



THE NEW INDIAN EXPRESS

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SPACEX LAUNCHES MISSION TO BRING BACK SUNITA WILLIAMS

Falcon 9 rocket carrying Dragon spacecraft lifted off from Cape Canaveral with NASA astronaut Nick Hague and Russian cosmonaut Alexander Gorbunov on board, leaving two seats empty for Sunita Williams and Butch Wilmore. The spacecraft will return with all four in February 2025. By then, Williams and Wilmore will have logged over eight months in space | AFP

After Nasrallah, deputy chief dies in Israeli strike

Blow to Hezbollah's command structure as 7th high-profile leader, Qaouk eliminated

AGENCIES

TWO days after Hezbollah suffered its biggest blow in recent times in the loss of its long-time chief Hassan Nasrallah, yet another high-profile leader of the Lebanese group was killed in an Israeli air strike on Sunday.



Sheik Nabil Qaouk

Iran seeks UNSC meet

Iran on Sunday sought a meeting of the United Nations Security Council to discuss the killing of Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah and Israel's ongoing attacks on Lebanon.

Qaouk was one of the earliest members of Hezbollah and led the force against Israel in the 2006 war. Since 2020, he was under US sanctions for his involvement in Hezbollah's activities.

"Qaouk was close to Hezbollah's senior commanders and was directly engaged in terrorist attacks against the State of

Israel and its citizens," Israel Defense Forces (IDF) said in a post on X. In the post announcing his death, IDF warned that it will continue to strike and eliminate the Hezbollah commanders.

Hezbollah also confirmed on Sunday that another senior commander Ali Karaki was among those killed along with Nasrallah in Friday's attack. Among other senior figures killed in recent are Nasrallah's right-hand man Fuad Shukur, head of the elite Radwan Force Ibrahim Aqil.

Israel has stepped up its attacks on Lebanon in recent days, carrying out a number of air strikes on targets in southern Lebanon and other parts of the country.

Reports quoting Lebanon's health ministry said 24 people were killed on Sunday in Israeli raids in Baalbek-Hermel. Israel said it hit over 120 Hezbollah targets in the latest attacks. P9

'Would have given Pak more money than IMF..'

FAYAZ WANI @Srinagar

DEFENCE Minister Rajnath Singh on Sunday said that India could have given a larger bailout package to Pakistan than what it is begging from the IMF, had Islamabad maintained friendly relations with New Delhi.

"The money that Pakistan is begging from IMF, our government has spent more money than that in Jammu and Kashmir," Singh said while addressing an election rally in border area of Gurez, close to Line of Control in Jammu and Kashmir on Sunday.

The IMF recently approved \$7 billion to Pakistan under a 37-month loan programme, with \$1 billion earmarked for immediate disbursement.

"I am saying to my Pakistani friends, why are you keeping

distance from us. You are our neighbouring country. Our beloved leader and former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee used to say that you can change the friends but not the neighbours," Singh said.

The defence minister said that whatever money the central government spends in J&K, it is for the region's development and to improve the living standard of people.

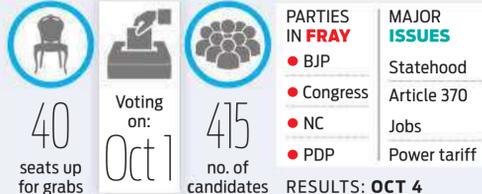
"In contrast, Pakistan has been misusing the financial assistance granted to it by other countries. After taking money, Pakistan is running a factory of terrorism," he said.

In a stern warning to Pakistan, the defence minister said: "I want to tell them that if a big terrorist attack takes place in India then we will strike inside Pakistan".



Rajnath Singh

CAMPAIGNING ENDS FOR FINAL PHASE



WON'T DIE TILL MODI IS REMOVED: KHARGE

Congress chief Mallikarjun Kharge, 83, on Sunday fell unwell while addressing a poll rally in Kathua. After receiving medical attention, he said he is fine and won't die till Prime Minister Narendra Modi is removed from power. "I am 83 years, I am not going to die so early. I will stay alive until PM Modi is removed..." he said | P7

EXPRESS READ

Cop, terrorist killed in J&K encounter

Jammu: A terrorist, suspected to be affiliated with the Pakistan-based Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM) outfit, was killed in a remote village in Kathua district of Jammu and Kashmir, officials said on Sunday. The body of the unidentified terrorist was recovered from the scene of the Saturday evening encounter at Kog-Mandli in Billawar tehsil, taking the death toll in the two-day operation to two. Head Constable Bashir Ahmad laid down his life and two officers were injured | P7

FIR filed against Snehamayi Krishna surfaces amidst his battle with Siddu

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Mysuru

RTI activist Snehamayi Krishna, who recently secured a court order to register an FIR against Chief Minister Siddaramaiah in the MUDA site-allotment case, has found himself in a tight spot as it has come to light that criminal charges have been filed against him for allegedly harassing a woman.

Though the woman, Lavanya, filed a complaint with the Nan-

jangud police on August 21, 2024, and an FIR too was registered the same day, this news started doing the rounds since Saturday late evening in the light of Krishna's actions against Siddaramaiah.

Lavanya has alleged in her complaint that Krishna, along with other accused, attacked her, pulled her clothes, verbally abused her and issued her death



threats, while she was returning home from court on July 18, 2024.

She has mentioned in the complaint that Krishna, along with her mother-in-law, brother-in-law and father-in-law, has been harassing her over a property dispute. This also involves claims over her husband's death benefits and her jewellery, which is currently under litigation. P4

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Trenches being dug up by the police to prevent sand mining | Express

Cops dig up trenches to curb illegal sand mining in U-K dist

SUBHASH CHANDRA N S
 @ Karwar/Kumta/ Honnavar
 (Uttara Kannada)

THE Uttara Kannada district police have started digging up trenches in villages where illegal sand mining has been happening for the last several years. The idea was first mooted by Superintendent of Police (SP) M Narayan.

After cracking the murder case of businessman in a swift manner, the district police led by SP Narayan, the places adjoining rivers are being dug up making it impossible for heavy

vehicles to use the routes. "Uttara Kannada has several rivers like Sharavathi, Gangavali, Aghanashini and Venkata-pura. In Manke, there are a lot of streams, water bodies and natural resources. Sand is one such mineral which is the property of the government and is governed by Minor Mineral Regulating Rules. Moreover, these rivers are in the Western Ghats, which are known as biodiversity hotspots and ecologically sensitive regions. To add to this, this region, being a coastal area, comes under coastal regulation zone. The il-

legal sand mafia thriving in the district is draining the district of the wealth which is for the government. Though the Department of Mines and Geology is the authority on sand mining, the police decided to act following several complaints from the local public," the SP told *TNIE*.

Accordingly, the local police have dug up trenches at Hotegali, Hankon and other places in Chittakula Police Station limits on 27th Upuni, Nagarabasthikere, Melinamudkani, Gerusoppa

and some places in Honnavar and Kalasina Mote, Deevgi, Mirjan, Kodakani, Hegde, Masur and Kumta taluk.

Trenches are also being dug up in Malkodu and Molkodu in Manke. Sand mining in Chittakula police limits in Karwar taluk takes place in Kali river, Aghanashini river in Kumta, Sharavathi river in Honnavar and several rivulets in Manke.

The initiative received a positive response for the district police with several netizens

lauding it. However, some people gave negative feedback saying that most of the sand mining is done by traditional fishing boats and their livelihood will be at stake. "Sand mined from the rivers are sold to truck drivers who transport them outside the district, even to neighbouring states, for a price ranging between Rs 15,000 and Rs 1 lakh under the patronage of influential people. If the traditional boats want this matter to be sorted out, they should approach the district administration and get a permit," said an official.

All Gadag villages to have graveyards by year-end: Min

RAGHOTTAM KOPPAR @ Gadag

LAW, Tourism and Gadag district minister H K Patil has started an initiative to ensure that every village in the district gets a graveyard by the end of this year. The officials at district, taluk and gram panchayat levels have been given instructions in this regard.

The minister told the officials to identify places for graveyards in eight villages in Gadag taluk and also inspect and submit reports about other taluks between November 1 and November 30.

Many villages in Gadag have no graveyards. Also, there are issues with land owners and neighbouring farmers. Many villagers complain that things get worse during rainy season.

There are issues with graveyards in old and new villages of flood-affected areas. The villagers agree to cooperate with the officials but fight among themselves when it comes parting with their land. They complain that there is a problem with new village dwellers as graveyards are far from their place and they have to spend a lot of money

on transportation. Hence, the villagers have requested the officials to visit and listen to them and advise them to get the work implemented soon.

Minister Patil has also instructed the officials to plant one lakh trees in all the seven taluks in Gadag district. He has directed officials to develop gardens in government hostels, government schools and colleges.

An official from Gadag district administration said, "The minister has told the officials to identify places for graveyards within November 30 and all villages should have graveyards by the year end. We need support from the people to make this possible."

Malatesh Lakkundi, a resident of Mulgund said, "This is good news that all villages in Gadag will have graveyards. Many villagers have been suffering due to lack of graveyards in rural areas. The mud thieves, sand looters, some noncooperative leaders and some villagers are to be blamed for this situation. Officials have to provide good roads and graveyards to us. We thank officials and the minister for this initiative."



Minister H K Patil

Ensure welfare of SC/STs, says panel

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Ballari

THE Vidhana Soudha Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Welfare Committee, headed by P M Narendraswamy and his team, visited Ballari district recently and held a meeting with senior officials. The committee instructed senior officials, including Deputy Commissioner of Ballari, to ensure proper implementation of schemes meant for SC and ST communities.

The committee was formed by the state government to look into the progress of welfare projects for SCs and STs in all the districts. Narendraswamy, chairman of the committee, said, as per the 2011 census, among 14 lakh people, five lakh belong to the SC, ST communities. He said the first priority of every government official should be to take



Vidhana Soudha SC/ST Welfare Committee at a meeting in Ballari recently | Express

the schemes to the eligible backward classes including SCs and STs. The government has introduced many schemes for the well-being of the communities to help them come out of poverty, he said. "Our government has introduced SC/ST reservation in tender works, among others, and there should be an awareness campaign to educate the communities about the schemes. Atrocities cases should be prevented and their rights should be protected. All five guarantee schemes of the

state government, including Gruha Laxmi and Gruha Jyothi, should reach the beneficiaries. However, there are some complaints against some officials in this regard. The senior officials should be reached if there are any issues. Problems faced by the Devadasi women from the district, who belong to the SC/ST communities, should also be solved by the officials at the earliest, failing which, action will be taken against non-performing officials," he added.

PUG MARKS OF LEOPARD IN KUD TRIGGER PANIC

MALLIKARJUN HIREMATH @ Chennai

THE leopard which was sighted on Karnatak University, Dharwad (KUD) premises a few weeks ago, has again triggered fear among the students and residents in and around the campus. Although the leopard has not been spotted after September 6, some pug marks of the big cat have created panic.

A notice has been issued by the varsity authorities not to step out of the hostels after 6 pm and before 6 am.

The efforts of the Forest Department in catching the leopard have not been successful. But the pug marks on the campus prove that the leopard is

on the prowl. Pradeep Pawar, Range Forest Officer, said a bone has been placed since the last few days but the big cat is not getting lured. Forest Department says their staff is busy searching for the leopard.

"We have requested the residents and students not to come out of their rooms without any reason. The big cats are good at hiding themselves," he added.

A senior official of the varsity said the notice was issued on Saturday keeping the safety of students in mind. "KUD has a large campus with thick greenery which is providing cover to the leopard. It has not been sighted after September 6," he added.



Minister H K Patil at a KDP meeting at the DC's office in Gadag | Express

RESIDENTS OF RON ELATED AS TWO LAKES TAKEN UP FOR DEVELOPMENT

RAGHOTTAM KOPPAR @ Gadag

RESIDENTS are happy after local MLA G S Patil said that he will provide Rs 50 lakh for the development of Bhisma Kere (lake) at Ron in Gadag district. Steps are also being taken to develop Jigalur lake as a source of drinking water. The lake is the lifeline of the people of Ron as it maintains underground water level and many

people use this water. The lake is now brimming with water.

Bhisma lake will be developed as a tourist spot with facilities for walkers, especially women, children and senior citizens. People can also do Yoga and meditation at the lake.

Karnataka Minerals Development Corporation president and Ron MLA G S Patil plan to develop Jigalur lake in six months.



Jigalur lake near Ron in Gadag district; a file photo of Ron MLA G S Patil | Express

Patil also shared his idea of introducing boating facility to attract more number of footfalls and also generate employment for local youth and business opportunities for businessmen.

The Ron lake development work has started and a stop wall has already been built. The lake gets water from the canal during drought and is now full after heavy rain lashed the town in recent weeks and months.

M S Karadakatti, a resident of Ron said, "These are the very important projects for residents of Ron. While one will become a picnic spot, the other will be a source of drinking water. Many residents complained about lack of facilities at Ron town's lake which has no name but is commonly called as 'Sante Kere' as it is near the market. We thank all officials concerned and our MLA G S Patil for the initiative."

Daily Starscope

PETER VIDAL

30th September: The mix of fiery and watery heavenly alignments is a sure sign that change is on the way. If any of you feel like dropping some of your commitments and taking on new ones, so much the better. But if you are one of those people who likes life to remain exactly as it is, you may have some small adjustments to make.

ARIES (Mar 21 - Apr 20)

Try not to take others too much for granted or you may come unstuck. There is a great deal waiting to be explained and, if major moves are planned, you would be wise to wait until the picture is clear. Also, rely on your natural charm to win rivals over to your side.

TAURUS (Apr 21 - May 21)

Wait for another few days for major family meetings or decisions. Today's stars are soicable, indicating that you will make progress only if you operate as part of a team. Equality is the watchword, so try to make sure that everyone has a fair chance.

GEMINI (May 22 - June 21)

Partners may still be in disagreement, but not for much longer. You could find it difficult to accomplish your tasks and feel as if one particular goal is slipping from your grasp. But be assured that friends and allies will continue to carry the torch on your behalf, probably right through to next year.

CANCER (June 22 - July 23)

Now is a good time to reconsider your attitude to close partners. Also, develop all foreign contacts and get in touch with friends and relatives abroad. Adventure is in the air, even in a small way, and you may be tempted to take major risks - in moderation, of course!

LEO (July 24 - Aug 23)

Relatively sympathetic stars favour financial adventures. You are inclined to spend your hard-earned money on luxuries and may be tempted to take a gamble. As to this last point, you must take responsibility for your own actions; if plans do come unstuck then it's up to you to get them back on track.

VIRGO (Aug 24 - Sept 23)

Nobody really knows what you are thinking at the moment, or even what you are experiencing. Either your thoughts have sped ahead of your actions, or plans are lagging behind what is actually happening. One way or the other, you've got to catch up with yourself.

LIBRA (Sept 24 - Oct 23)

There's a wide range of possibilities today, which means that all astrologers should be disagreeing with each other. I'll take a middle road and advise you to spread yourself around as widely as possible, investigating any personal options you may have ignored until now.

SCORPIO (Oct 24 - Nov 22)

You appear to be having second thoughts, which may come as a surprise to some people who thought they knew you well. It may be that you no longer feel so secure in a choice that you took a few weeks ago, but that uncertainty may reflect nothing more than the fact that you must now stand on your own two feet.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov 23 - Dec 22)

Your expansive and optimistic nature should now be an advantage. There is nothing to hold you back save your own memories, and perhaps fears. You can let rip and live like there's no tomorrow. To put it another way, if you focus your attention on the present, then you will begin to build a better future.

CAPRICORN (Dec 23 - Jan 20)

It's bound to be a few days before you gain a fix on exactly what is going on. You may do best to keep your private thoughts to yourself. You never know when blurring something out is going to have consequences opposite to those you desire: every word you utter could come to mean something much more than you intended.

AQUARIUS (Jan 21 - Feb 19)

You must now make some decisive moves and salvage as much as you can before your mood changes. Very soon you will realise that life is a good deal more mysterious and uncertain than you once thought. Someone close to you already realised that there can be no final answer.

PISCES (Feb 20 - Mar 20)

You're on top form, and if you are true to yourself you won't put a foot wrong. The general tone of the day is argumentative, so you must decide whether to confront someone or to bid your time. Plus, if you know what's good for you, you'll make sure you pick the right target.

Solutions to Saturday's puzzle

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

CROSS WORD

ACROSS

- Tuition isn't provided by this establishment (11)
- Refuge in the middle of the garden retreat (7)
- The one to right of them (5)
- Key to enter communist plant (4)
- It brings about a military rising (8)
- Black and brown plaid (6)
- Stay in touch with the leaders (4,2)
- Be on the way to appearing proper (8)
- Left in the cooler it may be jammed (4)
- Alert for a change in the future (5)
- Artist's pieceaway (7)
- Advisers are not the same as opponents (11)

DOWN

- Deal with someone with a complaint (5)
- Removed to Oklahoma (4)
- A heaver of wood and a drawer of water (6)
- Visibly in tears (8)
- Cover too many a circuit (7)
- At which steps may be taken to alleviate hardship (7,4)
- One who is at liberty to be extravagant? (4,7)
- Its growth may be dated (4,4)
- Said to be named again in divorce proceedings (7)
- Deprecates applications for admission (6)
- Will go away (5)
- A slight incoherence in speech (4)

JUMBLE

UNSCRAMBLE THESE JUMBLES, ONE LETTER TO EACH SQUARE, TO FORM FOUR ORDINARY WORDS.

BY DAVID L. HOYT AND JEFF KNUREK

FOENT

APWSM

DYRHAL

NCREWH

THE DISCUS HAD A CHIP IN IT, SO IT WAS

Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

Answer here: _____

SUDOKU EASY

TEST YOUR NUMBER CRUNCHING SKILL WITH OUR UNIQUE PUZZLE

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

Fill in the grid with digits in such a manner that every row, every column and every 3x3 box accommodates the digits 1 to 9, without repeating any.

SATURDAY'S SOLUTIONS

ACROSS: 1 Wished, 4 Asteroid, 9 Robust, 10 Harebell, 12 Rare, 13 Erect, 14 Plot, 17 Bridging loan, 20 Coping stones, 23 Amok, 24 Acute, 25 Otto, 28 Monsoons, 29 Friend, 30 Corsages, 31 Petals.

DOWN: 1 Wardrobe, 2 Suburbia, 3 Erse, 5 Searchlights, 6 Eyed, 7 Openly, 8 Dilute, 11 Frankincense, 15 Aglow, 16 Dante, 18 Anathema, 19 As good as, 21 Tamar, 22 Joiner, 26 Coda, 27 Free.



NAVARATRI COMING SOON

An artiste in Hubballi gives final touches to a statue of Goddess Durga to be installed in Vijayawada district in AP during the upcoming Navaratri festival which begins on October 3 | D HEMANTH

POLITICAL ACTIVITY HOTS UP

Sandur bypoll: Congress, BJP likely to field women candidates

Seat fell vacant after sitting MLA E Tukaram of Congress was elected to Lok Sabha

KIRAN BALANNANAVAR @Ballari

AS the date for assembly bypoll in Sandur constituency of Ballari district is likely to be announced anytime soon, political parties have started the groundwork to face the poll. The Sandur seat fell vacant after sitting MLA E Tukaram of the Congress resigned from the seat after he won the Lok Sabha election from Ballari constituency.

There is speculation that both the Congress and the BJP are likely to field a woman candidate from the constituency which is an ST reserved seat.

While Congress is most likely to field Tukaram's wife Annapurna or his daughter Souparnika Tukaram, the BJP is leaving no stone unturned to wrest the seat from the Congress, which it has never won. However, the saffron party appears to be working very hard and trying to galvanise voters



A view of a prominent circle in Sandur constituency in Ballari district

in the run-up to the poll.

B Sriramulu, former minister and prominent BJP leader in Ballari said, "The BJP will soon announce its candidate.

In a few days, the Election Commission of India (ECI) will announce the dates for the bypolls. We have never won from Sandur ST reserved con-

stituency so far, but we are banking on Valmiki ST Welfare Board scam which led to the resignation of minister B Nagendra. Also, citing MP Tukaram has not done much development work. Sandur is known for mining work, but in terms of development, it is neglected. Regardless of who the BJP candidate will be, our party workers are united and will create history by winning the bypoll."

A senior Congress leader of Ballari, however, said "Tukaram's accessibility to voters and the work done by him in the last two decades will ensure Congress party candidate's victory in the bypoll. "BJP will never win. No matter how much it tries to politicise issue, it stands no chance of winning from Sandur due to its ideology. The Congress high command will decide the party candidate for the bypoll," he said.

EXPRESS READ

KLE student tops in shooting competition

Gadag: KLE school student Siddharth Badni of class 8 has secured the first place in a shooting competition held in Kerala on September 25. Basavaraj Hombali, a shooting trainer from Gadag, has trained Siddharth. The working president of KLE Institute, the director of the governing body and staff congratulated Siddharth for this award. ENS



Shramadana at Fort premises

Koppal: District Administration, Zilla Panchayat, Information and Public Relations Department, Municipal Council, Urban Development Cell and various departments jointly organised a Shramadana programme on Fort premises. DC Nalin Atul, ZP CEO Rahul Pandey, SP Ram Arasiddhi, DCF Kavya Chaturvedi, district officials and staff from various departments will participate in event which will be held at 7 am. ENS

Two held, marijuana seized

Hosapete: Two persons with marijuana in their possession were arrested in Hoivina Hadagali taluk. According to police, arrested are Amar Badatte (23) and Mundaragi Guru (30). The seized substance is worth Rs 20,000 and weighs 300 grams. A case has been registered at Hoovina Hadagali police station. ENS

Rabies vaccination campaign

Koppal: Animal Husbandry and Veterinary Services Department and Polyclinic of Koppal are organising a rabies vaccination campaign as part of World Rabies Day 2024 from September 28 to October 27. Koppal residents who have domestic dogs and cats can contact Animal Husbandry and Veterinary Services Department's office or call: 08539299906. ENS

Joshi warns Lokayukta ADGP over abusive words

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @Hubballi



UNION Minister Pralhad Joshi has demanded action against Lokayukta ADGP Chandrashekar for allegedly using abusive words against Union minister H D Kumaraswamy. Joshi said that

as per Service Conduct Rules, the officer should immediately apologise. "It will not be tolerated if an officer uses such words against a people's representative and that too a Union minister. Kumaraswamy has never used abusive words against anybody. If there is an order from the government, the officer can investigate and give a statement in acceptable language. Such words do not suit officers. This situation is due to the Congress government. The Congress is backing such officers which will backfire for the party," he said.

Joshi added said that the Congress government itself is not a permanent one and warned the Lokayukta ADGP to be careful while on duty.

4 drives against drug abuse in 3 months in twin cities

MALLIKARJUN HIREMATH @Hubballi

HUBBALLI-DHARWAD police have carried out four major drives against drug abuse in the last three months. The department claims that since the first drive, nearly 60 per cent of the consumers have stopped using narcotics like marijuana and have tested negative in medical tests. As many as 3,631 suspected consumers were tested, of whom, 1,910 people had tested positive for drugs. 350 FIRs have also been filed against such people.

As for drug peddling, more than 200 peddlers were arrested and over 40 FIRs registered. Counselling sessions and parents' meetings were also held by the police. The police department has shared on its X handle, the work done by them step by step. The police has explained how the list of peddlers was prepared, the consumers identified, flash raids done, educational institutes visited and awareness programmes carried out.



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For more details please visit E-Tendering Portal, <https://tenders.kerala.gov.in/> or www.kmmil.com

Sl No	Tender Id	Items
1	2024_KMML_690107_1	For the supply of PTFE Lined Plug Valves
2	2024_KMML_691470_1	For the supply of Class 1 Brick Acid Resistant
3	2024_KMML_684115_1	Installation of Side Screen Filtration System(SSF) for cooling tower in TP Unit.
4	2024_KMML_692648_1	Fabrication & Supply of Sodium Aluminate Tank F555 (FRP-Bisphend)
5	2024_KMML_692703_1	Fabrication & Supply of Water Cooled Condenser E206

Chavara 27.09.2024 Sd/- Managing Director for The Kerala Minerals and Metals Ltd

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NOTICE INVITING E-TENDER
Dy. Chief Engineer (Works), Konkan Railway Corporation Limited, Ratnagiri, invites **Open Tender in Single Packet Bid** system through E-Tendering on IREPS Portal from eligible contractors for the following work: **Name of work:** Earthwork in cutting for flattening of slopes, provision of berms, construction of side drains/ catch water drains and protective works at Ashti cutting in KHED-ANJANI section at Km. 107/800 to 108/300 in Ratnagiri Region over Konkan Railway route in Maharashtra State. **Tender Notice No: KR-RN-DYCEW-ASHTI-11-2024, Dated: 30.09.2024. Total Estimated Cost: Rs. 1.898 Crore (Excluding GST). Bidding Start Date: 07.10.2024, Closing Date/Time: 21.10.2024 up to 15:00 Hrs.** for submission of on line offers/bids. **Completion period: 12 (Twelve) Months including monsoon.** Manual offers shall not be accepted. Please visit <https://www.ireps.gov.in> website for details/ participation and corrigendum/ addendum will be hosted on this website only.

Canara Bank SHIGLI BRANCH Dist.Gadag

SALE NOTICE
E-Auction Sale Notice for Sale of Immovable Properties under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with proviso to Rule 8 (6) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002. Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower (s) and Guarantor (s) that the below described immovable property mortgaged/charged to the Secured Creditor, the constructive/physical possession of which has been taken by the **Authorised Officer of the Canara Bank**, will be sold on "As is where is", "As is what is", and "Whatever there is" on 30/10/2024, for recovery of Rs.24,25,830.53 (Rupees Twenty-four lakhs Twenty-five thousand Eight Hundred Thirty and Paise Fifty-three only) with interest and other charges due to the **Canara Bank, SHIGLI Branch** from **Mr. MALLAYYA NAGAPPA HIREMATH (Borrower & Mortgagor) and Smt. JAYAMMA MALLAYYA HIREMATH (Co-Borrower)** The reserve price will be Rs. 19,70,000.00 and the Earnest money deposit will be Rs. 1,97,000.00 The Earnest Money Deposit shall be deposited on or before 29/10/2024 at 4.00 pm. Details and full description of the immovable property with known encumbrances, if any.

Reserve Price	(EMD) Earnest Money Deposit
Rs. 19,70,000.00	Rs. 1,97,000.00

Description of the immovable Property
All that part and parcel of the Residential land and building property bearing **GP No.958**, Situated at Ward No.03, Shigli Tq: Laxmeshwar District: Gadag and measuring land 596.75 sq.mtr and Residential land and building standing in the name of **Mr. MALLAYYA NAGAPPA HIREMATH and Boundaries East : Self property West : Road North : Road South : Road**

For detailed terms and conditions of the sale please refer the link "E-Auction" provided in Canara Bank's website (www.canarabank.com) or may contact **Mr. D'souza Elvis Sebastian** Senior Manager, **Canara Bank, Shigli Branch** (Mob.No.9845972214) during office hours on any working day.

Date: 27/09/2024 Sd/- Authorised Officer
Place: SHIGLI Canara Bank

RAIL WHEEL FACTORY
YELAHANKA, BENGALURU - 560 064.
Website: www.rwf.indianrailways.gov.in

TENDER NOTICE No: RWF/S/11/2024-25
Bated: 24.09.2024

On behalf of the President of India, the Principal Chief Materials Manager invites Electronic Open Tender from Manufacturers or authorised agents for supply of the item, on the Indian Railways e-portal www.ireps.gov.in

Tender No. P2245683
Brief Item Description: Set of Guide Ways/ bed plates of Make: HMT.
Quantity: 1 Set

Closing Date & Time for Tenders:
21.10.2024 at 14.00 Hrs.

Tender details can be viewed on our website www.rwf.indianrailways.gov.in or www.ireps.gov.in. The tender documents and the corrigendum to the Tender if any, will be available on the portal only.

TENDER NOTICE No: RWF/S/145/2024-25/08 Bated: 25.09.2024

On behalf of the President of India, The Principal Chief Materials Manager invites electronic tender for the following work through the website <http://www.ireps.gov.in> from experienced/reputed contractors in the field.

Tender No. RWFSTPT_SR_0-500Kms
Scope of Work: Transportation of **SCRAP CUT RAILS** from Various locations of Indian Railways to Rail Wheel Factory, Yelahanka, Bengaluru - 560064, by road.
Distance slab 0 to 500 Kms (with a minimum chargeable distance of 200Kms)
Quantity: 22,280 MT (approx).
Estimated Tender Value: Rs.8,47,75,400/-
EMD Amount: Rs.5,73,900/-
Contract Period: Minimum 12 (Twelve) months from the date of issue of Letter of Acceptance.

Closing Date & Time for Tenders:
30.10.2024 at 14.15 Hrs.

Principal Chief Materials Manager

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INDIA'S NEW CHALLENGE: SRI LANKA TURNS LEFT

DECODED BY **NEENA GOPAL**

IN CONVERSATION WITH EXPERTS

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Canara Bank SHIGLI BRANCH Dist.Gadag

SALE NOTICE
E-Auction Sale Notice for Sale of Immovable Properties under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with proviso to Rule 8 (6) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002. Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower (s) and Guarantor (s) that the below described immovable property mortgaged/charged to the Secured Creditor, the constructive/physical possession of which has been taken by the **Authorised Officer of the Canara Bank**, will be sold on "As is where is", "As is what is", and "Whatever there is" on 30/10/2024, for recovery of Rs.37,99,620.11 (Rupees Thirty-seven lakhs Ninety-nine thousand Six Hundred Twenty and Paise Eleven only) with interest and other charges due to the **Canara Bank, SHIGLI Branch** from **Smt. NEELAVATI SHANKRAPPAA SANGANNANAVAR (Borrower & Mortgagor) and Mr. GURAPPA SANGANNANAVAR (Guarantor)** The reserve price will be Rs. 9,00,000.00 and the Earnest money deposit will be Rs. 90,000.00 The Earnest Money Deposit shall be deposited on or before 29/10/2024 at 4.00 pm. Details and full description of the immovable property with known encumbrances, if any.

Reserve Price	(EMD) Earnest Money Deposit
Rs. 9,00,000.00	Rs. 90,000.00

Description of the immovable Property
All that part and parcel of the Residential land and building property bearing **GP No.48/303**, Situated at Shigli Tq: Laxmeshwar District: Gadag and measuring land 936 sq.feet and Residential land and building standing in the name of **Smt. NEELAVATI SHANKRAPPAA SANGANNANAVAR and Boundaries East : Plot No.48/304 West : Plot No.48/302 North : Plot No.48/263 South : Road**

For detailed terms and conditions of the sale please refer the link "E-Auction" provided in Canara Bank's website (www.canarabank.com) or may contact **Mr. D'souza Elvis Sebastian** Senior Manager, **Canara Bank, Shigli Branch** (Mob.No.9845972214) during office hours on any working day.

Date: 27/09/2024 Sd/- Authorised Officer
Place: SHIGLI Canara Bank

Canara Bank SHIGLI BRANCH Dist.Gadag

SALE NOTICE
E-Auction Sale Notice for Sale of Immovable Properties under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with proviso to Rule 8 (6) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002. Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower (s) and Guarantor (s) that the below described immovable property mortgaged/charged to the Secured Creditor, the constructive/physical possession of which has been taken by the **Authorised Officer of the Canara Bank**, will be sold on "As is where is", "As is what is", and "Whatever there is" on 30/10/2024, for recovery of Rs.14,96,944.80 (Rupees Fourteen lakhs Ninety-six thousand Nine Hundred Fourty-four and Paise Eighty only) with interest and other charges due to the **Canara Bank, SHIGLI Branch** from **Mr. RAGHAVENDRA MANTAPPA HATTIKAL (Borrower & Mortgagor) and Mr. NINGARAJ MANTESHAPPA HATTIKAL (Guarantor)** The reserve price will be Rs. 9,75,000.00 and the Earnest money deposit will be Rs. 97,500.00 The Earnest Money Deposit shall be deposited on or before 29/10/2024 at 4.00 pm. Details and full description of the immovable property with known encumbrances, if any.

Reserve Price	(EMD) Earnest Money Deposit
Rs. 9,75,000.00	Rs. 97,500.00

Description of the immovable Property
All that part and parcel of the Residential land and building property bearing **GP No.48/131**, Situated at Ward No.04, Shigli Tq: Laxmeshwar District: Gadag and measuring land 92.90 sq.mtr and Residential land and building standing in the name of **Mr. RAGHAVENDRA MANTAPPA HATTIKAL and Boundaries East : property of Mallavva R Bammannavar West : Property of Kavita Goneppanavar North : Road South : Property of Kulkumagur**

For detailed terms and conditions of the sale please refer the link "E-Auction" provided in Canara Bank's website (www.canarabank.com) or may contact **Mr. D'souza Elvis Sebastian** Senior Manager, **Canara Bank, Shigli Branch** (Mob.No.9845972214) during office hours on any working day.

Date: 27/09/2024 Sd/- Authorised Officer
Place: SHIGLI Canara Bank

'FEAR OF POLICE FADING... FORCE USED AS TOOL BY POLITICAL MASTERS'

CRIMES are increasing, but the fear of police is coming down. New sections in the Bharatiya Nyaya Samhita could have addressed multiple issues, like bringing in police reforms, but the opinions of stakeholders were not included, said **ST Ramesh**, former Director General & Inspector General of Police, Karnataka. In conversation with *TNIE*, he said the administration, government and DGs should endorse registering of more cases to know the true picture of society. More cases do not reflect law and order failure, he said.

Excerpts...

What do you have to say about the nature of crimes against women? Is it about the safety of women or more sensitisation, or lack of fear of the law and the role of police to solve it?

A We all talk of gender-sensitization, but who do we sensitize? Everybody needs sensitization. All categories of people commit crimes against women - boyfriends and parents. The Vyalikaval (Mahalakshmi) murder case is a new form of crime after the Delhi incident, where the woman's body was dismembered. Are we ready to sensitize all sections of human beings? The Nirbhaya case was committed by boys who were drivers, cleaners, people from broken homes. The theory of criminology says that a criminal is the first victim of a crime. Initially, we have to address sections like slum-dwellers, those who are deprived of schooling and people who do not have proper upbringing. Some modules have to be prepared that suit their background. Fear of police is lessening. These are issues an individual cannot answer.

Why is fear of police becoming less?

There was colonial police in 1947. Then, police could do anything and get away with it, so there was fear. It was not the right kind of policing. There is no difference between policing then and now. It has the same laws, same manuals and same procedures. The colonial hangover continued after 1947. Police should be able to command people's respect. Emergency was a watershed, and many wrongs of the police were exposed. Over a period of time, there is a lot of police bashing, no respect for the authority. Overall, police have become weak. It was being used as a tool by political masters, irrespective of political parties, and is becoming weaker. Nobody is interested in police reforms that benefit citizens.

Your opinion of the Bharatiya Nyaya Samhita (BNS)?

I have a problem with BNS. There were no consultations. It was done without any public discussion as everybody is a stakeholder. It is a substantive law. There was no draft. Nobody knows who made the changes. A retired IPS officer sitting in Delhi was given the job. How can one man do it? It was a great opportunity as we were complaining that it was a colonial law and had to be changed. Hindi names in the new law are in violation of Article 348 of the Indian Constitution. Article 348 says names of legislations should be in English. That is why it was earlier called Indian Penal Code. There is no provision for hate speech in the new law. Giving police custody beyond 15 days is dangerous. There are police officers who can misuse it. Legitimising handcuffing provisions is dangerous. The new law continues to use the same colonial language. Love jihad is the new

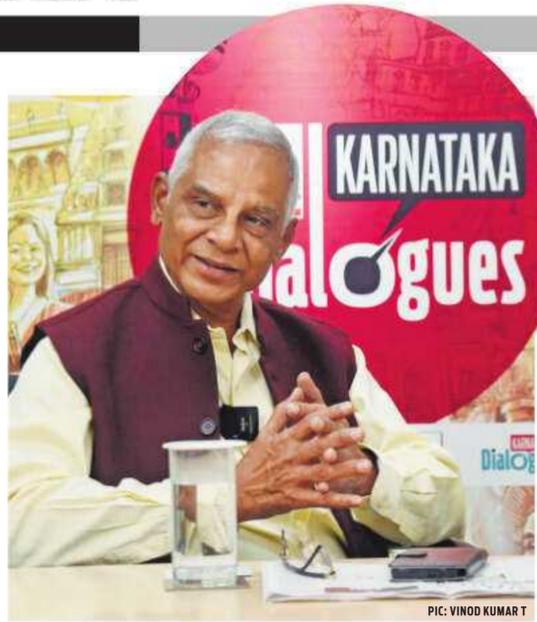
word that has got into the law book now and has assumed legal sanctity. In my 35 years of service, I have never come across this word love jihad. Nothing has changed. It is a revision without vision and a lost opportunity. It is a disappointment.

There is an overall trend of rising crime, not just cyber-crime, but all types - religious, personal and more. What is the reason for this?

Crime is under-reported. Police often control case registrations through burking, especially for minor property crimes. Many people avoid police stations due to fear of harassment, bribes or social stigma. This leads to incomplete crime data, as seen in NCRB reports. In rapidly growing cities like Bengaluru, with a growing population, crime is bound to increase. Leaders need to push for full crime registration - not as a failure of law and order, but to reflect reality and address rising issues fuelled by unemployment, poverty and consumerism.

What drives people to commit extreme acts like stabbing someone to death in a college, chopping a person to pieces, slitting someone's throat while walking on the road, or ganging up to murder someone in a restaurant or shed?

Crimes vary widely in nature. For instance, in case of actor Darshan, his fame and influence made him feel unassailable, allowing him to torture a man to death without fear of consequences. This kind of crime stems from power and arrogance. He was even rumoured to have influenced postmortem results. On the other hand, crimes like the Dharwad stabbing fall under 'crimes of passion', which are



EXPRESS Dialogues

not easily preventable. Some crimes, like frequent house thefts, can be reduced through surveillance, but others, such as a servant committing theft, are beyond control. Mental health plays a significant role in extreme crimes and Nimbans studies show it. Cases like dismembering a body show a severe mental disorder, indicating that crime is often a complex mix of mental, social and situational factors, requiring deeper sociological study beyond just poverty.

Recently, actor Darshan was reportedly allowed to use a phone in prison, similar to previous incidents. How can we address the issue of special treatment to certain prisoners?

This will continue, as there is no quick-fix solution. Those with money and influence will find ways to secure privileges. Bribery remains a challenge, especially when corruption in prisons is an accepted fact. Prison manuals and rules are well-written, but their effectiveness depends entirely on proper implementation. However,

The Cauvery Aarti will be performed on the banks of the river in Srirangapatna for five days from October 3. The aarti will be performed on the lines of the Ganga Aarti in Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh

women to freely raise their issues. SITs are not a bad option, they do a commendable job.

How has the recruitment process in the police department progressed, following the sub-inspector scam?

There has been no recruitment in the police department. However, during my tenure, the government issued an order for the recruitment of 400 sub-inspectors, marking the highest such effort to date. If successfully completed, this would have exceeded previous records.

Some cops look at prisons as correctional centres, if there is action, human rights issues crop up and the officers' hands are tied, the reforms have been namesake. Sometimes, it used to be very difficult to pull up officers. I would not have the moral courage to take action against them. The system itself needs policing. There is an unholy triad - political corruption, politicisation of administration and criminalisation of politics. Despite all these issues, officers who stick to their guns and do their jobs are brave men.

To what extent does technology influence crimes committed by juveniles in today's society?

Technology has a minimal role, it is a human element and has many underlying issues. It needs a fine balance. Teenagers behave peculiarly. A juvenile crime needs to be dealt with differently.

Crime keeps increasing, and whenever that happens, the police and government are blamed. But prevention of crime is a responsibility that rests with society also. What should society do?

Due diligence by citizens can help prevent crime. Society's role is to take normal responsible precautions. To prevent conventional crimes like theft, people should keep their houses locked. If there is a domestic help, keep your valuables safe. Cybercrimes can be prevented

if citizens exercise caution.

Lack of basic infrastructure like footpaths makes people vulnerable to crimes like chain-snatching...

We need to give pedestrians their space. Roads should be designed keeping pedestrians in mind.

What needs to be done to bring in friendly police stations?

The term people-friendly police is a contradiction. Enforcing the law is often an unpleasant job. For instance, people hate it when they are issued a challan for not wearing a helmet. Law enforcement is a necessary evil, and while police can be friendly to an extent, enforcement of laws is rarely met with universal approval. However, there are areas where police can establish rapport with citizens, which is necessary to improve their image. There should be a balance between enforcing the law and maintaining a cordial relationship with the community. A good relationship with citizens can facilitate better policing.

Has the decline in foot patrolling resulted in a gap between police and community?

Effective policing relies on foot patrolling. While police may have many vehicles, the fundamental problem is a lack of resources. The police-population ratio, according to UN standards, is 250 police officers per lakh of population. Developed countries have even more police per capita. In Karnataka, there are only 158.3 police officers per lakh of population. No one is addressing this shortage. Policing is a manpower-intensive job.

How can we attract people to join the police force?

In a society where unemployment is high, police jobs are often seen as powerful positions. The prospect of stable employment motivates many to join the force; for every 100 openings, there are about 10,000 applications. A police job offers a fixed salary, job security and benefits, which drives people to apply.

Caste-census report will be placed before cabinet: CM

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Mysuru

CHIEF Minister Siddaramaiah said the government has carried out the socio-economic and educational survey or caste census, with the aim of identifying the people who are still deprived of facilities, and in the coming days, a report on the same will be placed before the cabinet and steps will be taken to implement the recommendations.

Speaking after launching the Mysuru District BCM Hostel Senior Students Society at Kalamandira on Sunday, Siddaramaiah said the government has received the caste census report, but due to various reasons, it has not been implemented.

"But in the coming days, the report will be placed before the cabinet and action will be taken to implement the recommendations. Caste census is also the ideology of the Congress. Caste census, along with population census, in the country have not been done since 1930. Now, discussions on conducting caste census are gaining momentum across many states," he said.

Stating that quality education develops a scientific spirit and makes a good human being, Siddaramaiah said that there is no use of acquiring education if scientific, rationality and social responsibility do not develop.

CONG, BJP LEADERS PLOTTING TO TOPPLE SIDDU GOVT, ₹1,200 CR SET ASIDE: YATNAL

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Davanagere

BJP MLA Basangouda Patil Yatnal on Sunday alleged that a conspiracy has been hatched to bring down the state government led by Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and claimed that Rs 1,200 crore has been earmarked for the purpose.

He told reporters here that leaders from both BJP and Congress are part of this joint conspiracy. "I have information on this plot," Yatnal claimed, adding that some sections within BJP are thinking of Operation Lotus, though the BJP high command is not interested.

"Some people have even kept aside funds for the operation and are eyeing the CM's chair. The state government is mired in corruption and Siddaramaiah may be jailed in the MUDA case. I had requested Siddaramaiah to resign from the CM's post when the MUDA incident came up. By going to the people's representatives' court and the high court, Siddaramaiah has lost his image. Even if he had not gone to the HC, the issue would have been probed," he said.

He said the state government has gone bankrupt and it is finding it difficult to fund the guarantees and pay staff salaries. "But Congress MLAs are more inclined towards bringing down the Siddaramaiah government. No one is stating this openly. In the MUDA case, we were handed documents by Congress leaders, and we just spoke. BJP has nothing to do with this struggle," he alleged.

"The state government has already become corrupt and it should not continue in office. It was thought that Siddaramaiah would resign after the governor sanctioned his prosecution, and AICC president Mallikarjun Kharge would become CM. The same people who are planning to destabilise the government are behind the plot to make Kharge CM," he charged.

Meanwhile, Yatnal said the team opposing state BJP president BY Vijayendra will not speak till December, as they are waiting for the party top brass' decision about their demands, which they have expressed before leaders of the Sangh Parivar in Karnataka.



Mysuru District BCM Hostel Senior Students Association members felicitate Chief Minister Siddaramaiah in Mysuru on Sunday | UDAYASHANKAR S

Oppn not movers and shakers: CM

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Mysuru

OPPOSITION parties may create trouble politically for a couple of months but they can't shake me, said CM Siddaramaiah. Facing a Lokayukta inquiry into the MUDA scam after the High Court upheld the Governor's permission for a probe into how he got 14 sites in an upmarket area, Siddaramaiah said he is right, as per his conscience, and would not be scared. "I cannot be shaken till I have the blessings and support of the people," he said.

Speaking at a function to distribute sites to betel growers in Ashokpuram, he said that many well-wishers wanted him to be courageous and appealed to him not to resign. Siddaramaiah claimed he would win the legal battle. "I know they (BJP-JDS) can create trouble for one or two months. I will face it politi-

cally," he asserted.

Earlier, speaking to the media here, Siddaramaiah clarified that he would not interfere in the Lokayukta probe into the MUDA scam ordered by court. Asked about a complaint lodged against him with the Enforcement Directorate in the MUDA case, he said he would face it legally and the law would take its course.

On Lokayukta ADGP Chandrashekar's letter against Union Minister HD Kumaraswamy, Siddaramaiah said the ADGP has not called Kumaraswamy "a pig", but had referred to George Bernard Shaw's quote in response to the Union minister's charges.

Siddaramaiah said he didn't want to intervene between the ADGP and Kumaraswamy. Police will investigate if the former chief minister has committed a mistake, he said.

ADGP Chandrashekar hits back at HDK

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Bengaluru

UNION Minister HD Kumaraswamy on Saturday threw a bombshell, branding a senior police officer, ADGP M Chandrashekar, a "blackmailer" and implicating him in a shadowy Rs 20 crore deal.

But Chandrashekar, who is heading the Special Investigation Team (SIT) probing the Sandur mining case against Kumaraswamy, has not taken it lying down. He hit back saying, "Never wrestle with pigs, you both get dirty and the pig likes it." The officer said he will pursue a defamation case against Kumaraswamy.

Kumaraswamy is named accused in the controversial mining case involving Sri Sai Venkateshwara Minerals of Sandur. Recently, it was revealed that the SIT had sought Governor Thawar Chand Gehlot's nod to prosecute Kumaraswamy. This, insiders say, may have triggered the fresh war of words between ADGP Chandrashekar and the Union minister.

But there is a deeper, darker conspiracy. Suspended police inspector Kishore Kumar, embroiled in criminal cases for the

illegal sale of PACL lands, has resurfaced with claims of a Rs 20 crore extortion attempt. The accusations, however, were swiftly dismissed by the court, which threw out the case against Chandrashekar on November 6, 2023 for lack of evidence. But this crucial court decision is being buried as a dangerous disinformation campaign swirls, threatening to derail critical investigations by SIT.

FIRs paint a damning picture of Kishore Kumar, with allegations mounting against him and his associates. In an attempt to further muddy the waters, known rowdy-sheeter Sridhar filed a PCR, only for the High Court to step in on July 24, 2024, calling it an outright abuse of the legal process.

But in this web of half-truths, Kumaraswamy's sympathies for Kishore Kumar raise questions. Why is a suspended officer accused of perjury in the Supreme Court, which is pending in CID, receiving such support?

It all started after the papers from the Lokayukta office seeking sanction to prosecute Kumaraswamy leaked from either the Lokayukta office or Raj Bhavan recently.

Snehamayi Krishna terms FIR against him a 'conspiracy'

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

HER husband died in 2020, Lavanya stated. She mentioned in her complaint that Krishna, who is accused number 4 in the FIR, had assaulted her and made threatening remarks against her and her mother.

The police have registered the case under Sections U/s 85, 126(2), 74, 352, 351(2), 79, and 3(5) of BNS. The other accused are Prabha, who is accused number 1, Siddappa (A2) and Dhaba Jayakumar (A3).

Snehamayi Krishna on Sunday vehemently denied the al-

legations and termed them false and a deliberate conspiracy to thwart his activism. "This is yet another attempt to suppress my fight against corruption. Even if I am jailed, my battle will continue," he told reporters.

Meanwhile, Krishna revealed that he has written to the En-

forcement Directorate (ED), seeking an investigation into large-scale corruption within the Mysore Urban Development Authority (MUDA) and alleged that over Rs 5,000 crore has been misappropriated.

"I have already sent an email to ED and will submit a com-

plaint on Monday personally. My intention is to bring to light irregularities in MUDA's site allotment process since 2015. Deserving beneficiaries have been denied plots. I have already filed a writ petition before the court, seeking a comprehensive probe by the CBI," he added.



FOR BETTER HEALTH

Health Minister Dinesh Gundu Rao at the inauguration of Health Mela by The Greenpath Organic Restaurant in Bengaluru on Sunday | SHASHIDHAR BYRAPPA

CHANGE OF GUARD

PRAKASH KARAT TO BE THE INTERIM COORDINATOR OF CPM

Decision taken after sudden demise of sitting general secretary Sitaram Yechury

PREETHA NAIR @ New Delhi

THE CPI(M) appointed former general secretary Prakash Karat on Sunday as the "coordinator of the Polit Bureau and the Central Committee" until the 24th Party Congress next year.

"The Central Committee of the Communist Party of India (Marxist), now in session in New Delhi, has decided that Comrade Prakash Karat will be the coordinator of the Polit Bureau and the Central Committee, as an interim arrangement until the 24th party Congress to be held in April 2025 at Madurai," the CPI(M) said in a statement.

Just seven months before the crucial summit, Yechury's death came as a heavy blow to the party.

"This decision was taken due to the sad and sudden demise of the sitting general secretary of the CPI(M), Comrade Sitaram Yechury," said the party.

The central committee has unanimously decided to assign the interim responsibility to senior politburo member Prakash Karat, said a party leader. There was a majority opinion that a full-time general secretary should be selected in the Party Congress, said a leader.

The thinking in the party is that as a former general secretary, Karat will be able to steer the party ahead of the crucial Party Congress, scheduled for April 2025 in Madurai.

As the coordinator, Karat will be handling the day-to-day affairs of the party. He will be in charge of preparing the draft political resolution and organizational reports for the party summit. After the demise of Yechury, Karat had called for a 'collective leadership'. While Yechury had played a leading role in forming the INDIA bloc to take on the BJP in the recent Lok Sabha elections, it needs to be seen whether Karat will take his legacy forward in dealing with the allies.

One of the key faces of the party for decades, Karat was at the helm of the CPI(M) when it decided to withdraw support to the Congress-led United Progressive Alliance government at the Centre in 2008. The following years saw a decline in the strength of the Left in Parliament.

While several names are doing the rounds for the post of general secretary, prominent among them are M A Baby, B V Raghavulu, and Brinda Karat. If the party decides on Brinda Karat, then it will have to give an exemption on her age.

K'taka farmers launch 'satyagraha' against GM crops

ENS @ TUMAKURU

WITH the Supreme Court asking the Central government to formulate a national policy with regard to the environmental release of the Genetically Modified (GM) crops, the farmers in Karnataka gave a push for themselves by launching a four day 'satyagraha' at Gandhi school of Natural Farming at Doddahosuru village here on Sunday. The members of Karnataka Rajya Raitha Sangha from across the state are taking part in the 'satyagraha' that

concludes on Gandhi Jayanti day on October 2.

The head of Siddaganga Mutt Sri Siddalinga Swamiji extended his support to the farmers in opposing the GM crops.

"It has been confirmed by many researchers that GM crops are the root cause of cancer as it demands rampant use of pesticides. Therefore, it is imperative that farmers take a decision not to use GM seeds. This should not only cover the entire state, but the country, ensuring that a good environment should be left behind for the next generation", he suggested.

He commended the agricultural scientist Dr Manjunath and his team for launching the 'satyagraha' to create an awareness among the farmers and public in general to bring pressure on the governments to not allow the GM crops.

Former member of Rajya Sabha Anil Hegde said that the JD(U) is against the GM crops, as the party chief and Bihar CM Nitish Kumar has shared his views with Prime

Minister Narendra Modi. "I as a RS member had raised the issue over hundred times", he claimed. As a result of the GATT agreement, the alarming development is being seen in the agriculture sector, he observed. Congress MLC Madhu Madegowda stressed on the unity among the farmers for the struggle against the GM crops to be successful.

Tejaswi Patel of Sugarcane Growers' Association said that the issue should be raised in the assembly and the parliament.

The resolutions passed in the 'satyagraha' include-the central government should declare that the country is free of GM crops, stop subsidising biotechnology and breeding research, corporate companies should be stopped from providing financial support to such activities, multinational companies should be banned from funding education, research, and extension on the development of hybrid breeds, the contract between Bayer Company and ICAR should be cancelled immediately, among others.



DIVINE VISIT

CJI DY Chandrachud offers prayers in Tirumala on Sunday | EXPRESS

2 caught for loitering near MLA Raja Singh's house

Hyderabad: Two youngsters who were found loitering around the house of Goshamahala MLA T Raja Singh on Friday night were caught by his security personnel and handed over to the local police for questioning. The youth, identified as Shaik Ismail and Mohammad Khaja, had reportedly captured photographs of the MLA's house on their phones. Their phones also purportedly had photos of firearms and Raja Singh. The MLA said that previously too, some persons had conducted a recce on his house.

IAF helicopter makes emergency landing in KGF

V VELAYUDHAM @ Kolar

A CHETAK helicopter belonging to the Indian Air Force (IAF), which was on its way from Yelahanka Air Force Station, Bengaluru, to Thambaram Air Force Station, Chennai, made an emergency landing, reportedly due to technical problems, in Doddur Karpanahalli of KGF taluk. According to sources, there were three pilots on board.

Speaking to TNIE, KGF Superintendent of Police KM Shantharaju said that locals who were in their fields informed the police that a helicopter had landed in DK Halli, and a police team rushed to the spot. It is learnt that the helicopter suffered technical problems, which prompted its crew to make an emergency landing. All on board, along with the helicopter, are safe. Shantharaju informed that he also spoke to senior offic-

ers of the IAF in Bengaluru, and adhering to protocol, all three pilots were accommodated at the BEML guesthouse, while additional police personnel were deployed to set up a security perimeter around the helicopter.

He added that a team of technicians also reached the spot on another helicopter, to take up maintenance work of the stationed Chetak. To aid them, lighting arrangements were also made near the spot. Meanwhile, another team is reaching the spot by road.



KGF SP KM Shantharaju speaks with IAF pilots, after Chetak helicopter made an emergency landing



'Vehicle mfrs told to supply safety harness'

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

ADDITIONAL Commissioner of Transport (Enforcement) Mallikarjun C stated that the transport department has requested vehicle manufacturers to supply the safety harness and if they don't, they could be penalised.

As per the mandate of the Ministry of Roads, Transport and Highways (MoRTH), it is compulsory for two-wheeler riders carrying children to use safety harnesses as the number of accidents involving children is increasing. MoRTH issued the order on safety harnesses in early 2022 and the state transport department is gearing up now to enforce it.

Habitat destruction affects elephant gene pool: Study

BOSKY KHANNA @Bengaluru

HABITAT reduction and increased infrastructure works have affected the natural gene pool of Asiatic elephants, stated a study shared by researchers from the National Centre for Biological Science (NCBS) and Indian Institute of Science (IISc) on Saturday.

They also noted that reduced migration of elephants is also affecting their gene pool.

In the study -- "Divergence and serial colonization shape genetic variation and define conservation units in Asian elephants" -- published in Current Biology, the researchers have uncovered new insights into the genetic history of Asiatic elephants in India. The research reveals the existence of five genetically distinct populations of Asian elephants in India -- more than previously

thought. The research team included Prof Uma Ramakrishnan's group from NCBS and Prof Raman Sukumar from IISc.

India is home to 60% of the global population of Asiatic elephants, found across South and Southeast Asia. But today, their habitat is fragmented, surrounded by farmland, human settlements, commercial plantations and linear trans-

port infrastructure. This has resulted in widespread and often severe human-elephant conflicts. Despite their ecological and cultural significance, studies on the population genetic structure, diversity and demographic history of these elephants -- critical for identifying conservation and management units -- have been limited.

Dr Anubhav Khan, lead author of the report and IISc faculty, said this reduced ge-

netic variation could be the result of a serial founder effect, where fewer individuals from each starting population migrate to establish new populations.

"The identification of these five genetically distinct populations underscores the need for region-specific conservation efforts," the team pointed out. The research team is also planning to develop a genetic toolkit based on DNA extracted from elephant faeces.



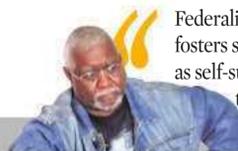
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NATIONAL CENTRE FOR CELL SCIENCE (NCCS) PUNE. Advt. No.: NCCS/PMC/P-08/2024. SUB: WALK IN INTERVIEWS FOR PROJECT POSITIONS UNDER EXTRA MURAL PROJECTS.

BANGALORE WATER SUPPLY AND SEWERAGE BOARD. INVITATION FOR TENDER. Providing and laying 1200mm dia RCC NP-3 class sewer pipeline from Balaji Theater to Sandhya Theater coming under AEE(WWM-N-K&T)-2 sub division.

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Federalism emphasizes autonomy and decentralization, fosters solidarity and complements groups' efforts to be as self-sufficient as possible. Groups can then be expected to cooperate as long as they derive mutual benefit

Lorenzo Kom'boa Ervin

INDIAN EXPRESS IS NOT AN INDUSTRY. IT IS A MISSION.

— Rammath Goenka

MAKE IN INDIA PROGRAMME LEAVES MUCH TO BE DESIRED

THE Make in India programme has completed 10 years. The project was launched by the Narendra Modi government in 2014 to give a major push to the manufacturing sector. The aim was to take the share of manufacturing in GDP, which was 15 percent in 2014, to 25 percent by 2020. In its earlier days, the programme focused on easing the rules of investments, creating better infrastructure, opening up more sectors for FDI, fostering innovations by making the rules for intellectual property rights more effective, and developing skills.

On the completion of 10 years of Make in India, the government has declared the programme a success. To prove its point, the government has been showcasing the success in some sectors such as electronics, defence, toys etc, where exports have shown tremendous growth. Mobile exports surged from ₹1,556 crore in 2014 to ₹1.2 lakh crore by March 2024. Defence exports soared from ₹1,000 crore to ₹21,000 crore, while exports of toys have zoomed 239% over the past 10 years. There are pockets of success stories of the Make in India scheme, primarily due to the Production-linked Scheme (PLI), which was launched in April 2020. Under PLI, the government is offering companies in 14 sectors cash incentives to produce in India.

However, beyond this, the scheme has largely been ineffective in either increasing the share of manufacturing in GDP or attracting major investments in the country. Even on the employment front, manufacturing jobs remain few and far between. The share of value addition by manufacturing sector is 15.9 percent in 2023-24 compared to 16.7 percent of GDP (in constant price) in 2013-14. Even in terms of FDI, net FDI inflows have come down from 1.5 percent of GDP in 2013-14 to 0.8 percent in 2023-24. The reasons for a rather insipid response to the Make in India programme are many. For one, ease of doing business is still a far cry from what is claimed on paper. High incidence of taxation and high handedness in dealing with tax litigation cases is another headache. Scarcity of skilled workers in India and competition from Vietnam and Bangladesh for low-skilled manufacturing also add to the woes.

RECKLESS DEMOLITIONS IN HYDERABAD MUST STOP

WHEN Telangana CM A Revanth Reddy's brainchild Hyderabad Disaster Response and Assets Monitoring and Protection Agency (HYDRAMA) went after a few farmhouses and structures constructed on encroached lands near lakes in Hyderabad a few weeks ago, everyone welcomed it in the belief that removal of encroachments would help the city. Fast forward to the present, that belief has been replaced with fear as the tentacles of the government began to reach the doorstep of thousands of people, all either middle class or poor, living for years in the Musi buffer zone.

The powerful lot owning farmhouses, guest houses and villas in other areas have all but been forgotten. In the name of the Musi River Development project, the government appears entirely focused on removing the encroachments on either side of the 55-km stretch of the river. The problem is, there are around 10,200 structures of all kinds in the region. The authorities, who are on the job of surveying, have understandably been met with stiff resistance. On the other hand, the HYDRAMA bulldozed illegal buildings in Ameenpur including one of a family that celebrated a housewarming ceremony only recently. A woman in Kukadpally died by suicide over fears that her daughters' houses would be demolished. It is obvious that thousands of families are going through a nightmare. The question is, should the government go ahead bulldozing unauthorised structures? It is not a simple question of yes or no. Successive governments turned a blind eye to encroachments as real estate boomed and local officials issued permissions left, right and centre. Properties were registered and the government has been collecting taxes. In normal course, if a builder claims to have all permissions, many customers do not check nor are they even aware of buffer zones. And on top of it, if lower level officials collude with builders and grant permits, there is no way for any customer to doubt the building's legality. At the same time, a responsible government cannot continue to ignore the encroachments since river Musi might flood the region in the future as it did in the past.

The solution is neither upending the lives of thousands within a short span nor let things be as they are. We suggest the government stop its demolition job for now and allay the apprehensions of people by precisely calculating compensation and rehabilitation. Demolition and rehabilitation cannot be a simultaneous job when people have been living in the area for years having constructed houses by the sweat of their brow. Give them choices of either relocating to government-built flats or accept compensation. The government must understand that often, the road to hell is paved with good intentions.

QUICK TAKE

FAST-TRACK COURTS ON SLOW TRACK

AFTER the Supreme Court had criticised governments for being slow to deliver justice to victims of sex crimes, the Union government declared in 2019 it would incentivise states to set up fast-track special courts to exclusively handle such cases. By the end of 2023, only 757 such courts, including 411 to deal with POCSO cases, were functional in 30 states and Union territories. The target was to have 2,600 such courts by 2026, but now the government has lowered its aim because of a lack of judicial officers to staff them. It's crucial for states and their high courts to inject urgency and speed into this effort.

ONE Nation One Election is a political slogan. The agenda of the BJP is to have synchronised elections. What that means is to have elections to the Lok Sabha and state assemblies together. But that has nothing to do with one nation. It is not as if since 1952, when there has been the absence of a law to hold synchronised elections, that we were not 'one nation'.

'One election' is also a misnomer. As contemplated by the Ram Nath Kovind Committee, 'one election', at the beginning, will be synchronised, but there will be situations when elections will have to be held mid-stream. In this case, there will be elections for the remaining term either in relation to the Lok Sabha or state assemblies depending on when the government falls. Therefore, the notion of 'one election' is yet another *jumla*. Both the slogan and motive are political.

Ram Nath Kovind, having held the presidential office, should never have consented to preside over this Committee. Having represented the republic, he should not be seen implementing the political agenda of a party. More so because the terms of reference of the committee was to provide a roadmap for implementing the ONOE agenda and not give its opinion on whether such a massive change requiring 15 constitutional amendments was desirable.

In the event, synchronised elections are to be held in 2029. The term of 17 state assemblies will be truncated for they would not have completed their respective five-year term. This violates the basic structure of the Constitution. The reason is every government has a constitutional right to complete its term in office. The rationale behind it is that political parties, through their manifestos, publicise their agenda for governance to persuade people to vote for them. Citizens have a right to know how the party in power has performed during its term. A depleted term will impact the credibility of parties.

The rationale given for simultaneous elections is that this will reduce expenditure. The 2019 Lok Sabha elections cost ₹60,000 crore and in 2024, ₹1,35,000 crore. It is perceived that with synchronised elections, there will be savings both for the public exchequer and parties. The second reason given is that the resources saved will be better utilised by political parties and that frequent elections have resulted in a policy paralysis,

There is no reason to believe expenditure will be less with synchronised polls as there could be frequent polls even after it is introduced. Instead, it could diminish democracy in several ways

ONE NATION, ONE ELECTION: YET ANOTHER JUMLA

KAPIL SIBAL

Senior lawyer and member of Rajya Sabha



SOURAV ROY

which is not good for governance. Apart from this, there are reasons relating to administrative efficiency, internal security, reduction in populist measures, increase in voter turnout, perceived social harmony and political stability.

It is unthinkable for any political party in government to give expenditure and consequential savings for conducting elections as a justification for violating the basic structure of the Constitution. To me, this is a spurious and irrelevant reason for introducing 15 constitutional amendments. There is no reason to believe that expenditure will be less because there could be frequent elections even after the introduction of synchronised elections, both in state assemblies and the Lok Sabha. Some be-

lieve the savings on account of synchronised elections would be about ₹5,000 crore. Whether these savings will be better utilised by political parties is debatable. We have seen in the recent past how one party used the massive resources created through electoral bonds to build five-star party offices and for huge rallies and infrastructural arrangements during elections.

The most serious implication of this ill-thought proposal is that it will diminish democracy in several ways. First, every elected member of the Lok Sabha and the state assembly is aware that 50 percent of them are not likely to be re-elected. Most of them would like to serve their entire term. In case of loss of confidence in the govern-

RECOGNISING THE REACH OF THE EPIC OF ASIA

WITH Pitr Paksh going on and millions of people remembering their ancestors, I am reminded of North Indians of diverse religious backgrounds saying, "Hum Ram ke vanshaj hain," meaning, 'We are descendants of Rama'.

This did not mean they had abandoned their respective religions. It was an assertion of cultural belonging, transcending caste and creed. Indians seem to have three kinds of reactions to the *Ramayana*—faith, critique and political ploy, forgetting that beyond religion, it's about culture. The epics are so entrenched in language, literature, the arts that we would be cultural orphans without their shared heritage.

The critique part has been dinned in our ears via English for decades. But long before that, Sita's fate tortured even the most dedicated Ram-bhakts, including influential poets like Narayana Bhattadri of Kerala and the Telugu saint-composer Thyagaraja. It was the grain of sand in the story that chafed us down the ages and the biggest pearl it produced as the zeitgeist evolved was the Constitution of India, which enshrined equal rights and justice for women like never before.

The political part too has been analysed to shreds, but I submit that it's coming from the *Ramcharitmanas* of Goswami Tulsi-das. Not that it is poor Tulsi's fault. Written at the height of Mughal rule, the *Ramcharitmanas* changed the history of religion in North India. Some Hindus in Kashi opposed Tulsi for daring to retell the epic in everyday speech. Ironically, it was fellow poet Abdur Rahim Khan-e-Khanan, then Mughal governor of Kashi, who protected Tulsi's spiritual and artistic freedom.

However, Tulsi's Ram is a faultless figure in monochrome gold, unlike Valmiki's humanly-textured hero. So, it strikes me that since everything has a socio-historic context, was Tulsi's Ram the deeply internalised response of North Indian Hinduism to the monotheism of the invaders? The political attempts today to make Ram a warlike rallying point suggest the possibility. It may be something to consider.

The Indian relationship with the *Ramayana* is so organic we take it for granted. But what was so gripping about this epic across Asia—from Mongolia to Japan to Myanmar, Laos, Cambodia, Thailand, Indonesia, the Philippines and others—that they integrated it into their own culture? They even developed entire art forms for it, like the Wayang of Indonesia (shadow puppet-theatre on the



RENUKA NARAYANAN

FAITHLINE

Ramayana and *Mahabharata*) and the Ramakien dance-theatre of Thailand.

A mega *Ramayana* conference in Delhi was held by the Sahitya Akademi in 1975 and international research papers shared were enlightening. They attested to how the *Ramayana* is truly 'the epic of Asia', widely transcending religion and language. The evidence was overwhelming.

To cite a few instances from personal observation, Southeast Asians instantly recog-



VIKRAMA CHANDRAN

The Indian relationship with the *Ramayana* is so organic we take it for granted. But it was so gripping across Asia that it was integrated into many nations' cultures. Some developed entire art forms for it, like the Wayang of Indonesia and the Ramakien dance-theatre of Thailand

nised Hanuman as an action hero. Thai boxing has sequences of moves dedicated to Hanuman and great Ramakien actors are identified with Hanuman's role. The Philippines version of Sita's *agni pariksha* displays its particular cultural melange, with Agni in a red dhoti bearing Sita in the Christian bride's white gown, denoting purity.

In the heart of Asia, I met the Uzbek national poet Muhammed Jon, who translated the *Ramayana* into Uzbek *slokas*. He recited a verse to me about the battlefield of Lanka bristling with swords. Why labour for years over the *Ramayana*? "To build Uzbek literature with a foundational Asian work," he said. It was Qamar Rais, former head of the Indian Cultural Centre at Tashkent, who translated the *Ramayana*

into its well-known Russian version.

In sum, Asia has a deep engagement with and active ownership of the *Ramayana*. But due to our colonialy-ordered and Delhi-centric view of history, the epic, to us, remains an unsung element in Asia's cultural bloodstream. Disadvantaged by India's history books and dragged down by politics of various hues, the *Ramayana* lacks elegant Indian spokespersons. This is to the scorn and amazement of Asian countries that have created their own exquisite versions irrespective of being Buddhist, Christian or Muslim, and had no qualms naming a national airline 'Garuda' or decorating city centres and international airports with gigantic sculptures of the 'Parthasarathiyam' and the 'Samudra Manthan'.

Asians know the *Ramayana* came their way from the ancient seafarers of India's Eastern shores, who sang to them of a beloved prince and his brothers born of a childless king's sacrifice. That an imperious sage helped the princes win beautiful princesses, that a palace intrigue not only dispossessed the prince overnight but exiled him to the forest for 14 years, that his loyal bride and a devoted brother went with him; that his father died of grief; and of another brother's selfless love and loyalty.

They told of a vengeful vampa, a lustful demon-king, an alluring golden deer and a shameful kidnap in disguise; that a brave old vulture died trying to save the princess. They sang of the prince's distraught search through many lands, of demons destroyed, a noble *vanara*, a pact, a flying leap, a talisman ring, the burning of the proud island city where the princess was captive, the bridge of boulders, the battle, the victory, and the homecoming in the flying chariot.

In depth and range, the *Ramayana* is the ultimate Asian drama, with not a thing left out—kings, queens, humble folk, wicked people, staunch souls, supernatural beings, a fight against terrible odds and a heartbreaking love story. Is it any wonder that Asia's peoples were entranced? To know the grander reality of the *Ramayana* is to transcend divisive paltriness. Will we *vanshaj* listen?

(Views are personal) (shebaba09@gmail.com)

MAILBAG

WRITE TO: letters@newindianexpress.com

Corporate exploitation

Ref: *Harvest of despair and political famine* (Sep 29). The onset of globalisation has opened up the agriculture sector to corporate exploitation. The vagaries of nature also compounded the woes of the community. Agricultural laws need a nasal feeding to farmers for their welfare measures and survival. **Katragadda Sarveswara Rao, Bhubaneswar**

Beyond symbolism

Ref: *United Nations: Altar of lip-sync, graveyard of peace* (Sep 29). The article accurately portrays the current functioning of the UN and effectively describes it as a symbol of inaction amidst global challenges like humanitarian crises and armed conflicts. To regain credibility, the UN must go beyond symbolism and take concrete action through authentic diplomacy. The world needs to see real change, not just empty words. **NR Jagannath, Bengaluru**

UN's reformation

The column is a powerful critique of the UN, highlighting its need for reform and greater effectiveness. While the tone may be stark, the insights offered are valuable for anyone interested in international relations and global governance. **Avinashiappan Myilsami, Sulur**

Star campaigner

On the advice of Tamil Nadu CM M K Stalin, the state's Governor R N Ravi appointed Udhayanidhi Stalin as deputy CM. He deserves the post. He was a star campaigner during the TN assembly election in 2021. Symbolically, he showed every election meeting a brick, indicating the AIIMS construction work at Madurai yet to begin. **6 Purushothaman, Tirunelveli**

Dynastic politics

Dynastic politics came full circle in DMK on Saturday when Stalin's son Udhayanidhi became the deputy CM. After all, the sole qualification required for such posts is that he or she should be from the late Karunanidhi's family. It is sad to see senior politicians of the party—Durai Murugan and T R Baalu—sporting superficial smiles and welcoming the change. **S Ramakrishnasayee, Chennai**

Political tactic

Filing an FIR against Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman and a few other BJP functionaries on the issue of electoral bonds appears to merely be a political tactic to score brownie points. Electoral bonds have been in place for quite some time and one fails to understand somebody choosing it to file a complaint against the FM now. **RS Ramprasada, email**



Anurag Thakur @rsurjewala
Earlier, we were put in jail for hoisting the tricolour flag at Lal Chowk in Kashmir, today the tricolour flies proudly at the same Lal Chowk for 24 hours.



Jitendra Patwari @jitupatwari
Over 5,000 government schools in Madhya Pradesh have not enrolled a single student in Class 1 in this academic session (2024-25).



Akhilesh Yadav @yadavakhilesh
BJP finds happiness in demolishing well-established homes... With every house that falls, BJP also falls even lower.

■ Congress-NC focuses on statehood after scrapping of special status ■ Cong chief campaigns in Jammu region

Article 370 key poll pitch as campaign ends in J&K

FAYAZ WANI @Srinagar

THE high-pitched campaigning for the third and final phase of polling in the Jammu and Kashmir Assembly elections concluded on Sunday evening, with major political parties engaging in fierce exchanges over Article 370, statehood and terrorism.

Voting will be held on October 1 in 40 assembly constituencies, including 24 in Jammu and 16 in the Valley. For the first time in over three decades, there was a high-octane poll campaign in both Jammu and Kashmir regions. Analysts say political leaders and candidates campaigned openly without any fear and threat, and there was greater participation of people in poll-related events.

It was the first assembly poll since abrogation of Articles 370 and 35A and bifurcation of J&K state into two Union Territories on August 5, 2019. It was also the first assembly poll in J&K in a decade — the last poll was held in 2014.

The parties used star campaigners to woo the voters and drum up public support in their favour. Being the first elections after the scrapping of J&K's special status, the campaigns remained centred on Article 370 and statehood.



NC candidate Farooq Ahmad Shah at a rally in Tangmarg, Baramulla district | PFI

BJP leaders including PM Narendra Modi, Home Minister Amit Shah, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, party chief JP Nadda and UP CM Yogi Adityanath campaigned in the polls and their focus remained Article 370 abrogation and the peace it brought to the region and doing away with discrimination by granting citizenship and voting rights to West Pakistan refugees and reservation to Gujjars, Bakerwals, Paharis and other communities.

Congress chief Mallikarjun Kharge and senior leader Rahul Gandhi led the party campaign with the focus on restoration of statehood to J&K, filling

one lakh government jobs and freebies on electricity. Although Congress leaders shied away from discussing Article 370, they talked about safeguarding jobs and land rights of local population. The regional parties — NC, PDP and Peoples Conference — majorly focused on restoration of Article 370 and statehood and jobs for unemployed youth.

Baramulla MP Er Rashid, who heads the Awami Itihad Party and is on an interim bail till October 2, called for resolution of the Kashmir issue, holding talks with all stakeholders in J&K, restoration of Article 370 and statehood.

Kharge feels dizzy during speech in Kathua, resumes address after treatment

FAYAZ WANI @Srinagar

CONGRESS president Mallikarjun Kharge on Sunday fell unwell while addressing a poll rally in Kathua and after being given medical assistance said he won't die till Prime Minister Narendra Modi is removed from power, and pledged to restore statehood to J&K.

"I am 83 years old, and I am not going to die so early. I will stay alive till Modi is removed from power. I will listen to you and fight for you," Kharge said after resuming his address following a brief pause.

"We will definitely restore statehood. We will fight for it. Whatever happens, I won't leave it," he said. The Congress in its manifesto has pledged to restore statehood to J&K.

Earlier, Kharge said the BJP government never wanted to hold Assembly elections in J&K as they wanted to run the government via remote control through Lieutenant Governor. "It was only after the Supreme Court order that Assembly elections are being held in J&K," he said.

Congress president accused PM Modi of "shedding crocodile tears" on the future of J&K youth. "The BJP has pushed J&K youth into the darkest era



We will definitely restore statehood. We will fight for it. Whatever happens, I won't leave it

Mallikarjun Kharge, Congress chief

for which PM Modi is responsible. They say they will provide five lakh jobs to youth. This has been said by the PM and HM during rallies in J&K. I want to ask them what they have been doing for 10 years," he said.

Kharge said 65% jobs in J&K are lying vacant. "There is one lakh backlog jobs in J&K. Why recruitment was not done to fill these jobs. The BJP is befooling the people and telling lies. Their intention is not to give jobs to youth," he said, adding that the NC-Congress will definitely form government and recruit for 1 lakh jobs.

Rejecting the BJP claim that Congress is going to withdraw reservation, he said, "Till there is untouchability and casteism, reservation will continue."

Constable, militant killed in encounter at J&K's Kathua

FAYAZ WANI @Srinagar

A police head constable and a militant were killed in an encounter in a forest area in the border district of Kathua in Jammu and Kashmir on Sunday, while another encounter broke out in the neighbouring Rajouri district.

Jammu ADGP Anand Jain said a police head constable, Bashir Ahmed, was killed in an encounter with militants in the village Kog (Mandli) in Kathua district on Saturday evening.

He said a joint party of police, Army and CRPF had launched a search operation in the area on Saturday afternoon after receiving inputs about the presence of militants. "There was a firefight between militants and troops during the search operation in the evening in which head constable Bashir Ahmed was killed and Dy SP Sukhbir Singh and ASI Niaz Ahmed injured," he said.

The injured DySP and ASI were shifted to a nearby hospital, where doctors have termed

their condition as stable. "The search operation continued in the area and the contact was again established with militants on Sunday morning. In the firefight, a militant was killed," the ADGP said.

A large cache of arms and ammunition and war-like stores were recovered from the slain militant, who is suspected to be a Pakistani national. "We have got inputs that a group of 2-3 militants are hiding in the area and the search is going on," a police officer said.

As the searches were going on in Kathua, a firefight broke out between militants and security forces during a search operation in the neighbouring Rajouri district. "Based on specific intelligence about presence of terrorists, a joint search operation was launched by security forces at Manial Gali, Thanamandi in Rajouri district on Sunday. A few rounds have been fired from both sides," ADGP said. The area has been cordoned off and more troops rushed to tighten the siege.



Govt plans to upgrade fencing, build bullet-proof posts along Pak border

MUKESH RANJAN @New Delhi

AMID recent spurt in terror attacks in Jammu region, the Central government has decided to upgrade infrastructure along the frontiers with Pakistan, with a plan to build bullet-proof posts for the security forces to monitor infiltration, officials said on Sunday.

Along with the proposals for Jammu and Kashmir, various border projects in Rajasthan, Gujarat and Punjab were also discussed in a high-level meeting chaired by Home Minister Amit Shah, the officials said.

According to sources privy to the information, reports of a hydrological and reconnaissance survey were presented before the committee to indicate various design parameters for preliminary estimates of the proposed projects.

Sources indicated that development projects across various rivers close to the India-Pakistan border were given an approval at the meeting. These projects, with an estimated cost of ₹1,500 crore, aim to improve access to the border areas.

The officials, while sharing further details regarding the decisions taken at the high-level meeting, said that the number of border posts along western frontiers would be increased

FORTIFYING THE BORDER

Bulletproof posts for security forces to monitor infiltration



Construction of roads from Border Out Posts to the border fencing across districts including Kathua and Samba sectors

Increasing number of border posts along western frontiers

₹1,500 CR worth development projects across various rivers close to the India-Pakistan border

Projects in different locations in Ferozepur & Abohar sectors of Punjab

Armored cables with high-quality lighting along the border

New high-powered LED lights for night checking

₹500 CR for fencing and walls with a new layered design in Rajasthan

and a few of them, considered more prone to infiltration, will be bulletproof.

The decision to build bullet-proof posts was taken in the backdrop of recent unprovoked firing by the Pakistan Rangers in which a BSF jawan was injured, sources said, adding that such sentry posts would help the force prevent casualties.

A source said, "A proposal for the construction of roads from border outposts to the fence along the Indo-Pakistan border across various infiltration-prone Jammu districts including Kathua and Samba sectors, have been approved."

This year, Rajouri and

Poonch have seen multiple terror attacks on the Army and civilians. These attacks have shown a change in strategy of terrorists in targeting Indians.

In addition, the Committee has also cleared projects in different locations in the Ferozepur and Abohar sectors of Punjab along India-Pakistan borders.

Armored cables will be used with high-quality lighting along the Indo-Pakistan border. New high powered LED lights will be brought for night checking. In Rajasthan, over ₹500 crore will be allocated for fencing and walls with a new layered design.

Govt plans 3 Bills to implement 'One Nation One Poll'

PREETHA NAIR @New Delhi

A week after Union Cabinet approved the proposal for 'One Nation, One Election' as recommended by a high-level committee headed by former President Ram Nath Kovind, the government is likely to bring three Bills in Parliament during the winter session or budget session.

Of this, two Bills include amending the Constitution to put in place the government's plan to hold simultaneous elections for the Lok Sabha, state assemblies and local bodies in a phased manner.

The Kovind committee had proposed simultaneous elections to the Lok Sabha and state assemblies as the first step, and synchronised polls to local bodies within 100 days of the general election. It had recommended 15 amendments to the Constitution to be carried out through two Constitution Amendment Bills. If the government decides to carry out the Kovind committee proposal from 2029, as many as 17 states will have

tenure of assemblies for less than three years.

The committee had proposed amendments to three Articles, insertion of 12 new sub-clauses in the existing Articles and tweaking three laws related to Union Territories with legislative assemblies. The total number of amendments and new insertions stands at 18.

However, experts have pointed out that to pass the Constitutional Amendment Bills, a special majority of not less than two-thirds of the House will be required. The government needs the support of 362 members, though the NDA has only 292 members in the House. As most Opposition parties and the 'neutral' parties such as BJD have opposed the Bill, the government has a tough task at hand.

Citing the committee's recommendations, sources said the proposed Bill would seek to amend Article 82A by adding sub-clause (1) relating to the 'appointed date'. It will also seek to insert sub-clause (2) to Article 82A relating to the end

of terms of the Lok Sabha and state assemblies together.

The Bill also proposes to amend Article 83(2) and insert new sub-clauses (3) and (4) relating to the duration and dissolution of the Lok Sabha. It also has provisions related to the dissolution of the legislative assemblies and amending Article 327 to insert the term 'simultaneous elections'. This Bill will not need ratification by at least 50% of the states, the recommendation said.

One of the proposed Constitutional Amendment Bills, which deals with aligning the local body elections to that of the Lok Sabha and the assemblies, will require an endorsement from at

least 50% of the states.

The second Constitutional Amendment Bill will seek to amend constitutional provisions relating to the preparation of electoral rolls by the Election Commission in consultation with State Election Commissions for local body polls.

The second Bill will also create provisions to hold simultaneous elections to municipalities and panchayats, along with elections to Lok Sabha and state legislative assemblies by inserting a new Article 324A.

The third Bill will be an ordinary one to amend provisions in three laws dealing with Union Territories with legislative assemblies — Puducherry, Delhi and Jammu and Kashmir — to align the terms of these Houses with other legislative assemblies and the Lok Sabha as proposed in the first Constitutional Amendment Bill.

The statutes it proposes to amend are the Government of National Capital Territory of Delhi Act-1991, the Government of Union Territories Act-1963 and the Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation Act-2019.

A decade of 'Make in India': Modi asks people to buy local products for festivals

RAJESH KUMAR THAKUR @New Delhi

ON completion of 10 years of 'Make in India' initiative, Prime Minister Narendra Modi in his 114th episode of the monthly radio programme 'Maan Ki Baat' on Sunday urged the people to buy locally made products during festivals.

He also invited the creator community to showcase their talent and strengthen the 'Create in India' movement.

He also said that 'Maan Ki Baat' shows people like positive stories and inspiring examples. "This episode today is going to make me emotional. It is flooding me with a lot of memories. The reason is that this journey of ours in 'Maan Ki Baat' is completing 10 years. 'Maan Ki Baat' started on the day of Vijaydashami on October 3, a decade ago," he said.

"This year on October 3 when 10 years of 'Maan Ki Baat' are completed, it will be the first day of Navratri," he said.

The PM cited many examples



In today's world, India has become a manufacturing powerhouse and it is because of the youth power of the country that the whole world is looking up to us

Narendra Modi, Prime Minister

of Make in India initiative taken up across the country. He also emphasised water conservation practices and cited some examples from several states.

Highlighting the success of Make in India initiative, the PM said the programme has facilitated a rise in exports from

every sector. The rise in Foreign Direct Investment is a testimony to its success, he said.

Speaking about his mantra of governance — Vikas (development) with 'Virasat' (heritages), the PM referred to his recent visit to the US. "The return of nearly 300 antiquities to India has widely been appreciated. It shows when people start taking pride in their heritage, the world respects their sentiments," he said, adding that a large number of ancient artefacts were brought back from different countries in the last 10 years of his government.

"In today's world, India has become a manufacturing powerhouse and it is because of the youth power of the country that the whole world is looking up to us," he said.

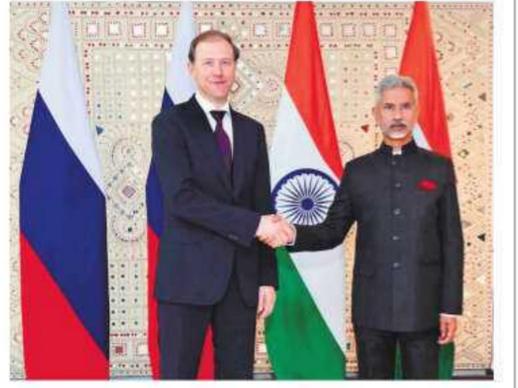
He also suggested that people gift their loved ones something made locally. "Any product that has been made with the sweat of an Indian artisan is our pride — we always have to lend glory to this pride," he said.

SHAHID FARIDI
The writer is Resident Editor
TNE, New Delhi.
Follow him on X @Shahid_Faridi.

Indo-Russian Ties

JAISHANKAR-MANTUROV MEET IN MUMBAI ON NOV 11

The next meeting of the India-Russia Intergovernmental Commission on Trade, Economic, Scientific, Technical and Cultural Cooperation is scheduled to take place in Mumbai on November 11 this year. The Indian side will be headed by external affairs minister S Jaishankar, while the Russian delegation will be headed by First Deputy Prime Minister and minister for industry and trade Denis Manturov. The two sides will review the progress made by the working groups and sub-working groups of the commission on cooperation in the field of energy, transport, trade, banking and financial matters, communication technologies, agriculture, pharmaceuticals, priority investment projects, etc and seek to resolve the pending issues. India is likely to raise the issue of equity oil offtake from Sakhalin-1, while the Russian side may flag the delay in its projects in India and the continued stalemate over setting up payment mechanisms between the two countries.



Member CBIC

GARG, SINGH, CHATURVEDI LEAD RACE FOR 2 POSTS

The Union government has initiated the process to appoint two members of the Central Board of Indirect Taxes & Customs (CBIC). The board will soon have two vacancies as Rajiv Talwar, Member (Compliance Management) is scheduled to retire on November 30 and Alok Shukla, Member (Administration) will retire on December 31. Sources said ten officers have been selected for interviews in two batches of five each. The interviews are scheduled for September 30 and October 3. Senior IRS officers Yogendra Garg, Vivek Chaturvedi, Mohan Kumar Singh, Ravinder Saroop and Mahendra Ranga will be interviewed on September 30. Rajkumar, Valte Vungzaman, Prachi Saroop, Rimhim Prasad and Rajesh Jindal are scheduled to be interviewed on October 3. According to sources, Yogendra Garg, Mohan Kumar Singh and Vivek Chaturvedi are among the frontrunners for the two posts.

Trouble in Punjab

MLAs SEEK MANN'S OUSTER AS AAP SUPPORT SHRINKS

All is not well in the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) in Punjab. The MLAs belonging to the state's ruling party are growing increasingly restless, and there are murmurs within the party of a section demanding that chief minister Bhagwant Mann be replaced with a more acceptable leader. Mann enjoys the trust of AAP chief Arvind Kejriwal. However, the rising number of MLAs seeking a change in leadership in Punjab is a matter of concern for him. The party's waning influence on the state's voters has also emboldened Mann's detractors. The AAP had stormed into office in Punjab by winning 92 out of the 117 assembly seats, trouncing the two national parties — BJP and Congress — and the main regional player, Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD). However, two years after this spectacular victory, the party faced a humiliating defeat in the Lok Sabha polls. It could win only three out of the 13 parliamentary seats, with the opposition Congress bagging seven, SAD



winning one and two seats going to independents. Sources said the AAP chief is keen to put his house in order. There are several names doing rounds as Mann's replacement, including Assembly Speaker Kultar Singh Sandhwan, education minister Harjot Bains and finance minister Harpal Cheema.

THEFT
Police have arrested two former employees of a private hospital and another person for allegedly stealing ₹21 lakh cash from a doctor's cabin at the medical facility in Thane district of Maharashtra, an official said on Sunday.

3 DEAD
4 HURT AS BUS COLLIDES WITH TRUCK IN BIHAR



INDIA	Max	Min	Mumbai	Max	Min
Ahmedabad	30	25	Mumbai	32	25
Bhopal	29	23	Panaji	30	26
Jaipur	32	24	Patna	30	25
Amritsar	32	24	Lucknow	30	24
Chennai	33	27	Port Blair	31	26
Kolkata	33	27	Imphal	29	20
Srinagar	26	12	Chandigarh	29	22

5 CRPF men injured in Naxal blast

Explosion took place when a team was out on a de-mining exercise in south Bastar area

EJAZ KAISER @ Raipur

FIVE CRPF personnel, including an assistant commandant, were injured in an improvised explosive device (IED) blast triggered by Naxalites on Sunday in Chhattisgarh's south Bastar area, police said.

The incident occurred in Usur block of Bijapur district while the forces were on a combing operation against the outlaws. The forces have stepped up operations as Union home minister Amit Shah had last month declared in Raipur that the country will be free from the Maoist problem by March 2026.

"A team of CRPF 153 battalion was out on a de-mining exercise when an IED exploded at Tarnem-Gundam area of Bijapur district. The squad was carrying out the task to track down IEDs and defuse them. The troops spotted a wire attached to the pressure IED. As the search for the bomb connected to the wire was on, it exploded causing splinter injuries to five personnel," a Bijapur police officer said.

The IED blast incident occurred only 350 metres from the CRPF's Chinnagur base camp. The troopers immediately took positions but there was no exchange of firing.

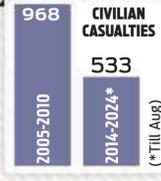
The personnel received splinter injuries on the face, eyes and above their abdomen area.

MAOIST DISTURBANCES

Since 2004 to 2014 there were

16,463 Maoists-related incidents and from 2014 till August **7,746** naxal disturbances—a **53%** drop

6,617 security personnel and civilians died during 2004-2014 and there was a decline by **70%** with 2004 casualties including both



In 2010, 96 districts in the country reported Maoist violence. Later 11 more districts were created, but recently only 42 districts report such cases

SO FAR 157 CADRES OF THE MAOISTS HAVE BEEN NEUTRALISED BY SECURITY FORCES, 663 CADRES ARRESTED AND 556 SURRENDERED THIS YEAR SINCE JANUARY IN THE CONFLICT-RIDDEN BASTAR ZONE, SOUTH CHHATTISGARH.

After the early treatment in the camp, the jawans were brought to the Bijapur district headquarters and later shifted to Raipur.

Besides CRPF assistant commandant Vaidya Sanket Devdas, the other injured included inspector Sanjay Kumar and three constables B Pawan Kalyan, Lochan Mahto and Dhole Rajendra Ashurba.

"The conditions of all the injured remain stable and out of danger," the Bijapur police of-

ficer said. As the troops are aggressively launching anti-Maoist operations in the conflict zone of Bastar zone, the IEDs remain the easiest weapon for the banned outfit to inflict damage on the security forces, said Brigadier (rtd) B K Ponwar, a guerrilla warfare expert.

Shah declared the deadline on eliminating the left-wing extremists with the revised plan of action aimed at final assault against the rebels with the twin objectives.

First, the efforts were directed to establish rule of law in the Maoist-affected areas, and second, to develop the area that witnessed destruction. Chief Minister Vishnu Deo Sai had said that the battle against the Maoists would continue till they were wiped out.

So far 157 Maoist cadres have been neutralised by security forces, 663 arrested and 556 surrendered this year since January in the conflict-ridden Bastar zone.



The year 2010 recorded the highest casualties of security personnel at **1005**, got reduced to **138** in the year 2023

Since 2019 there were **277** new camps of central armed police forces (CAPF) were set up to fill the security vacuum

2014-2024 period saw decline in Maoist violence and **14** top Maoist leaders were eliminated

NIA conducts raids in Bastar over last year's attack on Army

MUKESH RANJAN @ New Delhi

THE anti-terror federal probe agency NIA has conducted raids across the Amabeda area of North Bastar district in the Kaker region of Chhattisgarh as part of its investigation in a case linked to the brutal killing of Indian Army personnel by extremists of the banned CPI (Maoist) last year, officials said on Sunday.

The officials said that the investigative teams extensively searched several locations belonging to 11 suspects during the crackdown in villages Useli, Gumjhir, Badetevda, Umarmunta, and Amabeda.

Following the searches, air guns, mobile phones, printers, laptops, hard discs, DVRs, motorcycles, incriminating naxal documents, which are being examined, and ₹66,500 in cash have been seized, they said.

The case relates to the fatal attack on Motiram Achala, who was on leave from his posting in Assam in the Indian Army when he was shot dead by a group of unknown cadres of CPI (Maoist) near Murga Bazar village Useli, PS Amabeda, in February 2023, the

officials said.

Achala was at a local fair along with his elder brother Birajhu Ram Achala and his friends when he was attacked. After the murder, the assailants fled towards the nearby jungle, shouting slogans of "Lal Salam Jindabad".

"During the NIA investigation, names of CPI (Maoist) supporters suspected to have been involved in the heinous crime came to light, leading to today's searches," the statement read.

Achala, who joined as Havildar in 2013, was the first one from the village to join the Indian Army. He used to encourage local residents to join the defence forces.

During the NIA investigation, names of CPI (Maoist) supporters/OGWs suspected to have been involved in the heinous crime came to light, which led the NIA investigators to launch searches on the premises of the suspects.

The NIA, which took over the case from the local police in March this year, is continuing with its investigation and has intensified its efforts to dismantle the Maoist ecosystem in the region, the officials said.



GUWAHATI DIARY

PRASANTA MAZUMDAR

Our correspondent in Guwahati
prasantamazumdar@newindianexpress.com

NGO disputes CM's statement on NRC

Assam Public Works (APW), an NGO and one of the main petitioners for the updation of National Register of Citizens (NRC), disputed Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma's statement that the BJP government requested the Supreme Court to allow it to carry out the re-verification of documents covering 20% of people living along the Bangladesh border. "It's been five years but the BJP governments in the state and at the Centre have not submitted any affidavit in the SC seeking the re-verification of NRC documents. This government will not do any NRC-related work," APW chief Abhijit Sarma said.



BJP in Assam has 50 lakh members

The BJP now has 50 lakh members in Assam, the party said. BJP national general secretary BL Santhosh said the party achieved the milestone in the ongoing membership drive. "Assam has become the fourth state after Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and Gujarat to achieve this milestone," Santhosh said, applauding the state leaders. Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma said the BJP's total membership in Assam in 2019 was around 19 lakh. "This growth is massive. Moving forward, our goal is to secure 40,000 members per Assembly constituency," he said.

Frisking of school bags made mandatory

The Kamrup (Metro) district administration issued an order asking schools, both state-run and private, in the district to frisk the bags and pockets of students before the commencement of classes and if any arms, weapons, sharp objects or any toxic products like liquid, gutka, tobacco, cigarette etc or any other objectionable items are found, they should be seized and the parents informed. The schools were asked to treat the matter seriously. The order was issued in the light of a recent incident at the Padum Pukhuri School in the Darrang district in which a Class 9 student lost his life in school after he was assaulted by a schoolmate.

ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS

BJP changes tactics before Rahul's Haryana roadshows

HARPREET BAIWA @ Chandigarh

IN a tactical move, the ruling BJP eyeing a third consecutive term in Haryana in the assembly elections due October 5 appears to be experimenting with making this election more localised.

On the other hand, the opposition Congress is planning a series of road shows by leader of the opposition Rahul Gandhi in the coming days.

BJP leaders are focusing on the track record of their government. They charge the previous Congress governments with favoritism and corruption (kharchi & parchi) in government jobs.

"Under Khattar or Saini dispensation, the stress has been on good governance and transparency factor," said a BJP leader who was attending a rally of Home Minister Amit Shah in Karnal on Sunday.

He also highlighted various government sops to various sections of society. "We are committed to procuring all 24 crops on minimum support price (MSP).

Leader of Opposition and former CM Bhupinder Singh



Hooda has told the people, especially in rural areas, that the BJP failed to deliver on its commitments since 2014.

He charged the BJP with copy-pasting the Congress manifesto. "Their manifesto is a bundle of lies," said a Hooda supporter.

The saffron party is depending on the caste arithmetic and is trying non-Jat and Other Backward Classes (OBCs) vote bank. On the other hand the Congress is banking heavily on the consolidation of the Jat-Muslim-SC vote and looking for chinks in the BJP's coalition of non-Jat and OBC vote bank.

BJP depending on the caste arithmetic

The saffron party is depending on the caste arithmetic and is trying non-Jat and Other Backward Classes (OBCs) vote bank. On the other hand the Congress is banking heavily on the consolidation of the Jat-Muslim-SC vote and looking for chinks in the BJP's coalition of non-Jat and OBC vote bank. Home Minister Amit Shah addressed an election rally at Badshahpur in Gurugram.

Don't forget gains of 'double engine' govt, PM tells Pune



Pune metro project Phase-I

Swargate-Katraj Extension of Pune Metro is part of Phase-I to be developed at the cost of around ₹2,955 crore. This southern extension of around 5.46 km is completely underground with three stations — Market Yard, Padmavati and Katraj. The cost of the underground section between District Court to Swargate is around ₹1,810 crore. The PM praised the work of ahayuti government.



SUDHIR SURYAWANSHI @ Mumbai

AHEAD of the Maharashtra Assembly polls due soon, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday virtually laid the foundation stone of Pune metro projects connecting Swargate to Katraj (worth ₹11,200 crore) and inaugurated the Pune Metro section of District Court to Swargate which will also mark the completion of Pune Metro Rail Project (Phase-1).

The cost of the underground section between District Court to Swargate is around ₹1,810 crore. The Prime Minister said the "double engine govern-

ment" under the leadership of chief minister Eknath Shinde has been focusing on infrastructure development and connectivity in major cities of the state.

"The Pune Metro concept came in 2008, but our government started the work in 2016. The earlier governments did nothing to connect the important places by the Metro network and road, but our government is focusing on development," the PM said.

The PM praised the development work of the ruling Mahayuti government. "Pune city has been growing. It is the duty of the government to provide infrastructure development and state-of-the-art facilities," Modi said.

PM Narendra Modi said that Pune has witnessed a historical revolution and development in past. Savitribai Phule was the first person who started a school for girls' education.

The Prime Minister also dedicated to the nation Bidkin Industrial Area, a transformative project covering 7,855 acres under the National Industrial Corridor Development Programme.

Didi seeks Central help as N Bengal situation worsens

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ New Delhi

WEST Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Sunday described the flood situation in the northern districts as "alarming" and claimed that the state has been deprived of central assistance to deal with the natural calamity. She said her government was dealing with the deluge on a war footing.

"North Bengal is reeling under flood. Districts such as Cooch Behar, Jalpaiguri and Alipurduar have been affected. Due to heavy rain in catchment areas of Kosi river, places in Bihar, and Malda and Dakshin Dinajpur districts of West Bengal will be affected in the near future," she said on her way to Silihuri.

Accusing the central government of not helping the state in fighting the calamities, she said, "It did not take up maintenance work of Farakka barrage and its water-bearing capacity has reduced to a great extent despite our repeated reminders."

Following the meeting when asked whether she would reach out to the Centre again, Banerjee said, "If I write to the PM, one of his ministers will reply. This is not correct. (Maybe) I will then correct that again and send another letter." Banerjee had written twice to PM Narendra Modi after the flood broke out in the state. The CM said alert had been issued for six districts.



'Only in polls'

Mamata Banerjee said that BJP leaders visit West Bengal "only during polls but forget about the state when it matters most". "Only Bengal is being deprived of flood grants", she claimed.

Bihar steps up relief efforts, NDRF teams deployed

RAMASHANKAR @ Patna



Aggravates condition

The discharge of excess water may aggravate the condition of over 16.28 lakh people in 13 districts, sources in the state disaster management department said, as several rivers were in spate.

UNION government has stepped up measures to assist the Bihar government combat flood situation after release of excess rainwater from Valmiki Nagar and Birpur barrages in north Bihar following heavy rainfall in neighbouring Nepal. Union minister for home Nityanand Rai on Sunday said that if required, Airforce personnel will be engaged in evacuating people from flood affected areas to safer places in north Bihar. He said even food packets will be airdropped in largely affected villages, if need be.

Talking to media persons after chairing a high-level meeting with senior officials, Rai said that the central government was keeping a close watch on the flood situation in Bihar. "We are prepared to deal with the situation, which has worsened in some districts," he added.

At least nine teams of National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) have been deployed in flood hit districts and more teams kept in reserve, which will be sent on the recommendation of the state government. The NDRF personnel are already on the job, he added.

Additional chief secretary of state disaster management department Pratyaya Amrit chaired a meeting to assess the flood situation. The district magistrates of flood hit districts were asked to set up flood relief camps.

MANIPUR Two abducted Meitei youths call CM for help

PRASANTA MAZUMDAR @ Guwahati

TWO Meitei youths, abducted by the Kuki militants, appealed to Manipur Chief Minister N Biren Singh to save their lives. The appeal was made through a video that surfaced on social media early Sunday morning.

One of the abductees made a fervent appeal to Singh to save their lives by fulfilling the demands of their abductors. The demands were not immediately known. Hours after the video surfaced, Singh held a meeting with MLAs from various parties. He said the state government was taking steps to secure the duo's safe release.

Three youths — Ningombam Johnson Singh, Oinam Thoithoi Singh and Thokchom Thoithoi Singh — were reported missing on Friday after they had left their homes in the Thoubal district on a two-wheeler to take part in an army recruitment rally at New Keithelmanbi.

Day before SC hearing on RG Kar case, medics hit streets for more security

SULAGNA SENGUPTA @ Kolkata

JUNIOR medics from various government hospitals and general public participated in torch rallies across Kolkata on Sunday demanding justice for the murdered R G Kar hospital doctor and security at their workplaces, a day before the Supreme Court is set to hear the case of rape-murder of the post-graduate trainee.

Having gone back to work after a month-long agitation, the junior doctors on Saturday expressed their intention to consider resuming total 'cease work' in medical colleges, contingent on the state government's assurances regarding their safety during the upcoming court proceedings.

On Sunday evening, medics from the College of Medicine and Sagore Dutta Hospital organised a torch and candle

march, protesting an assault by outsiders following a patient's death on Friday night.

The junior doctors there have gone on strike after the incident, insisting on proper security measures.

Participants, including people from various professions, held candles and torches as they marched from Sagore Dutta Hospital to Dunlop Crossing. The junior doctors carried banners stating 'No security, no work' and 'No safety, no work'.

Meanwhile, Kolkata Police Commissioner Manoj Verma visited R G Kar Medical College and Hospital a day before the apex court is to hear the rape-murder case.

Sources said that Verma took stock of the security system at the hospital, spoke to the police personnel present there, and went to the emergency department.

After Lebanon bombing, Israel strikes Yemen

Dozens of Air Force aircraft, including fighter jets, refuelling planes attacked power stations and oil seaport

JERUSALEM

THE Israeli military said on Sunday it was striking several Houthi rebel targets in Yemen, including power stations and a seaport, using dozens of aircraft. The strikes came a day after the Iran-backed rebel group said it targeted Israel's Ben Gurion Airport with a missile.

"In a large-scale air operation today, dozens of Air Force aircraft, including fighter jets, refuelling planes, and reconnaissance aircraft, attacked military-use targets of the Houthi terrorist regime in the Ras Issa and Hodeida areas of Yemen," military spokesman Captain David Avraham said in a statement.

"The IDF (military) targeted power stations and a seaport used for oil imports," a military statement said.

The sites targeted Sunday were used by the Houthis, who seized the Yemeni capital Sanaa in 2014, to "transfer Iranian weaponry to the region and supplies for military needs", the statement said.

"The strike was carried out in response to recent attacks by the Houthi regime against the state of Israel," it added, after the rebels said they tried to hit Ben Gurion as Prime



Homes are heavily damaged around buildings which were levelled by Israeli strikes that targeted and killed Hassan Nasrallah in the Haret Hreik neighbourhood of Beirut's southern suburbs, on Sunday | AFP

Minister Benjamin Netanyahu arrived back from New York.

The Houthi-controlled Al-Masirah station reported on Sunday that Israeli strikes targeted "the ports of Hodeidah and Ras Issa" as well as two power stations after previously announcing "Israeli aggression on Hodeida".

The US on Saturday offered clear support for Israel's bombing campaign against Hezbollah in Lebanon, including a strike that killed the group's longtime leader, but also said the time has come for cease-fires there and in Gaza.

President Joe Biden called the killing of Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah "a measure of justice for his many victims, including thousands of Americans, Israelis and Lebanese ci-

vilians." In a statement one day after an Israeli air strike on a southern Beirut suburb killed Nasrallah, Biden reiterated US support for "Israel's right to defend itself against Hezbollah, Hamas, the Houthis, and any other Iranian-supported terrorist groups."

Meanwhile Iran on Saturday called for an emergency meeting of the UNSC in protest at the killing of Hassan Nasrallah in an Israeli air strike in Lebanon, according to a letter to the Council sent.

In the letter, Iran's UN envoy Amir Saeid Iravani called on the Council to "take immediate and decisive action to stop Israel's ongoing aggression and prevent... from dragging the region into full-scale war."

WAR WATCH
ISRAEL-GAZA: DAY 359

TOLL SO FAR
43,443

37 terrorists of Islamic State, Al Qaeda killed in 2 US air strikes in Syria



Retaliatory strikes
Anti-IS coalition forces have been targeted dozens of times with drones and rocket fire in both Iraq and Syria, as violence related to the Israel-Hamas war in Gaza since last year has drawn in armed groups across the Middle East. US has carried out multiple retaliatory strikes

These strikes against leadership and operatives of ISIS and the Al Qaeda affiliate represent CENTCOM's commitment to the enduring defeat of terrorist organisations
Gen Michael Erik Kurilla

WASHINGTON

US forces conducted two separate strikes in Syria, killing 37 "terrorist operatives" including members of the Islamic State group and Al Qaeda affiliate Hurras al-Din, the military's Central Command (CENTCOM) said Sunday.

A September 24 strike in northwest Syria killed nine "terrorist operatives," including senior Hurras al-Din leader Marwan Bassam 'Abd-al-Ra'uf, the US military said.

A September 16 strike in central Syria targeted an IS training camp and killed at least 28 people, including four senior leaders, the statement said. It did not identify the leaders.

The US military has around 900 troops in Syria as part of the international coalition against the Islamic State group. The coalition was established in 2014 to help combat the armed group, which had taken over vast swaths of Iraq and Syria.

"These strikes against leadership and operatives of ISIS and the Al Qaeda affiliate, Hurras al-Din, represent CENTCOM's commitment to the enduring defeat of terrorist organizations in the CENTCOM area of responsibility and our support to regional stability," said General Michael Erik Kurilla, CENTCOM's commander.

In August, US forces killed another Hurras al-Din leader, Abu Abdul Rahman al-Makki, in a strike in Syria.

INDONESIA

TOLL COUNT RAISES AT ILLEGAL MINE

The death toll after a landslide at an illegal mine in western Indonesia was raised to 13 on Sunday, an official said, as search efforts for any further victims ended. Heavy rains caused a landslide at a remote illegal mining site on Thursday evening in West Sumatra province on Sumatra island, where rescue workers had to walk for hours from the nearest village to reach the area. Provincial disaster mitigation agency spokesperson Ilham Wahab said 13 people were found dead, while 12 others were injured, raising the death toll by two. AFP

ASIA MATTERS

THAILAND

THUNDERSTORMS WARNING GIVEN

Authorities are warning of thunderstorms and high winds in all provinces in the North, the Northeast and the Central Plain along with the southern province of Chumphon until Thursday, Bangkok Post reported. The storm comes because of high-pressure systems from China would reach the nation, according to officials.

SINGAPORE

12 POST OFFICES SHUT IN TWO YEARS

National postal service provider Singapore Post has closed 12 post offices, or one in five branches, in the past two years as the company struggles with declining mail volumes, reported The Straits Times. Five of the shuttered post office branches were in malls while the rest were either standalone branches or found in community clubs, office buildings or Housing Board blocks. SingPost has 44 post offices remaining. A SingPost spokesperson said that adjustments will be made to some post offices and locations to ensure postal services remain cost-effective and relevant.

Kyiv sends 100 drones to hit Russian ammo depot

KYIV

UKRAINE on Sunday claimed to have sent more than 100 drones deep inside Russia to hit a major weapons depot, as Kyiv ups its attacks further inside Russian territory.

"Defence forces struck the Kotluban military depot" in the Volgograd region, hundreds of kilometres from the Ukrainian border, a day after a shipment of Iranian weapons reportedly arrived at the site, the Ukrainian military general staff wrote on Telegram.

"A fire and ammunition detonation were observed on the depot's territory," said the post, adding that the facility was being used for storage and the modernisation of missiles and artillery.

Russia did not confirm the strike but reported that it had destroyed 67 drones overnight over the Volgograd region.

A Ukrainian defence sector source told media that 120 drones flew more than 600 km



A damaged apartment house is seen after Russia attacked Zaporizhzhia with guided bombs overnight on Sunday | AP

to target the depot early on Sunday.

"As a result of the hit, ammunition and missile storage sites were damaged, which will lead to a shortage of ammunition for units of Russia's occupation army," the source said.

Western governments have accused Iran of supplying both drones and missiles to Moscow for its war on Ukraine, a charge Tehran has denied.

"Several explosions were recorded in the area of Kotluban, the location of a depot of the defence ministry's main missile and artillery directorate," Russian military blogger Rytbar wrote, adding that "serious destruction" had been avoided. Volgograd governor Andrei Bocharov said falling debris from the drones sparked grass fires but no casualties or damage.

Volgograd news sites cited locals as saying the drone attack lasted around two hours and prompted some to flee their homes, and that it was not the first time the area had been targeted by such operations.

Russia's defence ministry on Sunday said its air defences had destroyed and intercepted a total of 125 Ukrainian drones over its territory overnight.

The onslaught was the largest Ukrainian drone attack since President Vladimir Putin last week announced changes to the country's nuclear doctrine to allow a nuclear response to a massive cross-border drone attack.

Russian regional governors reported some damage but no casualties from the attack.

Voronezh Governor Aleksandr Gusev said several drones had fallen on the regional capital, causing fires in two residential buildings. Another 18 drones were destroyed over the Rostov region. AFP

Floods, landslides claim 170 lives in Nepal, 42 others missing

KATHMANDU

THE death toll from rain-triggered floods and landslides across Nepal climbed to 170 with 42 people missing on Sunday, officials said.

Large swathes of eastern and central Nepal have been inundated since Friday, with flash floods reported in parts of the country.

According to police, 170 people have been killed so far due to floods and landslides across Nepal. Home Ministry officials, 42 people are missing in floods, landslides and inundation.

As many as 111 people have sustained injuries in flood-related incidents, Ministry of Home Affairs spokesperson Rishiram Pokharel said.

Search and rescue operations are underway with the mobilisation of all the security agencies, he said, adding that the Nepal Army has airlifted 162 people from across the



In this aerial image of the Kathmandu valley, Bagmati River is seen flooded due to heavy rains in Kathmandu on Saturday. (Right) People gather at the edge of the Bagmati River | AP

country. As many as 4,000 people affected by flood and inundation have been rescued by the Nepal Army, Nepal Police and Armed Police Force personnel, Pokharel said.

All necessary relief materials, including food grains, have been distributed to those rescued, he said. In the Balkhu area in the outskirts of Kathmandu, meals were distributed

to 400 people with the help of social workers, the spokesperson said.

National highways have been blocked since Saturday, with hundreds of people stranded on various highways due to landslides. Efforts are underway to clear national highways where roads are obstructed due to flood, landslide and inundation. Transport has resumed at

the Tribhuvan Highway, the main land route connecting Kathmandu to other districts, Pokharel said. The flood damaged at least 322 houses and 16 bridges across Nepal.

Kathmandu's main river, the Bagmati, was flowing above danger levels after incessant rain lashed much of eastern and central Nepal on Friday and Saturday. PTI

the Tribhuvan Highway, the main land route connecting Kathmandu to other districts, Pokharel said. The flood damaged at least 322 houses and 16 bridges across Nepal.

Kathmandu's main river, the Bagmati, was flowing above danger levels after incessant rain lashed much of eastern and central Nepal on Friday and Saturday. PTI

Francis met with 17 victims. "I felt their suffering," he told the mass. "Evil must not be hidden, evil must be brought out into the open, let it be known," he added, calling for all perpetrators to be judged.

The programme of Sunday's mass had to be changed at the last minute after it emerged that the closing hymn was composed by a priest accused of sexual abuse. The blunder prompted the head of the Belgian bishops' conference, Archbishop Luc Terlinden, to admit that the Church needed to better monitor cases and perpetrators. AFP

Visa for Indians in spotlight as Conservatives elect new head

LONDON

THE two frontrunners in the race to replace Rishi Sunak as Conservative Party leader have thrown the spotlight on cutting immigration into the UK, with visas for Indians being singled out in heated debates.

Against the backdrop of the launch of the Conservative Party conference in Birmingham on Sunday, former immigration minister Robert Jenrick singled out India as one of the countries that should be subjected to tough visa restrictions across all categories unless it takes back its nationals who enter Britain illegally.

His closest contender, shadow housing secretary Kemi Badenoch, has also zeroed in on the same issue and condemned new migrants bringing their disputes from India to cause unrest on the streets of the country.

Nigerian-heritage Badenoch, considered among the favourites to win the ongoing Tory leadership election, was referencing the clashes that broke out in Leicester in September 2022 in the wake of an India-Pakistan Asia Cup cricket match. Meanwhile, her former ministerial colleague Robert Jenrick who has notched up an early lead in the contest told The DT earlier this week that there were as many as 100,000 Indians to be illegally residing in the UK.

Pope denounces child sexual abuse cover-ups in Belgium



BRUSSELS

POPE Francis implored bishops not to cover up the sexual abuse of children, during an open-air mass on Sunday that capped a three-day visit to Belgium, which is still struggling with the legacy of past scandals. Gathered in bright morning sunshine, about 40,000 faithful, some waving Belgian and Vatican flags, packed the King Baudouin stadium north of the capital to hear the 87-year-old pontiff. "There is no place for abuse, there is no place for covering up abuse," Francis said. "I ask everyone not to cover

up abuse, I ask the bishops not to cover up abuse, to condemn the abusers and help them heal themselves of this disease of abuse." During his stay, the pontiff was pressed by Belgian authorities and victims' advocates on the Catholic Church's handling of child sexual abuse, which was put back on the front pages by a hard-hitting documentary last year.

The Belgian documentary prompted around 200 more people to come forward with allegations that they were abused by members of the Church, adding to around 1,000 cases reported before then. On Friday,

CLASSIFIEDS

PUBLIC NOTICE

CHANGE OF NAME

CHANGE OF DATE OF BIRTH
I, BATNAPADU RAJANNA (ARMY Retired) S/o. B Chandramouli R/o. MIG 1/60, KHB Colony, Nethaji Nagar, Near Vasavi School, Ballari, Karnataka State. That my Father (B CHANDRAMOULI) & Mother (B BHAGIRATHI) there Date of Birth wrongly mentioned in my Service Records as 01.07.1945 & 01.07.1956 hence herewith Declare that his & her correct Date of Birth is 01.01.1954 & 01.01.1960 and same to be forthcoming Recorded in Service & all my Documents. Sworn before Notary Shikhamani Naik vide Affidavit on 28.09.2024

CHANGE OF NAME
I, AMREEN FATIMA (Old Name) Resident of Subhas Nagar 2nd Stop, Near Naik Sir Home, Gudihal Road Hubli - 580024 Dist: Dharwad, Karnataka State (address), have changed my name as **AMREEN FATIMA SHAIKH** (New Name) for all purposes, vide affidavit dated: 28/09/2024 before notary Shivalli M. A.

CHANGE OF NAME
I, LATHA GOUDAR (Old Name) Resident of At Yalawadahalli Post Haunsabhavi Tq: Hirekerur - 581109, Karnataka, India, have changed my name as **LATA PRAKASHAGOUA GOUDAR** (New Name) for all purposes, vide affidavit dated: 28/09/2024 before notary Bidaralli N. B.

CHANGE OF NAME
I, ZUBEIDA (Old Name) Resident of P B Road, Near Vegetable Market, Ranebennur- 581115, Dt. Haveri, State: Karnataka (address), Karnataka, India, have changed my name as **ZUBEIDA RABBANI** (New Name) for all purposes, vide affidavit dated: 28/09/2024 before notary Bidaralli N. B.

CHANGE OF NAME
I, DIKSHITA MAHENDRA OSWAL (Old Name) Resident of No A9, KDO Residency, Manoj Paradise, Kusugal Road, Keshwapur, Hubballi - Dharwad City - 580023, Karnataka, India, have changed my name as **DIKSHITA RAHUL LODAYA** (New Name) for all purposes, vide affidavit dated: 28/09/2024 before notary Bidaralli N. B.

QuoteExpress

WHEN YOU REACH THE END OF YOUR ROPE, TIE A KNOT IN IT AND HANG ON

FRANKLIN D ROOSEVELT

Festive sale: Know all the top deals, cashbacks & discount offers

During this ongoing festive season sale, ecommerce companies have tied up with various banks to offer discounts, no cost EMIs and cashbacks to shoppers

UMA KANNAN @Bengaluru

WITH discounts, instant credit, no cost EMIs and cashback offers, ecommerce retailers have made this ongoing festive season sale for shoppers almost impossible to resist.

Ecommerce companies have tied up with many banks to offer discounts to shoppers. Homegrown ecommerce marketplace Flipkart's annual flagship event The Big Billion Days (TBBD) 2024 is on till October 6, and the company has partnered with HDFC bank to offer customers 10% off on debit cards, credit cards and EMI transactions.

Flipkart Axis Bank Credit Card will also offer 5% Unlimited Cashback and customers can avail instant credit and No cost EMIs with Flipkart Pay Later, the ecommerce firm said. It also offers daily cashback for customers using Flipkart UPI.

The Flipkart Group includes Myntra, Flipkart Wholesale, Flipkart Health+, and Cleartrip.

As part of the festive season sale, for air travel, Cleartrip will provide special fares for international destinations starting at ₹5,999 and domestic destinations from ₹999.

Over 33 crore user visits were recorded on the ecommerce platform during early access and day 1 (September 26, 27). It said, the co-branded card witnessed a spike of 20X in overall spends and 8X transactions when compared to the non-sale days. Flipkart Pay Later EMI witnessed a 8.5X spike in the daily transactions run rate compared to the pre-TBBD period. The third party EMI usage grew by 27x in spends and 18X in transactions compared to the daily run rate.

Experts said as ecommerce companies offer more deals and discounts, there has been an increase in the number of shoppers.

About 120 million people visited Myntra platform during early access and day 1 of the Big Fashion Festival. It witnessed 15X new users over BAU

Meesho Balance, an in-app wallet offering instant refunds without requiring bank details. Meesho Balance, an in-app wallet offering instant refunds without requiring bank details. Meesho Balance, an in-app wallet offering instant refunds without requiring bank details.

IT'S RAINING DISCOUNTS



SELLERS ON AMAZON.IN WILL BENEFIT FROM A DROP IN SELLING FEES RANGING FROM 3% TO 12% ACROSS VARIOUS PRODUCT CATEGORIES

Myntra's Big Fashion Festival (BFF): Customers can avail additional 7.5% + 5% off using Myntra's co-branded credit card in association with Kotak Mahindra Bank

In addition to assured cashback from PhonePe, through financial banks like ICICI, Kotak and Axis, shoppers can also avail up to 10% off while making their festive purchases

Flipkart has partnered with HDFC bank to offer customers 10% off on debit cards, credit cards and EMI transactions

Amazon festive sale: Customers can avail 10% instant discount with SBI Debit and Credit Cards

nessed 15X new users over BAU (Business As Usual) joining the platform, and a 2X spike in OPM (orders per minute) at peak over last year, in the open-

ing hour of the event. "We are also seeing a notable demand coming from both metros and non-metros, with approximately 45% of orders coming from

Tier 2 & 3 cities and beyond," Neha Wali, Head of Revenue, Myntra said. SoftBank-backed ecommerce company Meesho, which kicked off its annual Meesho Mega Blockbuster Sale on September 27, said nearly 6.5 crore customers visited the platform on Day 1. Megha Agarwal, General Manager, Business at Meesho, said, the platform achieved a record-breaking feat of doubling its Day 1 orders over last year.

Meesho Mall also grew 2.5X in orders over last year. Meesho has announced several initiatives including customer refunds instantly. On an average, the majority of users now receive their refunds in 5 minutes, it said. Amazon Great Indian Festival 2024 kick-started on September 27.

It said customers can avail 10% discount with SBI Debit and Credit Cards. Up to 50-80% off on Fashion & Beauty across 4.5 lakh styles, and minimum 50% off on Kitchen, Home and Outdoors

products, Amazon said.

Jewellery item stocks up

Data analysed by e-commerce enablement SaaS platform Unicommerce reveals that while inventory levels have increased across multiple categories over the last three months, June - August 2024, the build-up of the inventory is significantly higher for many categories. It said brands across footwear, electronic wearables, kitchenware and home furnishings & decor categories have increased their inventories by over 55%, 33%, 30% and 26% respectively during this period.

Jewellery and healthy snack sub-categories have shown the highest increase in inventory. Stocks of jewellery items have grown by over 100%, while stocks of healthy snacks are up over 75%.

Surge in job creation

Apart from various offers, the

festive sale is also promising as it creates job opportunities. Sachin Alug, CEO of NLB Services, highlighted that roles such as delivery drivers, customer service representatives, tech support specialists, and freelance designers are expected to experience the highest demand.

Salaries for these positions, currently ranging between ₹12,000 and ₹16,000, are projected to rise by 10-20% over the next 3-4 months, driven by the surge in demand.

While last year saw the addition of approximately 500,000 temporary and gig jobs, this year, he anticipates even greater growth, with over 1 million temporary jobs expected.

"This rise is driven by factors such as booming e-commerce activity, the expansion of the gig economy, and heightened consumer demand during the festival season," he said.

MONEY MATTERS

WHY FINANCIAL BEHAVIOUR DECIDES WEALTH OUTCOME



FINANCIAL KNOWLEDGE

RAJAS KELKAR
(The author is editor-in-chief at www.moneyminute.in)

YOU want to do the right thing when it comes to money. Your hard-earned income deserves better direction and management to generate the wealth effect needed to meet your lifestyle goals. However, your financial well-being has a lot to do with your behaviour. This column has touched upon it regularly. A study published earlier this year in Malaysia suggests that individuals with a firm grasp of personal finance and money management are more inclined to make prudent financial choices, exercise self-control, and avoid excessive spending.

The operating words are 'prudence', 'self-control' and 'avoiding excessive spending'. New data from the Reserve Bank of India shows that credit card defaults are rising in India. The ease you can spend can have a ripple effect on your wealth outcome. Financial technology or Fintech companies play a role in causing that ripple effect. They simplify spending money you do not have or spend tomorrow's money today. A study of the lower income households in Malaysia last year found that due to the

ease of buying digitally, the desire to have a stylish lifestyle and display an image of wealth was a driving factor for them to buy luxury cars, stylish homes or high-end electronic devices. In many instances, people used debt.

Indians are no different. The surge in personal loans and credit card spending indicates people want to spend tomorrow's money today. Personal finance is not just about investing it right. It is also about controlling your senses and holding back on big spending based on impulse. You must have a financial plan for every significant ticket expenditure. Managing finances does not mean sacrificing your aspirations or desires for a better lifestyle. It

EXPRESS ILLUSTRATION



means making a plan so that you can convert every such dream into a financial goal and achieve it without disrupting your finances.

As you exercise self-control in spending, you need to push yourself a bit more while saving and investing. The latest bulletin published by the National Stock Exchange cites a study that provides evidence about individual investors anchoring their subsequent stock market purchases around the value of their initial purchase. When you start investing through systematic investment plans of mutual funds, you cannot just continue with the same quantity of money each month. Your income increases with age, and you must increase your investments. It is a good idea to keep adding to your existing portfolio of mutual funds. In the long run, your investments need to take care of financial needs, considering the impact of inflation.

The issue of 'self-control' matters while investing, too. Your emotions can push you to make wrong investment decisions. The temptation to 'get rich quick' drives many towards high-risk securities. The current euphoria in the Indian equities shows that more money flows into small and mid-cap companies than large-cap companies.

That is a risky strategy

for someone entering the market today at the rally's peak. At the same time, the dramatic surge in the number of traders in the futures and options category is an eye-opener. An updated study by the Securities and Exchange Board of India recently highlighted that barely one out of ten traders are making money.

The government intervention is a reaction to most of these behavioural patterns. There are several studies world over that show that financial behaviour is a result of your ability to learn. Financial literacy programmes barely make people aware of products and theoretically talk about pitfalls. Despite the high voltage campaigns, the average holding period of mutual fund systematic investment plans is less than five years. The government needs to think through a structural change to bring about a behavioural change. Equities, as an asset class, need your money to stay invested for long enough to give you the benefit of compounding returns.

The government should make investing in index funds free of capital gains tax after ten years. If you hold on your index funds long enough, you can take all that money home. That would encourage financial services companies to create products that encourage individuals to invest for the long term. It would also change the way you think about investments.

MONEY-WISE

EQUITY SAVINGS FUNDS UNDER THE SPOTLIGHT



FINANCIAL ADVICE

ASHOK KUMAR
Head of LKW-India.
He can be reached at ceolotus@hotmail.com

(Views expressed here are personal)



IN the previous column, we had commenced a discussion on Equity Savings Funds. Let us now turn the spotlight on a few randomly selected funds in this category and how they have performed over time frames of 1, 3 and 5 years.

These funds include Franklin India Equity Savings Fund, DSP Equity Savings Fund, Mirae Asset Equity Savings Fund, Kotak Equity Savings Fund and ABSL Equity Savings Fund.

Franklin India Equity Savings Fund has an AUM of ₹671 crore. The current Asset allocation mix is nearly 16% in Equity, 50% in Arbitrage, 27% in Debt, 4% in Margins & 1% in Cash & Cash Equivalent. Its top holdings are in the Banks, Petroleum Products and IT-Software sectors. The performance of this fund over a 1-year, 3-years and

5-years time period is 12.41%, 7.69% and 9.03% respectively. DSP Equity Savings Fund has an AUM of ₹1,735 crore. The current Asset allocation mix is nearly 32% in Equity, 39% in Arbitrage, 27% in Debt and 2% in Cash & Cash Equivalent. Its top holdings are in the Banks, Pharmaceuticals & Biotechnology and Automobiles sectors. The performance of this fund over a 1-year, 3-years and 5-years time period is 18.55%, 9.13% and 10.52% respectively.

Mirae Asset Equity Savings Fund has an AUM of ₹1,279 crore. The current Asset allocation mix is nearly 36% in Equity, 32% in Arbitrage, 22% in Debt and 10% in Cash & Cash Equivalent. Its top holdings are in the Banks, IT-Software and Pharma & Biotech sectors.

The performance of this fund over a 1-year, 3-years and 5-years time period is 18.95%, 10.35% and 12.78% respectively.

Kotak Equity Savings Fund

has an AUM of ₹7,115 crore. The current Asset allocation mix is nearly 32% in Equity, 34% in Arbitrage, 31% in Debt and 3% in Cash & Cash Equivalent. Its top holdings are in the Banks, Telecom Services and Finance sectors. The performance of this fund over a 1-year, 3-years and 5-years time period is 20.95%, 12.66% and 12.11% respectively.

ABSL Equity Savings Fund has an AUM of ₹602 crore. The current Asset allocation mix is nearly 17% in Equity, 49% in Arbitrage, 28% in Debt and 6% in Reits, Invts & Hybrid Instruments. Its top holdings are in the Banks, Transport Infrastructure and Finance sectors. The performance of this fund over a 1-year, 3-years and 5-years time period is 11.60%, 5.86% and 9.02% respectively.

Equity Savings Funds provide a balanced strategy for investors aiming for moderate equity exposure while benefiting from the stability of debt and cash. This flexibility allows for a blend of growth potential and risk management.

While some funds have shown strong historical returns, it's essential to note that past performance is not indicative of future results. Furthermore, choosing the right fund to match an investor's risk tolerance and financial goals merits seeking professional guidance.

Reliance Infra wins ₹780 crore arbitration case

ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU @ New Delhi

ANIL Ambani's Reliance Infrastructure said in an exchange filing that the Calcutta High Court has upheld a ₹780 crore arbitration award in favour of the company in a dispute with West Bengal-based Damodar Valley Corporation. The company had won a contract to set up a 1,200 MW thermal power plant in Purulia in West Bengal for ₹3,750 crore.

The project was delayed due to disputes and other reasons, leading to DVC seeking damages from Reliance Infrastructure.

"This is to inform that on September 27, 2024, the Division Bench of Hon'ble High Court of Calcutta delivered its judgment in a petition filed by Damodar Valley Corporation (DVC) challenging the arbitration award under Section 34, dated September 29, 2023, amounting to approximately ₹780 crore, including accrued interest in favour of the company concerning the Raghunathpur Thermal Power Project," the firm said.

Nifty 50 likely to trade in the range of 25,900 to 26,500 this week: Experts

ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU @ New Delhi

SUPPORTED by the growing optimism about reducing borrowing costs after the US Federal Reserve cut key benchmark rate by 50 bps in the week ending September 20, local benchmark indices, Nifty 50 and Sensex continued their upward momentum for the third consecutive week, reaching fresh all-time highs.

The Nifty 50 and Sensex climbed to all-time highs of 26,277.35 and 85,978.25 respectively, before closing the week at 26,178.95 and 85,571.85, a weekly gain of about 1% each. Market experts believe the optimism to continue where Nifty50 will face resistance at 26,500 on the upside and 25,900 on the downside. Fundamentally, the market will be guided by global cues and macroeconomic data. "Nifty 50 has delivered a strong weekly closing for the third consecutive week, now trading above 26,000. Market sentiment re-

mains positive, with immediate resistance at 26,500, and a breakout above this level could propel the index towards 26,650. On the downside, key support is at 25,900, with a breach potentially triggering selling pressure towards 25,600. Given the prevailing positive sentiment, we recommend a "buy on dip" strategy for traders looking to capitalize on any short-term corrections," said Vishnu Kant Upadhyay, AVP, Research and Advisory at Master Capital Services.

Santosh Meena, Head of Research, Swastika Investmart, said a key highlight from last week was China's economic activity, where the People's Bank of China (PBOC) announced interest rate cuts and a reduction in the reserve requirement ratio, along with fiscal stimulus measures. This sparked a significant rally in both the Chinese and Hong Kong markets, which in turn led to a surge in commodity prices.

Sebi may discuss charges against Buch

BENN KOCHUVEEDAN @ Mumbai

THE first board meeting after the chairperson Madhabi Puri Buch came under fire, first from Hindenburg Research and then a flurry of charges from the Congress Party since August 10, is slated for Monday.

The board is likely to discuss the volley of charges about non-disclosures and conflicts of interest against her apart from taking a slew of policy decisions including on a dozen consultation papers that are past their deadlines for public consultation and are now ready to be taken to the board for final decisions.

In a very unusual move for the Sebi, a formal agenda has not been finalised for the crucial board meeting, according to sources. If the charges against Buch are taken up, she will have to recuse herself from the meeting.

The New York-based short-seller Hindenburg had on August 10 levelled a slew of allegations against Madhabi Buch and her husband Dhaval mostly around non-disclosures of the income from her private advisory businesses to the government and Sebi and conflicts



Additional disclosure norms

Key reform will be the launch of the performance validation agency. Other topics that may get the greenlight include making it easier for foreign investors to comply with the additional disclosure norms issued in the August 2023 circular.

of interest arising from Dhaval's cushy jobs after her appointment to Sebi. Later, the Congress party leveled a series of charges based on her income tax filing and other official documents.

The Buchs have personally denied all charges. The government has not addressed the issues officially yet and the only government response so far has been letting the public accounts committee of the Parliament to call her for a performance review. A Sebi source

said, "the Madhabi issue has been in deliberations since the past week or so and the board cannot discuss it.

The nature of the allegations makes it clear that the board cannot ignore them."

The board is likely to discuss as many as 11 consultation papers floated by it and have passed their deadlines for public consultations and are now ready to be taken to the board for final decisions.

Some of the key topics that are likely to the board include

the proposed measures to curb the retail play in the F&O segment—something market is nervously awaiting; the regulations for 'mutual fund lite' for passively managed funds, introduction of a new asset class between PMS and MFs, extension of the definition of 'connected persons' under insider trading norms to include certain relatives, among others.

Once rolled out, the derivatives framework is expected to have a significant impact on the market, putting an end to the gambling-like trading behaviour that had taken off with daily expiries of index-derivative contracts.

The other likely big-ticket announcements include on derivatives, foreign investors, crucial decisions relevant to market players and intermediaries.

Another key reform will be the launch of the performance validation agency. It has been more than a year since a consultation paper on setting up such an agency that will authenticate the performance claims of various intermediaries including research analysts and regulated algo providers was floated.

No outside food, move in group: Security protocol for visitors

FIROZ MIRZA @ Kanpur

THEY might have lost the first Test in Chennai but Bangladesh seemingly had a good time in the city. They visited a mall and roamed around freely during their more than a week stay in the city. But a threat by Hindu Mahasabha, a right wing outfit, in protest of alleged violence against Hindus in Bangladesh, meant the movement of the visiting team has been restricted to a great extent in Kanpur, Uttar Pradesh.

Rain made it worse for them as they were confined to their hotel rooms throughout Saturday because play was called off

due to inclement weather. Sunday was no different as the team reached the venue but was ferried back to their hotel as wet outfield led to cancellation of the third day of play as well.

Given the sensitivity of the situation, Bangladesh team members have not only been advised to move in groups but they have also not been asked to order anything including outside food. A heavy posse of police has also been stationed at the hotel they are staying in.

"We have been asked not to go outside and move in groups. The security protocols have



Players and support staff usually go around in groups. But other accompanying members have to move separately. Whenever any of them go out, he is accompanied by a security official. We have also been told not to interact with outsiders, be it in the hotel or the stadium — Bangladesh team member

been put in place as a threat has been given by some organisation in protest of alleged violence against Hindus in our country," one of the team members revealed to this daily.

Speaking of the Chennai match, he said no restrictions were imposed on them for the first Test. "We visited a mall and one of our team members also went to a nearby city for personal reasons. We had food in the mall and did some shop-

ping as well. However, it's not the same here in Kanpur," he added.

It is learnt that the visitors have been briefed about the situation and have been asked to follow the security protocols. "Players and support staff usually go around in groups. But other accompanying members have to move separately. Whenever any of them go out, he is accompanied by a security official. We have also been told

not to interact with outsiders, be it in the hotel or the stadium," added the team member.

Kanpur police said these safety protocols for both the teams have been approved by the BCCI. "Players can move freely in the hotel lobby, but they aren't allowed to go outside, except on the match day," said Harishchandra, additional police commissioner (law and order). "In case any player wants to go out then a request has to come from team managers or security liaison officers following police making arrangements for their visit," he added.

Like Kanpur, the Hindu Ma-

hasabha has been protesting against Bangladesh in Gwalior, Madhya Pradesh as well where the first of the three T20Is is scheduled on October 6. The organisation has called for a bandh in the city on the day of the match.

"We have to follow similar protocols in Gwalior as we were told protests may take place in the city during our visit. But for the New Delhi and Hyderabad matches, we have not received any such instructions," said the team member.

The national capital will host the second T20I on October 9 while the final game will be held three days later.

BCCI AGM

Duleep Trophy likely to go back to zonal format

GOMESH S @ Bengaluru

THE 2024-25 domestic season's curtain raiser, Duleep Trophy, which was played in a four-team format, is likely to go back to the original zonal format in the next season.

The marquee red-ball tournament, which is historically played between five zones, was changed to a four-team format — India A, B, C and D — this year with the squads selected by the national selectors. However, after having received feedback from the state associations and other stakeholders, it was discussed at the BCCI Annual General Meeting on Sunday here in Bengaluru and chances are that the tournament may go back to the original format in the next season.

The change in the Duleep Trophy format happened earlier this year following the recommendation from the four-member group — the then head coach of India men's team Rahul Dravid, NCA chief VVS Laxman, men's chief selector Ajit Agarkar and former India pacer Abey Kuruvilla, BCCI general manager (domestic cricket). The recommendation was then submitted to BCCI secretary Jay Shah before implementation.

The tournament was played in Bengaluru (one match) and Anantapur, Andhra with India A, led by Mayank Agarwal, winning the title recently. While the tournament could go back to zonal format next year, what will be interesting to see is if the national selectors continue to pick the teams as they did this year or the respective state and zonal committees do as was the practice in the past.

As reported on Saturday, Arun Dhumal and member Avishek Dalmiya were re-elected to the IPL governing council. Besides, V Chamundeswaranath, nominated by the Indian Cricketers Association (ICA) as a player representative, was inducted to the Governing Council.

Play called off for the second consecutive day on Sunday due to wet outfield leaving thousands of fans frustrated

GREEN PARK'S GRASS LESS GREEN THAN OTHER SIDE



FIROZ MIRZA @ Kanpur

EARLIER this month, a one-off Test between Afghanistan and New Zealand was abandoned without a ball being bowled at the Shaheed Vijay Singh Pathik Sports Complex, Greater Noida. The decision came on the fourth day as wet outfield prevented any action on the field. It raised serious questions over the preparedness of the venue.

The Greater Noida Authority, which comes under the Uttar Pradesh government, owns the stadium and was supposed to provide all facilities to Afghanistan, the hosts. Ironically another venue in the state, the iconic Green Park Stadium in Kanpur, owned by the sports directorate of the UP government, seems to be going the same way.

Stakes here, however, are high. Unlike the Afghanistan-New Zealand match, the ongoing contest between India and Bangladesh is part of the World Test Championship (WTC) cycle and anything other than a win for the hosts could affect their chances of making it to the final for the third consecutive time.

After the delayed start on the opening day on Friday, the second and third day's play of the second Test was called off without a ball being bowled. While heavy rain on Friday night and intermittent drizzle on Saturday forced match officials to call off the play, Sunday witnessed no such rain and even the sun came out. However, wet outfield saw play being called off at 2PM after three inspections beginning at 10AM. The match officials found certain

areas in the outfield like mid-on, mid-off and the bowler's run-up from the media box end damp to start the play.

Around 15000 spectators turned up on Sunday morning and waited patiently for more than six hours for the action to begin but it turned out to be a heartbreak for them. Visibly upset, they blamed authorities concerned for the mess saying the ground should have better facilities to deal with such situations.



Curator Shiv Kumar oversees pitch preparation during the third day of the 2nd Test between India and Bangladesh, in Kanpur on Sunday | PPI

One of the Uttar Pradesh Cricket Association (UPCA) officials, however, said the match officials could have started the game at least in the third session. "They did three inspections but did not tell our ground staff the problems. Had they had any issues with the wet outfield, they should have told that specifically to the staff and the same would have been addressed. The ground was covered completely and the match could have proceeded

but it's unfortunate that fans have to head back without witnessing any on field action," a UPCA official said on the condition of anonymity.

After three days, Najmul Hossain Shanto and Co are 107/3 in the first innings of the Test after being invited to bat by India captain Rohit Sharma. There are still two days left but calling off play on two consecutive days has reduced chances of a result drastically.

Only a few days before the match, the Public Works Department (PWD) declared Balcony C of the stadium unsafe. The UPCA later claimed they addressed the concerns raised by the PWD and made the stand operational with a reduction in the seating capacity. There were also concerns on the drainage system as unlike other modern venues, where water is drained out quickly enough to resume the proceedings, Green Park, constructed in 1945, is devoid of such arrangements.

The venue is in the vicinity of the river Ganges and is in the heart of the city surrounded by houses, shops and offices from all the sides. The approach road to the venue is also small leading to traffic congestion on match days. Besides, the facility becomes home to animals like monkeys and dogs on non-match days.

Despite calling a super sopper from Lucknow on Saturday taking their tally to three, a lot was dependent on the sun to dry up the wet areas. But even as it emerged finally on Sunday afternoon, it was too late.

BCCI brings its vision to life

GOMESH S @ Bengaluru

AWAY from the chaos and hustle of Bengaluru city, spread across 40 acres of land in the quiet neighbourhood of Bande Kodigehalli, Singahalli, stands the BCCI's long-time dream that has finally come true — a state-of-art National Cricket Academy (NCA). The Board's Centre of Excellence inaugurated on Saturday.

The CoE, which was unveiled to the office bearers and other stakeholders by BCCI president Roger Binny and secretary Jay Shah, is expected to be fully operational from early 2025. The operations of the NCA, which currently functions out of the M Chinnaswamy Stadium, will be moved there in a phased manner. The facility, featuring as many as three grounds, has 86 pitches, an indoor training facility, a sports science and medicine block, gymnasium, pool and dormitories capable of housing 24 men and eight women's players at a time.

The main ground, which has floodlights and broadcasting facilities, has 13 red soil surfaces and can host first-class and A-tour games. Ground B and C features 11 Mandya and nine black soil surfaces and are expected to be used for practice and match simulation purposes. Perhaps, the biggest point of all is the 45 outdoor practice pitches, 20 of them with lights. NCA chief VVS Laxman, while speaking to journalists, said that he has never seen this kind of a facility elsewhere. "I have been to some of the best academies in the world, not only limited to cricket, but other



National Cricket Academy will be fully functional by early next year | ALLEN EGENUSE J

sports also. But I have not seen this kind of a facility," he said.

The former India cricketer said the different kinds of pitches and soil that are used will allow players to adapt and prepare for all conditions. "Adaptability is nothing but creating situations which a player gets to confront during matches. You can create by having a lot of match simulation or playing a lot of matches. You create different scenarios where the player is put into that position or that situation which he is going to confront. As far as the pitches are concerned... I think with the three different soils, you can make different kind of pitches for them. I think the pitches here will allow them to improve their adaptability. And the three beautiful grounds will allow them to face any situation with a lot of confidence," Laxman said.

One of the key aspects of the NCA has been the development of the age-group cricketers across men and women. The men won the 2022 U19 World

Cup while the women won the inaugural edition last year. For both the events, they have planned through the year, with multiple zonal and skill-based camps and it has helped India maintain their player pool. Laxman believes that the fully-functioning CoE would only add to the existing programmes. "Right from the age-group level, players are selected by national selectors. During the off-season, April-September, we have various programmes. We conduct close to 32 camps during this period but it happens in different parts of the country. With the KSCA, we get the Alur ground for some of these camps. Whereas, with the three grounds here, I think we can have a lot more programmes," he said.

For years, the BCCI had wanted to create such a facility and the dream has finally come true. Minutes away from the Bengaluru airport, the CoE has everything one could ask for where players go not just for rehab, but also to upskill and prepare for upcoming challenges.

Meg-isterial: A World Cup without its OG superstar

KALYANI MANGALE @ Chennai

IT'S that time of the year for cricket. Since 2022, the game has seen one women's ICC tournament every year and one look at the upcoming calendar would tell you that it will continue till 2026. The 2024 T20 World Cup is just days away. It's that time when the squads get analysed. The predictions about who could potentially lift the trophy catch fire. With the increasing popularity of the game, these conversations have progressively skyrocketed. However, something is missing

from the conversations this year and it's just one person. Meg Lanning.

In November 2023, Lanning announced her international retirement. Standing in front of Melbourne Cricket Ground, the colosseum that witnessed her greatest triumph, one of the most successful captains bid adieu to the game she dominated.

Now, in the heat

of Dubai, where the WC is scheduled to be held due to political unrest in Bangladesh, for the first time since 2018, someone other than Lanning will lift the trophy.

Lanning led the side that was expected to win every single time for close to a decade. In that time, Australia won five trophies. One can argue that the side Lanning led was full of superstars. How hard can it be to lead that team? With this much re-

lentless record came the responsibility to keep winning and even a single loss would get scrutiny. That is why for many, amongst many reasons, her not being around anymore has opened up this tournament.

So before we move on to the first global tournament in a while without her, Lanning deserves to be given her due. "If I have seen further it is by standing on the shoulders of Giants," Sir Isaac Newton had said. It is time to acknowledge the giant of women's cricket. And Lanning was undoubtedly one of those.



EXPRESS READ

Shooter docked two points in jr world meet

NEW DELHI: India lost a potential gold at the ISSF Junior Shooting World Championship in Lima after a pistol marksman was docked two points for "reporting late" at the preparation arena before the 10m final. The ISSF penalised Umesh Choudhary, a 20-year-old marksman, "two (2) point/hit penalty will be deducted from the score of the first match shot/series if the athlete does not report on time". There was some confusion in reaching the venue. "Coach Priya Jadhav and the concerned shooter reached the finals hall when she realised that the second shooter Pradyuman had fallen behind. She made Umesh sit in the finals hall and went to look for Pradyuman who had by then used another route to reach the reporting area, which was a little distance away.

EURO FOOTBALL

Villa manage draw, make a point with Ipswich

AGENCIES @ London

ASTON Villa missed the chance to go second in the Premier League as Liam Delap's double rescued Ipswich in a 2-2 draw at Portman Road on Sunday.

Unai Emery's side fell behind to Delap's early opener but responded to take the lead before half-time through goals from Morgan Rogers and Ollie Watkins. Delap, a promising 21-year-old signed from Manchester City in the close-season, hauled Ipswich back on level terms after the interval.

It was a frustrating result for Villa, who had travelled to Suffolk hoping to move level on points with leaders Liverpool.

Instead, Villa sit in fifth place, two points behind the Reds after their run of five successive wins in all competitions came to an end. Villa will look



Aston Villa's English striker Ollie Watkins celebrates goal against Ipswich | AFP

to bounce back in their Champions League clash with Bayern Munich on Wednesday.

Osasuna spoil Barca party
BARCELONA: Osasuna shattered La Liga leaders Barcelona's perfect start to the season

with an emphatic 4-2 victory on Saturday. The Catalans won all seven of their opening fixtures but Hansi Flick's rotated side came badly undone in Pamplona as Ante Budimir scored a brace either side of Bryan Zaragoza's strike.

Torino fail to go top

ROME: Roma's troubles are far from over despite new coach Ivan Juric making it two wins in two matches. Homegrown midfielder Niccolò Pisilli netted his first Serie A goal to help Roma fight back to beat promoted Venezia 2-1 on Sunday. Torino slipped to their first league defeat of the season beaten 3-2 at home by Lazio.

Frankfurt surge ahead

BERLIN: Egypt forward Omar Marmoush starred to lead Eintracht Frankfurt to a 4-2 win at promoted Holstein Kiel for their fourth straight Bundesliga win on Sunday. Frankfurt are now just a point behind league leader Bayern Munich after five rounds. Bayern dropped first points in a 1-1 draw vs Bayer Leverkusen.



Kerala Blasters (white) draw against NE United in Guwahati on Sunday | FSI

Kerala Blasters draw NEUFC

AGENCIES @ Guwahati

KERALA Blasters shared points with NorthEast United FC following a gripping 1-1 draw in their Indian Super League match here on Sunday.

Alaeddine Ajarai's goal from a freekick was equalised by Noah Sadaoui's stunning strike as the Kerala Blasters FC salvaged a crucial point on the

road. Right from kickoff, it was a very high-intensity match with end-to-end football from both sides. However, the visitors made the more impressive moves with the likes of Noah, Jesus Jimenez and Danish Farooq combining in attack. Despite pressing, Kerala could not score. NorthEast United made them pay when Ajarai scored in the 58th minute.



TIME TO INTROSPECT
If doubts are making your UPSC journey tumultuous, grab a notebook and a pen and answer these questions

- What is the best part about UPSC? List 5 reasons
- How will it change your life? List 10 reasons
- How driven are you on a scale of 1 to 10?
- Will the driving force be the same in 2-3 years?
- List 6 reasons as to what defines you/your identity
- Can you bring a change within the system? How motivated are you?
- What is your plan for cracking the exam?
- What are the steps that you should take to succeed?
- Do you think the plan would work for you in the long run?
- How much time do you think you need?
- What steps have you already taken to reach your goal?
- Have you set a limit for yourself?
- If not UPSC, then what are the other plans?
- List your plans in order of their priority
- Are you okay with the thought of not being able to crack UPSC?
- Will you be able to adapt to a corporate life easily?
- State 5 ways in which you think you can gain people's respect
- Is UPSC the only way?
- If unsuccessful, what would be your Plan B?
- How do you want to live your life? Think of drawing a flowchart

THE Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) is one of India's most respected public institutions, with a reputation for being inflexible, honourable and incorruptible. Public Service is considered a highly noble profession; one that demands the brightest minds and strongest characters – reaffirmed by a highly competitive and rigorous selection examination.

As a Constitutional body that selects officers to govern the district, state and national administration of India, the UPSC is highly regarded for its perceived integrity, impartiality, non-partisanship and transparency.

However, due to several controversies and apparent lapses in the UPSC and the Civil Service Exam (CSE) making the headlines this year, there has been a dent in this perception.

LET'S TAKE A LOOK AT SOME OF THESE INCIDENTS:

The fallout of the forged certificates

When it was revealed that one Puja Khedkar, a trainee Indian Administrative Services officer from the 2022 cadre faked a disability and her family's income status to enter the Civil Services, a nasty can of worms opened up.

It all began when Khedkar, who was interestingly posted in her hometown of Pune for her training, started demanding special privileges, such as her own cabin and an armed bodyguard, and occupied the office cabin of Pune Additional Collector Ajay More.

Following complaints, it was revealed that Khedkar appeared for the examination using a fake Other Backward Classes Non-Creamy Layer (OBC-NCL) certificate, as well as a false disability certificate. She also allegedly never turned up for her medical examination at the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), Delhi, and appeared for the CSE 11 times – two attempts more than the allowed number for OBC candidates (9).

Following these revelations, the UPSC introduced a candidate verifi-

cation system based on Aadhar to prevent candidates from trying to appear for the exam fraudulently.

The curious case of Manoj Soni

Amidst the Pooja Khedkar controversy, Manoj Soni, who was the Chairperson of the UPSC, submitted his resignation on July 20 this year – five years ahead of his retirement.

While he cited "personal" as the reason in his resignation letter, his exit did not fail to garner

"Mercifully, you have not chattered the rainwater for entering into the basement... You could have fined the water also, the way you arrested the SUV driver for driving his car there..."

– Delhi HC Bench while hearing case of the death of Civil Services aspirants & arrest of SUV driver

controversy – probably as much as his appointment as the UPSC Chairman did.

Soni joined the UPSC in 2017 and became its Chairman in May 2023. Several opposition leaders, like Indian National Congress' Gaurav Gogoi and Rahul Gandhi, as well as former Rajya Sabha member Jawahar Sircar, raised eyebrows at his alleged "close ties" to the Bharatiya Janta Party (BJP) and Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS).

In 2002, when Soni was teaching at the Sardar Patel University, he organised a symposium titled *In Search of a Third Space: Godhra*

Riots and Its Aftermath – which offered a supportive view of the Modi government.

Soni was appointed the Vice-Chancellor of MS University in Vadodara by Chief Minister Modi in 2005, students and teachers saw this appointment as a political one.

However, all said and done, many members of the UPSC remember Soni as a man of integrity and honesty, media reports state.

Rau's IAS Study Circle flooding – The tragedy that struck Delhi's coaching hubs

On July 27, three UPSC aspirants lost their lives after the basement of Rau's IAS Study Circle, a prominent coaching centre in New Delhi's Old Rajender Nagar (ORN), was flooded due to rains. The basement was allegedly being used as a library, in stark violation of safety norms.

Following this incident, there were protests and outrage from Civil Service aspirants as well as politicians, particularly from the BJP and Congress, who pegged this tragedy on the negligence of the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) government of Delhi.

The Delhi High Court, on August 5, transferred the case to the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI), which disclosed that the study circle had been operating without a valid fire safety certificate for nearly a year. It

was also revealed that these coaching centres operate in precarious conditions, and are often crowded beyond their capacity due to the demand for

IAS coaching.

In addition, the Municipal Corporation of Delhi shut down 13 "illegal" coaching centres in the area, and Drishti IAS in Mukherjee Nagar – another coaching hub.

Eventually, a few coaching centres attempted to move their operations out of these areas and shift to Noida, Uttar

Pradesh amidst this row.

Lateral entry halted due to backlash

In August 2024, the UPSC issued a notice to recruit 45 joint secretaries, directors, and deputy secretaries across 24 central ministries through lateral entry, particularly in the fields of "emerging technologies" and "semiconductors & electronics".

This sparked a huge debate, particularly with opposition parties like the Congress, Samajwadi Party and Bahujan Samaj Party, who contended that the move undermined the principles of affirmative action for Scheduled Caste (SC), Scheduled Tribe (ST), and OBC candidates, and could potentially perpetuate existing inequalities. Interestingly, even the BJP's ally Lok Janshakti Party opposed the move.

Following this backlash, Jitendra Singh, Minister of State (MoS) for the DoPT wrote to UPSC Chairperson Preeti Sudan, directing her to roll back the notification.

Doors to the Sangh Pariwaar open up to Civil Servants

The decision to lift the 58-year ban on Civil Servants participating in RSS activities, allegedly taken by the Central Government on July 9 has sparked significant controversy and backlash from opposition parties.

This ban was imposed in 1964 to prevent Civil Servants from engaging in political activities and maintain the neutrality of the government. In an open letter to the government, over 100 retired Civil Servants expressed their disapproval of the move, claiming that it allows civil servants to openly pledge their allegiance to an organisation that "stood against secularism and minority rights", which goes against their constitutional duty.

"Literally millions of RSS members openly campaign for the BJP in every state and national election. How then can the integrity of the electoral process be assured when Chief Election Commissioners, Returning Officers and all others tasked with organising a fair election?", the letter reads, as reported by *The New Indian Express*.



look back

Starting from the outside

Options for careers in public administration apart from the Civil Services

For aspirants wanting to have a career in public administration, but are unable to crack the UPSC, consultancy is a viable, lucrative and fulfilling career option. Jigyasu Agarwal, Founder of Rebound explains why, in conversation with Karthikeya S

BEING a highly coveted profession – and notoriously hard to get into – the Civil Services are the most sought-after career path for lakhs of young aspirants. To illustrate, in 2024 alone, over 13 lakh aspirants appeared in the Union Public Service Commission Civil Service Exam's Preliminary round, but only about 14,000 qualified for the Main paper.

Of these, only a few thousand candidates make it to the Interview round, and only 600 clear it.

With such low chances of success, several candidates fail to clear the exam in one go and make multiple attempts to do so – dedicating years in preparation for the CSE. However, several candidates do not realise that Civil Services is not the only career option for candidates wanting a career in public administration, public policy, or governance. *EdexLive* speaks to Jigyasu Agarwal, political consultant and Founder of Rebound, a platform that helps ex-UPSC aspirants land careers in administration and governance, to understand these pathways better.

UPSC aspirants bent towards public administration

According to Agarwal, the biggest advantage ex-UPSC aspirants have in their arsenal is their knowledge of India's administration and polity. "Generally, ex-UPSC aspirants have a better aptitude towards jobs in the development sector over tech or finance, as they have spent a considerable amount of time studying civics and various aspects of India's governance," he explains. Moreover, he

Multinational Companies

The biggest strategy consultancy firms dubbed the Big 3 (McKinsey, Boston Consulting Group, Bain & Company) often act as consultants to the government and administrative bodies, and look for public administration consultants to execute these projects. They also hire these consultants for their Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) activities.

Think Tanks

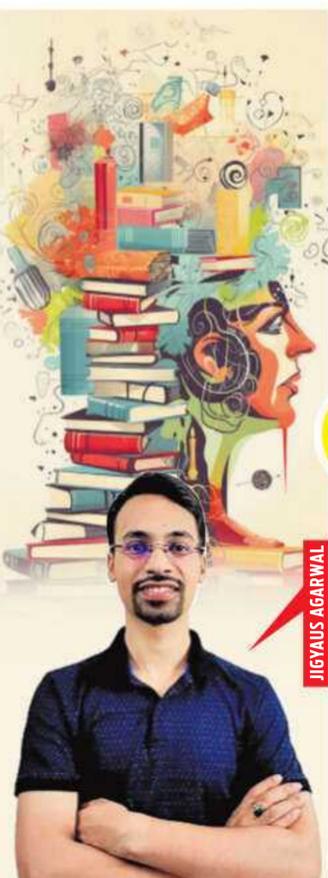
Both government-run think tanks like NITI Aayog, Centre for Development Studies, and others, as well as non-government think tanks such as Association for Democratic Reforms, Bharti Institute for Public Policy, the Brookings Institute and others, seek candidates well versed with India's policy and administrative matters.

Political Consultancy

Political consultants and consultancy firms advise political parties on political campaigns and election strategies and conduct polling, public opinion, and market research to arrive at the best possible plans. These include both party-specific consultancy firms like Nation with NAMO or Inclusive Minds, which are aligned with the BJP and Congress respectively, and the Indian Political Action Committee (IPAC), which works with different political parties.

Global Organisations

Ex-UPSC aspirants can also do well in international organisations and bodies like the United Nations or the World Bank, which have Indian chapters and work on various development issues in India.



begin again

JIGYASU AGARWAL

substantial professional or field experience in public administration.

"The CSE requires full-time preparation, which makes it difficult for aspirants to find work or projects to do parallelly. When they eventually run out of attempts or decide to switch careers, a huge chunk of their 20s is gone, and they cannot find fulfilling work due to their lack of experience," Agarwal says.

Because of this, he says that ex-UPSC aspirants must settle for less fulfilling jobs that do not add to their experience. To combat this, Agarwal who is an ex-UPSC aspirant himself, started Rebound, which helps ex-UPSC aspirants find a direction to a career in public administration and work as consultants.

"At Rebound, we aim to provide awareness about various career options and pathways to ex-UPSC aspirants and help them chalk out a clear direction for their careers. We also help them build their profiles so that they can transition seamlessly into public administration consultancy," he explains.

Since October 2023, Agarwal helped around 1,000 former aspirants find careers in the development sector through Rebound.

Low-risk factor

While consultants do not enjoy the same power or stature that Civil Servants do, they also enjoy more freedom, Agarwal explains.

"As a Civil Servant, most of your life is controlled by the government, and you are under a lot of scrutiny. You would not have this baggage as a consultant," he explains.

Moreover, public administration consultancy also has fewer risks involved for candidates, he adds.

"UPSC is a high-reward, but high-risk career option. Candidates spend a good part of their 20s trying to crack it. It's great if they get in, but they would find themselves in an unsure position if they don't. They have nothing to show for the years they spent preparing for the Civil Service Exam," he elaborates.

Instead, he advises candidates to limit their number of attempts to two or three and explore avenues to public service outside the UPSC.

"This is a calculated risk, which will ensure that you get to spend your 20s realising your true potential and building a career," he says.

Changes over the years

FROM THE TIME INDIA GAINED INDEPENDENCE AND BECAME A REPUBLIC – A SNEAK PEEK INTO THE CHANGE IN THE NUMBER OF ATTEMPTS OVER THE YEARS

First report of the Union Public Service Commission (January 1950 - March 1951)

In July 1948, a special recruitment board was established, with approval from the Federal Public Service Commission, to recruit individuals aged 27 to 45 for the Indian administrative and police services.

Kothari Commission (1976)



The Kothari Commission highlighted the need for reforms in the recruitment and training processes for the Indian Civil Services, which are overseen by the UPSC.

- They recommended the age cap for IAS/IFS/ Central Services of 21 years
- For IPS, it was 20 years
- No candidate was permitted after the age of 26 years. There was relaxation for SC and ST candidates.
- The number of attempts was suggested as 'two and not more.'

Revision of attempts in 1979

Three fresh attempts were granted to UPSC candidates irrespective of the number of previous attempts.

- General category candidates between the ages of 21 and 28 were permitted. Scheduled Caste (SC) and Scheduled Tribe (ST) candidates were given a relaxation of 5 years on the upper age limit (up to 33)
- Three attempts were allowed

for general category candidates. No limit on attempts for SC/ST candidates.

Reforms in 1984

The commission's previous report had proposed reducing the upper age limit for the 1986 and subsequent Civil Service exams from 28 to 26 years, with relaxation for reserved categories. However, the committee decided that the age limit would remain at 28 years in the year under review and that the reduction to 26 years would apply starting from the 1987 exams.

Committee on Civil Service Reforms (2004)

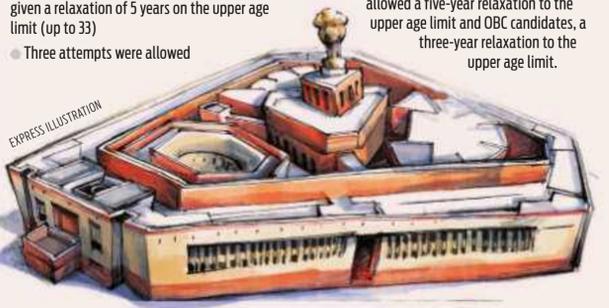
The age limit for entering the Civil Services was increased, with general candidates now eligible between 21 and 30 years, and additional concessions for OBC of three years and SC/ST for five years.

Before 2014

The maximum number of attempts for general category candidates was four, with a maximum age limit of 30 years. OBCs were allowed seven attempts, while SC/ST had no limit on the number of attempts.

2014 reforms

- The scheme was revised in 2011 on the recommendations of Prof SK Khanna Committee.
- Civil Service aspirants who had four chances to attempt the exam now will get six attempts. Candidates who are allowed seven attempts will now get nine. No cap on the attempts of SC/ST candidates.
- The minimum age was set to 21 and the maximum age to 32. SC/ST candidates were allowed a five-year relaxation to the upper age limit and OBC candidates, a three-year relaxation to the upper age limit.



– Compiled by Lovely Majumdar and Karthikeya S