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Rajnath Singh, Pete Hegseth Review 10-Year India-US Defence Framework



Cebu/New Delhi: Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Wednesday met his US counterpart Secretary of War Pete Hegseth in Cebu, Philippines on the side-lines of the 13th Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Defence Ministers' Meeting (ADMM) - Plus. In his post on X, the Defence Minister said, "Had an excellent meeting with US Secretary of War Pete Hegseth on the side-lines of the 13th ADMM-Plus. We reviewed the progress of our 10-year India-US Defence Framework, driving strategic convergence across military technology, information sharing, and co-production. Our robust partnership continues to be a cornerstone for a free, open, and secure

Indo-Pacific." Earlier posting about the same meeting Hegseth said, "Great meeting with Indian Minister of Defence Singh. We celebrated the one-year anniversary of the Framework for our Major Defence Partnership and explored ways to strengthen cooperation."

Rajnath Singh is leading 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. He will address the forum on 'Exchange of Views on Regional and International Security Issues'. On the side-lines of ADMM-Plus, Raksha Mantri is also

holding 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. India became the dialogue partner of

ASEAN in 1992 and the inaugural ADMM-Plus was convened in Hanoi, Vietnam on October 12, 2010. Since 2017, ADMM-Plus Ministers have been meeting annually to bolster defence cooperation amongst ASEAN and the Plus countries. The Philippines is the chair of ADMM-Plus for 2026. Under the construct of ADMM-Plus, India is co-chairing the Experts Working Group on Counter-Terrorism with Malaysia for the cycle 2024-2027. India's active participation in the ADMM-Plus mechanisms underscores the deepening defence diplomacy in Southeast Asia under the Act East policy, aimed at ensuring peace, stability and collective growth in the region.

Akali Leader Bikram Majithia's 'Prove Or Apologise' Warning To AAP On Drug Case

Chandigarh: A fresh political confrontation has erupted between the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) and senior Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD) leader Bikram Singh Majithia, who on Tuesday accused AAP national convener Arvind Kejriwal and Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann of misleading Punjabis by linking his

disproportionate assets (DA) case to allegations of drug trafficking. Addressing a press conference, Majithia alleged that the AAP government was attempting to divert public attention from Punjab's law-and-order situation and other pressing issues by repeatedly associating his name with the drug case. He challenged Kejriwal

"Ghosts Everywhere" : Nirmala Sitharaman Hits Back At Rahul Gandhi's Tata Remark

New Delhi: Launching a volley at Rahul Gandhi over his remarks that Tata is being "criminally destroyed", Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman "suggested" that he should not politicise every issue and refrain from seeing "ghosts everywhere". Taking to X on Wednesday, amid a high-profile boardroom battle that has been playing out in the open since last month, the Leader of the Opposition alleged that the group was being destroyed and no business leader was

daring to speak up. The Congress MP also took a dig at Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Home Minister Amit Shah and said they were treating India Inc as their "plaything". "Tata is being criminally destroyed, and no business leader dares say a word. How long will you stay silent? Until they own you? Indian business is not Modi and Shah's plaything. You lack courage. We don't. We will ensure justice for these crimes," he wrote. Quoting Gandhi's post, Sitharaman hit back and accused him of trying to spread distrust and toxicity. "I suggest you refrain from politicising every issue. Also, casually labelling commercial and legal matters as criminal is unacceptable. You have repeatedly decried the successes of Indian industry and our entrepreneurs. Now, are you trying to incite our business leaders to join you in spreading distrust & toxicity?" she asked.

The finance minister also alleged that the Con-



gress had, for decades, tried to stifle the spirit of Indian entrepreneurs under the "licence-quota raj" and inflicted "poverty on crores of Indians". She asserted that, under Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the government values the Indian industry and has made policies to enable its progress. Attacking Gandhi over his promise of ensuring justice, the finance minister took another jibe and alleged that he and his party had demeaned the judiciary.

"The Constitution of India ensures justice to all its citizens & our Honourable Courts are entrusted with upholding it. History is witness to the shoddy manner in

which you, your party and the PMs belonging to your party have demeaned the judiciary. So Rahul ji, refrain from seeing ghosts everywhere," she said.

Tata Battle

On Monday, Tata Trusts chairman Noel Tata challenged the September 17 board resolution to reappoint N Chandrasekaran as the chairman of Tata Sons, which is the holding company of the salt-to-software conglomerate. Noel Tata wrote to Tata Sons' company secretary Suprakash Mukhopadhyay, challenging the resolution. Citing sources, news agency PTI reported that Noel Tata termed the reappointment for five years as void.

CM Chandrababu Urges NDA Leaders to Work as One Team in Local Body Elections



From Our Staff Reporter Amaravati, October 28: Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu held a teleconference with 45,000 leaders and workers of the Telugu Desam Party (TDP), Jana Sena Party and Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). He urged leaders and cadre of all three alliance partners to work together as a united team in the upcoming local body elections. Speaking during the teleconference, the Chief Minister said the three parties had contested the 2024 elections together under the slogan of good governance, earning the people's trust and securing a historic victory for the NDA. He asserted that the government was delivering governance in line with the people's expectations and fulfilling its promises.

Naidu recalled that workers from all three parties had coordinated effectively during the general elections and called on them to maintain the same unity in the local body polls.

Opportunities for Those Who Do Not Get Seats

The Chief Minister acknowledged that differences and challenges were inevitable within political parties and that a three-party alliance could also face disagreements. However, he urged leaders to overcome minor differences in the larger interest of the

state. He said the alliance leaders had discussed seat-sharing and clarified the allocation of seats. Workers were expected to abide by these decisions and support the officially selected NDA candidates. Naidu assured leaders who did not receive tickets that they would be given opportunities through nominated posts and chairperson positions. He warned that contesting as rebels or independents would violate alliance principles and urged all workers to work for the victory of the officially nominated candidates.

Public Satisfaction with NDA Government

The Chief Minister alleged that the opposition had filed 62 petitions to obstruct local body elections and approached the Supreme Court, but the court had not agreed to postpone the polls. He said Cyclone Arnab had significantly affected the state and that he had briefed Union Home Minister Amit Shah on the situation. Despite reviewing the cyclone's impact over the past two days, he had also made time for party activities, he added. Naidu asserted that people were satisfied with the NDA government's performance. He cited the timely implementation of welfare schemes, the conduct of DSC recruitment, distribu-

tion of house-site pattas to the poor, issuance of land ownership passbooks to farmers and efforts to build pothole-free roads. He criticised the previous government, alleging that it had neglected development works while focusing on announcing welfare payments through the press of buttons. He called on alliance workers to secure a higher vote share than the NDA achieved in the 2024

Call for Higher Vote Share and a Stronger Alliance

Naidu urged workers to improve the alliance's vote share and electoral strike rate, recalling that alliance supporters had voted for candidates regardless of which party they belonged to during the general elections. He alleged that the YSR Congress Party (YSRCP) had weakened and accused its leadership of conspiring from Bengaluru. He also criticised YSRCP chief Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy, alleging that his focus was on palaces and properties rather than public welfare. The Chief Minister asked NDA workers to inform people about what he described as the opposition party's misdeeds. He claimed that the YSRCP's vote bank

was already declining and said it should shrink further in the interest of the state's development. "We are committed to working for the people. The NDA must remain strong at both the Centre and the state under Prime Minister Narendra Modi's leadership," Naidu said.

He called on the alliance to win all corporations, municipalities, Mandal Parishad Territorial Constituencies (MPTCs) and Zilla Parishad Territorial Constituencies (ZPTCs). Stressing the need to move from a double-engine government to a triple-engine government, Naidu urged alliance leaders and workers to remain active throughout the coming week and work with unity and dedication to ensure the NDA's victory in the local body elections.

CM Announces Major Relief for Cyclone Arnab Victims

Amaravati, October 28: Heavy rains triggered by Cyclone Arnab have lashed several districts of Andhra Pradesh, severely disrupting normal life. Continuous downpours have caused widespread hardship across the affected areas. In response, Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu has announced compensation for those affected by the cyclone. He assured that justice would be done to everyone who suffered crop and property losses due to Cyclone Arnab. Speaking to the media on Wednesday from the Real-Time Governance Centre at the State Secretariat, the Chief Minister shared several important details regarding Cyclone Arnab and the government's response to the situation.

AP SEC Reschedules MPTC, ZPTC Polling to November 5, Counting on November 7



From Our Staff Reporter Amaravati, October 28: The Andhra Pradesh State Election Commission (SEC) has rescheduled the polling and counting dates for the Mandal Parishad Territorial Constituency (MPTC) and Zilla Parishad Territorial Constituency (ZPTC) elections. According to the revised schedule, polling will be held on November 5, while counting of votes will take place on November 7. Earlier, the SEC had postponed urban local body elections and scheduled polling for November 1 and counting for November 3. Following the Supreme Court's green signal for local body elections on Tuesday, the Andhra Pradesh Election Commission decided on Wednesday to revise the dates for the MPTC and ZPTC elections.

Cyclone Arnab Severely Damages AP Power Network; Restoration Underway

From Our Staff Reporter Amaravati, October 28: Cyclone Arnab has caused extensive damage to the power distribution network under the Andhra Pradesh Central Power Distribution Corporation Limited (APCPDCL). The cyclone disrupted operations at 156 (33/11 kV) substations and 576 11 kV feeders. Officials have restored power supply through 93 substations and 324 feeders, while restoration work continues in the remaining affected areas. Electricity supply was also disrupted in 685 villages, affecting 264,999 domestic and commercial (non-agricultural) connections. Offi-

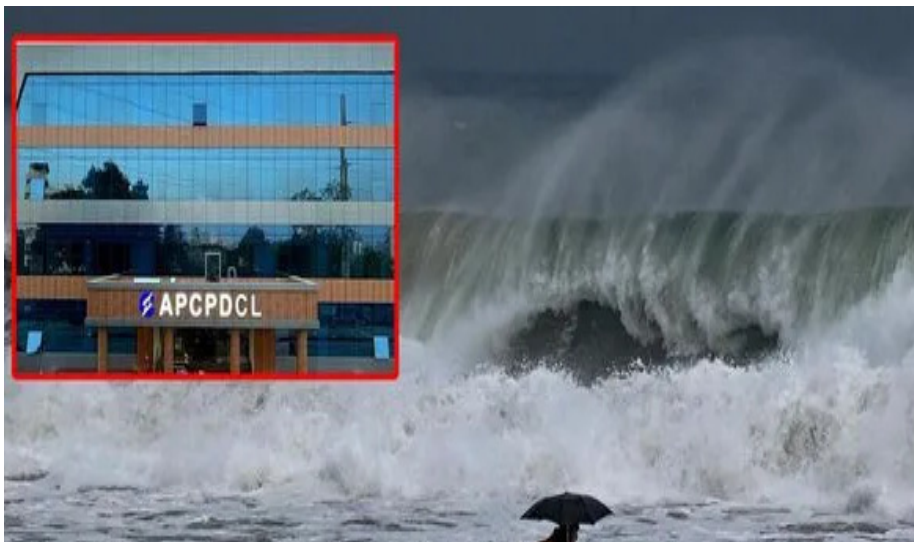
cials have restored 142,130 connections across 474 villages, while repair work is underway to restore the remaining 122,869 connections.

Krishna District Worst Hit

Krishna district suffered the most extensive impact, with 560 villages, 94 substations and 357 11 kV feeders affected by the cyclone. APCPDCL officials have estimated property damage to the electricity department at approximately ₹30 lakh. To accelerate restoration work, 399 special teams comprising 1,995 personnel have been deployed. The cyclone also disrupted

30,878 agricultural (AGL) power connections, of which 14,343 have been restored, officials said.

Telangana Offers Support for Power Restoration Amid the cyclone's impact, Telangana Deputy Chief Minister and Energy Minister Bhatti Vikramarka spoke over the phone with Andhra Pradesh Energy Minister Gottipati Ravi to enquire about the severity of the situation. Gottipati briefed Bhatti on the damage caused by Cyclone Arnab and the mitigation measures being undertaken under the leadership of Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu. Bhatti assured Andhra



Pradesh of Telangana's full support and offered to send personnel and equipment

to assist with electricity restoration. Gottipati Ravi thanked the Telangana

government for extending its support to Andhra Pradesh during the crisis.

EDITORIAL

Jail for Hoisting the National Flag?

Are we now living in a country where hoisting the national flag can land someone in jail? The detention of Ashutosh Ranka and Saurav Das of the Cockroach Janata Party, who staged a protest by waving the Tricolour at Jantar Mantar in Delhi, has once again brought this question to the forefront. However, it would be incorrect to claim that they were detained merely for hoisting the national flag. Authorities cited allegations including unauthorised entry, violation of previously furnished peace bonds, and the possibility of further disturbances to public order. On October 14, they were sent to five days of detention, which was extended by another two days on October 19. According to media reports, they were released on October 21 after providing a written undertaking that they would not call for protests at Jantar Mantar until it regained its status as an officially designated protest site. These developments cannot be viewed merely as the arrest and subsequent release of two activists. They present an opportunity to examine the relationship between the right to protest, personal liberty, government regulation and respect for the national flag.

Jantar Mantar: A Voice for the People

For decades, Jantar Mantar has served as a platform for farmers, workers, students, women and various people's movements. Located close to Parliament, it has been an important place where citizens could bring their grievances to the attention of those in power. It cannot be argued that protests should be completely free from restrictions. Certain regulations may be imposed to protect the rights of local residents, maintain law and order, and manage traffic. However, suitable and reasonable alternative locations must be provided for demonstrations. Merely claiming that an alternative location has been designated as a formality is not sufficient. What matters is whether the voices of protesters at such locations can reach the media and those in power. In the 2018 Mazdoor Kisan Shakti Sangathan case, the Supreme Court recognised the right to peaceful protest while clarifying that reasonable restrictions were necessary to protect the rights of others and maintain public peace. Article 19(1)(a) of the Constitution guarantees freedom of speech and expression, while Article 19(1)(b) guarantees the right to assemble peacefully and without arms. These rights are subject to reasonable constitutional restrictions. In the 2004 Union of India vs. Naveen Jindal case, the Supreme Court recognised that respectfully flying the national flag forms part of the freedom of expression.

At the same time, Section 2 of the Prevention of Insults to National Honour Act, 1971, makes certain acts of disrespect towards the national flag punishable. However, criticising government policies and insulting the national flag are not the same thing. Based on the available information, it has not been established that any specific charge under the law protecting national honour was registered against the two activists. Therefore, it would be inappropriate to claim that they were detained for insulting the national flag. Nevertheless, the authorities' arguments in this case cannot be ignored. The police have the power to take action when lawful orders are violated.

But several questions still require answers. Was the action taken necessary? Was five days of detention unavoidable? Were less restrictive alternatives available? Evidence would be required to establish that the action was politically motivated. At the same time, questioning whether such action was justified is a democratic right. The law must apply equally to everyone, and its enforcement should not vary according to political opinions. During India's freedom struggle, the Tricolour symbolised resistance to colonial rule and the aspiration for self-governance. Remembering that history does not mean equating today's government with British colonial rule. Rather, it means recognising the value of the rights guaranteed by the Constitution of independent India. Patriotism does not mean accepting every decision made by the government. One can love the country while questioning the government. One can respect the national flag while criticising the policies of those in power. One can respect the law while questioning shortcomings in its implementation. The national flag belongs to the people. The Constitution belongs to the people. The country, too, belongs to the people. There may be lawful restrictions on protests, but those restrictions must never become instruments for silencing the people's voices. Along with safeguarding the dignity of the national flag, the government also has a responsibility to protect the freedom, democracy and dignity of citizens that the flag represents.

That is the true message of the Tricolour!

Citizens First, Results Foremost

Narendra Modi has completed 25 years in public life, leading elected governments at both the state and national levels. During this period, he spearheaded the expansion of infrastructure, first in Gujarat and subsequently across the country. Both the scale and quality of infrastructure have improved significantly. During Modi's tenure as Chief Minister, the transformation of roads, electricity, ports and transport connectivity in Gujarat became a defining feature of the state's development journey. At the national level, the changes in infrastructure have been even more remarkable. In 2014, India had 74 airports. Today, that number has increased to 165, with some ranking among the finest airports in the world. Smaller cities such as Darbhanga and Gaya now have multiple daily flights connecting them to major metropolitan centres, including Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata and Bengaluru. These cities were among the places where I worked during the early years of my career. The railway network has also witnessed massive expansion and modernisation. From dedicated freight corridors and electrification of railway lines to the superior travel experience offered by Vande Bharat trains and the redevelopment of railway stations, the transformation has been extensive. National highways have expanded considerably. New expressways, ports and metro rail systems have fundamentally changed the country's transport connectivity landscape. Today, Indians travelling across different parts of the

country can enjoy road travel experiences that were previously available to them only when visiting foreign countries. India's ranking in the Logistics Performance Index has improved substantially. From 54th position in 2014, India climbed 16 places to reach 38th position by 2023. Meanwhile, logistics costs declined to 7.97 per cent of Gross Domestic Product (GDP). This has strengthened India's economic competitiveness. These visible transformations have naturally attracted widespread attention. However, a more fundamental change under Modi's leadership has been the emergence of an entirely new approach to how infrastructure is conceptualised, planned and implemented. In my experience, problems in infrastructure management are rarely caused by a single wrong decision. More often, the real problem arises when several decisions that appear reasonable individually fail to produce the desired collective outcome. Consequently, even when the benefits of individual components are combined, the overall system fails to deliver its full potential. Modi recognised this reality with an almost instinctive understanding.

Rather than viewing infrastructure solely from the perspective of the department responsible for constructing a particular facility, he focused on the broader outcomes that the infrastructure was intended to achieve. This results-oriented, citizen-centric approach has become a defining characteristic of his governance model. Another important aspect of Modi's approach is the



use of technology. In Gujarat, the BISAG (Bhaskaracharya Institute for Space Applications and Geo-informatics) developed capabilities in satellite applications, geographic information systems and spatial planning. Geospatial information made it possible to examine development comprehensively while taking the state's geographical characteristics into account. By integrating information related to land, roads, water resources, residential areas, industries and other infrastructure, it became possible to understand more comprehensively the relationships among different aspects of development. This experience laid the foundation for launching the Gati Shakti initiative at the national level. The significance of PM Gati Shakti does not lie merely in replicating Gujarat's existing model across the country. Its uniqueness lies in extending a governance approach that treats

geographical conditions, infrastructure and economic activities as interconnected elements to a much larger national scale. Gati Shakti brought various Union ministries, states and Union Territories onto a common platform, enabling integrated planning and coordinated implementation of infrastructure projects.

This paved the way for a whole-of-government approach, allowing different parts of the administration to function as a unified system. One might naturally ask whether coordination among government departments did not exist before the launch of Gati Shakti. Certainly, it did. However, there is a fundamental difference between the coordination mechanisms traditionally followed by governments and the systematic approach that Gati Shakti seeks to institutionalise. Together, the Gati Shakti and PRAGATI initiatives highlight a distinctive feature of Modi's

governance model. On the one hand, this approach examines the entire system holistically. On the other, it focuses on specific obstacles that can delay or halt individual projects. Infrastructure planning cannot be effective without understanding how its different components are interconnected. Similarly, projects cannot be completed efficiently without carefully addressing every aspect of implementation. The combination of integrated planning, continuous monitoring and sustained attention to problem-solving has enabled infrastructure development on an unprecedented scale and with greater efficiency. The real significance of this approach lies in bringing a comprehensive, systems-oriented perspective into governance, with the twin objectives of providing citizens with a seamless and convenient experience and improving productivity across the broader economy.

Will Israel 'Dump' Netanyahu? Why His Future Hangs In The Balance

Israel goes to the polls on October 27, in an election extensively framed as a referendum on Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. That assessment, however, limits a more crucial political contest to the fate of one leader, thereby missing a critical chapter of what Israeli politics looks like in the aftermath of the October 7 Hamas-led attack in 2023. The question that demands greater attention is whether the country's political center of gravity will shift if Netanyahu fails to secure an electoral mandate. Would a leadership change alter the country's strategic direction amid a heavily security-driven environment? Before offering assessments of Israeli elections and their potential outcome, it remains important to understand the electoral process itself. Israeli citizens do not vote directly for the prime minister on the ballot; instead, they vote for parties to the 120-member Knesset, or the Israeli parliament, allocated through proportional representation. The country essentially functions as a single constituency, and any party surpassing the 3.25% threshold receives seats broadly proportional to its vote share. The result, therefore, remains less dependent on the number of seats each party secures and more on its ability to form a coalition to govern. The alliance is required to command the support of at least 61 lawmakers to win a parliamentary majority. In comparison with Indian parliamentary elections, an Indian voter picks an individual member to be elected to the Lower House of the parliament, and the first one past the post generally gives the largest party or a coalition a clear mandate. Whereas, an Israeli citizen votes for a party, instead of a candidate, and the order of candidates on that list remains predetermined. In simpler terms, a vote for the Likud party is not a vote for Netanyahu. A party can lead polls, yet fail to form a

government. Meanwhile, a smaller party could win fewer votes but become indispensable in reaching a majority of 61 seats. The system, as such, is essentially rooted in coalition-building and less in ideological alignment of parties. The political polarisation and trauma of the October 7 attack seem to be dominating the political plank, as demonstrated in the broader consensus on security-related issues. The key divisive issues are based primarily on two questions: who should govern and how the state should be governed.

Israel's Political Spectrum

The characteristics of Israeli politics are reflected in the parties contesting the polls, and a closer examination of these parties reveals how these entities hardly fit the conventional political spectrum of right-wing and left-wing. The Netanyahu blocs can be understood as an alliance of distinct right- and far-right-leaning parties and religious constituencies. For instance, Netanyahu's Likud party represents nationalist-conservative politics, with a focus on security-related issues, Jewish national identity, and a strong executive. The ultra-Orthodox parties, including Shas and United Torah Judaism, have prioritised religious education, welfare, and preserving the current religion-based status quo. The far-right parties, including Minister of National Security of Israel Itamar Ben-Gvir's Otzma Yehudit, take a headline position on territory, Jewish settlements, and Palestinian statehood. While these parties have overlapping consensus on security and national identity, acute differences remain in how they view military services, the relationship between state and religion, judicial reform, and economic policy. They remain both strains and allies for Netanyahu. A similar lens can be applied to the opposition bloc, which does not represent a conventional left-wing or a



drastic opposition to the Netanyahu camp. The political plank of Gadi Eisenkot, known to be the biggest opponent in the ongoing polls, also rests on his security credentials as the former chief of staff of the Israel Defense Forces (IDF). He argues that Israel can remain security-centric without Netanyahu, while campaigning around issues of greater accountability, democratic institutions, and corruption concerns. Other key figures in the anti-government opposition bloc occupy distinct policy spaces - former Prime Ministers Naftali Bennett and Yair Lapid form a centrist-to-center-right alliance focused on security and governance reform, while Avigdor Liberman champions defense hawkishness alongside strict secularism. Meanwhile, the liberal-left, headed by Yair Golan, represents a smaller,

distinct constituency.

With that logic, the upcoming Israeli government, even if without Netanyahu, is unlikely to have a softened stance on the question of Palestine and regional security. Despite consensus on the security approach, the issue of military services has emerged more prominently in the discourse. Israel is a citizen army, with conscription closely tied to the country's social contract. Historically, the Haredi, ultra-orthodox community has been exempt from military service. However, heavy reserve mobilisation and exacerbated concerns of security have made this exclusion a central political debate. For secular and religious parties, this remains a matter of sharing an equal burden; meanwhile, Haredi parties regard this exclusion as a way of preserving their distinct reli-

gious lifestyle. Predictably, the October 7 attack has disproportionately dominated electoral campaigns over other national issues. The incident produced two competing arguments - how the security breach occurred under Netanyahu's watch, and who Israelis can trust to protect them in the future. Therefore, any anti-Netanyahu vote or sentiment should not be misread as a desire for a different Palestinian policy, with neither bloc campaigning on the issue of a two-state solution or against the disproportionate use of force in Gaza in 2023, or increasing settlement-related violence in the West Bank. The election contest may not alter Israel's strategic or regional direction in the foreseeable future; however, a change of leadership can carry significant domestic consequences.

Maharashtra Deputy Speaker Anna Bansode Directs Smooth Arrangements For Lakhs Of Ambedkar Followers In Mumbai

Mumbai: Maharashtra Legislative Assembly Deputy Speaker Anna Bansode has directed all concerned departments to coordinate their preparations for the 70th Mahaparinirvan Diwas of Bharat Ratna Dr Babasaheb Ambedkar on December 6, ensuring that lakhs of followers visiting Mumbai for tributes receive adequate facilities. At a review meeting held on Wednesday, Bansode emphasised the need for effective arrangements covering security, transportation, healthcare, sanitation and crowd management, particularly around Shivaji Park and Chaityabhoomi, where large numbers of followers gather annually.

He directed the authorities to ensure adequate police deployment at Shivaji Park and other locations housing statues and memorials of Dr Ambedkar. CCTV surveillance and drones

should be used to monitor crowds, while information about traffic diversions must be communicated to citizens well in advance to minimise inconvenience. Special crowd-control arrangements have also been sought at major railway stations, including Dadar, Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Terminus (CSMT), Kurla, Bandra and Mumbai Central. The railway administration has been requested to consider operating additional trains according to demand and avoid scheduling a mega block on December 6. The Maharashtra State Road Transport Corporation (MSRTC) has also been asked to plan additional bus services for the occasion. The public health department has been instructed to organise medical check-ups, health awareness programmes and blood donation camps on December 5 and 6. A special cleanliness drive will



also be undertaken to maintain hygiene in and around the gathering areas. The meeting also discussed the possibility of declaring a dry day across Maharashtra on December 6 and issuing the circular regarding the public holiday sufficiently in advance. The concerned departments have been asked to take the necessary action in this regard. The Social Justice Department has been directed to publish special advertisements in newspapers highlighting Dr Ambedkar's thoughts and contributions. Book stalls will also be set

up at Shivaji Park to promote his writings and make information about various government schemes available to followers.

Highlighting the financial requirements for the annual observance, Bansode said an estimated Rs 25 crore to Rs 30 crore could be required for the arrangements. He asked the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) to make the necessary budgetary provisions and complete the process of administrative approvals in time. Senior officials from the Home, General Administration, Public Works and Transport departments, along with members of the Chaityabhoomi Coordination Committee, attended the meeting. The administration is expected to finalise arrangements in advance to ensure that the annual observance passes smoothly and followers can pay their respects to Dr Ambedkar without facing avoidable difficulties.

'ACP Rathod Samjhe The, Gulfam Hassan Nikle'

: *BJP's Gaurav Bhatia Takes 'Sarfarosh' Dig At Naseeruddin Shah Over 'Dimagi Naxal' Remark*



New Delhi: Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) spokesperson Gaurav Bhatia on Wednesday took a swipe at veteran actor Naseeruddin Shah after the latter described himself as a “dimagi naxal” while expressing support for students protesting at Jamia Millia Islamia in Delhi. Taking a dig at Shah through a reference to the 1999 Bollywood film

Sarfarosh, Bhatia wrote on X, “Jisko hum ACP Rathod Samjhe the, Woh asl Zindagi mein Gulfam Hassan nikla” (The person we thought was ACP Rathod turned out to be Gulfam Hassan in real life). In Sarfarosh, Aamir Khan played the role of ACP Ajay Singh Rathod, the film's protagonist, while Shah portrayed Gulfam Hassan, a

Pakistani ghazal singer who serves as a spy and a key informer. Bhatia's remark came after Shah shared a video on social media backing the protesting students of Jamia Millia Islamia, who are demanding the restoration of student union elections and raising other concerns against the university administration. In the video, Shah described himself as a “dimagi naxal” and criticised the government for allegedly labelling its critics as anti-national and members of the “tukde-tukde gang”. “I proudly say that I am a dimagi naxal,” Shah said, adding that he wanted to question the government over its treatment of

young people, educational institutions and democracy.

The actor also referred to student-related controversies at Jawaharlal Nehru University, the Satyajit Ray Film and Television Institute and Jamia Millia Islamia, saying that the alleged treatment of students would not be forgotten. Students at Jamia Millia Islamia have been protesting to demand the restoration of student union elections. Their other demands reportedly include the removal of the chief proctor and the withdrawal of action taken against students participating in the agitation. Some students have also resorted to a hunger strike.

Seva First Innovation Challenge 2026 Sees 65,000 Registrations In Maharashtra Zone; Students And Innovators Can Apply Till October 30

Mumbai: The Seva First Innovation Challenge, a multi-state innovation competition organised by the Union Ministry of Skill Development, has received an encouraging response, with more than 65,000 registrations recorded from the Maharashtra zone. The online application window for the competition will remain open until October 30, 2026, giving students, researchers, startups and other interested participants an opportunity to submit innovative solutions to pressing social and public challenges.

The competition aims to encourage practical, technology-driven solutions to issues affecting society. Key focus areas include national security threats, urban population changes and migration patterns, and protecting workers from extreme heat. Participants can also propose solutions in areas such as agriculture, water management, healthcare, education, sanitation, the environment and transportation. According to the



registration data, the Maharashtra zone, comprising Maharashtra, Goa, Chhattisgarh and the Union Territories of Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu, has recorded more than 65,000 registrations involving 48,680 teams. The competition has also attracted 3,787 women participants and 2,044 are from the below the age of 18. Of the total registrations, 12,604 are from the general category. Participants have submitted a total of 7,952 ideas so far. Cabinet Minister Mangal Prabhat Lodha said the application process began on

September 21 and the response from the region had been encouraging. He said the challenge offers an important platform for identifying problems faced by society and developing solutions that are technologically sound and practically implementable.

Innovators, individual students, student groups, researchers, professors, startups, micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs), companies, social organisations, and educational and research institutions are eligible to participate. The minister also called upon students to identify local problems and develop feasible solu-

tions that could improve everyday life. He urged non-governmental organisations (NGOs) to guide students through the process, from identifying community-level challenges to developing solutions and submitting applications. NGOs have also been encouraged to prepare clear action plans specifying the schools they intend to reach, the number of students they plan to inform and the target for quality applications. Coordinated efforts by the government, schools and social organisations are expected to help bring grassroots innovations onto a wider platform.

Strong Winds Lash Polavaram District at 78 kmph

- *Schools, Anganwadi Centres to Remain Closed on October 29*

Rampachodavaram, Pen Power, October 28: Cyclone Arnab has brought heavy rainfall and strong winds to Polavaram district, with wind speeds reaching 77.72 kmph, District Collector K. Dinesh Kumar said on Wednesday. An average rainfall of 64.11 mm was recorded across 12 mandals by 6 PM. Of the 2,505 trees that fell across the district, 2,452 have been cleared. Of the 153 damaged electricity poles, restoration work on 82 has been completed. Around 350 electricity staff are engaged in restoration operations. Authorities have also established 199 relief centres across the district. Vehicle movement on the Rampachodavaram-Maredumilli-Chinturu-Bhadrachalam ghat road has been restricted due to



strong winds and heavy rainfall. All educational institutions and Anganwadi centres will remain closed on Thursday, October 29.

The Collector urged people to avoid unnecessary travel, stay away from fallen electric wires and trees, and avoid crossing

streams and flooded culverts. Officials have been directed to expedite road clearance and electricity restoration works.

SP Conducts Extensive Tour of Cyclone-Affected Areas

- *Police Clear Fallen Trees and Restore Traffic Movement*



Pen Power – Rampachodavaram, October 28: Polavaram District Superintendent of Police K. Chakravarthy, IPS, conducted an extensive tour of cyclone-affected areas across the Rampachodavaram and Chinturu subdivisions on Wednesday to assess the ground situation and review precautionary measures taken in view of Cyclone Amab. He inspected vulnerable locations, including streams, bridges, canals and reservoir surroundings, and directed police personnel to remain alert to prevent loss of life and property.

As part of his visit, the SP inspected the Maderu stream in Addateegala, the Vedurunagaram bridge near Rayapalli village, streams in Jaddangi, a bridge on the Rajavommangi-Labbarthi-Lagarai route, and the

Errampadu canal flowing downstream from Vattigadda Reservoir. He also visited the areas affected by fallen trees and instructed the personnel concerned to ensure the smooth movement of vehicles.

Police Act Swiftly to Clear Fallen Trees

A large Yegisa tree fell across the road at Urlakulapadu within the Jaddangi Police Station limits in Rajavommangi mandal, disrupting traffic. Responding immediately, Jaddangi Sub-Inspector Chinababu, with the assistance of police personnel, cleared the tree from the road and restored traffic movement on the Eleswaram-Narsipatnam route. Similarly, a large Nallamaddi tree fell near Gopavaram village in Rampachodavaram mandal, obstructing vehicles travelling between

Rampachodavaram and Gokavaram. The SP inspected the affected area and directed the concerned personnel to take immediate measures to clear the obstruction and facilitate the smooth movement of traffic.

Officials Directed to Remain on High Alert

In view of the possibility of heavy rainfall and flooding due to the cyclone, the SP instructed police officers and personnel to remain vigilant and continuously monitor vulnerable areas. He stressed the need for precautionary measures in low-lying areas and near streams, bridges, canals and rivers. He also directed officials to take preventive action against possible hazards such as falling trees, damaged electric poles, collapsing walls and damage to houses. Special care should be taken to protect human lives, livestock and wildlife,

he said. The SP further instructed police personnel to remain prepared to provide immediate assistance to the public during emergencies and coordinate with other government departments to ensure effective relief and rescue operations. Protecting the lives and property of the public is the primary responsibility of the police, SP K. Chakravarthy said, adding that the department would continue to remain alert and take all necessary measures to prevent untoward incidents during the natural calamity. DSP P. Ashraf Ali, SB Circle Inspector Bhanu Prasad, Rajavommangi Circle Inspector Sanyasinayudu, Rampachodavaram Circle Inspector Gopi Narendra Prasad, Sub-Inspectors Sharif and Ramesh, along with other police officers and personnel, participated in the field inspections.

First Such Case In Kashmir Valley As Kashmiri Pandit Is Booked Under UAPA Over Alleged Fake Militant Threat Letters Targeting Employees

Srinagar: Jammu and Kashmir Police have booked Kashmiri Pandit activist Rakesh Handoo under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA) for allegedly circulating fake militant threat letters targeting Kashmiri Pandit employees working in the Kashmir Valley under the PM's special employment package. The case is believed to be the first of its kind in the Valley, where a Kashmiri Pandit has been booked under the stringent anti-terror law. The development is significant as Kashmiri Pandits, a community displaced from the Valley following the outbreak of militancy, are widely regarded as Indian nationalists. Handoo was arrested by a Baramulla Police team from Faridabad in Haryana on October 17 in connection with the alleged circulation of threatening



letters in August this year. The letters reportedly contained the names and contact details of several Kashmiri Pandit employees working in the Valley, causing fear among them and raising concerns about their safety. “Police have got substantial and serious clues about his involvement. He has been booked

under UAPA,” IGP, Kashmir Zone, Sujit Kumar, was quoted as saying. The circulation of the alleged threat letters had prompted hundreds of employees recruited under the PM's special employment package to stay away from work for nearly three weeks over security concerns. The case was registered following a

complaint by Rohit Raina, appointed under the PM's package and posted in north Kashmir's Baramulla district. According to reports, police registered FIR No. 151/2026 at Baramulla Police Station under Section 66F, which deals with cyberterrorism, and Section 84C of the Information Technology Act.

Union Minister Prataprao Jadhav Launches Tobacco-Free Youth Campaign 4.0, Calls for Nationwide Fight Against Addiction



New Delhi: Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Ayush and Union Minister of State for Health and Family Welfare, Shri Prataprao Jadhav, today launched the fourth edition of the Tobacco-Free Youth Campaign (TFYC 4.0) at the Atal Bihari Vajpayee Institute of Medical Sciences (ABVIMS) and Dr. Ram Manohar Lohia (Dr. RML) Hospital, New Delhi, calling for a nationwide people's movement to protect young people from tobacco use and nicotine addiction.

The 60-day nationwide campaign, being undertaken by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, seeks to prevent tobacco initiation among young people, encourage tobacco cessation, strengthen enforcement of tobacco control laws and promote tobacco-free environments across the country. Building on the achievements of its previous three editions, which have seen over 5.8 lakh educational institutions and more than 73,000 villages declared tobacco-free, the fourth edition marks a significant expansion of the initiative, with universities and colleges emerging as a major focus of this year's campaign. Addressing the gathering, Shri Prataprao Jadhav urged the country's youth to firmly reject tobacco and other addictive substances and embrace healthy, fulfilling and addiction-free lives. He emphasised that the health and well-being of young people are central to India's aspirations of be-

coming a developed nation. Highlighting the pivotal role of young people in nation-building, the Minister said that India's youth are its greatest strength and that their energy, talent, creativity and determination will shape the country's future. He stressed that protecting the younger generation from tobacco and addiction is both a public health imperative and a national responsibility.

"Protecting our youth

tobacco smoke contains more than 7,000 chemicals, including numerous toxic and cancer-causing substances, which can severely damage different organs of the body. He cautioned that tobacco use not only endangers the health of users but also exposes family members, children and others to the harmful effects of second-hand smoke. Expressing particular concern about nicotine use during adolescence, Shri Jadhav

Nadda, the Government of India has been consistently strengthening its efforts to protect citizens, particularly children and adolescents, from the harmful effects of tobacco. He noted that the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare has been organising the annual 60-day Tobacco-Free Youth Campaign since 2023, focusing on tobacco prevention, cessation, stronger enforcement and community participation. The cam-

tiative and the growing commitment of stakeholders across States and Union Territories. He observed that the sustained efforts of the Government, supported by educational institutions and communities, have contributed to greater awareness about the dangers of tobacco and strengthened the country's tobacco control movement. Referring to national survey findings, including the Global Adult Tobacco Survey and Global Youth Tobacco Survey, he highlighted the importance of continued preventive efforts, particularly among adolescents aged 13-15 years. The Minister emphasised that the campaign must transcend the boundaries of a government programme and evolve into a mass movement driven by the active participation and leadership of young people. Recalling Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi's message on de-addiction during his Mann Ki Baat address on 30 August 2026, Shri Jadhav said that the Prime Minister had called upon citizens to collectively work towards keeping India's youth away from addiction and ensuring that they lead healthy and addiction-free lives. He urged young people to carry forward this message and become agents of change in their schools, colleges, families and communities.

Jadhav called upon all stakeholders to take the message of 'Say No to Tobacco' to every corner of the country and ensure that tobacco prevention becomes a shared social commitment. Referring to the achievements of the previous three editions, the Minister highlighted that over 5.8 lakh educational institutions and more than 73,000 villages have been declared tobacco-free, reflecting the expanding reach of the ini-

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India releases Four Key Publications on Biodiversity Conservation, Biosafety and Access and Benefit Sharing at CBD COP-17, in Yerevan, Armenia



New Delhi: Union Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Shri Bhubendra Yadav, today emphasised the need to translate global biodiversity commitments into effective implementation, sustainable financing and lasting conservation outcomes at a side event of the 17th Conference of the Parties (COP-17) to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) in Yerevan, Armenia. The event was organized by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Government of India, in partnership with India's National Biodiversity Authority (NBA) and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). The event was also graced by Mr. Hambardzum Matevosyan, President of CBD COP17 and Minister of Environment of the Republic of Armenia, besides Dr. Taukondjo Shikongo, Head of Access and Benefit-sharing (ABS) unit, Secretariat of the CBD. Delivering the keynote address

at the side event titled - From Policy to Practice: Advancing India's Biodiversity Commitments through Innovation, Finance, ABS and OECS - Shri Yadav highlighted the importance of building implementation capacity, sustaining finance and ensuring that biodiversity conservation and sustainable use contribute to human well-being and intergenerational equity. Referring to the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, the Minister said that the responsibility of countries extends beyond adopting targets to building the capacity and mobilising the resources necessary to implement them.

Yadav highlighted that biodiversity in India is inseparable from people's lives, knowledge and livelihoods. He emphasised that environmental protection and development must reinforce each other. The Minister also highlighted the principle of LiFE (Lifestyle for Environment),

noting the importance of sustainable choices and responsible consumption in maintaining a harmonious relationship with nature. During the event, the dignitaries released four publications, that are as follows: Guidelines for the Designation of India's Other Effective Area-Based Conservation Measures (IOEBCMs) 2026: The guidelines would support the recognition of conservation outcomes beyond conventional protected areas, subject to appropriate criteria and governance. They recognise that effective conservation can take place across diverse landscapes and management systems. 5th National Report on Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety: The report reflects the importance India attaches to transparent reporting and responsible biosafety governance. The Convention on Biological Diversity Handbook: Reference Guide and Indian Perspective: The handbook aims to strengthen informed

participation and continuity in implementation by providing accessible reference material on an increasingly complex international process. India's ABS Success Story: The book highlights India's position as a Globally acknowledged leader in Access and Benefit Sharing (ABS).

The Minister noted that these publications address interconnected priorities, including identifying conservation contributions, strengthening institutional understanding and reporting on implementation. He emphasised that ambitious biodiversity goals require sound guidance, reliable information and public accountability. The Minister called for measuring progress not merely by announcements or resources mobilised and areas identified, but by implementation, benefits delivered and sustained conservation outcomes. Highlighting the importance of Access and Benefit Sharing, Shri Yadav said that the Nagoya Protocol provides a basis for the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the utilisation of genetic resources.

He stressed the need to translate this principle into workable, transparent and equitable procedures. India's experience, he noted, demonstrates the importance of complementing policy reforms with capable institutions, digital innovation and engagement with communities and responsible businesses.

India and Mexico launch Negotiations for Preferential Trade Agreement, Sign Terms of Reference

India and Mexico Discuss Expanding Trade and Investment Ties; PTA Negotiations Cover Key Trade Areas



New Delhi: Mexico and India take an important step towards strengthening their economic and trade relations with the signing of the Terms of Reference for negotiations on a Preferential Trade Agreement (PTA), which establish the framework, scope, modalities and roadmap for negotiations aimed at creating new economic opportunities for both countries. The signing formally launches negotiations for a mutually beneficial and balanced PTA, with the potential to expand bilateral trade, create business opportunities, enhance investment flows and contribute to resilient and diversified supply chains. The initiative follows the understanding reached

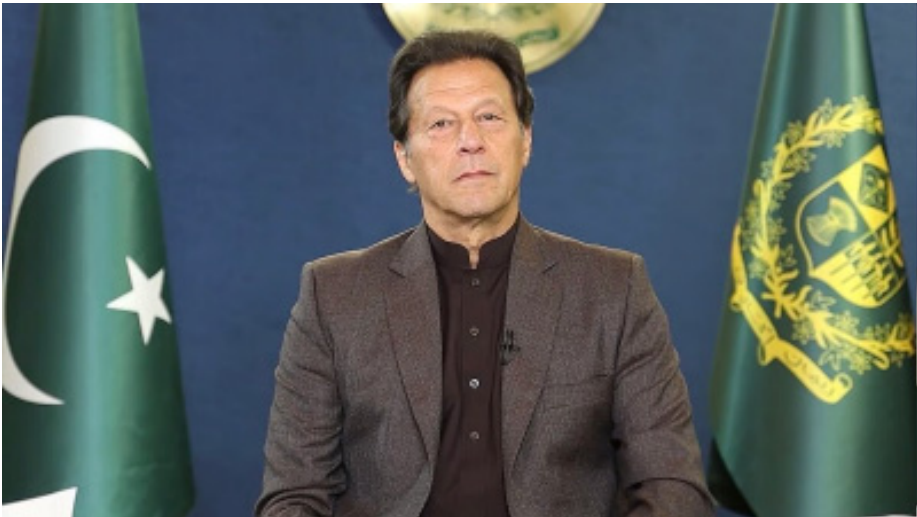
between Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi and President Dr. Claudia Sheinbaum during their meeting on the sidelines of the G7 Summit in Canada in June 2025, when the two leaders agreed to further strengthen and deepen the India-Mexico partnership.

During the visit of Commerce Secretary, Shri Rajesh Agrawal, both delegations discussed bilateral relations and opportunities to expand trade and investment flows. The discussions were held with Mexico's Undersecretary of Foreign Trade, Luis Rosendo Gutiérrez Romano, who participated on behalf of Secretary of Economy Marcelo Ebrard

Casaubon. The Terms of Reference cover key negotiating areas, including market access for goods, rules of origin, customs procedures and trade facilitation, dispute settlement, sanitary and phytosanitary measures, technical barriers to trade and trade remedies. The proposed agreement seeks to leverage the complementarities between the two economies and expand opportunities for Mexican products and businesses in the Indian market. With its strong linkages to global value chains, Mexico is an important market for Indian exporters and investors. Sectors with significant potential for cooperation include automotive, chemicals, electronics, pharmaceuticals, agri-

food, energy, critical minerals, medical devices and advanced manufacturing, among others. The delegations also discussed various aspects of the bilateral economic agenda, identifying opportunities to deepen trade and investment relations, strengthen cooperation and foster closer ties between the productive sectors of both countries. Both sides further discussed the possibility of organising a Mexican business mission to India during the first quarter of 2027. The proposed mission would facilitate business-to-business meetings, help identify commercial opportunities and strengthen commercial ties between the productive sectors of the two countries.

Pakistan PM Shehbaz Sharif Has A 'Gift' For His Predecessor Imran Khan: It's Not Freedom But A New Jail



Islamabad: Despite relentless protests by Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf demanding the release of its supremo, former prime minister Imran Khan, his successor Shehbaz Sharif has a gift for his predecessor. No, it's not freedom but a new jail. As hinted by Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi, Khan could be shifted to a new jail in Islamabad between November 20 and 30. According to a report by The Express Tribune, Khan will be housed in a special ward. Ironically, the new jail will be inaugurated by Prime Minister Sharif in the coming days. The Model Jail facility has been under construction for 17 years after the project initially started in 2009.

Khan has been behind bars since August 2023 and is currently serving his sentence at Adiala Jail in a £190 million corruption case. There are also pending trials under the Anti-Terrorism Act (ATA) related to the protests of May 9, 2023. Initially, Khan will be shifted to the new facility along with 1,500 other prisoners. Located in Sector H-16 of the capital, the Islamabad Model Central Jail is spread over 90 acres and has been designed to house 2,000 inmates. The first phase includes three completed barracks, a 35-bed mini-hospital, a mosque and a kitchen. This would become the first purpose-built prison in Islamabad, as prisoners in the capital region have until now been accommodated in Rawalpindi's Adiala Jail. This practice has resulted in the transportation of hundreds of prisoners between Rawalpindi and Islamabad every day, creating a security and logistical nightmare. According to reports, the Islamabad Model Central Jail will include separate barracks for women and juvenile inmates. Equipped with modern security infrastructure and rehabilitation-focused amenities, the facility will also have a library, vocational training centres, courtrooms and administrative offices. Quarters for prison staff and a school for children will also be available on the premises.

Thousands Gather In Dublin For Spectacular Halloween Parade Featuring Giant Figures And Live Performances



Dublin: Halloween is set to be celebrated around the world on Saturday, October 31, in Dublin. As the spooky festival is around the corner, people are already seen participating in parades and public events to involve themselves in trick or treat, seen in vibrant, eerie attire. Thousands gathered in Dublin for 'Fíáin' on October 26, 2026. Fíáin is the Irish word which means wild, and it was the central theme for the 20th-century-celebrating 40th anniversary Macnas Halloween Parade in Ireland. Meanwhile, Galway hosted a large-scale Halloween parade on Sunday, October 25, 2026. As Halloween is set to approach on October 31, people were seen participating in the 'Fíáin' Halloween in Dublin as well as Galway. Galway celebrated the festive one day prior, on October 25. The Irish town of Galway hosted a large-scale Halloween parade featuring giant moving puppets, theatrical costumes, music and pyrotechnics. Meanwhile, the Fíáin Halloween parade by the acclaimed Galway theatre company Macnas took place in Dublin's North East Inner City on Monday, October 26, 2026, at 7:00 PM as part of the Bram Stoker Festival. It was a free and family-friendly event which required no prior bookings. The event is organised directly by Macnas with funding and support from the Arts Council and Galway City Council, as part of Galway's Gaillimh Ah-Boo! Samhain celebrations under Fáilte Ireland's 'Home of Halloween' programme. Halloween 2026 will be celebrated on Saturday, October 31, 2026. Unlike festivals that follow lunar calendars, Halloween is observed annually on October 31. The festival is traditionally associated with the evening before All Saints' Day, which is observed on November 1. From haunted houses and pumpkin carving to costume parties and eerie decorations, Halloween offers a fun opportunity for people of all ages to enjoy the celebration together.

Spain Train Crash Death Toll Rises To 46; 2 High-Speed Trains Collide In Toledo, Rail Services Between Madrid And Andalusia Suspended

Madrid: Spain's state-owned news agency and other local media say at least 46 people have died in a crash between two trains in central Spain. The death toll rose to 46 from 10 this morning while the rescue operations are still ongoing. The Castilla-La Mancha 112 emergency service confirmed that firefighters from Alcázar de San Juan and Orgaz, Civil Protection teams from nearby municipalities, and three medical helicopters have been mobilised for rescue operations. Authorities are searching for survivors and providing medical assistance to the injured. Spain's rail system operator ADIF said the crash occurred Wednesday morning in the province of Toledo. Rail service is suspended between Madrid, Ciudad Real and Andalusia. TVE is reporting that the accident was between two high-speed trains heading in the same direction and that one ran into the tail of the other, knocking two of its cars off the track. The mayor of the nearby town of Urda, Manuel Galán, told Spanish state broadcaster TVE that passengers had been injured and that civil protection authorities had asked his town hall to prepare a sports pavilion to attend to passengers. The mayor of another nearby village, Jesús Pérez de Los Yébenes, told TVE that it appeared that the accident was "serious." The regional president of Castilla La Mancha, Emiliano García-Page, wrote on X that he is on his way to the crash site.

Trump Reportedly Approves US Visas For Flávio Bolsonaro And Family After Brazil Election Defeat Amid Supreme Court Probe

Washington DC: US President Donald Trump approved allowing Brazilian Senator Flávio Bolsonaro to enter the United States following his defeat in Brazil's presidential election, a Trump adviser told CNN, while Brazilian news site, Bahia Notícias reported that Washington would grant visas to the senator and his family. According to CNN, Trump administration officials were aware on Monday (local time) that Bolsonaro had approximately 24 hours to surrender his passport under a Brazilian Supreme Court order and made clear that he would be allowed to enter the United States. Two US officials told CNN that visas were being issued to Bolsonaro and his family. Brazilian news outlet Bahia Notícias, citing information confirmed by a White House official to Folha de S Paulo on Tuesday, also reported that the US government was aware of the senator's trip and would grant visas to the family. According to people close to the Bolsonaro family, the senator arrived in the United States at around 4:20 pm, accompanied by his wife, Fernanda, and their two daughters. His departure came two days after he lost the presidential election to Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva. Brazilian news outlet Bahia Notícias, citing sources familiar with the operation, reported that US Secretary of State Marco Rubio was involved in facilitating Bolsonaro's departure. CNN reported that it remained unclear whether Trump and Bolsonaro had spoken directly by phone before the senator left Brazil. The departure followed an order by Brazilian Supreme Court Justice Alexandre de Moraes directing Bolsonaro to surrender his passports within 24 hours. According to CNN, Bolsonaro had denied intending to flee the country in a video posted on Instagram on Monday (local time). CNN reported that the senator is under investigation by Brazil's highest court over alleged corruption, money laundering and currency evasion. The investigations include allegations linked to online betting platforms and the financing of a biopic about his father, former Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro. Flávio Bolsonaro denies wrongdoing. CNN reported that no arrest warrant had been issued against him at the time of his departure.



Meanwhile, Brazilian President Lula criticised Bolsonaro's reported departure while addressing supporters outside the Palácio da Alvorada on Tuesday (local time), during celebrations marking his 81st birthday. According to Brazilian news outlet Bahia Notícias, Lula called the senator's departure a "shameful act" and said he should have surrendered his passport in compliance with the court's order. "The citizen who leaves their country in secret does so because they owe something," Lula said, according to Brazilian media. Drawing a comparison with his own legal proceedings during Operation Lava Jato, Lula said he had chosen to remain in Brazil and surrender to the Federal Police when he faced accusations. "I decided to turn myself in to the Federal Police because I wanted to unmask my accusers and prove my innocence," Lula said, according to Bahia Notícias. Brazilian news outlet CNN Brasil also reported that Lula criticised Bolsonaro's departure, saying the senator could have remained in the country to address the allegations against him. The reported departure appeared to have surprised members of Bolsonaro's political camp. His campaign manager, Rogerio Marinho, told reporters that the opposition had expected the senator to assume a leadership role after the election. "We're surprised because yesterday we talked about the need for Flávio -- given the roughly 60 million votes he received -- to take on this leadership role for the opposition," Marinho said, according to CNN. The episode follows the departure of Bolsonaro's father, Jair Bolsonaro, for Orlando, Florida, after losing Brazil's 2022 presidential election. Jair Bolsonaro was subsequently sentenced to 27 years in prison over efforts to overturn the election results. Brazilian media reported that Flávio Bolsonaro was expected to address the press on Wednesday (local time), although the location had not been disclosed.

Mexico TV Host Ernesto Chavana Kicks Drone, Hits Model Isabella Rojas

Mexico: A live television broadcast in Monterrey, Mexico, took an unexpected turn after host Ernesto Chavana kicked a production drone, sending it flying into the face of model Isabella Rojas. The incident, which occurred during the entertainment programme Es Show on Multimedios Canal 6 on Monday, October 26, left the model in pain and prompted an immediate reaction from the cast. The footage has since circulated widely on social media, with viewers questioning the host's decision to kick the device and discussing the moments that followed the accident. The incident unfolded on the brightly lit Es Show set, where Chavana, dressed in a light blue suit and holding a microphone, was standing alongside a group of dancers and models. A small black drone was positioned on the studio floor when the host approached it and kicked it with considerable force. The device immediately lifted off the ground and travelled towards the women standing behind him. Within seconds, the drone struck Isabella Rojas, popularly known on the show as La Colombiana, in the mouth and face. Rojas instinctively bent forward and covered her face with her hands, visibly struggling with the impact. Other cast members appeared startled by the incident, with some rushing towards her to check on her condition. The model subsequently left the set, appearing to be in pain. What began as an action involving a piece of production equipment quickly became an alarming moment during the live programme. According to reports following the incident, Rojas received medical attention away from the cameras. She later shared an update on Instagram, showing an injury to her upper lip and indicating that she was doing okay. The development offered some reassurance to viewers concerned about the severity of the impact. Multimedios also addressed the incident, stating that Rojas "se encuentra bien", which translates to "she is doing well". The network further indicated that Chavana would take responsibility for the medical expenses and any damages arising from the incident. Chavana has also reportedly apologised following the accident.



As clips from the broadcast spread online, the incident prompted criticism of Chavana's decision to kick the drone while the models were standing nearby. Several viewers questioned why the host chose to strike the equipment rather than ask the production team to move it. Others focused on the immediate aftermath, discussing the reaction captured on camera and whether the injured model received sufficient attention from those around her. While some online discussions have centred on whether the action was careless or driven by frustration, the available footage does not, by itself, establish the host's precise intentions. The incident has also renewed discussion about the risks of handling production equipment impulsively in a live television environment, where cast members and crew may be positioned close to cameras and other devices. Es Show is a late-night entertainment programme broadcast by Mexican network Multimedios. The show features humour, models, dancers and variety segments, with Ernesto Chavana serving as its longtime host.

French Protesters Target Louis Vuitton Store, But Reinforced Glass Keeps Them Out In Viral Video

France: A video showing protesters attempting to break into a Louis Vuitton store in France has gone viral on social media, drawing attention to the luxury brand's reinforced glass and security measures. The footage appears to show individuals striking the storefront, but the glass remains intact despite repeated attempts to damage it. A bunch of individuals tried to force their way into the shop and steal, and although they succeeded in breaking the glass after numerous tries, they couldn't make an opening big enough to get inside and ultimately departed the location. This event has highlighted the robust protective glass employed in the underlining the significance of costly protective materials in actual occurrences. In a viral video, a bunch of individuals tried to force their way into the shop and steal, and although they succeeded in breaking the glass after numerous tries, they couldn't make an opening big enough to get inside and ultimately departed the location. In the circulating footage, protesters can be seen targeting the storefront of the luxury fashion house, attempting to break through the glass. However, the reinforced barrier appears to withstand the impact, preventing them from gaining entry.



The video has attracted attention for the contrast between the force used against the storefront and the glass's apparent resistance to damage. Social media users have reacted to the footage by discussing the technology behind protective glass and its growing importance for high-end retail spaces. While ordinary glass can shatter under significant impact, security glass is designed to offer greater resistance. Depending on its construction, it may feature multiple layers of glass bonded together with strong interlayers.



GST Rules Eased For Small Online Sellers, 9.5 Lakh Businesses Likely To Benefit

New Delhi: Small sellers on e-commerce platforms will be able to declare the platform's warehouse as their Principal Place of Business (PPOB) for supplying products in multiple states from November 1. The Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC) has notified changes in Central GST rules, allowing small sellers, who do not pass on input tax credit of more than Rs 2.5 lakh per month, to obtain registration in any other state or Union Territory where the person has no physical presence, by declaring a warehouse of an electronic commerce operator in that state or UT as principal place of business. A seller would need to have a physical presence in one home state, where physical verification and Aadhaar authentication would be completed, while registrations in other states could be obtained with the consent of the e-commerce platform without further involvement of a tax officer. The changes in CGST rules were approved by the GST Council in its October 8 meeting, and will be effective November 1, 2026.

The move could enable around 9.5 lakh small sellers to access the national market without having to establish physical offices in every state where their goods are stored, while creating greater tax parity across competing e-commerce business models. Such small sellers would have to apply in Form GST REG-01 and declare the Goods and Services Tax Identification Number (GSTIN) obtained



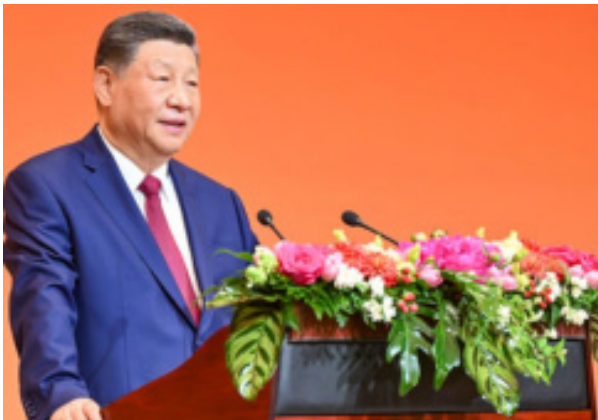
on their Permanent Account Number (PAN) in the home state where the seller has physical presence. The application would be forwarded to the concerned e-commerce operator for their

consent to be given within 7 working days. If the consent is not given within the period, the application would not be processed further. "Where the electronic commerce operator

withdraws the consent given to the registered person, the electronic commerce operator shall intimate the withdrawal on the common portal," the CBIC notification said.

China's Economy Faces Deepening Crisis As Weak Consumer Spending, Rising Debt And Export Dependence Hit Growth

London: Weak domestic demand has emerged as the main factor behind the slowdown in the Chinese economy and with people losing jobs amid the collapse of the country's real estate sector, this problem has only become worse. Chinese people aren't spending enough money. China today has the lowest consumption rate of any major economy in the world. Consumption makes up just about 56 per cent of China's GDP. In most economies, it's 70 per cent or more. To put this in perspective, China's consumption as a share of GDP is about 10 percentage points lower than Japan's was in the 1990s, at the worst point in its economic stagnation, according to an



article in The Diplomat. The article observes that the low consumption is a flashing warning sign that China's economic model is fundamentally broken. That's why GDP growth is coming to a screeching halt, dropping from highs of 10 per cent or more in the early 2000s to under 5 per cent

today, and China's debt is growing to alarming levels. The large trade surplus that China is enjoying is also an indication of the weakening of the Chinese economy. The Chinese people are not spending enough on imported goods because of financial constraints, leading to a fall in imports to

China and a rise in trade surplus. The slowing down of the rate of GDP growth to 5 per cent has also reduced the need for imported inputs of production, the article further states.

The article further states that low consumption in China is forcing the country's industries to step up exports at low prices to flood the markets of other countries. However, this dumping of cheap goods in countries from Europe to Asia is killing manufacturing industries around the world. While China has accumulated a massive trade surplus of \$1 trillion, which is often seen as a reflection of the Asian giant as a manufacturing power-

house, the truth is that it is also an indicator of weak domestic demand, a weakening Chinese currency and a slowing economy. The International Monetary Fund has warned China against economic imbalances. A country of 1.4 billion people is too big to rely only on exports to ensure a high growth rate, IMF Managing Director Kristalina Georgieva has pointed out. The continued dependence of Beijing on export-led growth is increasing global tensions. Other countries are looking to protect their industries from being destroyed by cheap Chinese goods by curbing imports from China, like the hike in tariffs by the US.

Delhi Liquor Booking App Expands Access To iOS Users, Aims To Curb Brand Pushing At Retail Stores

New Delhi: The permission for the online liquor booking app was granted by the previous government in 2024 to ensure transparency and stop brand pushing in retail sales, the Delhi State Industrial Infrastructure Development Corporation (DSIIDC) said. The 'Delhi Liquor Booking' app was launched by the DSIIDC after required trials, enabling customers to book liquor and pick it up from the vends of the corporation, officials said. "In order to ensure transparency, digital governance and avoid brand pushing, the Delhi Liquor Booking app was rolled out by DSIIDC in November 2025. Earlier, approval was granted for developing the app by DSIIDC Management in December 2024. A work order for developing the app was issued on January 2, 2025," a senior DSIIDC officer said. STORY | DSIIDC's online liquor booking app permitted by previous Delhi govt: OfficialsThe permission for the online liquor booking app was granted by the previous government in 2024 to ensure transparency and stop brand pushing in retail sales, the Delhi State Industrial Infrastructure Development Corporation (DSIIDC) said.

Since the app was origi-



nally only compatible with Android, a QR-code-enabled micro-site was rolled out on September 6 to give iOS users access and ensure platform neutrality. In the first year of its launch, the app saw a total of 3,629 transactions of around Rs 13 lakh worth of liquor sold in the 2025-26 financial year. This financial year, around Rs 30 lakh worth of liquor bottles have been sold so far in 10,730 transactions, the officials said. After registration on the app, customers can check stock online and book and pay digitally to avoid brand pushing. The order has to be picked up from the concerned store after confirmation and verification. There

is no provision for home delivery of liquor booked and purchased through the app, they said. However, cancellation of the booked order is allowed before pickup of the purchased bottle, the officials saidEach customer using the app also has to verify that he or she is of permissible legal drinking age of above 25 years, the officials saidThe app also aims at reducing crowds outside liquor stores that often lead to law and order situations, they added. There are four corporations of the Delhi government that run over 700 retail liquor stores in the city. The facility of online liquor booking is currently available only at over 200 vends run by DSIIDC.

Embassy Office Parks REIT Q2 Results: Net Operating Income Rises 15% To Rs.1,069 Crore, Announces Rs.670 Crore Distribution

New Delhi: Realty firm Embassy Office Parks REIT on Wednesday reported a 15 per cent growth in its net operating income (NOI) to Rs 1,069 crore for the second quarter of this fiscal year and said it will distribute Rs 670 crore to unitholders for the July-September period. Embassy REIT owns and operates a

portfolio of 53 million square feet of office space across Bengaluru, Mumbai, Pune, Delhi-NCR and Chennai. In a regulatory filing, the company said its revenue from operations rose 16 per cent annually to Rs 1,303 crore in the quarter ended September. Amit Shetty, Chief Executive Officer of Embassy REIT, said, "We

delivered an exceptional quarter, with 1.5 million sq ft of leasing driven by continued GCC (global capability centre) demand and healthy rental growth".

The company's robust operating performance, coupled with double-digit growth in revenue and NOI, enabled it to declare the highest-ever quarterly distributions,

he said. "With strong business momentum and continued progress across our portfolio, we are well-positioned to capitalise on India's structural office demand and deliver sustained growth for all our stakeholders," Shetty said. The Board of Directors of Embassy Office Parks Management Services, the

Manager to Embassy REIT, declared a distribution of Rs 670 crores or Rs 7.07 per unit for Q2 FY2027. The company leased 1.5 million sq ft of office space during the September quarter, with GCCs driving 85 per cent of leasing demand. New leases of 0.9 million sq ft were signed at an average 9 per cent premium to market rents.

Embassy REIT said it has pre-leased an entire 0.5 million sq ft building at the Embassy TechVillage project in Bengaluru to a global engineering company at a 15 per cent premium to current market rents. It also leased 0.2 million sq ft across three Pune assets, contributing approximately 25 per cent of new leasing during the quarter.

SC Agrotech Q2 Profit Jumps 48-Fold To Rs.10.21 Crore, Revenue Surges 802% To Rs.45.26 Crore

Mumbai: BSE-listed SC Agrotech Limited has reported a sharp rise in revenue and profitability for the quarter ended September 30, 2026. The agricultural trading company's net profit jumped nearly 48-fold, while

revenue surged 802 percent year-on-year. The company is also exploring a digital agriculture platform, AgriBridge, as part of its proposed long-term expansion strategy. According to its unaudited standalone fi-

nancial results, SC Agrotech reported a net profit of Rs 10.21 crore in Q2 FY27, compared with Rs 21.21 lakh in the corresponding quarter last year, representing growth of approximately 4,714 percent. Rev-

enue from operations increased to Rs 45.26 crore from Rs 5.02 crore, registering an 802 percent rise. Profit before tax climbed to Rs 13.67 crore from Rs 28.31 lakh.

For the first six months of

FY27, revenue surged 1,062 percent to Rs 83.11 crore from Rs 7.15 crore a year earlier. Net profit reached Rs 19.77 crore, compared with Rs 23.17 lakh in the previous year, reflecting growth of approximately 8,432 per-

cent. The company's first-half revenue was already equivalent to over 94 percent of its FY26 annual revenue of Rs 88.06 crore. Meanwhile, H1 profit was nearly six times the Rs 3.34 crore recorded during the

previous financial year. SC Agrotech is exploring AgriBridge, a proposed digital agriculture platform designed to connect farmers directly with institutional buyers. The platform aims to improve agricultural

procurement, crop-quality tracking, logistics coordination and transaction settlements. However, the initiative remains at the planning stage, with no confirmed commercial launch or revenue contribution.

SEBI Plans India-Made AI Model For Stock Markets



New Delhi: The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) is considering developing a domestically governed artificial intelligence (AI) model specifically for the securities market, Chairman Tuhin Kanta Pandey said at a media summit. The proposal aims to address concerns surrounding the confidentiality and availability of advanced AI models while strengthening India's technological capabilities in financial market regulation. Pandey said the proposed system could serve as digital public infrastructure for the securities market.

SEBI Explores Domestic AI Model And Governance Framework

Highlighting technology's growing influence on financial markets, Pandey said AI could improve investor services, risk assessment and regulatory supervision. AI-powered systems could also identify unusual patterns requiring closer scrutiny. However, he emphasised that increased automation must be accompanied by reliable

data, effective oversight and clearly defined accountability. "Using AI will require reliable data, effective model oversight, and clarity about who is accountable for decisions," Pandey said. He added that faster technological processes made institutional judgement increasingly important. SEBI is working towards implementing the International Organization of Securities Commissions (IOSCO) supervisory toolkit for AI. The initiative is intended to strengthen risk management and establish an adaptable governance framework. The regulator is also preparing a technology roadmap for market infrastructure institutions (MIIs), covering immediate priorities and long-term technological development.

SEBI Strengthens Cybersecurity Oversight And AI Training

Pandey said growing technological interdependence among financial institutions and service providers had increased the importance of cybersecurity,

business continuity and oversight of outsourced operations. To address these risks, SEBI has proposed extending the existing information technology and cybersecurity framework applicable to MIIs to their subsidiaries. The regulator also plans specialised training in collaboration with RRU and the National Institute of Securities Markets (NISM). The programme will train engineers managing security operations centres to use AI for analysing alerts, automating responses and improving operational effectiveness. Pandey acknowledged that regulatory initiatives had improved financial market cybersecurity but stressed the need for continuous cooperation. He said emerging technological threats required coordinated action across institutions to strengthen resilience. While AI could improve market efficiency and supervision, effective risk management and institutional accountability would remain essential.

Kiran Ramamurthy Appointed VML India CEO, Babita Baruah Elevated To Regional Ford Leadership Role

Mumbai: VML India has announced a major leadership reshuffle, appointing Kiran Ramamurthy as its new Chief Executive Officer (CEO), while current CEO Babita Baruah will move into a senior regional leadership position to head the agency's Ford business. The appointments are aimed at strengthening VML's leadership structure, ensuring business continuity and supporting growth across its Indian and regional operations. Ramamurthy, currently CEO of Grey 82.5, will succeed Baruah at VML India. He brings more than 30 years of experience across advertising, marketing, design, technology and content production. During his career, he has worked with major Indian and international brands, including Unilever, Amazon, Toyota, IBM, Coca-Cola, ITC, De Beers and Tata Consumer



Products. He also pioneered centralised marketing services through the Lenovo Marketing Hub and played a key role in integrating Grey and 82.5, driving business transformation and growth. Baruah brings over three decades of industry experience, including two decades managing leading brands such as Coca-Cola, Unilever, Nestlé and Kellogg's. Before becoming VML India CEO, she served as Regional Client Lead for Ford International Market

Group and Executive Director at VMLY&R Thailand, based in Bangkok. Under her leadership, VML India delivered strong business performance and secured major creative recognition, including accolades at Cannes Lions and the Effies. In her new regional position, Baruah will focus on expanding and strengthening VML's Ford business. Hephzibah Pathak, CEO of WPP Creative India, said the leadership changes reflect the company's commitment to developing talent while maintaining continuity for clients. Pathak praised Baruah's contribution to VML India's growth and described her regional elevation as recognition of her international leadership experience. She also expressed confidence in Ramamurthy's operational expertise, creative capabilities and ability to guide VML India through its next phase of growth. The transition is expected to maintain the agency's business momentum while strengthening its regional client relationships and creative capabilities across markets.

Scientists engage directly with farmers in Delhi's rural areas under 'Khet Bachao Abhiyan'

- Scientists raise awareness among farmers about rabi crop management, balanced fertiliser use and sustainable agricultural practices



New Delhi, October, 28 (PIB): The Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare is organising the 'Khet Bachao Abhiyan-Rabi 2026' across the country from 22 October to 30 November 2026 through its two departments. The primary objective of the campaign is to ensure that farmers receive direct information about the latest agricultural technologies and government schemes through awareness programmes organised in villages. It also aims to raise awareness about the improved management of rabi crops and

increased agricultural productivity through the adoption of modern technologies. The campaign is an important initiative towards developing agriculture for a developed India and ensuring the prosperity of farmers. Under the initiative, the concept of 'Lab to Land' is being put into practice, with agricultural scientists visiting farmers' fields to share the latest scientific techniques, research-based knowledge and practical information that can help improve agricultural practices and productivity. As part of this nationwide campaign,

Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK), Ujwa, Delhi, is also conducting special awareness programmes in various villages across rural Delhi from 22 October to 30 November 2026. For this purpose, 25 locations have been selected across the South-West, North-West and North districts of the National Capital Territory of Delhi. These programmes are facilitating direct interaction between farmers and agricultural experts, enabling farmers to access scientific guidance and information relevant to their agricultural needs.

Each team constituted under the campaign comprises four to five subject-matter experts, scientists, officials from various departments and innovative farmers. Senior scientists from the Indian Agricultural Research Institute (IARI), Pusa, New Delhi, are also participating in these programmes, sharing the latest agricultural technologies and scientific knowledge with farmers. The teams are working to bridge the gap between agricultural research and its practical application in the field by providing farmers with relevant information and encouraging the adoption of improved farming practices. Under the campaign, KVK Ujwa, Delhi, organised an awareness programme in Qazipur village on 27 October 2026. The main objective was to sensitise farmers to the importance of conserving soil health, carrying out agricultural operations at the appropriate time for the forthcoming rabi season, using fertilisers in a balanced manner and adopting natural farming practices. Dur-

ing the programme, KVK scientists provided information on maintaining soil fertility, undertaking essential agricultural operations at the right time and using fertilisers and other agricultural inputs scientifically and according to actual requirements. Particular emphasis was placed on adopting balanced fertiliser application based on soil health and ensuring the efficient management of agricultural resources. Farmers were encouraged to make informed decisions about the use of inputs to maintain soil productivity while supporting sustainable agricultural practices. Keeping the upcoming rabi season in view, farmers were given detailed information about improved, high-yielding wheat varieties, appropriate crop management practices and the balanced application of fertilisers. They were also made aware of the importance of regularly monitoring mustard crops, identifying major pests and diseases at an early stage, and adopting appropriate management measures. These practices are intended to

help farmers prevent potential crop damage, protect crop health and achieve better yields. The scientific guidance provided during the programme aimed to help farmers prepare for the season by adopting suitable crop-management measures and using agricultural inputs in accordance with crop requirements. The programme also highlighted the importance of adopting sustainable agricultural practices, including natural farming, conserving natural resources and maintaining soil health. Farmers were encouraged to use the agricultural resources available to them judiciously and adopt environmentally friendly farming technologies. The emphasis was on promoting practices that support long-term soil fertility, improve resource-use efficiency and contribute to sustainable agricultural production. Through such direct engagement with farmers, the campaign seeks to strengthen awareness of scientific farming methods and encourage the practical adoption of sustainable agricultural techniques at the village level.

MCL Hosts Street Plays To Promote E-Waste Management Under Special Campaign 6



New Delhi, October, 28 (PIB): Mahanadi Coalfields Limited (MCL) a subsidiary of Coal India Limited under the Ministry of Coal, organised a nukkad natak (street play) at its headquarters under Special Campaign 6 to spread awareness about e-waste management, responsible disposal of electronic waste and allied environmental issues. GM (Civil/Wel-TA & CSR), Heads of Departments, officers and staff attended the programme. Smt. Rekha Pandey, Director (HR), encouraged employees to contribute towards a cleaner work environment and a sustainable future. The street play highlighted the importance of environmentally responsible practices for the collection, segregation and scientific disposal of electronic waste. Through an interactive presentation, the programme emphasised the need to reduce, reuse and recycle electronic items and ensure that discarded electrical and electronic equipment is channelled through authorised e-waste collection and recycling systems. The initiative aligns with the theme of Special Campaign 6, being observed from October 2 to October 31, 2026, with a focus on e-waste management. The programme also reinforced the broader objectives of Special Campaign 6, including promoting environmental responsibility, encouraging sustainable workplace practices and strengthening collective participation in cleanliness and waste-management initiatives. Through such awareness activities, MCL continues to encourage its employees to adopt responsible waste-management practices and contribute towards the vision of a cleaner environment and a greener tomorrow.

TRAI Assesses Mobile Network Quality Across Gonda, Bahraich, Shravasti & Balrampur City, Prayagraj to Gonda and Gonda to Bahraich Highway under UPE ISA, during the month of September 2026

New Delhi, October, 28 (PIB): The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) has released findings of Independent Drive Test (IDT) conducted through its appointed agency across Gonda, Bahraich, Shravasti and Balrampur City under UPE ISA, during the month of September 2026, for information of general telecom consumers. The purpose of this drive test is to assess and verify real time quality of mobile network services (both voice & data) provided by Telecom Service Providers (TSPs). The performance of TSPs for key Quality of Service (QoS) parameters, captured during IDT are published to inform Consumers and encourage TSPs to improve their services. These IDTs have been designed to capture on ground mobile network performance of all TSPs across diverse usages environment like cities, hotspots, public transport hubs, etc. These tests were conducted under the supervision of the TRAI Regional Office Bhopal. The observations presented in drive test reports represent the performance of the TSPs on the area/ route under test on the day/ time of conducting the drive test. The drive tests conducted across City drive – 367.7 KMs in Gonda, Bahraich, Shravasti and Balrampur and 2.7 Km walk Test in Gonda & Balrampur City and 256 KMs Highway drive from Prayagraj to Gonda and Gonda to Bahraich, from 7th September 2026 to 10th September 2026 in UPE ISA.

Key Parameters Assessed

Coverage Gap: Percentage of samples, for which signal strength observed less than the minimum prescribed signal strength for respective technology (2G/3G/4G/5G).

Voice Services: Call Setup Success Rate (CSSR), Drop Call Rate (DCR), Call Setup Time, Call Silence (Mute) Rate, Speech Quality (MOS).

Call Silence (Mute) Instance: Number of call silence (Mute) instance occurred during the calls.

Data Services: Download/ Upload Throughput, Latency, Jitter, Packet Drop Rate

The overall mobile network performance in Gonda, Bahraich, Shravasti and Balrampur City & Prayagraj to Gonda & Gonda to Bahraich Highway for the key parameters has been summarised below: -

Coverage Gap - The signal strength observed during voice testing on the drive test route in auto-selection mode (5G/4G/3G/2G), measured as the number of samples having poor signal strength out of the total samples collected, were 818/ 19284 for Airtel, 7289/ 16823 for BSNL, 919/ 18995 for RJIL and 1775/ 19266 for VIL for Gonda City and 485/ 23477 for Airtel, 11807/ 19472 for BSNL, 1796/ 23226 for RJIL and 1369/ 23442 for VIL for

Bahraich City and 114/ 8605 for Airtel, 3271/ 7994 for BSNL, 411/ 8466 for RJIL and 159/ 8666 for VIL for Balrampur City. Details of the coverage gaps have been provided in the map Annexed.

Dropped Calls - Dropped calls, measured as the number of dropped calls out of the number of successfully established calls, were 1/ 171 for Airtel, 23/ 162 for BSNL, 0/ 171 for RJIL and 0/ 171 for VIL for Gonda City and 1/ 205 for Airtel, 6/ 159 for BSNL, 0/ 206 for RJIL and 1/ 205 for VIL for Bahraich City and 2/ 78 for Airtel, 2/ 72 for BSNL, 0/ 78 for RJIL and 0/ 78 for VIL for Balrampur City. Details of the dropped call locations have been provided in the map Annexed.

Call Silence Instance - Call silence instances, measured as the total number of silence instances observed for > 3 seconds out of the total calls established, were 2/ 161 for Airtel,

6/ 166 for RJIL and 8/ 165 for VIL for Gonda City and 0/ 196 for Airtel, 10/ 200 for RJIL and 1/ 199 for VIL for Bahraich City and 1/ 73 for Airtel, 2/ 74 for RJIL and 0/ 73 for VIL for Balrampur City. Details of the call silence instance locations have been provided in the map Annexed.

d) Data Download and Upload Throughput:

i) Data Download performance (Overall): Average download speed was observed as 94.98 Mbps for Airtel (5G), 1.15 Mbps for BSNL (4G), 167.44 Mbps for RJIL (5G) and 34.31 Mbps for VIL (5G) for Gonda City and 105.94 Mbps for Airtel (5G), 7.30 Mbps for BSNL (4G), 146.74 Mbps for RJIL (5G) and 41.12 Mbps for VIL (5G) for Bahraich City and 130.93 Mbps for Airtel (5G), 4.09 Mbps for BSNL (4G), 167.93 Mbps for RJIL (5G) and 31.66 Mbps for VIL (4G) for Balrampur City. Detail of Download throughput has been provided in

the map Annexed.

ii) Data Upload performance (Overall): Average upload speed was observed as 14.59 Mbps for Airtel (5G), 1.86 Mbps for BSNL (4G), 18.94 Mbps for RJIL (5G) and 9.53 Mbps for VIL (5G) for Gonda City and 17.60 Mbps for Airtel (5G), 2.88 Mbps for BSNL (4G), 12.09 Mbps for RJIL (5G) and 11.86 Mbps for VIL (5G) for Bahraich City and 21.40 Mbps for Airtel (5G), 2.16 Mbps for BSNL (4G), 16.90 Mbps for RJIL (5G) and 12.79 Mbps for VIL (4G) for Balrampur City. Detail of Upload throughput has been provided in the map Annexed.

Locations of Dropped Calls and Call Silence instances can be seen by clicking red dot on the map Annexed.

Details of drive test route and area covered during the IDT is as under: -

City – Gonda- Banghusra, Jhanjhari, Police line, Balpur Jot, Keswapur Pahrwa,

Veerpur, Janki Nagar, Semra Damman, Tulsipur and Sekhapur etc.

Bahraich- Begampur, Godan Basahi, Mohammad Nagar, Bakshi pura, Dikauli, Doob Kalan, Pachdewari, Gilaula, Khutehna, Chakujot, Jagtapur and Kamla Bhari etc.

Balrampur- Harbaspur, Bishunipur, Bishunapur, Dhusah, Benijot, Pahalwara koeliha, Shravasti, Ikauna, Khargaura Basti, Gopalpur and Ararpakar etc

Hotspots: District Court Gonda, District Hospital Bahraich, District Hospital Balrampur, Government Bus Stand Gonda, Government Polytechnic College Gonda, Railway Station Bahraich, Railway Station Balrampur etc. Walk Test: Gonda Junction Railway Station and Railway Station Balrampur etc. Highway: i) Prayagraj to Gonda- Passing through Mau Aima, Bela Pratapgarh, Sultanpur, Faizabad, Ayodhya and Nawabganj etc.

SECL Surpasses Key Targets under Special Campaign 6, Generates Rs.26.17 Crore through Scrap Disposal



New Delhi, October, 28 (PIB): South Eastern Coalfields Limited (SECL), a subsidiary of Coal India Limited under the Ministry of Coal, has surpassed several key targets under Special Campaign 6, achieving significant progress in cleanliness, scrap disposal, space optimisation and record management across its establishments in Chhattisgarh and Madhya Pradesh.

A collage of a house and a carDescription automatically generated

SECL has undertaken cleanliness activities at 226 sites against a target of 225, covering more than 47 lakh square feet of area against the target of 40 lakh square feet. Under the campaign, SECL has disposed of 4,602 metric tonnes of scrap against a target of 3,300 MT, generating revenue of approximately Rs.26.17 crore. The achievements reflect the company's focus on efficient resource utilisation, systematic scrap disposal and improved workplace management.

Significant Progress in Record Management and Pendancy Reduction

SECL has also recorded substantial progress in physical and electronic file management, surpassing its targets under Special Campaign 6. Against a target of reviewing 500 physical files, the company has reviewed 2,100 files, while 872 physical files have been weeded out against a target of 200. In electronic file management, SECL has reviewed 14,215 e-files against a target of 7,000 and closed 13,708 e-files against a target of 3,000, contributing towards reduction of pendancy, improved record management and administrative efficiency.

E-Waste Management and Waste-to-Wealth Initiatives

With effective collection, segregation and disposal of e-waste being a key focus of Special Campaign 6, SECL has undertaken dedicated e-waste collection drives across its establishments. At SECL Headquarters in Bilaspur, a dedicated e-waste collection bin was installed to facilitate the collection of discarded electronic items from employees. The bin itself was fabricated using discarded materials, demonstrating the concept of 'Waste to Wealth'. E-waste collection booths were also established in SECL's residential colonies in Bilaspur in, along with door-to-door collection activities to encourage participation by residents. Similar initiatives have been undertaken across SECL's operational areas.

Public Participation and Cleanliness Awareness Activities

As part of the campaign, SECL organised a range of cleanliness and awareness activities across its operational areas, including cleanliness rallies, Shramdaan activities, Nukkad Natak, school-level competitions, awareness programmes and community participation initiatives. The campaign also built upon the activities undertaken during Swachhata Hi Seva 2026, held from 17 September to 2 October, during which SECL cleaned more than 55 Cleanliness Target Units (CTUs) covering over 10 lakh square feet of area. The implementation phase of Special Campaign 6 was launched on Gandhi Jayanti, 2 October 2026, with a Swachhata Happy Run, plantation under 'Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam' and Swachhata Pledge at SECL Headquarters in Bilaspur.

Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal Meets H.S.H. Hereditary Prince Alois of Liechtenstein

- India and Liechtenstein Explore Opportunities to Strengthen Economic Engagement and Promote Investment under India-EFTA TEPA

New Delhi, October, 28 (PIB): Union Minister of Commerce and Industry Shri Piyush Goyal paid a courtesy call on H.S.H. Hereditary Prince Alois of Liechtenstein on 28 October 2026 during his State Visit to India. The meeting focused on strengthening economic engagement and advancing investment opportunities under the India-EFTA Trade and Economic Partnership Agreement (TEPA). Shri Goyal highlighted India's strong economic fundamentals, sustained reform agenda and expanding manufacturing capabilities, which offer significant opportunities for international investors. He underscored the Government's continued efforts to improve the ease

of doing business, simplify regulatory processes, strengthen digital governance and create a predictable, transparent and competitive business environment. India's investment performance reflects growing international confidence in its economic prospects. Cumulative Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) inflows stood at USD 843 billion during FY 2014-15 to FY 2025-26, with inflows reaching a record USD 94.53 billion in FY 2025-26, underscoring India's growing attractiveness as an investment destination. India also has a thriving start-up ecosystem, with 2.50 lakh startups supporting over 25.42 lakh jobs across more than 770 districts and 56 industries. Of these startups, 52% are based in non-metro-

politan cities. Shri Goyal highlighted the opportunities offered by the India-EFTA TEPA, which entered into force on 1 October 2025. The Agreement provides for EFTA States to aim to increase FDI into India by USD 100 billion over 15 years and facilitate the generation of one million direct jobs. This framework offers an opportunity to translate stronger economic engagement into long-term investments, productive capacity, technology partnerships and employment generation in India.

Goyal emphasised that India offers international businesses the advantages of a large and growing domestic market, a skilled workforce, a competitive manufacturing ecosystem and access to expanding

global value chains. He invited companies from Liechtenstein to explore opportunities in India, including through manufacturing partnerships, technology collaboration, research and development, and deeper integration with Indian suppliers and micro, small and medium enterprises.

The discussions also explored opportunities to expand industrial cooperation in areas such as precision engineering, advanced manufacturing, industrial technologies and innovation. Greater collaboration in these areas can support technology adoption, strengthen industrial linkages and create mutually beneficial opportunities for businesses in both countries. Earlier this month, on

7 October 2026, the India-EFTA Prosperity Summit was held in New Delhi to mark the first anniversary of the India-EFTA TEPA. H.E. Mr. Hubert Büchel, Minister of Home Affairs, Economy and Sport of Liechtenstein, along with representatives of Liechtenstein businesses, participated in the Summit. The meeting reaffirmed the shared interest in leveraging the India-EFTA TEPA to strengthen investment flows and deepen commercial engagement. India's focus remains on translating the opportunities created by the Agreement into tangible economic outcomes, including greater investment, enhanced manufacturing capabilities, technology collaboration and quality employment.

Trivikram's Powerful Speech Sets Expectations Right

Adarsha Kutumbam is one of the upcoming Telugu films, gearing up for a grand release on the 30th of this month. With just three days left for the release of the movie, the team held a grand pre-release event today in Hyderabad, to promote the film on a grand scale. Interestingly, Trivikram Srinivas delivered a lengthy speech, hinting at the film's storyline. Trivikram shared some anecdotes from Bhagavdgitha and also stressed the importance of families. Trivikram shared that he believes in the family system and respects the family values a lot which is why he loves to tell more about them through his films. At the same time, Trivikram told that the film Adarsha Kutumbam is about a simple family where the head, Chitti Babu, played by Venkatesh goes to any extent to save his family.

Trivikram made the audiences prepared that the film



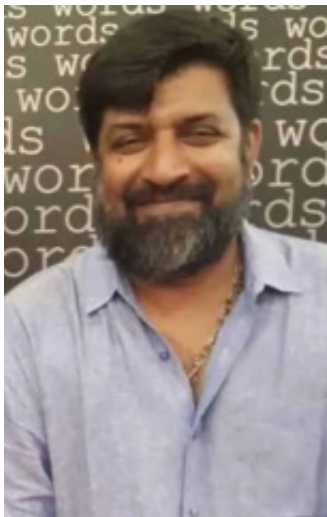
revolves around a family that runs into a problem and how they have overcome it by sticking to one another despite many adverse situations. He conveyed his best wishes to everyone including the artists and technicians while also gave a reason as to why he chose Venkatesh for this story. "When I am telling a story

about a family, I don't think anyone else other than Venkatesh will be the right fit because he proved everyone that one can become a superstar with family movies. Family is his mass and muscle," said Trivikram. Later in his speech, Venkatesh also recalled his experience of working with Trivikram. He appreciated the entire cast and

crew and conveyed to the fans that the film will thoroughly entertain them. As icing on the cake, Trivikram also felt that this is one of the finest performances of Venkatesh. Both the director and actor also conveyed a good-will message that their prayers are with the people of AP who are in the middle of a cyclone.

Trivikram's Special Praise For Writer Raises Curiosity

Trivikram Srinivas delivered a great speech at the pre-release event for his new film, Adarsha Kutumbam, last night. Starring Venkatesh in the lead role, the film is gearing up for a grand release on October 30th. During the pre-release event, Trivikram gave a huge shout-out to writer-director Kannan DS, who added a special touch to the film's story. Although Trivikram teased audiences to wait for the film's release to see it, curiosity is growing now. Usually, Trivikram is a Master storyteller and one of the finest writers in the Telugu film industry, and he doesn't need any assistance.



He rarely takes contributions from others, and this is one case. Kannan is currently a



part of Allu Arjun's Raaka, and he earlier worked on Atlee's Jawan as well. During

his speech, Trivikram revealed that he wanted to keep certain crucial narrative elements and surprises Kannan created under wraps. He promised to reveal Kannan's contributions only after the film's release.

In simple words, Trivikram praised Kannan for adding sweetness to this story. While discussing the film's broader philosophy, Trivikram noted how the film explores the contrast between the families we are born into and the relationships we actively choose. Adarsha Kutumbam also features Srinidhi Shetty, Nivetha Pethuraj, Brahmaji, Satya and others.

Sai Pallavi Receives 'Sita Maa Ki Jai' Chants

Ramayana: Rise of a Legend is an upcoming mythological drama set for a grand Diwali release. The film, however, was screened at the Academy Museum of Motion Pictures' David Geffen Theatre in Los Angeles. The cast and crew attended the screening as part of the film's promotion. Everyone was surprised by the roaring response to Sai Pallavi's presence.

Sai Pallavi has already debuted in Bollywood and doesn't need a special introduction to the Hindi audience. However, when she was cast as Sita Devi in the film, she faced unnecessary criticism. Even when the glimpses were released, Sai Pallavi's look drew criticism.

Later, when the teaser and trailer came out, a lot of people

criticized Sai Pallavi as a mis-cast. On social media, some of the netizens even pointed out that the background artists looked better than Sai Pallavi. But today, after the film's screening, things seem to have changed. When Sai Pallavi walked onto the stage right after the screening in Los Angeles, the crowd began chanting 'Sita Maa Ki Jai', and it itself is a testimony that Sai Pallavi's talent speaks volumes more than anything else. In fact, Sai Pallavi got a bigger cheer than what Ranbir received at the event. Sai Pallavi is considered the Lady Powerstar in the Telugu film industry, and her success is not matched by anyone in the South.

The positive reception at the special screening could



be the start of what Sai Pallavi can create in Bollywood. In the coming days, Bollywood audiences will get a chance to witness the real talent of the actress behind her star-

dom, and we wish that she receives all the love, support, and respect.

Directed by Nitesh Tiwari, Ramayana's first part gears up for a release on November 5th.

Dhanush's OM To Spark 2015 Controversy In Andhra Pradesh?



Dhanush is one of the leading actors in Tamil cinema, and his next film, OM: Chapter 1, is creating curiosity with its promotional content. Directed by Rajkumar Periasamy of Amaran

fame, the film features Sai Pallavi in a key role. The latest glimpse introducing her character has grabbed attention.

The promotional videos released so far suggest that the

story revolves around red sandalwood smuggling in the Seshachalam forests. Dhanush appears to play a young man connected to the labourers involved in cutting red sandalwood trees. Naturally, the subject reminds many viewers of Allu Arjun's Pushpa franchise. However, the makers may be exploring a different angle instead of repeating Pushpa's familiar storyline. The film appears to focus on the lives of workers involved in the red sandalwood trade and the larger network behind the illegal activity.

The subject also brings back memories of the controversial 2015 incident in the Seshachalam forests, where 20 people suspected of involvement in red sandalwood smuggling were killed in police firing. The incident triggered widespread debate, with questions raised about the circumstances of the deaths. Many of the deceased were

reportedly labourers from Tamil Nadu. The Andhra Pradesh police maintained that the firing took place after the group attacked the personnel. However, the incident drew criticism from several quarters, and the National Human Rights Commission sought an explanation from the state authorities.

With Sai Pallavi reportedly playing Nithya Reddy, a police officer investigating the smuggling network, the film seems to explore the issue from multiple perspectives. This has raised speculation about how the story will portray the workers, the smugglers and the officials involved in the case.

If the film draws heavily from the 2015 incident, it could invite debate in Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu after its release. Whether Rajkumar Periasamy presents a balanced perspective or takes a particular narrative approach remains to be seen. The film's actual content will determine how audiences respond.

Preity Zinta Looks Stunning At 51



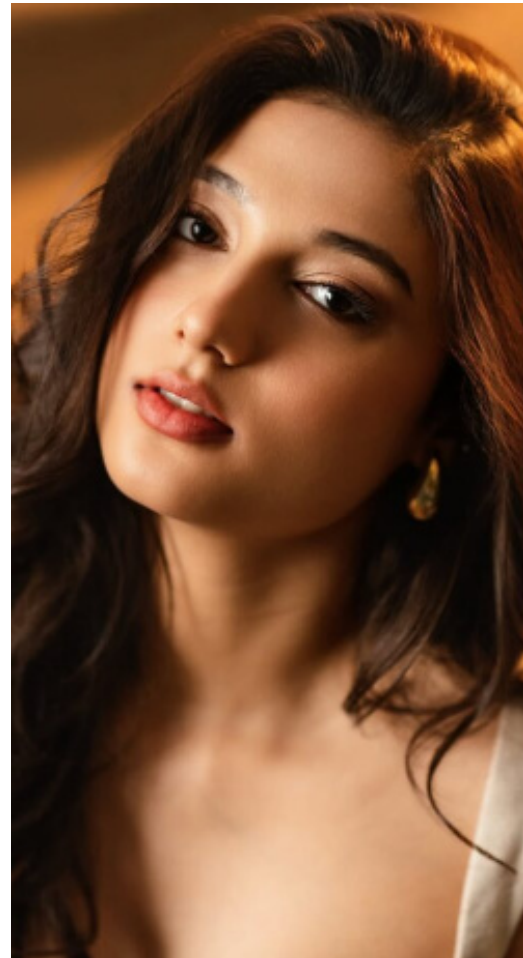
Preity Zinta stayed away from films after 2018. This year she made a comeback with two films, Batwara 1947 and Vibe. Both films underperformed at the box office. Even so, the actress is grabbing attention for how stunning she looks at 51. In her latest shoot for L'Officiel Arabia, Preity wore a black velvet strapless gown with crystal bow detailing at the waist and a high slit. She added a diamond necklace and styled her hair in soft side waves. In another look, she chose a silver sequin gown with blue floral work, paired with an emerald choker, matching earrings and a sleek hairdo with feather-like twists.

Mirai Girl Brings Grace To Powerpeta



Director Krishna Chaitanya is bringing together an intriguing combination of characters, emotions and political drama in Powerpeta, his ambitious film starring Sundeep Kishan. The project, backed by 70mm Entertainments, has made considerable progress, with the makers completing 60% of the shoot. Meanwhile, the team has announced that Mirai girl Ritika Nayak has been cast as the lead actress. They have also unveiled the first-look poster of the actress on the occasion of her birthday. The actress, who scored hat-trick blockbusters with her first three films, plays Padamataveedhi Janaki, the female lead opposite Sundeep Kishan, and the poster offers an appealing introduction to her character.

Unlike the intense impression created by Sundeep Kishan's glimpse, Ritika's first look focuses on charm and traditional beauty. She appears in a half saree with a sleeveless blouse and dupatta. Sitting on a wooden bench in a mandava house, she exudes a composed and graceful presence. A blend of traditional charm and modern glamour defines Ritika Nayak's appearance in a special glimpse that captures her in multiple avatars, revealing different facets of her personality. While her traditional looks underline her elegance, her trendy appearances showcase a more glamorous side, particularly in the oversized-shirt look. Sundeep Kishan was previously introduced as Senapathi Ravi in a glimpse that received a strong response. Krishna Chaitanya is aiming to present Powerpeta on a grand scale. The film also has an accomplished technical crew. Madhie is handling cinematography, Mani Sharma is



composing the music, and Sreekar Prasad is in charge of editing. Ramakrishna and Monika are overseeing production design.