

DECCAN Chronicle

THE LARGEST CIRCULATED ENGLISH DAILY IN SOUTH INDIA

CHENNAI | FRIDAY 8 | NOVEMBER 2024

WEATHER



Max: 33°C
Min: 26°C
Rainfall: 6 mm

ASTROGUIDE

Sobakrithu: Aaypasi 22
Tithi: Saphthami
Star: Uthradam
Rahukalam:
10.30 am to 12 noon
Yamagandam:
3 pm to 4.30 am
PRAYERS
Fajar: 4.52 am
Zuhar: 11.58 am
Asar: 3.12 pm
Maghrib: 5.41 pm
Isha: 6.54 pm

MEA team meets Taliban brass

New Delhi: In a significant move, an Indian delegation met Afghanistan's acting defence minister Mullah Mohammad Yaqoob and offered the use of Chabahar Port in Iran to businesses in his country, and also discussed extending humanitarian assistance to Kabul. The delegation was led by J.P. Singh, the joint secretary of the Pakistan-Afghanistan-Iran division in the external affairs ministry. Ministry spokesman Randhir Jaiswal said that apart from Mohammad Yaqoob, the delegation also met with former President Hamid Karzai and other senior ministers, along with the heads of UN agencies. — PTI

Death threat to Shah Rukh Khan

Mumbai/Raipur: The Mumbai police have registered an extortion case and summoned a lawyer from Chhattisgarh in connection with a death threat to Bollywood actor Shah Rukh Khan and a demand for Rs 50 lakh, officials said on Thursday. The lawyer from Raipur has been summoned as the threat call was made from a phone number registered in his name, a senior police said. — PTI

ED raid on vendors of Amazon, Flipkart

New Delhi: The Enforcement Directorate on Thursday conducted searches against some of the "main vendors" operating on platforms of e-commerce giants Amazon and Flipkart as part of a foreign direct investment violation investigation, official sources said. A total of 19 premises of these 'preferred' vendors located in Delhi, Gurugram and Panchkula, Hyderabad and Bengaluru were covered as part of the action, sources said. It is learnt that the ED inspected documents and took copies of some from the premises of about six such vendors. — PTI

COUNTER POINT



Let's hire Trump's poll strategists!

YUSUF JAMEEL | DC
SRINAGAR, NOV. 7

Several members of the Jammu and Kashmir Assembly on Thursday became embroiled in a brawl in the house as they argued over a resolution passed by an overwhelming vote a day ago and which sought restoration of the erstwhile state's constitutional special status revoked by the Union government in August 2019.

After witnessing an uproar, scuffles and the forcible eviction of three Opposition BJP legislators by the marshals, Speaker Abdul Rahim Rather adjourned the house till Friday. The house had, soon after deputy chief minister Surinder Choudhary moved the resolution, seen chaos and bedlam on Wednesday as well, paralysing the proceedings. Expressing concern over

the "unilateral removal" of the special status and constitutional guarantees, the resolution urged the Government of India to initiate a dialogue with elected representatives of the people of J&K for "restoration of special status, constitutional guarantees and to work out constitutional mechanisms for restoring these provisions". It, however, emphasised that any process for restoration "must safeguard both

national unity and the legitimate aspirations of the people of J&K". The BJP, the largest Opposition party in the 90-member house, rejected the resolution, calling it "anti-national" and a part of the "agenda of Pakistan and terrorists". ■ P7

Five BJP MLAs were being taken out by marshals following a ruckus in the J&K Assembly on Thursday.

— H.U. Naqash

STATE | 3

Udhayanidhi: People will answer those who want to destroy DMK



deccanchronicle.com, facebook.com/deccannews, twitter.com/deccanchronicle, google.com/+deccanchronicle

Govt schemes popular; DMK will return in 2026, vows CM

■ Party bullish about western region, CM tells cadre

G. BABU JAYAKUMAR, D. SEKAR | DC
CHENNAI, NOV. 7

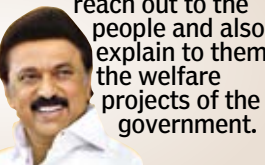
The DMK was sure to romp home in the 2026 elections with an overwhelming majority by winning at least 200 of the 234 seats in the state Assembly since it had been implementing welfare schemes much to the appreciation and benefit of the people, Chief Minister M.K. Stalin said on Thursday. A day after returning from Coimbatore, where his announcement of six new projects for the district was termed as 'hitting a sixer,' Mr Stalin, in his customary epistle to party cadre, acknowledged the western district evidently turning into a DMK bastion already and said he hoped to win the 10 Assembly seats there.

Lessons from Coimbatore

WESTERN DISTRICT is turning into a DMK bastion; party will win 10 Assembly seats there.

► Women and youth lined up on both sides of the road for over 6 km to cheer the Chief Minister.

► DMK functionaries have been working to reach out to the people and also explain to them the welfare projects of the government.



Surging support to local leaders like minister V. Senthil Balaji helps the party.

What he witnessed during his visit to Coimbatore disproved the earlier misconception that the region was a hole in the overall popularity canvas of the DMK, he said, attributing the surging support to local leaders like minister V. Senthil Balaji and others.

Having started his mission to meet people personally in Coimbatore on November 5 and 6, he would next visit Virudhu-

nagar district on November 9 and 10 for an official inspection of the implementation of welfare schemes and to get to know the needs of the common people and then go all over the state, the Chief Minister told his party cadre.

Impressed by the rousing reception given to him when he landed at Coimbatore with people, particularly women and youth, lining up on both sides of the road for over 6

km to cheer him and greet him and grandmothers bringing their grandchildren to welcome him, Mr Stalin announced that he had no doubts of winning the 2026 polls.

He was also happy over the manner in which DMK functionaries in the district had been working to reach out to the people and also explain to them the welfare projects of the government. One functionary from Mettupalayam had held 46 meetings and even brought the minutes of the proceedings to the review held by him, he said.

Another local functionary from Sullur had organised 57 party events, which were indicators of the DMK becoming popular in the district and the entire state, paving the way for an encore of the success in the next electoral battle, too. ■ P7

SPORTS | 12

Arjun becomes world No. 2

TABLOID | 13

SRK gets death threat



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Centre to unveil national anit-terrorism policy soon

AMRESH SRIVASTAVA | DC
NEW DELHI, NOV. 7



Union Home Minister Amit Shah and Intelligence Bureau (IB) chief Tapan Kumar Deka during the inaugural session of 'Anti-Terror Conference', in New Delhi, Thursday.

Acknowledging that law and order was a state subject, Union home minister Amit Shah on Thursday called for proper coordination between state and central intelligence networks to take on the source of terrorism. Terrorism has no territorial boundary, and so all security agencies — central and states — must work in close coordination, chalk out joint strategies and share intelligence, Mr Shah said addressing the two-day "Anti-Terror Conference 2024" that was organised by the NIA here.

The Union home minister announced that a 'national counter-terrorism policy and strategy to fight terrorism and their ecosystem will be unveiled soon.

Mr Shah also said the security forces have to train young officers and use technology to combat terrorism as the states

have their boundaries but the terror and terrorists have no boundaries. "After Narendra Modi became Prime Minister in 2014, the country has been moving forward with a solid strategy against terrorism. We are committed to eradicating terrorism," he said.

The home minister said that to win the fight against terror, a "whole of government approach" was essential, and "we

need to create an integrated, actionable system". He emphasised that a coordinated approach must be adapted from police stations at the state level to the offices of the DGP to address challenges such as terror financing and new threats like crypto currencies. Mr Shah said the time has come to shift from a "need to know" approach to a "duty to share" approach. ■ P7

PM to start campaign for Maharashtra polls today

BHAGWAN PARAB | DC
MUMBAI, NOV. 7

Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union home minister Amit Shah, two topmost leaders of the BJP, on Friday will kick start the ruling Mahayuti alliance's campaign for the Maharashtra Vidhan Sabha polls. While Mr Modi will address rallies in the north Maharashtra cities of Dhule and Nashik, Mr Shah will hold rallies in Sangli, Satara and Kolhapur in western Maharashtra.

According to political observers, after the setback received in the Lok Sabha polls, the BJP has pinned its hopes entirely on Mr Modi and Mr Shah to change its fortunes in the Vidhan Sabha elections. The party is hoping that both the top leaders will give it and the Mahayuti an edge in what

Get graft charges probed by CBI, Soren dares BJP

DC CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI/RANCHI, NOV. 7

A political slugfest between the ruling JMM and Opposition BJP has begun in Jharkhand over corruption issues with Chief Minister Hemant Soren challenging the BJP to "probe and prove" corruption charges in government jobs. Mr Soren also accused the BJP of eying the rich mineral resources of the state to oblige "crony capitalists".

Hitting back at former chief minister and BJP state chief Babulal Marandi for allegation of corruption in government jobs, Mr Soren on Thursday said the saffron party has all investigation agencies such as the CBI and the ED and can get the charges investigated. ■ P8

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SHORT TAKES

Prof. K. Gopal to helm Red Cross Society in Nilgiris

B. RAVICHANDRAN | DC
OOTY, NOV. 7

Prof. K. Gopal has become the new chairman of the Nilgiris chapter of the Red Cross Society. He replaces the Indo-Pak war veteran and nonage-narian social activist Capt. K.R. Mani, who steered the Red Cross in Nilgiris for nearly two decades.

At the annual general body meeting of the Red Cross here presided over by the Nilgiris Collector Lakshmi Bhavya Tanneeru, who is its ex-officio president, the new office-bearers of society in the Nilgiris were elected.

Prof. Gopal, hailing from Kilkavatti Badaga village, is associated with the Red Cross for a very long time. In his capacity as vice-chairman of the Red Cross here in the past, he played a vital role in chalking out programmes to take Red Cross activities even to the remote villages.

While N. Krishnamoorthi became the vice-chairman, A. Moris Shanta Cruz will continue as its secretary. T.K. Raju is the treasurer.

Red Cross in the Nilgiris has received state-level top honours for overall best performance among the Red Cross societies.

TN govt seeks applications to set up 'CM Pharmacies'

Chennai, Nov 7: The Tamil Nadu government on Thursday invited applications from B Pharm and D Pharm degree holders to establish 'Mudhalvar Marundhagam' (Chief Minister's Pharmacy) outlets to provide generic medicines to the public at affordable prices.

Interested entrepreneurs can apply through the website www.mudhalvarmarundhagam.tn.gov.in, the government said in a release.

It may be recalled that Chief Minister M K Stalin, during his Independence Day address, announced that the government would set up 1,000 such pharmacies across the state.

—PTI

₹48.50 lakh worth stolen jewellery recovered so far in Ariyalur

R. VALAYAPATHY | DC
ARIYALUR, NOV. 7

The Ariyalur district police have recovered stolen jewellery, worth Rs. 48.50 lakh, against the total value of stolen jewellery, worth Rs. 63.39 lakh, in 97 cases so far in the current year, according to superintendent of police S. Selvaraj.

He told mediapersons on the sidelines of showing the recovery of 32 sovereigns of gold ornaments at Ariyalur on Thursday from a thief, that during 2023, Rs. 4.27 lakh worth stolen jewellery was recovered though the total worth of stolen jewellery was Rs. 76.22 lakh in 131 cases.

Selvaraj said the arrested accused, Krishnamoorthy, hailed from Rishivandhiyam in Kallakurichi district. He was involved in house breaks along with his friend at Kuzhumur, Periyakurichi, Iluppaiyur in Sendurai police limits and Irukaalakurichi in Koovagam police limits.

A police team nabbed Krishnamoorthy and during preliminary inquiry he admitted that he and his friend were involved in robberies in several villages and said they stole 53 sovereigns of gold ornaments. The police recovered 32 sovereigns of stolen jewellery from him. Police are on the lookout for his friend.

Fair price shop staff hold demo, held for blocking road in Ariyalur

DC CORRESPONDENT
ARIYALUR, NOV. 7

Police took into custody a section of members of the Ariyalur district unit of the Tamil Nadu Fair Price Shop Employees Association, led by their president Aranganathan, when they attempted a road roko agitation at Ariyalur on Thursday.

GCC calling encroached lake 'beautiful' draws netizens' flak

T. SUDHEESH | DC
CHENNAI, NOV. 7

Greater Chennai Corporation (GCC) has drawn flak from residents after it posted a drone footage of Alapakkam lake on social media on Thursday, claiming it was 'beautiful'.

The footage was posted on its official X handle in the context of cleaning works under progress. But the angry residents asked the civic body how an encroached lake became beautiful.

The GCC post clearly shows the houses built on the lake and many parts were levelled up with debris. Caption on the post goes as: 'Here is a view of the beautiful Alapakkam Lake! The lake is being desilted and cleared as part of the monsoon preparedness works of GCC'.

Scores of netizens were quick to criticise GCC for calling a dying lake 'beautiful' without removing encroachments.

GCC has been conducting desilting and cleaning works at the lake for the last few days with modern equipment. The lake was seen in the video filled with filth and garbage. Some parts were choked.

Alapakkam lake, spanning wards 146 and 147 of



A grab from drone footage posted by GCC on its X handle on Thursday.

—DC

Valasaravakkam zone, used to overflow every monsoon season, causing trouble to the residents of the entire Alapakkam area.

Earlier, in 2021, the public works department (PWD) had informed the southern zone of the National Green Tribunal (NGT) that they had estimated that there were 1,900 encroachments on Alapakkam lake. Following this, the PWD issued notices to the encroachers. Nothing happened, and the lake continued to be encroached.

Apart from this, in 2019,

GCC had floated a tender worth ₹10.59 crore for the beautification of the lake in a bid to save it from squatters. This project never took off.

Madhavan, husband of Ramani Madhavan, Councillor of ward 147, said they did not know the status of the notices served on the encroachers. But no eviction drive was carried out after 2021. Revenue officials have to answer this. We have suggested to GCC to build a new canal, costing Rs. 50 lakh, to prevent the lake from overflowing during the monsoon season. The PWD and revenue depart-

ment have to take action against the encroachments, he said.

S. Muralidharan, a netizen, pointed out that most of the houses were built on the lake. This is why GCC struggles to keep water out of the houses. "Don't you think it's sensible to relocate all those residents, demolish the houses to reclaim the entire waterbody," he asks the civic body. He also said it was very clear from the video that houses were built by occupying the lake. Though DC tried to contact Valasaravakkam zonal officer, he was not available.

Intermittent rains hit normal life in Chennai

DC CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI, NOV. 7

The city received intermittent yet moderate rainfall throughout Thursday, making normal life difficult. The IMD predicts rain will continue for a couple of days due to strengthening of the easterlies and a cyclonic circulation hovering over the Bay of Bengal. The condition will be same in the neighbouring districts of Chengalpet and Kanchipuram, as well as Villupuram, Cuddalore, Mayiladuthurai, Naga patinam, Thanjavur, Tiruvarur, Pudukkottai, and Ramanathapuram districts and Pudukcherry.

The traffic was disrupted in the afternoon on the North and central



Scenes from city roads on a wet Thursday.

GST Road and Chengalpattu-Velachery road due to rains. School and college students faced disruptions due to traffic snarls.

Chennai also faced traffic congestion in many areas, especially where Metro Phase II work is going on. New Manali town received the highest amount of rainfall with 120 mm



—DC

from 6 am to 6 pm while the entire city recorded an average rainfall of 37.5mm.

Moderate rain was recorded in zones like Valasaravakkam, Kodambakkam, Teynapet,

Anna Nagar, Ambattur, Royapuram, Thiru. Vi. Ka. Nagar and Madhavaram.

Heavy rains occurred in Kolathur, Manali and Thiruvottiyur and Anna Nagar West.

CHHATH PUJA



Women celebrate Chhath Puja at My Lady's Garden swimming pool in Periamet on Thursday.

—N.Sampath

TN govt to introduce 25 bike ambulances

Chennai, Nov 7: The Tamil Nadu government will introduce 25 bike ambulances in hard-to-reach remote, non-motorable hamlets in tribal or hilly areas through the existing EMRI services in 10 districts to improve healthcare access in the state's remote habitations.

About ₹1.60 crore has been sanctioned to the Mission Director, National Health Mission-TN, to execute and operationalise this service, the government order (GO) dated November 6, said.

"The new service will deploy 25 specially equipped bike ambulances as feeder units to the existing '108 (1,353 nos.) ambulance' network. These

bikes will bridge last-mile healthcare gaps, provide first-responder emergency services, patient stabilisation, and prompt transport to higher-level care," a release here said on Thursday.

The services to be provided through the new venture include maternal and child health including support for antenatal care, check-ups, etc., emergency medical care, and transfers to healthcare facilities. Each bike ambulance will serve 25 selected remote villages and is equipped with GPS tracking for real-time fleet management and efficient response allocation, the release said.

—PTI

HEALTH IS WEALTH



Minister of Health Ma. Subramanian meets beneficiaries being treated under the government health scheme at Rajiv Gandhi Medical College Hospital on Thursday and enquires about their well-being. College Dean Dr Theranirajan and senior medical officers are seen.

—DC

Want smoke-free generation? Take a cue from UK



B. Vijayalakshmi

viewpoint

The UK government's new Tobacco and Vapes Bill tabled in the House of Commons this week aims at creating a "smoke-free generation", starting with a ban on smoking outside schools and hospitals in England.

The bill has worked out various measures to phase out the sale of tobacco products across the country to anyone aged 15 or younger this year and to break the cycle of addiction and disadvantage. The UK government is planning to restrict advertising and sponsorship of

vapes and nicotine products. UK's measures to create the first smoke-free generation are worthy of emulation.

Smoking continues to be one of the leading causes of death in our country. Though it has been more than 15 years since smoke-free rules were implemented to ban smoking in all public places in our country, questions remain over the effectiveness of the law.

Doctors have been asking the government to remove designated smoking rooms in restaurants, hotels and airports to pro-

tekt people from second-hand smoke. Second-hand smoke causes harm to children, pregnant women and medically vulnerable people.

Most smokers wish they had never started. They are trapped by addiction. However, No-Smoking Day observed every March motivates people to realize the bad effects of smoking and make healthy lifestyle changes to lead a better life. Similarly, during 'World No Tobacco Day' rallies are taken out across the country urging smokers to shun the practice considering tobacco's severe impact on their health and well-being. With smoking considered as a fashionable practice by youngsters, some of

them get addicted. Doctors say smoking can cause stillbirths, asthma in kids, cancers, strokes, heart attacks and even premature dementia.

Anti-tobacco warnings such as text message, image or video clip, are given in all films nowadays to discourage tobacco use and promote public health. Usually messages have information on health risks associated with smoking, such as cancer, heart disease and stroke. OTT streaming services also have smoking warnings added to their content.

A complete ban on tobacco may be impractical. Instead a multifaceted approach that balances regulation, scientific evidence, education and emotional appeal will help in creating a healthier society.

Court summons Arjun Sampath's son for apology

DC CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI, NOV 7

The Madras High Court had ordered Omkar Balaji, the State Youth Wing President of the Indu Makkal Katchi of Arjun Sampath, to appear before the court on November 13 and tender an apology for his controversial speech, in which he said that the tongue of R Gopal, the editor of the Tamil magazine 'Nakeeran' would be cut off.

Balaji, who is also the son of Arjun Sampath, had made that remark during a demonstration conducted on October 27 at Coimbatore demanding

action against those who spread rumours and filed false complaints against the Isha Yoga Centre of Jaggi Vasudev. Gopal had made the remark earlier in an interview to a YouTube channel.

When Balaji moved the court with a petition seeking anticipatory bail on November 4, the court dismissed the petition and ordered the filing of a fresh petition. On Thursday, the judge took exemption to the remark of the petitioner and ordered him to appear before the court and file an apology affidavit.

The petitioner's father, Arjun Sampath, the

founder of the Indu Makkal Katchi, had organized a protest meeting on Sunday in Chennai to demand a Prevention of Atrocities Act to protect the Brahmin community for attacks, on the lines of the law that provides protection to people belonging to the SC and ST communities.

South Indian actress Kasthuri, who spoke ill of Telugu people and government employees belonging to the marginalized communities at the meeting and in subsequent interviews on the controversy, apologized for the remarks after a few cases were filed and protests mounted against her.

SHORT TAKES

IUML PREZ MOURNS
MALAISAMY DEMISEDC CORRESPONDENT
TIRUCHY, NOV. 7

The Indian Union Muslim League (IUML) president Prof. K.M. Kader Mohideen has expressed condolences over the demise of former Tamil Nadu home secretary and former Rajya Sabha member K. Malaisamy.

In a release at Tiruchy on Thursday, he said "we pray to the lord almighty for the peace of his soul."

150 SC, minorities
women in Karur to get
free nursing trainingDC CORRESPONDENT
KARUR, NOV. 7

As many as 150 Scheduled Caste and minorities women of Karur district will be given six months' free training to become nursing assistants, under the Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Grameen Kaushalya Yojana scheme of the Union government, Karur Collector M. Thangavel has said.

In a release on Thursday, he said the selected 150 women will be given free training at a private training institute at Mylapatti and Kulthalai.

During the six-month training, the trainees will be given free food and accommodation, insurance coverage, and three months' stipend. After completing training, 100 percent employment opportunities will be made through the training institutes, he added.

The gents and ladies of these two communities of Karur district can apply for training in other programmes like CNG main operator, 'Sillarai Vanga Melaanmai' welding and catering supervisors and they can approach the respective taluk 'Mahalir thitta melaanmai alagu' office, he added.

The selection of trainees will be held at block development office at Thogamalai near Karur on November 9 and interested candidates can join the process, he added.

Raja Raja Cholan
coronation day fete
first held in 1934G. SRINIVASAN | DC
THANJAVUR, NOV. 7

'Sadhaya vizha' (coronation day) of King Raja Raja Cholan, who built the Big Temple here, was first held on November 15, 1934, according to Manimaran, Tamil pandit of Saraswathi Mahal Library at Thanjavur.

Evidence for this is available in books in the library, he said in a release on Thursday. After that it was not held for some time. But again celebrations were held in 1968, 1969 and 1971. Souvenirs were released in those years. From 2022, it will be celebrated as a government function. This year 'Sadhaya Vizha' is held on November 9 and 10 at the Big temple, said the release.

Misty hues give rollicking
experience to Ooty touristsB. RAVICHANDRAN | DC
OOTY, NOV. 7

On a day of changing weather patterns of different hues here on Thursday, from rains to shine, thick mists draping the rolling hills and the valleys gave an enthralling experience to the tourists and local kids even as the northeast monsoon weather appears to have more thrills in store in the coming days.

The weather here during the northeast monsoon period is known for unpredictability and astonishment when the rare meteorological phenomenon descends on the hills. Thursday was one such day as the hill residents woke up to a cloudy and rainy morning. In the evening hours the shine returned. But, what made the difference was the thick sheet of mist draping the hills and valleys, hindering the regular visibility range, giving an entirely new thrilling experience for



Tourists enjoying the mist-draped atmosphere at the Government Botanical Garden in Ooty.

—DC

tourists and locals also to enjoy a 'misty-walk' in the hills between 9.30 am till noon. Hill residents also opened the doors and windows to allow the mist to enter the houses and to enjoy the misty-delight. The tourists at the Government Botanical

Garden enjoyed the scenario at the mist-wrapped garden. For quite a good chunk of tourists at the Doddabetta peak standing tall at 8,650 ft, the summit trip on Thursday morning was a wonderment atop a thick sheet of hovering mist. The tourists at the

peak said that though the snowy summit hindered downtown views it gave them a different and very rare thrilling experience at the summit. The tourists opined that it was like an adventure walk in the air amid the mist-covered peak.

Govt must insist
on share of
Cauvery water
and get it: VasanR. VALAYAPATHY | DC
TIRUCHY, NOV. 7

Tamil Maanila Congress president G.K. Vasan wants the Karnataka government to release the monthly share of the Cauvery water to Tamil Nadu as the Cauvery water is the lifeline of Tamil Nadu farmers. Karnataka should release 13.28 tmc ft of water to Tamil Nadu and the Tamil Nadu government should insist on it and get the share.

Addressing a press conference at Tiruchy on Thursday, Vasan also urged the DMK government to function beyond political alignments and distribute agricultural machinery through primary agricultural cooperative credit societies without political discrimination.

He asked the government to remove encroachments along various rivers in Tiruchy, Pudukkottai and Sivagangai districts and to desilt the rivers and construct check-dams in a number of places across the rivers running in these districts.

The government is duty-bound to ensure proper maintenance of the state-owned transport corporation buses and protect people from road accidents, he said.

Referring to actor Vijay's Tamizhaga Vetri Kazaghama, he said the principles and policies of his party were meant to grow his party, and not satisfy other political parties, and added that it was unnecessary to speak about a party's A team and B team. "We have to wait and see about the functioning of the TVK," he said.

To a question, he said as the northeast monsoon has started, the health department must take suitable preventive measures to ensure people are not affected by dengue fever-like diseases.

All members of the Congress party are proud to have Kharge ji as their leader, and I am honoured to have him here," she said.

The Congress candidate said "In the last few days, as I have been traveling through the constituency, I have been deeply touched by the immense love you have shown me."

Priyanka concluded the second phase of her campaign on Thursday. She is anticipated to return shortly for the concluding stage of electioneering ahead of the polls, scheduled for November 13.

election authority orders due to the Wayanad Lok Sabha by-election.

Congress MLA T. Siddique has defended Priyanka Gandhi, stating that she does not require the distribution of food kits to win elections. On the other hand, LDF can-

didate Sathyan Mokeri has criticized the Congress, likening the distribution of kits to a "cash for votes" scheme.

"The kits were meant to be distributed among families affected by the disaster. Distribution was halted due to the election code of con-



Devotees witness Soorasamharam, the highlight of the Kandha Sashti festival, on Vellore Fort grounds, near Jalakandeswarar temple, on Thursday. —K.Senthil Nathan

More than 3 lakh devotees witness
Soorasamharam at TiruchendurM. ARULOLI | DC
TIRUCHENDUR, NOV. 7

More than 3 lakh devotees from across the state and even from outside the country witnessed 'Soorasamharam', the highlight of the Kandha Sashti festival, on the shores of Tiruchendur on Thursday.

The six-day Sashti festival commenced with yaga sala puja on November 2. Every day since then, the sanctum sanctorum of Arulmigu Subramanyaswamy temple in Tiruchendur was opened at 3 am and special pujas were performed for the presiding deities.

On Thursday, the sixth day of the festival, the temple was opened at 1 am and after performing the rituals, a fully decorated Lord Jeyanthinathar was brought to the Sashti mandapam outside the temple at 3.30 pm.

The idol of Lord Jeyanthinathar, placed at the

Sashti mandapam, facing the seashore, was worshipped by devotees, who chanted 'Vetrivel' and 'Aroharu'. Later, around 4.30 pm, the Lord was brought to the seashore, where the climax event of the Kandha Sashti festival - Soorasamharam - that was marked by the ritual annihilation of the demons, Gajamahasoran, Singamahasoran and finally Soorapadman, symbolising the victory of good over evil.

The half-hour event, held at the seashore in front of the Subramanyaswamy temple, was witnessed by more than 3 lakh devotees, who, immediately after the Soorasamharam, took a holy dip in the sea and concluded their Sashti vratam.

After the Soorasamharam, the idol of Lord Jeyanthinathar along with the deities Valli and Deivanai, was placed at the Santhosha mandapam. On the seventh day, on Friday (Nov. 8),

Kharge calls Modi liar for betraying families of Wayanad

GILVESTER ASSARY | DC
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, NOV 7

Congress President Mallikarjun Kharge on Thursday hit out at Prime Minister Narendra Modi, labeling him a "bogus man" and a "liar" for betraying the affected families of devastating landslides that killed over 400 people in July.

Speaking at a rally in Nilambur, Malappuram district, in support of Wayanad UDF candidate Priyanka Gandhi, Kharge mentioned that Modi had visited Wayanad following catastrophic landslides and pledged support to the victims. But whatever he promised, the prime minister never gave.

"The state submitted a detailed memorandum demanding Rs 2000 crore for relief and rehabilitation. But the Centre allocated only Rs 291 crore," Kharge said and contrasted this with the generous aid provided to BJP-ruled states in the wake of

natural disasters.

The Congress president hailed Kerala for consistently upholding the constitutional ideals of equality, liberty, and fraternity. The people of Kerala uphold the concept of a secular India. However, the actions of the Modi government are undermining the country's unity. Instead of promoting harmony, they are engendering division, anger, and fear, he said.

"They attempt to divide us based on caste and religion. However, I have faith in the people of Wayanad, and I am confident they cannot be divided. In recent years, the BJP and RSS have also introduced a new culture of communal and divisive politics in Kerala," he alleged.

Kharge said Rahul visited Manipur multiple times, meeting people from various sections and sharing their sorrow. He began his Bharat Jodo Yatra from Manipur to draw the nation's attention to the

struggles of the people there.

"Rahul works diligently and instills confidence in the people of this nation. He embarked on the Bharat Jodo Yatra from Kanyakumari to Kashmir. However, Modi has not visited Manipur to date to witness the dire conditions of the people and the tribal communities. The country requires a leader who stands with its citizens regardless of the circumstances," Kharge said.

Whatever Modi claims, he fails to act upon.

Priyanka Gandhi started her speech in Malayalam. "Ellavarkum namaskaram, ningalude snehatinu nanni, enikk kurachu urachu Malayalam ariyam (Greetings to everyone. Thank you for your love. I know little Malayalam)"

"I have learned three sentences, I will continue to repeat these lines till I learn more sentences," she said amid thunderous applause from the crowd.

"I hold the deepest respect

DC CORRESPONDENT
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, NOV 7

The seizure of food kits featuring images of Congress leaders Rahul Gandhi and Priyanka Gandhi, who is also a candidate, in Thirunelli, Wayanad, has sparked major

controversy. The opposition CPM led LDF has accused the party of a "provisions for votes" scam. The kits, confiscated by the election flying squad in Tholpetty, Wayanad, were stored near the residence of the Congress mandalam pres-

ident Sasikumar Tholpetty. The kits bore inscriptions indicating they were intended for Wayanad landslide victims. The Congress has stated that these kits were procured before the election announcement and that their distribution was halted by

election authority orders due to the Wayanad Lok Sabha by-election.

Congress MLA T. Siddique has defended Priyanka Gandhi, stating that she does not require the distribution of food kits to win elections. On the other hand, LDF can-

didate Sathyan Mokeri has criticized the Congress, likening the distribution of kits to a "cash for votes" scheme.

"The kits were meant to be distributed among families affected by the disaster. Distribution was halted due to the election code of con-

duct," explained T Siddique MLA. He said the food kit controversy is being raised to overcome the embarrassment the CPM faced due to Palakkad fiasco.

Siddique mentioned that the revenue department, in partnership with the district

administration, is supplying all the goods. He has also reported that the previously arrived goods were of sub-standard quality.

In a related incident, food kits infested with worms were given to families affected by landslides in the Meppadi

panchayat, which is ruled by Congress-led UDF.

The CPM's youth wing, DYFI, along with the impacted families, stormed the panchayat office on Thursday to protest the distribution of the contaminated food grains.

Udhayanidhi:
People will
answer those
who want to
destroy DMKDeputy Chief Minister
Udhayanidhi Stalin at
the Kalaigarn library at
MP's office, which he
inaugurated at
Thanjavur on Thursday.

—DC

G. SRINIVASAN | DC
THANJAVUR, NOV. 7

People will give a fitting answer to those who want to destroy the DMK, said Deputy Chief Minister Udhayanidhi Stalin here on Thursday.

Speaking at a marriage function, Udhayanidhi said a divided AIADMK and BJP are waiting to see a crack in the DMK alliance. But it will not happen. Those who are new to politics also want to destroy the DMK. "But I don't want to answer them. People will give their answer," he said.

He appealed to DMK cadre to work unitedly to see that M.K. Stalin becomes Chief Minister for the second time in 2026 and that the DMK comes to power for the seventh time.

Udhayanidhi said he was also proud to call himself 'delta man' like his father. Former Chief Minister M. Karunanidhi contested from Thanjavur and won, he said.



Dravida model government is considered the best in India. Niti Aayog statistics also vouched for the same. The DMK government has done a lot for women. A sum of Rs. 1,000 is paid monthly to 1.16 crore women in the state, he said, listing out the achievements of the government.

Earlier, he unveiled the portrait of Murasoli Selvam at the party office 'Kalaigarn Arivalayam'.

Later, the Deputy Chief Minister inaugurated the Thanjavur MP's office. He also inaugurated the Kalaigarn library at the MP's office complex.

He honoured sports persons who won in competitions held for the Chief Minister's trophy.

Govi Chezhiaan, minister for higher education, Anbil Mahesh Poyyamozhi, minister for school education, T.R.B. Raja, minister for industries, S. Murasoli, MP, MLAs Durai. Chandrasekaran and T.K.G. Neelamegam, Shan. Ramanathan, Than-

javar Mayor and others participated.

Later, Udhayanidhi distributed benefits worth Rs. 154 crore to people at a government function. He said Tamil Nadu stood first in 13 departments in the whole country. Also, 42 per cent women are employed in Tamil Nadu. Thanjavur Collector B. Priyanka Panakajam, participated in the event.

Udhayanidhi released the logo, bulletin and flag of Bharat Scouts and Guides at the 75th year foundation day that was celebrated here on Thursday.

Anbil Mahesh Poyyamozhi, minister and state chairman of Bharat Scouts and Guides, Govi Chezhiaan and T.R.B. Raja cheered them. Udhayanidhi also took charge as the chairman of the committee to celebrate the diamond jubilee of Bharat Scouts and Guides to be held at Sipcot ground at Manapparai, in Tiruchy district, and Kalaigarn centenary march of scouts and guides.

Kerala court sentences three TN men
to life term in 2016 collectorate blast

Kollam, Nov 7: A Kerala court on Thursday sentenced three individuals to life imprisonment for their involvement in a low-intensity IED blast at the Kollam district collectorate in 2016, stating that the explosion was intended to "create terror" in the minds of the public.

District Principal Sessions Court Judge G. Gopakumar sentenced Abbas Ali (first accused) from Ismail Puram, Madurai, and Dawood Sulaiman (third accused) from Pallivasal, Madurai, to two life terms each under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA). The second accused, Shamsun Karim Raja from K Pudur, Madurai, received three life sentences under the same act.

In his judgment, the court noted that evidence presented by the prosecution demonstrated the explosion was intended to instill fear in the public. The accused had planned similar explosions across various Indian institutions, as evidenced by videos found on their electronic devices, and successfully carried out five such blasts.

The court observed that, by targeting the Kollam district court complex frequented by judges, police,

and lawyers the accused sought to create a sense of insecurity among the public regarding the Indian judicial system's and police's ability to ensure safety.

The judge emphasized that the punishment must serve as a deterrent to others with similar extremist ideologies.

In addition to the life sentences, the court imposed various sentences under the Indian Penal Code and the Explosive Substances Act, including for attempted murder. The second accused was fined ₹2 lakh, while the other two received fines of ₹1.7 lakh each. Additionally, Rs 10,000 was awarded as compensation to the blast victim.

The accused requested leniency, citing their belief in the Indian Constitution and claims of family dependence. However, the prosecution, led by public prosecutor Scin G Mundaakkal, opposed leniency, highlighting the accused's involvement in six cases, including five explosions at different court centers. The prosecution stated that the accused aimed to destabilise the Indian judicial system by planting explosives at public locations.

The court heard that the accused were associated

with an extremist group influenced by Al-Qaeda leader Osama Bin Laden. The blast, which took place on June 15, 2016, occurred in a jeep parked in the collectorate compound. The IED, concealed in a tiffin box, detonated near the Munsiff Court around 10.45 am, producing a loud noise.

The prosecution alleged that the first accused founded the extremist 'Base Movement' at the Darul Islam Library in Tamil Nadu, recruiting others to promote Bin Laden's ideology and instill terror through nationwide court bombings beginning in 2015. The group was linked to blasts in court premises in Chittoor, Andhra Pradesh, on April 7, 2016; Mysore on August 1, 2016; Nellore on September 12, 2016; and Malappuram on November 1, 2016.

The Kollam court blast case was initially registered by West Police and investigated by the Kollam Assistant Police Commissioner under orders from the Kollam City Police Commissioner. The accused were arrested by National Investigation Agency (NIA) officials from Hyderabad, who were also probing the Mysore blast case, on November 28, 2016. —PTI

Kerala CM, Mohanlal wish Kamal on his 70th birthday

Thiruvananthapuram, Nov. 7: Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan and Malayalam superstar Mohanlal greeted legendary actor-politician Kamal Haasan on his 70th birthday on Thursday.

In a post on X, Mohanlal wrote, "Happy Birthday, dear Kamal Haasan sir! May this year bring you even greater success and

joy as you continue sharing your artistry, creativity, and dedication with the world."

CM Vijayan, in his message on X, described Kamal Haasan as a true icon of cinema and a passionate advocate for secular and democratic values.

"Happy birthday to my dear friend @kamalhaasan. A true icon of cin-

ema and a passionate advocate for secular and democratic values, Kamal has carved a unique space in our hearts through his art and public interventions.

His admiration for Kerala and Keralites is inspiring. Wishing him joy for the life ahead," the CM wrote.

Malayalam film director

T K Rajeev Kumar, whose 1989 thriller film "Chanakayan" starring Kamal was a huge hit, said the actor was a true professional who knew all the nuances of movie-making.

"It is his passion for cinema that takes him ahead. He is not bothered about victories or failures," Kumar wrote in an article in a Malayalam daily. —PTI

Seizure of food packets with picture of Rahul and Priyanka triggers controversy

DC CORRESPONDENT
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, NOV 7

The seizure of food kits featuring images of Congress leaders Rahul Gandhi and Priyanka Gandhi, who is also a candidate, in Thirunelli, Wayanad, has sparked major

controversy. The opposition CPM led LDF has accused the party of a "provisions for votes" scam. The kits, confiscated by the election flying squad in Tholpetty, Wayanad, were stored near the residence of the Congress mandalam pres-

ident Sasikumar Tholpetty. The kits bore inscriptions indicating they were intended for Wayanad landslide victims. The Congress has stated that these kits were procured before the election announcement and that their distribution was halted by

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didate Sathyan Mokeri has criticized the Congress, likening the distribution of kits to a "cash for votes" scheme.

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duct," explained T Siddique MLA. He said the food kit controversy is being raised to overcome the embarrassment the CPM faced due to Palakkad fiasco.

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administration, is supplying all the goods. He has also reported that the previously arrived goods were of sub-standard quality.

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panchayat, which is ruled by Congress-led UDF.

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IN BRIEF

MLC booked for misuse of funds

Kurnool: The Nandyal I Town police have registered a case against MLC and YSRC leader Issac Basha following a complaint from Salam, who recently challenged his previous arrest and alleged baseless accusations in court. According to circle inspector G. Sudhakar Reddy, Issac Basha, then a contractor, had filed a complaint against Salam in 2013, accusing him of trespassing on a construction site. The police subsequently investigated and filed a charge-sheet against Salam. The case went to trial. However, after years, the court acquitted Salam. Recently, Salam filed a petition in the court against Basha claiming that the case filed against him was unjust. The CI said the court recently directed police to take up the case and register it against the MLC.

Min. Nadendla checks rice mills

Vijayawada: Minister of civil supplies Nadendla Manohar has uncovered irregularities in the distribution of Public Distribution System (PDS) rice during a surprise inspection of seven rice mills in the Guntur and Palnadu districts. During the inspections, approximately 1,000 metric tonnes of PDS rice paddy were found stored illegally, leading to the registration of criminal cases against those responsible. The inspections revealed that rice meant for distribution under the government scheme was being hoarded in large quantities at various mills, including Rama Lingeswara Traders Rice Mill in Sattenapalli. The minister expressed concern after discovering about 100 tonnes of PDS ration at one mill and questioned officials why this rice had not been reported. He ordered immediate action.

Sivanath chairs VMC review meet

Vijayawada: Vijayawada MP Kesineni Sivanath has emphasised the importance of people's welfare as the primary goal of city development during a review meeting held at the Vijayawada Municipal Corporation headquarters on Thursday. The meeting, which was attended by VMC commissioner H.M. Dhyan Chandra and various departments' heads, has focused on upcoming development initiatives aimed at enhancing the quality of life for residents. Dhyan Chandra presented a detailed overview of several key projects, including improvements to the drainage system, enhancements to drinking water supply and the development of a new sports stadium. These initiatives are part of broader efforts supported by the Central and state government schemes to ensure sustainable growth in Vijayawada. Sivanath directed officials to prioritise solutions for 24-hour drinking water supply to residents.

LAND FOR SINDHU SPORTS ACADEMY SPARKS PROTEST

LAXMI PRANATHI | DC VISAKHAPATNAM, NOV. 7

The puja ceremony of Olympic medalist P.V. Sindhu's new sports academy in Thotaguru, Visakhapatnam, was marred by protests from the locals and CPM leaders on Thursday. The two-acre plot of land was allocated to Sindhu by the previous state government in June 2021 for establishing a badminton academy and sports school. However, the protesters argue that the land should instead be used for a junior college.

Former corporator Omni Sanyasi Rao, who staged a protest, said an additional 2 acres were supposed to be provided to build a junior college near a high school in the same area. He added that they had requested this to the previous government, which, instead, allocated it to Sindhu. "We are not against providing land to the player, but it could be allotted elsewhere so that this area near the existing high school can be used for a junior college," he added.

When the initial land allocation was made to Sindhu, the government had attached strict conditions, stating that the land should be not be used for commercial purposes.

Addressing the controversy, Sindhu told *Deccan Chronicle*, "We are following the rules, I have the proper documents and the land was allotted to me by the state government to build a sports academy. I spoke to the government officials, and they said they will provide a separate land for junior college." She added that staging a protest when the academy started functioning with proper documents was not fair and that the protesters should settle the issue with government.

Lokesh urges youth to become job creators

IT minister vows to make AP No.1 in education in the country

MD ILYAS | DC VIJAYAWADA, NOV. 7

Education minister Nara Lokesh declared that Andhra Pradesh will reach number one position in the country in the education sector. Inaugurating the International Higher Education Fair at the Vellore Institute of Technology (VIT) campus on Thursday, he told youth to focus on becoming job creators, rather than employment seekers.

At the fair being jointly organised by the VIT and the state government, the minister flagged off a driverless van, a drone and a robot in the presence of an elite gathering. He asked youth to set up start-up companies taking help from the AP Innovation Society, which will extend all possible assistance to the young entrepreneurs. "In fact, we have created a seed fund of ₹250 crore for this purpose," Lokesh underlined. He asked education institutes like VIT to focus on outcomes, instead of output.

Lokesh wanted youth to



Minister N. Lokesh inspects models at an exhibition at the International Higher Education Fair at VIT-AP University on Thursday. — BY ARRANGEMENT

concentrate on new innovations, keeping themselves abreast of technological developments across the globe. He advised youth to focus on success instead of worrying about failure. "I worked with the World Bank in 2005 after doing my MBA from Stanford University. I faced several ups and downs like anyone else," he recalled.

The minister said he had undertaken various developmental activities in AP

as a cabinet minister in 2017. He pointed out that in 2019, he contested from Mangalagiri Assembly segment and lost with a small margin of 5,300 votes. "No doubt I remained totally upset for a couple of days. Thereafter, I stood solidly with the people of Mangalagiri for full five years. Following this, voters of Mangalagiri elected me in the 2024 elections with the highest majority in the state," Lokesh pointed out.

He underlined that he is totally committed to achieve his goals. He asked youth to take him as an example. He said Andhra Pradesh presently has umpteen job opportunities presently, with developmental works in the capital city of Amaravati moving at a fast pace.

The minister expressed happiness that representatives of universities from across the globe are attending the International Higher Education Fair. He thanked all the universities, educational institutes, teachers, students and their parents for actively participating in the event. Speaking on the occasion, VIT-AP chancellor Dr. G. Viswanathan called on all states to increase their percentage of budget on education. VIT vice chancellor Dr. S.V. Kota Reddy, registrar Jagadeesh Chandra Murugan, International Relations coordinator Goswamy and Professor Reethu were among those who participated in the programme.



Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu virtually launches various substations from Tallaya Palem in Guntur district on Thursday. Energy department special chief secretary K. Vijayanand, ministers Nadendla Manohar, Kandula Durgesh, Gottipati Ravi Kumar, Guntur MP Pemmasani Chandrasekhar and others look on. — BY ARRANGEMENT

District as unit for SC quota categorisation in AP: Naidu

MD ILYAS | DC VIJAYAWADA, NOV. 7

Chief Minister Nara Chandrababu Naidu has stressed the need to provide equal opportunities to all sub-castes among the Dalits through proper implementation of the SC reservation categorisation.

At a meeting held at the secretariat on Thursday the Chief Minister discussed SC reservation categorisation with Dalit MLAs of the three-party alliance. This was in the context of an election guarantee the Telugu Desam had held out regarding the categorisation along with the Supreme Court verdict on its classification.

Naidu said the district will be treated as a unit,

● **CHIEF MINISTER N. Chandrababu Naidu said the Telugu Desam has been supporting Dalits all along. After 2014, funds were spent on Dalits as per proportional ratio through GO-25**

based on population ratio, for implementation of the SC reservation categorisation.

"The categorisation was implemented during the period of the undivided state but it was later stopped due to legal issues. In view of the recent Supreme Court verdict, various states are ready to implement the categorisation. We are thinking of implementing this by doing justice to all," he said.

The Chief Minister said the TD has been support-

ing Dalits all along. After 2014, funds were spent on Dalits as per proportional ratio through GO-25. Now that the SC verdict has clarified the categorisation, necessary action has been taken to implement it by setting up a commission for this purpose. He said comprehensive development of the Dalit community can be achieved by providing them education, employment, skill development and business opportunities.

"We are thinking about steps to help the Dalit community in the next five years. The people voted for our win in 27 constituencies out of the 29 SC seats in the recent elections. I will make all these MLAs win again in 2029," the Chief Minister stated.

Foundation Day



AP Governor S. Abdul Nazeer with Scouts and Guides cadets during an event to mark the 75th Foundation Day of Scouts and Guides celebrations held at Raj Bhavan at Vijayawada on Thursday. Director of school education and state chief commissioner of Bharat Scouts and Guides, Andhra Pradesh State Association V. Vijaya Rama Raju presented a scarf to the Governor and pinned a flag. Later, the Governor, who was the chief guest of the event, presented Rajya Puraskar certificates to cadets representing various schools. — BY ARRANGEMENT

HM vows action against online abuse of women

DC CORRESPONDENT VIJAYAWADA, NOV. 7

Home minister Vangalapudi Anitha on Thursday warned that anyone abusing women on social media platforms will be caught using advanced equipment and punished.

Anitha disclosed that under the leadership of Chief Minister Nara Chandrababu Naidu and Deputy Chief Minister Pawan Kalyan, they are bringing in a special law to bring to book those who misuse social media.

The minister accused former CM Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy of undermining women using bullies, goons and psychos under the guise of politics. She pointed out that Jagan did not respond even when abusive posts appeared on social media platforms targeting his own mother and sister.

Anitha made it clear that those who derive satanic pleasure by abusing women will be brought to book, regardless of their party, region, caste or reli-



Vangalapudi Anitha

gion. She advised Jagan to refrain from raising canards of peace and security deteriorating in AP, thereby undermining democracy.

The minister maintained that people have not forgotten the atrocities committed against women during the five-year rule of the YSRC president. She quoted a National Crime Report saying during Jagan's rule, young women had been raped every eight hours, women assaulted every two hours and children abused every 10 hours. She got emotional recalling how YSRC leaders targeted her with obscene posts while in power.

Anitha declared that crime rate has reduced by 28 per cent after the coalition government has taken office in Andhra Pradesh.

YSRC to boycott MLC polls, Assembly sessions

DC CORRESPONDENT VIJAYAWADA, NOV. 7

Former chief minister and YSRC president Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy said the YSRC would boycott the MLC elections due to anarchism prevailing in the state. He also said they would not attend the Assembly Winter Session, scheduled to commence on November 11, but would conduct mock Assembly to question the government.

Alleging that the Naidu-led coalition government had failed on all fronts and the state was pushed into a dark age, Jagan Mohan Reddy warned the police to stick to the rule book and not buckle under pressure to dance to the tunes of the

ruling party.

Quoting the Supreme Court ruling, the YSRC chief said, "Notices should be served first and magistrate permission be taken before arresting an MLA or MP if the police are armed with an arrest warrant. But the police in the state are throwing all procedures to winds and are arresting even family members if the person facing the charges not available. Illegal detentions have become the order of the day..." The former chief minister warned that the YSRC legal cell would take up the issue of false cases and all erring officials will have to face the music when the YSRC come back to power. "We track down every officer and take action," he warned.

KOLLU WARNS OF ACTION OVER MRP VIOLATIONS

MD ILYAS | DC VIJAYAWADA, NOV. 7

Minister for excise Kollu Ravindra warned that strict action would be taken against the violators of maximum retail price (MRP) rules and the illicit belt shops.

During a review meeting held at the excise commissioner's office in Mangalagiri on Thursday, the minister acknowledged the officials' efforts in transparently implementing the new liquor policy and allocating licenses to 3,396 liquor shops without disputes. However, he urged that recent allegations of MRP violations in liquor stores and mushrooming of belt shops should be addressed effectively.

Ravindra directed the officials to impose heavy fines on the violators and to revoke the shop licenses if necessary. "We have introduced the liquor policy to combat spurious liquor and protect the consumers' health. We will not tolerate any adulteration in alcohol sales and are determined to completely eradicate belt shops," he emphasised.

Currently, testing for extra-neutral alcohol is conducted based on six parameters, but the number will soon be increased to 13 to ensure public safety.

The minister explained that the testing process would use gas chromatography, adhering to the guidelines set by the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) and the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI).

PK AIMS AT HIKE IN PANCHAYAT REVENUES

FROM PAGE 1

The government would focus on fulfilling its election promises and addressing the primary demands of Sarpanches. He acknowledged that while Kerala has a strong panchayat raj system, the government has brought in IAS officer Krishna Teja to leverage his experience in bolstering the state's rural systems.

He shared new initiatives to increase panchayat revenues through programmes like 'Village Forests,' which aim to plant trees in vacant lands within villages. Kalyan noted the importance of self-sufficiency in meeting the wood-related demands of the nation.

The Deputy Chief Minister said the quality of work under the Grama Panduga (village festival) programme needed supervision from sarpanches. The present government listens to the people.

The previous government had neglected the Panchayat Raj Act, leading to a lack of self-governance and efficient governance within local bodies, he said. Pawan urged better execution of Gram Sabhas (village assemblies) to encourage community participation.

SHOT IN | ARM

Women's academy to come up at Anantapur

ACA to set up 3 cricket academies

DC CORRESPONDENT VIJAYAWADA, NOV. 7

The Andhra Cricket Association would set up three cricket academies in the state. A women's academy would be set up in Anantapur, a men's academy in Vizianagaram and a senior men's academy at the Moolapadu Stadium here.

Stating this, association president and local MP Kesineni Sivanath alias Chinni said on Thursday that these would be organised on the lines of the Centre of Excellence Centre started by the BCCI in Bengaluru.

The ACA apex council meeting was held on Thursday at the Mangalagiri International Cricket Stadium. The meeting discussed the development of

BOOST TO SPORTS INFRA

● **THE ACA will set up three cricket academies in Anantapur (women), Vizianagaram (men), and Moolapadu Stadium (senior men), modeled after the BCCI's Centre of Excellence.**

● **THE ACA plans to build cricket grounds in rural areas of AP and train local talent to nurture future players.**

● **THE ACA aims to develop players for the IPL, targeting the selection of 20 players from Andhra Pradesh for the upcoming season.**

Mangalagiri Cricket Stadium and about 16 issues related to cricket in Andhra Pradesh.

ACA would take advice and suggestions from architecture experts to correct the defects in the Mangalagiri stadium's construction, Sivanath stated after the meeting.

The MP said discussions were held on the steps to develop cricket in rural

areas. "We aim to establish grounds in rural areas where there are no sports facilities.

Talented athletes will be identified and trained in these academies. Most of the cricket players trained in these academies will be selected from AP for the IPL and the Indian cricket team.

He said efforts are being made to train internation-

al cricket players so that 20 persons from AP can be selected for the upcoming IPL matches.

Kesineni Sivanath said IPL matches would be held in the state during the upcoming IPL season. The Vizag stadium is being readied accordingly. "We aim to improve the Mangalagiri Cricket Stadium so that international matches can be held there." Actions will be taken to hold cricket tournaments in Vizianagaram, Visakhapatnam, Vijayawada, Mangalagiri, Anantapur and Kadapa stadiums." Andhra Cricket Association vice president Venkata Rama Prashanth, secretary Sana Satish, treasurer Dandamudi Srinivas, councilor Dantugaur Vishnu Tej and others were present.

■ Thousands throng polluted Yamuna despite HC warning ■ Leaders of AAP, BJP, Cong visit special ghats for puja

Chhath becomes battle to woo Purvanchalis

AVINASH PRABHAKAR and BHASKAR HARI SHARMA
NEW DELHI, NOV. 7

While political parties in Delhi are making Chhath a poll plank for the forthcoming Assembly elections early next year, thousands of people on Thursday thronged the polluted Yamuna for a holy dip.

Despite the Delhi high court's warning that a dip in the highly polluted river could cause serious harm, one could see a large number of devotees immersing themselves in the thick toxic foams of the Yamuna for a ritual bath.

As Poorvanchalis comprise

about 40 per cent of the city's total electorate, the ruling AAP and the Opposition parties are leaving no stone unturned to reach out to the crucial vote bank which plays a decisive role in the Delhi elections.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi also extended warm wishes to the nation on the holy occasion.

In Delhi, top leaders of different political parties like AAP supremo Arvind Kejriwal, BJP's Virendra Sachdeva, and Congress' Devender Yadav themselves dotted the special puja ghats for the Chhath festivities.

Chief minister Atishi also vis-

ited Giri Nagar and took part in the puja.

In fact, the AAP-led Delhi government has set up about 1,000 special ghats for Chhath puja across the city.

Bhojpuri superstar and Delhi BJP MP Manoj Tiwari also offered prayers, while another BJP MP Bansuri Swaraj, celebrated the festival at a ghat in Chirag Delhi.

Chhath puja is dedicated to the worship of the sun god and is celebrated with a rigorous four-day routine. It is a significant event for Delhi's Poorvanchali community, which consists of Bhojpuri-speaking residents from Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, and

Jharkhand.

The DPCC chief assured the devotees that when Congress returns to power, the ghats will be further enlarged with far better facilities taking into consideration the increasing population of Poorvanchalis in the capital and also slammed the AAP over the toxic condition of the Yamuna waters.

As concerns had been raised about the rising pollution levels in the Yamuna, the authorities had deployed chemical defoamers to mitigate the issue.

Last month, the Delhi BJP unit chief himself was taken ill and was hospitalised days after

taking a dip in the heavily polluted Yamuna. After taking a dip in the river, he was admitted to the RML Nursing Home as he complained of "skin itching and breathing issues."

Mr Sachdeva also slammed Mr Kejriwal over his "failure" to fulfil his promise of cleaning the Yamuna by 2025 and "sought forgiveness" for the "corruption" of the Delhi government, which he alleged looted funds meant for cleaning the river.

Hitting back, senior AAP leader Somnath Bharti accused the BJP of using the police and the DDA to stop Poorvanchalis from celebrating Chhath in the

city.

The AAP MLA from Malviya Nagar accused the BJP of preventing devotees from Hauz Khas village from celebrating the festival at a park where it used to be observed for many years.

"The anti-Poorvanchali face of the BJP has been exposed after it stopped people from the Hauz Khas village from celebrating Chhath at the place where it used to be held for many years by using the police and the DDA," Mr Bharti alleged.

Delhi BJP MLA Abhay Verma, meanwhile, laid the foundation of a permanent ghat in his constituency.

CPCB opposes Lancet study linking AQI to mortality rate

DC CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI, NOV. 7

The Central pollution control board (CPCB) in the national green tribunal opposed the findings of a Lancet study, which claimed poor air quality had severely affected mortality rates in 10 major Indian cities.

Claiming that the study's data may not be "absolute", the CPCB said the deaths couldn't be attributed to pollution alone and that the satellite data and modelling techniques used for extrapolations in it may not necessarily represent the "realistic Indian scenario". The NGT had taken suo motu cognisance of a news report quoting the study, which stated approximately 33,000 annual deaths were linked to air pollution levels that exceeded the World Health Organisation guidelines.

Centre doubles fine on stubble burning

DC CORRESPONDENT
With Agency Input
NEW DELHI, NOV. 7

The Centre has doubled the fine for farmers burning crop residue in view of the deteriorating air quality in the Delhi-NCR region, the penalty going up to ₹30,000 for those with more than five acres of farmland.

According to the notification, which was published on Wednesday and comes following the Supreme Court's tough stance on the issue, farmers with less than two acres of land will now have to pay environmental compensation of ₹5,000, up from ₹2,500 while those with land between two and five acres will be fined ₹10,000 instead of ₹5,000.

However, farmer bodies in Punjab strongly condemned the Centre's move of raising fines for stubble burning and asked why the government was not providing crop residue management machinery to them to check farm fires.

They also asked why farmers are always being "targeted" for pollution, questioning the government about any action taken against the industry for polluting the environment.

Unfavourable meteorological conditions combined with vehicular emissions, paddy-straw burning, fire-crackers, and other local pollution sources contribute to hazardous air quality levels in Delhi-NCR during late autumn and winter.

According to a Delhi

pollution control committee (DPCC) analysis, the city experiences peak pollution from November 1 to 15 when the number of stubble-burning incidents in Punjab and Haryana increases.

Major factors behind stubble burning include the paddy-wheat cropping system, cultivation of long-duration paddy varieties, mechanised harvesting that leaves standing crop stubble in the field, labour scarcity, and the lack of a viable market for crop residue.

Punjab has reported 5,041 farm fires between September 15 and November 6, registering more than 70 per cent decline in such cases as compared to the corresponding period last year.

3 kidnap, gangrape mentally ill Odisha woman, arrested

BHASKAR HARI SHARMA
NEW DELHI, NOV. 7

Three men were arrested for kidnapping and later raping an Odisha-based woman with mental illness, who has previously worked as a researcher, in the Sarai Kale Khan area last month.

According to police sources, the incident took place near ITO Metro station and Rajghat.

It was in the wee hours of October 11 when an official from the Indian Navy spotted the girl in a red kurta and a towel wrapped in the lower part of her body while she was bleeding profusely from her wounds.

At 3.15 am, the officer made a PCR call to the Sunlight Colony police station where

he expressed concern that the girl might have been injured or subjected to wrongful assault. The police rushed her to AIIMS Trauma Centre where she disclosed that she was raped by three unknown men.

The victim, who belongs to Odisha and had travelled to Delhi on May 9 without

informing her family, is a dedicated researcher, facilitator, and community leader with over eight years of experience in the social sector.

"She holds a Master's degree in social work from Utkal University of Culture, Bhubaneswar. She has actively contributed to various developmental organisations.

SOUTH WESTERN RAILWAY

The undersigned, on behalf of the President of India, invites E-Tenders for the following work:

E-Tender Notice No: Y/E.29/2024-25/62
Dated : 28.10.2024

| Name of the Work | Approx. Value |
|--|------------------|
| (Re-tender) Extension of Road-4 Line for shunting Neck by 750 Mtrs at Sasalu Yard. | Rs. 68,81,437.81 |

Last date for submission of bids:
Upto 11:00 Hrs on 19-11-2024

E-Tender Notice No: Y/E.29/2024-25/63
Dated : 29.10.2024

| Name of the Work | Approx. Value |
|--|------------------|
| (Re-tender) Comprehensive Annual Maintenance Contract for SCADA at RCC, TSS, SP & SSP of Chikjijur (Excl.) - Rayadurga (Excl.) section of Mysuru Division for 4 years. | Rs. 48,61,681.28 |

Last date for submission of bids:
Upto 11:00 Hrs on 20-11-2024

For details log on: www.irops.gov.in
Senior Divisional Electrical Engineer/Traction
PUB/547/AS/PRB/SWR/2024-25
f South Western Railway - SWR | SWRRL | SWRRL

SOUTH WESTERN RAILWAY

Tender Notice No: CAO/CN/BNC/EPC/11/2024
Dated: 06.06.2024

The undersigned, on behalf of the President of India, Invites E-Tenders for the following work:

| Item of work | Approx. Value |
|--|---------------------|
| Construction of a new Broad Gauge Railway Line between Malugur (Chainage (-) 831.6 (Ch: 109200 of Yelahanka - Penukonda)) to Palasamudram (Chainage 17150) including 02 new yards (Chalivendala & Palasamudram) and Existing Malugur yard modification with a route length of 17.981 km including Signal & Telecommunication, Electrification & Electrical General Service works. (Tender Ref. No.: MLU-PALASAMU DRAM-EPC-01R) | Rs. 283,20,51,034/- |

Last date for submission of bids:
18.11.2024 (15:00 Hrs)

For details log on : www.irops.gov.in

Dy. Chief Engineer/Construction/ Works/Bengaluru/Cantonment
PUB/555A/MOPR/SWR/2024-25

f South Western Railway - SWR | SWRRL | SWRRL

NORTH CENTRAL RAILWAY

E-Tendering Tender Notice

Divisional Railway Manager (Works) N.C. Railway, Jhansi for and behalf of President of India invites sealed "Open Tender" through on Line (E-Tendering) for the following work:-

E-Tender No.: JHS-ENGG-C-2024-180 Approx Cost : 76761710.18

Description of work : Virangana Lakshmbhai Jhansi-Kanpur section : Rebuilding of minor bridges in Parnam-Govindpur section (under ADEN/CNS jurisdiction) of DFC feeder route by RCC Box for 25 Tonne axle load with 100 kmph speed under Mission 3000 MT.

Earnest Money : 533800.00 Date of closing Tender : 29.11.2024 at 15:00 hrs.

Date of completion/period from issue acceptance letter : 12 Months

* Tender on line can be submitted up to 15:00 hrs on 29.11.2024. * For full details and submission of bid please see the Indian Railways website www.irops.gov.in 1919/24 (D)

f North central railways | @ CPONCR | www.ncr.indianrailways.gov.in

NORTH CENTRAL RAILWAY

E-Procurement Tender Notice No.: 24/74 Date: 05.11.2024

E-PROCUREMENT TENDER NOTICE

On behalf of the President of India, The Principal Chief Materials Manager, North Central Railway, Prayagraj, (An ISO 9001:2015 certified unit) invites the following E-Procurement Tenders.

| S.N. | Tender No. | Short Description | Qty. | Tender Opening Date |
|------|------------|--|----------------|---------------------|
| 1 | 80244000A | Servoplex SHC-120 (IOCL) Grease | 18957 Kgs | 25.11.2024 |
| 2 | 6324RC13 | This is tender to enter into Rate Contract for Manufacturing & supply of Prestressed Monoblock Concrete Sleepers of Different Drg. Nos. T-5691, T-4218, T-4149, T-6068, T-8969, T-8970 & T-8971 to 78. | 31073 Set/Nos. | 25.12.2024 |

Note: The complete information of above tenders can be seen and downloaded from IREPS website i.e. <https://www.irops.gov.in>. For any change/corrigendum in tender, please visit this website regularly. No separate corrigendum/change will be published in news paper.

f North central railways | @ CPONCR | www.ncr.indianrailways.gov.in

NORTH CENTRAL RAILWAY

E-Tendering Notice No. 2024- Nov-01 Dated : 05.11.2024

E-Tender Notice

Divisional Railway Manager (Engineering), N.C. Rly Agra for and on behalf of the President of India invites "Open Tender" through on Line only (E-Tendering) for the following works. The details of the tender are as under:

SN:1-TenderNo.: 2024-Nov-01-01 Approx Cost : ₹ 4,60,50,458.49

Description of work : Extension, raising & surfacing of platforms from medium level to high level at CHLR & KBP Station under ADEN-HQ/Agra.

SN:2-TenderNo.: 2024-Nov-01-02 Approx Cost : ₹ 1,24,47,785.30

Description of work : Repair and maintenance associated works/activities for one year in jurisdiction of SSE/Works/Agra Cantt under ADEN/HQ/Agra.

SN:3-TenderNo.: 2024-Nov-01-03 Approx Cost : ₹ 1,06,80,325.13

Description of work : Repair and maintenance associated works/activities for one year in jurisdiction of SSE/Works/Iddah under ADEN/HQ/Agra.

SN:4-TenderNo.: 2024-Nov-01-04 Approx Cost : ₹ 5,90,086.08

Description of work : Annual maintenance for a stretch of 24 months of Automatic water level gauge installed at Bridge No. 167 (Stretchy bridge) under jurisdiction of ADEN-HQ, Agra cantt.

For full details and submission of bid please see the Indian Railways website www.irops.gov.in. Tenders can only be submitted through web portal www.irops.gov.in up to 15:00 hrs on 27.11.24

f North central railways | @ CPONCR | www.ncr.indianrailways.gov.in

NORTH CENTRAL RAILWAY

E-Tender No.: JHS-ENGG-C-2024-200 Dated: 06.11.2024

E-TENDERING TENDER NOTICE

Divisional Railway Manager (Works) N.C. Railway, Jhansi for and behalf of President of India invites sealed "Open Tender" through on Line (E-Tendering) for the following work:

Approx. Cost : ₹ 39904221.67 Earnest Money: ₹ 349500.00

Date of Closing Tender: 02.12.2024 at 15:00 hrs.

Date of completion / period from issue acceptance letter: 06 Months.

Note: (1) Tender on line can be submitted upto to 15:00 hrs. on 02.12.2024. (2) For full details and submission of bid please see the Indian Railways website www.irops.gov.in 1940/24 (A)

f North central railways | @ CPONCR | www.ncr.indianrailways.gov.in

NORTH CENTRAL RAILWAY

E-TENDERING NOTICE

Sr. DEE/TRD/Agra for & on behalf of President of India invites "Open Tender" through on-line only (e-Tendering) for the following work:

Tender No.: AGCTRD7202424 Period of completion: Twenty Four months

Name of work: Comprehensive Annual Maintenance Contract for repair/maintenance of 02 nos. Lift Cranes of Agra Division for a period of two years

Approximate Cost: Rs. 46,49,251.44/- Earnest Money: Rs. 93,000.00/-

1. For full details & submission of the bid please see the Indian Railway website www.irops.gov.in. 2. Tender can only be submitted through web portal www.irops.gov.in up to 15:30 Hrs. on date 27.11.2024. 1937/24(ADM)

f North central railways | www.ncr.indianrailways.gov.in | @ CPONCR

NORTH CENTRAL RAILWAY

E-Procurement Tender Notice No. 24/73 Dt. 01.11.2024

E-Procurement Tender Notice

On behalf of the President of India, The Principal Chief Materials Manager, North Central Railway, Prayagraj, (An ISO 9001:2015 certified unit) invites the following E-Procurement Tenders.

| S N | Tender No. | Short Description | Qty. | Tender Opening Date |
|-----|------------|---|-----------|---------------------|
| 1 | 6324RC04 | This is tender to enter into Rate Contract for Manufacture and Supply of various types of CMS crossings with different Drg. Nos. | 942 Set | 02.12.2024 |
| 2 | 63245566 | Prestressed Monoblock Concrete Sleepers Sets (Prestensioned type) for BG Fan Shaped Turn out 1 in 8.5 as per RDSO Drg. No. T-4865 | 63 Set | 02.12.2024 |
| 3 | 70242680B | DECORATIVE THERMOSETTING | 5593 Nos. | 25-Nov-24 |
| 4 | 38243249 | SCOTCH BLOCK ASSEMBLY | 1352 Nos. | 28.11.2024 |
| 5 | 38243228 | BODY SIDE STANCHION | 1848 Nos. | 05.12.2024 |
| 6 | 38243230 | FLAP DOOR ARRANGEMENT (REDUCED HEIGHT) | 1221 Nos. | 09.12.2024 |
| 7 | 90241061 | PEELED BAR SIZE 42 1 MM DIA x 4525 MM LONG | 109 MT | 09.12.2024 |

Note: The complete information of above tenders can be seen and downloaded from IREPS website i.e. <https://www.irops.gov.in>. For any change/corrigendum in tender, please visit this website regularly. No separate corrigendum/change will be published in news paper.

f North central railways | @ CPONCR | www.ncr.indianrailways.gov.in

NORTH CENTRAL RAILWAY

E-Procurement Tender Notice No. 24/73 Dt. 01.11.2024

E-Procurement Tender Notice

On behalf of the President of India, The Principal Chief Materials Manager, North Central Railway, Prayagraj, (An ISO 9001:2015 certified unit) invites the following E-Procurement Tenders.

| S N | Name of Work | Tender value | EMD Amount | Period of Work | Contractor eligibility |
|-----|--|----------------------------|--------------|----------------|---|
| 1 | Construction of Commercial Building (R + 1) in S.No. 178 with an extent of 1275.00 sq.ft in Door No. 2 at Karpura Muthali Street in Chennai city | Rs. 68,36,376/- (with GST) | Rs. 44,200/- | 12 Months | Registered Contractors in appropriate class of Tamil Nadu Government Departments / Public Sector undertaking and they should possess life registration certificate for the current year |

1. For Tender Documents Visit : "https://tenders.gov.in"
2. For Free downloading of Tender in Website through online available on: 08.11.2024 to 26.11.2024 until 5.45 p.m.
3. Last date and time for Submission of tender document : 27.11.2024 upto 11.00 p.m
4. Date and time of opening of the E Tender: 27.11.2024 at 3.30 p.m

Place: Chennai - Date: 08.11.2024 DIPR/4735/Tender/2024 Temple Administration

CLARIFICATION/ADDENDUM

No. EL/1/DB/W/1/Rooftop Solar/2024-25 Date: 29-10-2024

The interested bidder are requested to take note of the following clarification/modification in respect of the Tender Notice No.: EL/1/DB/W/1/Rooftop Solar/2024-25/78 Dated: 01-10-2024 & TSC: DBWS-2024-TN000001 of website <https://www.bharat-electronicstender.com> for the work-"Implementation of Rooftop Solar PV System of capacity 1 MWp (1000kWp) at N.F. Railway Mechanical Workshop, Dibrugarh-786001 (Assam) with the objective of generating and supplying energy to railway installations through Public-Private Partnership (PPP) on Design, Build, Finance, Operate and Transfer (DBFOT) basis under Developer Mode."

| SN | Query | Remarks | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|--|---|---------|----------|---------|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1 | The bidders are unable to purchase the tender document due to technical issue with the ETS Bidding Fee payment system & the tender documents are currently not accessible on the Bharat Electronics Tender website | It is requested to deposit the amount of Rs. 34,810/- (Thirty four thousand Eight hundred Ten only) (Non-refundable) as the cost of RFQ document in the form of DEMAND DRAFT in favour of FARCAOMALIGAN/NFR payable at Maligaon, Guwahati with the (Assam). The scanned copy of the original Demand Draft to be submitted to the Email ID: dyceebdwbs19@gmail.com before the closing of tender. On submission of the scanned copy of the Demand Draft, the tender documents will be made accessible by the tendering authority (Dy.CEE/DBWS/NFR) on the Bharat Electronics Tender website. The original copy of DD should also be sent to the postal address as provided above in this addendum. All terms & conditions as stipulated in the tender documents remains same. | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2 | Without access to the tender documents, bidders are unable to review the Eligibility and Qualification Criteria, making it difficult to proceed | 15 days will be extended from the original closing date of the tender. Details are extension is as follows: <table><thead><tr><th>Details</th><th>Original</th><th>Revised</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>Date & Time of closure of procurement of tender documents</td><td>30-10-2024 at 13:00 hrs.</td><td>14-11-2024 at 13:00 hrs.</td></tr><tr><td>Last Date & Time of receipt of bid</td><td>30-10-2024 at 15:00 hrs.</td><td>14-11-2024 at 15:00 hrs.</td></tr><tr><td>Date & Time start of tender Opening Event (TOE)</td><td>30-10-2024 at 15:30 hrs.</td><td>14-11-2024 at 15:30 hrs.</td></tr></tbody></table> | Details | Original | Revised | Date & Time of closure of procurement of tender documents | 30-10-2024 at 13:00 hrs. | 14-11-2024 at 13:00 hrs. | Last Date & Time of receipt of bid | 30-10-2024 at 15:00 hrs. | 14-11-2024 at 15:00 hrs. | Date & Time start of tender Opening Event (TOE) | 30-10-2024 at 15:30 hrs. | 14-11-2024 at 15:30 hrs. |
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| 3 | Dispensation for MSMEs | Micro & Small Enterprises (MSEs) bidders who are having Valid Udyog Aadhaar certificate will be exempted for payment of Bid Document fee Rs. 34,810/- (Thirty four thousand eight hundred ten) (nonrefundable) (Inclusive of GST). Documentary evidence in respect of above shall require to be submitted. It is clarified here that no other benefit as mentioned above shall be extended to SMEs. MSME bidders must send scanned copy of Valid Udyog Aadhaar certificate to the Email ID: dyceebdwbs19@gmail.com so that tender document may be made accessible. | | | | | | | | | | | | |

Dy. CEE/Mechanical Workshop, Dibrugarh

NORTHEAST FRONTIER RAILWAY
Serving Customers With A Smile

DECCAN Chronicle

8 NOVEMBER 2024

Delhi needs to learn how to work with Trump's US

Reservations had been expressed during his long and successful campaign over Mr Donald Trump's unpredictable character, his convictions for felony, his liking for autocrats and his fitness for the office of the President of the United States. It is not with a modicum of fear over a second Trump term possibly sowing global volatility that the world has looked on at his triumphant march back to the White House.

Truth to tell, the world will have to learn to live with Trump's America and India is one country in Asia that would be looking forward to that in the belief that the benefits could outweigh the challenges while expecting some relief from the censorious eyebrow-raising ways of the liberals over India's patchy involvement with Canada over Sikh separatists resident there.

The warmth and enthusiastic cordiality of the Trump-Modi relationship that marked their ties in his first term could define how the ties go and whether the US will continue to endorse cultivating India as a counterweight to Beijing. It is also a quirk of diplomatic history that India's relationship with a Republican US President in place has invariably been warmer than with a Democrat in the White House, but only after the caustic Richard Nixon era.

Issues are bound to crop up given Mr Trump's pronouncements during his testosterone-laced campaign against a woman candidate in Kamala Harris. While everyone, especially China, is expecting a trade war to break out over tariffs that seem inevitable, India too will be forced to deal with Mr Trump if his regime does impose tariffs as he often threatened to do when quoting the Harley Davidson bike episode.

Illegal immigration, the most aggressive part of Mr Trump's campaign, is certain to crop up as Indians constitute a fair number who risk taking the Mexico route. But that, as Mr Trump himself will know, is not something Mr Modi's government can do much about. India's concerns will be more about how conservative the H-1B visa process may get in his presidency as India's export of IT brains is integral to its status as an IT-enabling power.

India would be hoping to bolster its continuance as a strategic partner of the US and derive benefits like a favourable visa programme for genuine skilled workers and, of course, a more liberal US approach to visas for Indian students whose presence is an economic force for the host country. Transfer of high technology to sustain India's status as a defence materials buyer and partner would also be an objective given stronger recent ties.

If Trump's USA, fired by an anti-China sentiment, moves along a curve of aggression to Beijing in trade, India can hope not only to suffer less from high tariffs that may specifically target Chinese goods but also to benefit from any manufacturing or assembly lines moving to India from out of China as seen in the case of Apple phones.

India has made progress as an attractive investment destination and increased FDI is something the country always hopes to get as much as active FIs bringing in money to sustain its stock markets that have moved up to record levels in the post-Covid years. That will not change because of the election result that may have been fuelled by a people tired of overseas imbroglíos, illegal cross border migration and an excessive pandering to "woke" sentiments.

Focus on J&K statehood, not 370

The resolution passed by Jammu and Kashmir Assembly on Wednesday seeking special status for the Union territory and the one moved in the house on Thursday calling for the restoration of Article 370 and Article 35A of the Constitution reflect political expediency and one-upmanship by the parties and does not exactly contribute to the genuine demand for the restoration of its statehood.

There are many in Jammu and Kashmir, and the country at large, who are opposed to the unilateral decisions of the Union government to abrogate Article 370, divide the state into two Union territories and strip both of statehood. There was widespread resentment to the process the government adopted — it steamrolled all Opposition views, threw parliamentary etiquette to the winds, made the state an open jail and put all those who opposed the government's point of view behind bars. While this cannot be reversed, there is pressing need for the restoration of statehood to Jammu and Kashmir. Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union home minister Amit Shah are on record committing themselves to fulfilling this demand; in fact, the Union government has assured the Supreme Court that it will do the same.

Omar Abdullah, Jammu and Kashmir's first elected chief minister after Article 370 was abrogated, sounded very competent and pragmatic when he said that he did not expect the NDA government to undo all that it has done to the state but there would be no compromise on the issue of statehood. True, the government resolution did not call for Article 370 to be returned to the Constitution and asked only for a special status but it did give the BJP an opportunity to cry foul. The second resolution will only embolden the hardliners in New Delhi.

The political parties in Jammu and Kashmir must get their priorities right and ensure that their posturing does not undermine their own legitimate demands.

Subhani



As Trump returns, can he end key global conflicts?



Syed Ata Hasnain

America's once and future President appears to have outdone himself in his latest and most spectacular achievement. The experienced leader that he is, President-elect Donald Trump is expected to hit the ground running, especially on his favourite subject — the avoidance of war. There are two areas in which much of the strategic community is immediately looking to see the potential effect of the return of Donald Trump to the helm of the US leadership. These are Ukraine and the Middle East, including the Iran-Israel standoff. How does this look from a Trump point of view knowing that he is sceptical of any US involvement in international conflicts and prefers diplomacy over military intervention. Mr Trump's record in foreign policy in his first term was considered nothing more than erratic, although quite a few innovations did take place, particularly in the Middle East. With that experience, he now meets a world that is on fire.

On Ukraine, Mr Trump has made it known that the war between Russia and Ukraine might never have happened if he was President. His meeting with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy in New York in September 2024 was cordial, but he did mention the need for the European nations to chip in with more aid for Ukraine. Mr Trump's first administration had provided military aid to Ukraine, but he had also faced criticism for initially withholding it. During the Zelenskyy meeting, Mr Trump reiterated his goal of ending the war, stating: "We both want to see this end, and we both want to see a fair deal made." However, vice-president-elect J.D. Vance has pro-

posed a more contentious peace plan, involving Ukraine's demilitarisation and permanent neutrality. Mr Trump has often boasted of knowing Russian President Putin very well, and his intent of stopping the war before he even assumes office may fructify if he forces Ukraine into a ceasefire. President Zelenskyy has resisted that all along and promised that this would be impossible if Russia did not withdraw from the Donbas area it has occupied. Mr Trump's compromise formula could be continued support to Ukraine with weapons, equipment and funding subject to an "as is where is" ceasefire; implying negotiations with Donbas still in Russian hands and the battle front broadly resting on the River Dnieper. Knowing Mr Trump's propensity to be unconventional and his largely anti-Nato stance, he could well push for non-Nato neutrality for Ukraine, which would leave Ukraine very largely vulnerable to future Russian designs, being bereft of Nato support. To keep Nato on an even keel, Mr Trump will have to ensure Ukraine should not give up its hopes of getting all its territory back from Russian occupation, but that it should negotiate based on the current frontlines.

It is unlikely that Mr Trump will do anything in a hurry. His transition team will probably caution him about hasty "peace interventions" without full thought through because in the last four years the global order has reworked itself. Nato has drawn upon itself a higher responsibility than any time since the end of the Cold War. The last time around Mr Trump did not order any immediate or hurried withdrawal from Afghanistan; it was finally Joe Biden who did so with-

That Iran will be handled much more strongly is a given, but Mr Trump's reputation as one who seeks peace through strength may well lead him to more initiatives across the Middle East

out being fully mindful of the consequences. So, don't expect any maverick decision-making in foreign policy from Mr Trump. One may recall the US pullout from the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), also known as the "Iran nuclear deal". The JCPOA was signed on July 15, 2015 but Mr Trump withdrew the US from it on May 8, 2018, over 15 months after his inauguration in January 2017. It was not one of those knee-jerk responses that some may allege against Mr Trump's record. Also, we may consider the fact that it is virtually confirmed that 10,000 North Korean troops have entered the war in Ukraine. This makes early decision-making on prospective peace even more challenging.

Expect the experienced new President to pay much attention to the Middle East. The last tenure was marked by a few important developments. Among the first was the support for the move of the Israeli political capital to Jerusalem; something the Palestinians are still extremely irked about. Then came the highly improved relationship with Saudi Arabia and the UAE in the strategic bid to exclude Iran from anything of relevance in the Middle East. The Abraham Accords was the next step with the intent of consensus on "live and let live" between the three major faiths of the Middle East. Many believe that Mr Trump's "peace through strength" approach will actually win the US more friends and calm the world's turbulent zones, the Middle East now being the most turbulent. In this context, influencing Israeli

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu may be easier for Mr Trump than what Joe Biden could ever achieve in the last one year of the Gaza conflict. Recently, Mr Trump advised the Israeli PM to swiftly conclude Israel's war in Gaza, emphasising the need for Israel to achieve victory quickly and end the ongoing violence. It's not certain what direction the ceasefire negotiations will take without any information on the likely release of the 100-odd remaining hostages.

Considering that it was the impact of Mr Trump's Middle East policy which indirectly led Hamas to consider the suicidal action of October 7, 2023, it remains doubtful how far Mr Trump can now influence some more important players such as Saudi Arabia and the UAE to play a greater role in securing the release of hostages. The agreement to release can then trigger further progress towards a ceasefire. Mr Trump probably has the power of personality and ability to ensure that Israel focuses more on Iran than on the Palestinians.

It's the Iran connection in the Middle East which is the most significant today. A broad assessment did speak of a potential joint US-Israel operation to take out Iran's nuclear facilities, with some technologies which may have been jointly developed. This could be preceded by the destruction of Iran's oil facilities, refining and storage. The latter would send the world energy scene into a tizzy. It's unlikely that a non-interventionist US President will wish to trigger a devastating conflict which would have worldwide impact. That Iran will be handled much more strongly is a given, but Mr Trump's reputation as one who seeks peace through strength may well lead him to more initiatives across the Middle East, where he remains committed to finding stability.

The writer, a retired lieutenant-general, is a former GOC of the Srinagar-based 15 ("Chinar") Corps

LETTERS TRUMP'S BACK

The emphatic triumph of Mr. Donald Trump in the US presidential election despite running a polarised and divisive campaign clearly suggests the voters' strong yearning for a change and disenchantment with the Biden administration. With Mr. Trump now having a popular mandate and is better prepared and controls all branches of government, the stage is set for massive disruption. Mr. Trump's repeated assertion of his brand of America First politics has already sown instability among both allies and adversaries of the US alike. Apprehensions that Trump's spectacular return to the White House will threaten everything from freedom of the press and gun safety to foreign policy, immigration, and climate change are legitimate and cannot be overlooked.

M. Jeyaram Sholavandan

ADVANTAGE INDIA

In his speech after announcement of results Trump like all politicians has stated that his rule would be "a golden period". India expects to have a cordial relationship with the US as PM Narendra Modi and Donald Trump have been great friends all along. It has to be seen if India could divert business orders from China. The advantages may outweigh disadvantages for India on Trump becoming the US President.

M.C. Vijay Shankar Chennai

DENIED JOBS

Mr. A. Raja of DMK says that there is no need for protection for Brahmins under PCR as applicable to SCs and STs since Brahmins are 'not attacked' like the oppressed communities. The truth is that Brahmins are subject to all kinds of insults, humiliations and degradations in every sphere of social life in Tamil in which Tamil films play a major role. Jobs in Government service are totally denied to Brahmins in TN despite their sufficient qualifications for posts from a clerk to govt. secretary. The community is constrained to seek jobs mostly in private sector where the employers are concerned only with efficiency of the employees irrespective of their caste.

MuthuSubramanian Coimbatore

Mail your letters to chennaidesk@deccanmail.com

Mahir Ali



True Brits: Do Starmer, Tory new chief Kemi share ideology?

There are ways in which Kemi Badenoch's advent as Britain's Opposition leader, at the helm of the Conservative Party, can be seen as a remarkable progression. A black Tory leader is decidedly an advance for a party that has long relied on anti-immigrant sentiment as a core value for its electoral support.

The Labour Party has consistently boasted more ethnically diverse MPs since 1987, and by 2019 more than half of its parliamentary representation consisted of women. But it has never had a female leader, and its front bench has been dominated by white men in both government and Opposition. The Conservatives, by contrast, can lay claim to three female Prime Ministers, an Asian PM (via Kenya and Tanzania), and currently an Opposition leader who was born in Wimbledon but grew up in Nigeria, and considers herself a first-generation immigrant.

As a student in England more than 40 years ago, I struggled to understand why any Briton from an ethnic background would be attracted to the Tories. The Labour alternative was problematic in many ways, but did it not point to a relatively brighter future for ethnic minorities and the working class? I was gobsmacked in the early 1980s when a

purported Pakistani community leader in Oxford — a charming host, working class by profession — turned out to be a Tory by nature. I cannot certify whether the cause lay in his political ignorance or his illiteracy. After all, certain conservative social values were endemic among early immigrants from South Asia. But, after arriving in the promised land, how could they possibly be oblivious to the race and class divide of the society in which they found themselves?

Many of the early Caribbean immigrants recognised soon that the imagined yellow brick road was just a dirt track. It took longer for the South Asians. Some of them were radicalised by the racist experience, while others fell in line with the established order of their former colonial masters. The latter tendency has been reflected among most of those who typified both the ethnic diversity and ideological perversity of recent Tory front benchers.

That's no excuse for Labour skipping on the diversity while more or less matching the perversity of the Conservatives. This aspect has been particularly evident since Keir Starmer, under false pretences, acquired the Labour leadership and initially focused on expelling potential adversaries — mainly critics of Israel's inevitable descent into open

genocide, including his predecessor Jeremy Corbyn. It's worth noting that Labour got fewer votes this year, when it won by a landslide, than it did in 2019, when it lost by a landslide. It suggests the British electorate is more attuned to the ideological ebbs and flows than one might assume.

Under Mr Corbyn, Labour was for a while Europe's largest political party in terms of membership. In his leadership bid, Mr Starmer vowed to adhere to the party's fairly popular manifesto, but steadily stepped away from potentially progressive leanings as Opposition leader and PM, losing little time in expelling Mr Corbyn and several of his anti-Zionist supporters from the party. Mr Starmer's attachment to the Zionist Netanyahu regime and its genocidal inclinations is reflected in the doubling of United States special forces flights to Israel from a British base in Cyprus. What are the chances that any of the culprits on either side of the Atlantic will ever be prosecuted for war crimes? After it emerged that 100 or so Labour activists had volunteered in their spare time to door-knock for Kamala Harris and that Donald Trump was upset, Mr Starmer was desperate to claim that it wouldn't affect his subservience to a future Trump administration.

Ms Badenoch, for all her "anti-woke" posturing and selective opposition to fellow immigrants who don't measure up to the atrocious "values" she holds dear, is unlikely to ever replace Mr Starmer, unpopular as he may be after a budget that sufficiently assuages the IMF's concerns with its trickle-down tendencies while pumping more resources into defence than healthcare, education or broader welfare. The tax raises won't trouble the very rich, including his hitherto ATM Lord Waleed Ali, but nor will they benefit the working-class victims of his neoliberal predilections.

Ms Badenoch has revived Priti Patel's political prospects — and the likes of the even more vicious Suella Braverman, Sajid Javid and James Cleverly (who lost the leadership contest by relying too hard on the fellow idiots that populate his party) are waiting in the wings. It's unlikely, though, that anyone is betting much on her prospects of replacing Mr Starmer as PM at the next election. As the sixth Tory leader in eight years, she might not last long enough. On the other hand, who knows what will ensue if Mr Starmer proceeds with his self-immolation more rapidly than one expects.

— By arrangement with Dawn

SHORT TAKES

Odia student kills self amid exam pressure

Bhubaneswar: A young woman preparing for medical entrance exams was found dead in her hostel room in Bhubaneswar, Odisha, after reportedly struggling with severe academic pressure. The student, identified as Kalyani Sahoo from Salipur in the Cuttack district, was pursuing a Plus II science course while preparing for the National Eligibility cum Entrance Test at a private coaching center in Patia. She was found hanging from the ceiling fan in her hostel room under circumstances her family describes as distressing and unexplained. While the exact cause of her death is yet to be ascertained, her family alleges that academic expectations from the coaching institute led her to experience considerable emotional distress. As per them, she had expressed feelings of depression stemming from what she described as "extreme mental pressure" tied to her coaching.

First India-Bhutan checkpoint opens

Guwahati: In what was long awaited, the commerce ministry on Thursday inaugurated the first integrated Check Post along the India-Bhutan border at Darranga in Assam. Officials said that the integrated check gate is equipped with state-of-the-art facilities including an office complex, parking areas, loading and unloading zones, a weighbridge, a warehouse, and residential quarters for officials. Developed by the Land Ports Authority of India, it also features inspection spaces, plant quarantine systems and parking facilities to ensure efficient operations. Informing that the strategic location of Darranga would boost its connectivity, officials said that on the Indian side, it is well-connected to NH 27 near Rangia, while on the Bhutanese side, robust customs infrastructure at Samdrup-Jongkhar ensures efficient trade.

Pithoragarh gets 1st direct flight to Delhi

Pithoragarh: The border district of Pithoragarh in Uttarakhand was linked by air to Delhi on Thursday with the first commercial flight from the national capital landing at the Naini Saini airport here at 11 am. "The 42-seater Alliance Air aircraft will run three days a week from Delhi's IGI Airport to Pithoragarh. Today was the inaugural flight," Naini Saini airport manager Deepak Saini said. He said 21 passengers including senior BJP leader Ganesh Bhandari reached Pithoragarh from Delhi by the inaugural flight. In the inaugural flight from Pithoragarh, 27 passengers including Union minister of state Ajay Tamta went to Delhi, he said. The inaugural flight was flagged off by CM Dhami from Delhi, Mr Saini said. The district is already linked by air to Pant Nagar, Dehradun and Haldwani. — PTI

SC will deliver its verdict on minority status of AMU today

New Delhi, Nov. 7: The Supreme Court is scheduled to pronounce its verdict on Friday on a vexed legal question whether the Aligarh Muslim University (AMU) enjoyed a minority status under Article 30 of the Constitution which empowers the religious and linguistic minorities to establish and administer educational institutions.

A seven-judge constitution bench headed by Chief Justice D.Y. Chandrachud will pronounce the verdict. The bench also comprising Justices Sanjiv Khanna, Surya Kant, J.B. Pardiwala, Dipankar Datta, Manoj Misra and Satish Chandra Sharma had reserved its verdict on the question on February 1 after hearing arguments for eight days.

On February 1, grappling with the intractable issue of the AMU's minority status, the top court said the 1981 amendment to the AMU Act, which effectively accorded it a minority status, only did a "half-hearted job" and did not restore to the institution the position it had prior to 1951.

While the AMU Act, 1920 speaks about incorporating a teaching and residential Muslim university in Aligarh, the 1951 amendment does away with compulsory religious instructions for the Muslim students at the university. The vexed question has repeatedly tested Parliament's legislative acumen and judiciary's prowess. — PTI



President Droupadi Murmu on board *INS Vikrant* during the operational demonstration by the Indian Navy on Thursday. — PTI

J&K parties seek return of 370 & 35A, submit fresh resolution

YUSUF JAMEEL
SRINAGAR, NOV. 7

The People's Democratic Party (PDP), People's Conference (PC) and some Independent members of the Jammu and Kashmir Assembly submitted a fresh resolution on Thursday, demanding immediate restoration of Articles 370 and 35A in their original form, for being taken up in the current session.

They also called for the reversal of all changes introduced under the J&K Reorganisation Act, 2019 after the erstwhile state was stripped of its special status and split up into two Union territories more than five years ago.

"This House strongly condemns the unconstitutional and unilateral abrogation of Article 370 and Article 35A, along with the enactment of the

Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation Act, 2019, by the Government of India. These actions stripped Jammu and Kashmir of its special status and statehood, undermining the foundational guarantees and protections originally accorded to the region and its people by the Constitution of India," the resolution reads.

It also says, "This House unequivocally demands the immediate restoration of Article 370 and Article 35A in their original, unaltered form, and calls for the reversal of all changes introduced by the Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation Act, 2019. We further urge the Government of India to respect the constitutional and democratic sanctity of Jammu and Kashmir by reinstating all special provisions and guarantees intended to preserve

its distinct identity, culture, and political autonomy."

The resolution comes amid the Assembly witnessing chaos and bedlam after it passed a resolution, brought by the ruling National Conference (NC), asking the Centre to work out a constitutional mechanism for restoring the special status of the erstwhile state and hold dialogue with the elected representatives over the issue.

The fresh resolution was submitted to Speaker Abdul Rahim Rather by PDP members Waheed Ur Rehman Para and Fayaz Mir, Peoples' Conference MLA Sajad Gani Lone, Awami Ittehad Party MLA Khurshed Ahmed Sheikh (brother of MP Sheikh Abdur Rashid alias Engineer Rashid) and Independent MLA from Shopian Shabir Kullay.

After deaths, MP forms panel to manage jumbos

DC CORRESPONDENT
BHOPAL, NOV 7

The forest department has constituted a committee for management of elephants in MP in the wake of the recent death of 10 elephants in the Bandhavgarh Tiger Reserve.

The committee, headed by additional principal chief conservator of forest (PCCF)(wildlife) L. Krishnamoorthy, will primarily focus on the development of the landscape and the elephant corridor, and also how to oversee the rescue operation in case the pachyderms land in any kind of dire situation, a senior forest officer said.

"We will study the best practices in elephant management and put in place a system for effective management of the wild elephants," Mr Krishnamoorthy said.

SC refuses to transfer RG Kar trial out of WB

'Judge has sufficient powers to order another probe'

DC CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI, NOV. 7

The Supreme Court on Thursday refused to transfer the rape and murder trial relating to a doctor in Kolkata outside West Bengal, saying the trial court judge has sufficient powers to order another investigation if necessary after examining the evidence.

A bench comprising Chief Justice D.Y. Chandrachud and Justices J.B. Pardiwala and Manoj Misra also perused the sixth status report filed by the CBI on the rape-murder case at Kolkata's R.G. Kar Medical College and Hospital but refrained from making observations, saying that the probe was underway.

The apex court noted that a Kolkata court had framed charges against the prime accused, Sanjay Roy, on November 4 and a day-to-day trial in the case would start from November 11.

When a counsel said that the trial should be shifted from the state due to the prevalence of "disturbing circumstances", the CJJ



Police personnel try to stop Congress activists during a protest in Kolkata on Thursday against the R.G. Kar Medical College and Hospital rape-murder incident. — PTI

said, "Yes, we have done it in cases like Manipur. But we are not doing anything like that here. No such transfer."

The national task force, formed to create a protocol for the safety of health professionals, also submitted its report to the bench.

The top court directed the report to be shared with all states and Union territories and posted the hearing after four weeks.

The apex court on October 15 questioned the West Bengal government over the hiring of civic volunteers in the state and

sought data on their recruitment and appointment process.

On September 30, the top court expressed dissatisfaction over the state's "tardy" progress in installing CCTVs and building toilets apart from separate resting rooms in government medical colleges and ordered its completion by October 15.

On September 17, the top court expressed anguish over the findings in a CBI status report in the case, refusing to divulge details and observing any disclosure could jeopardise the ongoing investigation.

Man, daughter hurt as kin set house on fire after tiff in UP

Bahraich, Nov. 7: A 45-year-old man and his daughter suffered serious injuries after two of their relatives allegedly set their house on fire over a dispute in the Nanpara area of this Uttar Pradesh district on Thursday, police said.

Agaiya village residents Rampher and his 18-year-old daughter Poonam were admitted to the district medical college with severe burn injuries.

They were later referred to the trauma centre in Lucknow after their condition worsened, Nanpara SHO Pradeep Singh said.

Rampher's family alleged that his nephew Rakesh, who lived in the same neighbourhood, set the house on fire.

They said Rakesh had a dispute with Rampher a day earlier. Rakesh and his cousin Ganga set the house on fire, the family members all eged.

The accused are on the run and a they have been booked for attempted murder, arson and criminal intimidation, Singh said. The police are working to arrest them, he added. — PTI

CID probes as samosas, cakes go to staff instead of HP CM

Shimla, Nov. 7: Samosas and cakes meant for Himachal Pradesh chief minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu were served to his security staff instead, the goof-up snowballing into controversy and necessitating a CID probe that termed it an "anti-government" act.

Those responsible acted according to their own agenda, a highly placed official in the CID said in his note on the October 21 incident when the chief minister was visiting the CID headquarters.

The brouhaha started when three boxes of the refreshments were brought from Hotel Radisson Blue in Lakkar Bazaar to be served to the chief minister who had gone to the CID headquarters to attend a function. However, the eatables were served to the CM



Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu security staff, according to the enquiry report conducted by a deputy SP rank officer.

The report stated that an officer of IG rank had asked a SI of police to get some eatables from the hotel for the CM's visit. The SI in turn directed an assistant SI and a head constable to bring the refreshments.

The ASI and the head constable fetched the refreshments from the hotel in three sealed boxes and informed the SI. The

police officers in their statement said when they asked the tourism department staff on duty whether the snacks in the three boxes were to be served to the chief minister, they said they were not included in the menu.

The enquiry report said only the said SI, who deputed the ASI and the head constable with the task of getting the snacks from the hotel, was aware of the fact that the three boxes were for Sukhu.

The three boxes of refreshments exchanged several hands in the process. Interestingly, a highly placed official in the CID department wrote in his noting that all persons named in the enquiry report have acted in anti-CID and anti-government manner due to which the items could not be served to the VVIPs. — PTI

Centre to unveil national anit-terrorism policy soon

FROM PG 1

Highlighting the achievements of the Modi government against terrorism since 2014, during which terror incidents have come down by 70 per cent in comparison to the earlier decade, Mr Shah said now the shelf life of terrorists has decreased from two years to a few days.

He said violence has been controlled to a great extent in J&K, Naxal-affected areas and the Northeast in the last 10 years due to joint efforts of state and central governments.

Mr Shah asked representatives of state police forces at the conference, most of whom are DGP-rank officers, to invoke anti-terror law Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act wherever required.

Mr Shah said states have their own geographical and constitutional limitations, while terrorism and terrorists have no boundaries. He said that terrorists engage in both international and interstate conspiracies, and to develop an effective strategy against them, we need to build a strong system through conferences like this. "This will help curb activities like terrorism, narcotics, and hawala operations, which



threaten the country's borders and economy", he said.

The home minister said the Union government's anti-terror probe agency, the National Investigation Agency, utilises UAPA in all terror cases. Chargesheets have been filed in 498 of the 632 cases and conviction rate is almost 95 per cent.

He asked the police chiefs of the states to establish a synergy down to the level of police stations and set up a strong ecosystem against terrorism.

The minister underlined the need to legally strengthen the hands of the institutions fighting it. He said, therefore, the jurisdiction of the NIA has been increased by amending the NIA Act and now it can probe terror cases abroad, too. By amending the UAPA, the authorities now have the power to confiscate properties and declare outfits and individuals as terrorists, he noted.

The home minister said that

a 25-point integrated plan has been prepared to stop the funding of terrorism, including jihadi terror and left-wing extremism.

The scope of the Multi-Agency Centre (MAC), an intelligence gathering mechanism, was expanded, and the standard operative procedures (SOPs) were created under it to monitor cyber security, narco terror and emerging radical hotspots, he said. "These measures have led to success in preventing many crimes before they happen," Mr Shah said.

The two-day anti-terror conference is expected to further enhance coordination among agencies to strengthen India's security bastion.

The annual conference has over the years emerged as a meeting point for operational forces; technical, legal and forensic experts and agencies engaged in counter terrorism for deliberations on issues impacting national security and threats emerging out of terrorism.

The conference is being attended by senior police officers from states/UTs, officers from central agencies and departments dealing with issues related to counter-terrorism and experts from related fields such as law, forensics and technology.

Govt schemes popular; DMK will return in 2026, vows CM

FROM PG 1

Whenever the DMK came to power, through its long term vision it had envisaged infrastructural schemes that would benefit the people and one such project was the Tidel Park in Coimbatore that was started by M Karunanidhi in 2009, opening up job opportunities for people



in the locality.

FROM PG 1

As the house assembled on Thursday morning for a discussion on a motion of thanks on Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha's address, BJP members were on their feet to protest against the passing of the resolution.

Leader of the Opposition Sunil Sharma said the resolution was "illegal and unconstitutional" and accused the Speaker of violating the honour of his chair by allowing it to be moved in the house and then putting it to vote hastily. He alleged the ruling National Conference was misleading the people of Kashmir on the issue. He said: "I want the NC's drama of special status to

end". Soon a war of words broke out between the treasury and the Opposition benches. The BJP members raised the slogan "Balidaan huway jahan Mookerjee, woh Kashmir hamara hai" (The Kashmir where Syama Prasad Mookerjee was martyred is ours). The NC MLAs responded by chanting "Jis Kashmir ko khoon se seencha, woh Kashmir hamara hai" (the Kashmir nourished with our blood is ours).

Amid slogan chanting, the Speaker asked Mr Sharma and other BJP members to resume their seats and allow the house to take up the day's business. "You are the leader of the Opposition, we will

hear you," he told Mr Sharma. His plea was disregarded by Mr Sharma and other defiant BJP members. Amidst their chanting "Bharat Mata ki Jai", "Separatist agenda nahi chale ga" and "Gundagardi nahi chale gi". Independent legislator Khursheed Ahmed Sheikh stormed into the well of the house waving a banner that read: "We demand restoration of Articles 370 and 35A and release of political prisoners". This exasperated the BJP members. Some of them rushed towards Mr Sheikh to snatch the banner from him and a scuffle ensued, during which he (Mr Sheikh) found J&K People's Conference chairman Sajad Gani Lone and

some other legislators, including those of the NC, on his side.

The watch and ward staff of the Assembly intervened but to no avail. BJP members tore the banner off after snatching it from Mr Sheikh.

Congress legislator Irfan Hafiz Lone also attempted to be a part of the show-down but was asked by JKPC chief Tariq Hameed Karra, a member of the house, to retract. Mr Karra and other Congress members watched the whole fracas in the House silently.

Amid pandemonium, the Speaker adjourned the House for 15 minutes.

When the House reassembled, the BJP members continued their

PM TO START CAMPAIGN FOR MAHARASHTRA POLLS TODAY

FROM PG 1

On November 12, Mr Modi will address rallies in Chimur (Chandrapur district) and Solapur and participate in a roadshow in Pune in the evening. He will then address rallies on November 14 at three places in the state — Chhatrapati Sambhajnagar, Raigad and Mumbai.

During the Lok Sabha elections, the Prime

Minister addressed major rallies in 18 constituencies in the state. Despite this, the BJP faced a drubbing as it won only nine and Mahayuti 17 seats out of 48 seats in Maharashtra.

The BJP is contesting the Vidhan Sabha polls as part of the Mahayuti alliance, which also comprises chief minister Eknath Shinde-led Shiv Sena and Ajit Pawar's NCP.

Motion seeking special status lands J&K Assembly in chaos

FROM PG 1

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SHORT TAKES

Opp. MPs to boycott
Parl panel's Waqf tour

Kolkata/New Delhi: Opposition members have decided to boycott the five-day tour of the Joint Committee on Waqf Amendment Bill starting Saturday to hear views of diverse stakeholders on the matter. All the opposition members of the JPC have decided to boycott the tour and its meetings as the chairman is working in an arbitrary and high-handed manner, TMC member Kalyan Banerjee told reporters at a press conference jointly addressed with party MP Nadimul Haque at the Press Club in Kolkata. Opposition members accused Committee chairman Jagdambika Pal of taking unilateral actions and visiting Karnataka to look into some "local matter". "The Committee does not have investigation powers, its job is to look into the Bill alone. Moreover the Chairman cannot act unilaterally and the Committee has to act collectively," AIMIM LS member Asaduddin Owaisi said. — PTI

Ajit campaigns
for Nawab Malik

Mumbai: Maharashtra deputy chief minister Ajit Pawar, who heads the ruling NCP, on Thursday campaigned for party candidate Nawab Malik, and held a roadshow in his support, ignoring ally BJP's stiff opposition to his candidature. Mr Pawar also held a roadshow for Mr Malik's daughter Sana, who is contesting her maiden Assembly poll from Anushakti Nagar in the city. "I am discharging my responsibility. We are campaigning for him (Malik)," Mr Pawar said. Mr Malik's candidature has been opposed by the BJP, which has alleged that the former Maharashtra minister has links with the underworld. When MVA was in power, Mr Malik, a former minister, was critical of BJP leader Devendra Fadnis, who is now the deputy chief minister. — PTI

Cong to face same
fate as Art 370: Yogi

Lucknow: Uttar Pradesh chief minister Yogi Adityanath on Thursday took a strong stance against the Congress and the National Conference, condemning their call to reinstate Articles 370 and 35A. The CM was addressing an event organised on the auspicious occasion of Chhath Puja. Referring to a recent proposal in the Jammu and Kashmir Assembly to restore these articles, he claimed the Congress and its allies aim to drag the country and the valley back into the flames of terrorism. "They are unwilling to see Jammu and Kashmir's development and the promising future of its youth. The nation will never accept their divisive agendas. The 140 crore people of India stand firmly for the unity and integrity of the nation and are prepared to respond decisively to any threats," he said. — PTI

PILOT ACCUSES
BJP OF DOUBLE
STANDARDS

RABINDRA NATH
CHOUDHURY
Bhopal, Nov. 7

Senior Congress leader and former deputy chief minister of Rajasthan Sachin Pilot on Thursday accused the BJP of maintaining double standards on pro-poor measures. The BJP projects itself as the messiah of the poor when the states ruled by the party announce different welfare measures, but when the Congress makes promises to implement any pro-poor measure, the saffron party dubs it 'revdi' culture (the practice of providing freebies), Mr Pilot said. He was here to campaign for the Congress in the November 13 byelections to Budhni and Vijaypur Assembly constituencies in Madhya Pradesh. Mr Pilot said that the Bharatiya Janata Party had hailed Prime Minister Narendra Modi for declaring to provide free rice to 80 crore people in the state, but the party criticised some pro-poor measures undertaken by the Congress-ruled governments in Karnataka, Telangana and Himachal Pradesh, calling them freebies.



Sachin Pilot

India & Afghan discuss use
of Chabahar Port for trade

DC CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI, NOV. 7

India on Thursday confirmed that a senior MEA official had visited Kabul earlier this week and met the "interim defence minister" in the ruling Taliban regime to discuss Indian humanitarian assistance to the Afghan people. The use of the Iranian port of Chabahar by the Afghan business community also figured in the talks. India is developing the Chabahar Port.

MEA spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said that joint secretary (Pakistan-Afghanistan-Iran) J.P. Singh had visited the Afghan capital on November 4 and 5 for the meeting. Mr Singh also met former Afghan President Hamid Karzai and heads of UN agencies working there. "They had discussions on India's humanitarian

Protect Hindus:
India to Bangla

New Delhi: India on Thursday once again urged the interim government in Bangladesh to protect Hindus after attacks on the community in Chittagong. Terming the latest attacks as unacceptable, MEA spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said extremist elements in Bangladesh were behind the attacks on Hindus and their properties were also looted.

assistance, also how the Chabahar Port can be utilised by the business community in Afghanistan for transactions and for export and import and any other thing that they would like to do," Mr Jaiswal said in response to a question. "I also want to recall

here that providing humanitarian assistance to Afghanistan is an important part of our assistance programme and so far in the last few months, and a few years, we have dispatched several shipments of humanitarian assistance. We have longstanding ties with the people of Afghanistan, and these ties will continue to guide our approach towards the country," Mr Jaiswal added.

It may be recalled that India has been stepping up its engagement with the Taliban regime in Afghanistan despite not conferring diplomatic recognition on the militia's regime.

Mr Singh had also visited Kabul earlier this year in March and met "senior members of the Afghan authorities" to discuss India's humanitarian assistance to the Afghan people.

Smear campaign:
Maha Cong files
plaint against BJP

DC CORRESPONDENT
MUMBAI, NOV. 7

The Congress in Maharashtra on Thursday filed a complaint against the BJP at the EC accusing the saffron party of a smear campaign and violations of election Rules.

In a letter to EC, the Congress lodged a complaint concerning a series of news articles and advertisements published across major newspapers in Maharashtra claiming that they are 'full of lies,' that are allegedly part of a smear campaign being propagated with the intention of misleading voters and influencing the upcoming elections.

On Thursday, the BJP published advertisements claiming the Congress did not fulfil promises made to women in three states Telangana, Karnataka and Himachal where the grand old party is ruling.

I'm not anti-business, I'm
anti-monopoly, says Rahul

FROM PG 1

"I started my career as a management consultant and understand what's needed for a business to succeed," said Mr Gandhi. He stressed that he is pro-business, pro-jobs, pro-innovation, and pro-competition.

In his opinion piece, Mr Gandhi argued that while the original East India Company was dissolved over 150 years ago.

Its legacy of monopolistic control is being revived by a new breed of monopolists, amassing vast wealth while exacerbating inequality in India. Mr Gandhi later claimed on X that after his article, many fair-play businesses had told him that a senior minister had been calling them, forcing them to post positive things about Prime Minister Modi and the government's programmes on social media. "Proves my point exact-



Rahul Gandhi

ly!" he wrote.

BJP minister Jyotiraditya Scindia responded on Wednesday, accusing Mr Gandhi of selling hatred and disrespecting Indian pride and history. Mr Scindia urged Mr Gandhi to learn about real Indian freedom fighters like Mahadji Scindia and Rani Velu Nachiyar, and criticised him for his "selective amnesia" regarding his own privi-

MEA: Canada consular camps
cancelled over lack of security

Hypocrisy: India as Ottawa blocks Oz media for reporting Jaishankar's presser

SRIDHAR
KUMARASWAMI
NEW DELHI, NOV. 7

India confirmed on Thursday that its consulate in Toronto had cancelled consular camps that were to take place over the weekend as it did not receive adequate security provisions from the Canadian authorities. New Delhi also hit out at Canada for its hypocrisy on freedom of speech after the social handles of a publication associated with the Indian-Australian diaspora were blocked in Canada just hours after it had posted news about the visit of external affairs minister (EAM) S. Jaishankar to Australia and an interview of him.

"You can draw your conclusions as to why the

'India working closely with
US over illegal immigration'

FROM PG 1

The PM highlighted that his spectacular and resounding victory reflected the deep trust of the American people in his leadership and vision. Reflecting on the positive momentum of the India-U.S. partnership during President Trump's first term, the PM recalled their memorable interactions, including the Howdy Modi event in Houston in September 2019 and the Namaste Trump event in

Ahmedabad during President Trump's visit to India in February 2020." It added, "Both leaders reiterated the importance of the India-U.S. Comprehensive Global Strategic Partnership, for the benefit of the people of the two countries as well as for global peace and stability. They reaffirmed their commitment to working together to further strengthen bilateral ties across technology, defence, energy, space and several other sectors."

channel was blocked by Canada," MEA spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal told reporters at the weekly MEA briefing on

Thursday evening.

Asked about the cancellation of the consular camp, Mr Jaiswal said the Indian consulate had

asked for security to hold the camps but added that "these have not been provided by the Canadian side".

Mr Jaiswal pointed out that such consular camps are conducted at the request of the Indian community and Canadians of Indian origin as they need relevant documentation for pensions and other matters in India. He said consular camps continue to be held in other parts of Canada like Vancouver.

In response to another query, he said that threats to Indian diplomats have increased and that they have been put under surveillance by the Canadian authorities which is "unacceptable". He said that New Delhi had earlier raised the issue with Canada.



Congress general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra during a public rally at Nilambur in Wayanad district of Kerala on Thursday. — PTI

OROP tribute to sacrifice,
courage of veterans: Modi

DC CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI, NOV. 7

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday marked 10 years of the "one rank one pension" (OROP) scheme, saying that it was a tribute to the courage and sacrifices of our veterans and ex-service personnel who dedicate their lives to protecting our nation.

The Prime Minister said that the decision to implement OROP was a significant step towards addressing this long-standing demand and reaffirming our nation's gratitude to our heroes.

Mr Modi assured that the government will always do everything possible to strengthen our armed forces and further the welfare of those who serve us.

In a post on X, Mr Modi said, "On this day, One Rank One Pension (OROP) was implemented. This



Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Haryana minister Anil Vij during a meeting in New Delhi on Thursday. — PTI

was a tribute to the courage and sacrifices of our veterans and ex-service personnel who dedicate their lives to protecting our nation. The decision to implement OROP was a significant step towards addressing this long-standing demand and reaffirming our nation's gratitude to our heroes."

"It would make you all happy that over the

decade, lakhs of pensioners and pensioner families have benefitted from this landmark initiative. Beyond the numbers, OROP represents the government's commitment to the well-being of our armed forces. We will always do everything possible to strengthen our armed forces and further the welfare of those who serve us," Mr Modi added.

Leaders in state from Nov. 12-18, K'taka, T'gana CMs to join
Priyanka, Rahul, Kharge to lead Maha rally

DC CORRESPONDENT
MUMBAI, NOV. 7

The Congress party is intensifying its campaign for the Maharashtra Assembly elections, bringing in key national leaders and chief ministers. Leader of the Opposition in Lok Sabha, Rahul Gandhi and AICC general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra will visit Maharashtra separately from November 12 to 17, while Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge will stay in the state from



Mallikarjun Kharge

November 16 to 18. Karnataka CM Siddaramaiah and Telangana CM Revanth Reddy will also join the campaign. The Congress has also suspended rebels who are contesting against the Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) candidates.

The party has planned a door to door campaign programme to inform voters about the guarantees announced by the MVA in the 'Maharashtra Swabhimaan Sabha' held at Bandra-Kurla Complex. The guarantees include ₹3,000 per month and free travel for women, waiver of farm loans up to ₹3 lakh across Maharashtra, an incentive payment of ₹50,000 to farmers who consistently repay their loans, monthly support of ₹4,000 to every unemployed youth in the state,

affordable health insurance of ₹25 lakh to all households and free-of-cost essential medicines in government hospitals.

The MVA manifesto, to be released on November 10 at a Mumbai event, will be unveiled by Mr Kharge, NCP leader Jayant Patil, and Shiv Sena's Sanjay Raut.

Congress refuted BJP's criticisms, pledging to implement these guarantees if elected, citing their success in Karnataka, Telangana, and Himachal Pradesh.

Odisha to make judicial system
more accessible and efficient

AKSHAYA KUMAR
SAHOO
BHUBANESWAR, NOV. 7

Odisha chief minister Mohan Charan Majhi on Thursday announced that his government is committed to making justice more accessible and efficient for citizens by bringing it directly to their homes.

Speaking at an event at Lok Seva Bhavan in Bhubaneswar, Mr Majhi emphasised his administration's focus on providing transparent and responsive police service-



Mohan Majhi

Information Report) from any citizen, regardless of jurisdiction. "Victims will no longer need to visit the police station to file an FIR. The police will be required to file a 'Zero FIR,' which will then be forwarded to the appropriate station for

further action," he said. This policy aims to remove delays and procedural barriers for crime reporting.

The CM also outlined new guidelines to protect vulnerable groups, ensuring that the police cannot summon individuals with disabilities, minors under the age of 15, or senior citizens to the police station except in unavoidable circumstances.

He highlighted the need to resolve cases under the Pocco Act within 60 days to expedite justice.

Soren challenges BJP to probe
and prove corruption charges

FROM PG 1

He also said that he inherited a rotten system of government appointments from his predecessor Raghunath Das and he set up a proper recruitment system for government jobs.

Addressing an election rally at Murhu in Khunti district, Mr Soren said that Union government has been using the central probe agencies to intimidate JMM leaders.

He also said that the BJP hates the tribal people and only works for the capitalists and accused the earlier BJP governments as anti-tribal.



Hemant Soren

"During their period, the tribals were forced to die of hunger with ration card in their hands," he said.

Not in CM race: Sule rules out reuniting with Ajit

Mumbai, Nov. 7: NCP(SP) working president Supriya Sule has said political rapprochement with Maharashtra deputy chief minister Ajit Pawar is not possible till he is aligned with the BJP and said she will not be a CM post aspirant if the MVA is voted to power.

Four-time Lok Sabha member Sule said people voted very assertively in the 2024 Lok Sabha elec-

tions and there is clarity in the voters' mind now.

She feels the Opposition Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA), comprising the NCP(SP), Congress and Uddhav Thackeray-led Shiv Sena (UBT) will do much better in the November 20 state Assembly polls.

Out of the total 48 Lok Sabha seats in the state, the MVA won 30 seat, and an independent supporting



Supriya Sule

t h e Opposition alliance a l s o e m e r g e d victorious. Last year, MS Sule's cousin Ajit Pawar and several other NCP MLAs joined the Eknath Shinde-BJP government in the state, leading to a split in the party founded by her father Sharad Pawar.

In June 2022, Mr Shinde had led a rebellion against the Shiv Sena leadership, which led to a split in that party.

Ms Sule said, "It is hard to say whether Pawars can reunite with Ajit Pawar politically. As long as he is working for the BJP it will not be easy. Our ideologies still remain a challenge politically."

On speculations that she could be the MVA's CM

face, she said, "I am not contesting elections and the NCP (SP) has made it clear that we are not in the race for CM's post. We have clarity and we will go along with whoever our partners decide."

Asked if the upcoming Assembly polls will settle the fragmented polity in Maharashtra, she said the Lok Sabha election results have settled the confusion. —PTI

SHORT TAKES

2015 BOMBING:
COURT ACQUITS
THAI WOMAN

Bangkok, Nov. 7: A court in Thailand on Thursday acquitted a Thai woman who had been charged with involvement in a 2015 bombing at a shrine in Bangkok that killed 20 people and injured 120.

Wanna Suansan was one of three people apprehended out of 17 suspects who authorities said were responsible for the blast at Erawan Shrine, a popular tourist destination, particularly for visitors from China. The Bangkok Southern Criminal Court ruled that there was not enough evidence to link her to the bombing.

SK PREZ DENIES
WRONGDOING IN
GROWING SCAM

Seoul, Nov. 7: South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol denied wrongdoing on Thursday in a burgeoning influence-peddling scandal that's severely hurting his approval ratings.

It centres around allegations that Yoon and first lady Kim Keon Hee exerted inappropriate influence on the ruling People Power Party to pick a certain candidate to run for a parliamentary by-election in 2022 at the request of Myung Tae-kyun, an election broker and founder of a polling agency who conducted free opinion surveys for Yoon before he became President.

CHINESE SAFE IN
PAK, MINISTER
ASSURES ENVOY

Islamabad, Nov. 7: Interior minister Mohsin Naqvi on Thursday met with China's top diplomat at the country's embassy here and assured him of the safety of Chinese citizens and projects in Pakistan, saying it was the government's topmost priority.

Naqvi's visit to the Chinese mission to meet Ambassador Jiang Zaidong comes after a local security guard opened fire at two Chinese nationals on Tuesday following a quarrel in the port city of Karachi.

According to a statement, Naqvi regretted the firing incident in Karachi.

GRAIN OF N-FUEL
PULLED FROM
JAPAN PLANT

Tokyo, Nov. 7: A robot that has spent months inside the ruins of a nuclear reactor at the tsunami-hit Fukushima Daiichi plant delivered a tiny sample of melted nuclear fuel on Thursday, in what plant officials said was a step toward beginning the cleanup of hundreds of tonnes of melted fuel debris.

The sample, the size of a grain of rice, was placed into a secure container, marking the end of the mission, according to Tokyo Electric Power Company Holdings, which manages the plant. It is being transported to a glove box for size and weight measurements.

TEAR GAS FIRED
ON MOZAMBIQUE
OPPN SUPPORTERS

Maputo, Nov. 7: Mozambican police fired tear gas at hundreds of opposition supporters converging on the capital Maputo on Thursday for the biggest demonstration yet against last month's disputed election.

Human rights groups say at least 18 people have been killed in the police crackdown on protests since the Oct. 9 vote, which extended ruling party Frelimo's five decades in power.

Opposition parties, civil society groups and Western observers said the poll was unfair and that results were altered.

The party was accused of vote-rigging earlier too.

WILDFIRES RAGE,
PEOPLE TOLD TO
VACATE HOMES

Santa Paula, Nov. 7: Thousands of people were under evacuation orders in Southern California as fast moving wildfires engulfed homes, authorities said, with the National Weather Service issuing a red flag alert that described the situation as "particularly dangerous."

Video shot by an eyewitness showed residents scrambling to evacuate their homes in the city of Camarillo as thick smoke blanketed the sky above. Footage also showed houses and cars completely engulfed in flames. The Mountain Fire was spread over 14,000 acres.

After Trump win, 50 European nations assess their fortunes

Prez-elect had threatened trade war, withdrawal of Nato commitments

Budapest, Nov. 7: Around 50 European leaders, including Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy and Nato secretary-general Mark Rutte, will be reassessing their trans-Atlantic relations in the hope that Donald Trump's second US presidency will avoid the strife and political pitfalls of his first administration.

Further compounding an already complicated situation, Germany — Europe's troubled economic juggernaut — sank into political crisis after German Chancellor Olaf Scholz fired his finance minister. It raises the spectre of an election in a few months and yet another standoff between the emboldened hard right and the establishment parties in Europe.

Those two combined "adds even more pepper and salt to this situation," Polish Prime Minister Donald Tusk said. But the US election fallout still took centre stage. "Our relationship with the US is essential and we are ready to deepen it," European Council President Charles Michel said.

The 27 nations from the European Union bloc will be meeting in a separate summit as soon as other leaders from the United Kingdom, Turkey and the Balkans leave in the evening. During his election campaign, Trump had threatened anything from a trade war with Europe to a withdrawal of Nato commitments and a fundamental shift of support for Ukraine in its war with Russia — all issues that could have ground breaking consequences for nations across Europe.

Summit host and ardent Trump fan, Hungarian PM Viktor Orban, said he had a phone call with the incoming president, announcing that "We have big plans for the future!"

So did Italian PM Giorgia Meloni, who lauded the "deep and historic strategic partnership that has always tied Rome and Washington." — AP



Cypriot President Nikos Christodoulides (L) speaks with Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelenskyy (C) and Albania's Prime Minister Edi Rama at a plenary session during the European Political Community Summit in Budapest, on Thursday.

TRUMP SAYS HE'LL FIRE SPECIAL COUNSEL JACK SMITH 'WITHIN TWO SECONDS'

Donald Trump said on Thursday that he will fire special counsel Jack Smith "within two seconds" of taking office. Trump was asked during an interview with conservative radio host Hugh Hewitt whether he would first pardon himself or terminate Smith to remove the legal cloud hanging over him.



AMERICA DESERVES A BADASS COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF RIGHT NOW: VIVEK RAMASWAMY

Of the view that the comeback of President-elect Donald Trump is the American comeback, entrepreneur-turned-politician Vivek Ramaswamy said that the country deserves a "badass commander-in-chief" right now and that's exactly what it got.



PRESIDENT XI CONGRATULATES TRUMP; SAYS CHINA, U.S. SHOULD FIND 'RIGHT WAY' TO MANAGE DIFFERENCES

Chinese President Xi Jinping on Thursday congratulated President-elect Donald Trump on his election victory and called for China and the US to find the right way to manage the differences by strengthening dialogue and communication.

Biden: Bring down temperature

Washington, Nov. 7: US President Joe Biden urged Americans to "bring down the temperature" on Thursday following Republican Donald Trump's election victory and sought to console fellow Democrats who were alarmed by the former president's stunning comeback.

"Setbacks are unavoidable. Giving up is unforgiveable," he said at the White House Rose Garden as he addressed staff who were disappointed in V-P Kamala Harris' defeat. "A defeat does not mean we are defeated."



Joe Biden

Biden said Tuesday's election had proven the integrity of the US electoral system and said he would preside over an orderly transfer of power — an implicit rebuke of Trump, who sought to overturn his 2020 defeat to Biden and raised baseless claims of fraud this year as well.

"We lost this battle. The America of your dreams is calling for you to get back up," he said. Some Democrats have blamed Biden, 81, for Harris' defeat, saying he should not have sought re-election. Biden only dropped his re-election bid in July after a disastrous TV debate with Trump raised alarm bells about his mental fitness. — Reuters



Residents waded through a flooded street after the passing of Hurricane Rafael in Batabano, Cuba, Thursday.

UK hits Russia with new curbs

London, Nov. 7: The UK government announced sanctions on Thursday against three private mercenary groups operating in Africa with links to the Kremlin, including Wagner group successor Africa Corps.

"These sanctions will

bear down on Russian malign activity in Libya, Mali, and CAR (Central African Republic), exposing and combatting Russia's illicit activity in Africa," a government statement said, announcing its latest package of measures against Russia.

The UK government said the measures were the first direct sanctions against Africa Corps by a G7 country.

Moscow was a key player in Africa during Soviet times and has been boosting its influence on the continent again. — AFP

LOGGED | OUT The new laws will be introduced to Parliament in late Nov.

Oz moves to ban u-16 kids from SM

Sydney, Nov. 7: Australia's prime minister on Thursday vowed to ban children under 16 from social media, saying the pervasive influence of platforms like Facebook and TikTok was "doing real harm to our kids".

The tech giants would be held responsible for enforcing the age limit and face hefty fines if regulators notice young users slipping through the cracks, Prime Minister Anthony Albanese said.

Australia is among the vanguard of nations trying to clean up social media, and the proposed age limit would be among the

world's strictest measures aimed at children.

"This one is for the mums and dads. Social media is doing real harm to kids and I'm calling time on it," Albanese told reporters outside Parliament. The new laws would be presented to state and territory leaders this week, before being introduced to Parliament in late November.

Once passed, the tech platforms would be given a one-year grace period to figure out how to implement and enforce the ban.

"The onus will be on social media platforms to demonstrate they are tak-



The tech giants would be held responsible for enforcing the age limit and face hefty fines if regulators notice young users slipping through the cracks.

ing reasonable steps to prevent access," he said, explaining what he dubbed a "world-leading" refo-



German Vice Chancellor and economy and climate minister Robert Habeck (L) along with foreign minister Annalena Baerbock brief the media after a meeting of German government leaders, in Berlin.

German coalition collapses as Scholz fires his fin. min.

Berlin, Nov. 7: Germany's centre-left Chancellor Olaf Scholz announced on Wednesday he was firing finance minister Christian Lindner, signalling the collapse of the ruling three-party coalition that relied on Lindner's pro-business party.

Scholz announced the move at a news conference following weeks of disputes among the coalition partners over ways to boost the country's ailing economy. He said he would seek a vote of confidence in January that he said might lead to early elections that otherwise would be due next September. "I feel compelled to take this step to prevent damage to our country. We need an effective government that has the strength to make the necessary decisions for our country," Scholz said.

Lindner, from the pro-business Free Democrats, had rejected tax increases or changes to Germany's strict self-imposed limits on running up debt.

Scholz's Social Democrats and the environmental Greens, who are also part of the coalition, wanted to see massive state investment and rejected the Free Democrats' proposals to cut welfare programmes. Lindner respo-

GERMANY NABS AMERICAN OVER CHINA SPYING

Berlin, Nov. 7: An American former employee of US military forces stationed in Germany has been arrested for allegedly offering to pass information about them on to China, German prosecutors said on Thursday.

According to prosecutors, the man named only as "Martin D." was held "on suspicion of expressing willingness to undertake intelligence activities for a foreign intelligence service," adding that he had "contacted Chinese officials in 2024 and offered to hand them sensitive info." — AFP

ned to his dismissal by accusing Scholz of failing "to recognise the need for a new economic awakening in our country. He has played down the economic concerns of citizens."

He said the chancellor's proposals to reenergise the economy were "dull, unambitious and make no contribution to overcoming the fundamental weakness of our country's growth." — AP

Hezbollah main bastion struck

Beirut, Nov. 7: Israel conducted air strikes on Hezbollah's main bastion in south Beirut on Thursday, with one raid hitting an area near Lebanon's only international airport.

The pre-dawn raids came after Hezbollah claimed a slew of attacks on Israel, including a missile strike targeting a military base near Israel's Ben Gurion International Airport. Also on Wednesday, the health ministry said Israeli strikes on the Bekaa Valley and the densely populated ancient city of Baalbek in east Lebanon, where Hezbollah holds sway, killed 40 people.

Hezbollah and Israel have been at war since late September, when Israel broadened its focus from fighting Hamas in the Gaza Strip to securing its northern border.

Hezbollah began low intensity strikes on Israel last year, in support of its Palestinian ally Hamas following the October 7, 2023 attack.

The strike near the Beirut airport caused heavy damage to a heater factory warehouse, an AFP photographer reported.

Transport minister Ali

FREE PALESTINE BANNER NOT IN FOOTBALL: MIN.

Paris, Nov. 7: A gigantic banner proclaiming "Free Palestine" unfurled by Paris Saint-Germain (PSG) supporters at a Champions League match has no place in a football stadium, France's interior minister said.

The huge banner covered an entire section of the stadium at PSG's home venue of Parc des Princes in Paris on Wednesday ahead of their defeat at the hands of Spanish rivals Atletico Madrid.

As well as the slogan "Free Palestine", it showed a bloodstained Palestinian flag, a gesticulating man with a keffiyeh scarf covering all his face except his eyes, the Al-Aqsa mosque in Jerusalem and a young boy wrapped in the Lebanese flag. — AFP

Hamie said the airport continued to operate as normal, with planes taking off and landing with no issue. — AFP

OTHER STORIES

Apollo SHINE advances student health in schools

DC CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI:

Apollo Hospitals, through its Apollo SHINE initiative, hosted a major event on "Emergency Preparedness in Schools" today, reinforcing its commitment to student health and safety. The event focused on equipping schools to manage emergencies and empowering students with essential health knowledge.

Since 2015, Apollo SHINE has impacted over 10 lakhs individuals in 175 schools and colleges across Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, and Delhi/NCR. Guided by Dr. Prathap C. Reddy's vision, Apollo SHINE addresses the rising prevalence of non-communicable diseases (NCDs) with programs for students, staff, and families.

Dr. Indira Jayakumar, Medical Director of Apollo SHINE Foundation, emphasized the importance of rapid response in medical emergencies, stating, "Time is a precious commodity in emergencies. These initial moments can make a significant difference." Dr. Jayakumar discussed the need for well-equipped health rooms and trained personnel, highlighting success stories from Apollo SHINE's work. Fifteen nurses were honoured for their dedication.

The event also launched the Apollo Shine Student Health Ambassador program, which empowers students to promote health and emergency readiness among peers. Participants explored Apollo's 1066 ambulances to enhance their understanding of emergency response.

"Apollo SHINE strives to create a safer school environment," said Kishore Manohar, Director of Apollo Shine Foundation. "The Student Health Ambassador program reflects our mission to build a culture of wellness and responsibility."

Exoticamp secures ₹7 cr for adventure tourism

DC CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI:

Exoticamp, Chennai's popular camping startup, has secured a Rs 7 crore investment from Brand Capital, marking a significant boost in its growth trajectory. This partnership will help Exoticamp expand its footprint across India and enhance brand visibility, bringing unique outdoor experiences to a larger audience.

Since its initial funding in July 2024, Exoticamp has grown rapidly, now operating 300 campsites across 13 states. With this latest investment, Exoticamp aims to leverage Brand Capital's extensive media reach to strengthen its position in India's adventure and eco-tourism sector.

"We are thrilled to have Brand Capital onboard," said Swaminathan Subramanian, Co-founder and CEO of Exoticamp. "This partnership aligns perfectly with our mission to make camping accessible and promote sustainable tourism across India. With Brand Capital's backing, we can reach a broader audience and establish Exoticamp as the go-to brand for curated camping experiences."

Srini Vudayagiri, President of Brand Capital, remarked, "Camping is increasingly popular among Gen-Z, who seek safe, unique adventure experiences. Our investment in Exoticamp will help meet this demand and foster the brand's growth."

Waste heat from sewers eyed to warm UK parliament

London: London landmarks including the UK parliament could be warmed by low-carbon heat powered by the River Thames, the London Underground train system and even the sewer network under new government plans. Around 1,000 buildings could be in line to receive the alternatively sourced warmth Under the plans to develop the UK's biggest heat network to provide decarbonised heat, pipes designed to carry excess heat taken from various.

THIS WILL BE HOTTEST YEAR ON RECORD

Chicago: For the second year in a row, Earth will almost certainly be the hottest it's ever been. And for the first time, the globe this year reached more than 1.5 degrees Celsius of warming compared to the pre-industrial average, the European climate agency Copernicus said Thursday. "It's this relentless nature of the warming that I think is worrying," said Carlo Buontempo, director of Copernicus.

Buontempo said the data clearly shows the planet would not see such a long sequence of record-breaking temperatures without the constant increase of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere driving global warming.

He cited other factors that contribute to exceptionally warm years like last year and this one. They include El Nino — the temporary warming of parts of the Pacific that changes weather worldwide — as well as volcanic eruptions that spew water vapour into the air and variations in energy from the sun. But he and other scientists say the long-term increase in temperatures beyond fluctuations like El Nino is a bad sign.

"A very strong El Nino event is a sneak peek into what the new normal will be about a decade from now," said Zeke Hausfather, a research scientist with the nonprofit Berkeley Earth.

News of a likely second year of record heat comes a day after US Republican Donald Trump, who has called climate change a "hoax" and promised to boost oil drilling and pro-



A counsellor fills up her campers' water bottles at YMCA Camp Kern in Ohio in the US. — AP

duction, was reelected to the presidency.

It also comes days before the next UN climate conference, called COP29, is set to begin in Azerbaijan. Talks are expected to focus on how to generate trillions of dollars to help the world transition to clean energies like wind and solar and avoid more warming.

Also on Thursday, a report released by the United Nations Environment Programme called for increased funds to adapt to global heating and its consequences. It found that the \$28 billion spent worldwide to adapt to climate change in 2022 — the latest year the data is available — is an all-

time high. But it's still far short of the estimated \$187 to \$359 bn needed every year to deal with the heat, floods, droughts and storms exacerbated by climate change.

"Earth's ablaze," said UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres in a pre-recorded statement marking the report's release. "Humanity's torching the planet and paying the price" with the vulnerable most affected, he said.

"Frankly, there is no excuse for the world not to get serious about adaptation," said UNEP's director Inger Andersen. "We need well-financed and effective adaptation that incorporates fairness and equity."

Buontempo pointed out that going over the 1.5 C threshold of warming for a single year is different than the goal adopted in the 2015 Paris Agreement. That goal was meant to try to cap warming at 1.5 C since pre-industrial times on average, over 20 or 30 years.

A UN report this year said that since the mid-1800s on average, the world has already heated up 1.3 C — up from previous estimates of 1.1 C or 1.2 C. That's of concern because the UN says the greenhouse gas emission reduction goals of the world's nations still aren't nearly ambitious enough to keep the 1.5 C target on track.

The target was chosen to try to stave off the worst effects of climate change on humanity, including extreme weather. "The heat waves, storm damage, and droughts that we are experiencing now are just the tip of the iceberg," said Natalie Mahowald, chair of Earth and Atmospheric Sciences at Cornell University.

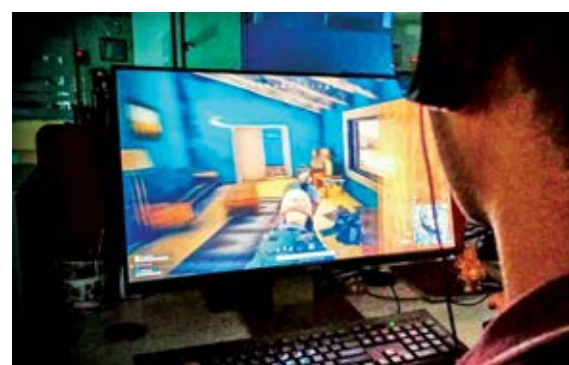
Going over that number in 2024 doesn't mean the overall trend line of global warming has, but "in the absence of concerted action, it soon will," said University of Pennsylvania climate scientist Michael Mann.

Stanford University climate scientist Rob Jackson put it in starker terms. "I think we have missed the 1.5 C window," said Jackson, who chairs the Global Carbon Project, a group of scientists who track countries' carbon dioxide emissions.

"There's too much warming," Scientists stress the importance of global observations, bolstered by international cooperation, that allow scientists to have confidence in the new report's finding: Copernicus gets its results from billions of measurements from satellites, ships, aircraft and weather stations around the world.

Going over the 1.5 C benchmark this year is "psychologically important" as nations make decisions internally and approach negotiations at the annual UN climate change summit Nov. 11-22 in Azerbaijan.

—AP



TN users struggle to find legal gaming: Survey

DC CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI:

A national study conducted by PRAHAR, a not-for-profit organization, has raised alarms about cybersecurity risks associated with online gaming in India.

According to the survey, 75% of Tamil Nadu respondents struggle to distinguish between legal and illegal gaming platforms, with 49% relying on advertisements to determine legitimacy. The survey highlights the link between foreign illegal gaming apps and rising cyberattacks on India, projecting 1 trillion cyber incidents annually by 2033.

The survey also reveals that 86% of respondents oppose government-imposed limits on online gaming time and spending, preferring self-regulation or operator-enforced restrictions.

PRAHAR's President, Abhay Raj Mishra, emphasized that Tamil Nadu's regulatory authority TNOGA could set a national standard for legal clarity in online gaming, potentially curbing cyber threats.

DELHI HC CLOSES PLEA AGAINST BAN ON RUSHDIE'S 'THE SATANIC VERSES'

New Delhi: The Delhi High Court has closed the proceedings on a petition challenging the Rajiv Gandhi government's decision to ban the import of Salman Rushdie's controversial novel, "The Satanic Verses", in 1988, saying since authorities have failed to produce the relevant notification, it has to be presumed that it does not exist.

In an order passed on November 5, a bench headed by Justice Rekha Palli observed that the petition, which was pending since 2019, was therefore infructuous and the petitioner would be entitled to take all actions in respect of the book as available in law.

The Centre banned the import of the Booker Prize-winning author's "The Satanic Verses" for law-and-order reasons in 1988, after Muslims across the world viewed it as blasphemous.

Petitioner Sandipan Khan had argued in court that he was unable to import the book on account of a notification issued by the Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs on Oct. 5, 1988, banning its import into the country in accordance with the Customs Act, but the same was neither available on any official website nor with any of the authorities concerned.

"What emerges is that none of the respondents could produce the said notification dated 05.10.1988 with which the petitioner is purportedly aggrieved and, in fact, the purported author of the



said notification has also shown his helplessness in producing a copy of the said notification during the pendency of the present writ petition since its filing way back in 2019," the bench, also comprising Justice Saurabh Banerjee, observed.

"In the light of the aforesaid circumstances, we have no other option except to presume that no such notification exists, and therefore, we cannot examine the validity thereof and dispose of the writ petition as infructuous," it concluded.

Besides assailing the ban notification, the petitioner had sought to set aside other related directions issued by the Ministry of Home Affairs in 1988.

The petition had also sought directions to enable him to import the book from its publisher or international e-commerce websites. During the course of the proceedings in the court, authorities had said the notification was untraceable, and therefore, could not be produced. —PTI

VIT-AP hosts international higher edu fair in Amaravati

Amravati: VIT-AP University hosted its first-ever International Higher Education Fair (IHEF) 2024, bringing together prestigious educational institutions from abroad to showcase graduate, research, and professional study programs.

The event, held at the university campus in Amaravati, provided students with a unique opportunity to explore global academic opportunities, interact with international university representatives, and gain insights into scholarships and financial aid options available for higher education abroad. There are more than 50 universities from USA, France, Australia, Canada, Germany have participated in the fair.

The fair was graced by several esteemed dignitaries, including chief guest, Nara Lokesh, Minister for Information Technology, Electronics and Communications, and Human Resources Development, Government of Andhra Pradesh and Dr. G.



Viswanathan, Founder & Chancellor of VIT.

Nara Lokesh emphasised the crucial role of higher education in shaping the future and encouraged students to pursue advanced studies. He highlighted the Andhra Pradesh government's commitment to ensuring access to quality education for all. As part of the "Vikasit Bharat 2047" initiative by the central government, the state is aiming to make AP the one of the top states for higher education in India.

He also commended the efforts of VIT-AP in making higher education more accessible to students across the

state. He interacted with all foreign universities delegates who participated in the fair and enquired about various courses details.

Dr. G. Viswanathan, Founder & Chancellor of VIT, stated that governments must allocate more funds for higher education, noting that the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 recommends that 6% of GDP be dedicated to this sector. He further pointed out that developed countries invest 5-6% of their GDP in higher education, underscoring the need for similar investment to ensure quality education and foster development.

The fair saw a strong turnout, with students engaging with representatives from top universities abroad and other places in India to learn about various graduate, and research programs. They also received detailed information on scholarship options, including merit-based, need-based, and country-specific funding opportunities available to international students.

Brigade Signs JDA to develop 1 mn sqft West Chennai apts

DC CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI

Brigade Group has signed a Joint Development Agreement to develop a residential project of around one million square feet in Chennai.

The project, located in West Chennai, which is one of the fastest growing parts of the city, will be developed as part of a 1.5 million square feet mixed use development. The project will have a Gross Development Value (GDV) of about ₹800 crores.

"This joint development agreement for a 1 million sq ft residential development, forming part of a larger mixed-use development, underscores our commitment to the city's growth and our vision to deliver world-class residential, commercial, retail and hospitality spaces. Our commitment to quality and innovation ensures that each property that we develop not only meets but exceeds customer expectations, providing a premium experience," said Pavitra Shankar, Managing Director, Brigade Enterprises Limited.

By inking this strategic joint development, Brigade Group further solidifies its position as a leading real estate developer in Chennai, contributing to the city's vibrant landscape and offering exceptional living and working spaces to its residents.

ment to the city's growth and our vision to deliver world-class residential, commercial, retail and hospitality spaces. Our commitment to quality and innovation ensures that each property that we develop not only meets but exceeds customer expectations, providing a premium experience," said Pavitra Shankar, Managing Director, Brigade Enterprises Limited.

INFIX OPENS CENTRE IN MADURAI

DC CORRESPONDENT
MADURAI:

Infix, a provider of AI-powered solutions for patient access and revenue cycle management (RCM), launched its delivery centre in Madurai. The state-of-the-art facility will support the company's mission of optimising revenue cycle processes for US-based healthcare providers, helping them focus on patient care while ensuring financial sustainability.

"The opening of our new delivery centre in Madurai marks a significant milestone in our journey toward transforming healthcare RCM through innovation and talent development. By investing in advanced AI-driven solutions and leveraging the immense potential of the local workforce, we aim to deliver unparalleled value to our clients while contributing to the technological growth in the country," said Sudeep Tandon, Managing Director, Infix.

Sudeep further added, "Our decision to establish this centre in Madurai reflects the city's strong talent pool, supported by a robust educational infrastructure and proactive government support. The centre represents our commitment to building future-ready capabilities that not only optimize healthcare operations but also empower communities with high-quality employment opportunities and skills for tomorrow."

The Madurai centre aligns with Infix's global expansion goals and marks the company's eighth centre in India, complementing existing operations in Mumbai, Bangalore, and Hyderabad. The centre will leverage advanced AI and automation technologies to streamline revenue cycle operations for its customers, further solidifying Infix's position as an industry leader. Infix is one of the first ITES organisations to setup a centre of this kind in Madurai.

'Jennifer Aniston took dresses from 'Friends'

Los Angeles: Apart from being one of the most popular TV shows of all time, "Friends" continues to be a fashion phenomenon and series star Courteney Cox says her co-actor Jennifer Aniston kept tons of clothes from the sitcom, even of her character Monica's.

Real-life buddies Cox, 60, and Aniston, 55, played Monica Geller and Rachel Greene, former high school classmates and eventual roommates on NBC show "Friends", on which Debra McGuire served as costume designer. "She (Aniston) took a lot of Monica's dresses, and she'll say 'Oh yeah, I used to wear this on 'Friends'.' And I mean, it looks great on her: She has a great figure and she's adorable. "But I'm like, 'Why would you take this floral little prairie dress from 'Friends'?" But she holds on to everything," Cox told Bella Freud on her "Fashion Neurosis" podcast.

The actor told Freud that "it's really funny that (Aniston) did take some of



Monica's clothes."

But the one time she tried wearing Aniston's costume, it didn't go so well. "I remember I was late to the game, but Jennifer had this outfit on. She was wearing a really cool jacket with a tank top

and a pair of jeans. I just thought, 'God, she looks great.' The shoulder pads are really sharp. So I thought, 'You know what, I'm going to get that jacket.' "There was one problem: "Everybody had that jacket, everybody had

worn it. Jennifer was maybe early on, of course, but by the time I got it, it wasn't as cool anymore. And I think even asked Mary, my stylist, she's like, 'Yeah, that's kind of not what people are doing.' And I was like, 'Oh my

God, this jacket was thousands of dollars... It was too late," Cox recalled.

Also starring Lisa Kudrow, Matt LeBlanc, Matthew Perry, and David Schwimmer, "Friends" ran for 10 seasons from 1994 to 2004. —PTI

Courtney Cox (left) and Jennifer Aniston were costars in the sitcom *Friends* that ran for 10 years as a highly watched show on TV.

quick BITES

| INDICATORS | | % |
|------------------------|------------|--------|
| Sensex | 79,541.79 | -1.04 |
| Nifty 50 | 24,199.35 | -1.16 |
| S&P 500* | 5,929.04 | 0.00 |
| Dollar (₹) | 84.37 | 0.09 |
| Pound Sterling (₹) | 108.90 | 0.16 |
| Euro (₹) | 90.68 | 0.04 |
| Gold (10gm)* (₹) | 76,994,339 | 0.44 |
| Brent crude (\$/bbl)* | 74.16 | -1.01 |
| IN 10-Yr bond yield | 6.796 | -0.003 |
| US 10-Yr T-bill yield* | 4.443 | 0.017 |

* As of 8:30 PM IST

Emami sees 19% rise in net profit to ₹213 crore

FMCG major Emami reported a 19 per cent year-on-year increase in its net profit for second quarter ended Sept. reaching ₹213 crore, driven by improved margins and steady growth in both domestic and international markets. Revenue from operations during the quarter rose by 3 per cent to ₹891 crore, with the domestic segment advancing by 2.6 per cent and international business growing 6 per cent the company said.



Vedanta Group wins 4 blocks of critical minerals

Vedanta Group has won four blocks while state-owned Oil India Ltd (OIL) bagged one in critical mineral blocks auction, the government said. Vedanta bagged vanadium and graphite mine in Arunachal Pradesh, cobalt, manganese and iron mine in Karnataka, its subsidiary Hindustan Zinc won tungsten block in Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu. OIL has bagged graphite and vanadium block in Arunachal Pradesh.

Macrotech acquires stake in logistics parks

Macrotech Developers, sells properties under Lodha brand, has acquired Bain Capital's stake in three industrial and logistics park entities for ₹307 crore as part of a strategy to enhance rental income. This is in pursuance of our planned strategy for calibrated growth in our annuity income through digital infrastructure viz. industrial and logistics under Lodha Industrial and Logistics Park brand, the company said.

Tata Power plans ₹500-cr spend on wind, solar energy

Tata Power will invest ₹550 crore to develop solar and wind power capacities and related infrastructure to supply clean energy to Noida International Airport (NIA). Under the arrangement, Tata Power's arm Tata Power Trading Company will supply 10.8 MW of wind power to the airport. Tata Power Renewable Energy will also develop, operate, and maintain a 13 MW onsite solar power capacity.

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India, Japan may gain on Trump's anti-China pose

The US had earlier threatened to put tariffs of 60% on Chinese goods

New York, Nov. 7: Donald Trump's election victory is seen changing the course of near-term money flows for three of Asia's largest equity markets as tariff risks loom large over Chinese assets. Market watchers see the possibility of funds flowing into India and Japan while investors assess Trump's anti-China stance, with the president-elect earlier having threatened to put tariffs of 60 per cent on Chinese goods. Morgan Stanley just reiterated its preference for the two nations' shares over China's.

India, viewed as a manufacturing alternative to China, is appealing to investors for its relative immunity to global risks given a domestic-driven economy. Japanese stocks are seen as indirect beneficiaries of Trump's reflationary economic policy. "Supply chains have been moving away from China and that helps not only Japan and India but also other countries, particularly in Southeast Asia," said veteran emerging-market investor Mark Mobius. "India is the big beneficiary since only India's workforce can

POLICY MATTERS

INDIA, VIEWED as a manufacturing alternative to China, is appealing to investors for its relative immunity to global risks given a domestic-driven economy.

IN THE VERY-NEAR TERM, the Trump trade could also be tactically positive for India in terms of foreign flows.

INDIA IS the big beneficiary since only India's workforce can match the Chinese in numbers and labor costs. With Trump maintaining or even extending trade restrictions on China, this will be positive for India. — MARK MOBIUS, Veteran Investor

JAPAN is expected to keep interest rates high, thereby boosting the dollar and weakening the yen to advantage of Asian nation's exporters.

FURTHER weakness in Chinese stocks is likely to be positive for their biggest emerging-market rival India.

The threat of tariffs is seen complicating Beijing's efforts to revive economy and lift market sentiment through stimulus measures.

match the Chinese in numbers and labor costs. With Trump maintaining or even extending trade restrictions on China, this will be positive for India." The threat of tariffs is seen complicating Beijing's efforts to revive the economy and lift market sentiment through a series of stimulus measures that began late September. This makes the nation's ongoing legislature meeting all the

more crucial for investors. Chinese stocks were already under pressure in the run-up to the US election, with the rally triggered by a monetary policy blitz cooling in the absence of an impressive plan for fiscal spending. "Bear in mind the tariff headwind could discount the net-net effect of potential reflation measures" to be announced this week, Morgan Stanley strategists said. "We reiterate

our core overweight Japan and underweight China view as well as our preference for Australia and India which are also overweight." Any further weakness in Chinese stocks is likely to be positive for their biggest emerging-market rival India, given that China's rebound has been cited as one of the key reasons for a record foreign exodus from India's shares in October. — Bloomberg

Listed hospital players plan to add 16,200 beds in about 3 yrs

RAVI RANJAN PRASAD MUMBAI, NOV. 7

India's listed hospitals have a major expansion plan of adding 16,200 plus beds over FY2024-27 through brownfield and greenfield projects as well as mergers and acquisitions (M&As), according to a report by BNP Paribas.

Post Covid hospital chains have been investors focus with six hospital concluding their initial public offerings, also rising interest from new investors predominantly private equity and record FDI flow of \$1.53 billion in FY24 and aggressive bed expansion plans of listed hospitals.

The 10 listed hospitals which plan to expand had a combined capacity of 34,000 plus beds as of end-March 2024. Most of the new bed additions by listed hospitals are planned in North Indian states (Delhi-NCR, Gurugram, Noida), followed by South Indian states (Kerala, Karnataka and other states).

Brownfield expansions remain priority for hospitals with a large focus on the home market. In the latest expansion phase, as 41 per cent of the planned expansions of the ten list-

HEALTH INFRA

MAX HEALTHCARE has plans for a 501-bed greenfield project in Gurugram over **FY25-27.**

APOLLO HOSPITAL to add 500-bed greenfield projects in Chennai and Mumbai.

KIMS to add 500-beds brownfield project in Hyderabad.

Aster DM Healthcare to build 454-bed greenfield project in Thiruvananthapuram.

FDI INVESTMENTS in India's healthcare sector stood at **\$3.07 billion** in FY24.

ed hospitals are brownfield projects, mainly in their existing flagship hospitals while a further 40 per cent are greenfield projects, the report said. "As regional dynamics play an important role in healthcare services, 91 per cent of the bed capacity expansion is planned in home markets, where the existing hospital brand had 5 plus years of presence and was quite successful," the report said.

Max Healthcare and Apollo Hospital have expansion plans with a capex outlay of ₹4,750 cr and ₹3,435 crore (cr) respec-

tively, followed by Krishna Institute of Medical Sciences (KIMS) and Aster DM Healthcare at ₹1,730 cr and ₹1,500 cr respectively.

Deal activity in the Indian hospital segment has been picking up in recent years, with several M&As and private equity deals concluded.

"There is a lot of room for consolidation in the hospital segment, and the large hospital chains will acquire standalone hospitals with a keen interest in new markets," Tausif Shaikh, research analyst, BNP Paribas Securities India said.

India should be part of RCEP, says Niti CEO

New Delhi, Nov. 7: India should be a part of the regional comprehensive economic partnership (RCEP) and comprehensive and progressive agreement for trans-pacific partnership (CPTPP), Niti Aayog CEO BVR Subrahmanyam said on Thursday.

RCEP in 2019 after entering negotiations in 2013. "India is one of few countries which are not a part of large trade agreements. India should be a part of RCEP and CPTPP and become a member," Subrahmanyam said at an event organised by industry body Assocham. "...that will be best for

India' micro, small and medium Enterprises (MSME) sector. The 40 per cent of India's exports are from MSME. Big corporates are not corporate exporters," he added. "I don't think we have captured the 'China plus one' opportunity as much as we could have," he said, adding that countries like

FMCG cos intend to increase prices on firm commodity costs

SANGEETHA G CHENNAI, NOV. 7

With prices of several commodities remaining firm, FMCG companies intend to increase prices of products in the current quarter. While crude oil prices have been volatile in recent times, prices of edible oil, especially palm oil, tea, coffee have seen much inflation.

FMCG companies had passed part of higher input costs to consumers in previous quarter.

Crude palm oil and tea experienced inflation of 10 per cent and 25 per cent YoY, respectively. Given our assessment, that this price increase is here to stay, we are now taking calibrated price increases. While crude oil remained benign during the quarter, there has been recent volatility in prices owing to geopolitical tensions," said Hindustan Unilever.

According to Sudhir Sitapatti, chief executive officer of Godrej Consumer Products, the compa-

PINCHING POCKETS

FMCG companies had passed part of higher input costs to consumers in previous quarter.

PRICES OF EDIBLE OIL, especially palm oil, tea, coffee have seen much inflation.

Copra prices are up 25% compared to last year and rice bran oil 7% up.

ITC finds surge in domestic wood prices and ocean freight continue to weigh on margins.

ny's Ebitda margin was at the lower end of the targeted band due to high inflation on palm oil.

"The already high prices were further exacerbated by the import duty on oil. We think this is a short-term hit, and we will recover the margin through judicious price increases and stabilising our costs over the next few quarters," he said.

In the case of soaps, Godrej has taken sequential price hikes. "It is positive pricing this quarter also. Next quarter or this quarter onwards, we will see significant price growth and next quarter will be even higher," he said. Marico is monitoring

the food and retail inflation spike in September. "Copra prices are up 25 per cent compared to the same period last year and rice bran oil 7 per cent up. We will take calibrated pricing actions in response to the rising trend in input cost," it said.

Tata Consumer products finds that tea prices were 28 per cent higher for the Sept. quarter in North India and 25 per cent up in South India. Average coffee prices for Q2 were 82 per cent higher on a y-o-y basis. Staggered price increases have been actioned across Tata's tea brands and price increase has been announced in Tata Salt.

ED conducts searches on e-comm vendors

New Delhi, Nov. 7: The Enforcement Directorate (ED) Thursday conducted searches against some of the main vendors operating on platforms of e-commerce giants Amazon and Flipkart as part of a foreign investment violation investigation, official sources said.

A total of 19 premises of these preferred vendors located in Delhi, Gurugram and Panchkula (Haryana), Hyderabad (Telangana) and Bengaluru (Karnataka) were covered as part of the action, the sources said. It is learnt that the ED inspected documents and took copies of some from the premises of about six such vendors who were not named.

The sources said a probe has been initiated by the federal agency under the provisions of the Foreign Exchange Management Act (FEMA) after it received several complaints against the two large e-commerce companies where it is alleged that they were "violating India's foreign direct investment (FDI) rules by directly or indirectly influencing the sale price of goods or services and not providing level playing field for all the vendors".

There was no immediate response from the two e-commerce companies.

Meanwhile, the Confederation of All India Traders (CAIT) welcomed the ED action. "The CAIT, along with several other

● IT IS alleged that they were violating India's foreign direct investment rules by directly or indirectly influencing the sale price of goods or services and not providing level playing field for all the vendors.

trade bodies, has been raising these issues for the past few years. I welcome the Enforcement Directorate-te's actions as a step in the right direction," CAIT secretary general Delhi Praveen Khandelwal said in a statement.

He claimed that the Competition Commission of India (CCI) had also issued penalty notices to Amazon and Flipkart, and their preferred sellers, for engaging in anti-competitive practices that have adversely affected small traders and 'kirana' (grocery) stores.

Meanwhile, the Income-Tax department Thursday carried out searches at offices of global caller ID platform Truecaller on charges of tax evasion, official sources said.

The company said it was cooperating with the investigators. Tax officials said the searches were aimed to gather detailed information and check documents in connection with certain charges of tax evasion including those pertaining to transfer pricing issues. —PTI

WB supporting India's energy transition efforts

SANGEETHA G. CHENNAI, NOV. 7

The World Bank is supporting India's transition towards net zero emissions with development policy operations worth of \$3 billion.

Green hydrogen is a core technological innovation that can shift energy-intensive sectors like cement, fertilizer, and steel to a low-carbon path. India aims to develop a green hydrogen industry to create jobs and boost energy security.

This strategic financing is designed across three interconnected areas - emergence of a green hydrogen industry, expansion of renewable energy, and the mobilization of climate finance.

The World Bank's hydro-gen for development partnership, supported by the energy sector management assistance program, facilitated \$1.5 billion in concessional financing in



FY24 to ramp up clean hydrogen projects in India.

It has also committed \$195 million to training, upskilling, and providing more than 3 lakh people with jobs in high growth sectors including renewable energy, information and technology services, and hospitality. It has also provided \$74 million to India for a jobs-development project.

Further, the second national ganga river basin project directly benefited 37 lakh people - adding over 2,600 km of sewer network and prevented 40.4 cr litres per day of untreated wastewater flowing into the Ganga, said World Bank.

SHORT TAKES

Franchises keep big names safe

New Delhi, Smriti Mandhana, Ellyse Perry, Shafali Verma, Meg Lanning and Harmanpreet Kaur were some of the big names retained by their respective franchises for the next edition of the Women's Premier League.

Royal Challengers Bengaluru on Thursday announced the retention of 14 players, including six overseas recruits. Along with captain Mandhana, star batter Perry, and wicket-keeper Richa Ghosh headlined the list of retainees of the championship-winning team. RCB's retention strategy is built on trust and confidence in a core that has developed a strong bond over the past two seasons and came together last year to showcase its potential and deliver a historic title.

Besides Shafali, Delhi Capitals retained Jemimah Rodrigues, Radha Yadav and Arundhati Reddy among others. Some of their overseas retentions include Lanning, South African Marizanne Kapp, Southern Stars' Jess Jonassen, Alice Capsey and Annabel Sutherland. — PTI

Kiran George in Korean quarters

Iksan City, South Korea: India's Kiran George dished out yet another gritty performance to upset third seed Chi Yu Jen of Chinese Taipei in a tough three-game match and progress to the men's singles quarterfinals of the Korea Masters badminton tournament here on Thursday.

The 24-year-old Indian overcame his Chinese Taipei opponent, ranked 31 in the world, 21-17, 19-21, 21-17 in a second round match that lasted one hour and 15 minutes.

World number 44 George will play fifth seed Takuma Obayashi of Japan in the last-eight round.

Earlier also, George had to dig deep to defeat Vietnam's Kuan Lin Kuo 15-21, 21-12, 21-15 in the opening round of the BWF Super 300 tournament. George, the lone Indian shuttler competing in the tournament, started brightly and always had his nose ahead of his Chinese Taipei rival in the opening game to eventually take the lead. — PTI

Sindhu to start academy in Vizag

Visakhapatnam: Two-time Olympic medalist shuttler P. V. Sindhu's dream project, the P. V. Sindhu Centre for Badminton and Sports Excellence, will be set up in the port city here. The facility will be dedicated to nurturing and empowering athletes across multiple sports and disciplines.

Sindhu and her Team PVS thanked Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu for continued support.

"I'm truly grateful to be building this centre for the incredible people of Vizag. In choosing a location, I couldn't imagine a better place than this wonderful city. This centre will be a space where athletes of all levels and from any discipline can find a home and a mentor dedicated to guiding the next generation to the top. I've always dreamed of building a place where young players can truly thrive. This centre is more than just a facility — it's a call to action," Sindhu said in a statement. — PTI

King & Carty hit centuries for WI

Bridgetown, Barbados: Brandon King and Keacy Carty blasted centuries as the West Indies scored a series-clinching eight-wicket victory over England in the third and final game of their One-Day International series at Kensington Oval on Wednesday.

Replying to the visitors' total of 263 for 8, King and Carty featured in a second-wicket stand of 209, the duo making light of what could have been a daunting task following the early loss of Evin Lewis.

King fell for 102 with victory in sight but Carty finished on an unbeaten 128 after hitting the winning boundary as West Indies coasted home on 267 for the loss of two wickets with seven overs to spare.

FAST FORWARD

Blues put Test debacle behind, take on South Africa in T20 series

Durban, Nov. 7: As India firmly embraces a transition phase, a clutch of second line stars such as Sanju Samson and Abhishek Sharma will be hoping for a breakaway series in the four T20Is against South Africa, starting with the first contest here on Friday.

It is imperative for them to shed the tag of side-kicks and establish themselves as the first-choice players in this format.

The recent home T20I series against Bangladesh was a precursor. Samson received a chance to open consistently against the neighbours, and he made most of it slamming a 47-ball 111.

In the post-Rohit Sharma era in T20Is, Samson would like to further buttress his claim for a regular opening slot with a few fruitful outings against the Proteas.

This is an important series for Abhishek as well. The dashing left-hander showed his impressive skills while hammering a 47-ball hundred against Zimbabwe at Harare in July, but his other six international innings have produced 0, 10, 14, 16, 15, 4.

Abhishek will be keen to be more consistent to safeguard his place, and he will also be looking to be more penetrative with his left-arm spin.

Tilak Varma offers a similar case. The left-hander has somewhat fallen off the radar after making a solid beginning to his T20I career against the West Indies in August 2023.

Since then, his 12 outings in the shortest format have produced just one fifty and has not featured in the blue jersey after appearing against Afghanistan earlier this January.

So, the Hyderabad based player will be keen to impress the selectors with some meaningful efforts against the Africans, and he has also started using his off-spin more regularly.

This series also offers an excellent opportunity for wicketkeeper-batter Jitesh Sharma, who has slipped a few rungs below in the pecking order, and spinner Varun Chakravarthy, who impressed against Bangladesh taking five wickets, to keep themselves afloat over the competition.

The seniors in the side like skipper Suryakumar Yadav, all rounders Hardik Pandya and Axar Patel, the only member from the Test side here, will be hoping for a strong outing so that India can apply some balm over the wounds from their recent home series defeat against New Zealand. — PTI

Shreyas slams double ton in Ranji

Mumbai, Nov. 7: Shreyas Iyer continued with his red-hot form, smashing a stroke-filled 233 to lead Mumbai to a massive 602 for four declared in their Ranji Trophy Elite Group 'A' match against Odisha, here on Thursday.

Iyer's second consecutive ton in Ranji Trophy also turned out to be his highest score in first-class cricket as the right-hander hammered Odisha all around the park at a strike rate of nearly 103.

Iyer's knock was well complimented by comeback man Siddhesh Lad's 169 not out, who hit 17 fours in his 337-ball innings.

Mumbai added another 217 runs to their overnight score of 385 for three with Iyer and Lad putting on an overall 354 runs for the fourth wicket — now a record for the 42-time winners in the Ranji Trophy.

Home spinners Shams Mulani (2/52) and Himanshu Singh (2/22) then provided crucial breakthroughs to reduce the visitors to 146 for 5.

Odisha are still trailing by another 456 runs in the first essay and have Sandeep Pattanaik (73 not out) and Debabrata Pradhan (7) at the crease. Shardul Thakur provided an early breakthrough



Australia 'A' bowler Michael Nesar sends down a delivery during the first day of their unofficial Test against India 'A' at the Melbourne Cricket Ground in Melbourne on Thursday. Nesar returned with figures of 4 for 27. — AFP

India 'A' bounced out by Oz

Melbourne, Nov. 7: Dhruv Jurel showcased his sound technique and cool temperament while wickets fell like ninepins at the other end in another shoddy batting display by India 'A' on the opening day of the second unofficial Test against Australia 'A' at the iconic Melbourne Cricket Ground (MCG) on Thursday.

Jurel (80 off 186 balls), who came to bat in the third over scored nearly half of India 'A's paltry first innings total of 161 in 57.1 overs with only other batter to cross 20-run mark was Devdutt Padikkal (26).

Veteran K. L. Rahul (4), opening the batting, done in by a peach of a delivery from Scott Boland (1/51 in 15 overs).

Michael Nesar (4/27 in 12.2 overs), one of the finest and unluckiest among contemporary Australian pacers, dealt a telling blow in the opening over from which India 'A' couldn't recover.

At stumps, Australia 'A' were 53 for 2 in reply with Mukesh Kumar again looking best among Indian bowlers.

What stood out during the day was Jurel's composure and ability to play late, using soft hands.

When there was extra bounce, he would quickly loosen his bottom hand grip to ensure that the ball didn't go to slip or gully region. He judged the length per-



India 'A' batsman Dhruv Jurel plays a shot on way to his half-century against Australia 'A' at the Melbourne Cricket Ground in Melbourne on Thursday. — AFP

fectly and the flicked six off Boland was a treat to watch.

While Rishabh Pant is the first-choice wicket-keeper-batter, Jurel's ability to leave deliveries on length should put him in a better position than Sarfaraz Khan in the middle-order batter role. It was also the day when one got an indication that

India senior team might bank on Rahul's experience of opening the innings if Rohit Sharma skips a match. — PTI

BRIEF SCORES

India 'A' 161 in 57.1 overs (Dhruv Jurel 80, Michael Nesar 4/27, Beau Webster 3/19) vs Australia 'A' 53/2 in 17.1 overs (Marcus Harris 26 batting).

PAK READY TO FOLLOW HYBRID MODEL FOR CT

Karachi, Nov. 7: In an apparent climb down from its earlier stated position, Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) is willing to make "adjustments" in the schedule of the 2025 Champions Trophy which it is hosting with matches involving India taking place in the UAE, according to sources.

It could mean that the tournament may be held in the 'Hybrid Model' as the Indian government is unlikely to allow its team to travel to Pakistan in the existing socio-political environment and security concerns for national team.

The last tournament that Pakistan hosted was the Asia Cup in 2023, conducted in a 'Hybrid Model' with India playing their matches in Sri Lanka as the government refused to permit the players' travel across the border.

The PCB feels that even if Indian government does not clear the tour to Pakistan slight adjustments can be made to the schedule, as in all probability India would play its matches in Dubai or Sharjah. — PTI



Arjun beats Alexey in Round 3, jumps to World No. 2

DC CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI, NOV. 7

Arjun Erigaisi jumped to second in the World Rankings following his win over Alexey Sarana at the Chennai Grand Masters 2024 on Thursday in Chennai. The 21-year-old also reinforced his lead at the top of the Masters category, which he jointly leads with Amin Tabatabaei after three rounds.

The Chennai Grand Masters 2024 features two categories—Masters & Challengers. With a rating average of 2729, the Masters presents a more competitive field this time around. The debuting Challengers, meanwhile, is designed to provide emerging Indian talent the chance to compete in a top-class tournament.

Starting the black pieces, Arjun replied to Sarana's Queen's Pawn Opening by engaging him in the Indian Game, before quickly launching an East Indian Defense.

Both players castled their kings early in the tie and remained locked in an intense battle before Arjun seized the upper hand and converted it into his second win of the tournament. Courtesy of his triumph, the youngster reclaimed his 2800 ELO rating and surged above Fabiano Caruana into the number

two spot.

In Round 3 of the Masters category, Amin Tabatabaei caused a major upset by defeating French Grandmaster Maxime Vachier-Lagrave, showcasing impressive tactical precision. Meanwhile, Levon Aronian claimed a strong victory over Parham Maghsoodloo, solidifying his presence in the tournament. Meanwhile, Vidit Gujrathi bounced from successive losses with a gritty, tactical draw against local favourite Aravindh Chithambaram.

Pranav V continued his impressive streak in the Challengers category at the Chennai Grand Masters 2024, securing his third consecutive win by defeating Karthikeyan Murali. Meanwhile, Pranesh M claimed victory over Vaishali Rameshbabu, strengthening his position. The closely fought match between Raunak Sadhwani and Leon Mendonca ended in a draw, as did the encounter between Harika Dronavalli and Abhimanyu Puranik.

With three rounds gone, Arjun and Tabatabaei jointly lead the Masters category with 2.5 points, with Aronian in third, 0.5 points behind. Meanwhile, Pranav tops the chart in the Challengers category with 3.0 points after winning all three of his games so far.



Arjun Erigaisi during the third round of the Chennai GM chess on Thursday. — E.K. Sanjay

STATE RANKING | TENPIN BOWLING

Akram emerges bowling champ

DC CORRESPONDENT
CHENNAI, NOV. 7

Akramullah Baig defeated Ganesh NT (447-377) in the final of the fourth Tamil Nadu State Ranking Tenpin Bowling tournament which concluded at LetsBow!, Thoraipakkam, on Thursday.

In the final played based on cumulative pinfall of two games, Ganesh was leading Akram by a margin of nine pins after the first game. In Game 2, Akram crushed Ganesh by a huge margin of 79 pins and eventually defeated Ganesh by a pinfall difference of 70 pins (447-377).

Earlier in the day, in the first semifinal played based

on the cumulative pinfall of two games, top seed Akramullah Baig defeated fourth seed Parthiban J (380-356) in the two-game knockout by a pinfall difference of 24 pins. In the second Semi-Final, third seed Ganesh NT convincingly beat second seed Shabbir Dhankot J (419-374) by 45 pins to secure his spot in the final.

The top four bowlers made it to the knock-out round based on the cumulative pinfall scored in 18 games. Akramullah Baig finished on top of the table after Round 3 with a pinfall 3722 at an impressive average of 206.78 followed by Shabbir Dhankot (Pinfall – 3713, Average – 206.28).



Akramullah Baig (left) and Ganesh NT.

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