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BJP announces nationwide protests over Kharge's Modi remark

New Delhi: The BJP has announced nationwide protests on Monday after Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge invoked Prime Minister Narendra Modi's father during a heated exchange at a gathering in Patna, prompting accusations of personal abuse and demands for an apology. The confrontation occurred on Sunday during an event commemorating the 139th birth anniversary of Bihar's first chief minister, Shri Krishna Singh. Kharge was addressing the audience when a man inter-

rupted with words suggesting that Modi would not leave power.

"Modi ka baap bhi jayega," Kharge responded, a Hindi expression meaning "Even Modi's father will have to go." He repeated the remark as disorder broke out inside the venue, drawing immediate condemnation from leaders of the governing Bharatiya Janata Party. Union Home Minister Amit Shah accused Kharge of crossing the limits of decency and said the Congress had repeatedly targeted Modi and

his family. Shah argued that the opposition party's electoral setbacks had led its leaders to substitute personal attacks for substantive political arguments. BJP president Nitin Nabin also condemned the language, describing it as indecent and unparliamentary. He said voters were watching the Congress leadership's conduct and would respond to it politically. Other BJP representatives accused Kharge of insulting the prime minister's late father and undermining standards of public debate. The con-

troversy acquired another dimension when the audience member, identified as Santosh Kumar, said his words had been misunderstood. Speaking outside the venue, he maintained that he had not intended to defend Modi's continuation in power or disrupt Kharge's speech.

"I was saying that unless there is a revolt, Modi will not go. But only a part of it was heard and was misunderstood," Kumar said. His explanation suggested that the exchange began with a sentence

Kharge had interpreted differently from its intended meaning. Kumar said he wanted Modi to leave power but believed political change would require stronger public resistance. His account challenged the initial portrayal of him as a supporter of the prime minister heckling the Congress leader, although the full exchange remained difficult to establish from the words audible in the hall. People attending the function confronted Kumar after the interruption.



Poll Body's 'Unanimous' Defence In Supreme Court Over SIR Row

New Delhi: The Election Commission, in its affidavit filed in the Supreme Court today, explained its decision-making process that has come into question after reports that two of the three Commissioners were not on board with the process adopted for the Special Intensive Revision of voter list and inclusion of new voters. Asserting that all decisions are unanimous,

the Commission said the petitions on the matter filed in the top court are based solely on newspaper reports and should be dismissed. The Commission reiterated that the three orders related to the SIR process issued in June 2025, October 2025, and May 2026 were also adopted unanimously. The Commission said any decision-making process, suggestions, ob-

servations, varying views or queries by any official in the chain of command are taken into consideration for arriving at a decision. So the views of Election Commissioners are taken into account for the decision-making process. Any comments, questions, or suggestions made by the CEC or the Election Commissioners during the consideration of a file cannot be con-

strued as the final decision of the Commission. "The files put up by the respective divisions are sent first

to one Election Commissioner and thereafter to the other Election Commissioner and then finally to the Chief Election Commissioner... Such approved decisions of the Commission are duly noted in the con-

cerned files of the Election Commission and bear the signature of the ECs and CEC. Thereafter, the decision is notified and implemented by the ECI Secretariat," the affidavit read.

"In any decision-making process, any suggestion, observation or query by the Chief Election Commissioner or the Election Commissioners either to other Election Commissioner/Chief Election

Commissioner or to any officer of the Commission - does not constitute a decision of the Election Commission under Section 18 of the 2023 Act," the Commission said. Rejecting the allegations regarding changes to 'Form 6, the Commission clarified that none of the three SIR orders have resulted in any changes to the statutory 'Form 6' used for voter registration.

PM Modi to Attend DGPs and IGPs Conference in AP



From Our Staff Reporter Amaravati, October 26: The conference of Directors General of Police (DGPs) and Inspectors General of Police (IGPs) will be held from December 4 to 6 at the Indian Institute of Science Education and Research (IISER) in Tirupati. Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Home Minister Amit Shah are expected to attend the conference. In this regard, an inter-departmental committee meeting was held at the Andhra Pradesh Secretariat on Monday under the leadership of Chief Secretary G. Sai Prasad. During the review meeting, the Chief Secretary issued key instructions to officials on various aspects of the arrangements. He directed the concerned departments to ensure elaborate and foolproof arrangements for the conference attended by the Prime Minister, leaving no room for lapses. The Chief Secretary also guided officials on the preparations and responsibilities to be undertaken by each department to ensure the smooth conduct of the event.

Cyclone Arnab: Schools Closed in Several Andhra Pradesh Districts



From Our Staff Reporter Amaravati, October 26: Andhra Pradesh Meteorological Department officials have reported that Cyclone Arnab is moving rapidly across the east-central and west-central Bay of Bengal. The cyclone has been moving at a speed of 13 kilometres per hour over the past six hours.

According to officials, the cyclone is currently located approximately 580 kilometres from Visakhapatnam, 660 kilometres from Kakinada, 760 kilometres from Machilipatnam, and 830 kilometres from Bapatla. They warned that the cyclone is intensifying as it approaches the coast.

In view of the cyclone, the Andhra Pradesh government has announced holidays for schools in several districts.

Schools Closed on Tuesday and Wednesday in Krishna District

Krishna District Collector D.K. Balaji announced that holidays have been declared for several schools in the district on Tuesday and Wednesday as a precautionary measure against Cyclone Arnab.

Holidays Declared in Rajamahendravaram

District Collector Keerthi Chekuri announced that educational institutions and Anganwadi centres in Rajamahendravaram will remain closed on October 27 and 28 due to Cyclone Arnab.

The Collector also stated that emergency control room phone numbers have been established in East Godavari district to assist residents during emergencies.

People can contact the following numbers in case of emergencies:

District Collectorate, Rajamahendravaram: 08832-944455

Sub-Collector's Office, Rajamahendravaram: 08832-442344

RDO Office, Kovvur: 08813-231488

District Collector Keerthi Chekuri urged residents to contact these numbers whenever emergency assistance is required.

Minister Savitha Pledges Efforts for the Development of Valmiki and Boyas

From Our Staff Reporter Sri Sathya Sai District, October 26: Maharshi Valmiki Jayanti was celebrated with great enthusiasm at the TDP office in Penukonda. Minister Savitha paid floral tributes to Maharshi Valmiki by garlanding his portrait. Speaking on the occasion, the Minister said Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu deserved credit for issuing a government order in 2017 to celebrate Valmiki Jayanti as a state festival. She praised Maharshi Valmiki as the great sage who gave the world the historic epic Ramayana. She said Valmiki's Ramayana offers valuable lessons on the relationship between husband and wife, family bonds, and the values relevant to contemporary society. Minister Savitha stated that political,

social, and economic recognition for the Valmiki and Boya communities could be achieved under Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu's leadership. She said these communities had been given importance in local body elections. She also credited Chandrababu Naidu with establishing the Valmiki Corporation and announced that a bronze statue of Maharshi Valmiki was being installed in Penukonda. The Minister said former Chief Minister N.T. Rama Rao and Chandrababu Naidu had consistently supported the Backward Classes (BCs). She emphasised that the development of BC communities remained the TDP's objective. Savitha added that BC communities had consistently supported the TDP and the ruling alliance in elections.



Centre Approves Rs.27,370 Crore Green Energy Project for Andhra Pradesh



From Our Staff Reporter New Delhi, October 26: The Central Government has extended major support to Andhra Pradesh by approving a massive power transmission project worth Rs.27,370 crore. The project, sanctioned under the Green Energy Corridor-III (GEC-III), aims to integrate solar, wind, and pumped storage power into the electricity grid. The Narendra Modi-led Central Government has given a significant boost to Andhra Pradesh's green energy sector by approving the project to expand renewable energy generation and strengthen the state's power transmission infrastructure. Under the project, the Centre has ap-

proved the construction of 7,872 circuit kilometres of transmission lines across the state, along with new 400 kV substations at Ramayapatnam and Koppaka. The Rs.27,370 crore project will modernise

Andhra Pradesh's electricity transmission network. New substations with a combined capacity of 9,500 MVA will be constructed as part of the initiative. The Central Government has prepared plans to complete

the project by 2029-30. To ensure a reliable and high-quality electricity supply to port areas and industrial clusters in Andhra Pradesh, the Centre has also decided to establish a 400 kV substation at Ramayapatnam.

Major Setback for Y.S. Jagan in His Home Turf of Pulivendula



From Our Staff Reporter Kadapa, October 26: YSRCP chief and former Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy is facing successive political setbacks. He lost power in the Assembly elections, with his party reduced to just 11 seats. Now, the ongoing local body elections have dealt another major blow to him in his home turf of Pulivendula. Of the 40 municipal wards in Pulivendula, TDP candidates have been elected unopposed in 20 wards. Elections will be held for the remaining 20 wards and the chairperson's post. The TDP has also gained control of the Kadapa Municipal Corporation and eight municipalities in the district. Out of nine municipal chairperson posts in the district,

the TDP has won six unopposed. The alliance parties have secured the chairperson posts in four municipalities—Rajampet (TDP), Proddatur (TDP), Badvel (TDP), and Mydukur (TDP)—as well as two nagar panchayats: Kamalapuram (TDP) and Yerraguntla (BJP).

Ward-Wise Election Details

Rajampet: Of the 32 wards, TDP candidates were elected unopposed in 14 and a Jana Sena candidate in one.

Proddatur: TDP candidates won unopposed in 51 of the 52 wards, while a BJP candidate secured the remaining ward. Badvel: Of the 40 wards, TDP candidates won 35 unopposed and Jana Sena candidates secured two. Two independent candidates were also elected unopposed. Elections will therefore be held only in Ward 39 on November 1. Mydukur: TDP candidates were elected unopposed in 17 of the 32 wards. Elections will be held in the remaining

15 wards. Kamalapuram Nagar Panchayat: Of the 23 wards, TDP candidates won 22 unopposed, while a BJP candidate secured one. Yerraguntla Nagar Panchayat: Of the 28 wards, TDP candidates won 17 unopposed and BJP candidates secured 10. An election will be held in Ward 7. Kadapa Municipal Corporation: Of the 66 divisions, TDP candidates were elected unopposed in 47, BJP candidates in two, and a Jana Sena candidate in one.

EDITORIAL

Where Is the 'Indian Soul' in Politics?

The developments unfolding on India's political stage today are not confined to ordinary changes of government or criticism by opposition parties. They point to a deeper and more serious crisis of democracy. Congress leader Rahul Gandhi's observation that the cosmic dance of creation and destruction does not require a predetermined plan because the universe already knows its steps aptly reflects the present political atmosphere. As the repressive actions of the government in power intensify, young people are responding with equally strong resistance on the streets. These circumstances clearly indicate that the country's political future may be approaching a significant turning point. The most distressing reality before us today is that, decades after the end of colonial rule, India's administrative machinery and police forces have still not managed to shed the legacy of that era. In a democracy, a citizen's word should be presumed truthful, and the burden should rest on the government to prove wrongdoing. However, in our country, treating every citizen with suspicion and forcing individuals to prove their own innocence have become commonplace. Police forces, too, are acting in the interests of their political masters and following their orders, ruthlessly attacking peaceful protesters, women and students. Such actions are damaging India's international reputation. The brutality of the police that claimed the lives of theatre artist Snehalata Reddy and engineering student P. Rajan during the Emergency era in 1977 appears not to have changed even today, as current incidents demonstrate. Despite the formation of the National Police Commission in 1977 and the Supreme Court's clear directives, police reforms have remained confined to paper rather than being implemented in practice. The roots of the repressive laws that the present Modi government uses to keep opposition leaders, social activists and students in prison for years without trial can be traced to previous administrations. The Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, the National Security Act, controversial provisions of the Information Technology Act and the Foreign Contribution Regulation Act, which have been used against the Bhima Koregaon accused and individuals such as Sharjeel Imam and Umar Khalid, were introduced by earlier governments led by the Congress for their own purposes. This is a bitter truth. Today, the ruling government has sharpened these laws and further undermined civil liberties and the voices of its critics. Laws introduced in the name of protecting democracy and national security have now become weapons for suppressing the fundamental rights of citizens. Only by correcting past mistakes, acknowledging the wrongs committed during their own tenure and making amends can opposition parties gain the moral authority to restore democracy. At the same time, the protests and uprisings taking place on the streets of the national capital, Delhi, are emerging as signs of a new political consciousness. The anguish of former Jawaharlal Nehru University students and the anger of young people overflowing across digital platforms reflect a strong demand for systemic change. When permission is denied for a display of the Tricolour at a prominent location in the country, and even those carrying the national flag are viewed with suspicion, a fundamental question arises in everyone's mind: Who has the authority to decide whether a citizen is patriotic? No matter how hard the government tries to divert public attention from these protests, it cannot conceal the flames of dissent burning on the streets. It is not easy to hide the growing domestic discontent behind the glitter of foreign diplomacy and international oil agreements.

Visits by US Secretary of State Marco Rubio and the business strategies of industrial magnates may have offered the government some reassurance, but they cannot solve the problems of unemployment and repression burning within the country. If India wishes to demonstrate its strength and influence abroad, it must first address the political unrest emerging at home with compassion and in accordance with the Constitution. State power and repressive measures may temporarily suppress protests, but they cannot extinguish the resentment smouldering in the hearts of citizens. The upcoming Assembly elections in various states will not merely represent routine changes of government; they are likely to become a popular verdict on this authoritarian political culture. On one side are the strategic moves Rahul Gandhi is making to unite opposition parties; on the other are the instruments of state power being deployed by the government to preserve its position. Caught between these two forces, it is the ordinary citizen who ultimately suffers. The most pressing need of the hour is to put an end to politics characterised by corruption and outdated, monarchical attitudes, and to revive the broad-minded, compassionate and forgiving Indian soul. Only after this dance of repression comes to an end can we hope for a new chapter and a fresh dawn in the story of Indian democracy.

What Is Suspicious?

Jagdeep Dhankhar's appearance on the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) stage during its Dussehra celebrations has triggered widespread discussion. Fifteen months ago, he abruptly resigned as Vice President, citing health reasons, under circumstances that raised questions. While reports and political discussions have suggested that the BJP-led Union government has been treating Dhankhar unfairly by not even providing him accommodation in Delhi befitting a former Vice President, his presence at an RSS event was bound to attract attention. After all, why would it not spark debate when the ideological mentor of the BJP invites him to its Dussehra celebrations?

These were no ordinary Dussehra celebrations. Every year, on Dussehra, the RSS also celebrates its foundation day in Nagpur, its headquarters. This year, the occasion assumed even greater significance because it marked the culmination of the celebrations commemorating the RSS's centenary. Why, then, did RSS leaders invite Jagdeep Dhankhar as a distinguished guest to such an important event held at Reshimbagh ground in Nagpur?

Dhankhar shared the stage with RSS chief Mohan Bhagwat, Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnis, who is particularly close to the Nagpur establishment, Union Minister Nitin Gadkari, Dainik Jagran editor Sanjay Gupta, who was the chief guest, and Israeli Consul General Yaniv Revach.

Why did Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Amit Shah, who had once favoured Dhankhar and chosen him for the Vice President's office, humiliate him and push him out so abruptly? The reason for describing him as their favourite lies in his conduct before becoming Vice President. Since 2014, appointments to such positions have increasingly appeared to follow a pattern. Before that, not all Vice Presidents belonged to these categories. The office has also been held by distinguished intellectuals and individuals of exceptional integrity. The Vice President's position is by no means an insignificant one.

Consider the political role of the office. The Vice President serves as the Chairman of the Rajya Sabha, the Upper House of Parliament. The responsibility includes regulating its proceedings and ensuring that the House functions properly. After Modi and Amit Shah took charge of the Union govern-

ment, appointments to such positions increasingly seemed to favour either people who were unlikely to become politically troublesome in the future or those who would remain exceptionally loyal to the leadership.

After moving through the Janata Dal and the Congress before joining the BJP, Jagdeep Dhankhar demonstrated considerable loyalty after Modi became Prime Minister for a second term. In 2019, he was appointed Governor of West Bengal. There, he repeatedly clashed with the state government and then Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee. While serving as Governor, he frequently made controversial political remarks through Twitter and the media.

His political comments became so contentious that the Trinamool Congress mocked him as the real Leader of the Opposition in West Bengal. Mamata Banerjee even blocked Dhankhar on X, reportedly because she objected to the allegedly unethical and distasteful manner in which he referred to her on several occasions. The fact that a Chief Minister blocked the Governor of her own state illustrates how deep their differences had become.

When the BJP nominated Dhankhar for the Vice President's election in 2022, it hailed him as a "son of the farmer." Prime Minister Narendra Modi personally led a procession of Union ministers and BJP leaders accompanying him to file his nomination. Why did this relationship come to such an abrupt end before even three years had passed? Dhankhar resigned from the Vice President's office under circumstances that raised questions.

Why did the BJP leadership push him out? Why did the RSS invite him back to its platform for such a prestigious occasion? For some time, discussions have suggested that the RSS and the BJP-led Union government may not be entirely on the same page. According to sources within the Sangh, inviting Dhankhar was seen as an attempt by the RSS to assert its authority. They contend that his invitation helped dispel the perception that the BJP had gained the upper hand over the RSS in recent years.

Over the past few years, some of RSS chief Mohan Bhagwat's statements, even when indirect, have appeared to contain pointed messages for the BJP leadership in power at the Centre. During his Dussehra address last year, Bhagwat expressed concern over the communal violence in Manipur.



Even after a year, he observed, the state was still waiting for conditions that would allow peace to return. His remarks suggested that the Union government had not done enough to address the situation. It was after these comments that Modi visited Manipur for the first time.

On another occasion, Bhagwat appeared to criticise Modi's approach when he said that, in a democracy, the opposition must be treated as the opposition rather than branded as anti-national. As Modi approached the age of 75, Bhagwat also made remarks that were interpreted as suggesting that everyone should retire from office upon reaching that age, supposedly in accordance with an RSS norm. For some reason, he later qualified those remarks. Reports also emerged that Modi visited Nagpur in between these statements. Perhaps Dhankhar's invitation was a continuation of the same approach adopted by the RSS chief.

Was there a conspiracy to remove Narendra Modi's government and install Rahul Gandhi as Prime Minister? Did foreign forces, allegedly operating from the United States, attempt to execute such a plan through then Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar? Was businessman Anil Ambani also involved in this alleged conspiracy? Did Modi make Dhankhar resign in such haste because he had learned about these developments? After Dhankhar's resignation, a story along these lines circulated widely. If that were true, why would the RSS invite Dhankhar as a distinguished guest to its celebrations? Even assuming that the RSS was unhappy with Modi, it could have sought to remove him from office and replace him with another leader who would follow its line. But why would it welcome Dhankhar if he had been in-

volved in a conspiracy to remove Modi and install Rahul Gandhi, the RSS's ideological adversary, as Prime Minister?

Leaving aside the allegations about foreign interference, a report published by a district-level newspaper in Andhra Pradesh, described as highly credible in the state, claimed that Anil Ambani had told Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu that the RSS was unhappy with Modi, that Modi was benefiting only Gautam Adani, and that business circles across the country were dissatisfied with him. According to the report, Ambani also suggested that further details could be obtained by meeting Dhankhar. Subsequently, Naidu's son, Nara Lokesh, allegedly met Dhankhar.

YouTube channels later reported that Modi summoned Chandrababu Naidu and questioned him about these developments. Naidu reportedly denied the allegations and offered an incoherent explanation, promising that such an incident would not happen again. These reports further claimed that Naidu's praise of Modi became increasingly excessive from that point onwards.

There is no way to establish the truth of these reports conclusively. After all, openly conducted activities are not generally called conspiracies; conspiracies are carried out in secret and are difficult to prove. That does not necessarily mean, however, that every unproven allegation is false.

It appears that, rather than foreign forces conspiring to install Rahul Gandhi as Prime Minister, there may have been attempts to remove Modi from power, and Dhankhar's position may have come under threat in that context. Dhankhar's appearance on the Nagpur stage during the recent Dussehra celebrations may also raise questions about

whether the RSS had any role in such efforts.

Like someone instinctively touching their shoulders when accused of stealing a pumpkin, a newspaper that habitually showers Chandrababu Naidu with praise and wishes that he remain Chief Minister for as long as the earth exists, while all other political parties perish, published the foreign-conspiracy story on its front page after a year had passed. It apparently sought to demonstrate that neither Chandrababu Naidu nor his son Lokesh had anything to do with the alleged conspiracy.

The newspaper claimed that Chandrababu Naidu knew nothing about conspiracies and had, in fact, warned Modi about the matter. It also tried desperately to establish that Lokesh had never met Dhankhar, but was caught out by its own earlier reporting. On June 18 of the previous year, just days before Dhankhar's resignation, the same newspaper had published a photograph of Lokesh meeting Dhankhar in Delhi.

So, what exactly is suspicious?

Is it the allegation that Jagdeep Dhankhar attempted to conspire with foreign forces to bring down the Modi government? Is it the possibility that Chandrababu Naidu and his son Lokesh, despite being partners in the NDA, tried to reach Dhankhar through Anil Ambani to destabilise the Modi government? Is the foreign-conspiracy narrative a fabricated story cooked up by a newspaper to protect Chandrababu Naidu and his son? Or is it the RSS's invitation to Dhankhar to the Nagpur Dussehra celebrations, intended to send a message to the RSS-BJP establishment that Dhankhar is still one of their own and to dispel all these allegations? These are the questions that remain.

Middle Power Myths, And Why The West Needs To Stop Putting India In A 'Box'

Canada has faced insults and contempt from US President Donald Trump as well as economic pressure. This has goaded Prime Minister Mark Carney to widen his country's geopolitical and economic options. At the Davis Economic Forum, he spoke of "middle powers" joining together to carve out a more autonomous role for themselves at the international level.

This has triggered discussions on many platforms on the international role of "middle powers" in the light of huge geopolitical, economic, technology and security disruptions caused by the Trump administration.

There is no agreed definition of the attributes of "middle powers". It would seem that major European countries, such as the UK, Germany and France, are now seen as "middle powers". Former UK Prime Minister Rishi Sunak in a panel discussion at the recent Munich Security Conference in Delhi on "middle powers" was comfortable with the idea of the UK being a "middle power". Japan, Brazil, Turkey and Indonesia are also classified as such in

the current discourse.

The genesis of this "middle powers" concept is essentially the disarray in the western world because of the manner in which the Trump administration is bullying Europe and its other allies. Trump has discomposed the NATO alliance at a time when the alliance is deeply involved in a proxy war against Russia in Ukraine. Trump, Vance and others are openly interfering in the internal political affairs of Europe, attacking personally some European leaders, supporting right wing parties, lambasting European policies on uncontrolled migration to the point of wondering whether the European allies can remain dependable when political power slips eventually into the hands of Muslim migrants.

With Trump's hectoring of Europe and a growing recognition that Europe faces a structural change in its relations with the US, Europe sees the necessity of re-ordering its ties with the non-western world. Drawing closer to India is an option, which explains the FTA with India as well as an intensive engagement of India by major European countries.

This, of course, is in India's interests too as the Trump administration has delivered serious blows to bilateral ties on a number of issues. Once again the issue of trust has arisen in India-US ties, which in the last couple of decades had begun to dissipate.

Is India a "middle power" is a question now being discussed in think tank and other circles. The question got attention when at the Munich Security Conference organised in New Delhi, a "middle powers" panel was organised in which India participated.

India is obviously not a "great power" yet. It is not a permanent member of the UN Security Council. It is, however, a nuclear and missile power as well as a space power. It possesses large and strong military although its domestic defence manufacturing base is still deficient. India exercises strategic autonomy but it still has many vulnerabilities and external dependencies.

But India is not a "middle power". Its status is sui generis. It is the biggest country in the world population-wise. It has a young popula-

tion. Its economy is growing, with a general international consensus that it will be the third largest economy in the world in a few years. In PPP terms, India is already the third largest. It has very considerable human talent, which in scale is a big national and even an international asset. The big European countries are still powerful but they are not rising powers. They are declining powers, with a declining population, and the issue before them is to manage their decline and preserve their prosperity. Unlike India they are dependent on their security on the US. Germany hosts several US bases and US nuclear weapons are stationed on its soil. In a sense, Germany is still an occupied country. Unlike most of the other "middle powers" which are compelled by alliances to operate in blocs, India engages all sides, be it US, Russia and even China. Europe today has essentially cut off ties with Russia. How many "middle powers" have the capacity to straddle the rich North and poor South. India has more geopolitical manoeuvrability. That India has dependencies does not make it a "middle power", as we are not

unique in this regard in this interdependent and connected world. Even the hands of the US are tied to a degree because of its dependence on China for critical raw materials and technologies. India is a rising power. It is managing its security challenges, and serious ones at that, without hosting foreign bases on its soil and joining any military alliance. Canada and the European "middle powers", despite two them being permanent members of the UNSC and nuclear powers, are dependent on their security on NATO which is US-led. They see themselves as "middle powers" bracketed by the US on one side and China on the other. India does not have the same perspective. It defines itself as a civilisational power, which means that unlike the US which is 250 years old and Europe's limited historical depth as a civilisation (Gandhi disputed the idea of a European civilisation) India posits its contribution to human civilisation over thousands of years, and today India believes it can contribute once again globally its way of looking at and dealing the world rooted in its civilisation.

Discipline and Vigilance Are Essential for Effective Public Service - Polavaram SP K. Chakravarthy Advises 51 Newly Recruited Constables



Rampachodavaram, Pen Power, October 26: Discipline, vigilance and respect towards the public are essential in police service, Polavaram District Superintendent of Police K. Chakravarthy, IPS, stated. He called upon the newly recruited constables to perform their duties with honesty, dedication and a strong commitment to public service, bringing a good name to the police department. A total of 51 newly recruited constables, who successfully completed nine months of police training, met the District SP on Monday and received his guidance. The group comprises 33 male and 18 female constables. Addressing the new recruits, the SP advised them to put the knowledge

and skills acquired during their training into practice in the field. As they are required to perform election duties, he stressed that every constable must remain vigilant, maintain discipline and discharge responsibilities with utmost commitment. He advised the personnel to maintain physical fitness and good health while performing their duties actively. He also emphasized the importance of strictly following the instructions of senior officers and treating every member of the public with respect, particularly women and children. He noted that punctuality, dedication and a sense of responsibility are essential qualities for police personnel. The SP explained that their responsibilities

would include maintaining police station records, station duties, security bandobast, festival and public event arrangements, VIP security and escort duties. He instructed them to be prepared to handle these responsibilities efficiently by applying the knowledge gained during training. As the constables would be serving in the agency areas of Polavaram district, the SP stressed the need to develop a thorough understanding of local geographical conditions, regional issues and the situation in Maoist-affected areas. He directed them to remain alert while on duty and promptly inform the concerned senior officers about important developments, acting according to their

instructions.

He further instructed the newly recruited personnel to bring outside phone calls and any need to travel to other areas to the attention of their superiors in advance and act only in accordance with their permission and guidance. The SP urged the constables to uphold the reputation of their teachers, parents, the police department and society through their conduct and service. He called upon them to make public service their primary objective and discharge their duties with integrity and dedication. Administrative Officer Javali, DSPP. Ashraf Ali, AR DSP Seetharamudu, CI Gopi Narendra Prasad, SI Ramesh and other officials participated in the programme.

EAM S Jaishankar Meets Russian State Duma Chairman Vyacheslav Volodin In Delhi, Discusses Bilateral Ties & Parliamentary Cooperation

New Delhi: External Affairs Minister (EAM) S Jaishankar met Chairman of Russia's State Duma, Vyacheslav Volodin, in New Delhi and discussed bilateral cooperation as well as opportunities to deepen parliamentary linkages between the two countries. "Pleased to meet the Chairman of the State Duma of Russia, Vyacheslav Volodin and his delegation in New Delhi. We discussed our bilateral cooperation as well as opportunities for deepening our parliamentary linkages," EAM Jaishankar posted on X. Earlier in the day, Volodin noted that the BRICS countries are united in recognising the right of each state to a sovereign path of development. "We represent countries with different political systems, economic models, and traditions. But we are united in building a multipolar world, respecting different approaches and national legislations, and recognising the right of each state to a sovereign path of development," said



Volodin in his address at the plenary session of the 12th BRICS Parliamentary Forum, which began in New Delhi.

In his address, Volodin, currently on his first working visit abroad to attend the two-day forum in New Delhi, highlighted that, over the 20 years of its existence, BRICS has become one of the key pillars of the emerging multipolar world and a just world order. "The relations between our countries within BRICS are an example of effective cooperation, where sovereign states work on mutually

beneficial terms, developing their economies and improving the well-being of their citizens," said Volodin. Volodin also met Prime Minister Narendra Modi at the inauguration of the forum in New Delhi and conveyed warm greetings and best wishes from Russian President Vladimir Putin. Volodin began his working visit to India on Sunday and met with his foreign counterparts for bilateral discussions on the sidelines of the BRICS forum in New Delhi. According to the Russian Foreign Ministry, meetings and talks with "colleagues

from the Parliament of India" are also planned, considering that Russia-India relations are a privileged strategic partnership, rooted in traditions of 'Druzhiba Dosti' and mutually beneficial cooperation. "Relations between Russia and India constitute a privileged strategic partnership, rooted in traditions of friendship, trust and mutually beneficial cooperation. It is important to contribute to developing and strengthening these relations through parliamentary cooperation," the ministry mentioned.

CM Suvendu Adhikari Holds Subdued Bijaya Sammilani After Chor Bagan Stampede, Promises To Release SIT Report

Kolkata: Chief Minister Suvendu Adhikari on Monday had organised 'Bijaya Sammilani' at Milan Mela ground with 600 puja committees in a subdued manner due to the Chor Bagan stampede incident. Adhikari kept a place vacant to condole the deaths of 19 people and also handed over compensation to those who were injured during the stampede. WB CM Suvendu Adhikari expressed grief for 19 family members who lost lives in today's Bijoya gathering. He requested not to CLAP after his speech ends. Can't be in celebration mood after death of family members. Compare this to how Mamata was dancing after Mal flash flood. Addressing the gathering, Adhikari said that, taking this incident as a lesson



and also from the probe that is being done by the SIT, the state government will organise future festivals more carefully. "Will make the SIT probe report public soon after we get it. I will not say that this incident was a 'sabotage'. I agree with Mohan Bhagawat that this is caused due to 'human error'. I will neither call it a

small incident. We will take lessons from this and will organise other festivals and also Durga Puja in 2027 more carefully. A couple of years back, there were some untoward incidents during Kartik Puja. We will take lessons from them as well," said Adhikari. The Chief Minister also mentioned that the overall puja celebration was good without

any restriction that was imposed by the earlier government due to 'appeasement politics'. Adhikari also urged people not to clap and said that the cultural programmes had to be subdued as people have lost their lives. Meanwhile, pandal theme artist Sushanta Sibani Paul has been summoned for interrogation on October 28.

Heavy to Very Heavy Rains Likely in Polavaram District: Collector - Schools, Colleges and Anganwadi Centres to Remain Closed on October 27 and 28

Rampachodavaram, October 26 (Pen Power): Polavaram District Collector K. Dinesh Kumar has urged people to remain alert as heavy to very heavy rainfall is expected in the district due to a depression over the Bay of Bengal. He said the district administration had taken precautionary measures to prevent loss of life and property. Addressing a press conference at the Collector's chamber in Rampachodavaram on Monday night, the Collector said strong winds reaching speeds of 115-120 kmph were likely in connection with the weather system. Heavy to extremely heavy rainfall was forecast for October 27, 28 and 29, with the possibility of more than 100 mm of rainfall in a single day. Special teams comprising

Revenue, Police and Panchayat Raj personnel have been formed in vulnerable and cut-off areas. District-level emergency operations, sub-divisional control rooms and mandal-level control rooms have been established to respond promptly to emergencies. Officials have also been instructed to remain available in their respective villages and clear fallen trees immediately to restore road connectivity.

As part of precautionary measures, 122 pregnant women whose expected delivery dates were approaching have been identified and shifted to hospitals for their safety. Nutritional supplies, including rice, milk and eggs, have also been distributed to children and lactating women through Anganwadi centres. The Collector an-



nounced that schools, colleges and Anganwadi centres would remain closed on October 27 and 28 in view of the anticipated heavy rainfall. He appealed to the public to follow official advisories, avoid unnecessary travel and stay indoors dur-

ing severe weather conditions. The district administration's primary objective is to prevent loss of life and minimise property damage, he said, directing all officials and staff to remain vigilant and provide timely assistance to the public.

Police Personnel Asked to Remain Alert in View of Arnab Cyclone

- Emergency Information Must Be Reported Immediately: SP K. Chakravarthy

Rampachodavaram, October 26: Polavaram District Superintendent of Police K. Chakravarthy, IPS, has directed all police officers and personnel in the district to remain on high alert in view of the possible impact of Cyclone Arnab on October 27, 28 and 29, as indicated by weather department warnings.

The SP instructed police personnel to respond immediately to emergencies such as landslides, house collapses, overflowing rivers,

streams and canals, water-logging on roads, and road blockages. He stressed the need for prompt action without negligence to ensure public safety and provide necessary assistance.

Police officers have been directed to immediately report natural disasters, untoward incidents and road blockages within their respective station limits to the Rampachodavaram Control Room, SI Control Room or the Polavaram District Special Branch Inspec-

tor. They were also instructed to coordinate with officials of other departments, take immediate relief measures and keep senior officers informed of the situation.

Emergency Contact Numbers:

Rampachodavaram Control Room: 9441290132

SI Control Room: 8309702674

Polavaram District Special Branch Inspector: 9985822555

The SP urged all police



personnel to remain vigilant throughout the period of the cyclone threat and give top priority to the safety and protection of the public.

Blood Donation Camp Organised on Police Martyrs' Memorial Day

Rampachodavaram, October 26 (Pen Power): Polavaram District SP K. Chakravarthy, IPS, called upon everyone to donate blood voluntarily to save precious lives. On the occasion of Police Martyrs' Memorial Day, the Polavaram District Police Department organised a blood donation camp in Rampachodavaram, where the SP personally donated blood and inspired police personnel.

He stated that timely blood donations can save the lives of accident victims and patients requiring emergency medical care. He urged people to participate



in blood donation drives as a social responsibility.

CI Sanyasinayudu, SIs Ramesh and Ganesh, po-

lice personnel, newly recruited constables, Administrative Officer Javali, DSPP A. Ashraf Ali, AR DSP

Seetharamudu, CI Narendra Prasad and ANS personnel participated in the programme.

Follow State Election Commission Guidelines on Election Expenditure: Collector

Rampachodavaram, October 26 (Pen Power): Polavaram District Election Officer and Collector K. Dinesh Kumar directed election officials to communicate State Election Commission guidelines on election expenditure to all local units of political parties ahead of the second general elections for urban local bodies, MPTCs and ZPTCs.

The Collector stated that expenses incurred by candidates or their election agents, as well as expenses by others to promote a specific candidate, must be accounted for as per applicable rules. General publicity expenses, including posters, banners, flags and stickers without a specific candidate's name or photograph, should be recorded in the political party's account. Campaign material featuring a particular candidate must be included in that candidate's election expenditure account.

He also clarified that vehicle expenses incurred during joint campaigning with specific candidates must be allocated to the respective candidates' expenditure accounts. Political parties, candidates and election agents were urged to maintain transparent and accurate expenditure records in strict compliance with the Election Commission guidelines.



Lula’s Historic Win In Brazilian Election Is A Major Boost To Latin American Left

Incumbent President of Brazil Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva, better known globally as Lula made a dramatic comeback in October 25 run off Presidential elections by comfortably defeating the far right candidate Flavio Bolsonaro who was the frontrunner after the first round of elections on October 4. After 100 per cent counting on Sunday night, the Election Commission announced that 80 year old Lula representing the Left coalition got 51.79 per cent votes as against his 45 year old far right rival Flavio Bolsonaro receiving 48.21 per cent. So Lula had a clear lead of 3.58 per cent. This was a remarkable fightback as in October 4 round, Bolsonaro had a clear lead of 2 per cent over Lula. This was Lula’s consecutive second term and in all fourth term as President of the largest economy of Latin America. It was an incredible achievement for the Brazilian Left to organize the historic win through three weeks of intense campaigning focusing on the disgruntled workers who did not vote for Lula in the first round and also the absentee voters who avoided both candidates and did not cast their votes in the first round. All the members of the coalition including The Workers Party of Lula and the Brazilian Communist Party having big base among the trade unions, resolved to persuade the deserters of the first round to the side of Lula in the run off. Every member was asked to contact and persuade one new voter. The campaign focus turned a bit nationalistic as the slogan was save Brazil from being

a colony of the Americans. The final campaign rally on Saturday was attended by one million people amidst joyous celebrations as if the victory was already achieved. Addressing a packed crowd of ecstatic supporters in a São Paulo conference hall, Lula said: “We are going to change the way that this country is governed ... This election was a defeat for denialism ... I want to thank God and to thank you, Brazilian men and women of this country ... it was democracy that made this happen.”Lula’s vice president Geraldo Alckmin told the crowd addressing his President “You saved Brazilian democracy for the second time. Congratulations, President Lula”. In fact, the entire Latin American Left was looking at the outcome of the October 25 Presidential elections in Brazil as Brazil was the last big country still under Left rule while the far right upsurge in other Latin American nations was continuing with big support from the Trump administration. Lula took it as a challenge after his defeat in the first round and made an appeal to the common Brazilians to save the country from the rule of far right Bolsonaro, an acolyte of President Trump. His fervent appeal had its impact on the non Left nationalist Brazilians, the results showed Alexandre Padilha, Lula’s health minister, said: “This is a huge victory for the Brazilian people who in the second round had the chance to think about what President Lula means for the environment, for the defense of our national

health service and our education system and the Brazilian constitution. And the risks that the extreme right candidate entailed.”He said that this was a massive victory, not just for Brazil, but for entire Latin America and the world. The extent of Lula’s campaign success in the runoff is explained by the fact that in the first round of elections on October 4, he lost by 2.2 million votes, but in the final round on October 25, Lula won by 4.3 million. So in three weeks, the net gain of the Left campaign was around 6.5 million votes compared to the first round. This has been an unprecedented success for the Left coalition taking into account the far right domination in opinion polls till the last stage. But as usual, the defeated far right candidate Flavio Bolsonaro is not ready to concede victory to Lula. Bolsonaro said it was “impossible to concede the election result” and that his legal team would seek to have the election annulled. Flavio was just following the precedent of his father former President Jair Bolsonaro who tried to stage a coup after the 2022 presidential election results were announced indicating Lula’s victory. Jair Bolsonaro is now undergoing sentence for 27 months following a Supreme Court order. Flavio in his election speech said that once he got elected, he would pardon his father and set him free to join politics. So the entire Bolsonaro family, many of whom have been elected as Congress members and governors in the October 4 elections, are disheartened.

Israel’s Election Is A Form Of Referendum On PM Netanyahu

Israel’s vote is a referendum on leadership after three years of war, but its consequences reach far beyond the ballot: from Gaza’s future to Iran, Washington and regional stability. Benjamin Netanyahu’s political strength rests on a potent argument: that Israel faces existential threats and that he alone has the experience and resolve to confront them. He has presented the wars involving Gaza, Lebanon and Iran as evidence that his government has weakened Israel’s adversaries. For voters whose overriding concern is security, that record can outweigh anger over the October 7, 2023, security failure. Yet, the same attack is his most serious liability. It exposed a catastrophic breakdown on his watch, and he has resisted calls for a state commission of inquiry. His opponents argue that accountability cannot be postponed indefinitely-and that the prime minister’s personal and political interests have distorted decisions about the war. The issue resonates with bereaved families, displaced communities and Israelis who want an explanation as much as a promise of future protection.

The final polls suggest a close contest, not a clear mandate. Gadi Eisenkot’s Yashar party has led Likud in several surveys, but neither the opposition nor Netanyahu’s bloc appears close to the 61 seats required to form a government. Israel’s proportional system turns the result into a coalition puzzle: small parties hovering near the 3.25% electoral threshold could determine which bloc has the better chance. Even a nominal opposition lead may not translate into power. Netanyahu also retains a dependable right-wing base, while some voters radicalised by October 7 may shift further right rather than toward the opposition. His campaign’s “No Surrender” message addresses genuine public fear and appeals to voters who believe military pressure is the only language Israel’s enemies understand. His rivals face a difficult task: persuading those voters that a change of government can deliver security, not merely a different style of leadership. The opposition’s energy comes from a convergence of grievances, not a single policy platform. Demonstrators have demanded an inquiry into October 7, criticised Netanyahu’s handling of the war and protested what they see as threats to democratic institutions, including his efforts to curb judicial power. The draft exemption for ultra-Orthodox men is another flashpoint: many Israelis resent bearing military and economic burdens that are not shared equally. Eisenkot has pledged to enforce court rulings on conscription and establish an inquiry, giving discontent a candidate with military credentials. Eisenkot’s personal profile matters. A former army chief, he has presented himself as a restrained, relatively unshowy alternative who



understands security but is not identified with Netanyahu’s political style. His family’s losses in the Gaza war deepen that credibility for voters who want a new direction without being branded naïve about threats. The opposition has also drawn support from Israelis worried about the economy, education and social cohesion-not only the conduct of the war. But “change” is a broader label than a settled programme. The opposition has not agreed on a successor, and its parties disagree over whether to cooperate with Arab parties, whose support may be crucial to reaching a majority. Nor does a victory promise a sharp break on Palestinians: major Jewish opposition lead-

ers reject full Palestinian statehood, and Eisenkot has described a future arrangement in terms of autonomy under Israeli security control. The bloc is more united against Netanyahu than it is on the country’s destination. For Palestinians in Gaza, the election is consequential but offers little prospect of quick relief through a change of government alone. Netanyahu has ruled out Palestinian statehood and has framed the war as necessary to defeat Hamas. Eisenkot, meanwhile, has said Hamas rule should end within 18 months, through a US-led plan or military means. He has also cautioned against expecting an immediate troop withdrawal from Gaza. The two camps differ in ap-

proach and political tone, but neither has offered a clear route to Palestinian sovereignty. A Netanyahu victory would likely strengthen the influence of right-wing coalition partners who favour continued military control and settlement expansion. That could narrow the space for a negotiated political settlement and deepen Palestinians’ fears of further displacement and dispossession. An opposition victory might bring greater restraint on settler violence in the West Bank and a more diplomatic approach to regional initiatives. But Gaza’s suffering would not automatically become a priority for a government whose voters largely see security, not Palestinian statehood, as the central question.

Increasing Nuclear Threats Amid A Changing World Order

The escalating conflict in West Asia has raised serious concerns about the possibility of a wider war. US President Donald Trump has repeatedly issued threats against Iran, at times invoking its annihilation. Whether these statements are coercive rhetoric or a prelude to further military action remains to be seen. Marco Rubio’s statement in a press conference recently where he has out rightly threatened Iran reflects arrogance of the US administration. The world cannot afford to remain complacent in such situation. As per the information coming from different sources Iran is contemplating a renewed attack from US and Israel combine. They have warned that in case Israel uses nuclear weapons then Iran would completely destroy the Israeli nuclear installation in the Negev Desert, southeast of the city of Dimona. Iran has already marked nearly 400 targets including the US bases in the gulf to as far as Indian Ocean according to Emilio “Pepe” Escobar a Brazilian journalist in an interview with Zulfikar Ali on the digital broadcast channel Transition Protocol. Meanwhile, Israel’s reported lockdown of the occupied West Bank following a shooting incident near Hebron and the recent visit of US Secretary of War Pete Hegseth to Israel also warrants scrutiny. Iran’s resistance has exposed the limitations of American military power. The disruption of shipping through the Strait of Hormuz has seriously affected global energy supplies and increased eco-



The UK, EU Spent Billions On Ukraine To Proxy-Fight Russia

London: The long-drawn Ukraine-Russia war seems to be turning out to become the world’s largest and most expensive proxy war in the modern era, in which the European Union and the United Kingdom have so far spent nearly \$300 billion on Ukraine to tame Russia. The Syrian civil war since 2011 may be the longest proxy conflict in the post-Cold War era. The Ukraine-Russia war since 2022 is a massive contemporary proxy conflict with Ukraine receiving extensive military and financial backing from the NATO allies, while Russia receives some material and economic support from partners like Iran and China. It may be of interest to those world conflict watchers that the ongoing Syrian civil war involves overlapping proxy dimensions with major external powers—including Russia, Iran, Turkey, and the United States—backing different local factions, resulting in over 528,000 deaths and millions displaced so far. The EU and the UK together may not have spent the huge amount from their own budgets to assist Ukraine, but it is substantially linked with the total amount of Russian central-bank sovereign assets frozen by western nations globally following the 2022 invasion of Ukraine. Around \$300 billion Russian sovereign funds have been immobilised globally. The EU controls the largest share, around \$210 billion, primarily held in Belgium’s Euroclear. Allies are leveraging the billions in yearly interest generated by these frozen accounts to guarantee long-term loans for Ukraine’s military and re-



construction needs. The assets remain locked until Moscow pays formal war reparations to Ukraine, essentially keeping the funds out of Russian hands indefinitely. On the other hand, the Syrian civil war is widely characterised as a complex, multi-layered proxy conflict because major regional and global powers—including Russia, Iran, Turkey, and the United States—intervened directly and through local factions to advance their own strategic interests. Russia and Iran provided vital military, financial, and logistical support to the Bashar al-Assad regime (with Iran deploying Revolutionary Guards and Hezbollah fighters, and Russia launching extensive air campaigns starting in 2015). Turkey supported various anti-government and opposition factions (such as the Free Syrian Army) while military operations targeted Kurdish YPG forces in northern Syria. The US and Western/Gulf allies rendered backing, training, and equipment to select opposition and Kurdish-led forces (such as the Syrian Democratic Forces – SDF) while focus-

ing heavily on counter-terrorism operations against ISIS. The conflict also mirrors overlapping regional tensions, including Iran versus Israel, Iran versus Saudi Arabia, and Turkey versus Kurdish groups. The external patrons are believed to have been supplying weapons, funds, and air power. It may be noted that local factions and the Assad regime largely fought for their own survival and localized objectives rather than acting as pure, passive instruments of foreign capitals. The Syrian conflict shifted dramatically following a major offensive by Hay’at Tahrir al-Sham (HTS) and allied groups in late 2024 that resulted in the ousting of Bashar al-Assad on December 8, 2024, altering the landscape of foreign involvement and internal governance. The Syrian civil war, running for over 15 years, involves overlapping proxy dimensions with major external powers—including Russia, Iran, Turkey, and the United States—backing different local factions, resulting in over 528,000 deaths and millions displaced so far. The EU-UK sponsored proxy war, like

most other proxy wars, is becoming difficult to end even though the belligerent parties – Ukraine and Russia – are in favour of reaching a conclusion. Actually, proxy wars are notoriously difficult to end as they remain at the mercy of external sponsors. The latter act as the principals supplying the money, intelligence, and weapons while local factions (the agents) provide the blood. The typical domestic thresholds for ending a war—such as economic exhaustion or heavy political fallout from troop casualties—do not apply evenly to both sides. External sponsors and local proxies rarely share identical objectives. The conflict sponsors view a proxy war through their own strategic lens, seeking to bleed a rival, drain their resources, or project regional influence. For them, a prolonged, grinding stalemate can actually be a “successful” outcome because it continuously weakens an adversary. This could be a reason why Ukraine, which is physically devastated by the Russian war, is not finding it easy to strike a compromise.

DCM Shriram Q2 Profit Falls 33% To Rs.105.68 Crore, Revenue Rises 21% To Rs.4,151 Crore

New Delhi: DCM Shriram Limited reported a 33.4 per cent decline in consolidated net profit to Rs 105.68 crore for the second quarter ended September 30, 2026, compared with Rs 158.72 crore in the corresponding quarter last year. Despite the fall in profit, revenue from operations increased 20.9 per cent to Rs 4,150.79 crore from Rs 3,432.43 crore in the year-ago period, according to the company's stock exchange filing. The company's total income rose to Rs 4,178.26 crore from Rs 3,531.26 crore a year earlier. However, total expenses increased to Rs 4,025.86 crore from Rs 3,285.40 crore.

Profit before tax declined to Rs 152.40 crore from Rs 245.86 crore, while earnings per share stood at Rs 6.72 against Rs 10.14. Compared with the June quarter, consolidated revenue increased 9.7 per cent from Rs 3,784.67 crore. However, net



profit declined from Rs 693.44 crore in Q1 FY27, when the company had recognised substantial tax adjustments and exceptional gains. For the six months ended September 2026, consolidated revenue rose 15.2 per cent to Rs 7,935.46 crore from Rs 6,887.61 crore. Net profit increased to Rs 799.12 crore from Rs 272.54 crore, supported by the earlier tax ad-

justments and exceptional gains. Chemicals and Vinyl revenue increased to Rs 1,576.66 crore from Rs 1,108.40 crore. However, segment profit declined to Rs 133.68 crore from Rs 200.71 crore. Sugar and Ethanol revenue increased to Rs 1,197.21 crore, while Fenesta Building Systems revenue rose to Rs 344.44 crore. Bioseed reported a segment loss of Rs 42.98 crore. The

board declared an interim dividend of Rs 4 per equity share, with October 30 fixed as the record date. It also approved capital expenditure of up to Rs 145 crore for a solar power plant, Rs 120 crore for additional electrolyzers and Rs 60 crore for cement plant improvements. Separately, it approved an equity contribution of up to Rs 50 crore to its Shriram Teknor joint venture.

REC Q2 Net Profit Falls 21 Per Cent To Rs.3,477.73 Crore; Board Approves Rs.3.50 Interim Dividend

New Delhi: State-owned REC Ltd reported a 21 per cent decline in its consolidated net profit to Rs 3,477.73 crore for the September quarter, mainly due to subdued total revenue from operations. Its consolidated net profit was Rs 4,414.93 crore a year ago, an exchange filing showed. Total revenue from operations dipped to Rs 15,000.40 crore in the quarter from Rs 15,152.67 crore in the year-ago quarter. The board also approved the second interim dividend for 2026-27 at the rate of Rs 3.50 per equity share of Rs 10 each. The record date for eligible shareholders for the second interim dividend is October 30. The dividend will be paid on or before November 21, 2026.

According to a company statement, high power offtake, coupled with REC's relentless focus on technology-driven credit assessment and customer-centric solutions, resulted in strong growth in assets under management (AUM). Its loan book rose 5 per cent sequentially to Rs 6.17 lakh crore as of September 30, highlighting that REC re-



mains the largest standalone financier in the power sector, it stated. With the Ministry of Power's targeted efforts, the financial health of power utilities continued to improve, reflected in lower sectoral credit risk premiums. REC has been adequately passing on these benefits to the sector in line with the market, and has still maintained a healthy net interest margin (NIM) of 3.22 per cent during H1 FY27. With strong operational and financial performance, REC recorded a profit after tax of Rs 7,541 crore during the half year ended September

30, 2026, translating into an annualised earnings per share (EPS) of Rs 57.27. Backed by sustained profitability, the company's capital base further strengthened, with net worth surging 14 per cent year-on-year to Rs 94,325 crore. REC said it continues to maintain pristine asset quality and resolved a Stage III asset of Rs 4.16 crore during the quarter, resulting in a net non-performing asset (NPA) ratio of 0.11 per cent as of September 30, 2026. Stage II loan assets also reduced by 80 per cent year-on-year to Rs 3,235 crore as of September 30, 2026,

driven by focused recovery efforts and effective monitoring. REC continued to expand its presence in strategic growth sectors. The renewable energy portfolio grew 27 per cent to Rs 86,660 crore, reflecting the company's commitment to India's clean energy transition. The portfolio in the newly entered non-power infrastructure and logistics sector has increased to Rs 61,637 crore, representing over 10 per cent of the overall loan assets and underscoring REC's position as a one-stop solution for financing needs across the infrastructure sector.

India-EU Free Trade Agreement Likely To Take Effect In Q1 2027, Says Piyush Goyal

New Delhi: Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal has said the India-European Union Free Trade Agreement (FTA) is expected to be operationalised by the end of 2026 and come into effect during the first quarter of 2027. Speaking to members of the Indian diaspora in Amsterdam on Sunday, Goyal outlined the proposed implementation timeline and highlighted opportunities for expanding trade between India and European markets. His remarks came during an official visit to the Netherlands, where he held discussions on investment, logistics and bilateral economic cooperation. The proposed agreement is expected to improve market access for businesses and strengthen commercial relations between India and the Euro-



pean Union. As Indian exporters prepare for potential opportunities under the pact, efficient transportation and logistics infrastructure could play an important role in facilitating trade. During his visit, Goyal toured the Port of Rotterdam, Europe's largest port, and met its Chief Executive Boudewijn Simons.

Rotterdam serves as a major gateway to European

markets, offering international connectivity and infrastructure capable of supporting India-Europe supply chains. The minister also highlighted discussions between Indian customs authorities and Rotterdam port officials on digitalising cargo handling processes. The proposed cooperation aims to accelerate cargo clearance, reduce ship turnaround times

and improve overall logistics efficiency. During an interaction organised by the Indian Embassy in Amsterdam, Goyal addressed approximately 70 participants, including business representatives and professionals.

He expressed concern about young people being influenced by negativity and moving away from traditional values in certain European countries. The minister encouraged young people to become more responsible and responsive. Goyal also described Indians as peace-loving people who contribute positively to the countries where they live and work. His visit highlighted India's efforts to strengthen economic engagement with the Netherlands while preparing for closer trade integration with Europe.

India Reimposes Anti-Dumping Duty Of Up To \$681 Per Tonne On Titanium Dioxide Imports From China

New Delhi: India has reimposed anti-dumping duties ranging from \$460 to \$681 per metric tonne on specified titanium dioxide imports from China for five years to protect domestic manufacturers from unfairly priced imports. The Finance Ministry issued the notification following recommendations from the Directorate General of Trade Remedies (DGTR). In its final findings dated Aug 3, 2026, the DGTR concluded that Chinese titanium dioxide was being imported at dumped prices, causing material injury and threatening further damage to Indian producers. The notification covers specified imports under customs tariff classifications 2823 00 10, 3206 11 10 and 3206 11 90.

Anhui Gold Star Titanium Dioxide (Group) faces a duty of \$609 per metric tonne. A rate of \$563 applies to Anhui Gold Star Titanium Dioxide Trading, Shandong Jinhai Titanium Resources Technology and Shandong Xianghai Titanium. Specified LB Group manufactur-



ers and Henan Billions Advanced Material face duties of \$460 per metric tonne. Non-sampled cooperative producers will pay \$510 per metric tonne. The highest duty of \$681 applies to other specified import categories, including certain shipments routed through third countries. Importers claiming manufacturer-specific rates must provide valid commercial invoices containing signed declarations identifying the producer. Without the required documentation, the general duty rate

will apply. The notification excludes specified titanium dioxide products used in food additives, pharmaceutical tablet coatings, cosmetics, sunscreens and textile manufacturing. Certain nano and ultrafine products with particle sizes below 100 nanometres are also exempt for designated applications. However, titanium dioxide pigments used for printing on garments and fabrics remain outside the textile exemption.

India originally initiated

an anti-dumping investigation into Chinese titanium dioxide imports in July 2015. Provisional duties followed in May 2016, with definitive measures introduced in February 2017. The government extended the duties for five years in October 2021. A second sunset review began on March 20, 2026, to assess continuing dumping risks. The existing duties were subsequently extended temporarily while the review proceeded, with their expiry scheduled for Jan 27, 2027.

Gold Futures Recover From Three-Month Lows, Silver Hovers Around Rs.1.95 Lakh On MCX

New Delhi: Gold and silver prices recovered on low-level buying following a sharp sell-off, though the yellow metal remained near a three-month low. On the Multi Commodity Exchange (MCX), gold futures (December) opened Rs 277 higher at Rs 1,42,301 per 10 grams against the previous close of Rs 1,42,024. The yellow metal surged as much as 0.6 per cent, or Rs 864, to Rs 1,42,888, hitting an intraday high at 11:50 am. It was trading at Rs 1,42,500, up Rs 476 or 0.34 per cent. On the other hand, silver futures (December) opened Rs 538 higher at Rs 1,96,257 per kg against the previous close of Rs 1,95,719. The white metal recorded an intraday high of Rs 1,97,186, up 0.74 per cent or Rs 1,467. At last count, it was trading at Rs 1,95,572, down Rs 147 or 0.08 per cent. According to market experts, "MCX gold is holding between support and resistance bands after last week's slide. The De-



cember contract fell nearly 4 per cent last week to close near Rs 1.42 lakh." "MCX gold is gaining about half as much as COMEX gold and trails MCX silver as silver's oversold bounce is sharper. Immediate resistance is seen at Rs 1,43,000-1,43,700 zone, followed by Rs 1,45,300-1,46,000, while immediate support is at Rs 1,40,000-1,41,000 zone. RSI near 33 is close to oversold and MACD's negative histogram is widening," they

added. Bias remains cautious, with a reclaim above Rs 1,43,000-1,43,700 needed to stabilise. For MCX silver, immediate resistance lies in the Rs 2,00,000-2,02,000 zone, followed by Rs 2,06,000-2,08,000, according to them. "Support is placed at Rs 1,92,000-1,94,000, with next support at Rs 1,83,000-1,85,000. Friday's long lower shadow near Rs 1,92,000 suggests an attempt to establish a base. RSI near 25 remains deep

oversold, though MACD continues below its signal line, indicating bearish momentum remains in place," the experts said. In the global market, COMEX gold futures opened at \$4,012.20 per ounce against the previous close of \$4,007.90. It had touched \$5,586.20 earlier this year. Meanwhile, COMEX silver opened at \$54.29 against the previous close of \$53.94. It had hit the \$121.79 mark earlier this year.

ICICI Prudential Mutual Fund Launches BSE Power ETF, NFO Opens With Rs.1,000 Minimum Investment

Mumbai: ICICI Prudential Mutual Fund has launched the ICICI Prudential BSE Power ETF, offering investors an opportunity to participate in India's expanding power sector through an exchange-traded fund. The New Fund Offer (NFO) opened on October 26 and will close on October 30, 2026, with a minimum investment of Rs 1,000. The open-ended ETF will track the BSE Power Index, providing exposure to companies involved in electricity generation, transmission, integrated utilities and heavy electrical equipment. The index comprises heavy electrical equipment companies (40.6 per cent), power generation firms (37.1 per cent), transmission companies (13.1 per cent) and integrated utilities (9.2 per cent). After allotment, investors can buy or sell ETF



units on stock exchanges in lots of one unit. As of September 30, 2026, the BSE Power Index delivered a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 20 per cent over five years, 17 per cent over three years and 8 per cent over one year. The index has 75.57 per cent exposure to large-cap companies

and 24.42 per cent to mid-cap firms. Major constituents include NTPC, Power Grid Corporation, Adani Power, Bharat Heavy Electricals and Tata Power. India's electricity consumption grew annually by 7.4 per cent between FY21 and FY25, compared with the global average of

0.9 per cent.

Per capita electricity consumption increased 53 per cent, reaching 1,460 kWh in FY25 from 957 kWh in FY14. Peak power demand touched 271 GW in May 2026, while the Central Electricity Authority projects demand reaching 459 GW by FY36.

ONGC Earnings May Jump 20% To Rs.1.4 Lakh Crore In FY27, S&P Global Sees Strong Recovery In Oil And Refining Business

New Delhi: Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) is expected to witness a strong earnings recovery over the next six to nine months, supported by elevated crude oil prices and

improving performance at its refining subsidiaries, according to S&P Global Ratings. The ratings agency expects ONGC's consolidated EBITDA to increase by 15-20 per cent to Rs.1.3 lakh

crore-Rs.1.4 lakh crore in FY27. S&P Global expects ONGC's upstream oil and gas operations to remain the primary growth driver. The company is projected to maintain quarterly domestic produc-

tion of approximately 10 million tonnes of oil equivalent, generating EBITDA of Rs.25,000 crore-Rs.30,000 crore. The agency estimates Brent crude prices will average \$95 per barrel during the

remainder of 2026 before declining to \$80 in 2027. ONGC's downstream subsidiaries, Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited (HPCL) and Mangalore Refinery and Petrochemicals Limited (MRPL),

are also showing signs of recovery. Their combined EBITDA reached Rs.12,000 crore in the September quarter, compared with a negative Rs.17,500 crore in the preceding quarter.



Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare Reviews Progress of Special Campaign 6 and Preparedness for Kayakalp Activities

- Union Health Secretary Chairs Review Meeting, Calls for Visible, Sustainable Improvements in Cleanliness Across Health Facilities

- Health Ministry to Undertake Kayakalp Activities on 27 October, 2026 Under Special Campaign 6 to Strengthen Swachhata in Government Health Facilities



New Delhi, October, 26 (PIB): The Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare reviewed the progress of the ongoing Special Campaign 6, aimed at institutionalising Swachhata and minimising pendency in government offices. The review meeting also assessed preparedness for the dedicated one-day Kayakalp Activities on Sanitation and Hygiene, scheduled. The review meeting, chaired by Union Health Secretary Smt. Punya Salila Srivastava, was held virtually from Kartavya Bhawan-1, New Delhi, today. Heads of institutions and organisations, including Central Government hospitals, Central Public Sector

Undertakings (CPSUs), the Central Government Health Scheme (CGHS), and other offices and units under the Department of Health and Family Welfare, participated in the meeting. During her interaction with the representatives of health institutions and facilities, Union Health Secretary emphasised that the campaign must go beyond symbolic activities to bring about perceptible improvements in sanitation, hygiene, space management and the overall upkeep of public healthcare facilities. She underscored that healthcare facilities are high-footfall areas where proper sanitation and cleanliness are essential for effective service delivery. En-

suring swachhata and hygiene, she stressed, is crucial to enhancing the quality of services and improving the overall experience of patients and visitors. She encouraged the institutions to participate wholeheartedly in the Kayakalp activities scheduled for 27 October, 2026 and ensure that the improvements undertaken are perceptible and verifiable, bringing about a distinctive change in the appearance of their premises and the experience of visitors.

Furthermore, she also noted that 100 per cent of identified cleanliness sites had been cleaned, nearly 100 per cent of public grievance appeals had been resolved, and approximately



Rs.50 lakhs in revenue had been generated through auction and clearance drives. A key focus of the discussion was the effective implementation of the principles of Reduce, Reuse and Recycle, alongside sanitation and hygiene measures, pest control, biomedical waste management, e-waste disposal and improved maintenance of public spaces. Institutions were encouraged to undertake disposal of obsolete records and materials, including through e-auctions, to create usable space and generate revenue also, wherever feasible.

Further, participating institutions were encouraged to share examples of innovative practices undertaken

as part of the campaign. These included repurposing discarded materials into functional items such as plant stands and storage racks, refurbishing condemned furniture, digitizing medical records to free up valuable space, developing green spaces through plantation drives, and undertaking deep-cleaning and horticultural initiatives to improve the overall environment of healthcare facilities. Other initiatives shared by several institutions during the meeting included the disposal of long-pending scrap through authorized auction platforms, which helped in generating revenue for the institutions and also creating additional usable space

within their premises. Certain institutions also introduced digital grievance redressal platforms and QR code-enabled feedback mechanisms to expedite complaint resolution and reduce pendency. Union Health Secretary emphasized that the campaign's impact must be assessed through direct feedback from visitors and beneficiaries also. She concluded the meeting with a call to all health institutions to document their initiatives, share achievements through designated digital platforms, and ensure that the Special Campaign 6 creates a cleaner, accessible and welcoming environment for patients, pensioners, staff and visitors. The review meeting was attended by representatives of 336 Central health institutions from across the country, including AIIMS Guwahati, AIIMS Rishikesh, AIIMS Bhubaneswar, NIMHANS Bengaluru, CDSCO Ahmedabad, Lady Hardinge Medical College, Safdarjung Hospital and RIMS Imphal, among others.

Ministry of Coal CPSEs Achieve Major Milestones under Special Campaign 6, Clean 130.16 Lakh Sq. Ft. Area and Generate Rs.53.94 Crore from Scrap Disposal

New Delhi, October, 26 (PIB): Driving a massive nationwide momentum toward institutionalizing cleanliness and E-Waste management, CPSEs under Ministry of Coal have been delivering stellar outcomes under Special Campaign 6. The initiative has successfully unlocked valuable office space, generated substantial revenue through efficient waste management, and streamlined internal record-keeping to foster a cleaner, more productive work culture. With its implementation phase running up to 31st October, CPSEs successfully cleaned 1,696 sites against an initially identified target of 1,565 sites, covering a massive area of 130.16 lakh square feet—surpassing the targeted cleaning area of 101.80 lakh square feet. In addition to transforming workspace environments, the campaign yielded substantial economic and environmental benefits through efficient waste management. A total of 16,158 Metric Tons of scrap was successfully disposed of, exceeding the projected target of 10,909 Metric Tons. This extensive scrap disposal generated significant revenue amounting to Rs.53,94,62,602.45 (approx. Rs.53.94 Crore) for the exchequer.

Furthermore, administrative efficiency was significantly enhanced through rigorous record management and digitization efforts. Officials reviewed 78,635 physical files and e-files against a target of 59,593 and total files weeded out and closed are 70,093, reflecting a streamlined approach to governance and office procedures. Reinforcing their dedication to institutionalizing cleanliness and sustainable administrative



workflows, CPSEs under the Ministry of Coal are setting benchmarks through pioneering Swachhata initiatives and effective space management strategies. Prominent best practices executed during the campaign include: An e-waste collection bin has been fabricated using recycled scrap materials at SECL HQ. Placed for systematic collection and segregation of electronic waste, it pro-

motes effective disposal in line with the campaign objective of "Effective collection, segregation and disposal of e-waste." Modernization of CIL HQ Canteen: Renamed as Cilantro and inaugurated on 05.10.2026 after a comprehensive renovation spanning nearly 10 years, the project upgraded canteen infrastructure and ambience to ensure a hygienic, comfortable, and employee-friendly dining

environment. Educational Support for Tribal Girls by WCL: At Mata Sabri Balika Awasiya Shiksha Parisar (Parasia, Chhindwara), WCL provided educational and basic facility support to over 160 girl students, primarily from tribal and mining-area communities, to pursue higher education. Waste to Wonder Workshops for Kids by WCL: Interactive workshops organized for children to en-

courage creative recycling, transforming waste into wealth and instilling early environmental responsibility. Promoting Menstrual Hygiene at Workplace: Installation of sanitary napkin vending machines at CIL HQ to enhance access to menstrual hygiene products for women employees and visitors, fostering an inclusive and women-friendly workplace environment.

TRAI releases Recommendations on 'Authorisation Framework for Application-based Linear Television Distribution (ALTD) Services'

New Delhi, October, 26 (PIB): The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) has today released Recommendations on 'Authorisation Framework for Application-based Linear Television Distribution (ALTD) Services'. In view of the evolving broadcasting landscape, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting (MIB) has sent a reference to TRAI, under Section 11(1)(a) of the TRAI Act 1997, on 15th December 2025, to examine and recommend a regulatory framework for Free Ad-Supported Streaming Television (FAST) Services ensuring parity, content accountability and consumer protection.

TV sets and other devices; or as downloadable mobile/smart TV applications; or as web-based applications accessible through web browsers. Considering such wider scope of service provisioning through connected TVs, the services have been broadly referred to as 'Application-based Linear Television Distribution (ALTD) Services' including FAST Services.

Accordingly, the Authority on 6th April 2026, had issued a Consultation Paper titled 'Formulation of a Regulatory Framework for Application-based Linear Television Distribution (ALTD) Services (Including Free Ad-Supported Streaming Television (FAST) Services)' and solicited comments from stakeholders. In response, 207 comments and 11 counter-comments were received and uploaded on TRAI's website. As part of the consultation process,

an Open House Discussion (OHD) was held on 10th June 2026, providing stakeholders an opportunity to present their views on the issues under consultation.

Based on the comments and counter-comments received from stakeholders, inputs gathered during the OHD, and its own analysis, the Authority has finalised its Recommendations on the 'Authorisation Framework for Application-based Linear Television Distribution (ALTD) Services'. The recommendations seek to establish a light-touch and future-ready policy framework for Internet-based distribution of linear television channels, while promoting innovation, ease of doing business, consumer protection and regulatory certainty. These recommendations are built upon and complement the broader authorisation framework recommended by the Au-

thority in its recommendations on 'Framework for Service Authorisations for provision of Broadcasting Services under the Telecommunications Act, 2023' issued on 21st February 2025.

Since 'ALTD Service' aggregates and distributes linear television channels over public Internet or other IP-based networks and provides consumers with a television viewing experience akin to conventional television distribution platforms across a variety of Internet-enabled devices, the Authority has recommended that 'ALTD Service' be introduced as a distinct sub-category under 'Television Channel Distribution Services' within the broadcast authorisation framework under Section 3(1)(a) of the Telecommunications Act, 2023. The recommendations further prescribe an authorisation framework, specifying the terms and

conditions governing both the grant of authorisation and the provisioning of 'ALTD Service'. The recommendations also provide obligations for key stakeholders like Original Equipment Manufacturers (OEMs), Operating System (OS) providers and the

broadcasters/content owners of the TV channels; measures for consumer protection; and inclusion of ALTD viewership in the television audience measurement framework, thereby covering all aspects of a linear television distribution services.

Raksha Mantri to lead Indian delegation at 13th ADMM-Plus in Philippines

New Delhi, October, 26 (PIB): Raksha Mantri Shri Rajnath Singh will lead the Indian delegation at the 13th Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Defence Ministers' Meeting (ADMM) - Plus at Cebu, Philippines from October 28 to 29, 2026. He will address the forum on 'Exchange of Views on Regional and International Security Issues'. On the sidelines of ADMM-Plus, Raksha Mantri will hold bilateral meetings with his counterparts of participating countries. He will review the ongoing defence ties with the nations, and explore ways to further strengthen strategic partnerships. The ADMM is the highest defence consultative and cooperative mechanism in ASEAN. ADMM-Plus is a platform for ASEAN member states (Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Timor-Leste and Vietnam) and its eight Dialogue Partners (India, US, China, Russia, Japan, South Korea, Australia and New Zealand) to strengthen security and defence cooperation.

Cabinet Secretary chairs a meeting of NCMC to review preparedness for the impending cyclone in Bay of Bengal

New Delhi, October, 26 (PIB): Cabinet Secretary, Dr. T. V. Somanathan chaired a meeting of the National Crisis Management Committee (NCMC) to review preparedness for the impending cyclone in the Bay of Bengal. Director General, India Meteorological Department (IMD) briefed the Committee that the deep depression over East central and adjoining Southeast Bay of Bengal has moved nearly Westwards and intensified into cyclonic storm 'ARNAB' and lay centered at 0530 hrs IST of today over East central and adjoining West central Bay of Bengal about 590 km Northwest of Sri Vijaya Puram (Andaman Islands) 650 km East-Southeast of Vishakhapatnam (Andhra Pradesh), 730 km East-Southeast of Kakinada (Andhra Pradesh), 830 km East of Machilipatnam (Andhra Pradesh) and 910 km East of Bapatla (Andhra Pradesh). It is forecast to move west-northwestwards till 27th October and then northwestwards towards Andhra Pradesh coast. It is likely to cross Andhra Pradesh & Yanam coasts between Bapatla and Visakhapatnam as a very severe cyclonic storm with the maximum sustained wind speed of 115-125 kmph gusting to 140 kmph by forenoon of 28th October, 2026. Thereafter it is likely to affect districts in Telangana, Southern Odisha, South & Central Chhattisgarh apart from Eastern Uttar Pradesh and Bihar. The Chief Secretaries/ Senior officials of Andhra Pradesh, Odisha, Telangana, Chhattisgarh and the Union Territory of Puducherry apprised the Committee of the preparatory measures being undertaken by the State Governments/ local administration. It was informed that adequate shelters and evacuation arrangements have been made, and necessary NDRF and SDRF teams have been kept on standby. District Control Rooms have also been activated and they are monitoring the situation.

Fishermen have been advised not to venture into the Southwest and adjoining central Bay of Bengal, and along and off the coasts of Andhra Pradesh, Odisha and Yanam (Puducherry) from 26th to 29th October. Those already at sea have returned. Central Ministries/Departments attending the meeting informed the Committee that all Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) are in place, necessary guidelines have been issued, and precautionary measures are being taken to minimise damage due to the impact of the cyclonic storm.

National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) informed that they have deployed teams, with additional teams on standby. Rescue and relief teams of the Army, Navy, Air Force and Indian Coast Guard, along with their ships and aircrafts, have been kept ready. Indian Coast Guard has so far shepherded multiple ships/boats to jetties/shore, and the remaining ships have been alerted to return to the coast. The Union Home Secretary informed the Committee that the Ministry of Home Affairs, NDMA and IMD are continuously monitoring the situation and coordinating with the Ministries/Departments, State Governments and other agencies. Reviewing the preparedness measures of the Central agencies and the State Governments, Cabinet Secretary stressed that the objective should be to ensure zero loss of life and minimise damage to property and infrastructure. In the event of any damage, essential services should be restored in the shortest possible time. Cabinet Secretary also directed that in addition to Andhra Pradesh, Odisha, Telangana, Chhattisgarh and the Union Territory of Puducherry, since high rainfall was also expected in Eastern Uttar Pradesh and Bihar, they should be suitably alerted by MHA/IMD. The meeting was attended by the Union Home Secretary; the Chief Secretaries/ Senior officials of Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Chhattisgarh, Odisha and the Union Territory of Puducherry; Secretaries in the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas, Department of Fisheries, Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways, and Ministry of Power; Member and Head of Department and Secretary, NDMA; Chief of Integrated Defence Staff to the Chairman, Chiefs of Staff Committee (CISC); Director General, NDRF; Director General, IMD; Director General, Indian Coast Guard; Director General of Media and Communication, MHA; and senior officers of IMD and the Ministry of Home Affairs.

Department of Commerce Extends RELIEF Initiative under Export Promotion Mission Until March 31, 2027

New Delhi, October, 26 (PIB): The Department of Commerce has extended the timelines under Component II of RELIEF (Resilience & Logistics Intervention for Export Facilitation), a time-bound intervention under the Export Promotion Mission (EPM), until March 31, 2027. The extension was notified vide Notification No. 37/2026-27 dated September 30, 2026, in view of continued geopolitical disruptions in West Asia and their impact on maritime logistics across the Gulf and adjoining regions.

Component II of the initiative aims to encourage exporters to obtain Export Credit Guarantee Corporation of India (ECGC) cover for upcoming shipments to specified regions by providing 95 per cent risk coverage. The benefit is available for Standalone Policies and Whole Turnover Policies obtained on or after March 16, 2026. Under this component, the premium payable by eligible exporters is protected against increases beyond pre-disruption levels during the eligible period. The covered cargo categories include Full Container Load (FCL), Less than Container Load (LCL) and refrigerated (reefer) containers, excluding energy shipments. Exporters seeking coverage under the RELIEF initiative are required to submit claims and supporting documents through the ECGC customer portal at www.ecgcldt.in. Guidance on generating user IDs and passwords, completing exporter registration and submitting claims under the initiative is available through dedicated video tutorials on ECGC's official YouTube channel, [@ecgcldt7016](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCecgcldt7016). Launched on March 19, 2026, RELIEF is a targeted intervention to support Indian exporters facing extraordinary freight cost escalation, higher insurance premia and war-related export risks arising from disruptions in the Gulf and the wider West Asian maritime corridor. The extension of RELIEF underscores the Government's commitment to strengthening export resilience, sustaining trade flows and supporting Indian exporters amid continuing geopolitical and maritime logistics uncertainties.

South Africa must build on Gqeberha turnaround, says Klusener



New Delhi: Former South African all-rounder Lance Klusener believes consistency with the bat will be crucial for South Africa as they look to build on their response against Australia in the ongoing Test series. He said the team's World Test Championship triumph had already demonstrated its credentials, but sustained contributions from the batting unit remained essential. South Africa bounced back from a heavy defeat in the opening Test in Durban with an innings victory in the Abu Dhabi T10 League, spoke to IANS on the sidelines of the tournament ahead of the series decider, assessing the Proteas' response and the challenges facing both teams.

For Klusener, South Africa's victory over Australia in the World Test Championship final had already answered questions about the team's ability to compete against the strongest opposition. The emphatic victory in the second Test, he said, further demonstrated the side's character, although one outstanding performance would not guarantee sustained success. "The fact that South Africa won the World Test Championship really tells you that they're a good team. There was obviously some talk that they hadn't played Australia and probably India enough. So, it's nice to see that we've been able to silence a few critics. Obviously, there's a game to go. We're all looking forward to that tomorrow. But they're a serious team. And to be able to bounce back and beat Australia by an innings as well just shows you the character, the challenges.

Shreyas Iyer's India aim to clinch series against depleted New Zealand

Wellington: New Zealand will be without two of their most potent fast bowlers, Matt Henry and Lockie Ferguson, when they take on a rampant India in the third T20I at Hnry Stadium. Trailing 2-0, New Zealand must win the match to keep the series alive. Henry, who bowled only two overs in the second match at Hagley Oval in Christchurch on Saturday, one of them a maiden, is unavailable for the rest of the series to manage his workload ahead of the other formats. Ferguson, meanwhile, will sit out the match in Wellington. Neither bowler completed his allotted overs in the previous match. Henry had a calf complaint, while Ferguson also left the field as a precaution. Their absence leaves New Zealand relying on Adam Milne and Blair Tickner, who are available for the remainder of the series, along with Kyle Jamieson, who will feature in Wellington before playing a Ford Trophy match to prepare for the Test series. India, by contrast, have barely put a foot wrong so far, despite having just one training session before the series opener in Christchurch. Sharper execution with the bat has helped them chase down a record 226 and a tricky target of 181. India have also benefited from some generous fielding and bowling by New



Zealand. However, the visitors will want veteran seamer Bhuvneshwar Kumar to improve his performance after conceding 99 runs in just eight overs in the series while taking only one wicket. Wellington, however, will present a different challenge. Hnry Stadium, also known as the 'Cake Tin', is a multi-sport venue that is usually windier. With a drop-in pitch and square boundaries of only around 60 metres, India's bowlers will have to adjust their plans accordingly. With Ishan Kishan yet to recover fully from a low-grade right adductor strain, teenage batting sensation Vaibhav Sooryavanshi is set for another opportunity at number three. India are therefore expected to retain the same playing XI combination as in the previous match. According to CricViz, India head into the third T20I with both momentum and the numbers firmly in their

ference in that Test match in terms of just batting a little bit more time. "So, margins even in Test cricket are small. I'm sure both teams would have had a look at a few things and, hopefully, going to read the conditions right when they get that opportunity tomorrow. But yeah, exciting times. Both teams have had a few things to look at. I'm sure they've done that. And I think the quality of the cricket in the third Test was going to be even better than what we've seen so far," he said.

Even a modest addition to Australia's first-innings total, Klusener suggested, might have changed the course of the second match, underlining the importance of patience and decision-making when conditions favour the bowlers. Beyond the immediate contest, he said the series had demonstrated why Test cricket continued to hold a distinctive place in the sport despite the growing influence of franchise leagues and shorter formats. "There's a balance. Test cricket is the ultimate examination of technique and character. And there's always going to be a place for that. But at the same time, the game is moving forward. We need to accommodate not only what cricketers want, but also what spectators want. "And that's the shorter-ball format of the game. "The spin-offs from T20 cricket, for example, have been immense, not just from a spectator or from a monetary point of view. We see those benefits in Test cricket now. I'm sure there are people that have come back to watch Test cricket because T20 has maybe sparked their interest. So the shorter format has most definitely impacted cricket in general in a big way, not just from a cricketing skills point of view, but from a spectator point of view as well," he said.

After Kohli, Rohit, Klusener tips Gill and Sooryavanshi for India's future

New Delhi: Former South African cricketer Lance Klusener believes Indian cricket has the talent to move smoothly into its next era, backing Shubman Gill to lead the team for years while identifying young batter Vaibhav Sooryavanshi as a potential future superstar following the eventual departures of Virat Kohli and Rohit Sharma. Klusener said Kohli and Rohit's stature should not prevent Indian cricket from embracing its next generation, stressing that the sport has repeatedly produced players capable of carrying forward the legacy of those who came before them. The former Proteas all-rounder, currently the head coach of the Arabian Aces in the Abu Dhabi T10 League, made the remarks while speaking to IANS on the sidelines of an event organised for the tournament, as Indian cricket continues to manage the transition from two of its most influential modern-day players.

"As good as Virat and as good as Rohit have been in the past, they will have to walk away from the game when their time comes. But the beauty of cricket is that it carries on. It gets stronger sometimes. "When we played, people never thought that Sachin Tendulkar's records would ever be broken. And people are challenging those already. So, players come and go. It's a sad day when legends of your game and legends of your country step away. But on the brighter side, there are always younger, fitter, faster players in the wings as well," Klusener told IANS.



The former all-rounder described Gill as an "absolute superstar" with the bat and said the young captain's next challenge would be to separate his responsibilities as a leader from his role as India's premier batter. "For me personally, I'm convinced already. I think he's the right man for the job. He's an absolute superstar with the bat. It's probably just being able to separate Shubman Gill as a batter and Shubman Gill as a captain as well. I think all the great captains have been able to separate that. And I'm sure he'll have a lot of opportunities and a lot of people to lean on in helping him do that. "But absolutely, I think he's as good as it gets with a cricket bat. And captaincy, even for old-established captains, you're learning all the time. He'll do the same. So, I'm absolutely excited

for him. I think he's a superstar. He's going to be someone who will serve India with great courage and great purpose for many years to come, hopefully," he opined. Gill's emergence as a leader comes as India prepares for life beyond Kohli and Rohit, who have shaped the country's cricketing fortunes for more than a decade. While their eventual retirements will leave a considerable void, Klusener believes the transition should be viewed as a natural part of the sport rather than a threat to India's competitiveness. He pointed to Sooryavanshi as evidence that another generation of Indian talent is already emerging.

"It's a balance. Every team is different. Every nation works the retirement of players differently, and players retire every single season. India are facing

that now with those two stars. South Africa have faced that with stars that they've had as well. "But cricket goes on. Stars come and go, and legends retire, and people think that it'll never be the same again. But India doesn't have to look further than a youngster like Sooryavanshi. There's the next superstar," the former Afghanistan head coach stated. Klusener believes that Gill must manage the two responsibilities independently, with the young leader given time and support to develop his own style. Captaincy, he noted, remains a continuous learning process even for experienced players. Gill will therefore need to draw on the guidance of senior figures around him while gradually taking ownership of India's next phase.

Sheetal Devi rates individual gold her most special medal at Asian Para Games

New Delhi: India's star para archer Sheetal Devi is keeping her focus firmly on her game and tuning out the social media buzz as her consistent medal-winning performances continue to raise expectations. Her latest success came at the Asian Para Games in Japan. Sheetal returned to New Delhi to a rousing welcome along with her fellow Indian archers after winning two gold medals and a silver in the compound individual, mixed team and women's team events. "I focus on my game. I do not look at social media much. But I feel very happy when I win a medal and people come to see me. Many children, even young children, watch, so it feels wonderful," she told. The para archery sensation defended her individual title with a hard-fought win over Singapore's Nur Syahidah Alim, renewing their rivalry from the 2023 Hangzhou Asian Para Games final. The 19-year-old from Jammu rated the individual gold as the most special of her three medals. "The individual event. The others are special too, but my focus was more on the individual event to return as a champion. With the grace of God and everyone's wonderful and lovely support, I won," she said. Paris Paralympics gold medalist Harvinder Singh said India's recurve team handled the pressure of heightened expectations well to clinch gold at the continental event. "Indeed, higher expectations bring pressure, but I am glad we handled that pressure. Our practice was excellent, the federation's support was wonderful, and we received a week of training there, all of which benefited us in archery," said Harvinder, who partnered Vijay Sundi in the men's recurve team event. India recorded its best-ever campaign in archery at the Asian Para Games, returning with three gold and an equal number of silver medals. "It feels wonderful when the entire team wins medals. In 2018, only I had won an individual medal, but this time I am happy that many more medals have come. For those few players who did not win, we hope that

next time our entire team will bring home medals," he said.

Mona Agarwal's dream run in Japan

Para shooter Mona Agarwal described her campaign at the Asian Para Games as a dream come true after clinching two gold medals and setting five records, including a world record. Mona, who was named India's flag bearer for the closing ceremony in Nagoya, emerged as the country's most successful athlete in its campaign that yielded 114 medals. "I would like to say that in a very short time, I have brought back a lot of happiness from Japan. I was expecting a medal, but when five records were created together and I became the flag bearer, it is a very big achievement for me," she said upon her return. "Winning a medal, setting records, and becoming a flag bearer are all connected; they cannot be separated. It feels like a dream. When I left for Japan, I went thinking I would bring back two medals, but I did not think I would return with two gold, five records, and become the flag bearer," she added.



Nitesh eyes another Paralympics gold

Indian shuttler Nitesh Kumar clinched gold in the men's singles SL3 category after defeating compatriot and veteran Pramod Bhagat in an all-Indian final. "Winning against Pramod in two sets is, of course, very special. Winning the final against him is a very rare thing, and the final match was quite

good and interesting," the Paris Paralympics gold medalist said. Nitesh said his ultimate goal was to defend his Paralympic title at the Los Angeles Games in 2028. "We are hoping for the same (Paralympics gold), but two years is a long journey. First, we have to get through qualifications, and the target will remain the same — to defend my title in LA," he said.

'I batted three times a day': Harmanpreet on regaining her touch

Vadodara: Three batting sessions a day helped Harmanpreet Kaur rediscover her touch after a prolonged lean patch, with the India batter saying she needs extensive practice to maintain her batting rhythm. Harmanpreet's underwhelming run with the bat had been a key talking point, but the 37-year-old roared back to form with a blistering unbeaten 91 off 41 balls in the final T20I against Zimbabwe before carrying that momentum into the ODI series with a match-winning 126 in the second game. "I have practised a lot at home. The more you bat, the more confident you get. I batted in the morning, afternoon and evening — three sessions," she told fellow centurion Deepti Sharma in a video shared by the BCCI. "I am someone who requires a



lot of training. Looking at my age, I like to spend a lot of time on my fitness. More than that, I batted a lot because I felt like batting was lacking a little. The time I spent at home is helping me," she added. Harmanpreet walked in after India lost the wickets of captain Smriti Mandhana and Shafali Verma in quick succession in the second ODI here on Sunday. Rather than allowing the

early setbacks to build pressure, she and opener Pratika Rawal (61) settled in and stitched together a 124-run stand. Harmanpreet then added another 153 runs with Deepti, who scored an unbeaten 106. India went on to win by 121 runs and take an unassailable 2-0 lead in the three-match series. "I was talking to Pratika about the wicket, how they are bowling.

Sai Pallavi Turns Into An Intense Telugu Cop In Dhanush's OM

A new character introduction teaser of Dhanush's upcoming film OM has been released, and Sai Pallavi has grabbed attention with her intense cop look. For the first time in her career, she will be seen playing a police officer, adding a new dimension. Interestingly, Sai Pallavi plays an AP police officer Nitya reddy (Naidupeta Ammayi) and her character appears the same in the Telugu, Tamil, and Hindi versions, making the role even more interesting for the audience. Another notable detail is the presence of several Telugu dialogues across all three teaser glimpses, suggesting that the character's regional identity remains important in the story. OM is directed by Rajkumar Periasamy, who previously worked with Sai Pallavi in Amaran. That film emerged as a major success, and their reunion has raised expectations about what they can deliver together this time. The director chooses an intense role for Sai Pallavi, moving away from the characters audiences usually associate with her. Whether she can impress viewers in this new avatar is something to watch out for. Sai Pallavi is also preparing for another major challenge with her portrayal of Sita in Ramayana. With expectations surrounding that role already high, her performance as a police officer in OM will offer audiences a different side of her acting abilities.



Rashmika Hits Back at Trolls Questioning Her Love Language

In her strongly worded post, Rashmika said the controversy was never about the number of times she asked Vijay to marry her or the fact that it took an entire year for them to make the decision. She explained that their focus was on understanding each other and building a future together.

Rashmika also made it clear that she was deeply in love with Vijay and had no problem expressing her feelings for him publicly.

"And yes, I am OBSESSED with my man. When did that become a bad thing?" she wrote, questioning why people were criticising her for being in love with her husband.

She further said that if she was not in love with the man she was marrying, there was no reason for her to marry him. Describing Vijay as her lifelong companion, she said he was her friend through ordinary and extraordinary days, the father of her children, and the man she wanted to grow old with.

"Find a man who loves you so beautifully that even after you're married, you'd still want to tell him, 'Let's get married.' I would do it a thousand times – 100 is nothing. It's really that



simple," Rashmika wrote. Rashmika also hit back at those who continued to criticise their relationship, saying that both of them had built their lives on their own terms through their choices and hard work.

She said they were capable adults who had the freedom to

decide how they wanted to live and whom they wanted to share their lives with. "And we chose US. We will keep choosing each other, again and again, until the end," she stated. The actress also questioned the growing negativity surrounding their relationship,

saying that people were entitled to their opinions but should not turn their differences into an excuse to attack others. She added that she wanted to protect people who believed in love and hoped that everyone would find their own version of it.

Adding a personal touch to her response, Rashmika also shared a video featuring Vijay Deverakonda. The video shows the couple sharing a playful moment, with Vijay carrying Rashmika on his back.

The video has now gone viral on social media, with fans reacting to their chemistry and the actress's strong defence of her husband. Rashmika's post has also drawn attention to the support Vijay has given her during difficult times, including when she broke a bone. Her message highlights the importance of standing by each other through life's challenges rather than judging a relationship based on a few comments made during a public conversation.

With her latest post, Rashmika has made her position clear: she is proud of her relationship with Vijay and does not believe she needs to justify her love to anyone.

Trisha Turns Coimbatore Roads Into Fan Festival



Trisha recently impressed everyone with Karuppu, the Suriya starrer directed by RJ Balaji, which turned into a blockbuster. The film crossed 100 crore net in India within six days and became the highest grosser of Suriya's career, with Trisha as the female lead. Now she has made news in Coimbatore. Trisha attended the opening of a new iMobile showroom on Gandhipuram 100 Feet Road, and she reached the venue in an open top car, greeting fans along the way. Big crowds of fans gathered to cheer, and the photos and videos are now viral online. For the event, Trisha chose a rich red traditional saree and teamed it with a diamond choker. The classic outfit with simple styling looked truly elegant and drew plenty of praise from fans across social media.

Kriti Sanon Stuns Glamorous Looks



Kriti Sanon, who has appeared recently in Cocktail 2 with Shahid Kapoor and Rashmika Mandanna, crossed 100 crore worldwide. At Abhinav Mishra's Into The Wild 2026 couture show, Kriti walked in a black mirror work lehenga with hand embroidery, styled with a sheer sequin cape, a choker and wavy open hair. In her second look, she wore a red saree with a white striped blouse, paired with a clear beaded clutch. Kriti will next be seen in an untitled horror film from Maddock Films, reportedly her ninth project with the production house. The makers have not announced its title or release date yet.

Netaji's Family Questions Prabhas' Elevations in Fauzi

On the occasion of Prabhas' birthday, the team of Fauzi released a special glimpse which has now landed in a controversy. The teaser begins with a conversation between Hitler and Subhash Chandra Bose where Bose elevates Prabhas' character.

Already, the netizens and film activists raised doubts over the authenticity of the situation, triggering a debate. Now, Chandra Kumar Bose, Netaji's grandnephew, has criticised Hanu Raghavapudi for allegedly distorting historic facts.

Chandra Kumar Bose called out the flaw from the side of the makers, claiming that they ignored the historical accuracy just for the sake of elevating the hero. Chandra Kumar Bose argued that the filmmakers have the freedom to portray India's freedom struggle but they should not ignore the historical accuracy.

Also, Chandra Kumar Bose particularly spoke about the misrepresentation of Netaji regarding the alleged meeting with Hitler. According to him, the scene diminishes Netaji's stature.



Not stopping there, Chandra Kumar further demanded an apology from Hanu Raghavapudi to Indians for misrepresenting the facts.

In the particular scene, Netaji speaks about one Indian soldier who gives tough

time to the British, but there are various sources saying that Netaji has never met Hitler. At the same time, the makers of Fauzi have also not given clarity on whether the film is fictional or based on real-life incidents. At least

now, if the makers come forward with their explanation, the film will not further run into more controversies. Fauzi, bankrolled by Mythri Movie Makers, is scheduled for a grand release on 19th March.