

### Sri Geetaansha Digitals

Hyderabad | Visakhapatnam | Kakinada | Vijayawada | Ongole



Print Print

► Compactible Pigment Inks Available at Low Cost  
► News Print Rolls Available at Reasonable cost

For More Details: 93948 55244, 9059465965

## BJP Calls ECI Differences 'Healthy Democracy' As Congress Raises 'Vote Theft' Charge



**New Delhi:** The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) on Wednesday hit back at the Congress over its fresh allegations of “vote theft” and “dictatorship” in the Election Commission of India (ECI), saying differences during inter-

nal deliberations were a sign of a healthy democracy. The political row erupted after The Indian Express reported that Election Commissioners Sukhbir Singh Sandhu and Vivek Joshi had formally objected at least 14 times over 10 months to

decisions and orders they said were issued without their knowledge. The objections involved matters including the addition and deletion of voters and aspects of the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls. BJP spokesperson Sambit Patra rejected the Opposition’s interpretation of the reported differences. He argued that discussions among the three Election Commissioners showed that institutional deliberations were taking place rather than supporting allegations of wrongdoing. “This is an official deliberation among the three

election commissioners. What do we gather from this? The BJP did not go and plant a story in the media saying that there had been official deliberations among them. Such deliberations are actually a sign of a healthy democracy,” Patra said, reports.

The BJP leader also pointed to the ECI’s position that the commissioners were on the same page over the SIR. The poll body said differing views and observations were a normal part of institutional deliberations and maintained that its decisions over the past year had ultimately been unanimous.

## "Moving closer to every doorstep": PM Modi

**New Delhi :** Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday marked the milestone anniversary of the Ayushman Bharat initiative, highlighting its role in transforming the nation’s medical landscape and providing financial security to millions of vulnerable citizens. The Prime Minister emphasised in a post on X that the flagship public health insurance program was launched nearly a decade ago with a clear vision to make top-tier, affordable healthcare accessible to every citizen. “Eight years ago, Ayushman Bharat was rolled out with the idea that every Indian should have

access to top-quality and affordable healthcare. Today, more than 60 crore beneficiaries have access to Rs. 5 lakh annual health cover, making it the largest healthcare scheme in the world,” PM Modi wrote. Highlighting the expansion of primary care facilities across regions, he pointed out that Ayushman Arogya Mandirs have significantly decentralised healthcare delivery. “It has enabled record savings on medical expenses, thus benefiting the poor and middle class. And healthcare is moving closer to every doorstep. Ayushman Arogya Mandirs have already recorded over 500 crore visits, strengthening primary healthcare at the grassroots. My best wishes to all Ayushman Bharat beneficiaries,” PM stated.

The remarks came following the completion of eight years of Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana. Similarly, on Wednesday, Union Health Minister JP Nadda highlighted the completion of eight years of Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB PM-JAY), saying that the scheme has transformed healthcare access for millions across the country. In a post shared on X, Nadda said,



"What began 8 years ago as the Sankalp for Seva of Hon’ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi ji has transformed healthcare access for millions, with Ayushman Bharat PM-JAY — the world’s largest Health Assurance Scheme — now covering more than half a billion people across the country." He said that more than 60 crore people have been covered under the scheme, with over 48.54 crore Ayushman cards created and more than 13 crore people having availed treatment. "With 60 Crore+ people covered, 48.54 Crore+ Ayushman Cards created and 13 Crore+ people having already availed treatment, the scheme is turning the promise of quality healthcare and financial protection into a reality for families across India. More than 72 Lakh Crore+ worth of hospitalisation and treat-

ment has been availed through 39,000+ empanelled public and private hospitals across the country," Nadda said. Nadda said the government remains committed to strengthening an accessible, affordable and inclusive healthcare system. Ayushman Bharat PM-JAY, launched on September 23, 2018, is the flagship financial protection component of the government’s healthc are initiatives and provides cashless hospitalisation coverage of up to Rs 5 lakh per family annually to economically vulnerable citizens. The scheme provides coverage for secondary and tertiary care and has funded 13.25 crore hospital admissions worth Rs 2.03 lakh crore through more than 38,000 empanelled public and private hospitals as of August 31, 2026.

## 'No point in talking about big schemes if women are not safe': Priyanka Gandhi on Jamui case



**Wayanad :** Congress MP Priyanka Gandhi Vadra on Tuesday expressed concern over the alleged harassment of two minors in Bihar’s Jamui, saying that crimes against women were increasing and that governments must ensure their safety in public spaces. "It's horrible. Crimes against women are just increasing.

It's become unsafe for women. It was always unsafe, but it's become more and more increasingly violent towards women. I think that there's no point in talking about big schemes and programs if we can't even ensure the safety of women on our streets. So it's really something that all of us need to think about. Wherever

there are state governments and especially the central government, they need to think about how they are going to ensure that women feel safe," Priyanka Gandhi said. Her remarks came after a video purportedly showing the alleged harassment and assault of two minors in Bihar’s Jamui surfaced on social media, triggering public

outrage and political reactions. Police have registered a case under relevant provisions, including the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, and arrested three people in connection with the incident. An SIT has also been formed to identify and apprehend the remaining suspects.

## 24,000 Poor Families to Receive House-Site Pattas in First Phase: MP Kesineni Chinni

**From Our Staff Reporter Vijayawada, September 23:** Vijayawada MP and TDP leader Kesineni Chinni said house-site pattas were being sanctioned to poor families under the ‘Pedalaku P a t t a b h i s h e k a m ’ programme. He said 24,042 poor beneficiaries had been identified and that the pattas would be distributed at a programme to be held under the leadership of Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu on September 30. He remarked that the Dasara and Diwali festivities would arrive early for the people of Vijayawada. Speaking in Vijayawada on Wednesday, he said land worth 71 lakh crore was being given to the poor in the form of house-site pattas. He described the dis-

tribution of pattas to 24,000 beneficiaries in the first phase as a positive development. MP Kesineni Chinni said the government’s objective was to fulfil the dream of owning a house for poor families. He said all eligible beneficiaries would be invited to receive the pattas. There were still some beneficiaries left to be covered, he said, adding that pattas would be distributed to them in the second phase. He said property pattas worth 71 lakh crore were being distributed to 24,000 families.

**MLA Gadde Thanks CM and Deputy CM**

Vijayawada East MLA Gadde Ramamohan described ‘Pedalaku Pattabhishekam’ as a good initiative. He said it was a dream that elected represen-



tatives had cherished for many years and that the issue had been discussed in district-level meetings. He said officials had made efforts to facilitate the distribution of pattas.

He added that even complex issues were being resolved and thanked Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu and Deputy Chief Minister Pawan Kalyan for their support.

**CM Responded Posi-**

**tively to House-Site Pattas: Collector**

NTR District Collector Lakshmi Shah said house-site pattas would be provided to all eligible poor beneficiaries. She said the distribution of house-site pattas would take place on September 30. The Collector said Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu had responded positively to the issue.

## Key Changes in BJP: New In-Charges for AP, Telangana

**From Our Staff Reporter Amaravati, Sept., 23 :** The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) has made key changes in its organisational structure, appointing new in-charges and co-in-charges for Andhra Pradesh and Telangana.

The party leadership has appointed Dr. Arvind Bhadauria as the BJP’s Andhra Pradesh in-charge and Smt. Vanathi Srinivasan as co-in-charge. Sunil Bansal has been appointed Telangana BJP in-charge, while Abhay Patil and Smt. Rekha Sharma have been appointed co-in-charges. The primary responsibilities of the in-charges include coordinating the party’s organisational activities in the respective states and



working with the state leadership to take forward party programmes. The latest national-level appointments come against the backdrop of the BJP recently appointing district in-charges for 28 districts in Andhra Pradesh and restructuring the state executive committee.

Meanwhile, the party has also assigned organisational responsibilities in other states to several BJP leaders from

Andhra Pradesh and Telangana. BJP Andhra Pradesh leader and former Union Minister Daggubati Purandeswari has been appointed Odisha BJP in-charge. Telangana leader D.K. Aruna has been appointed Tamil Nadu BJP co-in-charge, while Dr. Kasam Venkateshwarlu has been appointed Karnataka BJP co-in-charge. With these appointments, leaders from

the Telugu states have also been entrusted with overseeing party affairs in other states. According to information, BJP National General Secretary Tarun Chugh announced that all these appointments would come into effect immediately. Recent reports also stated that Tarun Chugh has been assigned responsibility as the in-charge of the party’s central office in the new national team.

## Sai Krishna Custodial Death Case: Key Development in Supreme Court

**Delhi, September 23:** A key development took place in the Supreme Court on Wednesday in connection with the custodial death case of Gade Sai Krishna of Krishna Lanka in Vijayawada. The Supreme Court deferred to Thursday the issue of staying the proceedings in the case before the Andhra Pradesh High Court. It also deferred to Thursday the plea seeking transfer of the Sai Krishna case from the AP High Court to the Supreme Court. A bench headed by Justice Vikram Nath heard the case on Wednesday. During the hearing, the bench directed the petitioners and the Andhra Pradesh government to place before it by 10.30 a.m. on Thursday details of the cases pending before the High Court in con-

nection with the Sai Krishna case, as well as those in which the hearings have been completed and judgments are awaited. The bench said it would issue further directions after examining the stage of the proceedings before the High Court. After the lunch break, the state government’s lawyers placed before the Justice Vikram Nath-led bench details of the cases pending before the High Court in connection with Sai Krishna’s disappearance. The state government informed the bench that the High Court had deferred its judgment on a petition filed by Sai Krishna’s mother seeking a CBI probe into the case.

The state government’s lawyers said the High Court had deferred its judgment on the habeas corpus petition

concerning Sai Krishna and the interlocutory applications seeking directions for a CBI investigation. The Justice Vikram Nath-led bench directed the lawyers to provide clear details by Thursday morning of the petitions on which the High Court had reserved its judgment. The bench said the matter would be taken up as the first case on Thursday. It also stated that it would decide tomorrow whether to continue or modify the interim directions issued during the morning hearing. During the morning hearing, the bench headed by Justice Vikram Nath had strongly questioned the conduct of the Andhra Pradesh police and the DGP over Sai Krishna’s disappearance while in custody and the alleged destruction of evidence.

## Srivari Brahmotsavams Conclude Successfully; Rs.29 Crore Hundi Revenue: TTD Chairman

**From Our Staff Reporter Tirumala, September 23:** The annual Srivari Brahmotsavams of Lord Venkateswara at Tirumala concluded successfully through collective efforts, said TTD Chairman B.R. Naidu. Speaking to the media on Wednesday, he thanked the priests, officials, employees, police personnel and district administration for their efforts in ensuring the success of the Brahmotsavams. He said 5.76 lakh devotees had darshan of Lord Venkateswara during the first eight days of the Brahmotsavams. The hundi generated revenue of 729 crore, while annaprasadam was served to 21.80 lakh devotees. As many as 2.04 lakh devotees offered their hair to the Lord, and 33 lakh

laddus were sold to devotees.

Naidu said Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu offered silk clothes to Lord Venkateswara on September 15 and unveiled the TTD diaries and calendars for 2027. He said the renovated Sri Venkateswara Museum and the Healing and Devotion Experience Centre at the Vaikuntam Queue Complex were inaugurated. Electric buses, the Nandakam app and a group insurance scheme for devotees were also launched by the Chief Minister. He said lakhs of devotees were provided both Vahana Seva and darshan of the presiding deity.

**Thanks to the Chief Minister**

The TTD Chairman said plans had been prepared to

develop an integrated township on 50 acres near Alipiri. The ‘Vriksha Govindam’ programme was launched to increase greenery in Tirumala and Tirupati. Special plans were also being formulated to strengthen Srivari Seva and medical services. He said 7230 crore had been allocated for infrastructure facilities in the TTD employees’ housing colony. Naidu stated that all devotees who visited Tirumala on the day of Garuda Seva were provided darshan. TTD officials also interacted directly with devotees on the occasion, and they expressed satisfaction with the arrangements. The Chief Minister expressed satisfaction over the arrangements made for the Brahmotsavams, Naidu said, adding that the TTD had conveyed



its gratitude to him.

**Foreign Cultural Troupes Draw Strong Response**

For the first time, 295 cultural troupes from 20 states and one Union Territory were given an opportunity to perform during the Brahmotsavams, Naidu said. A total of 7,871 artists presented cultural programmes

ahead of the Vahana Sevas. On Garuda Seva day, 32 troupes from 14 states, comprising 916 artists, performed. For the first time, foreign cultural troupes also participated in the Brahmotsavams. Performances by cultural groups from Germany and Singapore received an enthusiastic response, he said.

# EDITORIAL

## Youth Falling Prey to Pharma Drugs

Young people in several states across the country are becoming addicted to heroin, a narcotic substance. Morphine, codeine, oxycodone, fentanyl and heroin are opioids. These drugs primarily act on the brain and nervous system and are used to relieve pain. When used medically in the prescribed dosage, they can help control pain. However, excessive or improper use can lead to drowsiness, constipation, slowed breathing and, eventually, life-threatening conditions. In terms of population percentage, the opioid problem is more prevalent in Mizoram, Nagaland, Arunachal Pradesh, Sikkim, Manipur, Punjab, Haryana and Delhi. A 2018 survey found that nearly 2 per cent of people, ranging from 10-year-olds to those aged 75, were using heroin extensively. The use of such substances among school students was recorded at 2.8 per cent. Among youngsters addicted to heroin, education, employment and social relationships are being adversely affected. Their physical and mental health is also severely impacted. Punjab, which has been one of the leading states in illegal drug trafficking, is now witnessing a sharp decline in the availability of heroin. As a result, the use of pharmaceutical drugs as an alternative has increased among the youth. The large-scale inflow of these pharmaceutical intoxicants into Punjab from other states has become a major challenge for the police in preventing their use and distribution. Most of these pharma drugs are not manufactured in Punjab. They are produced in Himachal Pradesh, Gujarat, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Haryana and Delhi. Since last year, 11.54 lakh pharmaceutical tablets and capsules linked to these states have been seized. It is estimated that around 80 per cent of the pharma drugs available in Punjab are sourced from other states. This is completely opposite to the situation in the past, when nearly 80 per cent of the drugs illegally entering Punjab were smuggled from across the Pakistan border. In 2024, large quantities of narcotics were seized in Punjab. In just the first six months of 2024, 215 kg of heroin was seized. A new trend is now emerging in Punjab, with the misuse of pharmaceutical medicines increasing significantly. There is a need for the states where pharma drugs are manufactured, as well as the states through which they are transported to other regions, to take coordinated action against drug manufacturers, distributors and organised drug networks. Authorities need to monitor drug manufacturing units, sales, purchases and transportation, and prevent these drugs from being illegally diverted to Punjab. To curb the smuggling of narcotics through drones from across the Pakistan border, the BSF and police forces have undertaken multi-level measures. These measures have helped curb the widespread availability of heroin on the streets of Punjab. With heroin becoming less accessible, young people in the state have increasingly turned to pharmaceutical drugs that produce intoxicating effects. On September 3, three units of the mobile drone detection platform 'DroneSense D200 Pro' were deployed at strategic locations in the border districts. The system is designed to detect the activities of drones used for drug smuggling, pinpoint their exact locations and identify the places where the drones drop the drugs. This enables security personnel to reach the locations in time and take necessary action. For these operations, 52 Drone Response Teams (DRTs) have been formed, comprising 147 police personnel. These teams work in coordination with the BSF. As soon as alerts regarding drone-based drug transportation are received, the teams respond immediately, reach the locations where the drones have dropped the drugs and maintain surveillance. They patrol these areas and apprehend those who arrive to collect the drugs.

The police have also deployed a total of nine anti-drone systems, including three 'Baaz' anti-drone systems. These have been operational in Amritsar, Tarn Taran and Ferozepur since August last year. They detect the movement of drones used for drug transportation in advance and disrupt their communication. Village Defence Committees have also been formed in border areas. These committees act as the eyes and ears of the police. Under the 'Yudh Nasha Virudh' (war against drugs) campaign, nearly 80,000 people involved in drug trafficking have been arrested since March 1, 2025. Financial measures are also being taken to weaken the economic foundations of drug networks. Assets worth more than Rs. 336 crore belonging to those involved in drug production and illegal trafficking have been frozen. A reward policy is also being implemented for those who provide information about drug trafficking or help identify the whereabouts of narcotics. A cash reward of Rs. 25,000 is being offered for identifying and helping seize drones used for drug transportation.

# China Claims It Has Cut Troops At The Indian Border. But The Math Doesn't Add Up

The Ministry of Defence released its Annual Report for 2025-26 on September 14 this year, and it speaks to vital challenges facing India's northern border with China, even as it sweeps the naval frontier under the rug. Nonetheless, an interesting facet buried in the Indian Army chapter is an assertion that becomes critical to understanding the organisation of the People's Liberation Army (PLA) Western Theatre Command (WTC), which is the theatre designed to operate exclusively in India's operational direction. It says: "The year 2025 witnessed a significant reduction in the deployment of PLA Forces opposite Northern Borders, with 10 Combined Arms Brigade (CAB) size forces each deployed in areas along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) and in traditional training areas." A few important conclusions can be drawn from this assertion. Firstly, the operative phrase "each" indicates that 20 CABs/CAB-sized forces have been identified along the LAC and in the depths of the WTC's coverage, particularly in its Xinjiang and Tibet military districts (MDs). That troop strength lies somewhere between 90,000 and 1,20,000 in the theatre's India-facing posture, after what the report calls a significant reduction. But, the reduction, or drawdown, likely has more to do with the deployment along the LAC than the total strength active in the WTC - the former being closer perhaps to the 20,000-40,000 mark.

Secondly, there is the vagueness induced by using the phrase "CAB-sized". A CAB is a specific unit that emerged in 2017, after the PLA underwent massive above- and below-the-neck reforms in 2015-16. As a

unit of measure, it means little. These sweeping reforms in the PLA replaced the old, service-specific group army-division-regiment structure with a standardised group army-brigade-battalion one. In this new hierarchy, a CAB includes approximately 4,500 to 6,000 personnel, and can be classified by heft of deployment (heavy, medium, or light), or by whether it is tracked, wheeled, or high-mobility. Usually, each CAB features four combined arms battalions under its command, which host organic armour, infantry, mortars, and reconnaissance. Ten CABs are thus close to 50,000 troops, while 20 CABs constitute a field army.

**Reaching Conclusions**

The WTC fields two group armies, the 76th at Xining and the 77th at Chongzhou. They are garrisoned deep in provinces like Qinghai, Gansu, Ningxia, and Sichuan, and are the most likely occupants of the "traditional training areas", though not necessarily the only ones. They field their frontier deployments across the two MDs. The Tibet MD fields the 52nd and 53rd mountain brigades at Shigatse and Nyingchi, and the 54th Heavy CAB at Lhasa. Xinjiang MD, on the other hand, is the PLA's last division-based ground force, retaining four combined arms divisions (CADs) - 4th, 6th, 8th, and 11th - each roughly twice the strength of a brigade. Found in addition at the frontlines are three CABs from the 77th GA, which were permanently positioned there during the 2017 Doklam stand-off to provide the Tibet MD's two lighter mountain CABs with greater firepower and capability. So, the complicated mathematics likely is that three Tibet MD brigades, the three



77th GA brigades transferred since 2017, independent border defence regiments, and troops from the four Xinjiang MD CADs together constitute the 10 "CAB-sized" forces at the LAC. The Xinjiang MD either fields its CADs in rotation, or composite elements are drawn from several of them - mostly the 4th, 6th, and 8th - under the umbrella of the PLA '506 Special Mission'. There is also an external benchmark to consider here, and it is provided by the US Department of War's annual 'China Military Power' Reports. The Report counted 10 CABs across the LAC's three sectors in 2022, and argued that some of them were borrowed from other theatre commands. These could further add to the MoD's CAB-sized assessment outside of the MDs' deployments, the BDRs, and the GA reinforcements. In 2024, the Pentagon spoke only of the total deployment of 16 CABs and three infantry brigades, bringing the brigade architecture in the WTC as a whole to

about 19. That is roughly the WTC's whole manoeuvre force, and can perhaps explain the reference to "10 each" in the MoD's Report. And whatever strength reduction was achieved could perhaps be the pullback from line to depth, or even the return of borrowed brigades back home.

**India v/s the WTC**

Deployment in the WTC is intense, and altitude and hypoxia do not make it any better for Chinese soldiers derived mostly from the mainland. In Tibet, for instance, the average altitude is approximately 4,380 metres, where oxygen levels are about 60% of that at sea level. As a consequence, formations have to acclimatise gradually, and through staging complexes, which include the Sanshili Yingfang and Kangxiwa on the G219 highway, Rutog and Shiquanhe further south, and, of course, the permanent garrisons at elevations of 5,371 and 5,592 metres. This movement continues across weeks and can some-

times be difficult to spot. Further, since 2020, the PLA has dug underground and tunnelled depots near Shigatse, Lhasa, and Hotan. Imagery of the Sirijap plain has shown in the past 122 mm howitzer battalions in trench-linked positions covering Pangong's north bank. Similarly, PHL-03 launchers have been found near Rutog, concealed by camouflaged revetments. They hold the Chushul bowl. And so, even if the brigade drawdown is evident, the forward presence and stock are already in place. So, if the WTC as a whole is already oriented towards India, and its stocks already forward, the question is not how many brigades sit opposite the LAC, but how quickly ten in depth become twenty on the line, and in which sector. It also likely warrants discussion on the next steps following disengagement - de-escalation and de-induction, even as the Special Representatives reach a conclusion on early harvest settlement of the boundary.

# China Is No Longer Waiting For Trump To Set The Rules. And He Knows It

Since the 1970s, US-China relations have been the fulcrum of the world order. While the strategic balance has always been shaped by the military balance of power between the US and the Soviet Union, and, in our time, between the US and Russia, China has been the classic 'swing power' in this global triangle. Both Washington and Moscow recognise this reality. There is no major geopolitical decision in Washington that does not involve a calculation of Chinese interests and reactions. When the Kremlin was on the verge of intervening in Ukraine, it was Beijing that Moscow kept on side to secure its back.

During the late Cold War years, Washington enlisted China in its anti-Soviet containment strategy. In the post-Cold War era, the US sought to keep China from doing things that could complicate US geopolitical objectives. In some form or another, China's role has been central to prolonging a US-led order. An innate Chinese attitude to mind its affairs and secure its own periphery has allowed the US to recover from a series of geopolitical follies over the decades.

**China Has Changed**

The stakes in this game, however, have suddenly changed over the past decade. As China's power has grown and it has shed its previous inhibitions about projecting its own world order ideas and defending its interests, the US' juggling act in the great power triangle has become more and more complicated. By the mid-2010s, China itself became an object of US strategic concern, changing the fundamental conundrum of US geostrategy: responding to the emergence of a new peer competitor. Yet, when confronted with a stark choice of reorienting American

strategic posture towards Pacific Asia and crafting an assertive policy, US administrations, without exception, have balked at such a move.

The primary direction of pressure from the US has remained on the Eurasian heartland area and stubbornly focused on Russia. The outbreak of the Ukraine crisis in 2014 locked the US into a confrontation with Russia that finally escalated in 2022. With an unending and resource-guzzling NATO-Russia war of attrition in Ukraine, China became a secondary front that was managed by a mix of diplomacy and a non-provocative military posture to keep the Western Pacific stable.

Confrontation with Russia and stability with China have become two sides of the same coin. It is because the US lacks the power to simultaneously pressurise Eurasia's great powers that US-China relations have acquired their unique character. The US debacle in the Iran war and military failure to subdue Tehran has removed all doubt about the ability of the US to contemplate a China containment policy in the traditional sense or bring to bear a credible military posture in Asia that could alter Beijing's calculus.

2026 has been a turning point. This is the big picture context that sets the backdrop to the Trump-Xi summit.

American analysts are pessimistic that any clear policy line can emerge from a broken Washington and a dysfunctional White House that has lost control of its foreign policy agenda. In economic terms, "China has escalation dominance over the United States, meaning that at any level of threat, the Chinese government has the ability to inflict more pain on the United States than vice versa." The Trump White



House has learnt this the hard way as all its bluster against China fizzled out in 2025. Shrewder analysts hope for the US to buy time by engaging in a renewed form of sophisticated interdependence while rebuilding domestic capacities. But will the Chinese oblige in helping the US revive and transform its industrial economy, only to be confronted with real hostility further down the road?

The big shift in Sino-American relations is how the Chinese are articulating the terms of engagement. Following Xi Jinping's cue, Chinese scholars are more confident and realistic in how they define a framework for stable ties. Competition and differences are no longer shied

away from but are to be managed and "not become a geopolitical roller coaster". The tables have turned. The once-worrying US rhetoric of competition from the past decade has now been adopted by China, which is "willing to recognize that the fundamental nature of US-China relations is competitive". Indeed, "Beijing believes that competition can be effectively managed without presenting an existential threat". This new, confident attitude can be explained not merely by China's economic-technological advancements but also the broader geopolitical context of multipolarity.

**This Is No 'G-2'**

Some strategists have misinterpreted this Chinese discourse as

foreshadowing a G-2 or a typical great power relationship where the rest of the world falls into line. These clichés belong to the past. The fact is that both these rivals, despite their interdependence, have opposing conceptions of world order in a fast-changing international landscape.

One way to discern this is to see what the Chinese are not doing. They are not exploiting the Russia-NATO conflict to cut a side deal with the US, an opportunity that the latter has probed for years and would still relish. Neither is China helping the US extricate itself from a range of miscalculations, such as the trade standoff with China, or the catastrophic war in the Middle East, or mounting structural problems in the US economy.

# LSR Students Protest Over Alleged Gang-Rape Near Kalkaji Temple, Demand Women's Safety

**Delhi:** Students of Lady Shri Ram College for Women staged a protest march in Delhi following the alleged gang-rape of a 17-year-old girl near Kalkaji Temple, demanding stronger security measures for women in the area. Students from nearby women's colleges of Delhi University also reportedly joined the protest, raising concerns over the safety of women and students around the campus and neighbouring areas. The protest comes a day after Lady Shri Ram College shifted classes online following the alleged sexual assault of the teenager at Aastha Kunj Park near Kalkaji Mandir. The college will resume offline classes and its regular academic schedule from Thursday, the principal said. Meanwhile, the college administration has sought enhanced security arrangements from the Delhi Police in and around the campus. The administration has requested the Amar Colony police station to increase patrolling in the lanes adjoining the college, particularly around the college's rear gate and the parks located in the vicinity. The college has specifically urged the police to step up



surveillance and patrolling around the rear entrance, which is used by students, as well as nearby parks, amid concerns over the safety of students. The alleged gang-rape of the minor has sparked concern among students and residents in the area, with calls for greater police presence and improved security infrastructure. The protest by LSR students was aimed at highlighting these concerns and pressing authorities to ensure a safer environment for women. The alleged incident at Aastha Kunj Park has also prompted renewed attention to the safety of public spaces in the vicinity of educational institutions in Delhi.

## Jammu And Kashmir: 'Electoral Process Must Be Protected Or Democracy Will Be At Risk,' Says PDP Chief Mehbooba Mufti

**New Delhi:** People's Democratic Party (PDP) president and former Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Mehbooba Mufti on Wednesday warned that India could come to resemble a "banana republic" if the electoral process continued to be undermined, as she reacted to reports that two Election Commissioners had repeatedly objected to decisions of the poll panel. Responding to a question about reports that the two commissioners had raised objections 14 times, Mufti said India and Pakistan appeared to be competing over "who can harm their own country the most". Her remarks came amid reports of differences within the Election Commission of India over electoral roll-related decisions. Mufti said India was regarded as the world's largest democracy and noted that Prime Minister Narendra Modi had described the country as the "mother of democracy" during his visits



jections within the Election Commission adding another layer to the debate over how the electoral process is being managed. The Election Commission, however, has said its decisions on the nationwide Special Intensive Revision (SIR) were unanimous. Mufti described the reported objections by the two Election Commissioners as a "silver lining", praising their "courage and integrity" in questioning those in power. "We still have people like two Election Commissioners, who have the courage and integrity to question the people in power. I don't want to take their name at this point. I don't know what trouble they are going to go through... they may have to face ED and Income Tax raids," she said. The reported dissent assumes significance because it concerns the electoral process, an institution at the heart of representative democracy. At the same time, Mufti's allegations about electoral

rolls and possible action against the commissioners remain her claims, rather than established findings. Turning to Pakistan, Mufti criticised the country over its treatment of dissent, contrasting its international role with what she described as repression at home. "Look at Pakistan, which goes around the world as a peacemaker and as a mediator of peace while crushing dissent within its country with an iron hand," she said. Mufti referred to the detention of former Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan's sisters, saying they were unarmed and peacefully protesting in support of their brother. "What does it say? You are going around the world as a peacemaker, and you are detaining women who have no weapons in their hands," she said. Mufti said it was unfortunate that there were no voices within Pakistan's establishment questioning what she called the arbitrary detention of Khan's sister.

# Navi Mumbai SIR: Nearly 3.85 Lakh Names Deleted From Airoli, Belapur Electoral Rolls

**Navi Mumbai:** Nearly 3.85 lakh names have been deleted from the electoral rolls of the Airoli and Belapur Assembly constituencies during the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) exercise, with computerised verification and door-to-door enumeration revealing a large number of discrepancies. According to the electoral roll revision data, 2,19,002 names were deleted from the Airoli Assembly constituency and 1,65,258 names from the Belapur constituency. The exercise involved door-to-door distribution and collection of enumeration forms, followed by computerised verification of voter records. Voters whose records could not be mapped or whose identities could not be verified during the exercise were classified under the ASDD category. The category includes absent, shifted, dead and duplicate entries. The 150-Airoli Assembly constituency covers several areas falling under NMMC wards, including wards 15, 8 to 1, 27 to 42 and 61. The 151-Belapur Assembly constituency comprises wards 10 to 26, 43 to 60 and 62 to 66. The electoral authorities have also identified a significant number of duplicate entries. In Airoli, 1,02,682 duplicate entries were identified, while 81,840 notices have been issued and 12,840 notices remain pending for distribution. In Belapur, 83,742 du-



plicate entries were identified, with 89,704 notices issued and 2,034 notices pending distribution. Under the electoral roll revision process, the ASDD list is published first, following which voters and political parties can raise objections by submitting the prescribed forms. Booth-level agents of political parties and citizens can also file objections. The Electoral Registration Officer then conducts a hearing and takes a final decision after verifying the claims and objections. Frequent migration of tenants and workers employed in Navi Mumbai's IT and industrial sectors remains a major challenge in maintaining updated electoral rolls. The city's large floating population results in residents frequently changing addresses, increasing the possibility of voters remaining registered at their

previous addresses. The SIR exercise has also brought the issue of voters having registrations in more than one constituency to the fore. The Election Commission has been using computerised demographic matching through its voter services portal and the BLO app to identify

discrepancies. Officials and political representatives have stressed the need to expand such technological verification across neighbouring constituencies, including Parnell, to detect duplicate registrations and prevent voters from being registered at multiple locations.

## IndiGo Delhi-bound Dreamliner returns to London over technical issue

**New Delhi:** A Delhi-bound IndiGo Dreamliner aircraft returned to London Heathrow due to a technical issue, according to a source. The Boeing 787-9 aircraft, operating flight 6E4 from London Heathrow to Delhi, was airborne for around an hour before turning back, according to information available on the flight-tracking website Flightradar24.com. The source said the aircraft had suffered a technical issue and landed back safely at London Heathrow. The airline, without providing further details, said, "Technical issue was detected shortly after take-off on IndiGo flight 6E 04 operating from London to New Delhi on 22 September 2026. Following standard operating procedures, the pilots decided to turn back and landed the aircraft safely at London Heathrow Airport." The aircraft was undergoing maintenance checks and would resume operations after securing all necessary clearances, the IndiGo statement said. Specific details about the issue and the number of passengers onboard the plane could not be immediately ascertained.

# ECI Denies Rift Over SIR

**New Delhi:** The Election Commission of India (ECI) rejected reports of an internal rift among its three members over the ongoing Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls, saying all final decisions taken by the poll panel have been unanimous. The clarification came after an Indian Express investigation reported that Election Commissioners Sukhbir Singh Sandhu and Vivek Joshi had recorded at least 14 objections over 10 months to decisions and orders linked to the SIR exercise. In a detailed press note, the ECI said written notes, observations, technical suggestions and internal checks were part of the normal functioning of a multi-member constitutional body. It said such inputs were intended to ensure transparency, legal compliance and operational rigour and did not amount to formal dissent. "Differing views and observations are a normal part of deliberation in any institution," the Commission said, adding that every officer was authorised to offer suggestions aimed at improving the electoral



system. The ECI also maintained that all official orders and administrative directions issued by it carried legal sanction and followed statutory procedures under the Chief Election Commissioner and Other Election Commissioners (Appointment, Conditions of Service and Term of Office) Act, 2023. Responding to the report's focus on 14 objections, the Commission said highlighting specific internal observations over 10 months while overlooking the "much larger body" of approvals and decisions presented only one side of the picture. It said the Commission had

taken numerous decisions, introduced around 40 initiatives and undertaken several electoral reforms, including SIR, during the past year. According to the ECI, all these decisions were outcomes of unanimous decisions of the full Commission. The poll panel also defended its digital platforms, including ECINet, saying they operated under strict data security protocols and audit controls to prevent unauthorised tampering or manipulation. It said Electoral Registration Officers and District Election Officers continued to exercise their statutory powers regarding

registration and deletion of names. The Indian Express report had highlighted objections concerning changes to Form 6, access to electoral-roll databases, appeals during the SIR process in West Bengal and software-related issues affecting voter registration and restoration. The report triggered criticism from Opposition leaders, who questioned the functioning of the poll panel and raised concerns over the SIR exercise. The ECI, however, reiterated that it remained committed to carrying out its constitutional responsibilities with "complete integrity".

## Surendra Koli Died By Suicide, Post-Mortem Report Confirms: Uttarakhand Police

**Haridwar:** Surendra Koli, who spent nearly two decades in jail before being acquitted in all 13 cases linked to the 2006 Nithari killings, died by suicide, according to his post-mortem report, Uttarakhand Police said. Koli was found dead at a tea stall in Haridwar on September 18. Police said the post-mortem examination found that he died of asphyxia due to ante-mortem hanging and that the investigation had so far found no evidence suggesting another person was involved.

"The autopsy report of Surendra Koli states it as a suicidal death. The cause of death is specified as asphyxia due to ante-mortem hanging. During the investigation also, no other forensic evidence, CCTV footage of any suspect person or suspicious activity came to light," City Police Station in-charge Kundan Singh Rana said. No suicide note was recovered. Koli had rented the tea stall in Haridwar's Sapt Rishi area just three days before his death. His brother, Chandan Koli, submitted a complaint



at the Saptarishi police outpost in Haridwar on Sunday, seeking a high-level investigation into the death. He alleged that his brother had died under suspicious circumstances. The demand for a high-level probe and the police findings present contrasting aspects of the case. While Koli's family has raised questions about the circumstances surrounding his death, police have said the post-mortem findings and evidence gathered during the investigation point to suicide. After Koli's body was recovered, police began an investigation and sent it for a post-mortem examination to establish the

cause of death. The examination was conducted on September 19. Following the examination, Koli's brothers and son performed his final rites at the Khadkhadi Cremation Ganga Ghat in Haridwar, Hindustan Times reports. Police said the investigation found no forensic evidence, CCTV footage involving a suspect or suspicious activity indicating the involvement of another person in Koli's death. Koli had walked out of jail on November 12, 2025, wearing a powder-blue shirt, black trousers and a navy-blue jacket. Anil Sharma, who had rented the tea stall to Koli in Haridwar's Kumbh Mela

area, said Koli had introduced himself as "Sada Ram" and told him that he had previously worked in Roshanabad. Neighbouring shopkeepers said Sada Ram appeared to have been looking ahead to the next year's Ardh Kumbh fair and hoped to maximise his earnings during the four-month event. The tea stall is in the core Mela zone, an area with a large number of temples, ashrams, dharamshalas, maths and hotels. Sharma had rented the stall to Koli for Rs 7,000 a month and taken an advance of Rs 14,000. Police identified Koli as a resident of Magrukhal in the Bhikiasain area of Almora.

## IIT Bombay Student Death Probe Stalled

**Mumbai:** The ongoing investigation into Sahil Wakode's death case has hit a major roadblock as his iPhone remains unlocked. The Mumbai Crime Branch has sought technical assistance to unlock the iPhone of IIT Bombay student Sahil Wakode as it continues its investigation into his death, according to reports. Wakode's phone has not yet been unlocked, and investigators consider the device an important piece of evidence. Its examination could provide information relevant to the investigation, including the circumstances surrounding allegations that Wakode used ChatGPT during a mid-semester examination hours before his death. Professor Suryanarayana Doolla was reportedly an invigilator during the examination. According to reports, Wakode returned to his hostel room following the examination incident



Science and Engineering, was found dead in his hostel room on the Powai campus on Sep 18. Reports have alleged that Wakode was caught using a mobile phone to access ChatGPT during a mid-semester examination hours before his death. Professor

and was later found dead. The circumstances surrounding his death remain under investigation. Wakode's parents have alleged that their son faced caste-based harassment and have demanded justice. The case has since been transferred to the Mumbai Crime Branch. Meanwhile, Doolla has reportedly been sent on a week-long leave amid continuing student protests over Wakode's death. The development came days after he was reportedly removed from

his administrative role as Dean. Faculty members have reportedly maintained that Doolla has not been suspended from his teaching position. Furthermore, IIT Bombay has also released a revised timetable for the mid-semester examinations, which had been cancelled following Wakode's death. The announcement signals the resumption of academic activity even as student protests continue.

# Dirty Politics": Punjab Minister Jabs Opposition Over Man Who Took Poison



**"Chandigarh:** Punjab Cabinet Minister Aman Arora has accused the Congress, BJP and Shiromani Akali Dal of indulging in what he called "dirty and low-level politics" over the recent incidents in Sangrur, particularly the case involving Namol village resident Jagseer Singh alias Jagga. Arora said the incident was being politically exploited to

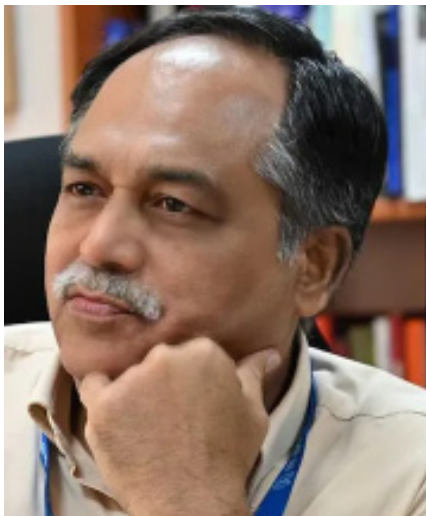
target the Aam Aadmi Party government, while asserting that the facts surrounding Jagga Singh's background and the ongoing police inquiry must also be taken into account. Jagga Singh allegedly consumed a poisonous substance outside the Sangrur Deputy Commissioner's office after raising allegations regarding the sale of drugs in his

village. He was initially taken to Sangrur Civil Hospital and later shifted to Rajindra Hospital in Patiala as his condition was reported to be serious. Arora said two village panchayats had taken a decision to prevent the sale of drugs in the village. According to him, the opposition was portraying Jagga Singh as a crusader against drugs while

simultaneously targeting the panchayat members who, he claimed, were trying to stop the alleged drug trade. The minister further claimed that Jagga Singh has nine FIRs registered against him, including cases under the NDPS Act, Excise-related cases and a rape case. He said four of these cases have resulted in convictions, while four others are under trial. These claims were also reflected in the account given by Sangrur SSP Ravjot Grewal. According to SSP Grewal, Jagga had uploaded a social-media video on September 12 in which he allegedly threatened to take his own life if action was not taken in his case. Police subsequently registered a DDR under Section 226 of the BNS and informed the area magistrate, she said. Grewal said the matter was under preliminary inquiry. She added that the panchayat

had alleged that Jagga was being politically provoked and was naming the entire panchayat because of a dispute connected with alleged drug-related activities. The police officer also said Jagga has a previous criminal record and that the allegations surrounding political provocation were part of the ongoing investigation. Arora accused opposition parties of selectively presenting the incident and demanded that those making allegations against the government should first consider the police record and ongoing investigation. He said the Congress, BJP and Akali Dal leaders who were describing Jagga as a person fighting against drugs were ignoring the allegations and cases against him. "Opposition parties are indulging in low-level politics only to defame the AAP government. They should apologise to the people," Arora said.

# Fake News": IIT Bombay Denies Director's Resignation Over Student Death



"Embroiled in student protests over the past few days due to death by suicide of a second-year student, IIT Bombay on Monday denied reports that its director has resigned. Dubbing the reports of director Prof Shireesh Kedare as fake news, the institute posted that the director has not resigned." "Director IIT Bombay has NOT resigned. We categorically state that the related news is false," IIT Bombay posted on its X handle. The campus has been witnessing student protests since the death of Sahil Wakode on Friday evening. Wakode was found hanging from the ceiling fan in his hotel room on the IIT Bombay's Powai campus, hours after he was allegedly caught using a mobile phone and ChatGPT during a mid-semester examination, according to officials.

**Sahil Wakode was found dead in his hostel**

**room on Friday**  
His family has alleged that Wakode, a native of Maharashtra's Yavatmal district, was subjected to institutional harassment and caste-based discrimination before he took the extreme step, which triggered a protest by students on the campus. The protesters claimed that Wakode faced severe pressure and threats of academic suspension. The institute, however, issued a statement on September 19 stating that no disciplinary action was initiated against the student. In view of protests over the suicide, the institute's director, Prof Shireesh Kedare, had reportedly told the protesters that he will resign on Monday, but noted he must follow the process. IIT Bombay's board is reportedly scheduled to meet to discuss the issue. Prof Kedare told protesters late Sunday night: "I will re-

sign; however, I have to follow the process and will convey my decision after a meeting on Monday," news agency PTI had reported. On Sunday night, the IIT Bombay administration met the protesting students to look into their 18 demands that included ensuring student representation in academic committees, independent investigation into four cases of death by suicide on campus, and mental health workshops for professors. The demand also included suspension of Professor Suryanarayana Doolla, the Dean of Students Welfare, and no action against the protesters. The institute's administration has agreed to 18 demands put forth by the protesters during a meeting. The institute also on Monday apologised for what it called "statements contained in our earlier communication concerning the circumstances surrounding the unfortunate demise of Sahil."

# Punjab Man Who Took Poison In Anti-Drugs Protest Faces 9 Cases Himself

**Chandigarh:** A young man who allegedly swallowed a poisonous substance outside the office of the deputy commissioner in Punjab's Sangrur, in protest against what he alleged was unstoppable sale of drugs in his village, has fallen into more trouble in addition to dealing with the consequences of taking poison. Jagseer Singh alias Jagga had trooped into the DC office and launched a protest alleging drugs were sold in his village, but nothing was done despite flagging it to the sarpanch and the local administration. Jagga then took poison, after which people took him to hospital. The incident had sparked a political row with rivals of the ruling Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) government attacking it

over the drug menace in the border state. The case took a new turn today with the police announcing that Jagga himself was not exactly someone who stood against drug abuse. The police in a press conference said Jagga faces at least nine cases that include charges under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act, 1985. The most recent case was filed against him this year only, the police said. The information shared by the police is likely to blunt the Opposition's attack on the Bhagwant Mann government in the state where elections are due soon. Earlier, the Congress's Punjab in-charge Sachin Pilot had said the incident showed the "pressure and

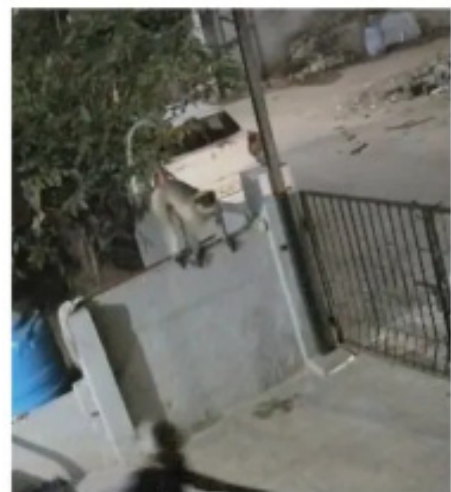


mistreatment" allegedly faced by those speaking against drugs in Punjab. He said Jagga allegedly received threats and faced harassment after posting videos against drugs and

questioned the accountability of the AAP government and administration. BJP leader Parminder Brar also attacked the AAP government, linking the case with two similar inci-

dents in the last one month. In May, Mann had defended his government's anti-drug campaign, saying it had an 87 per cent conviction rate under the NDPS Act.

# CCTV Shows Monkey Pouncing On 91-Year-Old Woman



**In Karnataka, She Dies Next Day** A 91-year-old woman died a day after she was attacked by a monkey at her home in Karnataka's Koppal. The woman, identified as Najamunnisa Begum, was the wife of noted writer M.S. Savadatti.

According to her family, she was walking through the compound of her house in B.T. Patil Nagar when a monkey suddenly attacked her, causing her to fall to the ground. The incident was captured on a CCTV camera installed outside the

house.

When Najamunnisa's daughter rushed to help her, the monkey allegedly attacked her as well. Najamunnisa was then taken to a private hospital for treatment.

Although she initially appeared to be recovering, her condition later worsened and she died while undergoing treatment the following day.

**Monkey Menace**  
The incident comes amid several recent reports of monkey attacks involving elderly women, some of which have had fatal consequences.

On September 10, a 55-year-old woman died after falling from her rooftop while trying to escape monkeys in Aligarh's Gabhana, as per a PTI report. She had reportedly gone to the roof to dry clothes when the animals surrounded her.

A similar incident was reported in Shimla, Himachal Pradesh, on September 14. A woman died after falling

from a rooftop following a sudden monkey attack in the cemetery area. The incident later led to protests by residents, who raised concerns over the growing monkey menace in the city. Residents and local representatives demanded Rs 5 lakh in compensation for the woman's family. Protesters also highlighted a sharp increase in aggressive wildlife, including monkeys, langurs, and stray dogs.

In March this year, a 65-year-old woman, Chinna Bulli, died in Kakinada, Andhra Pradesh, after reportedly being chased by a group of monkeys while returning from her fields. She panicked and tried to get away but lost her balance and suffered fatal injuries in the fall.



**New Delhi:** The swearing-in of seven new judges of the Delhi High Court on Monday has increased its strength to 50. The sanctioned strength of judges in the Delhi High Court is 60 which includes 45 permanent and 15 additional judges. Chief Justice Kumar Upadhyaya administered the oath to Justices Nivedita Anil Sharma, Nisha Sahay Saxena, Sanjay Sharma, Bharat Parashar, Aditi Choudhary, Dinesh Bhatt and Arun Bhardwaj, who were serving as judicial officers in the district judiciary here. The swear-

ing-in ceremony was held in the high court premises and after administering the oath, the chief justice congratulated the new judges. Justices Nivedita Anil Sharma and Saxena, who have been appointed permanent judges, took oath in English. The other five have been appointed additional judges of the high court and they took the oath in Hindi. Prior to appointment as judges of the Delhi High Court, Justice Parashar was serving as secretary general of the Supreme Court while Justice Bhardwaj was deputed as the Registrar General of

Delhi High Court. Justices Saxena, Sanjay Sharma and Bhatt were serving as principal district and sessions judges at Rohini, Karkardooma and Rouse Avenue Courts respectively. Justices Nivedita Anil Sharma and Choudhary had retired from the district judiciary and their names were earlier recommended for elevation to the high court. The central government notified the seven new appointments on September 19 after the Supreme Court collegium made a recommendation in favour of these judicial officers.

# 3 Girls Among 6 Minors Drown While Bathing In Pond In Bihar's Bhagalpur

**Bhagalpur (Bihar):** Six children drowned while bathing in a pond in Bihar's Bhagalpur district on Monday, police said. The incident occurred around 10.30 am in the Taraita Bahiyar area under the Sultanganj Police Station limits when the children had gone for a ritual bath on the occasion of the Karma-Dharma festival, a senior officer said. There were three girls among the deceased, he said. The deceased were identified as Pooja Kumari (13), Rahul Kumar (14), Vikas Kumar (13), Ayush Kumar (12), Meenakshi Kumari alias Minki (12) and Jyoti Kumari (14), the police



officer said. "Locals claimed that one of the children waded into deep water and the others tried to rescue him. But all six drowned. The children were taken out of the pond and sent to the Sultanganj Referral Hospital, where doctors declared them dead," he said. Sultanganj

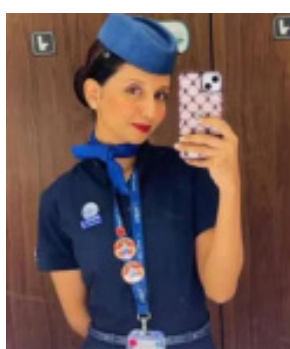
Circle Officer Raman Kumar and Station House Officer Dhananjay Kumar reached the spot and began an investigation. Raman Kumar told reporters that the bereaved families would be provided all possible assistance and compensation would be given as per rules.

# IndiGo Crew Member, Mother Of 8-Year-Old, Dies In Taxi Crash In Mumbai

**Mumbai:** An IndiGo cabin crew member died in a freak road accident while returning from work in a cab in Mumbai. The accident took place on September 18 on the Western Express Highway in Borivali East. Thirty-two-year-old Kainoor Mistry was returning home after finishing her shift in a company-provided cab. The car rammed

into a bridge railing after the driver lost control. Mistry, who was seated in the rear seat, sustained a head injury. She was rushed to hospital where she died during treatment. A resident of Mira Road in Mumbai, Kainoor Mistry is survived by an eight-year-old son. IndiGo had engaged 'Mayuresh Tour and Travels' to provide

transport for its employees. The police have registered a case against the cab driver, Vijay Khose. Initially, a case was registered for rash driving and endangering lives. Following Kainoor Mistry's death, a case of negligence has now been registered under Section 106(1) of the BNS (Bharatiya Nyaya



Sanhita). The police have also issued a notice to the driver. Questions are now



being raised regarding the safety of transport facilities provided to employees.

## Mamdani Calls Netanyahu "Genocide Architect", Then A " Hamas Supporter" Reply'



Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has launched a sharp attack on New York City Mayor Zohran Mamdani, accusing him of supporting Hamas. The exchange marks the latest escalation in a running war of words between the two leaders, days before Netanyahu is due to address the UN General Assembly. Netanyahu's comments came in response to remarks Mamdani made to CNN on Monday, in which he described the Israeli prime minister as a "war criminal and an architect of a horrific genocide of the Palestinian people."

Responding in a brief video statement, Mamdani said, "I'm coming to the UN. I'm going to tell the truth about our heroic soldiers, and I'm going to tell the truth about you (Mamdani)." He is sched-

uled to speak at the UN General Assembly on Thursday.

Netanyahu did not hold back further. "Shame on you, Mr. Mamdani," he said. "Shame on you for supporting the Hamas terrorist monsters who butchered our people. Shame on you for inciting riots against New York Jews."

Mamdani had previously said he would arrest Netanyahu if he entered New York, although he acknowledged he did not actually have the power to do so. Some Republican opponents have called Mamdani antisemitic, pointing to his pro-Palestinian advocacy and his criticism of Israel's military action in Gaza. Mamdani has rejected this characterisation, saying he has condemned antisemitism and that his criticism of Israeli government policy is wrongly

conflated with hatred of Jewish people.

This is not the first time Netanyahu has targeted Mamdani. In a Fox News interview in July, the Israeli prime minister accused the New York mayor of "fomenting hate." He said, "He's supposed to be the mayor of all New Yorkers, Jews, Christians, Muslims, everyone. But he's trying to turn one group against the other."

The clash comes against the backdrop of an ongoing case at the International Criminal Court (ICC), which has charged Netanyahu with war crimes, an accusation he dismisses as "bogus". The Hague-based court has accused Netanyahu, his former defence minister and the late Hamas leader of crimes against humanity.

According to the Palestinian territory's health min-

istry, more than 73,000 people have been killed in Israel's offensive in Gaza, roughly half of them women and children. Around 1,200 people, most of them civilians, were killed in the initial Hamas attack on Israel that triggered the war.

The United States is not a member of the ICC. It signed the treaty that established the court, known as the Rome Statute, in 2000, but never submitted it to the Senate for ratification, and the US formally withdrew its support for the treaty in 2002. As a non-member state, the US is not bound by the court's rulings or obligated to act on its arrest warrants.

President Donald Trump has shown little regard for the ICC's case against Netanyahu, and has previously taken action against the court itself, including sanctions targeting ICC officials over its investigations into Israeli conduct. On Tuesday, during his speech at the United Nations General Assembly, Trump urged members of the International Criminal Court to resign and condemned what he called an "out-of-control institution" and "an evil group of people."

"I call on all nations that are members of the ICC to officially resign from this rogue institution immediately," he said.

## Imran Khan's Party Warns Of 'Civil War' In Pakistan After Leader 'Kidnapped' At Gunpoint



New Delhi: Former Prime Minister Imran Khan's Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) has accused the Shehbaz Sharif government in Islamabad and the Field Marshal Asim Munir-led army of institutional diktat, alleging gunpoint kidnappings and attempts to kidnap its leaders in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), days before the party's planned mega protest.

Pakistan's opposition PTI has called a nationwide protest on September 27, demanding the release of its founder Imran Khan "at all costs." Ahead of the planned protest, police in Lahore have also detained 73-year-old Khan's three sisters, Aleema Khan, Noreen Niazi, and Dr Uzma Khan, along with their children.

### 'The Kidnappings'

Now, PTI has alleged that two of its leaders -- including Minister Fazal Shakoor Khan and former provincial minister Shakil Ahmad -- have become the latest targets of authoritarian descent.

Speaking during a provincial assembly discussion, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assembly Speaker Babar

Saleem Swati alleged that Minister for Public Health Engineering Fazal Shakoor Khan was picked up from the middle of the road by masked men in Peshawar, while an attempt to kidnap Minister Shakeel Khan was foiled in Malakand.

Swati said it was a question mark on the performance of the 'institutions' that masked men were firing at and kidnapping people, according to a Dawn report. He also reportedly accused the police of working as a 'B-team' of 'agencies.'

Fazal Shakoor Khan was reportedly kidnapped by masked men on Monday from Peshawar Motorway Toll Plaza after a brief firing. A video of the purported kidnapping has surfaced on social media, showing unidentified masked men setting up blockades to choke off the main highway.

PTI said the men aimed gunfire directly at the tyres of the minister's vehicle, forcing it to a stop, before forcing him out of the vehicle and taking him away to an undisclosed location. However, other accounts in Pakistani media claimed

the confrontation began after his guards allegedly resisted a police search and opened fire.

Simultaneously, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Minister for Law Aftab Alam Afridi said that local minister Shakeel Khan was also followed and attacked in Malakand.

"His guards retaliated, but an FIR was lodged against him," he added.

"What message do they want to give to the provincial cabinet? It is done by the powers-that-be. They want to give a message to PTI that it has no standing," he alleged, taking aim at the Sharif government and Munir-led army.

### Pak Preparers for 'Humanitarian Crisis'

Authorities in Pakistan have also arrested several elected leaders of PTI and raided party offices in a nationwide crackdown ahead of the September 27 march.

At the same time, Islamabad's hospitals have also been placed on emergency footing. A report by Drop Site showed that the Sharif government has issued instructions before the planned protest, directing hospitals to prepare for a potential "humanitarian

crisis" and "mass casualty incident" in Islamabad.

The measures have reportedly started affecting patients in Islamabad hospitals, who were scheduled for surgeries and were told that their procedures would be postponed.

The instructions to hospitals indicate an institutional preparedness for a brutal crackdown on protesters.

### A Civil War Threat

Despite the crackdown, PTI said it will go ahead with the planned protest. Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Sohail Afridi said the party would announce its detailed protest plan on September 25 and mobilise workers across the country.

Khan, 73, has been in jail since 2023 and is currently lodged at the high-security Adiala Jail in Rawalpindi.

Addressing a press conference in Peshawar, Afridi said arrests of PTI provincial ministers and lawmakers had begun ahead of the protest, prompting an emergency meeting of the party's parliamentary group. The Minister said the party had pursued "all constitutional and democratic avenues" but was being prevented from meeting Khan despite court orders. He said PTI had no intention of confrontation and would pursue its demands through peaceful and democratic means. He also said party workers would not carry weapons during the protest. Afridi also warned that any firing during the protest could lead to retaliation and alleged that the prevailing situation was pushing the country towards 'civil war'.

## World Is Bigger Than 5": After India, Turkey Calls For UN Security Council Reforms

"Ankara:

After India, Turkey has also called for comprehensive reform of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC), including the removal of the veto power held by its five permanent members: China, France, Russia, the United Kingdom, and the United States. In an op-ed for Bloomberg titled "The UN Should Abolish the Security Council Veto," Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan stressed that "the world is bigger than five" and that global decision-making mechanisms must adapt to be "more effective, fair, and accountable."



often using the slogan: "The world is bigger than five," which refers to the UNSC's unrepresentative membership.

Calling for the addition of new privileged members to the Security Council, Erdogan said it is now imperative to translate the need for reform into a concrete roadmap. He said the move would not resolve the problem of decision-making power being concentrated in the hands of a few states; rather, it would expand the scope of the privileged structure.

### 'Abolish Veto Power'

He also called for the abolition of veto privilege. He said the act should be both the starting point and the fundamental strategic objective of any meaningful reform. "Reform cannot mean extending the same privilege to other states," he said.

### 'Greater Role For General Assembly'

The Turkish leader also called for a new balance between the UN Security Council and the General Assembly. He proposed enhancing the powers of the General Assembly and creating a Security Council without permanent members, with council members elected by the General Assembly for fixed terms.

Under the approach outlined by the president, member states seeking another term as UNSC members would have to regain the confidence of a majority of the General Assembly through elections. "Within the General Assembly, a

broad coalition should be built around the principle that no state should have the power to permanently obstruct the will of the majority of the international community," he wrote.

"Representation and accountability of the Security Council before the General Assembly should be enhanced," he added.

### New International Order

Erdogan also argued the international order of the future could not be built by preserving the hierarchies of the past.

"The developments of the last quarter century -- a relatively brief period in world history -- have demonstrated that no balance of power and no international order are permanent. The system that promised humanity peace, stability and shared prosperity has failed to prevent new wars, reduce inequalities or respond to shifting balances of power," he noted. He noted that new centres of power have emerged across fields ranging from the economy and security to technology and diplomacy, while international institutions have failed to adapt to this transformation at the same pace.

Wars, the climate crisis, irregular migration, and economic vulnerabilities have once again underscored the importance of states having strong institutions, resilient economies, and deterrent defence capabilities. The security and sustainability of trade, logistics, transport, and energy corridors have become increasingly decisive, he added.

### 'Asia and Africa Need a Seat at the Table'

The president noted that Asia's economic weight has grown while Africa is also calling for stronger representation commensurate with its potential, with developing countries voicing their own priorities more assertively.

He said the growing influence of certain regional actors has brought greater responsibility to address challenges within their own regions.

"The issues facing each region cannot be resolved through methods imposed from outside. We believe that approaches grounded in the will of the countries concerned, local circumstances, and shared interests will produce more lasting and stable outcomes," he said, calling for nations with the diplomatic capacity, economic resources, and ability to communicate with different sides to assume "more active roles" in promoting peace and stability.

### Failures of Globalisation

Erdogan also addressed economic inequalities across the globe, saying expectations that globalisation would broadly distribute prosperity had not been fully met. "In these changing circumstances, responsibilities must be shared equitably to ensure global justice, while developing countries' right to development and access to the financing they need must be guaranteed. Such a change requires international will on a broad scale," he said.

## "Make Deal Or Quickly Drive Iran Into Hell?" Trump At UN General Assembly

Days after US President Donald Trump told Axios that he is approaching crossroads in the Iran war about whether to restart massive attacks or not, he said that he has a "big decision" to make. While addressing the UN General Assembly on Tuesday, Trump said, "I have a big decision to make. Will a deal be made with Iran that lets them rebuild and create a far greater country than it ever was before, maybe one of the greatest in the Middle East or even the world?," he questioned.

Then added, "Or do I annihilate the Islamic Republic and do it quickly, never giving them a chance to kill and destroy people and countries again?"

However, Trump soon answered his own question and said that the US would make a deal with Iran after the mid-term elections are held on November 3.

"I believe we'll make a deal right after the election because it doesn't make sense for them not to. They're waiting to see how I do in the midterm election," Trump said during his speech.

When the 80-year-old leader started speaking



about the last six months of military strikes against Tehran, the Iranian delegation walked out and only one person remained seated.

Trump defended his ongoing conflict with Iran which has triggered widespread economic disruption after Tehran blocked the Strait of Hormuz and emphasised his "unwavering" commitment to ensure that the Islamic Republic never gets hold of a nuclear weapon.

"As president of the most extraordinary nation in history," Trump said. "I have no interest in leaving dangers to grow for another day. I do not believe in let-

ting problems fester."

Last year, while addressing the General Assembly, Trump had claimed that the US had "demolished" Iran's nuclear capabilities.

### Trump Rejects Claims About US Running Low On Ammunition

Trump also rejected claims that the US is running low on ammunition and said that the US is adding to the stockpiles "faster than ever before."

"The cowards and traitors would love to say the United States is low on ammunition, but that's not true," he said.

"We have more munitions than we could ever possibly think of using, and

we're building them at levels we have never done before. We are adding to our stockpiles faster than ever before-top-of-the-line stuff", he added.

He also claimed that in the near future, massive munitions plants will be opening and that there are 18 in construction at the moment. The high-level general debate is scheduled from September 22 to 26 and on September 28 in New York, featuring global leaders addressing critical international challenges alongside high-level meetings focused on climate action, development, sea-level rise, and pandemic preparedness.

## Pakistan Hospitals Ordered To Prepare For "Mass Casualty" Ahead Of PTI March

Former Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan's three sisters have been detained in Lahore as authorities prepare for a major Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) march in Islamabad on September 27. At the same time, hospitals in the capital have been told to prepare for a possible "mass casualty event" ahead of the planned protest. Aleema Khan, Dr Uzma Khan and Noreen Niazi were detained within 24 hours as part of a crackdown on Khan's family and PTI leaders ahead of the march, which the party says will demand the release of their jailed leader and former prime minister.

The sisters were detained under Pakistan's Maintenance of Public Order (MPO) law, which allows their detention for up to 30 days, according to Drop Site News. Eight members of Khan's family were detained during the crackdown. The children were later released after being held for a few hours, according to Aleema Khan's son Shershah Khan, while the three sisters remain in custody. Shershah Khan said on X that police surrounded the family's home in Lahore. "Our home is under siege. Both ends of our street have been cordoned off, effectively placing our entire family under house arrest," he wrote. The move comes as authorities step up measures against the party and its supporters ahead of the planned protest demanding the release of jailed former Prime Minister Imran Khan. The arrests came as federal health authorities issued instructions to hospitals in Islamabad to prepare for a possible large number of casualties during the September 27 march. Hospitals have been asked to clear beds and prepare their surgical departments for a potential emergency, according to Drop Site News."

# Green, red or brown dot on soap, shampoo: What new packaging rules mean



**New Delhi** :Consumers will now be able to identify whether certain personal care products such as soaps, shampoos and toothpaste are of vegetarian or non-vegetarian origin, with the government making a change to packaging labelling rules.The Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution on Monday notified the Legal Metrology (Packaged Commodities) Fourth Amendment Rules, 2026, introducing a new labelling requirement for soaps, shampoos, toothpaste and other cosmetics and toiletries.

**What has the government changed?**

Under the amended rules, products such as soap, shampoo, toothpaste and other cosmetics and toiletries will have to carry a symbol indicating whether they are made from vegetarian or non-vegetarian ingredients. A green dot will be used for products of vegetarian origin, while a red or brown dot will be used for prod-

ucts of non-vegetarian origin.

Importantly, the symbol has to be placed at the top of the principal display panel of the product's packaging, according to the notification.

**Why is this important?**

The change is relevant for consumers who want to know the origin of ingredients used in personal care and cosmetic products before making a purchase.

Unlike food products, items such as soaps, shampoos and toothpaste are generally used directly on the body but may contain ingredients derived from different sources. The new labelling requirement is aimed at making the relevant information visible on the product's main display panel. The placement requirement is also significant. Instead of the symbol being difficult to find elsewhere on the packaging, the amended rule specifically requires it to appear at the top of the principal display panel.

**How will it affect consumers?**

For consumers, the most visible change will be on the packaging of affected products.

A green dot will indicate vegetarian origin, while a red or brown dot will indicate non-vegetarian origin. This means consumers can check the symbol while buying products such as soaps, shampoos and toothpaste and make their purchase based on the information displayed on the pack.

**PLI scheme**

The Ministry of Food Processing Industries is implementing the Production Linked Incentive Scheme for Food Processing Industry (PLISFPI) with an approved outlay of Rs 10,900 crore for the period from FY 2021-22 to FY 2026-27. The Scheme provides performance-linked incentives on achievement of eligible incremental sales and aims to promote domestic processing and value addition, support creation of

global food manufacturing champions, promote Indian food brands in overseas markets and generate employment opportunities.A total of 163 applications from 127 companies, including 69 Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) are presently covered under the Scheme. The approved projects are spread across 212 locations in 22 States. Incentives amounting to Rs 3,271.44 crore have been disbursed up to June 2026. The Scheme has contributed to expansion of food processing capacity, growth in sales and exports, mobilisation of investment and generation of employment. The investments undertaken under the Scheme have resulted in creation of food processing capacity of 34 lakh metric ton per annum.

Approved applicants under PLISFPI have invested 79,207 crore against committed investment of 77,722 crore and generated approximately 3.35 lakh direct and indirect employment opportunities against the target of 2.50 lakh. Sales of PLI-supported products increased from 758,758 crore in FY 2019-20 to 71,08,854 crore in FY 2025-26.

The Ministry implemented the Mega Food Park Scheme, a component scheme under the umbrella scheme Pradhan Mantri Kisan Sampada Yojana since 2008. The Scheme followed a cluster-based hub-and-spoke approach for creation of primary processing, storage, common pro-

cessing and enabling infrastructure. The Mega Food Park Scheme has been discontinued with effect from 01.04.2021. A total of 41 Mega Food Parks in 25 States have been approved under the Scheme, of which 25 are operational. These projects are expected to create preservation capacity of 28.57 Lakh Metric Ton Per Annum (LMTPA) and processing capacity of 15.41 LMTPA, benefitting approximately 86,881 farmers and generating 1,02,440 direct and indirect employment opportunities.

Under PLISFPI, the Government promotes exports and branding of Indian food products abroad through the Branding and Marketing component. Approved applicants are provided financial incentives at the rate of 50 per cent of eligible expenditure incurred on Branding and Marketing Abroad, subject to a maximum of 3 per cent of sales of food products or Rs 50 crore per year, whichever is less. The PLISFPI also promotes domestic processing and value addition through performance-linked incentives on eligible incremental sales. The investments undertaken by approved applicants have facilitated expansion of processing capacity and adoption of modern processing, packaging and manufacturing technologies. A separate category has also been provided under the Scheme for Small & Medium Enterprises (SMEs) engaged in innovative and organic food products.

## PF claim rejected because bank details do not match? Know the checklist before filing again



**New Delhi** :You have submitted your PF withdrawal request and are waiting for the money to reach your account. Instead, the claim status shows "rejected". If the reason mentioned is related to bank details, filing another claim straight away may not solve the problem. The first thing you should do is find out what went wrong. A PF withdrawal is credited to the bank account linked with the member's UAN. EPFO requires members to link their bank account with the UAN for PF withdrawals to be credited to that account.

So, if your claim has been returned because of a bank-related issue, check the information first and apply again only after making the required correction.

**Start with your account number**

Open your EPFO member account and see which bank account is linked with your UAN.

This is particularly important if you have changed jobs or switched banks over the years. You may be using a new bank account today while an older account is still showing in your PF records. Compare the account number carefully. Do not check only the last few digits. Even one wrong digit can create a problem.

**Is your IFSC correct?**

The account number may be right, but the IFSC also needs attention. This can become an issue when a bank branch is merged, shifted, or its IFSC changes. Someone using details from an old cheque book may not realise that the bank now uses a different code.

Check the IFSC shown in your PF records against the latest details given by your bank.

**Look at how your name appears**

Next, check your name across your records. Suppose the PF account carries your full name, while your bank account has a different spelling or initials. Such differences are worth cor-

recting before you submit another withdrawal request.

Do the same check for your Aadhaar details. Your basic information should be consistent across the records being used for the claim.

**Do not ignore the rejection remark**

Many people see that their PF claim has been rejected and immediately submit a fresh one. That may simply bring the same result.

Instead, read the rejection remark available with the claim status. It can give you an idea of what needs attention. If it points towards the bank account, first correct the bank information and make sure the updated details are showing properly. If another reason has been mentioned, deal with that issue before filing again.Changed your bank? Update it first

If you no longer want to use the bank account linked with your UAN, update the new account before making another claim. The process has become easier than it was earlier. EPFO removed the requirement for employer approval after bank verification for seeding bank account details with UAN. Members changing an already seeded account can submit the new account number and IFSC, with Aadhaar-based authentication. EPFO has also removed the earlier requirement of uploading an image of a cheque leaf or attested bank passbook while filing online claims where the required bank details have already been validated.

**Check everything once before refileing**

Once the correction is made, do one final check. Look at the bank account number, IFSC, your name, and the details available in your EPFO profile. Also check whether the corrected bank information is actually visible in your account before submitting the fresh request.

## Google faces \$463 million EU fine over location data: Regulator flags GDPR violations

**New Delhi** :The Data Protection Commission (DPC) of Ireland has imposed a raft of fines on Google for breaches of the EU privacy rules in how it processed users' location data, including one of 403 million euros, or approximately \$463 million. Google has been using the location data provided by three services - Web & App Activity, Location History and Location Accuracy - from May 2018 until February 2020.

**Why was Google fined?**

The DPC, as Google's main privacy authority in the European Union, determined that Google failed to comply with GDPR's demands for lawful, fair and transparent processing of personal data.

The investigation found that the way that Google uses location data in Web & App Activity and Location History was not lawful or fair. The regulator also found shortcomings in Google's ability to demonstrate compliance with GDPR requirements for Location Accuracy.

Google also didn't fulfill some transparency standards in all three features, the DPC said. It also raised other questions with respect to the duration of location data storage in Web & App Activity and Location History. The regulator has ordered Google to bring its processing practices into compliance within six months, alongside the 403 million euro administrative fine.

**How was users' location data used?**

Google has 3 tools that can collect or process location data differently.

Web & App Activity is a Google Account feature that tracks activity from Google services on the web and in apps. The information may contain details on browsing and searching activity, and location data, depending on the settings.

Google's Location History service is another Google service that tracks the user's location with compatible devices after they choose to use it. It can use location information to identify places visited, activities and routes between locations. This information can be shown on Google Maps by using the Google maps timeline; users will have their own map of where they went. Location Accuracy is different. It's something that Android added to the platform to assist devices in finding their location more accurately than GPS. Users don't need to have a Google Account to use it, and it can make use of more signals to help it pinpoint their location.

**Regulator emphasises privacy risks**

The privacy regulator's position on location data is that while it can be useful to digital services, it can also reveal "highly personal information" on the individuals involved. Location data can be interpreted as to where someone is located and reveal information that is private, said DPC Deputy Commissioner Graham Doyle. The regulator says Google's fault may have led users to have no knowledge of how their location data was being used.

The DPC added that information might also be used to "make inferences" about users' interests or "to influence advertising. The regulator also noted that keeping location data for longer than necessary can add to loss of control that users have over their personal data. The investigation started after consumer complaints

## UPI MDR GST: NPCI clarifies impact on small merchants; check MDR rules



**New Delhi** :The National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) has clarified that the new Merchant Discount Rate (MDR) on select UPI merchant transactions will not impose an additional GST burden on small merchants. The clarification comes after reports suggested that GST on UPI MDR could increase costs for small businesses and make digital payments more expensive. NPCI said these concerns were misplaced and explained how the new MDR and GST mechanism will work.

**UPI MDR: Which transactions will attract the charge?**

Under the new framework, MDR will apply to Person-to-Merchant (P2M) UPI transactions above Rs 2,000. Transactions up to Rs 2,000 will continue to have zero MDR. The new MDR framework is scheduled to come into effect from October 15, 2026. For eligible transactions, the standard MDR has been set at 0.4%, subject to a maximum charge of Rs 300 per transaction. Person-to-Person (P2P) UPI transactions will continue to remain free.

The government has said around 96% of P2M UPI transactions will remain outside the MDR framework.

**GST on UPI MDR:**

**What NPCI said**

NPCI said GST will apply to the MDR amount rather than the entire UPI transaction.

For example, if a merchant receives a Rs 10,000 payment through an eligible UPI transaction, the MDR at 0.4% would be Rs 40. The GST would be calculated on this Rs 40 MDR amount, and not on the Rs 10,000 payment itself.

GST on MDR is reportedly applicable at 18%. Eligible GST-registered merchants can claim input tax credit on the GST paid on such charges, subject to the applicable GST rules.

NPCI said the GST paid on MDR can be adjusted against the GST payable on the merchant's sales, in the same way as other eligible input taxes are set off against output tax liability.

**Small merchants with Rs 1 lakh UPI receipts get zero MDR**

NPCI has also highlighted a separate exemption for small merchants.

Merchants receiving up to Rs 1 lakh per month through UPI under the applicable small-merchant category will not be liable to pay MDR. Therefore, such merchants will not face GST on MDR either. This

provision is aimed at keeping small shops, street vendors and other low-volume businesses outside the MDR framework.

**Will customers have to pay GST or UPI charges?**

The new MDR is a merchant-side charge. Consumers will not be charged MDR for making UPI payments. The Ministry of Finance has also said UPI will remain free for all P2P transactions, irrespective of the amount. Merchant payments up to Rs 2,000 will also remain free, while transactions covered by the zero-MDR framework for small merchants will continue without MDR. Banks and payment ecosystem participants have been advised to ensure that the MDR is not passed on to customers.

**What changes from October 15?**

From October 15, 2026, eligible P2M UPI payments above Rs 2,000 will attract the new MDR. However, the payment itself will not become subject to GST.

Instead, GST applies to the MDR charged on the transaction. For GST-registered merchants eligible for input tax credit, the GST paid on the MDR can be adjusted against their output GST liability.

NPCI said the combination of the Rs 2,000 threshold, the zero-MDR provision for eligible small merchants and the input tax credit mechanism means that concerns about GST creating an additional burden on small merchants are misplaced.

## OnePlus N6 Lite 4G launched at Rs 16,999: 7,000mAh battery, 120Hz display and more



**New Delhi** :OnePlus has introduced a new addition to its N series, dubbed the OnePlus N6 Lite 4G as the new budget-friendly device in India. It has a 6.75-inch HD+ LCD display boasting a 120Hz refresh rate, while it is powered by the Unisoc T7250 chipset. The new smartphone is also equipped with a 7,000mAh battery, with battery power being a significant factor. The OnePlus N6 Lite 4G is powered by 4GB RAM and 64GB inbuilt storage. Other features include a 13-megapixel rear camera, IP64 waterproofing, a 3.5mm headphone jack and 15W wired charging.

**OnePlus N6 Lite 4G Price and availability in India**

OnePlus N6 Lite 4G comes in only one variant and that is with 4GB of RAM and 64GB of storage. The cost of it in India is Rs 16,999.

The smartphone comes in two different colour options, Midnight Hype and Neo Green.

**OnePlus N6 Lite 4G specifications at a glance:**

OnePlus N6 Lite 4G's design and display The OnePlus N6 Lite 4G has a 6.75 inch LCD display with an HD+ resolution of 1570x720 pixels. The screen's refresh rate is 120Hz, allowing for smoother scrolling and animation when compared to the usual 60Hz screens.

The display features a peak HBM brightness of up to 900 nits and 86 per cent coverage of the DCI-P3 colour gamut. The smartphone has an IP64 rat-

ing, which indicates it is water resistant and protected from dust. OnePlus also claims the device is built to military standards (MIL-STD-810H).

**OnePlus N6 Lite 4G processor, RAM, and storage**

Under the hood, the smartphone is powered by the Unisoc T7250 octa-core processor. It has 4GB of physical RAM and can be expanded with virtual RAM up to 8GB. There is 64GB of storage with UFS 2.2 support. The phone also has a 13,700 sq mm heat dissipation area to ensure it remains temperature controlled during long usage.

With the Unisoc processor, 4GB RAM and 64GB of storage, it is a budget option in the smartphone market.

**Camera**

The OnePlus N6 Lite 4G is equipped with an 13-megapixel rear shooter with f/2.2 aperture and AF. The phone's front features a 5MP camera with an f/2.2 aperture. Selfie and video calling are possible using the front camera.

**Battery and charging**

One of the major specs for the smartphone is the 7,000mAh battery. According to OnePlus, the battery will allow users to use it for up to 49.7 hours on a single charge for calling.

The phone comes with 15W wire charging. It also includes 5W wired reverse charging, so that the handset can power compatible devices via a wired connection. The high battery life will appeal to those who want to use it for extended durations without recharging.

## Meesho shares rally 11% after UBS raises target price; 'Buy' rating retained

**New Delhi** :E-commerce Meesho shares rose over 11 per cent on Tuesday after the brokerage UBS maintained its 'Buy' rating and raised its target price. The scrip stood at Rs 239 per share at 1:00 PM, trading 9 per cent higher. The intraday's high stood at Rs 244.74 per share, against the previous day's close at Rs 219.15 per share. For year-to-date, shares of Meesho have given a return of over 31 per cent to investors.

UBS has maintained its 'Buy' rating on Meesho and raised its target price to Rs 260 from Rs 210, citing stronger growth prospects and an improving margin outlook.

The brokerage has raised its FY29-31 NMV estimates by 7-18%, with a similar increase in contribution profit estimates. Its EBITDA estimates have been raised by 20-40%, reflecting expectations of stronger medium-term margins.

**Seller and buyer growth supports NMV**

UBS said the higher NMV estimates are supported by continued growth in Meesho's seller and buyer base, along with a rapid expansion in SKUs and logistics partners. The number of sellers rose 81% year-on-year to 1.04 million in Q1 FY27, while buyers increased 29% to 274 million, according to the brokerage.

**Advertising, logistics to improve margins**

The larger increase in EBITDA estimates reflects UBS' expectation of a stronger medium-term margin trajectory.

The brokerage expects improving advertising monetisation and better logistics economics to support Meesho's profitability going ahead.

**Meesho Q1FY27 Results**

The e-commerce platform reported higher revenue and a sharp reduction in losses for the June quarter. Revenue from operations rose 48 per cent year-on-year to Rs 3,712.8 crore, while consolidated net loss narrowed 54 per cent to Rs 132.8 crore from Rs 289.4 crore in the year-ago period.

# Vice-President Inaugurates 9th India International Water Week 2026

- Vice-President C. P. Radhakrishnan Calls for Collective Action and Innovation to Build a Water-Secure and Climate-Resilient India  
- Union Jal Shakti Minister C R Patil Emphasises Cooperation and Jan Bhagidari for Water Security



**New Delhi, Sept., 23 (PIB):** The Hon'ble Vice-President of India Shri C. P. Radhakrishnan inaugurated the 9th India International Water Week (IIWW) 2026 at Bharat Mandapam, New Delhi, today in the presence of Union Minister of Jal Shakti, Shri C R Patil, Ministers of State for Jal Shakti Shri V. Somanna and Shri Raj Bhushan Choudhary. Secretary, Department of Drinking Water and Sanitation Shri Ashok K.K. Meena, Secretary, Department of Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation Smt. Archana Verma, and Chairman, Central Water Commission Shri Anupam Prasad and representatives

from India and abroad, Ambassadors, global water leaders, senior officials, representatives of international organisations, experts, researchers, industry, innovators and other stakeholders were also present. Organised by the Ministry of Jal Shakti, Government of India, from 22 to 26 September 2026, the five-day event is being held on the theme "Climate Resilient Water Management." The ninth edition marks an important milestone as the event, organised in its earlier editions as India Water Week, has evolved into India International Water Week, reflecting its growing global engagement and the increas-

ing importance of international cooperation in addressing shared water challenges. The Netherlands and Germany are participating as partner Countries, along with 14 States as partner States and two Central Ministries as partner Ministries. The event brings together governments, international and multilateral organisations, research and academic institutions, industry, civil society, start-ups, innovators and young professionals. It provides a comprehensive platform for policy dialogue, technology demonstration, knowledge exchange, networking, business tie-ups and new collaborations.

Addressing the inaugural session, the Vice-President emphasised the growing challenges to water security posed by climate change, urbanisation and increasing pressure on natural resources. He called for integrated and sustainable management of water through innovation, efficiency and collective action. He underscored the critical role of interlinking of rivers in addressing spatial and temporal variations in water availability. He appreciated the various interventions undertaken by the Ministry of Jal Shakti and applauded the achievements made. Recalling his tenure as Governor of Jharkhand, the Vice-Presi-

dent noted that rural tap water coverage in the State rose from about 7% to 37% under Jal Jeevan Mission. He described the Mission as a transformative programme that has significantly expanded access to potable drinking water in rural households. He also highlighted the significance of cooperative arrangements among States for sharing and management of interstate river waters. He called upon the participants to use IIWW 2026 to exchange knowledge, strengthen partnerships and translate deliberations into concrete action. He also launched two important publications, namely, "Sustainable Urban River Management Framework" and "AI and ML Driven Integrated Reservoir Sediment Management." Union Minister of Jal Shakti, Shri C R Patil, said that water security and climate resilience must go hand in hand, as many of the impacts of climate change are increasingly being experienced through water. He highlighted India's Water Vision@2047 and major interventions including Pradhan

Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana, Jal Jeevan Mission, Jal Sanchay Jan Bhagidari, Namami Gange, Atal Bhujal Yojana, NAQUIM, the Ken-Betwa Link Project, Dam Rehabilitation and Improvement Project and the National Hydrology Project. The minister added that Jan Bhagidari is our biggest strength where we learn from each other and share experiences to advance water management. He underlined the transformative potential of research and development, Artificial Intelligence, Machine Learning, remote sensing, GIS, real-time sensors and advanced modelling, while stressing that technology must work together with strong institutions, local knowledge and community participation. Welcoming the participants, Smt. Archana Verma, Secretary, Department of Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation, said that IIWW has evolved into an important multidisciplinary global platform for dialogue, knowledge sharing, technology demonstration and partnerships.

## Corporate Social Responsibility in Coal India Limited: A Journey from Community Welfare to Inclusive Growth

**New Delhi, Sept., 23 (PIB):** For a company whose operations touch some of the most resource-poor and tribal-dominated districts of India, the idea of giving back to the community is not new to Coal India Limited (CIL). Long before the Companies Act, 2013 made Corporate Social Responsibility a legal obligation for corporate India, CIL and its subsidiaries were already engaged in welfare activities in and around their mining areas under the Community Development (CD) Policy, 2005. Under this earlier CD regime, subsidiaries supported villages within an 8 km radius of mining operations through drinking water facilities, health camps, and small infrastructure works — meaningful interventions that fostered harmony with peripheral communities. In the three years leading up to the Act (FY 2011-12 to 2013-14), CIL's consolidated CD spend varied from Rs. 82 cr. (FY 2011-12) to Rs. 409 cr. (FY

2013-14). The work being done was genuine and appreciated on the ground; what it lacked was a consistent, institutionalised framework to sustain and scale it year on year. The Companies Act, 2013 and Section 135 changed this fundamentally. Companies were now required to spend a statutorily defined share of their average net profits on CSR, guided by Schedule VII themes and monitored by a Board-level CSR Committee. CIL built on this with its own policy architecture: at least 80% of annual CSR expenditure within a 25 km radius of mines and establishments, prioritising Project Affected Areas, with the balance for state and national initiatives. As a natural consequence of this local-area focus, more than 90% of CIL's CSR expenditure continues to be incurred within coal-bearing states — keeping the benefit anchored where the impact of mining is felt most directly. The results are visible in the num-

bers. CIL has not merely met its statutory obligation — it has exceeded it consistently, year after year. Cumulatively, from FY 2014-15 to FY 2025-26, CIL has spent Rs. 7,276 crore against a statutory requirement of Rs. 5,795 crore. What is more striking is the trajectory within this: annual expenditure, once closer to Rs. 500 cr., the yearly outlay now touches almost Rs. 1,000 crore — placing CIL among the largest corporate CSR spenders in the country. This growth in scale has been matched by a growth in purpose, with CIL's CSR converging deliberately with national missions. It was the number one CPSE contributor to the Swachh Vidyalaya Abhiyan, completing over 50,000 toilets in government schools; it was among the earliest major contributors to the PM-CARES Fund and ran an extensive COVID-19 relief programme, from dedicated hospitals in Odisha and Chhattisgarh to oxygen plants under "Mission

Praana Vayu." Flagship interventions have given the programme a distinct identity of its own — the NIRMAN scheme rewarding more than 1,300 UPSC aspirants from mining districts, the Thalassemia Bal Sewa Yojana enabling more than 1,000 life-saving bone marrow transplants, Nanha Sa Dil screening over 2 lakh children and curing over 1,700 of congenital heart disease, and the Scholarship Schemes with the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India reaching over 2,500 children. This has been matched by major healthcare and education infrastructure such as a 500-bed medical college and hospital at Angul and a cardiac care centre at Jharsuguda, together worth Rs. 596 crore, now serve as tertiary-care hubs for their respective regions, while Digital Vidya has commissioned over 2,300 smart classrooms and 500 ICT/STEM labs in government schools, alongside a 5,000-seater state library under

construction in Ranchi. The reach extends well beyond health and education. Skilling and livelihood programmes — including Project PRAGATI, tribal women's poultry support, and plastic engineering and multi-skill training — have benefited more than 48,000 people over the last four financial years alone. The Khelgaon Sports Academy, run in partnership with the Government of Jharkhand, has produced over 1,800 medals, including 15 at the international level; and landmark public-interest works — from the centenary building at IIT (ISM) Dhanbad to the illumination of Kolkata's Howrah Bridge — have carried CIL's CSR footprint into premier institutions and national landmarks alike. Taken together, these efforts have touched an estimated 3.56 crore lives, directly and indirectly — with vulnerable groups including SC/ST communities, persons with disabilities, and women forming a significant share of the beneficiaries. This work has

also meaningfully advanced India's own SDG commitments — health (SDG-3), education (SDG-4), gender equality (SDG-5), clean water and sanitation (SDG-6), and poverty alleviation (SDG-1). None of this has happened by accident. CIL's CSR is governed by a structured output-outcome methodology — Annual Action Plans shaped by community needs, MoUs with defined deliverables and timelines, phase-wise fund release tied to milestones and Utilisation Certificates, and Impact Assessment Guidelines that make third-party evaluation mandatory for larger projects, layered atop internal, statutory, and CAG audit oversight. This architecture is now being strengthened at a sectoral level: on 8th September, the Ministry of Coal became the first Ministry of the Government of India to launch a sector-wide CSR framework, aimed at bringing greater consistency, convergence, and accountability to CSR efforts across the coal PSUs.

## NHAI Signs MoU with SSNNL to Simplify Approval Framework for National Highway and Irrigation Infrastructure Projects in Gujarat



**New Delhi, Sept., 23 (PIB):** To strengthen inter-agency coordination and expedite infrastructure development, National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) and Sardar Sarovar Narmada Nigam Limited (SSNNL) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to establish a simplified and time-bound framework for granting approvals for National Highway, canal and pipeline crossings across the State of Gujarat. The MoU aims to

strengthen inter-departmental coordination, facilitate faster approvals and ensure seamless execution of National Highway and Irrigation infrastructure projects. The MoU was signed by Regional Officer-Gandhinagar, NHAI and Chief Engineer (QC, Tech. & CPC), SSNNL in presence of Directors from SSNNL and other officials at Gandhinagar, Gujarat. A key feature of the MoU is mutual waiver of various fees, charges and other levies by

NHAI and SSNNL for all National Highway, canal and pipeline crossings covered under the agreement. This provision will help in reducing project costs, eliminate avoidable procedural bottlenecks and optimize the utilization of public funds to accelerate the pace of infrastructure development. The MoU also lays down a framework for early sharing of project information, adoption of standardized engineering practices as well as clearly defined re-

sponsibilities for the construction and maintenance of crossing structures. These measures will facilitate better project planning and ensure adherence to high standards of quality and operational efficiency. The MoU marks a significant milestone in promoting integrated infrastructure planning in Gujarat by fostering closer coordination between NHAI and SSNNL. The collaborative framework will accelerate the implementation of both National Highways and irrigation infrastructure projects in Gujarat, while improving efficiency, implementation timelines and reducing overall financial implication associated with project execution. By enabling faster approvals and strengthening coordination, the MoU reinforces NHAI's commitment to develop world-class infrastructure that not only enhances connectivity but also supports economic growth.

## TRAI Assesses Mobile Network Quality on Gandhidham to Santhalpur National Highway (NH-27) in Gujarat LSA

**New Delhi, Sept., 23 (PIB):** The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) has released findings of Independent Drive Test (IDT) conducted on Gandhidham to Santhalpur National Highway (NH-27) in Gujarat LSA, during the month of July 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). During the IDT, TRAI captures performance of TSPs for key Quality of Service (QoS) parameters like Coverage, Call Drop Rate (CDR), Call Setup Success Rate (CSSR), data Download (DL) and Upload (UL) throughput etc., which are then 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. In this type of drive testing, live data and voice sessions are established using SIM cards from all TSPs over 2G, 3G, 4G, and 5G networks. Multiple advanced test handsets are used, and the sessions are monitored and analysed in real-time using advanced Software Systems. TRAI, through its appointed agency, conducted drive test from Gandhidham to Santhalpur National Highway (NH-27) on 1st July 2026, covering 149.1 KMs (Gujarat LSA). This test was conducted under the supervision of the TRAI Regional Office Jaipur. 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.

## Assam's Living Traditions and Cultural Legacy Features in PM Mementos e-Auction 2026

*Assamese handlooms, bamboo and cane crafts, brassware and heritage artworks showcase the State's distinctive cultural traditions*

**New Delhi, Sept., 23 (PIB):** Assam's rich cultural traditions and heritage find a distinctive representation in the 8th edition of the PM Mementos e-Auction 2026, with a collection of mementos showcasing the State's renowned handloom traditions, bamboo and cane craftsmanship, metalwork, traditional art and heritage architecture. The Assam collection brings together objects that reflect both the everyday craftsmanship and the deeper cultural memory of the State. Alongside traditional crafts and artworks, the collection features mementos associated with important historical personalities, cultural institutions and significant moments in Assam's history. These mementos offer a glimpse into the skills, traditions and cultural practices that have been passed down through generations and continue to form an important part of Assam's cultural identity. The collection also includes representations of Assam's heritage and cultural institutions, bringing together material traditions with the State's historical and spiritual legacy. Among the notable mementos are artworks and commemorative pieces associated with Bir Chilarai, Bharat Ratna awardee Lokpriya Gopinath Bordoloi, Swargadeo Chaolung Sukapha and Mahapurush Srimanta Sankardeva. The collection also includes a representation of the 1894 Patharughat Battle, recalling an important chapter in Assam's history, along with representations of Bordua Satra and Swahid Smarak Khetra & Park.

The Assam mementos form part of the larger collection of 1,498 mementos offered in the 8th edition of the PM Mementos e-Auction. The auction provides citizens, collectors, institutions, corporates and art and culture enthusiasts an opportunity to acquire mementos presented to the Prime Minister on various occasions. An accompanying exhibition at the National Gallery of Modern Art (NGMA), New Delhi, enables visitors to view the mementos and appreciate their artistic and cultural significance. The PM Mementos e-Auction is organised by the Ministry of Culture through the National Gallery of Modern Art (NGMA), New Delhi. The funds raised through the auction are donated to the Namami Gange Programme, a national mission for the conservation and rejuvenation of the River Ganga. The PM Mementos e-Auction 2026 is being conducted through the official portal: <https://pmmementos.gov.in/#/>

## Department of Food and Public Distribution starts 'Swachhata Hi Seva-2026' campaign

*Campaign focuses on behavioural and cultural transformation under the theme 'Swachhata Mein Sahbhag, Swachh Bharat, Viksit Bharat'*



**New Delhi, Sept., 23 (PIB):** The Department of Food and Public Distribution (DFPD), Government of India, along with its Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs), attached and subordinate offices, has commenced the 'Swachhata Hi Seva-2026' campaign across the country. The campaign is being undertaken in accordance with the guidelines of the Department of Urban Development and the Department of Drinking Water and Sanitation, with a focus on cleanliness and sanitation. The campaign, being observed under the theme 'Swachhata Mein Sahbhag, Swachh Bharat, Viksit Bharat', seeks to promote behavioural and cultural transformation and encourage greater participation of citizens and stakeholders in cleanliness initiatives.

Shri Sanjeev Chopra, Secretary, Department of Food and Public Distribution, administered the Swachhata pledge to officials of the Department on 17 September 2026 at Krishi Bhawan, New Delhi. The pledge was followed by a cleanliness drive in the premises. Officials of DFPD participated in a slogan competition on Swachhata. The Department also organised a workshop for Safai Mitras, focusing on their wellbeing, health and social security, which constitute one of the six pillars of the Swachhata Hi Seva-2026 campaign. During the workshop, Safai Mitras were informed about the activities planned for them during the campaign and various social welfare schemes of the Government of India and the benefits available under these schemes. The Central Warehousing Corporation (CWC) organised a cleanliness and beautification drive at Mayur Vihar, Delhi, on 19 and 20 September 2026. A painting competition was also organised at Veer Chand Singh Garhwali Sarvodaya Bal Vidyalaya on 18 September 2026. The Indian Grain Storage Management and Research Institute (IGMRI) and its field stations undertook several activities as part of the campaign. IGMRI Field Station, Ludhiana, administered the Swachhata pledge followed by a cleanliness drive on the campus on 17 September 2026. IGMRI Field Station, Hyderabad, organised an art competition at a nearby Government school, with prizes distributed to selected students. The Food Corporation of India (FCI) commenced the campaign on 17 September 2026 across its Headquarters, Regional and District Offices and depots with the administration of the Swachhata pledge and display of campaign banners. As part of the campaign, a comprehensive health check-up camp was organised on 18 September 2026 at FCI Headquarters, New Delhi, and various FCI offices and depots for Safai Mitras and their families..

# Sukumar's Assistant + Rathnavelu's Assistant = The Paradise

The Paradise will be shown to audiences in the next few hours. Starring Nani and Kayadu Lohar in the lead roles, Srikanth Odela directs the film. The movie is releasing without a trailer, but it already has solid buzz. The team is busy with promotions, and one interesting aspect of the film is the special attention it is receiving. The film's director, Srikanth, is a former assistant to director Sukumar, while the film's DOP, Ch Sai, is a former's assistant to Sukumar's long-time DOP, Rathnavelu.

Sukumar is known for making movies in collaboration with cinematographer Rathnavelu. On any given day, Sukumar's first choice is Rathnavelu, and he prefers him for his production ventures wherever possible. The director-DOP combination has delivered blockbusters over the decades. Now, The Paradise features the best combination of the director's assistant and the DOP's assistant.

Everyone eagerly waiting for The Paradise is talking about the visuals. The entire cast and crew heaped praise on Sai, who has done a brilliant job. Although Sai wasn't the first choice for the film, he has done an amazing job since taking over the project, as the visuals



we've seen so far make clear.

Sai debuted in Tamil as cinematographer on Kamal Haasan's production, Amaran, starring Siva Karthikeyan and Sai Pallavi. Later, he did Now, The Paradise, which marked his Telugu debut, where he translated Srikanth's vision through his lens. Earlier, Sai worked on an independent Telugu film titled Tatva.

As Sukumar's assistant,

Srikanth made a name for himself and proved his worth with Dasara. Now, with The Paradise, he is on his way to make his mark in Telugu cinema by going raw and rustic to portray a region's emotions in an uncompromised manner. A director's fuel is his DOP, and the fight masters Ram-Lakshman duo also revealed during the pre-release event

that Sai worked like a director on the film. With both passionate people driving the film forward, the film is already teasing with the few glimpses we got to see.

If the film becomes a big blockbuster, Srikanth could become a star director, and Sai will undoubtedly become the primary choice for many star heroes and big-budget flicks in Telugu.

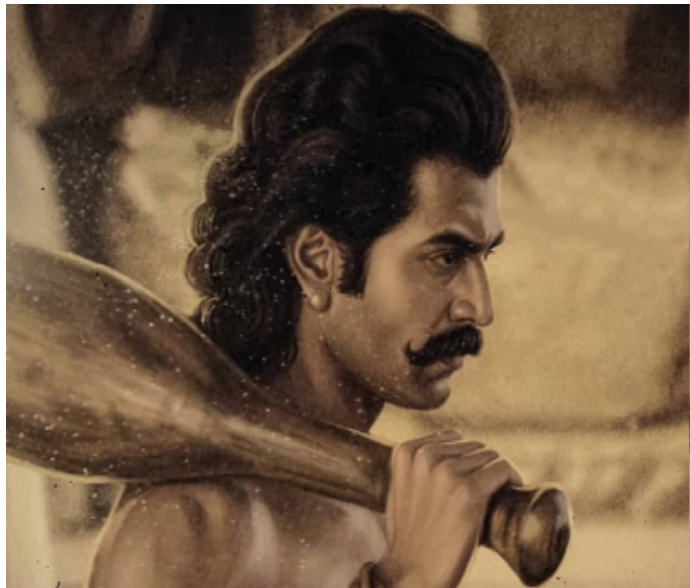
# Couple Friendly Girl Comes On Board For George Krish



Charming Star Sharwa who is riding high with consecutive hits is presently starring in an out-and-out family entertainer George Krish, being helmed by Sreenu Vaitla and produced by Anil Sunkara. Meanwhile, Manasa Varanasi has been confirmed as the heroine. Manasa, who tasted success with her recent film Couple Friendly, will be seen sharing the screen with Sharwa in this first-time collaboration between the actor and director Sreenu Vaitla. Interestingly, the title poster released earlier had already dropped a subtle clue about the prominence of the love story. The makers are keeping the promotional momentum going by announcing that the First Booster will be unveiled tomorrow. KV Guhan handles cinematography and Anup Rubens composes the music. The movie is scheduled to reach theatres worldwide on January 14, 2027, targeting the Sankranti festive window.

# No Breaks — Busy Shoots for Vijay Deverakonda

Vijay Deverakonda isn't slowing down. The star has officially completed shooting and dubbing for Ranabaali and has already joined the sets of Rowdy Janardhana in Mangaluru without taking a break. The actor is currently balancing two of the biggest pan-India projects of his career with remarkable speed and dedication. Ranabaali, directed by Rahul Sankrityan, reunites Vijay with the filmmaker after Taxiwaala. The ambitious historical action drama features Rashmika Mandanna alongside Vijay, while Hollywood actor Arnold Vosloo makes his Indian cinema debut in a key role. Produced by Mythri Movie Makers and presented by T-Series, the film is arriving in theatres worldwide on October 16. As soon as Ranabaali was wrapped, Vijay shifted to Mangaluru for Rowdy Janardhana. The ongoing schedule features a massive action sequence, and the actor is expected to complete the film's remaining shoot in one uninterrupted stretch, showcasing his relentless work ethic. With Ranabaali ready for release and Rowdy Janardhana progressing at full pace, Vijay Deverakonda is currently leading one of the busiest production schedules among Telugu stars. The actor is fully focused on delivering two large-scale theatrical entertainers back-to-back.



# From Babu Ready To Babu Packup: 20 Months For Varanasi



January 24, 2025, Mahesh Babu started his journey with Varanasi and the excitement around the Rajamouli project has only grown since then. After a dedicated schedule, the Superstar has now reached an important stage. Yesterday, September 22, Mahesh wrapped up his part of the shoot for Varanasi. Superstar has spent a considerable amount of time on this highly ambitious project, making Varanasi one of the most awaited films in his career. His portions being wrapped is now a major milestone for the team. Rajamouli is simultaneously moving ahead with the remaining shoot and extensive post production work. The film is expected to enter the final phase soon, with the team targeting the announced April 7, 2027 release. For Mahesh Babu, it is finally a wrap for this phase after months of intense work. The next big wait is for the audience to see what Rajamouli has created with Mahesh in this ambitious world. From Babu being ready on January 24, 2025, to finally saying packup on September 22, 2026, the journey has been a long one. Now, all eyes are on the next big update from Varanasi.

# IVANA PROVES SIMPLICITY IS STILL PURE CLASS

Tamil beauty Ivana, who won a big surge of attention with her cameo as Harini in Dragon last year, kept things low-key on the film front after that, her only outing in 2025 was the Telugu debut #Single, also playing a character named Harini. Now she's gearing up for her next big Tamil release, Jolliya Iruntha Oruthan, a comedy entertainer directed by M Rajesh and starring Jiiva in the lead. The film wrapped shooting earlier this year and its first look and teaser have already dropped, with the makers promising full jolly mode. And while fans wait on Jolliya Iruntha Oruthan, Ivana just gave them something else to talk about, a fresh set of pictures in a powder-pink and sage-green kanjivaram saree, styled with a floral brocade blouse and a full spread of temple jewellery: a layered stone necklace, jhumkas, a floral gajra tucked into her bun, and bangles stacked on both wrists. Simple pose, big smile, classic South-glam.



# Salman Khan's Body Boosts Bigg Boss Views

Bigg Boss 20 Hindi has started on a sensational note, setting new viewership records and becoming one of the biggest television events in recent times. Hosted by Salman Khan, the latest season has grabbed attention with its high-voltage drama and entertaining contestants. As per the update, the latest episode recorded an impressive 21 million views, surpassing the viewership numbers of several major cricket broadcasts. This highlights the immense popularity of Salman Khan and his unmatched appeal among television audiences. One of the biggest talking points was of Salman Khan's angry shirtless moment lecturing the trolls, which generated huge buzz on social media, with clips and discussions going viral within hours.

The strong opening has once again proven that Bigg Boss



remains one of India's most powerful entertainment brands. Salman is known for his aggressive hosting and the way he slammed all his trolls, supported the likes of Katrina Kaif, and made a statement, generated terrific views. Salman Khan has been associated with the

franchise for over a decade and is making a whopping Rs 120 crore with this new season. With the season off to a flying start, expectations are now even higher. On the other hand, the Telugu Bigg Boss 10 has started on a dull note with not much happening in terms of masala.

# Rashmika Turns Midnight Into A Silhouette

Rashmika Mandanna went full drama in a floor-length black gown by Anamika Khanna, the kind of dress that looks quiet till you get close, then you notice it's covered top to bottom in intricate embroidery and sequin work. High structured neckline, sleeveless cut, fitted through the bodice and hips before flaring out into a sleek column silhouette with a slit at the ankle. The waist is where it gets interesting, a burst of Swarovski crystals sitting like a broken belt across one side, the only "loud" moment in an otherwise all-black look. Smart styling, honestly, because it draws the eye without fighting the embroidery.

Hair was left loose and wind-swept, makeup stayed soft, bronzy, sun-kissed, barely-there, letting the dress do the talking. One arm up, hand in her hair, big statement crystal ring catching the light. Pointed-toe black heels rounded it off. On the workfront, she is next coming up with Ranabaali. The first single from Period Drama has been released and impressed the audience.

