



Su-30MKI and
Rafale Jets
Begin Joint
Missions

P8



India and Japan
explore major
energy partnership
in Tokyo

P9

P10

Pooja Hegde
shines again
with strong
comeback



45 T'gana pilgrims charred to death in Saudi

The deceased, including 20 women and 11 children, At least 45 people, including 10 children, were on an Umrah pilgrimage to Saudi Arabia

HYDERABAD

At least 45 Indian Umrah pilgrims, all from Telangana's Hyderabad, were charred to death after a passenger bus carrying devotees from Mecca to Madinah caught fire after colliding with a diesel tanker in Saudi Arabia early on Monday morning.

Immigration officials in Hyderabad confirmed that most of the victims, including 20 women and 11 children, were from the city.

The devastating accident occurred around 1:30 am IST at Al Mufrihat, about 160 km from Madinah, on a wide road prone to high-speed traffic. Most the pilgrims were asleep at the time, worsening the impact of the tragedy. After performing 'Umrah' (mini pilgrimage) in Mecca, the pilgrims left for Medina on Sunday night. When the bus was about 25 km away from Medina, it caught fire after colliding with an oil tanker, according to officials.

Saudi Civil Defence and police rushed to the site soon after the accident. Indian officials and Umrah agency representatives too reached the spot to assist in recovery and coordinate information for families back home, as per official sources.

A pilgrimage that turned into a nightmare

The group of 54 pilgrims had travelled from Hyderabad to Jeddah on November 9 to perform Umrah. After spending a week in Mecca, 46 of them boarded a bus to Medina, scheduled to stay there till November 22. Just 25 km before reaching Medina, their vehicle collided with an oil tanker, resulting in a massive fire and catastrophic loss of life.

Of the 54, four people travelled separately by car to Madina on Sunday, while another four stayed back in Mecca. All of them were supposed to return to Hyderabad on November 23.

Telangana announces Rs 5 lakh compensation

The Telangana government has announced a compensation of Rs 5 lakh each to the kin of Umrah pilgrims from the state who died in Saudi.

The decision was taken at a state cabinet meeting chaired by Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy on Monday.

It was also decided to send a government delegation, headed by Minister for Minorities Welfare Mohammed Azharuddin, to Saudi Arabia. The delegation will also include an MLA of All India Majlis-e-Ittehadul Muslimeen (AIMIM) and a senior official of the minorities welfare department.

Last rites in Saudi

The meeting has also decided to perform the last rites of the deceased as per their religious traditions in Saudi, and to send at least two kin of each deceased to Saudi.

'16 from Bazarghat of Hyderabad'

Telangana IT Minister D Sri-dhar Babu told reporters that of the victims, at least 16 are from Bazarghat area in Mal-lepalli of Hyderabad. Most of the pilgrims were from Asif Nagar, Jhirra, Mehdiptnam and Toli Chowki areas of Hyderabad.

The Embassy in Riyadh and the Consulate in Jeddah are coordinating with the Saudi Haj and Umrah Ministry, local authorities, and the relevant Umrah operators.



Tragedy at a glance

54

Total pilgrims from Hyderabad

46

Passengers on the ill-fated bus

45

Casualties

1

Survivor

Families worst affected: Musheerabad, Karwan, Nampally

Cause: Collision with diesel tanker, triggering massive fire

Location: 25 km before Medina

Purpose of travel: Umrah pilgrimage

Lone survivor battles for life

A 24-year-old resident of Asifnagar in Hyderabad has reportedly emerged as the sole survivor of the tragic bus accident near Madinah that claimed the lives of 42 Umrah pilgrims early Monday. According to sources, Mohammed Abdul Shoeb remains in critical care at a hospital in Madinah.



Hyderabad-based family loses 18 members of 3 generations, including 9 children

A Hyderabad-based family lost 18 members, including nine children, in a horrific bus accident that claimed the lives of 45 Indian Haj pilgrims near Medina in Saudi Arabia. According to reports, the family, spread across three generations, had travelled for Umrah and was scheduled to return home on Saturday. According to their relative, they had completed the pilgrimage and were on their way back to Medina when tragedy struck late at night.

Families back home grief-stricken

Back home, several families in Hyderabad are struggling to come to terms with the devastating news. One family from Ramnagar, Musheerabad, tragically lost 18 members in the accident. Another family lost five relatives. Emotional scenes unfolded as relatives gathered, desperate for official confirmation. Telangana Minister Mohammad Azharuddin personally met with the grieving families, assuring them that the government would extend full support.



Deeply saddened by the accident in Madinah involving Indian nationals. My thoughts are with the families who have lost their loved ones. I pray for the swift recovery of all those injured. Our Embassy in Riyadh and Consulate in Jeddah are providing all possible assistance. Our officials are also in close contact with Saudi Arabian authorities.

—Narendra Modi, Prime Minister

24x7 control room

Jeddah

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Ch. Chakravarthi, PRO: +91 99583 22143

Rakshith Nail, Liaison Officer: +91 96437 23157

'Entire family wiped out'

Mohammed Asif said 18 members of his extended family had been killed. "My sister-in-law, brother-in-law, their son, three daughters and their children went for Umrah. They were supposed to return on Saturday.

NIA arrests 2nd aide of Delhi blast perpetrator from Kashmir

NEW DELHI

In another significant breakthrough in the Delhi car bombing case, the National Investigation Agency (NIA) on Monday said to have arrested another key associate of the terrorist involved in the blast who had allegedly "provided technical support for carrying out terror attacks by modifying drones and attempting to make rockets" ahead of the terror attack.

Jasir Bilal Wani alias Danish, also a Kashmiri resident, was arrested from Srinagar in Jammu and Kashmir by an NIA team that was in the Valley in the case.

In a statement, the NIA said its investigations have revealed that "Jasir had allegedly provided technical support for carrying out terror attacks by modifying drones and attempting to make rockets ahead of the deadly car bomb blast which killed 15 persons and left over 30 persons injured."

As per the NIA, Jasir, a resident of Qazigund in Anantnag district of Jammu and Kashmir, was an active co-conspirator behind the attack and had worked closely with the terrorist, Umar un Nabi, to plan the terror carnage that was executed them at around 7 pm on November 10 near the iconic Red Fort.



Inauguration Today at 10:00 AM

GUESTS OF HONOUR

H.E. Mr. Jan Christian Vestre

Minister of Health and Care Services, Norway

H.E. Ms. Ilse Aigner

President of the Bavarian State Parliament, Germany

H.E. Mr. Rafal Rosinski

Deputy Minister, Digital Affairs, Poland

Lord Mayor Nicholas Reece

Lord Mayor of Melbourne, Australia

TECH SUMMIT HIGHLIGHTS

Business Expo

Awards & Quizzes

Multitrack Conference

Startup Pitches & Product Launches

FUTURE MAKERS CONCLAVE



GLOBAL INNOVATION ALLIANCE PARTNERS



ATTEND CONFERENCE VISIT EXPO

Protecting public property and renouncing violence is a constitutional fundamental duty of every Indian citizen

CMofKarnataka https://dipr.karnataka.gov.in/

karnataka information



QUICK READ

Work Pressure : Election Official's Sudden Death Sparks Concern

Kasaragod

A booth-level officer (BLO) involved in the three-tier panchayat election voter list revision was found dead at his home in Ettukudukka, near Payyannur, on Sunday. Aneesh George, 45, was found hanging inside his house, with his family citing work pressure as a possible reason. The police are treating the case as a suspected suicide, with initial investigations suggesting that George was under severe stress related to his election duties. The chief election officer has submitted a report on the incident to the district collector. A team led by Payyannur DySP K. Vinod Kumar is investigating the matter, as authorities seek to understand the circumstances surrounding George's untimely death.

Tragic Accident Claims 12-year-old Boy

Belthangady

A 12-year-old boy was tragically killed and five others injured when an autorickshaw overturned in Hakkila here on November 16. The victim, Tanvith, was on his way to Shree Kshetra Dharmasthala for the Laksha Deepotsava with his family and friends when the accident occurred. The autorickshaw, driven by Shashi of Navoor, lost control, leading to the fatal crash. Tanvith, son of Ganesh, succumbed to his injuries while being taken to a private hospital. The five injured passengers were admitted to a nearby hospital for treatment. The Belthangady traffic police are investigating the incident. This is not the first time an autorickshaw has been involved in a serious accident in the area. In April 2025, an autorickshaw overturned near Ujire, leaving the driver seriously injured.

Roads in Shambles: UK District Suffers from Poor Infrastructure

The Uttara Kannada district administration has blamed the heavy rains for the poor state of the roads, but the locals are not buying it

KARWAR

The district of Uttara Kannada is reeling under the weight of its poor road infrastructure, with residents and tourists alike crying out for relief. The roads, which are in a deplorable state, have become a major concern for the people, with many areas witnessing frequent protests and demonstrations.

The district headquarters, Karwar, is no exception, with the Karwar-Kaiga road being one of the worst affected. Despite numerous complaints and protests, the authorities have failed to take concrete action to repair the roads. The rural areas are equally affected, with many roads being reduced to dust bowls, making it difficult for vehicles to navigate.

The situation is no better in other parts of the district, with the Gokarna-Dandeli route, a popular tourist destination,



being plagued by potholes and uneven surfaces. The roads in Shirsi, Haliyal, and Yellapura are also in a similar state, with many areas witnessing heavy traffic congestion and accidents.

The locals blame the authorities for their apathy, stat-

ing that the roads have been in a poor state for months, with no signs of improvement. "The roads are not just a matter of inconvenience, they are a matter of life and death," says Nagraj Nayak, a local hotel owner. "We have had numerous accidents and

near-misses due to the poor state of the roads."

The district administration has blamed the heavy rains for the poor state of the roads, but the locals are not buying it. "The rains may have damaged the roads, but it's the lack of maintenance and neglect that has brought us to this state," says Vishnu Nayar, president of the Atal Adivasi Sangh.

The situation is so dire that tourists are now avoiding the district, fearing damage to their vehicles and safety risks. The locals are urging the authorities to take immediate action to repair the roads and provide relief to the people.

The Lokaayukta has taken cognizance of the issue and has directed the authorities to take immediate action to address the problem. However, till then, the people of Uttara Kannada will continue to suffer the consequences of poor infrastructure.

MLA Nayak Orders Shutdown of Indira Canteen Over Poor Service

KARWAR

In a surprise visit to the Indira Canteen in the city, local MLA Bheemanna Nayak was left unimpressed with the poor quality of food and service. The canteen, which was inaugurated three months ago, is meant to provide subsidized meals to the poor and needy.

Nayak, who visited the canteen on Sunday morning, found that the food being served was not up to the mark and the canteen staff were not following the prescribed menu. He questioned the authorities on why the canteen was not serving idlis, to which the staff replied that they had not made idlis for several days.

The MLA expressed his discontent with the authorities, stating that the canteen was meant to benefit the poor and that the current state of affairs was unacceptable. He questioned the municipal engineer, Shivaraj, on who was responsible for monitoring the quality of food and the clean-

liness of the canteen.

Nayak warned the contractor, who is responsible for running the canteen, to improve the service or face action. He also directed the authorities to shut down the canteen until further notice.

"The canteen will remain closed until the issues are addressed and the service improves," Nayak said, adding that the authorities had been lax in their duties.

The shutdown was carried out, with a notice being put up citing "technical reasons" for the closure. The MLA's visit has sparked hopes that the canteen will be brought up to standards and will serve the purpose it was intended for - providing nutritious food to the needy.

The incident has also raised questions about the functioning of the authorities and their role in ensuring that government schemes are implemented effectively. The local residents are hoping that Nayak's intervention will bring about a positive change in the canteen's service.

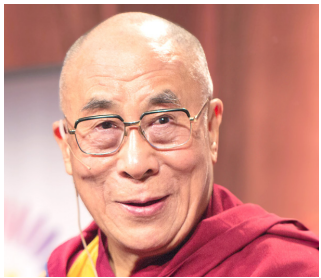
Dalai Lama Visit: Tibetan Camp Readies for Welcome

KARWAR

The Tibetan camp in Mundagod is abuzz with preparations as the spiritual leader of Tibetan Buddhists, Dalai Lama, is set to arrive on December 12. The camp is gearing up to host the revered guest, who will be staying for over a month.

The camp, which is being transformed into a 'Mini Tibet', is witnessing a flurry of activities, including painting of compound walls, renovation of gardens, and construction of fountains. The local authorities are leaving no stone unturned to ensure a grand welcome for the Dalai Lama.

Buddhist followers from Arunachal, Himachal, and Ladakh have already started arriving at the camp, and Tibetan families who had migrated earlier are returning to be a part of the celebrations.



The visit has also brought cheer to the local laborers, who are getting ample work opportunities. "There is a huge demand for painters, carpenters, and construction workers, and we are working round the clock to complete the work on time," said Manjunath, a labor contractor.

The Buddhist temples are being decorated, and welcome arches are being set up across the colony. However, official announcements regarding public events are yet to be made, said Jampa Lobsang, a Buddhist leader.

Wild Boar Causes Chaos: Car Overtakes, Driver Injured

SULLIA

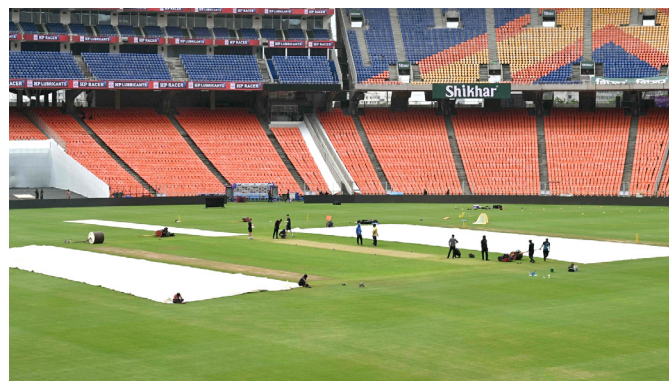
A wild boar's sudden dash across the road led to a shocking accident in Kanakkuru of Kolchar on Sunday, leaving the car driver injured. The incident occurred when the boar jumped onto the road, causing the car driver to lose control and overturn the vehicle. The driver, traveling from Sully to Kerala's Bandadka, suffered injuries in the accident. Emergency services were alerted, and the driver was rushed to a nearby medical facility for treatment. The car's damage is extensive, with the vehicle lying mangled near the scene. Local authorities are involved, and an investigation into the incident is underway.

'Padubidri to Get International Cricket Stadium and Airport'

UDUPI

A proposal to establish an international cricket stadium and an airport in Padubidri, Udupi district, is moving ahead, with the Karavali Development Board exploring the project for development at Nandikoor-Belapu near Padubidri in Kaup taluk. The project is expected to be a game-changer for the region, which lacks major infrastructure projects.

Board Chairman M A Gafoor announced that the government already holds land in the proposed location, and the stadium is likely to be developed through the Karnataka State Cricket Association (KSCA). A master plan will be prepared for the project, for which a consultant will be appointed soon. Resource persons will be invited to share insights in seminars, and experts' opinions will be incorporated before the plan is finalised.



The proposal will be submitted to Chief Minister Siddaramaiah during the upcoming legislature session, and a request for a special grant will be placed. Gafoor added that the board plans to seek a minimum of Rs 250 crore from the state government for development works across all 19 assembly constituencies in the coastal region.

Udupi DC Swaroopa TK said that both the airport and the international cricket stadium are being considered, as ample land is available. She noted that Udupi district lacks major infrastructure projects, making these proposals significant. The new airport is envisioned as a twin-airport model functioning like a second terminal, especially since the Bajpe airport in DK district has limited expansion scope.

Board Chairman M A Gafoor announced that the government already holds land in the proposed location, and the stadium is likely to be developed through the Karnataka State Cricket Association (KSCA)

The stadium, planned over 50 acres with a 50,000-seating capacity, is expected to be part of a larger sports complex. KSCA's inspection will give further clarity. The proposals are expected to boost tourism and economic development in the region, and the board is optimistic about receiving funding support from the state and central governments, as well as CSR contributions.



Illegal Cow Slaughter Operation Busted in Bantwal

BANTWAL

In a significant crackdown on illegal cattle slaughter, the Bantwal Rural Police have arrested a 57-year-old man, Mayadi, for allegedly running a cow slaughter operation from his residential property in Arala village. The police conducted a raid on the premises on November 16, 2025, following a tip-off about unlawful activities.

During the operation, law enforcement officials found three individuals involved in slaughtering a cow and processing its meat. While two suspects managed to escape, Mayadi was apprehended at

the scene. The police rescued three cows and a calf, and seized approximately 150 kilograms of processed beef as evidence.

A case has been registered against Mayadi under various sections of the Karnataka Prevention and Preservation of Cattle Act, 2020, and the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act. The police have also seized the property, citing unauthorized use of domestic electricity for the slaughter operations. The Bantwal Police Department has vowed to continue enforcing laws related to animal welfare and illegal slaughter activities in the region.

Gambling Racket Busted in Manipal: 8 Held, Cash Seized

UDUPI

In a major crackdown on illegal gambling, police have arrested eight individuals for playing cards for money at a house in Manoli Gujji Bettu. The arrested individuals are Naveen, Bhaskar, Krishna, Jagadish, Santosh, Shankar Poojary, Manjunath, and Shivavya. The police operation resulted in the seizure of Rs

1,02,060 in cash, seven mobile phones, two motorcycles, and one car. A case has been registered at the Manipal police station, and further investigation is underway. The police action is part of ongoing efforts to curb illegal activities in the region. The arrested individuals are likely to face charges under relevant laws related to gambling and betting.

Ganja Racket and Hooliganism Leave Residents Living in Fear in Shivamogga

SHIVAMOGGA

Residents of Shivamogga city are living in terror due to the rampant activities of goons and ganja peddlers in the area. The situation has become so dire that people are scared to venture out at night, and even during the day, they are being harassed and robbed.

The latest incident took place in RML Nagar, where a resident, Harish, was attacked and robbed of Rs 22,000. The assailants also threatened to kill him if he reported the incident to the police. The police have been accused of inaction, with the local MLA, S.N. Channabasappa, leading a delegation to the Dodda Pete police station to lodge a complaint.



According to locals, the goons are operating with impunity, stopping vehicles, abusing and threatening people, and robbing them of their valuables. They also visit local shops, take goods without paying, and threaten the owners if they dare to complain. The situation has become so

bad that people are selling their homes and leaving the area.

The MLA has blamed the police for their inaction, saying that he has made numerous representations to the Home Minister, but to no avail. He has demanded that senior police officers visit the area and take action against the goons. The police, however, claim that they can only take action if the public comes forward to complain.

The incident has sparked widespread outrage, with local leaders and residents demanding immediate action against the perpetrators. The police have assured that they will take strict action if the victims come forward to complain.



Man Held for Attempted Sexual Assault & Caste-Based Abuse

KADABA

A local man, Umesh Gowda, has been arrested and remanded to judicial custody for allegedly attempting to sexually assault a woman and directing caste-based slurs at her.

The incident occurred on November 13, 2025, when the victim, a Scheduled Tribe member, was sleeping in a shed near her home. Gowda allegedly approached her and attempted to harass her sexually. The woman's family intervened, and Gowda assaulted them before fleeing.

The Kadaba Police registered a case against Gowda under various sections of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS)-2023 and the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989. He was arrested on November 16, 2025, and is currently in judicial custody.

The police investigation is ongoing, with authorities committed to ensuring justice for the victim.

Prajitha Biju Awarded PhD for Pioneering Skin Fungal Infection Study

MANGALURU

Prajitha Biju, Assistant Professor in the Department of Pharmaceutics at Yenepoya Pharmacy College & Research Centre, Mangaluru, has been conferred with the Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in Pharmacy by Yenepoya Deemed to be University. The degree was awarded during the university's 15th convocation ceremony held on November 15, 2025.

Biju's research focused on developing innovative treatment modalities for dermal fungal infections, exploring

novel approaches to combat these prevalent conditions. Her thesis, "Carbamide and Luliconazole Niosomal gel as a treatment modality for Dermal Fungal Infections," showcased her dedication to advancing pharmaceutical science.

Under the guidance of Dr. Mohammed Gulzar Ahmed and Dr. Manjunath Shenoy, Biju's research has contributed significantly to the field, resulting in numerous publications and patents. Her passion for research and teaching has made her a respected figure in the academic community.

QUICK READ



Jayshree Ullal Tops India's Richest Women Entrepreneurs' List

Mangaluru
Jayshree Ullal, a Mangaluru-born tech leader, has secured the top spot among India's richest women entrepreneurs, with an impressive wealth of Rs 50,170 crore, according to the Hurun Research India Rich List 2025. As the president and CEO of Arista Networks, a US-based computer networking giant, Ullal has led the company to remarkable success since 2008. Under her leadership, Arista Networks achieved a revenue of USD 7 billion last year, marking a 20% growth over the previous year. This achievement is a testament to her exceptional leadership and vision in the tech industry. Ullal's success has earned her a place among the country's top 10 richest self-made women, inspiring aspiring entrepreneurs and business leaders.

Roy Castelino Elected Rachana President at AGM

Mangaluru
Roy Castelino has been elected as the new President of Rachana, Catholic Chamber of Commerce & Industry, at the Annual General Meeting held at Bendur Church hall. Castelino, a respected figure in the region's business landscape, brings a wealth of experience and leadership to his new role. The AGM also elected Leslie Rego as Vice President, Alron Rodrigues as Secretary, James J. Madtha as Joint Secretary, and Naveen Lobo as Treasurer. The newly elected team is expected to build upon Rachana's strengths and explore new avenues for growth and innovation, focusing on expanding membership, enhancing mentorship opportunities, and promoting ethical business practices.

Vidya Jeevan Amruth Trust and Seon Home Inaugurated with Devotion and Gratitude

MANGALURU

The inauguration of Vidya Jeevan Amruth Trust and the house-warming ceremony of Seon Home was a momentous occasion, marked by devotion, community spirit, and gratitude. The event, held at Rohan Estate, Paldane, brought together community leaders, parish representatives, relatives, and well-wishers to bless the new home and celebrate the launch of the trust. The day began with a thanksgiving Eucharistic Mass at St Theresa of Kolkata Church, Paldane, led by the parish priest and the sisters of the parish. In his hom-

ily, the priest emphasized the importance of "faith-filled homes that become centres of love, compassion and service to society." The gathering then moved to Seon Home, where a solemn blessing ceremony was conducted, invoking God's grace on the family and the residence. A key highlight of the programme was the felicitation of workers and contractors who contributed to the construction of Seon Home, a gesture that reflected the family's gratitude and respect for their contributions. The event was filled with cultural performances, including a graceful dance and

tle in a Tata Ace container vehicle. A case has been registered against them under various sections of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, and Karnataka Prevention of Slaughter and Preservation of Cattle Ordinance. Interestingly, Mansoor Adyapady, the first accused, has 29 previous cases registered against him, making this his 30th offence. Mohammad Ashwad has one earlier case, while Abdul Mohammad Nisham is facing charges for the first time. The police have invoked provisions related to organised crime in this case.

Three Arrested for Illegal Cow Transport from Hosmaru-Nellikaru

MOODABIDRI

In a significant crackdown on illegal cattle transportation, police have arrested three individuals for allegedly transporting cows in contravention of the law. The accused, identified as Mansoor Adyapady, Mohammad Ashwad, and Abdul Mohammad Nisham, were intercepted near Hosmaru-Nellikaru in Moodbidri taluk on October 15. The police had received credible information about the illegal transportation and acted swiftly to apprehend the suspects. The accused were found to be carrying three cat-

melodious songs by children, and the felicitation of family elders and guests. Denis Mascarenhas, owner of Seon Home and founder of Vidya Jeevan Amruth Trust, expressed his heartfelt gratitude to all those who contributed to the construction of the home and the launch of the trust. "This home is not just built of cement and bricks; it is built with the prayers, blessings and hard work of so many people," he said. "My dream was not only to build a home for my family but also to create a space that will serve the community through Vidya Jeevan Amruth Trust."

The Karnataka government has established the Coastal Development Board, upgrading the existing Coastal Development Authority, with the aim of accelerating development in the coastal regions of Dakshina Kannada, Udupi, and Uttara Kannada districts. The board, chaired by M.A. Gafur, is expected to play a crucial role in shaping the future of the region. The board's primary objectives include promoting livestock, fisheries, inland water transport, and tourism, as well

MANGALURU

The much-anticipated redevelopment of the Central Market and fish market near Hampankatte in Mangaluru is all set to become a reality, with the project entering its final stage under the Smart City initiative. The public-private partnership-driven project is expected to be opened to the public and traders by January, bringing a modern shopping experience to the city. The construction, which began around two-and-a-half years ago, had faced several delays, including the Covid lockdown and contractor issues. However, officials are now confident that the project will be completed within the next three months. The new Central Market is being built on 3.61 acres at a cost of Rs 114.03 crore and boasts a



six-storey structure with a total area of five lakh sq. ft.

The market's design includes two basement floors

for vehicle parking, 1.50 lakh sq. ft of space to be handed over to the city corporation, and 3.50 lakh sq. ft dedicated to commercial and trading activities. While 80-85% of the infrastructure work is already complete, the pending tasks include installation of shutters for stalls, final internal and external technical works, painting, and finishing touches, as well as road levelling and drainage improvements around the market. The old Central Market, which had stood for 64 years, was demolished due to structural weakness and the growing need for modern infrastructure to cater to the city's increasing population and commercial activity. The new market is expected to not only provide a safer and more hygienic shopping environment but also boost the local economy.

Landless Families Protest at Kuppepadavu GP

MANGALURU

A group of 80 landless families, who were allotted plots in Ambelottu, Kilenjaru village in 2017, staged a protest at the Kuppepadavu Gram Panchayat office on Monday, demanding the authorities to hand over the possession of the land. The families, led by the Niveshanarahita Horata Samiti, have been fighting for their

rights for years, alleging that despite having title deeds, they have not been given the land. The protest is the latest development in the long-standing issue, which saw the families staging an indefinite sit-in protest at the panchayat office for 11 days in May this year. The district panchayat officials and the Tahsildar had visited the spot and assured them of resolving the issue, but to no avail.

Driver Flees with Stolen Petrol, Owner Left High and Dry

MANGALURU

A brazen petrol theft has left the owner of Adinatheshwara Roadlines fuming as the accused driver, identified as Likhith K, made off with 40 litres of precious fuel. The incident occurred on November 13, when the tanker was en route to the Seethangoli depot in Kasaragod. According to Sujith Alva, the proprietor of Adinatheshwara Roadlines, the tanker had been dispatched from MRPL with a consignment of petrol. However, when it failed to reach its destination the next day, Alva sprang into action, launching a search for the missing vehicle. His efforts paid off when he located the tanker parked at the Kana parking yard. Upon inspection, Alva was shocked to find Likhith siphoning petrol from the tanker using a plastic pipe and collecting it in cans placed beneath the lorry. As he approached the scene, the accused driver made a swift exit, abandoning the stolen goods and fleeing with an unidentified accomplice. The stolen petrol, estimated to be around 40 litres, was stored in two 20-litre plastic cans.

Kani Kani Kantha Grand Finale: A Triumph of Konkani Storytelling

MANGALURU

The Konkani storytelling competition, Kani Kani Kantha 2025, concluded on a high note with its grand finale held at the Infant Jesus Shrine Hall, Mangaluru. The event, which drew a large audience of participants, parents, and literature enthusiasts, showcased the rich talent pool of Konkani storytellers from Mangaluru, Udupi, Kundapur, and Puttur. The finalists captivated the audience with their expressive and imaginative storytelling, highlighting the beauty of the Konkani language. The event was a testament to the enduring power of storytelling in preserving cultural heritage and promoting linguistic diversity. The prize distribution ceremony, presided over by Fr



Speaker Promises Action on Cashew Cultivation Expansion

MANGALURU

Speaker of the Karnataka Legislative Assembly, U.T. Khader, has assured that a meeting will be convened soon to discuss the expansion of cashew cultivation in Karnataka. He was speaking at the concluding ceremony of the three-day 'Godambi Shathamotsava Shringa' event, organized by the Karnataka Cashew Producers' Association to mark the 100th anniversary of the cashew processing industry in South Kannada district. Khader responded to MLA Vedavyas Kamath's request to advise the government to take steps to revive cashew cultivation, saying that a meeting of officials from the forestry, revenue, and agriculture departments would be held to discuss the matter. "We will instruct them to submit a report on how cashew cultivation can be promoted, and we will try to announce a plan in the next budget," he said. The event was attended by

Khader responded to MLA Vedavyas Kamath's request to advise the government to take steps to revive cashew cultivation, saying that a meeting of officials from the forestry, revenue, and agriculture departments would be held to discuss the matter

MLAs Manjunath Bhandari, Gurume Suresh Shetty, Yashpal Suvarna, Ivan D'Souza, Kishore Kumar, S.S. Anil Kumar, Chief Executive Officer of the Sri Kshetra Dharmasthala Gramabivrudhi Yojana, and S.A. Rao, President of the Karnataka Cashew Producers' Association. The speaker's assurance has raised hopes among cashew farmers and industry stakeholders, who have been seeking government support to boost cashew cultivation and processing in the state.



Rupesh Madtha, was graced by noted poet and film director Stany Bela as the chief guest. In his address, Stany Bela urged the youth to keep Konkani alive through creative expression, literature, and community engagement. The event was marked by the presence of several dignitaries, including Fr Melvin D'Cunha, Praveen Tauro, and writer Flavia Albuquerque. The judges, Asuntha Priya Danthy, Edward Sequeira,

Sapna Crasta, and Molly Miranda, were felicitated for their contribution to the competition. The programme was expertly compered by Elson Hiran, and Premitha D'Souza and members of the Secular Carmel played a key role in organising the event. The announcement of the winners in all categories brought the curtains down on a memorable celebration of Konkani storytelling.

Natekala Civic Protection Forum Elects New Office Bearers in Mangaluru

MANGALURU

The Natekala Civic Protection Forum held its annual general meeting and awareness program on substance abuse at Kunil School Campus. Sub-In-

spector Nagaraj of Konaje Police Station spoke on the ill effects of substance abuse. The forum elected new office bearers, with Moushir Ahmad Samani as President, Kunji Monu Natekala and Iqbal Hubballi as

Vice Presidents, Hanif P.S. as General Secretary, Siddiq Maulavi as Joint Secretary, and Hanif Shain as Treasurer. The newly elected team aims to continue working for the welfare of the community.

ACCELERATING DEVELOPMENT

Coastal Devpt Authority Gets a Boost with New Board

MANGALURU



as developing and conserving water resources, soil conservation, forestry, horticulture, and agriculture. The board will also focus on implementing government programs and schemes.

The board comprises members from various fields, including parliamentarians, legislators, district panchayat presidents, and experts nominated by the government. It will have a separate fund,

which will receive grants from the central and state governments, as well as donations from individuals and organizations. The board's first meeting is scheduled to be held in Udupi on November 17, 2025, where it will discuss its future plans and strategies. The establishment of the board is seen as a significant step towards realizing the Congress party's election promise to develop the coastal region. However, the board's functioning is expected to be challenging, as the government is yet to finalize the rules and

regulations, and allocate a separate budget. The board is currently operating with the existing staff and funds allocated to the Coastal Development Authority. M.A. Gafur, Chairman of the Coastal Development Board, expressed optimism about the board's prospects, saying, "The board will work towards creating a comprehensive development plan for the coastal region, focusing on education, employment, tourism, and water resources. We expect support from the government and the people to achieve our goals."

QUICK READ

City road-sweeper rental sparks public outrage

Bengaluru

The Karnataka government's plan to rent 46 road-sweeping machines for ₹613 crore in Bengaluru has triggered strong criticism. Residents and opposition leaders said buying similar machines would cost only about ₹37–38 crore, with total expenses including staff likely under ₹100 crore. Union Minister Shobha Karandlaje called the deal "inflated" and urged full transparency. Many social media users mocked the proposal, sharing satirical images questioning the high cost. Citizens wondered whether the government was genuinely cleaning streets or wasting money. The controversy continues as taxpayers demand clarity, while the state government has not yet offered a detailed explanation regarding the expensive rental plan.

KARNATAKA SET TO LAUNCH AFFORDABLE AI COMPUTER 'KEO'

As India's digital economy continues to grow, there is need for affordable devices that can reach more families and students'

BENGALURU

Karnataka will launch an affordable artificial intelligence (AI) computer named 'KEO' at the Bangalore Tech Summit on Tuesday, said IT and BT Minister Priyank Kharge.

Addressing the media, he said the three-day Bangalore Tech Summit 2025 will begin on November 18, and the KEO computer will be one of its major highlights.

Kharge explained that computer access in India is still very low, with fewer than 10% of households owning one. In Karnataka, the number is slightly higher at 15%. He said nearly 60% of Indian students still miss out on online education because they do not have a computer. As India's digital economy continues to grow, he stressed the need for



affordable devices that can reach more families and students.

To bridge this gap, the state is introducing KEO, an AI-powered, low-cost computer. The price will be revealed at the launch. Chief Minister Siddaramaiah will inaugurate the Tech Summit at the Bengaluru International Exhibition Centre. After the

launch, free booking for the KEO computer will open on the Keonext.in website, and deliveries will be made within two months of booking.

The KEO computer comes with several useful features. It is designed to be smart, economical, and open-source. Built on a RISC-V processor and powered by a Linux-based operating system, it supports 4G, Wi-Fi, Ethernet, USB-A, USB-C, HDMI, and an audio jack. It includes tools for learning, programming, and productivity.

A key feature is the built-in on-device AI core, which allows users to run AI tools even without internet access. It also includes an AI agent called Buddha, trained on the Karnataka DSERT curriculum to support students in areas with poor connectivity.

MEET OF TITANS



Chief Minister Siddaramaiah with AICC president Mallikarjun Kharge at his Delhi residence

▸ CH PHOTO

HC quashes Mahesh Shetty Timarodi deportation order



BENGALURU

The Karnataka High Court has quashed the deportation order against Mahesh Shetty Timarodi, linked to the Belthangady student murder case, which had barred him from Dakshina Kannada district for one year.

A bench led by Justice Suraj Govinda Raju heard Timarodi's petition challenging the order issued on September 18 by Puttur Assistant Commissioner Stella Varghese, which had directed his relocation to Manvi taluk in Raichur district. The High Court ruled the deportation order unlawful and directed the Assistant Commissioner to conduct a fresh inquiry within 15 days, issuing a new order with proper reasoning and reference to relevant legal provisions.

Timarodi's lawyer argued that the original order was "illegal and unilateral," issued abruptly without providing an opportunity to be heard. In contrast, the government's counsel contended that Timarodi's activism in the Belthangady student case and multiple registered cases justified the deportation and that due legal process had been followed.

The case background indicates that over 32 cases were filed against Timarodi across various police stations, with authorities alleging he had caused societal unrest and caste-related tensions in Dakshina Kannada. Following these complaints, the Puttur Assistant Commissioner had ordered his deportation.

The High Court's decision emphasizes adherence to the principles of natural justice and procedural fairness, requiring a fresh inquiry and reasoned order before any further action.

HC seeks response on delayed local elections

The Karnataka High Court has issued a notice to the state government after a petition was filed seeking timely elections for 187 urban local bodies across the state. These include 47 municipal corporations, 91 municipalities, and 49 town panchayats whose terms will end between November and December this year. The petition, filed by the State Election Commission, requested the court to direct the government to release the final reservation notification for the posts of president, vice-president, and ward-wise categories so that elections can be held without delay. A division bench consisting of Chief Justice Vibhu Bakhru and Justice C.M. Poonacha heard the case. The bench issued notices to the Chief Secretary and the Additional Chief Secretary of the Urban Development Department, asking them to file objections. The hearing was then adjourned. During the session, the Election Commission's counsel pointed out that the terms of several urban local bodies were ending soon. He argued that elections must be held within the constitutional timeframe.

The government's counsel informed the court that a separate petition concerning Gram Panchayat elections is scheduled for hearing on December 11. He said the State Election Commission had requested the government to issue reservation notifications for 5,950 Gram Panchayats, whose terms will expire in January next year. The petition also highlighted past delays. The Election Commission had written to the government twice—on January 27 and June 26—seeking the final notification but received no reply. It argued that failing to conduct elections on time violates Article 243 of the Constitution, which mandates timely polls for local bodies.

Report dangerous dry trees: BCCC to public

BENGALURU

The Forest Department has announced that it is actively clearing dry and dangerous trees and branches along roads and government lands within the limits of the Bengaluru Central City Corporation (BCCC).

Officials said this work is being done to prevent accidents, especially during windy weather and unexpected rains. They requested the public to help by reporting any such trees or branches they come across.

People can share information by calling the helpline numbers 1533 or 9480685702. They can also

contact Forest Department officers directly and send photographs and location details through WhatsApp. The department said that quick reporting from citizens will help them remove risky trees fast, keeping neighbourhood safe.

To make the process easier, the Forest Department has shared the contact numbers of officials based on assembly constituencies. In Zone 1, which includes Shantinagar and C.V. Raman Nagar, people can call Vinay, Sub-Zonal Forest Officer, at 7760933913. In Zone 2, covering Chamarajpet, Chikkapet, and Shivajinagar, the public can contact Shivanna

T.C., Sub-Zonal Forest Officer, at 9164597895. For the Gandhinagar constituency, Narendra Babu N.R., Zonal Forest Officer (In-charge), can be reached at 9480685399.

The Assistant Conservator of Forests of Bangalore Central City Corporation said that officers for every zone are ready to respond quickly. He added that the cooperation of residents is important because they are the first to notice dry or leaning trees near their homes, offices, and streets.

Appeal by BSMC
The Bengaluru South Municipal Corporation (BSMC) has issued a public notice urging residents to report any dry

or dangerous trees and branches found within its limits.

Authorities have requested citizens to call the helpline 1533 or 9480685704 if they notice any dry, weak, or leaning trees that could pose a risk. For issues in Jayanagar, Bengaluru South, and Padmanabhanagar assembly constituencies, residents can contact Harish H.R., Sub-Zonal Officer, at 9743433665. For Bommanahalli and BTM Layout constituencies, the public can reach out to Manjunath K.T., Zonal Forest Officer, at 9900245014. Both officers will coordinate with field teams to inspect and remove dangerous trees as needed.

Bengaluru Residents brace for six-hr outage

BENGALURU

Residents of Bengaluru will face a scheduled six-hour power cut today, November 18, as the Bangalore Electricity Supply Company (BESCOM) carries out essential maintenance work at the 66/11 kV Sobha City substation. The outage, planned from 11:00 AM to 5:00 PM, is aimed at enhancing the safety and reliability of electricity supply across the city.

The power disruption will affect a wide range of localities. Key areas include Sobha City, Chokkanahalli, RK Hegde

Nagar, Ex-Servicemen Layout, Police Quarters, Shabari Nagar, New Shanti Nagar, Kemppegowda Layout, Nagenahalli Village, and Regency Park. Other affected locations are Esther Harmonic Layout, Balaji Layout, Nagenahalli Gym, Slum Bird Area, Bench Royal Wood, Arkavathi Layout, Bellahalli Village, Thirumenahalli Village, Mittaganahalli, and Kogilu Village. Extended parts of RK Hegde Nagar, Arkavathi Layout in Thanisandra, and nearby villages will also experience interruptions during the scheduled hours.

BESCOM has urged residents to plan ahead and take necessary precautions. Essential electronic devices should be fully charged, and sufficient water should be stored in advance. The utility company stressed that this planned outage is a preventive measure to maintain and upgrade the city's power infrastructure, which is crucial to avoid unexpected electrical failures in the future.

While the temporary disruption may cause some inconvenience, BESCOM assures that it will result in improved stability and reliability of electricity supply across the affected areas. Routine maintenance like this reflects the company's commitment to meeting the growing demands of Bengaluru's population and ensuring a safer, uninterrupted power experience for all residents.

Residents are advised to stay informed about updates from BESCOM and follow safety measures during the outage. Once the repairs are completed, smoother power flow and reduced chances of outages are expected, benefiting households, businesses, and essential services throughout the city.

Kalajatha mobile drive spreads awareness on schemes

BENGALURU

The Karnataka government launched the "Kalajatha Exhibition Mobile Vehicle" to raise public awareness about five key guarantee schemes: Annabhagya, Grihalakshmi, Grihaljyothi, Shakti, and Yuvaniidhi Yojana. The mobile unit, equipped with LED screens, showcases short films, street plays, and music performances to educate citizens. The launch was flagged off by R. Byre Gowda, President of Doddajala Gram Panchayat, at the Government Higher Primary School in Doddajala village. Assistant Director Soumya N., local officials, Dharani Cultural Arts Club performers, and residents attended the event.

BENGALURU

Bengaluru is facing rising air pollution, with many parts of the city now showing moderate to poor air quality. To reduce the growing dust and harmful particles in busy areas, the Karnataka State Pollution Control Board has decided to place air purifiers at key junctions. Officials say these machines can help clean the air by removing dust and improving the overall quality in crowded roads.

KSPCB chairman PM Narendraswamy said earlier trials of air purifiers showed good results. He explained that Bengaluru once had clean air and several road junctions featured water fountains. These fountains worked like natural diffusers because the moisture in the air helped ab-



sorb dust. Over the years, many of these fountains were removed, and the city became more dust-heavy, leading to the situation people see today.

The board has now asked the Central Pollution Control Board for permission to install purifiers at the city's busiest points. This request comes as the fine particulate

matter known as PM2.5 has increased. These particles can enter the lungs and may cause breathing problems and other health issues.

On Monday, Bengaluru recorded an AQI of 112, which falls under the moderate category. One station showed poor air quality, reaching 215. Other locations such as Hebbal, Jayanagar, Jigani, and Silk Board also recorded moderate levels. Only four out of twelve stations listed on the Sameer app showed satisfactory air.

Some residents have compared the current situation with Delhi and believe illegal garbage burning is adding to the pollution. Many citizens are now calling for stronger steps to stop such activities and improve air quality across the city.

WHEN TRADITION MEETS FLAVOUR

'Kadlekai Parishe' off to a flavourful start at Basavanagudi

BENGALURU

The annual Basavanagudi Kadlekai Parishe (Peanut Festival) has begun, with Muzrai Minister Ramalinga Reddy officially launching the five-day celebration at the iconic Doddabasavanna Temple. The festival will continue until Friday, November 21.

The launch ceremony saw the minister feeding peanuts to Doddabasavanna and offering peanut plants to five bulls in the temple premises. Speaking to the media, Reddy highlighted the festival's rich history,



which dates back 500 years to the Kempegowda era. He also stressed environmental responsibility, urging shopkeepers to avoid using plastic during the fair.

This year, duty-free shops have been allowed to operate, and roads around the temple have been lit and decorated with vibrant floral arrangements. "Last year, the festival attracted 4–5 lakh visitors. This year, we expect an additional two lakh people," the minister said. He added that the event aims to encourage people to visit not just the fair but also

the surrounding temples.

Basavanagudi MLA Ravi Subrahmanya, Bangalore South MP Tejaswi Surya, MLA Uday Garudachar, and several other dignitaries attended the opening ceremony. The event is supported by the GBA, with significant contributions from the Muzrai department, ensuring a well-organized and lively festival for devotees and visitors alike. The Basavanagudi Peanut Festival continues to be one of Bengaluru's most anticipated cultural events, combining tradition, local flavor, and community spirit.

QUICK READ



Human-elephant conflict escalates in Jharkhand

Ranchi

Human-elephant conflict is intensifying across Jharkhand, with five people killed in elephant attacks over the past week and two elephants found dead under mysterious circumstances. In the latest incident, a herd of around 15 elephants entered Kharkanda village in the Jageshwar OP area of Bokaro district and went on a rampage for several hours. The herd trampled 45-year-old Sanjho Devi to death and vandalised 25-30 houses. A car and a tempo parked outside a home were also damaged, and the stored food was eaten.

Kerala HC lambasts Vijayan govt for shielding accused

Kochi

The Kerala High Court on Monday came down heavily on the Pinarayi Vijayan government for refusing to grant sanction to the CBI to prosecute two key accused in the multi-crore Cashew Development Corporation corruption case. The Single Bench asked why the government was protecting the corrupt and warned that it would be compelled to record such an observation in its order if the state government continued its present stance. The criticism was directed at the government's decision to deny prosecution sanction for former Corporation chairman and Congress leader R. Chandrasekharan, and former P.A. Ratheesh.

Self-styled 'Major' among 4 militants arrested in Manipur

Imphal

In a major joint crack-down, security forces have arrested four hardcore militants, including a self-styled 'Major', and seized a huge cache of arms and ammunition, comprising 12 sophisticated weapons, from different districts of Manipur over the last 24 hours, officials said on Monday. Among the arrested is dreaded militant Koijam Ibochouba alias Inao alias Sumo (45), police confirmed. A senior police official said that Koijam Ibochouba is the self-styled 'Major' of the People's Liberation Army (PLA) and its sister outfit Revolutionary People's Front (RPF), and he was a wanted insurgent in connection with the 2017 Ambush on Assam Rifles at Sajik Tampak in Chandel district, the official said.

Navy unveils crest of indigenous anti-submarine ship 'Mahe'

NEW DELHI

The Indian Navy has unveiled the crest of Mahe, the first ship of the indigenously designed and built Mahe-class Anti-Submarine Warfare Shallow Water Craft (ASW-SWC), ahead of its commissioning in Mumbai on November 24, an official said on Monday.

This marks an important milestone in the ship's journey from design to induction, celebrating India's growing self-reliance in naval shipbuilding and the symbolic identity that binds the ship's heritage, design, and operational role, said the Navy official in a statement.

Named after the coastal town of Mahe on India's western seaboard, the ship reflects India's enduring maritime traditions and coastal spirit.

The ship's crest draws inspiration from the cultural and martial legacy of the region, depicting an 'Urumi' - the flexible sword associated with Kalarippayattu and a symbol of Kerala's martial heritage, rising from the sea, said the statement.

The 'Urumi' signifies agility, precision, and lethal grace, reflecting the ship's ability to operate swiftly and strike decisively in the littorals.

DEFENCE CONCLAVE

Manipur witnesses remarkable decline in violence: Army Chief

'The security situation in Manipur has significantly improved, with violence declining and public trust gradually returning'

NEW DELHI

Chief of the Army Staff, General Upendra Dwivedi, on Monday highlighted a dramatic shift in the security scenario of Manipur, stating that the northeastern state has seen a sharp reduction in violent incidents since early 2025.

Speaking at the Chanakya Defence Conclave 2025, he noted that the improvements have been particularly visible after President's Rule was imposed in February this year.

Reflecting on the unrest that broke out in May 2023, General Dwivedi spoke with personal emotion, recalling his own years serving in Manipur.

When the incidents happened in May 2023, they caused me deep personal pain, because I have worked in Manipur myself. It hurt me to see such a beautiful state, which felt like heaven to me, in such a condition, he said. The Army Chief pointed out that the political and administrative shift brought about by President's Rule has helped restore faith among people. What has changed is that people's mutual trust, as well as their trust in the government, has started to improve. There has been significant improvement since then, he added. General Dwivedi also credited Prime Minister Narendra Modi's recent visit to the state in September 2025 for further stabilizing conditions. When P M Modi visited, that too helped

change things on the ground. If the situation continues to improve, the President will also be visiting soon, he noted. Comparing the current conditions with those during peak unrest, the Army Chief said the contrast is stark. In 2023, the police were also troubled, and people were anxious. The standards of 2023 and today have completely changed. Highlighting operational achievements, he stated that weapon recoveries have doubled, rising from about 200 per month in 2023-24 to nearly 400 now.



Delhi car blast probe links jailed west Bengal man to militant network

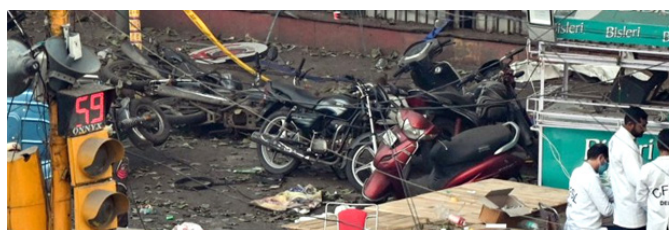
KOLKATA

The investigation into the recent car bomb blast in Delhi — which claimed 12 lives and left several others injured — has taken a new turn, with the name of Sabir Ahmed emerging as a key figure in the case. Ahmed, a resident of Palashipara in Nadia district of West Bengal, is currently in judicial custody on drug trafficking charges.

Despite being behind bars, he is now suspected of engaging in anti-national activities through covert communication channels.

Sources in the investigative agencies revealed that the terror plot has clear militant links.

The breakthrough reportedly came after the interrogation of Dr. Shaheen Shahid, an Al-Falah University physician arrested for suspected involvement in the attack. Investigators learned that the conspiracy was coordinated through multiple online social



groups, where Shahid acted as a mentor. Sabir Ahmed, despite being incarcerated, was allegedly active in one such group, promoting anti-India propaganda and encouraging extremist activities.

In a related development, the Special Task Force and Palashipara police detained Ahmed's brother, Faizal Ahmed, from Bara Naldaha area on November 12.

Authorities have not confirmed whether Faizal has been formally arrested.

A source claimed that Sabir may have managed to influence the Delhi blast plot from inside prison — a possibility now under intense investigation. However, police officials remain cautious. The STF

took Sabir's brother a few days ago. However, we do not have any information about Sabir's involvement in the blasts, said Uttam Ghosh, Additional Superintendent of Police (Rural), Krishnanagar Police District.

Meanwhile, the National Investigation Agency (NIA), in collaboration with West Bengal Police, has also arrested another suspect — MBBS student Nisar Alam of Al-Falah University. Alam was detained in Dalkhola, North Dinajpur, after authorities tracked his mobile location.

The probe continues, with investigators now examining how a jailed man could allegedly contribute to a deadly terror conspiracy.



Bengal Guv summons Kolkata cops, CRPF

KOLKATA

West Bengal Governor, C.V. Ananda Bose had summoned the bomb squad of the Kolkata Police and Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) for thorough and joint search operations within the premises of Raj Bhavan in Central Kolkata amid the recent allegations by a Trinamool Congress four-time Lok Sabha member that arms and ammunition were being distributed from Governor House premises to BJP-backed goons.

It has also been decided that the joint search and combing operations by the city police will also be telecast live by the office of the Governor. According to a statement issued by the office of the Governor on Monday afternoon, the Honourable Governor is cutting short his ongoing outstation tour and returning to Kolkata later in the day. On the instructions of Honourable Governor, a Joint Combing Operation will be carried out for the entire Raj Bhavan building and its precincts. The Joint Combing Operation will be led by Honourable Governor himself and will be conducted by the following: Kolkata Police, Raj Bhavan Police outpost, CRPF Bomb Squad and Dog Squad, the statement issued by the office of the Governor read.

As per the statement, the disaster management and civil defence departments will also participate in the joint search and combing operations. The entire combing operation will be LIVE. Members of the media and civil society will also be present throughout the combing operation, the statement from the Governor's House read. Earlier, the Office of the Governor had also directed the Kolkata Police to start an investigation into the allegations made.



Centre clears ₹7,712 cr investment under ECMS

NEW DELHI

The Central government has cleared a major new tranche of investment proposals under the Electronics Component Manufacturing Scheme (ECMS), with a total commitment of ₹7,712 crore, senior IT Ministry officials confirmed on Monday.

The announcement was made by IT Secretary S. Krishnan, who said that 17 applications were approved from 249 submissions during the latest round.

In a significant milestone, this tranche includes the first-ever approved project from Jammu and Kashmir. Other approved proposals are spread across Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Karnataka, Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu, reflecting the government's aim to expand manufacturing capacity across multiple regions.

Among the 17 selected companies, Aequus Consumer Products Private Limited stands out with the largest individual commitment of ₹1,500 crore and an expected production output of ₹7,669 crore. Other major names include TE Connectivity India, which will invest ₹612 crore, and Jabil Circuit with ₹957 crore. Additional approvals were granted to Secure Circuits, Zetfab, Zetchem with ₹55 crore, Micropack with ₹54 crore, Uno Minda with ₹264 crore, AT&S India, HI-Q, Infopower Technologies, Syrma Mobility with ₹250 crore, and Meena Electrotech from Jammu and Kashmir committing ₹111 crore.

Speaking on the occasion, Krishnan emphasized the government's strategic goal of strengthening India's position in the global supply chain. The basic objective is to deepen the value chain in India. The world is looking at diversification of value chains, and India is a key player in that, he said.

Union IT Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw also addressed the event, outlining three critical priorities for sustainable growth in electronics manufacturing: developing strong design capabilities, ensuring six sigma quality standards, and fostering a globally competitive domestic supplier ecosystem.



Bengal STF seizes ₹5 crore cash from car in New Town

KOLKATA

The Special Task Force (STF) of the West Bengal Police on Monday seized cash amounting to Rs 5 crore from a car near Akanksha Crossing in New Town and arrested two persons, including the vehicle's owner. The seizure was made following a tip-off from a confidential source.

Two people, including the owner of the car, have been arrested in connection with the incident, police said, adding that an investigation is underway.

Police said that the money was being brought from the New Town area. Sources said Bengal STF is searching for the source of the money.

The recovery of such a large amount of money while checking the car has raised concerns, especially ahead of next year's state Assembly polls.

According to police, the recovery of such huge cash has raised eyebrows, especially in the backdrop of the Special Intensive Revision

(SIR) exercise of West Bengal's electoral rolls by the Election Commission.

The police are investigating where this money came from, where it was being taken, and what the purpose was.

Cash worth Rs 5 crore has been recovered from a car after conducting a raid. The cash has been seized. Two people have been arrested. An investigation has started to find out the source of the money, said a police official. Last week, the Enforcement Directorate (ED) recovered large sums from the residence of a businessman in the Taratala area during searches connected to the municipal recruitment scam. Earlier this month, ED teams carried out raids at around 10 locations across the city, including Salt Lake and Beliaghata. ED sleuths searched the house of a businessman in the Taratala area in connection with the municipal recruitment corruption case. Investigators recovered a huge amount of money from the house then too.

ENTREPRENEURSHIP JOURNEY

'Mission Mangalam' brings transformative impact

AHMEDABAD

The Gujarat government's flagship women empowerment initiative, Mission Mangalam, continues to demonstrate its transformative impact on economic independence and grassroots entrepreneurship.

Among its most inspiring success stories is the women-run 'Mangalam Canteen' at Gandhinagar Metro Station, Sector-1 — now a thriving model of self-reliance and collective progress.

Mission Mangalam focuses on strengthening self-help



groups (SHGs) by ensuring their access to banking services, credit facilities, and livelihood training. The initiative is anchored by the Gujarat Livelihood Promotion Company (GLPC), which plays a key role in facilitating

loans, skilling and market linkages. The scheme has empowered thousands of women across rural and urban areas, helping them transition from financial vulnerability to entrepreneurship.

Among the beneficiaries

are Pushpa Parmar from Dehgam taluka and Vaishali Rathod from Kalol, whose journeys reflect the vision of an Atmanirbhar Gujarat and the ethos of Har Ghar Swadeshi. Pushpa, a member of the 'Jai Chamunda' Sakhi Mandal formed under Mission Mangalam, received an initial bank-linked loan of ₹1 lakh, followed by a second loan of ₹4 lakh. With guidance from GLPC, she and Vaishali made a bold decision — to open a canteen at the Gandhinagar Metro Station. The result was Mangalam Canteen, which now earns over ₹6 lakh annu-

ally. Its steady growth has not only provided financial stability but also bolstered social confidence and dignity for the women running it. Their success highlights how targeted support and structured credit access can enable women from modest backgrounds to become job creators and role models.

As Mission Mangalam expands, stories like these strengthen Gujarat's commitment to inclusive development, demonstrating the powerful ripple effect of women-led entrepreneurship on families and communities.

QUICK READ



Journalists swap newsrooms for ballot boxes

Thiruvananthapuram
A quiet but noticeable shift is unfolding in Thiruvananthapuram's political arena, where an increasing number of journalists are stepping out of newsrooms and straight into electoral politics. The Thiruvananthapuram Corporation has long been a springboard for bigger political roles -- several of its former councillors have risen to become MLAs and Ministers. Education Minister V. Sivankutty once served as Mayor, while the current Food Minister G. R. Anil began his political journey as a councillor here. This year, two well-known journalists both former office-bearers of the prestigious Trivandrum Press Club are contesting the civic polls, each running as an independent despite their long association with the CPI(M).

Kisan Sangh to launch stir against land pooling policy

Ujjain

The Rashtriya Swayam-sevak Sangh (RSS)-affiliated Bharatiya Kisan Sangh (BKS) is set to hold a fresh round of protest to oppose the land pooling policy in Ujjain on Tuesday. According to Bharat Singh, Madhya Pradesh BKS Convenor, more than 2,000 farmers from Ujjain and adjoining districts of Malwa-Nimar region will be participating in the protest to raise their grievances. Farmers from 18 districts, including from Ujjain, will gather at the Bhumi Mata Mandir at 9 a.m. on Wednesday. Later they will march towards District Collector's office and will hold a protest until the Madhya Pradesh government takes back its land pooling scheme, Singh told media persons.

Punjab farmers yet to get relief for crop loss: BJP

Chandigarh

Punjab BJP spokesperson Pritpal Singh Baliawal on Monday wrote a letter to Chief Minister Bhagwant Singh Mann, drawing attention to the severe negligence faced by flood-hit farmers of Sahnewal in Ludhiana district, who have still not received their promised compensation. Baliawal highlighted that villages such as Sasarali, Boothgarh Banjara and Sasarali Colony suffered massive destruction during the recent floods caused by the overflowing Sutlej river.

Gujarat govt hosts CM fellowship youth workshop

AHMEDABAD

A one-day workshop for the Chief Minister's Fellowship cohort was held in Gujarat's Gandhinagar on Monday, with Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel emphasising that the synergy between the domain expertise of senior bureaucrats and the fresh ideas of CM Fellows programme can significantly enhance public welfare and strengthen ease of doing business across the state. Addressing 24 CM Fellows working across various state departments, Chief Minister Patel said the state government aims not merely

Will work with states to resolve governance challenges: HM

The Union Home Minister led the 32nd Northern Zonal Council meeting, prioritizing cooperative federalism and collaborative governance

FARIDABAD
Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Monday chaired the 32nd meeting of the Northern Zonal Council, reaffirming the Centre's commitment to working jointly with states to resolve key governance challenges.
The session opened with a solemn tribute to the victims of the Delhi blast on November 10, underscoring the Council's sensitivity to national tragedies and security concerns.
Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta was among the key attendees. Sharing her thoughts on social platform X, she highlighted Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of co-operative federalism as a cornerstone of nation-building.



The Northern Zonal Council is an extremely effective and result-oriented platform that brings that very idea to life on the ground, she stated.
CM Gupta emphasized that the Council fosters open and constructive dialogue between the Centre and states, enabling collaborative solutions on complex and interconnected issues. She noted that many challenges -- especially those related to law and order, development, and public welfare -- can only be resolved through collective participation.
The agenda of the meeting reflected its growing relevance. Discussions featured several urgent national issues, including the faster investigation and disposal of cases involving sexual offences against women and children,

along with the expansion of Fast Track Special Courts (FTSCs) to ensure timely justice.
The Council also reviewed progress on strengthening rural banking access, particularly ensuring brick-and-mortar facilities in every designated village. Other key focus areas included the implementation of the Emergency Response Support System (ERSS-112), improved nutrition and health outcomes, education, electricity supply, urban development, and reinforcement of cooperative systems.
The Northern Zonal Council includes the states and Union Territories of Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Punjab, Rajasthan, Delhi, Jammu & Kashmir, Ladakh, and Chandigarh.

ED begins restitution of ₹55.85 cr assets in Varron bank fraud case

MUMBAI
The Directorate of Enforcement (ED), Mumbai Zonal Office, has started the process of restituting three immovable properties valued at ₹55.85 crore in connection with a ₹694 crore bank loan fraud case linked to Varron Aluminium Pvt. Ltd.
An official statement released on Monday confirmed that these properties were previously attached under Section 5 of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA). The ED stated that Varron Aluminium and associated entities had fraudulently siphoned off bank funds for personal enrichment. The valuation of the seized properties is based on a 2021 assessment referenced from the State Bank of India's reports.
The money laundering investigation stems from FIRs registered by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI), accusing the company of



ENFORCEMENT DIRECTORATE

cheating Bank of India and State Bank of India of ₹293.74 crore and ₹401.25 crore respectively. According to the chargesheet, a ₹300 crore Manual Letter of Credit issued by Canara Bank in favour of group company VACPL was discounted without proper verification by Bank of India -- a key step in the fraudulent scheme.
As per ED findings, Varron Aluminium and its allies repeatedly opened new Letters of Credit (LCs) to repay old ones, thus masking their liabilities and inflating their financial statements. Shell entities and circular credit transactions were integral to the

‘India-US trade deal likely to be signed soon’

NEW DELHI
India and the US are nearing closure of their talks for signing the first tranche of the proposed Bilateral Trade Agreement (BTA), Commerce Secretary Rajesh Agrawal indicated on Monday. Agrawal told journalists that the two countries have been holding regular virtual rounds of talks on the BTA. Although no formal deadlines can be set on the issue, the first stage of the trade talks is progressing swiftly, he added. US President Donald Trump sent positive signals on strengthening U.S.-India relations last week, raising fresh hopes that a bilateral trade agreement between the world's two largest democracies could be signed soon. Trump told reporters at the White House on Thursday that his talks with Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi were going great and that a visit to Delhi could take place next year. Earlier on Monday, Trump said that he plans to lower tariffs imposed on India at some point, indicating that a breakthrough in the trade talks could come soon. I think we're pretty close to doing a deal (with India) that's good for everybody, Trump said, in answer to a question from the media, at the ceremony for swearing in Sergio Gor as the new US Ambassador to India.

Task force should be formed to increase university ratings: Maharashtra Governor

MUMBAI
Maharashtra Governor Acharya Devvrat, on Monday, asked the universities in the state to establish a task force at every university level to increase their overall ratings. He said that continuous and organised efforts are needed to bring Maharashtra's education system to the global level. Merely creating plans is not enough; their practical implementation must be carried out consistently and it is therefore necessary to continuously strive to improve the national and international ranking levels of universities, the Governor added. The Governor was speaking at the workshop on the topic of 'National Education Policy 2020 (NEP 2020) and Vision Maharashtra 2047'. Governor Devvrat said that universities should be centres of knowledge and culture.
Teachers should be connected with students intimately. If dialogue and cooperation between teachers and students increase, the overall development of students will be assured. Also, students should actively participate in activities like sports, NCC, NSS. A healthy body and a strong mind are the pillars of



good education, he added.
Universities should develop employable curricula that are directly linked to the industry. Education should be connected to the progress of society and nation. Continuous training of teachers and administrative officers is necessary to remain compatible with new technology.
The more quality the training, the higher the quality of education will rise. There is a need to further elevate the standard of our training centres, the Governor said.
According to Governor Devvrat, students should be sensitised about the Indian culture, traditions, and moral values. Universities should invite speakers whose ideas will inspire students with life values.

Rajasthan is my Karma Bhoomi: New Chief Secy

JAIPUR
V. Srinivas has assumed charge as the new Chief Secretary of Rajasthan at the Secretariat on Monday as the outgoing Chief Secretary Sudhansh Pant handed over the charge to him. Before assuming charge as Chief Secretary, V. Srinivas and Sudhansh Pant performed puja with chanting of mantras at the Ganesh Temple at the entry gate of the Secretariat's main building. The Chief Secretary warmly embraced Sudhansh Pant upon taking charge of the office. Speaking to the media after assuming charge as Chief Secretary, V. Srinivas said, I express my gratitude to Chief Minister Bhajan Lal Sharma, who believed in my efficiency and gave me such a significant responsibility. I also want to express my gratitude to the Prime Minister for entrusting me with the responsibility of the Department of Administrative Reforms and

WB Chief Minister up in arms against Centre's Gorkhaland appointment

KOLKATA
West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee has once again raised strong objections to the Union government's decision to appoint former Deputy National Security Advisor and ex-BSF Director General Pankaj Kumar Singh as the interlocutor for tripartite talks on a permanent political solution to the Gorkhaland issue.
In a fresh letter addressed to Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday, Banerjee reiterated that the move undermines the state government's role and concerns.
This marks Banerjee's second communication to the Prime Minister on the matter. Her first letter, dated October 18, 2025, had urged the Centre to reconsider and revoke the appointment, stressing that a sensitive issue like Gorkhaland required mutual consultation, not unilateral action.
In her latest letter, the Chief Minister accused the Union Ministry of Home Affairs of bypassing her objections and proceeding with the interlocutor's office. It is a grave concern that, without any prior



communication in response to my letter and despite your kind intervention, the office of the interlocutor... has already started functioning. This is really shocking, she wrote. Banerjee described the Centre's action as a unilateral and arbitrary step that ignored the state's position. She argued that appointing a retired IPS officer to mediate the long-standing demands for a separate Gorkhaland involving Darjeeling, Kalimpong, Kurseong, and parts of the Terai and Dooars could further complicate matters instead of fostering trust. The ongoing demand for Gorkhaland, a separate state carved out of northern West Bengal has witnessed decades of political volatility, protests, and multiple negotiation attempts. The state government maintains that any dialogue should be inclusive, involving local stakeholders and respecting federal principles.
With the interlocutor's office already operational as of November 10, tensions between the state and Centre are once again on display, setting the stage for renewed political friction over the sensitive hill issue.

India-UK joint drill 'Ajeya Warrior 25' begins in Rajasthan

JAIPUR
The eighth edition of the India-UK Joint Military Training Exercise AJEYA WARRIOR-25 commenced on Monday at the Foreign Training Node, Mahajan Field Firing Ranges in Rajasthan. Scheduled from 17 to 30 November 2025, the 14-day exercise underscores the growing defence cooperation and interoperability between the Indian Army and the British Army. A total of 240 personnel, with equal representation from both armies, are participating in the exercise.
The Indian Army contingent comprises troops from the esteemed Sikh Regiment, renowned for its operational excellence and professionalism.
The exercise is being conducted under a United Nations mandate, with a primary focus on honing joint capability in counter-terrorism operations in semi-urban terrain.
Over the next two weeks, the participating troops will undergo an intensive and immersive training curriculum.
Key activities include joint mission planning at the Brigade level, integrated tactical drills, simulation-based scenarios, and company-level field training exercises designed to replicate realistic counter-terror contingencies.
These modules aim to strengthen interoperability, enhance tactical proficiency, and develop coordinated responses for complex operational challenges.
Special emphasis will be laid on sharing best practices, refining Standard Operating Procedures, and improving operational synergy for peacekeeping and counter-terror missions.
Instituted in 2011 and held biennially, AJEYA WARRIOR has grown into a flagship engagement between the Indian and British Armies.

REVIVAL GETS AI TOUCH

Ganga rejuvenation: NMCG embraces AI, advanced research

NEW DELHI
The 67th Executive Committee (EC) meeting of the National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG), held on Monday, marked a strategic shift towards science-led river rejuvenation, with a focused emphasis on artificial intelligence tools and advanced research systems. Officials said the meeting identified pollution abatement and data-backed research as central pillars in the ongoing effort to restore the Ganga's ecological health.
Chaired by NMCG Director-General Rajeev Kumar Mital, the session saw experts



backing a host of pivotal scientific initiatives. These include Digital Twin technology for the Ganga, high-resolution SONAR-based riverbed mapping, real-time hydrological modelling, and glacier monitoring -- all aimed at deepening understanding of the river basin and enabling precision planning.
A key approval was granted to a ₹3.98 crore research project titled Glaciers and Glacier Melt Runoff Changes and Their Linkage to the Hydro-climatic and Topographic Context in the Upper Ganga

Basin. To be conducted by the National Institute of Hydrology in Roorkee, this study will examine glacier retreat, evolving snow cover patterns, and resulting shifts in meltwater contributions to the river system. The findings are expected to support long-term water security and climate resilience plans.
Further research efforts include studies on Himalayan Ganga headstream glaciers, managed aquifer recharge in paleochannel zones, and the development of a historic geospatial river database -- providing the scientific backbone for sustainable river basin management.

The meeting was attended by senior officials including Gaurav Masaldan, Joint Secretary & Financial Adviser (Ministry of Water Resources), Nalin Srivastava, Deputy Director General (NMCG), and executive directors across administrative, technical, project, and finance divisions. Project directors from Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal were also present.
The new research-led roadmap underscores the NMCG's commitment to combining innovation, environmental science, and technology -- ensuring the future of the Ganga is shaped by actionable data, not just declarations.

QUICK READ

Protests against Constitutional Amendment grow

Islamabad

Activists from the Pakistan Awami Tehreek (PAT) political party and its women wing Sindhiyani Tehreek (ST) continue to protest against the 27th Constitutional Amendment, corporate farming, new canals on the Indus River, honour killings and the exploitation of the resources of Sindh province, local media reported on Monday. The party organised a march that began at Jail Road and ended at the local press club, where various leaders addressed the participants, Pakistan's leading daily Dawn reported. PAT President Vasand Thari, Noor Ahmed Katiar, Lal Jarwar, Dr. Rasool Bux Khaskheli, Abdul Qadir Ranto, and others led the march.

Disability rights advocate Alice Wong dies at 51

SAN FRANCISCO

Alice Wong, a prominent disability rights activist and acclaimed author, has died at 51. Wong passed away at a San Francisco hospital due to an infection, her close friend Sandy Ho confirmed. A trailblazer in disability justice, Wong amplified the voices of people with disabilities through her writing, advocacy and the influential Disability Visibility Project. Born to Hong Kong immigrants and living with muscular dystrophy, she used a powered wheelchair and breathing device throughout her life. Wong's memoir Year of the Tiger and her broader body of work celebrated autonomy, community living and authentic storytelling within marginalized disability communities.

Trump warns of harsh US sanctions on nations trading with Russia

Washington

US President Donald Trump issued one of his strongest warnings yet against countries maintaining economic ties with Russia, declaring that any nation "doing business with Russia will be very severely sanctioned." His remarks come as the administration and Republican lawmakers accelerate efforts to impose sweeping penalties on Moscow over its war in Ukraine. Trump said he supported congressional efforts to introduce tough new measures. "They're passing legislation... very tough sanctioning... on any country doing business with Russia.

SU DO KU

Brain-Bender: Can You Solve It?

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Solutions to Yesterday's puzzle

Su-30MKI and Rafale Jets Begin Joint Missions

Indo-French air forces begin Exercise Garuda 25, boosting interoperability, strategic coordination, and defence cooperation

PARIS

The skies over France roared on Monday as Indian Air Force (IAF) Su-30MKI fighters and French Air and Space Force Rafale aircraft took flight together, marking the start of coordinated aerial missions under the bilateral Exercise Garuda 25. The 8th edition of the air exercise is being held at Mont-de-Marsan Air Base in France from November 16 to 27.

In a statement shared on X, the Indian Air Force wrote,

Exercise Garuda takes off. Indian Air Force Su-30MKI and French Air and Space Force Rafale aircraft soared into the skies, commencing coordinated missions as part of the bilateral air exercise. The engagement reinforces strong interoperability and deep defence cooperation between the two Air Forces.

Exercise Garuda has long been a key pillar of India-France defence ties, offering both nations' air forces an opportunity to improve combat readiness, tactical coordi-



nation, and mutual understanding of operational procedures. This year's edition focuses on enhancing interoperability, sharing best practices, and deepening strategic cooperation.

The IAF has deployed its Su-30MKI multirole fighter jets for the exercise, supported by the C-17 Globemaster III for strategic airlift operations during induction and de-induction phases. Additionally, the IL-78 air-to-air refuelling aircraft is extending the operational range and en-

durance of participating fighters, enabling longer and more complex mission profiles.

The Ministry of Defence emphasized that such exercises not only build operational synergy but also reinforce India's commitment to strengthening global defence partnerships. The presence of Indian aircraft in French airspace highlights the growing trust and technological alignment between the two nations, especially as both operate Rafale fighters.

S Korea Proposes Military Talks with N Korea to Redefine Border Line

SEOUL

South Korea on Monday formally proposed military talks with North Korea to address escalating concerns over repeated incursions and rising tensions along the inter-Korean border. The move comes after multiple incidents in which armed North Korean soldiers crossed the Military Demarcation Line (MDL) while working near the border, including land clearing and mine-laying operations within buffer zones.

This marks Seoul's first official dialogue offer since President Lee Jae Myung assumed office in June, pledging to restore communication channels with Pyongyang and ease cross-border tensions. Our military officially suggests holding inter-Korean talks between military authorities to discuss how to establish the Military Demarcation Line, to prevent accidental clashes and ease military tensions, said Kim Hong-cheol, South Korea's Deputy Minister for National Defence Policy.

Kim expressed hope that Pyongyang would respond



South Korea seeks military dialogue with North Korea to clarify border lines and prevent clashes along the tense DMZ.

swiftly and constructively to the proposal, which aims to reduce tensions and rebuild military trust. He added that Seoul is flexible regarding the talks' format, including venue and schedule.

Since April 2023, North Korea has deployed troops near the MDL inside the Demilitarised Zone (DMZ) to plant mines, install anti-tank barriers, and reinforce barbed wire fencing. Kim Jong-un

has previously declared that South Korea is no longer a partner but a hostile state, deepening the security rift.

North Korean soldiers have crossed the border around 10 times this year, including an incident in October when two armed soldiers briefly crossed the line while attempting to pursue a defector. South Korean forces have responded by broadcasting warnings and firing warning shots in several cases.

One key issue is the deterioration of MDL markers—installed in 1953 after the Korean War armistice. Of the roughly 1,300 original boundary posts, only about one-sixth remain clearly identifiable.

Sheikh Hasina gets death penalty for 'crimes against humanity'

Tribunal rigged, ruling biased: Hasina

New Delhi: Ex-Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina responded fiercely after being sentenced to death, in absentia, by that country's International Crimes Tribunal for "crimes against humanity". The verdict revealed "the brazen and murderous intent of extremist figures in an unelected government", she said. Hasina also denied all charges and criticised the court for not giving her Awami League Party and herself a "fair chance to defend themselves". She also accused the tribunal and its members of bias.

DHAKA

Bangladesh's International Crimes Tribunal (ICT-BD) on Monday sentenced deposed prime minister Sheikh Hasina to death after finding her guilty of alleged crimes against humanity over her government's violent crackdown on student-led protests last year that led to the fall of her Awami League government.

The 78-year-old fugitive politician was on trial in absentia for being the "mastermind and principal architect" behind last year's suppression of mass demonstrations, in which some 1,400 people were killed.

The three-member also delivered its judgment against two of Hasina's aides. It sentenced former home minister Asaduzzaman Khan to death for his involvement in the use of deadly force against protesters. Both Hasina and Khan fled to India last year. A third suspect, former police chief Chowdhury Abdullah Al-Mamun, was sentenced to five years in prison after becoming



a state witness against Hasina and pleading guilty.

The former Bangladesh prime minister was "found guilty on three counts" of preventing justice, ordering the killing of protesters and failing to take measures to stop punitive killings.

"We have decided to inflict her with only one sentence -- that is, sentence of death," judge Golam Mortuza Mozumder read to the packed court in Dhaka. The tribunal, however, spared Al-Mamun from the death penalty after he became a state witness.

45 Umrah pilgrims from T'gana charred to death Saudi

Tour operators, authorities under scrutiny

Two Hyderabad-based travel operators, Flyzone and Al Makkah Haj and Umrah, arranged the travel for the pilgrims. Officials are verifying whether adequate safety measures and coordination were maintained throughout the journey. The Telangana State Haj Committee, although not involved with private operators, has extended support to the victims' families.



Saddened by the tragic accident involving a bus carrying Indian pilgrims in Saudi Arabia. My condolences to the families who have lost their loved ones. The Indian government is closely coordinating with Saudi authorities to provide all necessary support to the affected families in this hour of grief and ensure that the injured receive proper care.

—Rajnath Singh, Defence Minister



My sincere condolences to the bereaved families. Pray for the speedy recovery of those injured. The Embassy in Riyadh and the Consulate in Jeddah are providing full support to Indian nationals and their families.

—Dr S Jaishankar, External Affairs Minister



Continued from page 1

Repatriation of bodies: Priority for officials

Hyderabad MP Asaduddin Owaisi has urged the Ministry of External Affairs for immediate repatriation of the bodies, calling it the "top priority."

He confirmed speaking to both the Deputy Chief of Mission and the Consul General to expedite formalities.



At least 1 family member of victims to be sent to Saudi: Min

Hyderabad: Telangana Minister for Public Enterprises and Minority Welfare, Mohammed Azharuddin, on Monday said the government will ensure that at least one family member of the victims is sent to Saudi Arabia. Azar said he is monitoring the situation and the government will ensure that at least one member is sent. "I have received information that the bodies have been charred beyond recognition. A DNA test is also likely to be conducted to identify the victims," he said. The government has issued a helpline number, besides opening a control room at Haj House to provide information to families of the victims, the Minister said.

Risk of transport

Transporting worshippers around Saudi Arabia's holy sites has frequently proven dangerous, particularly during the Hajj, when roads can be chaotic with buses creating interminable traffic jams. Millions of people from across the world visit Saudi Arabia for the Umrah pilgrimage, which happens outside of the Hajj period. There have been numerous incidents during the Hajj, the Muslim pilgrimage to the cities of Mecca and Medina, that have caused loss of life.

Major accidents

- **November 17, 2025:** A bus transporting Indian Hajj pilgrims from Mecca to Medina collided with an oil tanker about 25 km from Medina, resulting 45 fatalities.
- **March 2023:** A bus ferrying pilgrims to the holy city of Mecca burst into flames after ramming a bridge due to a brake failure near Medina, killing 20 people of different nationalities and injuring more than two dozen others.
- **October 2019:** Some 35 foreigners were killed and four others injured when a bus collided with another heavy vehicle near Medina.
- **2015:** A stampede near the Jamarat area in Mecca killed 14 Indian pilgrims, including a volunteer.
- **2008:** Seven people, including one Indian, were killed when a bus collided with a fuel tanker near Riyadh. The victims were on their way home from Medina with a Bahraini tour group.

INDIA UAE DEFENCE

Minister Seth Holds Bilateral Talks at Dubai Air Show 2025

DUBAI

Minister of State for Defence Sanjay Seth met his UAE counterpart Mohammed Mubarak Al Mazrouei on Monday, reinforcing India's commitment to expanding defence cooperation with the United Arab Emirates. The meeting took place on the sidelines of the Dubai Air Show 2025, where both leaders underlined stronger engagement through institutional frameworks, defence exhibitions, and enhanced training collaboration.

Raksha Rajya Mantri Shri Sanjay Seth held a bilateral



meeting with his UAE counterpart Mohammed Mubarak Al Mazrouei, on the sidelines of the Dubai Air Show 2025, the Defence Ministry announced in a post on X. He underlined stronger engagement through institutional

mechanisms, defence exhibitions, training cooperation and encouraged exploring joint research, co-development and co-production for deeper defence ties.

As part of his engagements, Seth inaugurated the BRAH-

MOS stall at the exhibition and interacted with 15 iDEX winners showcasing next-generation aerospace and defence innovations inside the Vista Startup Zone. The BRAHMOS supersonic cruise missile drew significant attention, noted for its deployment versatility across ships, submarines, mobile platforms, and aircraft, and its precision capability against both land and maritime targets.

The Indian Consulate in Dubai highlighted the missile's presence as a major attraction, underscoring India's growing indigenous defence capabilities. Earlier, the min-

ister also inaugurated the India Pavilion, which features indigenous fighter jet technologies, advanced startups, and aerospace innovation under the national vision of achieving self-reliance in defence manufacturing.

Sanjay Seth is leading a high-level Indian delegation comprising senior officials from the Defence Ministry, Defence Production, External Affairs, and the Armed Forces. The visit marks a continued effort to foster strategic partnerships and expand defence industrial co-operation between India and the UAE.

QUICK READ



Truckers strike halt coal movement from CCL mines

Chatra
Road transportation of coal from Central Coalfields Limited's (CCL) Amrapali and Chandragupta projects in Jharkhand's Chatra district has remained suspended for seven consecutive days, as truck operators continue an indefinite strike protesting alleged police extortion. The strike, which began on November 12, has brought coal movement to a standstill, causing substantial daily revenue losses to CCL and the state exchequer. Officials warn that if the deadlock persists, several NTPC-run thermal power plants could face imminent fuel shortages. Transporters allege that police personnel stationed along the Tandwa-Simaria road, particularly in the Khadhaiya area, demand between Rs 5,000 and Rs 10,000 from each truck.

India's labour force participation rate rises in Oct

New Delhi
Increasing trend in overall Labour Force Participation Rate (LFPR) for persons of age 15 years and above, indicating an increase in employment, continued for the fourth month in a row to touch 6-month high level of 55.4 per cent in October, according to a statement issued by the Ministry of Statistics on Monday. Participation of female in labour force observed consistent increase for the past four months for persons aged 15 years and above. This sustained growth in rural female participation signals strengthening economic inclusion in the economy.

Your export crisis is self-inflicted: World Bank warns Pak

New Delhi
The World Bank has issued a strong advisory to Pakistan, warning that the country's export crisis is no longer a temporary problem but the result of deep, long-standing structural flaws. In its latest assessment, the Bank says Pakistan's weak exports are caused by inconsistent policies, distorted markets and a constant failure to reform, according to a report by The News International. It urges the government to adopt a market-based exchange rate, cut high energy and input costs, and overhaul trade agreements that have brought little benefit. According to the report, Pakistan's export performance has sharply declined over the decades.

EPFO is ensuring PF services to all with speed: Dr Mansukh

NEW DELHI
The Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO) has transformed from manual processes to seamless digital platforms, ensuring that provident fund services reach every worker -- formal or gig, urban or rural -- with equal speed and dignity, Union Minister Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya said on Monday. He highlighted that EPFO has long served as a pillar of financial security for crores of workers across the country.
The minister observed that in the past year, EPFO has undertaken decisive steps to strengthen its digital ecosystem. The upgraded unified portal, revamped EPFO website, simplified claims processes, real-time grievance redressal, paperless onboarding, and doorstep support for pensioners through Digital Life Certificates (DLCs) have collectively enhanced the citizen experience, he noted.
The EPFO, for the very first time, organised its state-of-the-art pavilion at the India International Trade Fair (IITF) 2025 at Bharat Mandapam here, which was formally inaugurated by Dr Mandaviya.

India and Japan explore major energy partnership in Tokyo

India and Japan are strengthening energy cooperation through new investments and policy-driven growth in the Indo-Pacific region

NEW DELHI

Union Minister for Petroleum and Natural Gas, Hardeep Singh Puri, held a high-level roundtable with Japan's leading industry representatives in Tokyo on Monday, focusing on expanding Indo-Japanese collaboration across the entire energy value chain. The discussion emphasized the shared goal of securing energy stability and supporting sustainable growth in the Indo-Pacific, a region critical to the global economy.
Puri highlighted that India's expanding energy infrastructure, driven by Prime Minister Narendra Modi's leadership, presents unprecedented opportunities for international partnerships. India is currently



opening investment avenues worth more than \$500 billion across key segments such as exploration and production (E&P), liquefied natural gas (LNG), city gas distribution, hydrogen, new fuels, and shipping. This vast scale of development is backed by a young workforce, structural reforms, and a business environment that encourages global participation. He noted that Japan's cutting-edge technology and leadership in green innovation perfectly align with India's growth-focused approach and the vision to Make in India for the World. The minister also underscored India's liberalized policies, including 100 per cent foreign direct investment (FDI), transparent bidding processes, and year-round exploration licensing, which together create a predictable and investor-friendly business environment. India's six major oil

and gas public sector undertakings (PSUs) recorded combined revenues of approximately \$315 billion in FY 2024-25, accounting for around 8 per cent of the nation's GDP. Puri described this scale as evidence of India's role as a global energy anchor and a reliable partner for Japanese investors and technology providers.
Earlier this month, Puri reiterated that India is charting its own energy path from the sands of Rajasthan to the sea depths of the KG Basin. With 1 million sq km of offshore area now open for exploration and 99 per cent of 'No-Go' areas cleared, India is accelerating its search for new energy reserves and technological advancement through international collaboration.

Piyush Goyal launches new innovation initiative to strengthen deep-tech, promote sustainability, and accelerate circular economy solutions in plastics

Goyal launches 'Startup Search Initiative' to boost sustainability

NEW DELHI

Union Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal on Monday reaffirmed the government's dedication to fostering India's deep-tech ecosystem, easing business operations, reducing regulatory burdens, and encouraging innovation. He was speaking at the launch of the 'Startup Search Initiative,' a joint effort by IIM Calcutta Innovation Park (IIMCIP) and PlastIndia Foundation, designed to support pioneering startups in the plastics sector.
The launch event, held simultaneously in New Delhi, Kolkata, and Mumbai, marked a major step toward advancing India's sustainability and innovation goals. Goyal emphasized the importance of technology and entrepreneurship in reshaping the plastics industry, particularly

in achieving India's vision of 100 per cent reuse and recycling of plastic waste. The government is committed to strengthening India's deep-tech ecosystem, enhancing ease of doing business, reducing compliance burden, and promoting innovation and entrepreneurship, Goyal said. He expressed confidence that this initiative would accelerate the transition of the plastics industry toward environmentally responsible and circular practices, in alignment with global sustainability benchmarks.
The Startup Search Initiative aims to identify high-potential innovators and connect them with investors, industry experts, and funding opportunities. The



program will prioritize startups working in areas such as plastic waste recycling, alternative materials, circular economy models, and energy-efficient processes. Selected startups will also gain the opportunity to present their solutions at PLASTINDIA 2026, one of the largest plastics exhibitions in the country, scheduled for next February in New Delhi under the theme Bharat Next. This platform is expected to provide innovators a global stage to showcase cutting-edge technologies and sustainable strategies.
Ravish Kamath, President of PlastIndia Foundation, noted that partnering with IIM Calcutta would enable the identification of innovative solutions through a nationwide startup challenge. The initiative, he said, represents a crucial step toward supporting both environmental goals and industrial transformation in India's plastics sector.

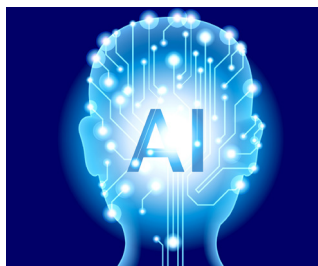
CBDT chief confident of achieving ₹25.2 lakh crore tax collection

NEW DELHI

Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) Chairman Ravi Agrawal on Monday expressed hope to meet the income tax collection target of Rs 25.20 lakh crore by the end of the current financial year (FY26). Speaking on the sidelines of the India International Trade Fair (IITF) here, Agrawal stated direct tax mop-up is growing at 6.99 per cent as compared to last year, which is an encouraging trend. And we're hoping that we can reach the goals by the end of the year. The response from taxpayers has also been good, he added. Due to slower refunds and increased corporate tax

mop-up, net direct tax collection increased 6.99 per cent from April 1 to November 10 of this fiscal year to over Rs 12.92 lakh crore. Up until November 10, refunds fell 18 per cent to more than Rs 2.42 lakh crore. He added that the deadline for submitting audit returns for the 2024-2025 fiscal year has been extended and that there are still two advance tax instalments due for the current fiscal year. The CBDT chief stated that by December 10, we could be able to catch up. Earlier CBDT data showed that India's net direct tax collection recorded 9.18 per cent growth to cross Rs

10.82 lakh crore till September 17 this fiscal compared to the same period of the previous financial year, as there was a sharp decline of 23.87 per cent in refunds. Of the total amount, non-corporate tax revenue grew by 13.67 per cent to Rs 5.83 lakh crore during the period. The tax is paid by a specific set of entities that are not registered as companies under the Companies Act. Net corporate tax collections grew by 4.93 per cent to Rs 4.72 lakh crore, while securities transactions tax (STT) increased marginally by 0.57 per cent to Rs 26,305.72 crore, according to the official figures.



By 2027, AI will create more jobs than it destroys: Report

HYDERABAD

Artificial intelligence is expected to transform the global workforce in the coming years as by 2027 AI will create more jobs than it eliminates, a new report said on Monday. The data compiled by Gartner suggests that the impact will be more positive than many fear -- marking a shift from concerns about job losses to a focus on workforce transformation.
The insights were shared at the Gartner IT Symposium/Xpo 2025, taking place in Kochi, where analysts addressed over 1,100 CIOs and IT leaders. Gartner said that while AI will automate many low-complexity tasks, it will also open doors to new roles and entirely new skill sets. The report stressed that the real challenge is not just AI readiness but human readiness -- ensuring employees have the ability and mindset to work effectively with AI.
Gartner's July 2025 survey of more than 700 CIOs showed that by 2030, IT work will be deeply integrated with AI. IOs expect that no IT task will be done entirely by humans, 75 per cent will involve humans working with AI, and 25 per cent will be handled by AI alone. Analysts noted that few organisations are currently preparing their workforce for this shift. Arun Chandrasekaran, Distinguished VP Analyst at Gartner, said companies should begin reshaping their workforces now. He explained that instead of job cuts, organisations should limit new hiring in routine roles and shift existing talent toward emerging.

Air India resumes Delhi-Shanghai flights after 6 years

NEW DELHI

Air India on Monday announced the resumption of non-stop flights between New Delhi and Shanghai starting February 1, 2026, marking the airline's long-awaited return to mainland China after nearly six years. The move follows recent diplomatic breakthroughs between India and China, enabling air links that were suspended in early 2020 due to the pandemic. Subject to regulatory approvals, the airline also intends to launch non-stop flights between Mumbai and Shanghai in 2026, further expanding its international network.



The Delhi-Shanghai route will operate four times a week using Air India's Boeing 787-8 Dreamliner, which offers 18 flat-bed seats in Business Class and 238 seats in Economy Class. Shanghai becomes the 48th international destination served by the Air India group, which continues to fly more international passengers than any other Indian carrier.
Campbell Wilson, Air India's CEO & Managing Director, described the reinstated service as a symbol of renewed connectivity between two historic nations. The resumption of our Delhi-Shanghai services is more than a

Air India restores direct Delhi-Shanghai flights, strengthening India-China connectivity for business, education, healthcare, and cultural exchanges.

route launch. It is a bridge between two great, ancient civilisations and modern economic powerhouses, he said. Wilson added that the flights would support opportunities across sectors including business, trade, healthcare, education, and culture, backed by Air India's signature Indian hospitality.
Air India first began flying nonstop to mainland China in October 2000. The reinstated service is expected to significantly enhance bilateral movement, especially in fast-growing sectors like pharmaceuticals, technology, and higher education. Bookings for the Delhi-Shanghai service are now open across all channels, the airline confirmed.
Meanwhile, IndiGo has also expanded its China operations, launching daily non-stop flights between Delhi and Guangzhou. IndiGo CEO Pieter Elbers said the new route strengthens the airline's footprint in China after the successful revival of its Kolkata-Guangzhou service.



Adani Foundation, Adani Electricity celebrate Children's Day

NEW DELHI

The Adani Foundation, supported by Adani Electricity, recently celebrated Children's Day with over one lakh students from schools in Mumbai. Under Project 'Uththan', Adani Foundation and Adani Electricity celebrated the day under the theme 'Bachpan Ka Utsav' on November 14, across 25 wards, 900+ schools, and over one lakh students in Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) schools in Mumbai, according to an official statement. As per the theme 'Bachpan Ka Utsav', schools came alive with joyful learning experiences: fun games hour, talent shows with songs, dance, and mimicry, and a special 'teachers as students' role play where teachers and principals became learners for a day.
Children also enjoyed drawing, painting, brain teasers, thumb painting, and relay games. The celebrations boosted confidence, enabled teamwork, and fostered emotional bonding among students, reflecting the National Ed-

ucation Policy's (NEP) 2020 vision of play-based, activity-oriented learning in the foundational years. Project Uththan is a flagship education initiative of the Adani Foundation, implemented in partnership with Adani Electricity Mumbai Limited (AEML). The project aims to strengthen foundational learning outcomes and improve the overall quality of education in BMC schools. Launched with the vision of enabling every child to learn with confidence, joy, and curiosity, Project Uththan focuses on enhancing foundational literacy and numeracy (FLN) skills. It also provides experiential and activity-based learning opportunities; supports teachers through capacity-building and modern pedagogical tools; creates a positive, inclusive, and engaging school environment; and aligns classroom practices with the objectives of the NEP 2020. Project Uththan operates across 25 wards of Mumbai, covering more than 900 BMC schools and reaching more than 1 lakh students annually.

IMEI TAMPERING PENALTIES

Govt warns mobile industries against IMEI tampering

MUMBAI

The Government of India on Monday issued a stern advisory to mobile handset manufacturers, importers, brand owners, and resellers, stressing strict adherence to mandatory International Mobile Equipment Identity (IMEI) registration and warning of serious legal action against any form of IMEI tampering. The caution comes from the Department of Telecommunications (DoT), which reiterated that the recently enacted Telecommunications Act, 2023 introduces stringent pro-



visions to protect telecom security and curb the circulation of counterfeit and tampered devices. According to the DoT, Section 42(3)(c) of the Act explicitly prohibits tampering with telecommunica-

tion identifiers, including IMEI numbers. Further, Section 42(3)(f) makes it an offence to willfully possess any device—such as mobile phones, modems, modules, or SIM boxes—knowing that it carries unauthorized or altered identifiers. Violators face harsh penalties, including imprisonment for up to three years, fines reaching ₹50 lakh, or both. The offences are classified as cognizable and non-bailable under Section 42(7), meaning arrests can be made without a warrant. Those aiding or abetting such crimes are subject to the same punishment under Section 42(6). To strengthen digital security, the Telecom Cyber Security Rules, 2024 mandate that all manufacturers register IMEI numbers of every device—whether for

sale, testing, research, or development—on the Device Setu (ICDR) portal before their first commercial use. Importers must do the same before bringing any IMEI-bearing equipment into the country. The government emphasized that telecommunication devices form the backbone of India's rapidly expanding digital ecosystem. Ensuring secure, authentic, and traceable IMEI records is essential not just for consumer safety, but also for national security, crime prevention, and maintaining trust in India's telecom infrastructure.



Kajol wishes for a longer weekend day

Bollywood star Kajol once again made her fans smile with a light-hearted post on Instagram. Known for her funny and relatable thoughts, she joked that there should be an extra day between Sunday and Monday. In her Instagram story, she shared a note that read, “There should be a day between Sunday and Monday called ‘Hang on a second’.” Many fans instantly agreed with her wish for a little more time before the busy week starts. Kajol often posts cheerful and quirky messages on social media, along with warm moments from her family life. Recently, on Children’s Day, she shared photos of her kids, Nysa and Yug, and wrote a humorous message about parenting. She said raising children can be a lot of work, but also the most rewarding feeling, adding jokingly that kids should “shrink after 8 pm.”

Her husband, actor Ajay Devgn, also shared his Children’s Day greetings with a sweet picture of their children on a boat trip. He wrote that sometimes he wonders whether he’s their father or they are his, showing his playful bond with them.

On the work front, Kajol is currently hosting her talk show Two Much With Kajol and Twinkle. She will soon be seen in the upcoming film Maharagni: Queen of Queens, directed by Charan Tej Uppalapati and featuring a strong ensemble cast. The release date will be announced later.

Tom Cruise’s emotional Oscar speech

Tom Cruise delivered an emotional and heartfelt speech as he accepted his Honorary Oscar at the Governors Awards. The award was presented to him by filmmaker Alejandro G. Iñárritu, who is directing Cruise in an upcoming film set for release in October 2026.

Cruise began by thanking the thousands of people who work behind the scenes in the film industry — writers, crew members, artists, and technicians — acknowledging their hard

work and dedication. His voice softened as he explained why he has stayed committed to cinema for more than 40 years.

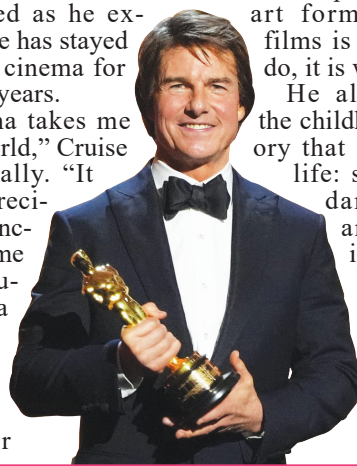
“The cinema takes me around the world,” Cruise said emotionally. “It helps me appreciate our differences and shows me our shared humanity. In a theatre, we laugh together, we feel together, we hope together

— that is the power of this art form. Making films is not what I do, it is who I am.”

He also shared the childhood memory that shaped his life: sitting in a dark theatre and watching a single beam of light fill the screen with endless possibilities. That mo-

ment, he said, “opened my imagination far beyond the boundaries of my life,” and he has been chasing that magic ever since.

Cruise, who already had four Oscar nominations, finally joined the league of Hollywood legends with this honour. The evening also celebrated Debbie Allen, Wynn Thomas, and Dolly Parton. Stars like Jennifer Lawrence, Leonardo DiCaprio, Sydney Sweeney and Dwayne Johnson attended the warm, star-studded event.



Dhruv’s Bison roars onto OTT soon

Dhruv Vikram’s film Bison Kaalamaan, directed by Mari Selvaraj, is set to make its digital debut after a mixed theatrical journey. The movie released on October 17, 2025, and while it performed well in Tamil Nadu, the response in the Telugu states was fairly average. Still, the film managed to gain attention for its unique storytelling and strong performances.

Now, Bison is gearing up for a much wider reach. Netflix has officially announced that the film will start streaming on November 21, 2025. Unlike its theatrical release, which was largely limited to Tamil and Telugu, the OTT launch will include Hindi, Kannada, and Malayalam versions as well. This multilingual release is expected to help the film connect with a bigger and more diverse audience.



POOJA HEGDE shines again with strong comeback

Pooja Hegde, who faced a tough phase in her career over the last two years, says 2025 has finally brought her the success and confidence she was waiting for. With no releases in 2024 and a box-office failure in 2023, many felt her career had slowed down. But this year proved to be a turning point. Pooja appeared with Suriya in Retro. Although the film didn’t do well commercially, her special song in Rajinikanth’s Coolie became a huge hit.

The track went viral and kept her trending for months, helping her regain popularity and industry attention. In total, she had three releases in 2025 and is now preparing for the release of Vijay’s Jana Nayakudu in January 2026. She also has two more projects lined up, including a Telugu film currently being shot. With a packed schedule once again, Pooja has stepped firmly back into the spotlight. Looking back at her journey, Pooja said the year has been creatively refreshing. “It has been a very satisfying year from a creative point of view, with the kind of reception and love I received for my performances, especially my role in Retro. And the Monica song turning into a rage added to that. It has been creatively fulfilling,” she told Travel + Leisure Magazine.



RASHA THADANI begins exciting Telugu journey

Rasha Thadani, daughter of Bollywood actress Raveena Tandon, is set to make her debut in Telugu cinema. After receiving widespread attention for her expressive performance in the song “Uyi Amma” from her Bollywood debut Azaad, she quickly became a popular face online. Now, she is ready to take her first step into the South Indian film industry. Rasha has signed her first Telugu film opposite Jaya Krishna Ghattamaneni, grandson of legendary actor Krishna and nephew of superstar Mahesh Babu. She will be seen as the main female lead, and the collaboration has already created excitement among fans.

The film is presented by Ashwini Dutt of Vyjayanthi Movies and produced by P. Kiran under the Chandamama Kathalu banner, with director Ajay Bhupathi leading the project. Said to be an intense love drama set against rugged hill landscapes, the movie promises strong emotions and striking visuals. Regular shooting begins later this month, with the title to be announced soon.



Balakrishna’s new song set for grand launch

The excitement around Akhanda 2 is growing fast as actor Nandamuri Balakrishna teams up once again with director Boyapati Sreenu. After the first film became a massive hit, fans have been eagerly waiting to see what the sequel brings. The team has already released the teaser and the first song, and now all eyes are on the second single, “Jajikaya Jajikaya.”

This new track is said to be a romantic dance number featuring a younger-looking Balakrishna alongside actress Samyuktha. Fans are especially curious because the first single received a mixed response. The makers seem confident, though, and are planning a special launch event.

The song will be unveiled at the famous Jagadamba Theatre in Vizag at 5 PM on November 18. A good crowd is expected, and the makers hope the song will create strong buzz ahead of the film’s release. Whether it lives up to expectations will be known once the crowd reactions start pouring in.

Aadi Pinisetty plays the villain in this 14 Reels Plus production, while Thaman is composing the music. The movie is set to hit theatres on December 5, 2025. It will release in multiple languages, and a 3D version is also planned, adding more excitement among fans who are waiting to experience Akhanda 2 in a bigger way.



Nora Fatehi slams rumours linking her to raves

Actor Nora Fatehi has strongly denied reports linking her to drug-fuelled rave parties allegedly connected to underworld figure Dawood Ibrahim. Calling the claims “lies,” she said she was being used as an “easy target” once again.

Nora reacted on Instagram Stories on Sunday, saying she does not attend parties at all. “I’m constantly on flights. I’m a workaholic with no personal life. On my off days, I’m at home, on a beach in Dubai, or with my school friends,” she wrote. She added that she spends all her time working on her dreams and has no connection to the people mentioned in the reports.

The actor urged fans not to trust the rumours. “Don’t believe anything you read! My name is an easy target. You tried to destroy me with lies once before and it didn’t work,” she said, recalling how she stayed silent when earlier attempts were made to smear her reputation.

Nora ended her note by warning against using her name or image for unrelated controversies. “Please refrain from using my name and image in situations that have absolutely nothing to do with me. This will come with a heavy price!” she wrote.



Sinner Retains ATP Finals Crown with Win over Rival Alcaraz

Sinner capped a dramatic year by defeating Alcaraz to defend his ATP Finals title

TURIN

Jannik Sinner retained his ATP Finals crown, overcoming great rival Carlos Alcaraz 7-6 (7/4), 7-5 in a gripping championship match that electrified Turin. The Italian star, buoyed by a roaring home crowd, closed his season with another milestone, adding the prestigious year-ending title to his Australian Open and Wimbledon triumphs.

The 24-year-old's victory also marked a powerful comeback from his three-month ban earlier in the year, imposed despite WADA accepting that his clostebol contamination had been accidental. With Sunday's result, Sinner extended his astonishing in-



door hard-court winning streak to 31 matches, dating back to the 2023 final he lost to Novak Djokovic at the same venue.

Four more wins would draw him level with Djokovic's 35-match run, still well behind John McEnroe's all-

time record of 47, but the form Sinner displayed this week suggests he is far from finished.

Both finalists had marched into the showdown, but the title clash demanded far more grit. The opening set stayed on serve until a tense tie-

break in which Sinner seized control with a deft lob before sealing it with a booming serve.

The second set began poorly for Sinner, who gifted Alcaraz a break with consecutive double faults—his first lost service game of the tournament. But he rallied, breaking back in the sixth game as the arena erupted once more.

Alcaraz, equally relentless, pushed Sinner deep into rallies, yet the Italian refused to yield. The contest ended with Alcaraz sending a backhand wide on championship point, prompting Sinner to collapse in elation before celebrating with his family in the stands. It was the finale Turin had hoped for—and the champion Italy had dreamed of witnessing again.

Haaland Inspires Norway to 4-1 Win Over Italy, Secures WC Spot

MILAN

Norway booked their place at the 2026 FIFA World Cup after a commanding 4-1 victory over Italy at a drenched San Siro, ending a 28-year absence from football's biggest stage. Erling Haaland, who has scored 16 goals in qualifying, struck twice in quick succession in the 78th and 79th minutes to seal the win and cap a perfect campaign with 24 points from eight Group I matches.

Italy had initially taken the lead through Pio Esposito in the 11th minute, but Antonio Nusa's thunderous equaliser in the 63rd minute shifted momentum decisively to Norway. Jorgen Strand Larsen added a brilliant solo goal in stoppage time to complete the rout. Coach Stale Solbakken hailed his team's dominant campaign but remained cautious about their World Cup prospects. Italy, six points behind Norway, must now navigate the playoffs in March.

Harbhajan Singh says overly bowler-friendly home pitches are harming India's cricketing growth

'They've Completely Destroyed Test Cricket': Harbhajan Singh

NEW DELHI

Former India off-spinner Harbhajan Singh has launched a sharp critique of underprepared and excessively bowler-dominated home pitches, calling them a "destruction of Test cricket" after India's 30-run defeat to South Africa on a treacherous Eden Gardens surface. The match ended inside three days, with India collapsing while chasing just 124 in the opening Test of the two-match series.

Speaking on his YouTube channel, Singh said such pitches prevent genuine player development and create a misleading sense of progress. "They have completely de-

stroyed Test cricket. Rest in peace, Test cricket," he said, stressing that this trend has persisted for several years.

He argued that India's continued success at home has masked the underlying issue. "No one talks about it because the team is winning, someone is taking wickets, someone is becoming great by taking those wickets. So everyone feels everything is going well. But this practice has been going on for many years, and I feel it is the wrong way of playing."

Harbhajan, who took 13 wickets at the same venue during India's iconic 2001 victory over Australia, said that

turning tracks do little to help either batsmen or bowlers evolve. "You are just going around in circles like an ox tied to a mill. You are winning, but there is no real benefit. As a cricketer, you are not growing."

He added that drastically spin-friendly conditions make even competent batsmen appear inadequate. "What difference remains between a capable bowler and a capable batsman if the conditions are so favourable that people are getting out because of the pitch, not because of skill?"

Calling for introspection, Singh urged administrators and curators to rethink pitch preparation to preserve the integrity of Test cricket and ensure balanced contests. India and South Africa will now head to Guwahati for the second and final Test starting November 22.



Bezzecchi Wins Valencia GP, Gives Aprilia MotoGP Victories

VALENCIA

Marco Bezzecchi powered to victory at the Valencia Grand Prix, delivering a commanding lights-to-flag performance to secure Aprilia's first consecutive MotoGP wins. The Italian repeated his heroics from last weekend's Portuguese GP, celebrating with a cheeky knee-down tribute to his bike after crossing the line.

Raul Fernandez of Trackhouse completed an Aprilia one-two finish, while Fabio Di Giannantonio of VR46 Racing overtook KTM's Pedro Acos-



ta late in the race to maintain Ducati's podium streak. The season finale marked MotoGP's return to Circuit Ricardo Tormo after 2024's cancellation due to devastating floods in the region.

Bezzecchi admitted Fernandez made the win challenging: "He was super-fast, getting closer lap by lap, so it was tough. But very happy with the team's work." Drama unfolded in the warm-up lap as Franco Morbidelli collided with Aleix Espargaro, fracturing his hand and retiring before the race started.

Polesitter Bezzecchi had a flawless start, while Ducati's

Francesco Bagnaia crashed early, ending a disappointing season with five consecutive retirements. Former champion Jorge Martin, returning after injury, was withdrawn mid-race as a precaution.

As the laps progressed, Di Giannantonio executed a late move on Acosta to claim third, showcasing superb tyre management and racecraft. "After half the race I got my rhythm again, saved the tyres, and fought hard for third. It was amazing," he said.

With this win, Bezzecchi closes the season on a high, while Aprilia looks poised to carry momentum into 2026 testing. The Italian's 2025 campaign now includes back-to-back victories, highlighting his dominance on the final two rounds of the championship.



Indians Must Risk Losing to Succeed: Freddie Spencer

COIMBATORE

Three-time MotoGP world champion Freddie Spencer believes India's aspiring motorcycle racers must be willing to "risk losing" if they hope to succeed on the global stage. Speaking after the conclusion of the JK Tyre-powered Continental GT650 Cup at Coimbatore's Kari Motor Speedway, Spencer said Indian riders often hesitate during crucial selection stages, limiting their growth.

Spencer, who dominated the sport in the 1980s and now works closely with Royal Enfield's racing programme, stressed that effort and resilience are essential. "You have to make the effort to try. You must accept that success requires pushing beyond what you think is pos-



sible," he said. Spencer has been mentoring Indian riders through the Royal Enfield Track School for four years.

India's presence in MotoGP remains minimal, with only S. Sarath Kumar and K.Y. Ahamed having made brief appearances. Spencer believes reinstating the Indian Grand Prix could spark wider interest. Recalling the 2023 event, he praised the Buddh International Circuit and said global visibility could inspire local participation. "A championship at that level reaches the general public and creates interest in racing locally," he noted.

Despite the challenges, Spencer is upbeat about emerging talent. "These riders have the potential to compete abroad. Royal Enfield's support gives them a pathway," he said.

In the national racing championship on Sunday, Bengaluru's Dhruv Goswami clinched the LGB Formula 4 title after winning both weekend races, overturning a deficit to beat leader Diljith T.S. Provisional winners were announced across categories, including Levitas Cup, Novice Cup and the RE Continental GT Cup, where Anish Shetty and Bryan Nicholas took top honours.

Spencer's message, however, remained clear: India can rise in global racing—but only if its riders dare to chase greatness fearlessly.

Rory McIlroy Loses Playoff to Fitzpatrick, Secures Seventh Race to Dubai

DUBAI

Rory McIlroy's spectacular 2025 season concluded with drama at the World Tour Championship as he lost a playoff to Matt Fitzpatrick but secured his seventh Race to Dubai title, making him the European Tour's season-long No. 1.

McIlroy eagled the 18th hole in regulation to force a playoff but dove into a creek on the first extra hole, handing Fitzpatrick the victory. Fitzpatrick, winning his third season-ending title, chipped to three feet and converted the par putt to triumph at Jumeirah Golf Estates.

Despite the setback, McIlroy's season was remarkable: a Masters win completing his career Grand Slam, triumphs at The Players Championship, Irish Open, and a pivotal role in Team Europe's Ryder Cup success. His seventh Race to Dubai title places him ahead of the late Seve Ballesteros and just behind Colin Montgomerie's record.

The final round featured nine players sharing or contesting the lead, with Fitzpatrick birdieing three of his last five holes to overtake McIlroy, Tommy Fleetwood, and Ludvig Åberg. McIlroy, waiting on the 18th fairway, executed a clutch eagle putt, thrilling the crowd but ultimately falling short in the playoff.

Fitzpatrick reflected on his season turnaround: "To finish the year strong, after a slow start, and contribute at the Ryder Cup, feels incredible. I didn't hit one bad shot today." McIlroy remains focused on surpassing Montgomerie's record in future seasons, confident that more milestones await. The Race to Dubai also secured PGA Tour cards for top performers including Marco Penge, Laurie Canter, Kristoffer Reitan, and Neergaard-Petersen, highlighting a competitive and memorable season finale.

Dubai also secured PGA Tour cards for top performers including Marco Penge, Laurie Canter, Kristoffer Reitan, and Neergaard-Petersen, highlighting a competitive and memorable season finale.



India's Dhanush Wins Air Rifle Gold, Murtaza Settles for Silver

NEW DELHI

Shooter Dhanush Srikanth continued his golden run at the Deaflympics in Tokyo, winning the men's 10m air rifle gold and opening India's medal tally. The 23-year-old, who debuted at the 2022 Deaflympics in Brazil with two golds, set a Deaf Final World Record of 252.2 in the final to clinch the top podium spot.

Compatriot Mohammed Murtaza Vania scored 250.1 to secure silver, while South Korea's Baek Seunghak earned bronze with 223.6. Dhanush had qualified for the final in first position with a score of 630.6—a Deaflympic record—well ahead of Murtaza's 626.3. Based at the National Centre of Excellence in Delhi, Dhanush added a second men's 10m air rifle Deaflympics gold to his collection, having previously won individual and mixed team gold in 2022. After over a year away from international competition following a triple-gold performance at the 2024 World Deaf Shooting Championship in Hanover, Dhanush will next pair with Mahit Sandhu in the 10m air rifle mixed team event, aiming for a fourth Deaflympics gold. Sandhu had earlier won silver in the women's 10m air rifle, while Komal Waghmare took bronze.

BARCELONA

Barcelona Weigh Renaming Camp Nou after Lionel Messi: Report



Barcelona are reportedly considering the ultimate tribute to Lionel Messi — renaming the iconic Camp Nou after the club's greatest legend. Barcelona are exploring the possibility of permanently incorporating Lionel Messi's name into their stadium, with "Spotify Camp Nou Leo Messi" emerging as the leading option, according to reports. The idea

has gained momentum following Messi's recent visit to the under-renovation ground, where he toured redevelopment works and revived discussions about a proper farewell in Blaugrana colours. Club officials see the proposal as a long-overdue gesture to honour Messi while he is still active and to heal the wounds of his emotional 2021 exit.

ABUJA

Nigeria coach accuses DR Congo of using 'voodoo' magic after shoot-out loss



Nigeria head coach Eric Chelle has sparked controversy after accusing DR Congo of using "voodoo" during their dramatic penalty shoot-out win in the 2026 FIFA World Cup qualifier. The match finished 1-1 before DR Congo triumphed 4-3 on penalties, ending Nigeria's World Cup hopes and sending Congo to the intercontinental play-offs. Viral videos online show Chelle confronting DR Congo staff moments before the decisive kick, gesturing angrily and picking up a water bottle before being restrained by Nigeria's assistants. After Congo converted the winning penalty, Chelle again charged towards their dugout but was held back.

tal play-offs. Nigeria's assistants. After Congo converted the winning penalty, Chelle again charged towards their dugout but was held back.

BELLEAIR, FLORIDA

Linn Grant cruises to second LPGA crown at The Annika



Sweden's Linn Grant sealed her second LPGA title with a dominant three-shot victory at The Annika, closing with a spotless 5-under 65 despite a final-hole bogey that ended a remarkable run of 52 bogey-free holes. Grant finished at 19-under 261, earning another trophy from tournament host Annika Sorenstam, who praised her com-

manding performance. Jennifer Kupcho briefly tied for the lead with an opening birdie, but Grant quickly regained control and never looked back, stretching her advantage with key birdies on the front nine. Kupcho also carded a 65 to finish runner-up. Mexico's Gaby Lopez surged to third with a late birdie run.

Satwik-Chirag Lead India's Charge at Australian Open

SYDNEY

With India's singles shuttlers still struggling to string together consistent performances, all eyes will once again be on the country's premier men's doubles pair, Satwik-sairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty, as the Australian Open Super 500 begins on Tuesday. The top-seeded duo, looking for their first title of the season, has been the standout force in an otherwise uneven year for Indian badminton.

The Asian Games and Commonwealth Games champions have delivered some of India's biggest results in 2025, including a second World Championships bronze and runner-up finishes at both the Hong Kong Super 500 and the China Masters Super 750. Once ranked world No.1 for 18 weeks, Satwik and Chirag had slipped to No.27 in May but staged a strong resurgence to reclaim the No.3 spot. They open their campaign against Chang Ko-Chi and Po Li-Wei of Chinese Taipei.

In singles, Lakshya Sen and HS Prannoy will look to rediscover the rhythm that has eluded them for much of the season. Lakshya, who endured a dip after his near-podium finish at the Paris Olympics, showed encouraging signs with a final appearance at the Hong Kong Open and a semifinal run in Japan last week. Seeded seventh in Sydney, he faces Su Li Yang of Chinese Taipei in the opening round.

Prannoy, returning from injury, aims to regain full flow after a second-round exit in Kumamoto. A former runner-up at the Australian Open, the 33-year-old meets Canada's Brian Yang. Veteran Kidambi Srikanth takes on fifth seed Lin Chun-Yi, while Ayush Shetty faces Malaysia's Justin Hoh. Kiran George meets sixth seed Kenta Nishimoto, and Tharun Manneppalli plays Magnus Johannessen. In women's singles, Aakarshi Kashyap is India's sole representative and faces a tough opener against Olympic champion An Se Young.

Haaland Fires Norway Past Italy to Seal First World Cup Berth Since 1998

MILAN

Norway ended a 28-year wait for World Cup football with a commanding 4-1 victory over Italy at a rain-soaked San Siro, securing qualification for the 2026 finals in the United States, Canada and Mexico. Erling Haaland delivered yet another decisive performance, scoring twice in the 78th and 79th minutes to seal top spot in Group I with a perfect record of eight wins from eight.

With Italy needing a scarcely believable nine-goal win to

Sangakkara Returns as Rajasthan Royals Head Coach for IPL 2026

The coaching reshuffle comes amid significant changes in the squad

NEW DELHI

Rajasthan Royals on Monday confirmed the return of Sri Lankan great Kumar Sangakkara as their head coach for the 2026 Indian Premier League season, marking a renewed phase for the franchise after a disappointing 2025 campaign. Sangakkara, who has served as the team's Director of Cricket since 2021, previously held the head coach role from 2021 to 2024 and now steps back into the position following Rahul Dravid's exit.

Dravid's second stint with the Royals came to an abrupt close in August despite sign-

ing a multi-year contract. His departure followed a "structural review" of the team's underwhelming performance in the 2025 season, where they finished ninth with just four wins from 14 matches. The management's decision to reinstate Sangakkara reflects a move toward stability and continuity as they attempt to rebuild.

The coaching reshuffle comes amid significant



changes in the squad. The Royals recently traded longtime wicketkeeper-batter and former captain Sanju Samson to Chennai Super Kings, receiving Ravindra Jadeja and Sam Curran in a high-profile exchange. The trade marks one of the most notable off-season moves ahead of the 2026 tournament, signaling a bold overhaul of the Royals' core group.

Ahead of the mini auction scheduled for December

16 in Abu Dhabi, Rajasthan also released seven players, including overseas names Maheesh Theekshana, Wanindu Hasaranga and Fazalhaq Farooqi. Domestic players Akash Madhwal, Ashok Sharma, Kumar Kartikeya Singh and Kunal Rathore were also let go as the franchise opens space for fresh talent.

With Sangakkara at the helm again, the Royals are aiming to revive their fortunes and craft a more competitive unit for the upcoming season. His dual role as Director of Cricket and head coach is expected to provide strategic cohesion as the team navigates its major transition.



Ind, Pak Blind Women Cricketers Showcase True Spirit of the Game

KATUNAYAKE

Blind women from India and Pakistan set aside months of political and sporting hostility, sharing warm handshakes and compliments during their Women's Blind T20 World Cup encounter in neutral Sri Lanka. The gesture, simple yet powerful, stood in stark contrast to recent tensions between the two cricketing nations, whose sighted men's and women's teams have avoided handshakes in high-profile tournaments this year.

The match, played at the Free Trade Zone grounds in Katunayake, saw both squads arrive together on the same bus and later greet one another with enthusiasm despite expectations that they would follow the frosty precedent set by their mainstream counterparts. India's blind players, initially expected to mirror the no-handshake stance, surprised many by warmly greeting the Pakistani side at the end of the match. Compliments were exchanged freely, and the spirit of cricket prevailed.

On the field, India cruised

to an eight-wicket win, chasing down Pakistan's 135 for eight in just 10.2 overs.

Pakistan captain Nimra Rafique congratulated India on their dominant performance, while Indian skipper T.C. Deepika commended Pakistan's effort. Though neither team was allowed to speak to the media post-match, their actions told a larger story.

Despite a sparse crowd, the game was telecast live on Sri Lanka's national

broadcaster, with visually impaired officials following commentary online. Indian team manager Shika Shetty said the tournament marked a "biggest opportunity" for vi-

sually impaired girls, encouraging more young women with disabilities to pursue sport and education. Pakistan coach Tahir Mehmood Butt echoed the sentiment, applauding the platform the tournament offers.

With teams from Australia, Nepal, Sri Lanka, and the US also competing, the event highlights the growing momentum of women's blind cricket. The final will be played next Sunday in Colombo.

Blind women cricketers from India and Pakistan share rare goodwill amid tense relations.

Pakistan seals commanding ODI series win with strong batting and pace

Pakistan Completes Dominant 3-0 Sweep over Sri Lanka in ODI Series

RAWALPINDI

Pakistan wrapped up a comprehensive 3-0 series victory over Sri Lanka with a six-wicket win in the final ODI, capping off a white-ball campaign marked by consistent batting and disciplined seam bowling. Chasing 212, Pakistan cruised home in 44.4 overs, thanks to composed half centuries from Mohammad Rizwan and Fakhar Zaman.

Sri Lanka, asked to bat first, squandered a bright opening stand of 55. Debutant Kamil Mishra and Pathum Nissanka gave the visitors early momentum, but Pakistan's pace attack quickly regained control. Haris Rauf and Mohammad Wasim initiated the slide, while wrist-spinner Faisal Akram, returning after a year, struck crucial middle-order blows. Sri Lanka's stand-in skipper Kusal Mendis contributed 34, and Sadeera Samarawickrama top-scored with 48, but the team folded for 211 in 45.2 overs —



their lowest total of the series.

Pakistan's chase began shakily when debutant Haseebullah Khan fell for a duck. But Zaman, building on his earlier knocks of 78 and 55, stitched a 76-run partnership with Babar Azam as Sri Lanka's second-string pace attack struggled with dew and errant lengths. Leg-spinner Jeffrey Vandersay briefly revived Sri Lanka with three quick wickets, dismissing Zaman, Babar and Salman Ali Agha to leave Pakistan at 115-4.

Rizwan, celebrating his 100th ODI, anchored the in-

nings with an unbeaten 61 while Hussain Talat added a steady 42. Their unbroken century stand ensured Pakistan crossed the line comfortably. Captain Shaheen Shah Afridi, back after a fever, praised his senior players. "Babar and Rizwan are the backbone of our team," he said.

Sri Lanka will now regroup for a T20 tri-series featuring Pakistan and Zimbabwe, beginning Tuesday in Rawalpindi, after a tense tour that continued only following renewed security assurances.

Jones imitates Ronaldo as Dolphins edge Commanders

MADRID

Miami's Jack Jones delivered a dramatic overtime interception and celebrated with Cristiano Ronaldo's trademark pose as the Dolphins beat the Washington Commanders 16-13 in the NFL's first regular-season game in Spain. Jones picked off Marcus Mariota on the opening play of overtime, setting up Riley Patterson's 29-yard winning field goal at the Santiago Bernabéu. The Dolphins had earlier failed twice on fourth-and-goal, while Washington missed a potential game-winner when Matt Gay's 56-yard attempt sailed wide. De'Von Achane powered Miami with 120 rushing yards, as Tua Tagovailoa managed a steady, mistake-free outing. Mariota threw for 213 yards and a touchdown but couldn't capitalize late.



Portugal Seal 2026 Wc Berth with 9-1 Rout of Armenia

PORTO

Portugal stormed into the 2026 World Cup with an emphatic 9-1 victory over Armenia, delivering one of their most dominant qualifying performances despite the absence of suspended captain Cristiano Ronaldo. Hat-tricks from Bruno Fernandes and Joao Neves powered Roberto Martinez's side to the top of Group F and into their seventh consecutive World Cup finals.

After a draw against Hungary and a shock defeat to Ireland earlier in the win-



dow, Portugal needed a convincing response and delivered immediately at the Estádio do Dragão. Renato Veiga opened the scoring in the seventh minute, heading in after Armenia goalkeeper Henri Avagyan parried Fernandes's curling free-kick

onto the post. Armenia equalised moments later through captain Eduard Spertsyanyan, but the visitors' joy was short-lived as Portugal shifted gears.

Goncalo Ramos intercepted a back pass and restored the lead before Neves

smashed home Portugal's third from the edge of the box. The Paris Saint-Germain midfielder doubled his tally with a stunning free-kick into the top corner as Portugal surged toward an insurmountable advantage. Fernandes added a penalty in first-half stoppage time, sending Portugal into the break 5-1 ahead.

The Manchester United playmaker continued his orchestration in the second half, scoring twice more to complete his hat-trick—his 28th international goal making him Portugal's sixth-highest scorer of all time.

BENGALURU

Billie Jean King Cup 2025: Dutch Outclass India in Playoff Tie



India ended their Billie Jean King Cup playoff weekend with a 0-2 defeat to the Netherlands, losing both singles matches in straight sets at the SM Krishna Tennis Stadium. Shrivalli Bhamidipaty fell 2-6, 4-6 to Anouk Koevermans, while Sahaja Yamalapalli went down 2-6, 3-6 to Dutch No. 1 Suzan Lamens, disappointing a strong turnout of home

supporters. With Slovenia already having sealed the group, the tie held no bearing on qualification, but India nevertheless finished bottom of Group G. Despite brief moments of resistance, the ranking gap proved decisive. Shrivalli, ranked 381, and Sahaja, 309, struggled to sustain pressure against their higher-ranked opponents.

GOA

FIDE World Cup: Harikrishna Crashes Out in Fifth-Round Tie-Break



Pentala Harikrishna bowed out of the FIDE World Chess Cup after losing to 26-year-old Jose Martinez Alcantara in the second set of tie-breaks of the fifth round at Resort Rio. After both classical games and the first rapid set ended in draws, the faster formats favoured speed-chess specialist Martinez, who clinched the first game of the

second rapid set before holding Harikrishna to a draw. In other key results, former World Rapid Champion Daniil Dubov, who had eliminated R Praggnanandhaa earlier, was knocked out by American GM Sam Shankland. Andrey Esipenko also advanced, while Alexander Donchenko survived a tense battle to reach the last eight.

KOLKATA

'Bring Legends to Train Your Coaches,' Matthauss Tells Indian Football



German World Cup-winner Lothar Matthauss has urged India to overhaul its football development system by inviting legendary players and elite coaches to train local coaches. Speaking at a promotional event in Kolkata, Matthauss said India cannot afford to stay absent from the World Cup while smaller nations like Cape Verde

qualify. Matthauss stressed that strong coaching is the foundation of strong players and advised India to begin at the school level by creating a unified system involving the federation, government, clubs and academics. He also highlighted India's struggles — from the lack of a successor to Sunil Chhetri to uncertainty around the domestic league.

