to throw a stick at the approaching drone, a video released by IDF showed. After the target was found to be alive, a tank fired at the building, killing him. However, it was not many hours later that the IDF confirmed the man who breathed his last on the sofa was the Hamas political chief.

DNA test confirms identity It was on Thursday that the Israeli soldiers revisited the area to check on the dead bodies. As the inspection progressed, IDF found out that one of the dead men had a few similarities with the inputs they had on Sinwar, the BBC said. They took a part of the dead man's finger and sent it to Israel for DNA matching.

As the testing progressed, the building was checked for booby traps and the body was recovered by the IDF. As the DNA samples recovered from a spot where Sinwar's presence was confirmed before matched with that of the dead body, IDF confirmed his identity.

Sinwar is often protected by several Hamas fighters. The group also used Israeli hostages as human shields for their leader.

Georgia's pro-Western opposition disputes crucial election result that could decide its EU path

Georgia's pro-Western opposition disputed the results of the parliamentary election after officials declared Sunday the ruling party led the crucial vote that could decide whether the country remains on the path to joining the European Union or comes under Russian sway.

The Central Election Commission said Georgian Dream won 54.8 per cent of Saturday's vote with almost 100 per cent of ballots counted. Following a divisive pre-election campaign, initial figures suggested turnout is the highest since the ruling party was first elected in 2012.

Georgian electoral observers, who stationed thousands across the country to monitor the vote, reported multiple violations and said the results do not correspond to the will of the Georgian people. Georgian Dream has become increasingly authoritarian, adopting laws similar to those used by Russia to crack down on freedom of speech. Brussels suspended Georgia's EU membership process indefinitely because of a Russian law, passed in June. Bidzina Ivanishvili, the billionaire founder of Georgian Dream who made his fortune in Russia, claimed victory

almost immediately after polls closed and said, It is rare in the world for the same party to achieve such success in such a difficult situation. He had vowed ahead of the election to ban opposition parties should his party win.

Tina Bokuchava, the chair of the United National Movement opposition party accused the election commission of carrying out Ivanishvili's dirty order and said he stole the victory from the Georgian people and thereby stole the European future. She indicated the opposition would not recognise the results and will fight

like never before to reclaim our European future.

The UNM party said its headquarters were attacked on Saturday while Georgian media reported two people were hospitalised after being attacked outside polling stations. The pre-election campaign in the South Caucasus nation of 3.7 million people, which borders Russia, was dominated by foreign policy and marked by a bitter fight for votes and allegations of a smear campaign.

Some Georgians complained of intimidation and being pressured to vote for the governing party.

UN peacekeepers in southern Lebanon staying put despite Israeli warnings to move

GENEVA : Forces in the United Nations peacekeeping mission in southern Lebanon are maintaining their positions despite warnings from Israeli Defence Forces to move away, a spokesman for the UN force said Friday.

Andrea Tenenti of UNIFIL, the interim force in Lebanon, says a "unanimous" decision was taken by its 50 troop-contributing countries and the Security Council for it to hold its positions as part of its aim to monitor the conflict and work to ensure that humanitarian aid reaches needy civilians.

"The IDF has repeatedly targeted our positions, endangering the safety of our

troops, in addition to Hezbollah launching rockets toward Israel from near our positions, which also puts our peacekeepers in danger," Tenenti told a UN news briefing in Geneva by video.

Earlier this month, UNIFIL said an Israeli tank "directly" fired on its headquarters in the town of Naqoura, knocking down an observation tower and injuring two Indonesian peacekeepers. Germany said Thursday that a German navy ship deployed as part of UNIFIL off Lebanon brought down a drone of unknown origin.

Tenenti said deteriorating security in recent weeks

in the fighting between Hezbollah and Israeli forces had forced UNIFIL - which has some 10,000 personnel - to suspend most, but not all, of its patrols near the "Blue Line" boundary along the Lebanon-Israel border.

"We are seeing, at the moment, hundreds of trajectories, and sometimes more, crossing the Blue Line each day, forcing our peacekeepers to spend extended hours in shelters to ensure their safety, which remains our top priority," he said from Beirut.

UNIFIL is staying put "despite IDF demands to move from positions close to the Blue Line," Tenenti said, adding that the peacekeepers



had 29 positions "very close - up to five kilometres" from the Blue Line.

He said he was not aware of any cases in which UNIFIL troops had fired their weapons in self-defence.

"Self-defence can be used, but we also have to be very pragmatic on when to use it and how to use it because we don't want to become part of the conflict," Tenenti said.

Disney Adventure to embark on its maiden Singapore voyage starting Dec 15, 2025

SINGAPORE : Longest roller-coaster at sea, seven uniquely themed areas, dazzling stage shows and Broadway-style entertainment, Disney Adventure, the latest vessel in the fleet of Disney's Cruise Line, promises to be a story of many 'firsts' as it set sails from Singapore on December 15, 2025.

With a host of activities and larger-than-life attractions bringing alive the fantastical worlds and beloved characters at the heart of Disney, Pixar and Marvel, the cruise ship, with an approxi-

mate passenger capacity of 6,700, is set to make a big splash with its maiden voyage in the Asian waters.

"Everyone has been waiting for when we are going on sale or what the pricing is? We have got a great array of pricing which is fantastic as we think about everything from our inside cabin to our concierge, three day, four day sailings, and then our seasons and number of guests etc.

"December 10 we are going on sale and December 15, 2025 is our maiden voy-

age. So we announced those dates which is incredibly exciting and then we also unveiled our seven immersive lands," Sarah Fox, vice-president and regional general manager (Southeast Asia) of Disney Cruise Line told PTI at a recent event in Singapore.

So, be it world-class entertainment, themed dining or artful accommodations, the trademark Disney magic will be on full display, courtesy seven uniquely themed areas: 'Disney Imagination Garden', 'Toy Story Place', 'San Fransokyo Street', 'Town



Square', 'Wayfinder Bay', 'Disney Discovery Reef' and 'Marvel Landing'.

While the colorful landscapes of 'Disney Imagination

Garden' will transport guests into the pages of well-loved Disney stories alongside their favorite characters; 'Toy Story Place' will inspire

guests to explore, play, connect and have fun in a whimsical water play land where the world of Pixar's 'Toy Story' will spring to life.

At Marvel Landing, guests will experience Avengers-level adventures inspired by iconic Marvel superheroes, including the one of its kind 'Ironcycle Test Run', a 250-meter-long (820 feet) roller coaster.

The Disney Adventure is big on entertainment quotient too, and is set to make waves with its bespoke content, an eclectic mix of old and new

productions.

"Deadpool will be in the show and will be making its debut on Disney Cruise Line. Also, 'Remember', which is our new Broadway-style musical of the Walt Disney Theatre that centers around Wall-E and Eve the couple from Pixar's Wall E.

"They have never appeared on stage before. So, this is the first time these characters will have been seen live and that's particularly exciting to us," said Jenny Weinbloom, vice-president (Live Entertainment) of

Disney Signature Experiences.

Also, a foodies paradise, the Disney adventure will host delightful dining experiences for guests where they can enjoy the best of Asian and international flavors.

Besides elaborately themed restaurants, it will also be home to multiple quick service restaurants, including 'Mowgli's Eatery', offering vegetarian and regional dishes from India, inspired by Mowgli's epic journey through the jungles of India in "The Jungle Book".

BUSINESS

OMCs' operating profit to drop by 30% in FY25 amid diesel spread softening: Crisil reports

NEW DELHI : Oil marketing companies (OMCs) are expected to see a drop in operating profit to USD 12-14 per barrel in fiscal 2025 from USD 20 per barrel last fiscal, Crisil Ratings reported.

The decline is primarily due to discounts on Russian crude oil, a softening of diesel spreads, and inventory losses, according to the market intelligence firm.

The report notes that stable retail fuel prices amid volatile oil prices will help support overall returns for the industry.

Despite the decrease, the operating profit will still be higher than the USD 9-11 per barrel average over the past

decade through fiscal 2024. This will partially support OMCs' substantial capital expenditure (capex) requirements.

An analysis of public sector OMCs rated by CRISIL Ratings, covering 90 per cent of the sector, confirms this trend.

OMCs earn through two main channels: refining and marketing. In refining, they earn a gross refining margin (GRM)-the difference between the value of refined products at the refinery gate (benchmarked to international prices) and the cost of crude oil used in production. In marketing, they earn a margin on petrol, diesel, and

other petroleum products sold.

While oil prices declined by 11 per cent year-on-year to an average of USD 83 per barrel in fiscal 2024, inventory value fluctuations had a marginal impact on overall GRM, reported at USD 12 per barrel. Core margins remained robust due to high diesel spreads, sustained by geopolitical uncertainties that disrupted global energy supply chains, keeping international prices elevated.

Furthermore, stable retail fuel rates contributed to healthy marketing margins (net of operating expenses) of Rs 4 per litre or USD 8 per barrel, resulting in an overall

profit of USD 20 per barrel for the year.

Aditya Jhaver, Director at CRISIL Ratings, commented, "GRMs are experiencing a sharp correction this fiscal and are likely to average USD 3-5 per barrel, with diesel spreads stabilising as refineries globally have ramped up production while consumption has slowed. Additionally, discounts on Russian crude have reduced, and oil prices are projected to average USD 75 per barrel in the second half of the fiscal, down from USD 82 per barrel in the first half, leading to inventory losses.

However, marketing margins (net of operating expenses) are expected to remain

stable at Rs 4.5 per litre (or USD 9 per barrel), assuming no reduction in retail fuel prices." The resulting cumulative cash accrual, estimated at Rs 52,000-54,000 crore, will partly support the planned Rs 90,000 crore capex by OMCs.

OMCs continue to invest in capex, primarily for brown-field capacity expansion. Around 80 per cent of the budgeted capex is allocated for meeting domestic demand for petroleum and petrochemical products, with the remainder directed towards product pipelines, marketing infrastructure, and green energy initiatives.

Joanne Gonsalves,

Associate Director at CRISIL Ratings, noted, "While profits may moderate year-on-year, the industry is likely to maintain its capex, partly funded by debt. Consequently, the debt-to-Ebitda ratio of CRISIL-rated OMCs is projected to increase to 3 times in fiscal 2025 from 1.9 times in fiscal 2024. Nevertheless, the sector's credit profiles will remain supported by its strategic importance and government ownership benefits."

The market intelligence firm cautioned that significant volatility in crude oil prices, without corresponding adjustments for end-consumers, could pose downside risks to these expectations.

Adani Foundation donates Rs 100 crore to Telangana for its Young India Skills University

HYDERABAD (TELANGANA) : Adani Group through its CSR arm Adani Foundation has handed over a donation cheque of Rs 100 crore to Telangana for its Young India Skills University, Telangana CMO said in a post on social media platform X on Friday.

The delegation led by Adani Group Chairman Gautam Adani met Telangana Chief Minister Revanth Reddy and assued his support skill development initiatives of the state, the post added.

In the post, Telangana CMO added," A delegation from Adani Foundation, led by Chairperson of Adani Group, Mr @gautam_adani

met with Hon'ble Chief Minister @revanth_anumula garu to handover a donation cheque of Rs 100 crore towards the establishment of Young India Skills University. Adani also promised continued support for the initiatives of Telangana state government for skills development, and empowerment of youth."

The Young India Skills University in the state will provide courses in a variety of areas, including healthcare, pharmaceuticals, and artificial intelligence. As per the official information, the university will start teaching the courses this year. The university has announced

that the courses will be started in October after the Dasara festival. The classes will be started in the Engineering Staff College of India (ESCI) on a temporary basis.

The courses in Healthcare, Commerce and Logistics will be launched first. Apollo, AIG, Lenskart, Flipkart, Amazon, All Cargo, Pro Connect and O9 Solutions companies have come forward to offer courses and conduct classes. The board also decided to provide training to 2000 youth in the first year, as per the information provided by the state CMO on its website.

Indian markets rebound from day's low led by metals and banking stocks



MUMBAI (MAHARASHTRA) : The stock market on Friday closed in the green, erasing the losses it made in the opening session.

At the end of the trading day, Nifty 50 closed at 24,854.05, up 104 points or 0.42 per cent. The Sensex BSE was at 81,224.75, up 218.14 points or 0.27 per cent.

During the trading day on National Stock Exchange (NSE), all the sectors except FMCG, IT, oil and gas traded in green. The sectoral stocks of IT remained the top loser during the trading hours.

The sectoral performance varied, with the Nifty Private Bank index advancing, and both the Nifty Metal and Nifty Bank indices were up.

"After the morning sell-off, the market bounced from the oversold level driven by selective buying in financials, auto and metals stocks. Initial set of results from private banks were positive, building an expectation that the upcoming set of financial results in the weekends will also be optimistic. The metals also performed well, benefiting from a slightly better-

than-expected growth in China's Q3 GDP. Consecutive rate cuts by the ECB supported rate sensitive stocks," said Vinod Nair, Head of Research, Geojit Financial Services.

"Data shows that FIIs have been continuous sellers over the month of October and the selling pressure has been absorbed by DIIs. The Hyundai IPO was major event of this week that received a tepid response," said Shriram Subramanian, Founder and MD, InGovern Research Services At the close of the day, the stocks of Axis Bank, Wipro, Eicher Motors, ICICI Bank, Shriram Finance were the top gainers while Infosys, Asian Paints, Britannia, Nestle India, and Tech Mahindra were the top losers in the market.

The stock market opened down because of the record selling by foreign investors throughout the month. However, the experts suggest that the situation will improve in the coming weeks, anticipating a sharp recovery.

In the Nifty 50 list, 17 stocks declined, while 33 stocks advanced during the trading.

Paul Mescal shares his working experience with Denzel Washington in 'Gladiator II'



Washington [US] : Actor Paul Mescal, who is gearing up for the release of his next project, 'Gladiator II' talked about his experience of sharing screen space with Denzel Washington, reported Deadline.

For him it was challenging however, he was fighting with the rhinoceros in the Colosseum, and he had to work hard to match up with the Academy Award-winning star.

'Gladiator II' is an upcoming epic historical action film directed and co-produced by Ridley Scott. It is a sequel to Gladiator (2000), the film was written by David Scarpa. It stars Paul Mescal, Pedro Pascal, Connie Nielsen, and Denzel Washington. Nielsen and

Derek Jacobi reprise their roles from the first film.

While appearing on 'The Graham Norton Show', alongside Saoirse Ronan and Eddie Redmayne, Paul opened up on the making of the sequel and meeting Denzel on the sets.

"The first day that I was working with Denzel, he was up in the box, and I was rolling around fighting some monkeys or something. And at the end of the day, I was like, 'God I must go up--' he said, turning to Washington as he added, 'I haven't told you this-- and introduce myself to Denzel.'"

Mescal admitted to being nervous about the encounter at first but then pumped himself up the next day to meet his n-

screen mentor.

"I was stood at the bottom of the steps, and I stood there for a couple of minutes, and I said, 'Not today,' the actor recalled. "So I bailed out and I ran to my dressing room and was like, 'Tomorrow I'm going to be a brave boy.'"

"The second day, I waited at the bottom of the stairs, and I was like, 'Just gotta stay put,' he shared, adding, "And Denzel walks down, and it was like, 'Oh, God, here we go.' And he shook my hand, and I just felt extraordinary."

Washington criticised Mescal's physical makeover for the action flick during their meeting, "He looked at me for ages, and he goes, 'Stop workin' out, man,'"

Mescal said, chuckling. (Elsewhere during the interview, Mescal spoke of the rigorous diet and exercise schedule required to portray a Roman gladiator, which entailed "lots of chicken breasts and heavy lifting of things." Though Mescal described the process as "fun," guest Redmayne said his experiences of bulking up for the silver screen were decidedly not fun but "horrendous.")

Washington later praised his co-star, saying of Mescal's performance, "Let me say this: This kid delivers. I'm a pretty good actor. I'm serious, trust me. I saw it when Russell [Crowe, star of Gladiator] did it -- he delivered. This kid delivered," reported Deadline.

Tom Hardy, Kelly Marcel always planned for 'Venom' to be trilogy



WASHINGTON [US] : As 'Venom: The Last Dance' continues to dominate the international box office, bringing the franchise's total to 1.5 billion dollars, star Tom Hardy and director Kelly Marcel stated that the Sony Marvel films were always intended to culminate as a trilogy, reported Deadline.

"We knew it would be three," said Marcel,

who is credited as a writer on all three films and helmed the final instalment. "We knew it was a trilogy and we knew it would end like this from the beginning." She continued, "Sony asked me to direct and I was like, 'Oh, okay then.' I have been on the first two movies and it felt like we knew that this was the third and final one, and knew that this

one was going to be both a blast but emotional as well."

While talking about her collaboration with Hardy, who co-wrote the story for the last two films, Marcel said, "I feel like Tom and I, having spent the better part of seven years working on this, really wanted to bring this one home from inception to the finish line. It felt like the right time to step up and the right movie to do it with."

Hardy agreed, saying, "hundred per cent." 'Venom: The Last Dance' marks Hardy's final foray into the role of Eddie Brock/Venom, following his acclaimed performances in 'Venom' (2018) and 'Venom: Let There Be Carnage' (2021).

Joining Hardy in this adventure are Chiwetel Ejiofor, Juno Temple, Rhys Ifans, Peggy Lu, Alanna Ubach and Stephen Graham. The film is directed by Kelly Marcel from a screenplay, based on the story by Hardy and Marcel. The film is produced by Avi Arad, Matt Tolmach, Amy Pascal, Kelly Marcel, Tom Hardy and Hutch Parker.

The original 'Venom', directed by Ruben Fleischer, was a surprise smash hit

As per the picture's logline, "Hunted by both of their worlds and with the net closing in, the duo are forced into a devastating decision that will bring the curtains down on Venom and Eddie's last dance," reported Deadline.

"You will see different shade": Rajpal Yadav on evolution of his iconic character 'Chota Pandit' in Bhool Bhulaiyaa 3

"You will see different shade": Rajpal Yadav on evolution of his iconic character 'Chota Pandit' in Bhool Bhulaiyaa 3

New Delhi [India], October 27 (ANI): Rajpal Yadav has won audiences over with his many hilarious, endearing, and iconic roles. The actor is now preparing to reprise his beloved character Chota Pandit for the third time in 'Bhool Bhulaiyaa 3'.

With his impeccable comic timing, Yadav has made this character unforgettable. Amid cast changes and evolving storylines, Chota Pandit remains a constant presence, retaining his charm and relevance.

In a conversation with ANI,

Rajpal Yadav discussed his character's evolution. Since Bhool Bhulaiyaa premiered in 2007, Chota Pandit has left a lasting impact. He is the only character who first witnessed Manjulika (Vidya Balan) in the film, an experience that fundamentally altered his personality.

The actor starred in both the 2007 film Bhool Bhulaiyaa, alongside Akshay Kumar, and the 2022 sequel Bhool Bhulaiyaa 2, with Kartik Aaryan. Now, he is set to reprise his role in the third instalment.

Speaking in detail about his character, Rajpal said, "He isn't just a character but a caricature, a comic archetype. In our Indian culture, Bharat Muni's 'Natya Shastra' envisioned such charac-



Frankie Muniz's 1st race since landing full-time NASCAR ride spoiled by truck's mechanical problems

HOMESTEAD, FLORIDA : Frankie Muniz finished 33rd on Saturday in his first Truck Series race since the "Malcolm in the Middle" star announced he will become a full-time NASCAR racer next season.

Muniz, who is 38, recently made the jump from part-time racer to a full slate in the No. 33 Ford for Reaume Brothers Racing. He made two starts for Reaume Brothers this season in the Truck Series.

Muniz has said he is confident his team could be successful in this series, but Saturday's race was marred by mechanical issues for his Toyota. He qualified 31st out of 34 cars.

He competed twice this season in NASCAR's second-tier Xfinity Series, including the opener at Daytona International Speedway, and has also participated in the ARCA Series, one of the lower rungs on the NASCAR feeder system.

Muniz said Friday that his ultimate goal as a full-time driver is to win races.

"I want to be the best," he said, "but realistically, the series is tough. There are a lot of good drivers and a lot of good teams, but I think if we could consistently be in the top 20 that would be a huge achievement for us."

The former actor has been a race enthusiast for decades. Muniz drove the pace car for the 2001 Daytona 500 - a race in



which seven-time Cup Series champion Dale Earnhardt was killed on the final lap. Grant

Enfinger of CR7 Motorsports won the race - his second straight win.

Salman Khan to perform at 'Da-bangg The Tour - Reloaded' in Dubai

NEW DELHI : Bollywood superstar Salman Khan on Sunday announced that he is set to perform at the "Da-bangg The Tour - Reloaded" in Dubai on December 7.

Besides Salman, Sonakshi Sinha, Jacqueline Fernandez, Disha Patani, Tamannaah Bhatia, Prabhu Deva, Maniesh Paul, Sunil Grover, and Aastha Gill will also perform at the event.

The actor, who is currently shooting for his upcoming film "Sikandar", shared the announcement on his official X page.

"DUBAI get ready for DA-BANGG THE TOUR - RELOADED on 7th December 2024 @SonakshiSinha @AsliJacqueline @DishPatani @tamannaahspeaks @PDDancing @ManishPaul03 @WhoSunilGrover @GillAastha @pateljordy @theJAEvents @SohailKhan @AdilJagmagia #SohailKhanEntertainment," Khan wrote on the microblogging site.

According to the poster shared by the actor, the event is billed as "4+ hours of non-stop dance, music, fun, laughter & party." It will be held at the Dubai



Harbour.

The announcement comes days after the Mumbai Police arrested a man from Jamshedpur in relation to a threat message to Khan.

A threat message demanding Rs 5 crore from the actor was received on the Mumbai Traffic Police's WhatsApp helpline last week, prompting the police to register a case and launch an investigation.

Khan earlier received death threats from the Lawrence Bishnoi gang. Suspected members

of the gang had opened fire outside the actor's Bandra home in April. A few months ago, the Navi Mumbai police uncovered a plot by the Bishnoi gang to kill Khan, leading to security enhancement for the actor.

NCP leader Baba Siddique, who was gunned down on October 12, may have been targeted by Bishnoi because of his proximity to Khan, according to police.

The actor currently serves as the host on the reality TV series "Bigg Boss 18".

Johnny Depp returns to directing with new biographical drama at Rome Film Festival

WASHINGTON [US] : Actor Johnny Depp recently arrived in Italy for the screening of his new directorial project, 'Modi: Three Days on the Wing of Madness', at the Rome Film Festival.

Despite a delayed flight that caused him to miss the festival's press conference, Depp presented his film and accepted an award before departing the following morning, according to The Hollywood Reporter.

Known for his tumultuous history in Hollywood, including a high-profile legal battle with ex-wife Amber Heard, Depp appears to be experiencing a notable career resurgence, particularly in Europe. His comeback began at last year's Cannes Film Festival, where he starred in 'Jeanne du Barry', directed by Maiwenn.

'Modi', which premiered at the San Sebastian Film Festival last month, explores the life of Italian artist Amedeo Modigliani during a chaotic three-day period in war-torn Paris in 1916.

In a candid interview with The Hollywood Reporter, Depp discussed his connection to Modigliani and reflected on his own past struggles.

Depp shared that the concept for 'Modi' was originally suggested to him by Al Pacino back in 1997, when Pacino intended to direct the film.

"Al was going to direct it at the time... then it sort of disap-



peared," Depp recalled.

More than two decades later, the project has finally come to fruition.

Reflecting on his venture into directing, Depp remembered his first experience with 'The Brave', which faced harsh criticism.

"It made me understand... you learn from that," he noted during the interview with The Hollywood Reporter.

When asked if he sees himself in Modigliani, whose life was marked by excess and emotional

struggles, Depp humorously replied, "He is the exact opposite of me. I adore rejection."

However, he acknowledged a shared sense of perseverance and authenticity, adding, "I do understand him in the sense that he stuck to his guns with his particular style." Depp likened his recent experiences in the industry to navigating a "vast wilderness" and emphasised the personal growth that comes from adversity, stating, "That vast wilderness taught me a whole lot."

30 Palestinians killed by Israeli bombing in Gaza

MI news Serve,Gaza: At least 30 Palestinians were killed by the Israeli bombing of the town of Beit Lahia in the north of the Gaza Strip, media reported. The Israeli army shelled a residential square that includes at least five houses, and the victims included women and children, the Palestinian official news agency Wafa said on Saturday. Local residents told Xinhua that neither the Civil Defence nor the medical teams could reach the area, forcing the locals to transfer the casualties using donkey carts or on foot. The Israeli army has not commented on this incident, Xinhua news agency reported. Israel has been launching a large-scale offensive against Hamas in the Gaza Strip to retaliate against a Hamas rampage through the southern Israeli border on October 7, 2023.

IRCTC To run Bharat Gaurav Tourist Train "Dev Bhoomi Uttarakhand Yatra"

MI News Service, Kolkata: Indian Railway Catering & Tourism Corporation Limited (IRCTC) is the Mini Ratna PSU arm of Indian Railways holding 20 years of presence in all facets of domestic and international tourism. The Bharat Gaurav Policy of Ministry of Railways specially curates for affordable experiential tourism on rail envisaging Economical and Affordable Tours throughout the country. IRCTC through its East Zone office has secured one such trains under the policy for Tourists desiring to travel Pan India for Religious or Fun travel from West Bengal Jharkhand, Bihar and Odisha. The trains are aesthetically curated to tourism taste

which shall enhance the travel experience on-board. IRCTC East Zone presents "DEV BHOOMI UTTARAKHAND YATRA (EZUBG14)" Tour package through Bharat Gaurav rake covering visit to divine places like Tanakpur-Cham pawat/ Lohaghat-Chaukori- Almora - Nainital - Bhimtal in 10 nights & 11 days tour. The services are comprehensive & includes Train Journey, on board & off board Vegetarian Cuisine. Accommodation at the available Home Stays/Guest House/Budget Hotels. Non-AC/AC road transportation. The detailed itinerary for the Devbhumi Uttarakhand Darshan is tabulated below for ready information.

Tour	Devbhumi Uttarakhand Darshan		
Package Code	EZUBG14		
Originating Station	Kolkata Railway Station		
Date of Starting	16.11.2024		
Date of End	26.11.2024		
Duration	11 Days/10 Nights		
Tour Itinerary	Tanakpur- Champawat/Lohaghat- Chaukori- Almora - Nainital - Bhimtal		
Boarding & De Boarding Station	Kolkata (KOOA) - Awanol - Jhaiba - Baranui - Hailpur - Gorakhpur - Lucknow		
No. of Berths	360		
Accommodation	Air Condition		
Category	Adult	Child (5-11 Years)	
Standard	30,925/-	30,925/-	
Deluxe	38,535/-	38,535/-	

Surge in ticket demand ahead of Chhath Puja

MI News Service, Kolkata: Chhath Puja, a significant festival in the Purvanchal region of India, has led to an extraordinary surge in ticket demand from Kolkata. As families and individuals prepare to travel for the celebrations, multiple routes are experiencing high waitlists. The routes towards Patna, Gaya, Varanasi, and other destinations in Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, and Jharkhand are witnessing intense pressure, with waitlists growing across popular trains several weeks before departure.

The demand is especially high in Sleeper and AC 3-tier, classes, as travelers are finalizing their journeys early to be with their families during this auspicious occasion. Passengers are advised to monitor ticket availability closely on the IRCTC portal and secure bookings in advance to avoid last-minute difficulties.

Train Number & Name	Date	SAC	SL
15047 Purbanchal Express Kolkata - Gorakhpur	04.11.2024 05.11.2024	Waiting list-143 Waiting list-101	Waiting list-248 Waiting list-209
15049 Purbanchal Express Kolkata - Gorakhpur	09.11.2024	Waiting list-224	Waiting list-157
13105 Sealdah - Ballia Express	03.11.2024 04.11.2024 05.11.2024	Waiting list-107 Waiting list-85 Waiting list-77	Waiting list-276 Waiting list-259 Waiting list-210
13671 Howrah - Jamalpur Express	03.11.2024 04.11.2024 05.11.2024	Waiting list-80 Waiting list-95 Waiting list-81	Waiting list-152 Waiting list-153 Waiting list-135
13019 Bagh - Express Howrah - Kathgodam	03.11.2024 04.11.2024 05.11.2024	Waiting list-150 Waiting list-125 Waiting list-121	Waiting list-293 Waiting list-287 Waiting list-225
13099 Doon Express Howrah - YogNagarBikesh	03.11.2024 04.11.2024 05.11.2024	Waiting list-81 Waiting list-61 Waiting list-74	Waiting list-135 Waiting list-121 Waiting list-161
12351 Howrah - Rajendranagar Express	03.11.2024 04.11.2024 05.11.2024	Waiting list-135 Waiting list-138 Waiting list-95	Waiting list-268 Waiting list-240 Waiting list-174
12333 Vijbhuti Express Howrah - Prayagraj	03.11.2024 04.11.2024 05.11.2024	Waiting list-90 Waiting list-91 Waiting list-75	Waiting list-193 Waiting list-176 Waiting list-148

*Availability position is subject to change
Eastern Railway remains dedicated to facilitating smooth travel during this peak season and requests passengers to cooperate with railway staff for a safe and hassle-free journey.

Special campaign 4.0 continues in ER "Rail Chaupal" Campaign and Plantation Drive conducted

MI News Service, Kolkata: In a significant stride towards environmental sustainability and cleanliness, Eastern Railway's divisions and workshops have successfully conducted a Plantation Drive under the "Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam" initiative, alongside an Intensive Cleaning and awareness campaign under "Swachhta Chaupal" as part of Special Campaign 4.0.As part of the Special Campaign 4.0, "Rail Chaupal" Campaigns were organized at various stations, including Kolkata, Sealdah, Naihati, Munger, Bandel, Azimganj among others. Railway offi-



cers and staff interacted with passengers, raising awareness about maintaining cleanliness at railway premises and the importance of community participation in keeping stations clean. They also took feedback from passengers. Additionally, intensive cleaning and sensitization activities were carried out at various stations like Banka, Azimganj among others. Eastern Railway also conducted tree plantation programs at various stations premises such as Kolkata, Sealdah, Naihati, Bandel, Azimganj, Nabadwip Dham, Bardhaman among other locations across its

jurisdiction, supporting the "Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam" initiative. This initiative reinforces Eastern Railway's commitment to environmental sustainability and its efforts to create a greener future. Moreover, intensive cleaning and sensitization activities were carried out at various stations over Eastern Railway. Eastern Railway remains committed to its goal of fostering a cleaner and greener environment through these initiatives, ensuring the upkeep of railway stations, premises, and offices as part of the ongoing national effort under Special Campaign 4.0.

Grave Mistake or Good Beginning'? Israeli Politicians on Scope of Attack in Iran

MI News Service, Jerusalem: The Israeli attack in Iran has drawn both criticism and applause at home from across the political spectrum.

Israeli Minister of National Security Itamar Ben Gvir, who criticized Israel's restrained response to the Iranian attack in April, wrote a more positive post on his X account this time, saying that the strike "was a good beginning in order to target Iran's strategic assets, which needs to be the next phase." He added, "We have a historic duty to remove the Iranian threat." The attack was also praised by opposition leader Yair Golan, head of the Israeli Labor Party, for "harming Iran's defensive and offensive capabilities without dragging us into a war of attrition."

However, the strike was criticized for not inflicting serious damage to either Iranian economics by striking oil reserves or to Iran's nuclear program. Yair Lapid, leader of the opposition, wrote on Saturday on his X account that Iran should have "paid a much heavier price" and that "the decision not to attack strategic and economic targets in Iran was wrong." Tally Gotliv, a member of the Knesset from

Netanyahu's governing Likud party, used even stronger words, saying that "Not striking Iran's nuclear facilities will be a cause for regret for generations. Not striking Iran's oil reserves is a grave mistake." She added, "Unfortunately, this is submission to the Biden administration which doesn't think for a moment about Israel's interests." On Saturday, Israel struck a number of military targets in Iran in response to the Iranian attack on October 1. The Israeli attack in the early hours of Saturday morning was carried out by air force, striking, among other targets, missile manufacturing facilities. The Prime Minister's office issued a denial of Hebrew media report arguing that Israel initially planned to strike Iran's oil and natural gas facilities, but changed its plan after persistent US pressure. "Israel chose the targets ahead of time, based on its national interests," said the PMO, "and not based on American directives." "Israel did not notify Iran before the attack -- not about the timing, not about the targets, and not about the scale of the attack," said another statement from the Prime Minister's office.

UP woman went missing 4 months ago, body was found in Kanpur's VVIP area

MI News service, New Delhi: A woman's body was retrieved from near the Kanpur District Magistrate's bungalow, four months after she was allegedly murdered. The accused Vimal Soni, a gym trainer in the Green Park area, confessed during questioning by the police that he had buried the body of the businessman's wife in an area which comprises bungalows allotted to government officials. The man, a resident of Kanpur's Raipurwa locality, informed the police about the spot from where the body was found after digging the ground. The woman had gone missing on June 24 and subsequent probe had found that she was dead. DCP (North Kanpur) Shrawan Kumar Singh told reporters said that the woman was allegedly upset over the man's wedding getting finalised. On the day of the crime, she had come to the gym after 20 days and the duo had gone into the car to have a conversation. An argument ensued during which he punched her in the neck, following which she fainted. He then murdered her. Mr Singh said it was difficult to trace the man as he did not use a mobile phone. He added that teams were sent to Pune, Agra and Punjab for investigation.

Cancellation of 13109/13107 Kolkata-Dhaka- Kolkata Maitree Express on 29.10.2024

MI News Service, Kolkata: As per message received from Bangladesh Railways, 13109 Kolkata - Dhaka Maitree Express (journey commencing on 29.10.2024) and 13107 Dhaka - Kolkata Maitree Express (journey commencing on 29.10.2024) will remain cancelled. The FULL ticket fare will be REFUNDED as per extant procedure.

Situation in northern Gaza 'horrific': ICRC



MI News Service, Gaza: An official from the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) has described the situation in northern Gaza as "horrific". "Ongoing evacuation orders and continued restriction of essential supplies leaves the remaining civilian population in north Gaza in horrific circumstances," said Stephanie Eller, deputy head of the mission in Gaza, in a press briefing on Saturday. "Hospitals have been ordered to evacuate, which could result in the potential loss of medical services for many civilians who remain

there, while those hospitals are already struggling with severe resource shortages as more wounded and sick people continue to arrive," she said. She reported that many civilians are unable to move due to the fighting, destruction, illness, or disabilities, adding that the situation is further complicated by unclear evacuation instructions, Xinhua news agency reported. Eller called for further efforts to ensure safe access for humanitarian and medical personnel to reach those in need in Gaza City and northern Gaza.

Bangladesh Nationalist Party raises objection over demand to remove President

MI news Service, Dhaka: Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP), one of the largest political parties in Bangladesh, has raised objection over the demand to remove the President, Mohammed Shahabuddin. Anti-discrimination Student Movement, the group led to oust Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, met BNP leaders late on Saturday to request them to support the demand to remove the President, but BNP did not agree. "BNP will not take a hasty decision," said BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakrul Islam Alamgir, referring to the demand for the removal of the President. "We will discuss it in our party forum," he added. "Impartial elections should be held as soon as possible after carried out the election-centric reforms," Mirza Fakrul told the reporters on Sunday.

BNP leaders consider resignation of the president will create a constitutional vacuum. "If the President is removed, it will create a constitutional vacuum in Bangladesh. It will delay the next election. BNP did not agree to this demand," Salahuddin Ahmed, another BNP leader, said earlier. Anti-discrimination student movement, the group that led to the ousting of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, announced a 5-point demand, including the resignation of the President, at a rally in central Shaheed Minar in Dhaka in last week. Later, protesters in Bangladesh seiged Banga Bhaban, the presidential palace, demanding the resignation of the president.

Miscellaneous

Railway Protection Force launches 'Digital Memorial of Valour' to honour brave martyrs

'Digital Memorial of Valour' will provide a platform to ensure a wider reach for citizens to pay tribute to our martyrs

MI News Service, New Delhi:

If you feel jawans protecting the nation are our real heroes & you want to give a heartfelt tribute to those forgotten heroes who laid down their Life to give us our comforts then you can do so. Railway Protection Force, a paramilitary forces under Indian Railways has launched a 'Digital Memorial of Valour' where you can digitally adorn a martyr's photo with wreath & candle. 'Digital Memorial of Valour' is website to honour the sacrifices of its courageous personnel, has been launched on 25, October, 2024 in New Delhi. This is a unique digital platform where the citizens can pay their respects to the martyrs of the Force. This innovative website (www.digitalmemorialofvalour.in) is part of the Martyr's Week Observance following the Police Commemoration Day on 21st October. The website offers a solemn space for reflection and remembrance as it allows users to pay respects to the martyrs by digitally adorning their photos with a wreath and candle. Visitors can also take a moment to pray and reflect on the supreme sacrifice of the brave RPF Heroes. The website features the photographs, names and ranks of 14 martyrs of the Force who attained martyrdom in the previous year and includes a comprehensive list of 1,011



martyrs from RPF and RPSF who have laid down their lives over the years in the service of the nation.

Aligned with the government's 'Digital India' initiative, the 'Digital Memorial of Valour' serves as a platform for those who are unable to attend physical commemorative events. This digital portal will provide a platform to ensure participation of a larger segment of our population. In addition to paying tributes, the website invites users to subscribe the digital copy of the 'Compendium of Martyrs in RPF', which will be released on October 28, 2024. The Compendium will chronicle the stories of RPF personnel who laid down their lives in the service of the nation over the past years.

Speaking on the occasion of the website launch, Shri Manoj Yadava, DG RPF said, "Each of these heroes has laid down their lives so others could live safely. This

memorial is a humble token of our everlasting gratitude and a reminder that their legacy of valour will never fade. Their courage and sacrifice will forever stand as a beacon of inspiration. As we honour these brave souls today, we reaffirm our commitment to safeguarding the nation with the same dedication they exemplified." As part of RPF's continued efforts to honour the legacy of its martyrs, in September this year, Shri Manoj Yadava, DG RPF led the Police team to visit the Hot Spring Memorial in Ladakh, a site of historical significance where brave police officers made the ultimate sacrifice during the 1959 clash with Chinese troops. This visit, which took place in one of the most challenging terrains at 15,400 feet near the Line of Actual Control (LAC), underscores RPF's commitment to honouring the legacy of India's bravehearts.

Special train between Bhagalpur & New Delhi for Diwali & Chhath Festival

• 7,200 berths to be generated

MI News Service, Kolkata: To meet the growing demand for travel during Diwali and Chhath festivals, Railway will run one Special train between Bhagalpur & New Delhi. This move will help reduce congestion and ensure smooth travel for passengers. Passengers of Bhagalpur, Jamalpur and Sultanganj area will be immensely benefited. 7,200 berths will be generated by running 04035/04036 Bhagalpur - New Delhi - Bhagalpur special trains.

04036 New Delhi - Bhagalpur special will leave New Delhi at 12:00 hrs. on 30.10.2024, 02.11.2024 & 05.11.2024 to reach Bhagalpur at 10:00 hrs. on the next day and 04035 Bhagalpur-New Delhi special will leave Bhagalpur at 13:00 hrs. on 31.10.2024, 03.11.2024 & 06.11.2024 to reach New Delhi at 11:40 hrs. on the next day. The train will stop at Sultanganj, Jamalpur, Abhaipur, Kiul, Patna, Danapur, Ara, Buxar, Pt. deen dayal Upadhyaya, Prayagraj and Kanpur Central stations enroute in both directions.

SER To run more than 30 special trains during Festival Season

MI News Service, Kolkata: For convenience of the passengers during this festive season, South Eastern Railway is running more than 30 Special trains toward different directions. These special trains are running to facilitate smooth travel for passengers during festival season. It is noteworthy that during Durga Puja, Diwali and Chhath festivals, millions of passengers travel across the country. These special trains will ensure that passengers reach their destinations seamlessly. Every year, a large number of people from all over the country travel to West Ben-

gal, Uttar Pradesh and Bihar for Durga Puja, Diwali and Chhath Puja. These festivals are not only of religious significance for the people of West Bengal, Uttar Pradesh and Bihar but also provide an important opportunity to reunite with their families. Due to the heavy rush of passengers during the festive season, most trains see their tickets go on the waiting list two to three months in advance. To address this, SER is once again operating special trains during the festival season this year. The Special Trains are running as per the following schedule:

SL No.	Train No	Train Name	Notified Upto
1	01108	Santragachi-LTT Mumbai Special	07.11.2024
2	02837	Santragachi-Puri Special	27.12.2024
3	02839	Shalimar-Puri Special	29.12.2024
4	02841	Shalimar-MGR Chennai Special	18.11.2024
5	02847	Santragachi-Digha Special	28.12.2024
6	02848	Digha-Santragachi Special	28.12.2024
7	02897	Santragachi-Digha Special	29.12.2024
8	02898	Digha-Santragachi Special	29.12.2024
9	03466	Digha-Malda Town Special	01.12.2024
10	06078	Santragachi-MGR Chennai Special	02.12.2024
11	06082	Shalimar-Kochuveli Special	02.12.2024
12	06088	Shalimar-Tirunelveli Special	30.11.2024
13	06090	Santragachi-MGR Chennai Special	28.11.2024
14	06096	Santragachi-Tambaram Special	29.11.2024
15	06212	Santragachi-SMVT Bengaluru Special	27.10.2024
16	07070	Santragachi-Sanatnagar (Near Chennai) Special	07.11.2024
17	07222	Santragachi-Secunderabad Special	01.01.2025
18	07224	Santragachi-Secunderabad Special	28.12.2024
19	07226	Shalimar-Secunderabad Special	31.12.2024
20	08007	Shalimar-Bhanpur Special	28.12.2024
21	08008	Bhanpur-Shalimar Special	30.12.2024
22	08011	Bhanpur-Shalimar Special	28.12.2024
23	08185	Hatia-Durg Special	26.12.2024
24	08489	Shalimar-Puri Special	27.10.2024
25	08507	Shalimar-Visakhapatnam Special	27.11.2024
26	08611	Santragachi-Ajmer Special	18.11.2024
27	08845	Santragachi-Secunderabad Unreserved Special	15.11.2024
28	08863	Kharagpur-Villupuram Special	26.10.2024
29	08865	Howrah-Tirupati Special	26.10.2024
30	09620	Ranchi-Madar Special	30.12.2024

Suspected terror attack: At least 24 injured as truck strikes bus in Tel Aviv area

MI News Service, Tel Aviv: At least 24 people were injured when a truck struck a bus in the area of Gllilot north of Tel Aviv in a suspected terror attack on Sunday morning. Numerous victims are still trapped beneath the truck.

An initial investigation indicates that the bus arrived at a stop by an army base to drop off passengers when it was hit by the truck. Police sources said the truck driver - a resident of the Israeli-Arab town of Qalansawe - was shot and killed by a civilian at the scene after exiting the vehicle while reportedly holding a knife.

