

# Across State

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## When Chips Are Down, Bet On India: PM Modi's Big Semiconductor Push



### New Delhi

In a big push for local semiconductor manufacturing, Prime Minister Narendra Modi today said India provides an integrated ecosystem for chip companies and the world can bet on the country. "This is the right time to be in India. In 21st century India, the chips are never down. When the chips are down, you can bet on India," said PM Modi at Semicon India, a three-day event that focuses on India's semiconductor policy.

The prime minister

said the country dreams to have an Indian-made chip in every device in the world. Over ₹ 1.5 lakh crore investment has been committed in semiconductor manufacturing and several projects are pending, he added.

"India offers unique proposition of a reformist government, growing manufacturing base and tech-oriented market," he told chipmakers. The country has an integrated ecosystem for semiconductor sector, and

provides stable policies and ease of doing business, he added.

"We are preparing the semiconductor workforce of 85,000 technicians, engineers and RNT experts," he said.

PM Modi said India will play a big role in furthering the global semiconductor industry. "Earlier, status was 'let the chips fall where they may'. Today, it is to produce more chips," added the prime minister.

India's Critical Mineral Mission will also support the semiconductor industry, said PM Modi, adding that work is underway to create a chip research centre at the Indian Institute of Space Science.

"Some people question why India is focussing on this. Such people should see the impact of Digital India so far," he added.



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## Shooting Ball Association elects Jalundar Chakor as working President

### Mumbai

Reportedly, the Executive Committee of the Mumbai Shooting Ball Association (2024-27) has elected Jalundar Chakor of Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation sports building as the working President.

The annual general meeting of Mumbai Shooting Ball (Volleyball) Association, affiliated to the national organization of Shooting Ball Federation of India having state status in Mumbai, was held on 23rd August 2024 at Parag Vidyalaya Bhandup under the chairmanship of the current president and former MLA Shambhai Sawant.

In the said meeting, a new executive committee was elected for a three year term -2024-27 and Jalundar Chakor was elected as the working President by majority vote.

Jalundar Chakor has been representing Brihanmumbai Municipal



Corporation Kreeda Bhavan Shootingball (Volleyball) team since 1996 and he was also selected for the national tournament several times from the Mumbai team. Under his leadership, the Brihanmumbai Municipal team has won many titles in the All India level and State level competitions that he represents. He has also coached the Mumbai team for the national competition number of times and has led the Mumbai team to victory many times in this

competition.

Jalundar Chakor is an administrative officer in the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation and the Director of The Municipal Co-op Bank Ltd. Mumbai. He is also working as an Expert Director of The Maharashtra Employees Banks Co-op. Association Mumbai. He ensures to attract sports youth to this outdoor sport by organizing division wise state level competitions in Mumbai and suburbs. Priority will be given to send senior national players to those divisional schools to teach the game to more students at the school level. He also ensures to try their best to get special skill marks for school athletes.

Working President Jalundar Chakor informed that efforts are being made to get accident insurance cover for the players registered with Mumbai Shootingball (Volleyball) Association.

## Mumbai's dabbawalas feature in Kerala's school curriculum for Class 9

### Mumbai

Mumbai's legendary dabbawalas, known for their unmatched punctuality and dedication in delivering lunch boxes across the city, have achieved a new milestone of being featured in Kerala's Class 9 English syllabus. A five-page chapter, titled 'The Saga of the Tiffin Carriers,' celebrates their inspiring journey from their beginnings in 1890 to their global recognition.

The chapter, authored by travel writers Hugh and Colleen Gantzer, is part of Kerala's updated 2024 curriculum introduced by the Kerala State Council of Educational Research and Training (SCERT).

It recounts the fascinating history of Mumbai's dabbawalas, starting with Mahadeo Havaji Bachche, who delivered the first tiffin box from Dadar to Fort for a Parsi lady in 1890, almost 134 years ago. The dabbawalas grew into a highly efficient system that has garnered international acclaim for their community-driven entrepreneurship.



Over the years, the dabbawalas have become a symbol of dedication and excellence. Their unparalleled service has been the subject of numerous films, documentaries, books, and even doctoral theses.

In 2019, Mumbai-based artist Abhijeet Kini created a comic book to highlight their daily grind. The dabbawalas have also been invited to deliver talks at prestigious institutions such as the Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) and Indian Institutes of Management (IIMs) and international business schools. "It's a great honour for us to have our story included in school curriculums. We hope this inspires the younger generation to appreciate the values of hard work, dedication, and teamwork,"

said Ulhas Muke, president of the Mumbai Dabbawala Association. "While we are grateful for the recognition we've received globally, we would also love to see a similar acknowledgment from the Maharashtra government," Muke added.

Muke accredits King Charles of England for the praise they are receiving worldwide as he was the first one to recognise their efficient service in 2004. The chapter in Kerala SCERT also states, "From those humble beginnings, this self-made Indian organisation has grown into a huge network whose incredible efficiency has won the admiration of international business schools and even Prince (now King) Charles of England."

## Kangana Ranaut sells Bandra bungalow for Rs 32 crore

### Mumbai

Actor and BJP MP Kangana Ranaut sold her bungalow in Mumbai's Bandra area for Rs 32 crore, according to Zapkey India.

Ranaut bought the property in September 2017 for Rs 20.7 crore and it was converted into the office for Manikarnika Films, the actor's production house. It is situated in Bandra West's posh Pali Hill area. The actor also took a loan of Rs 27 crore against the property in December 2022.

The total return for the property stood at 55 per cent with a Compound Annual Growth Rate of 6.4 per cent.

In 2020, the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) ordered partial demolition of the bungalow for illegal construction. The demolition was halted after the Bombay High Court ruled in

Ranaut's favour.

Meanwhile, the actor-politician's directorial debut movie "Emergency" has been postponed and a new release date is yet to be announced. The political period drama was scheduled to hit theatres across the country on Friday but the makers are yet to get a clearance from the Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC) and the matter is currently in court.



Ranaut, who essays the role of former prime minister late Indira Gandhi, had earlier this week accused the CBFC of stalling the certification to delay the release. The film has been caught up in controversy after Sikh organisations, including the Shiromani Akali Dal, which accused it of misrepresenting the community and getting facts wrong.

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# Shiv Sena workers to go door-to-door to popularise 10 key govt schemes

**Mumbai**

Amid the ongoing "credit war" between ruling alliance partners Shiv Sena and NCP over the Mukhyamantri Majhi Ladki Bahin Yojana, Chief Minister Eknath Shinde announced the launch of a new state-wide campaign called Mukhyamantri Kutumb Bhet. Starting Tuesday, this door-to-door initiative will involve Shiv Sena workers visiting 15 families each day to inform them about government schemes.

Shinde said he will personally kick-off the campaign by visiting 15 families who have benefited from various schemes.



The Mukhyamantri Kutumb Bhet campaign aims to educate families about 10 key government initiatives.

The focus will be on reaching

out to both beneficiaries of the Mukhyamantri Majhi Ladki Bahin Yojana and those who have yet to be contacted. Additionally, an app for the Majhi Ladki Bahin

Family Visit Campaign will be launched on Tuesday.

Earlier, CM Shinde held a video conference with Shiv Sena ministers, MPs, MLAs, and activists across the state to discuss the campaign's rollout. "As part of the campaign, each Shiv Sainik will visit 15 households of beneficiaries. The goal is to ensure families are informed about these schemes, verify whether they have received benefits, assist those who haven't, and explain the processes for other government initiatives," Shinde said. He expressed confidence that this initiative will ensure that no one is excluded

from benefiting the government's welfare programmes.

Additionally, Shinde announced an extension for the registration of the Majhi Ladki Bahin Yojana until September 30, 2024. So far, nearly 2 crore women have applied for the scheme, with 1.69 crore already receiving direct financial benefits.

The Chief Minister also noted that over 5 crore citizens have benefited from various government schemes, including the Mahatma Jyotiba Phule Jan Arogya Yojana, which recently increased its coverage limit from Rs 1.5 lakh to Rs 5 lakh.

## BMC launches second girder on Gokhale bridge, work to be completed by Nov

**Mumbai**

The Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) on Monday completed the launch of the second girder of the Gopal Krishna Gokhale bridge in Andheri. The girder was partially launched on September 5.

Last week, the BMC was able

with the approach roads. After the beams are lowered, the balance work including constructing the approach roads will be completed," the BMC said.

The BMC has further mentioned that the work of constructing the bridge will be completed by November this year,

while the construction works pertaining to the approach roads will be finished by April next year. The officials said that after the girders are

fully in place, ancillary work like setting up of traffic lights, and road signage will be taken up.

A prime east-west connector in suburban Mumbai, the Gokhale Bridge is at present partially operational with the first girder being opened for vehicle movement in February last year. Earlier in November 2022, the bridge was officially shut by civic authorities citing structural instability, following which the old structure was demolished and a new bridge was constructed.



to slide the girder by 25 metres and the remaining 71 metres was pending, considering the latter would pass above the railway tracks and the authorities would have required a railway block as a precautionary measure.

The BMC in a statement on Monday said they managed to slide the girder 86 metres towards the western side of Andheri station. "Over the next few days, the metal beams of the girder will be lowered by eight metres to match their level of alignment

## Union Home Minister Amit Shah Visits Lalbaugcha Raja In Mumbai

**Mumbai**

Ahead of Maharashtra assembly elections, Union Home Minister Amit Shah is on a two-day tour to the state. After meetings with state BJP leaders and CM Eknath Shinde and Deputy CM Ajit Pawar on Sunday, Shah visited traditional Ganpati Mandals in Mumbai to take blessings on the occasion of Ganesh Utsav.

On Monday, Shah took darshan Lalbaugcha Raja and Andheri's sarvajanik Mandal headed by MLA Ashish Shelar. He also visited the residences of CM Eknath Shinde and Dy CM Devendra Fadnavis to take blessings of Lord Ganesha.

School Education Minister Deepak Kesarkar, BJP State President Chandrashekhar Bawankule, BJP National General Secretary Vinod Tawde, former MP Raosaheb Danve, BJP Mumbai President Ashish Shelar were also present on this occasion.

On Monday, questions were raised on the apparent discord within the Mahayuti. During his visits to Ganpati Mandals, Amit Shah was accompanied by CM Eknath Shinde and Dy CM Devendra Fadnavis. However, Deputy CM and NCP chief



Ajit Pawar was not seen. The tensions within Mahayuti are visible lately after comments from Shiv Sena ministers on Ajit Pawar.

Amit Shah's visit to Maharashtra is not limited to take darshan of Lord Ganesha. The Home Minister had lined up three back-to-back meetings

with BJP state unit leaders, a separate meeting with CM Eknath Shinde and Deputy CM Ajit Pawar. The meetings assume utmost significance in view of the charged atmosphere in the state political circle that is witnessing most volatile moments in the last few days with controversies over running the government.



## Manipur on edge, curfew imposed in 2 districts, Net suspended for 5 days



### Imphal

Amid an escalation in violence in Manipur that led to widespread protests in various parts of the state on September 9, an indefinite curfew was clamped on Imphal East and West districts on Tuesday, while prohibitory orders under Section 163 (2) of the BNSS were imposed in Thoubal.

People have been barred from coming outside their houses. The state government also ordered suspension of the mobile Internet, broadband and VPN for five days (from 3 pm on September 10 to 3 pm on September 15) in Manipur. Meanwhile during the day, a high-level meeting of top security personnel was held in Imphal to review the law and order situation. No casualty had been reported from the state till the filing of this report.

Sources said top officials of

the BSF, the Manipur Police and the Assam Rifles held discussions in the state capital to discuss measures to check the surge in the violence witnessed since September 1.

Nine persons have been killed and 15 injured with drones and rockets being used by extremists to attack civilians.

The curfew and prohibitory orders were imposed in parts of the state a day after student protests demanding the restoration of peace in the strife-torn state rocked the Imphal Valley. During the protests, even the heavily guarded Raj Bhavan was stoned by the protesters.

The Centre has directed the deployment of two fresh CRPF battalions comprising about 2,000 personnel for security duties in the state.

Meanwhile, with Chief Minister N Biren Singh having

met Governor Lakshman Acharya twice in quick succession during the weekend, political observers say there is discontent among the Meitei BJP MLAs. Eighteen of them had accompanied him to the Raj Bhavan.

He had placed a slew of demands before the Governor. The key among these was seeking control of the Unified Command, which is currently governed by the Centre and is the main body governing the law and order situation in the state.

The political observers said the Chief Minister was learnt to have made the demand after consultation with his MLAs amid speculation that there was a rift within the ruling BJP MLAs over his leadership. Speculations are rife regarding the political developments in the troubled state with some quarters even hinting at the possibility of imposition of President's Rule.

The Unified Command is headed by state security adviser Kuldip Singh, a former Director General of the CRPF. He was appointed by the Centre in May last year.

The Unified Command coordinates between the central and state forces, and the local administration to ensure law and order.

## Maldivian Prez to visit India; 2 of his ministers resign over jibe at Modi



### New Delhi

Mohamed Muizzu, Maldivian President, will travel to India on an official visit "very soon", his spokesperson said today.

Heena Waleed, the chief spokesperson at the President's Office, announced Muizzu's visit on a day when two junior ministers, suspended in January for derogatory comments against Prime Minister Narendra Modi, resigned from the government.

She said while the exact date for the trip was yet to

be finalised, the two sides were discussing a date, which was of convenience to the leaders of both countries, a news portal reported.

"The President is scheduled to visit India very soon... such trips are scheduled for a time of maximum convenience to leaders of the two countries. Discussions regarding this are in progress," she said during a press conference.

Muizzu, known for his pro-China leanings, visited New Delhi on June 9 to attend Prime Minister Modi's swearing-in ceremony. Unlike his predecessors, who made the first port of call to New Delhi after assuming office, Muizzu travelled to Türkiye first and to China for his first state visit in January.

Heads of the states from India's neighbourhood and the Indian Ocean region attended Modi's oath ceremony. Muizzu said he was delighted to receive PM Modi's invitation and "equally delighted" to have attended the event. On his return, Muizzu described his first visit to India as a "success" for the Maldives.

## SC refuses to quash fresh FIR against Saini in '91 murder case

### New Delhi

The Supreme Court on Tuesday turned down former Punjab DGP Sumedh Singh Saini's petition seeking quashing of a fresh FIR lodged against him in connection with the 1991 disappearance and murder of junior engineer Balwant Singh Multani, saying a chargesheet had already been filed in the case.

In view of the subsequent development of a chargesheet having been filed in the case, the court would not like to interfere with the FIR, a Bench led by Justice MM Sundresh told senior counsel Mukul Rohatgi, who represented Saini.

However, it clarified that the observations and findings of the Punjab and Haryana High Court in its September 8, 2020, verdict would not come in the way of the proceedings before the trial court. Rohatgi urged the top court to quash the FIR on the ground that it was lodged in

2020 due to political reasons — decades after the alleged incident. Describing Saini as a "decorated officer", he sought to emphasise that time and again this court had granted him relief and even protected him from coercive action in the case.

However, the Bench said as the chargesheet had already been filed, it could not quash the FIR at this stage.

Multani, a junior engineer with the Chandigarh Industrial and Tourism Corporation, was allegedly picked up by the police in December 1991 after a terror attack on Saini that left three policemen dead. Saini was injured in the attack.

Saini's troubles started in May 2020 when he was booked at a police station in Mohali along with six others for the alleged kidnapping of Multani in 1991. The murder charge was added in August after two of the accused policemen spilled the beans.

The Supreme Court had on December 3, 2020, granted him anticipatory bail in the fresh case lodged in the 1991 disappearance and murder of Multani after setting aside an order of the Punjab and Haryana High Court declining him pre-arrest bail in the case, saying a long delay in lodging of the FIR can certainly be a valid consideration for grant of anticipatory bail.

Saini is also facing trial in a special CBI court in Delhi along with three others for the alleged abduction and disappearance of automobile businessman Vinod Kumar, his brother-in-law Ashok Kumar and their driver Mukhtiyar Singh in 1994.

Multani, son of a former IAS officer, the late Darshan Singh, was allegedly tortured to death in the custody of the Chandigarh Police in December 1991. Saini was the SSP of Chandigarh at that

time.

Multani was allegedly picked and interrogated as a suspect in the terror attack on Saini. He was booked along with Devinder Pal Singh Bhullar, a convict in a Delhi bomb blast case, for the attack on Saini. However, after a few days, the Chandigarh Police claimed that Multani escaped from the custody of the Qadian (Gurdaspur) police.

The family alleged that Multani's arrest and elimination were staged. On a complaint of Palwinder Singh Multani, Jalandhar-based brother of the victim, the Punjab Police, in May 2020, booked Saini and six other police officers for the alleged abduction, torture and elimination of Multani.

Later, former Inspector Jagir Singh and ASI Kuldep Singh, Saini's co-accused, became approvers. Multani's body was never found.



## Rashid gets interim bail for J&K elections

New Delhi

A Delhi court on Tuesday granted interim bail till October 2 to newly elected Lok Sabha MP Sheikh Abdul Rashid, popularly known as Engineer Rashid, in a terror funding case to enable him to campaign in the coming Jammu and Kashmir Assembly elections.

Rashid defeated former J&K Chief Minister Omar Abdullah in the recent parliamentary poll from Baramulla. The order came from Additional Sessions Judge Chander Jit Singh on Rashid's petition seeking interim bail to campaign in the elections.

The J&K Assembly has 119 seats, including 24 segments that are reserved for Pakistan-occupied Kashmir and five nominated members. Elections to 90 seats are scheduled to be held in three phases on September 18, September 25 and October 1. The counting of votes will take place on October 8.

Rashid has been in jail since 2019 after he was arrested by the



National Investigation Agency (NIA) under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act in the 2017 terror funding case. On July 5, the court had granted Rashid custody parole to take oath as an MP. He is currently lodged in Tihar Jail. The court will pronounce its order on his regular bail application on Wednesday.

Rashid's name figured in the case during the investigation of Kashmiri businessman Zahoor Watali, who was arrested by the NIA for allegedly funding terrorist groups and separatists in Kashmir.

## 'Dormant' firm made Rs 2.95 cr after Buch joined Sebi: Congress sees conflict of interest

New Delhi

The Congress on Tuesday made fresh 'conflict of interest' allegations against Sebi chief Madhabi Puri Buch, stating that contrary to the claim made by her and her husband Dhaval Buch, their consultancy firm Agora Advisory Private Ltd did not remain dormant after she became a full-time member and later the chairperson of the market regulator.

After US-based short-seller Hindenburg Research levelled 'conflict of interest' charge against the her, Madhabi and Dhaval refuted it, saying that Agora had become dormant after she joined Sebi in 2017. Addressing a press conference here, Congress spokesperson Pawan Khera said Agora Advisory Private Limited had received Rs 2.95 crore during 2017-2024 from companies like the Mahindra Group and others after Puri becoming a full-time member of Sebi in April 2017 and subsequently the chairperson

of the market regulator from March 2022. "Buch still owns a 99 per cent stake in the company (Agora). She has been caught red-handed lying about the company. This is a case of wilful concealment," Khera said.

Apart from Mahindra and Mahindra, the companies that availed consultancy services from Agora after Madhabi Puri joining Sebi include Dr Reddy's, Pidilite, ICICI, Sencorp and Visu Leasing and Finance, Khera said. Of Rs 2.95 crore received by Agora, Rs 2.59 crore or 88 per cent of the total income came from the Mahindra and Mahindra Group alone, the Congress leader said.

Khera said Dhaval received Rs 4.78 crore as income in a personal capacity from the Mahindra and Mahindra Group between 2019-2021. He received these payments while Madhabi was adjudicating cases of Mahindra Group as a full-time Sebi member, the Congress leader alleged.

## IAF officer accuses senior of sexual assault

New Delhi

The J&K Police have registered an FIR after a woman Flying Officer filed a complaint against a Wing Commander, alleging "sexual assault, harassment and mental torture". The FIR has been lodged under Section 376(2) of the Indian Penal Code at Budgam police station in Central Kashmir.

The IAF said the force was cooperating with the police in Budgam. Officials in Delhi said the police had been approached to get all the details. The IAF was aware of the case and have taken note of it, they said.

In her complaint, the officer alleged after a party at the Air Force Station in Srinagar on the New Year's Eve last year, a Wing Commander took her to his room on the pretext of handing her over some gift and sexually assaulted her. "I revealed the incident to two women officers. They guided me to file a complaint, but I was embarrassed and lacked courage to do so," the complaint read.

The officer claimed she finally decided to put up a fight. "A Colonel was ordered to investigate the incident," she said, adding to her shock, the accused was made to sit with

her twice. After a delay of two months, the internal committee met on April 2, but it didn't recommend any action. Her request for the transfer of the accused was also not entertained. The investigation ended on May 15 and no action was taken against anyone. "I continued to face social boycott and harassment at the hand of seniors. My personal communications are being monitored constantly," she alleged.

She said she finally approached the police for legal action against the accused and a few other officers.

## Defying SC directive, docs continue protest



directed the protesting resident doctors to resume work by 5 pm on Tuesday and said no adverse action shall be taken against them on the resumption of work. The court had passed the direction after the West Bengal Government assured it that no action, including punitive transfers, shall be taken against the protesting doctors on resumption of work. "We will continue with the cease work as our demands have not been fulfilled. We had asked the state government to remove the Kolkata Police Commissioner, Health Secretary, Director of Health Services and the Director of Medical Education by 5 pm. We are open to discussion," one of the agitating doctors said.

The junior doctors began their 'cease work' on August 9, hours after the body of the woman postgraduate trainee was found in RG Kar Hospital.

Meanwhile, former principal of RG Kar Sandip Ghosh was today sent to judicial custody till September 23 by a special CBI court in a financial irregularities case. The court also sent his security personnel Afsar Ali and two alleged associates — medical equipment vendor Biplab Singha and pharmacy shop owner Suman Hazara — to judicial custody till September 23.

Kolkata

Agitating junior doctors defied the Supreme Court's directive to join duties by 5 pm on Tuesday, saying that they would continue

with their 'cease work' until their demands were fulfilled and the rape and murder victim of RG Kar Hospital was given justice.

The top court had on Monday



# In US, Rahul says rights of Sikhs under threat; BJP rakes up 1984

## Virginia

Congress MP and Leader of the Opposition Rahul Gandhi whipped up a political storm with his remarks on the state of religious freedom in India, citing the example of Sikhs, at an event in US. While speaking at an event in Herndon, Virginia, on Monday, Rahul Gandhi said, "The fight (in India) is about whether a Sikh is going to be allowed to wear a turban...whether a Sikh will be allowed to wear a kada or go to the Gurudwara. That's what the fight is about, and it's not just for Sikhs, but for all religions".

Gandhi's remarks on Sikhs drew sharp criticism from the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP).

"In 1984, 3,000 Sikhs were massacred in Delhi, their turbans were taken off, their hair chopped, and their beards shaved. He doesn't mention that this happened when the Congress was in power," BJP national spokesperson RP Singh said, accusing Gandhi of overlooking the Congress party's own history with the Sikh community.

Singh further challenged Gandhi to repeat his remarks on Indian soil, warning of legal repercussions. "I will file a case against him and drag him to court," Singh declared.

Union Minister Giriraj Singh also reacted to Rahul Gandhi's statements and said, "The Congress, which has long



engaged in appeasement politics and was responsible for the Sikh massacre, is now trying to lecture us. Rahul Gandhi boldly claimed he would deliver 400 seats in writing, but those who couldn't surpass 99 seats are now talking about winning 400. We'll need to respond forcefully to such claims. Meanwhile, PM Modi has come to power for a third time, securing more votes than even his grandmother".

Union Minister Hardeep Singh Puri, a prominent Sikh leader, strongly criticised Congress MP Rahul Gandhi over his recent comments on the Sikh community at an event in the United States. Puri expressed

his disappointment, stating that he had been proudly wearing a turban for over six decades and a kada for even longer.

"I am not just a proud Sikh, but I am also proud of the fact that this government has gone out of its way to address the issues concerning the Sikh community," Puri said. He added that Sikhs have never felt safer and more honored than they do now, under the current government. In contrast, Puri pointed to a period of insecurity during the rule of Rahul Gandhi's family, specifically referencing the 1984 anti-Sikh riots that took place under Congress rule.

"In 1984, a program was carried out against the Sikhs. 3,000 sikhs were killed. Anti-sikh riots happened during Congress rule. Sikhs faced persecution under Congress rule. They were dragged out of their homes and tyres were put around them, and they were burnt alive. These are all documented," said Puri.

Puri accused Rahul Gandhi of spreading a "dangerous narrative". "Rahul Gandhi is surrounded by people who harbour harmful views, and this is a part of a more sinister agenda," Puri said.

The Union Minister also criticised Gandhi for making contradictory statements about India's economy and unemployment during his US trip, and for his attacks on the RSS. Puri suggested that Rahul Gandhi should better educate

himself before making such remarks.

BJP's Shivraj Singh Chouhan also attacked Rahul Gandhi over his statements in the US.

"Rahul Gandhi is defaming and discrediting the country. He is dejected and completely disappointed by the regular defeats," said the BJP leader.

Union Minister Kiren Rijju, too, criticised Rahul Gandhi over his statement on Sikhs, questioning the need for airing internal issues on foreign soil.

He remarked, "Why go abroad and expose your own shortcomings? Within the country, such immaturity might be tolerated, but what is the point of making it so evident outside? Who is attacking India in this manner?"

Congress leader Pawan Khera clarified Rahul Gandhi's statement, saying, "Since when has BJP become synonymous with India? There should be no misunderstanding that criticising the BJP is the same as criticising India".

The 1984 anti-Sikh riots were a series of violent attacks against the Sikh community in India, particularly in Delhi, following the assassination of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi on October 31, 1984, by her Sikh bodyguards. Over the course of several days, thousands of Sikhs were killed, their homes and businesses destroyed, and many women were raped.

## Months after BrahMos delivery, Defence Secy to visit Philippines

### New Delhi

Indian Defence Secretary Giridhar Aramane will visit the Philippines on Wednesday to strengthen defence cooperation between the two countries. The visit comes months after two significant developments: India began delivering BrahMos supersonic cruise missiles to the Philippines, and External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar reaffirmed India's support for protecting the territorial integrity of the East Asian nation. "During the visit, the Defence Secretary will discuss ways to further consolidate defence cooperation between the two countries," the Ministry of Defence said on Tuesday.

In April this year, India started delivering the BrahMos supersonic cruise missiles to the Philippines under a \$375 million order. A total of three batteries of the shore-based anti-ship variant of the BrahMos missiles are to be delivered. These missiles can target ships at sea at distances of up to 300 km. The Philippines is one of five countries — along with Taiwan, Vietnam, Malaysia, and Brunei — that are engaged in a maritime dispute with China over the demarcation of boundaries

in the South China Sea. Last week, Chinese coast guard vessels collided mid-sea with Filipino fishing vessels. Beijing claims the entire South China Sea as its territory and has refused to accept a UN ruling on the maritime boundaries. In March, after a bilateral meeting with his counterpart Enrique Manalo in Manila, Jaishankar said, "I take this opportunity to firmly reiterate India's support to the Philippines for upholding its national sovereignty." He added that India is "preparing to step up its engagement with the Philippines." In May, a flotilla of three Indian Navy warships visited the Philippines as part of an operational deployment to the South China Sea.

INS Delhi, INS Shakti, and INS Kiltan visited Manila, including a maritime partnership exercise in the South China Sea — the second such India-Philippines exercise since December last year.

Aramane will co-chair the fifth meeting of the India-Philippines Joint Defence Cooperation Committee (JDCC) in Manila. Senior Under Secretary Irineo Cruz Espino from the Ministry of National Defence of the Philippines will co-chair from his side.

## To summon Buch or not? Key Parl panel has no clear answer

### New Delhi

The issue of whether Sebi chief Madhabi Puri Buch can be called suo motu before the Public Accounts Committee seems to have divided the key Parliamentary panel.

The panel, which met on Tuesday to discuss the performance audit on the National Rural Drinking Water Programme of Jal Shakti Ministry, based on a CAG report, is learnt to have debated on the procedural aspects of the matter regarding summoning the Sebi chairperson before it.

While sources aware of the rules said the PAC, which mainly scrutinises programmes and projects on the basis of CAG reports, can summon a person suo

motu, the panel seems to be divided on the issue.

Sources said while PAC chairman and Congress MP KC Venugopal indicated that Buch could be summoned and a decision in this regard would be taken after building consensus with other members of the committee, BJP MP Nishikant Dubey is learnt to have objected to the proposal during Tuesday's meeting. He is understood to have said that on a suo motu basis, the panel could not summon anybody. TMC MP Sougata Roy had written to Venugopal on September 2 to summon Buch for the September 10 meeting. However, the panel chief is yet to take a call on it even as the debate within it rages over procedural issues.

## NIA chargesheets Laos firm's CEO in human trafficking case

**Mumbai**

The NIA on Tuesday chargesheeted the CEO of Laos-based Long Sheng Company in the high-profile human trafficking and cyber fraud case having an international footprint.

Sudarshan Darade, who was arrested by NIA Mumbai in June, has been named in the chargesheet as a key culprit in the case. Darade is the sixth accused to be chargesheeted in the case, and the third, after Jerry Jacob and Godfrey Alvares, to have been arrested.

A large amount of incriminating material has been recovered from his mobile phones. He has also revealed details to the NIA regarding another wanted accused, Sunny Gonsalves, as well as foreign nationals Niu Niu and Elvis Du, who are still absconding, official sources informed. The NIA is following up on the information to get leads on the absconders. Its investigations

have revealed that Darade's company Long Sheng, which is based in the Bokeo province of Laos, was actively involved in the racket relating to trafficking of youth to the Golden Triangle Laos via Bangkok on the pretext of job offers.

The company would conduct WhatsApp interviews and send appointment letters to the youth, who, on reaching the destination, were forced to commit online crypto currency frauds. On Darade's instructions, Jacob would arrange for the transportation of the Indian youth to the Golden Triangle Laos. Shocking details of the investigation show that refusal by the trafficked youth to engage in the cyber fraud in the Golden Triangle led to starvation and lashing in locked rooms. Some youth were even given electric shocks if they failed to meet their targets of befriending prospective victims on social media.

## 'Agla station khushi ka hai'; Delhi Metro's suicide prevention campaign

**NEW DELHI**

With incidents of suicide reported inside Delhi Metro premises, the DMRC has started a campaign to raise awareness about mental well-being and placed banners and digital displays at prominent stations across the national capital, officials said on Tuesday.

"Agla station khushi ka hai, darwaje aapki side khulengey (The next station is of happiness, the doors will open on your side)," reads one of the messages placed across the city as part of DMRC's suicide prevention campaign.

Issuing a statement on World Suicide Prevention Day, the DMRC said it has strategically placed banners and digital displays at prominent metro stations, including Rajiv

Chowk, Janakpuri West, Central Secretariat, Netaji Subhas Place, across Delhi to promote message of hope and resilience.

"The campaign also extends to digital platforms, with an

around the world with the aim to foster a culture of understanding and compassion to those struggling with mental health issues, the statement said.

"Agla station kamyabi ka hai, darwaje aapki side khulengey (The next station is of success, the doors will open on your side)", and "Agla station haunsale ka hai, darwaje aapki side khulengey (The next station is of courage, the doors will open on your side)" are also part of the DMRC's banners and digital displays, it said.

DMRC has long supported initiatives promoting a positive outlook on life with campaigns like #Nevergiveup, #Choosetolive with an aim to encourage open conversation on mental health issues, it said.



active presence on social media to engage the public and raise awareness about mental well-being," the Delhi Metro Rail Corporation (DMRC) said.

The World Suicide Prevention Day is observed

## Netflix series on IC 814 'an attempt to rewrite history', says PIL in SC

**New Delhi**

Describing the Netflix series on IC 814 hijack as "a vile attempt to rewrite history" and subtly glorify hijackers' actions, a PIL in the Supreme Court on Tuesday sought setting up of an autonomous body to monitor, filter and regulate content on over-the-top (OTT) and other platforms.

The petitioners – advocate Shashank Shekhar Jha and Apurva Arhatia – referred to Netflix series 'IC 814: The Kandahar Hijack' to highlight the need for such a regulatory mechanism.

As the producers claimed the series was based on real-life incidents, the petitioners termed it "a vile attempt to rewrite history, downplay the terror inflicted by the actual hijackers, and subtly glorify their actions...by reducing the tragedy of IC 814 to a farcical narrative..."

They said, "...the series tried to promote the insidious agenda that seeks to whitewash the brutality of terrorism and

vilify the Hindu community."

They urged the top court to direct the Centre "to constitute an autonomous body/board namely 'Central Board for Regulation and Monitoring of Online



Video Contents' to monitor and filter the contents and regulate the videos on various platforms for viewers in India".

Such a board must be headed by a secretary-level IAS officer and have members from varied fields including the film industry, cinematography, media, defence forces, the legal profession and

members of academia, the PIL demanded.

The Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC) – popularly known as censor board -- is statutorily mandated to regulate public exhibition of films under the Cinematograph Act which provides for a strict certification process for commercial films.

"However, no such body is available to monitor/regulate the OTT content and they are only bound by the self-regulations which are not compiled properly and the controversial content is shown to the public at large without any checks and balances," the petitioners submitted.

In the absence of a CBFC-type body for the OTT and other digital media platforms, filmmakers often release content without getting clearance certificates for films and web series from government authorities.

More than 40 OTT platforms were providing "paid, ad-inclusive, and free content" to citizens and abuse the right

to expression granted in Article 19, said the petitioners, who made the ministries of Information and Broadcasting, Health and Family Welfare, Women and Child Development, Defence and the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India parties to the PIL.

Describing the IT Rules, 2021, notified by the Centre to self-regulate OTT platforms as "inefficient", the PIL said the unregulated portals were releasing everything without any moderation and common people in India were watching such content in the comfort of their houses which could ultimately lead to various problems in future.

"The issue pertains to the abuse of fundamental rights of equality (Article 14), freedom of expression (Article 19), thus infringing right to life of people at large (Article 21) and Article 47 mandating state to improve public health and prohibit the consumption of intoxicating drinks and drugs harmful to health," they contended.



# PM Modi chairs 1st governing board meeting of Anusandhan National Research Foundation

## New Delhi

Prime Minister Narendra Modi chaired the first governing board meeting of the newly formed Anusandhan National Research Foundation (ANRF) on Tuesday.

Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan, who attended the meeting said, "A landmark day for Bharat's research and development landscape as Prime Minister Narendra Modi leads the ANRF. Aligned with the goals outlined in the National Education Policy (NEP), 2020, the ANRF will bring more



scale, strength and synergies in research, innovation and entrepreneurship, help achieve sustainable development

goals and establish India as a hub of frontier research and solutions."

The ANRF replaces the Science and Engineering Research Board (SERB), established in 2008. It aims to seed, grow and promote research and development (R&D) and foster a culture of research and innovation across the country's universities, colleges, research institutions and R&D laboratories. It will act as the apex body to provide high-level strategic direction in scientific research as per the recommendations of the

NEP.

The ANRF will forge collaborations among the industry, academia and government departments and research institutions, and create an interface mechanism for participation and contribution of industries and state governments, in addition to the scientific and line ministries.

Officials say one of the goals of the ANRF would be to address the infrastructural gap in state and central universities and to enhance research capabilities.

## Amit Shah launches 'Suspect Registry' to combat cybercrime

## New Delhi

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Tuesday said that in the age of increasing digital transactions, there was a need to create greater awareness among people regarding helpline 1930 created by the Indian Cybercrime Coordination Centre (I4C).

Addressing a gathering on the occasion of the first foundation day celebration of I4C, Shah said the centre had issued more than 600 advisories and blocked several websites, social media pages, mobile apps and accounts used by cybercriminals.

Highlighting the need for all states to work unitedly as cybercriminals worked beyond boundaries, he said the creation of a Suspect Registry, which he



launched on the occasion, would help in strengthening fraud risk management capabilities of the financial ecosystem.

"The registry will help bring all cybercriminals on one platform with the help of a common database, towards which all states will collaborate," he said.

Shah also called for the need to strengthen the fight against cybercrime. To achieve this goal, he highlighted the importance of using Artificial Intelligence (AI) while solving cybercrime litigation cases.

From September 10, I4C had launched an awareness campaign across the country. "Through more than 72 channels, 190 FM channels and many other platforms, we will try to popularise this campaign. The campaign won't be successful unless the victims know how to escape," he said.

He informed that with digital transactions having gone up by 78 per cent in the last 10 years, the need to curb cyber frauds had increased manifold.

## RG Kar hospital ex-principal, 3 others sent to judicial custody



## Kolkata

Former principal of RG Kar Medical College and Hospital Sandip Ghosh was on Tuesday sent to judicial custody till September 23 by a special CBI court in a financial irregularities case.

The court also sent his security personnel Afsar Ali and two alleged associates – medical equipment vendor Biplab Singha and pharmacy shop owner Suman Hazara – to judicial custody till September 23.

Although the accused were previously remanded to CBI custody for eight days leaving the probe agency with the option to pray for another six days of maximum remand, the investigators made no such petition before the court.

"The CBI has already secured large amounts of digital evidence on the alleged crime. We need time to analyse that evidence. We do not need the accused in police custody immediately. But we may seek their custody again later, if required," the agency counsel submitted in court.

Chaotic scenes were witnessed at the Alipore Court premises where Ghosh and others were produced, when lawyers, mostly women, demonstrated against the former RG Kar principal and tried to block the courtroom exit when he was being escorted out by security personnel.

Even the judge's appeals to refrain from agitation fell on deaf ears. The police summoned central paramilitary jawans to gain control over the situation.

## Congress MLA bats for DK Shivakumar as Chief Minister as Siddaramaiah faces probe

## Bengaluru

Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah's ongoing battle with corruption charges has spurred an internal race within the state Congress unit, with some leaders putting their hats in the ring for the top post. While slamming senior leaders for publicly positioning themselves for the top job, Channagiri MLA Shivaganga Basavaraj has come out in support of Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar.

Basavaraj expressed his displeasure over public jockeying, arguing that such behaviour only serves to create confusion and disunity within the party. He suggested that the decision on who should become the next chief minister should be left to the party's

high command, and that all 136 Congress MLAs were equally eligible for the role. "If the situation arises, DK Shivakumar will become the Chief Minister; the system is like that," he said, urging restraint among party members.

The MLA's comments come against a backdrop of growing internal conflict, with several senior Congress leaders making public statements about their desire for the chief minister's post. Basavaraj criticized this trend, asserting that it sets a poor example for junior leaders and could harm the party's cohesion. "They are all seniors and should not make these mistakes, and we juniors should not follow them," he added.



# Trump Vows To End Russia-Ukraine War "Putin Would Eat You," Says Harris

From abortions to wars to the economy to the housing crisis, US presidential candidates Donald Trump and Kamala Harris battled it out at their first presidential debate hosted by ABC news today. Eight weeks to go before the United States votes, the Republican candidate and the Democrat opponent met on the debate stage. At the start of the debate, Harris and Trump shook hands after they were introduced, ending an eight-year streak of no handshakes on the presidential debate stage.

Interestingly, this is also the first time the two leaders met, and Ms Harris made a point to introduce herself to Mr Trump.

Asked to respond to a question on the economy and the cost of living, an issue high on voters' minds, Ms Harris spoke of her middle-class background and her plans to support families and small businesses if elected to the top post. Targeting Trump, she said he would provide tax cuts to "billionaires and big corporations" and also reminded the viewers of the condition he left the economy in when Joe Biden took over. At one point, Ms Harris said, "Donald Trump has no plan for you."

As the debate heated up, Trump started targeting Harris on the Biden administration's record on immigration, she responded, "You're going to hear from the same old tired playbook, a bunch of lies, grievances and name-calling."

"Let's talk about what Donald Trump left us. Donald Trump left us worst unemployment since the



great depression. Donald Trump left us the worst public health epidemic in a century. Donald Trump left us the worst attack on our democracy since the Civil War. And what we have done is clean up Donald Trump's mess," she said.

At one point, Trump switched to a personal attack. "She is a Marxist. Her father was a Marxist." Harris was seen smiling throughout. The former President complained that he did not get enough credit for the "great job" during the Covid pandemic. "We did a phenomenal job with the pandemic," he said.

Moving to the key subject of abortion, Harris warned that Donald Trump will ban abortions if he returns as President. "She is lying," he replied. Trump appeared to be stumped by a question on whether he would veto a national abortion ban. He said such a law won't pass the Congress.

As the focus shifted to immigration, Harris said Trump would be talking about this subject a lot. She invited people to attend Trump's rallies because it's "a really interesting thing to watch". She said at the former President's rallies, he talks about fictional characters like Hannibal Lecter and that people start leaving his rallies because they are bored.

A livid Trump responded that no one goes to Harris' rallies. Trump then started talking about a social media conspiracy theory about Haitian immigrants eating dogs in Ohio. "In Springfield, they're eating the dogs. The people that came in, they're eating the cats. They're eating - they're eating the pets of the people that live there." This got a laugh out of Harris as she shook her head.

As Trump attacked the Joe Biden administration's record on crime control, Harris responded that the remarks were "so rich" coming from someone criminally

charged multiple times. Trump said the cases against them were an example of the weaponisation of the Department of Justice to target a political opponent. He then brought up the July 13 assassination attempt, saying "I probably took a bullet to the head because of the things" they (Democrats) have said about him. "They talk about democracy, I'm a threat to democracy. They're the threat to democracy," he said.

"I have travelled the world as Vice-President of the United States. World leaders are laughing at Donald Trump. They say you are a disgrace," Harris said, drawing a rant from the former President.

On the Israel-Hamas war in Gaza, Harris batted for a two-state solution. Trump said the situation would have never reached this point if he was President. He said Harris hates Israel as well as the Arab

population in the region. The vice president responded that Trump's claims were not true and stressed her support for Israel.

During an exchange on the Ukraine war, Harris said Russian President Vladimir Putin would be in Kyiv if Trump was president. Harris said Trump would "give up" in the face of pressure from Putin. "Putin would be sitting in Kyiv with his eyes on the rest of Europe, starting with Poland. How quickly you would give up for the sake of favour and what you think is a friendship with what is known to be a dictator who would eat you for lunch."

To a question on whether he wants Ukraine to win its war against Russia, Trump did not have a direct answer but said he wants the war to stop. "I think it's in the US' best interest to get this war finished."

As Trump constantly brought up the Biden administration's failures, trying to tie Harris to them, the vice president responded, "You are not running against Biden."

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Asked why he had questioned Harris's racial identity, Trump replied, "I don't care what she is." He said he had read that she was not Black. Harris calls it a "tragedy" that Trump tries to use racial identity to divide Americans. She said she is neither Biden nor Trump and represents a new generation of leadership. Trump responded that the current administration is "divisive".

## Russia, Ukraine have to negotiate, India willing to give advice if they want: Jaishankar in Germany

### Berlin

Underlining that the Ukraine conflict cannot be resolved on the battlefield, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar said on Tuesday that Russia and Ukraine have to negotiate and if they want advice, India is always willing to give it.

Responding to questions at the Annual Ambassadors' Conference of the German Foreign Office in Berlin, Jaishankar said India is not "closed to business from China", but the issue is in which sectors the country does business with Beijing and on what terms.

On the Russia-Ukraine war, he said, "We don't think

this conflict is going to be resolved on the battlefield. At some stage, there's going to be some negotiation. When there is a negotiation, the main parties - Russia and Ukraine - have to be at that negotiation."

His remarks came a day after he held a "useful conversation" with his Russian counterpart Sergey Lavrov on the margins of the India-Gulf Cooperation Council foreign ministers' meeting in the Saudi capital on Monday.

Recalling Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visits to Russia and Ukraine, he said that India has said in Moscow and Kyiv that this is not an era of war.

"We don't think you're going to get a solution out of

the battlefield. We think you've got to negotiate... If you want advice, we are always willing to give it...", he said, adding that countries have differences, but conflicts are not a good way to resolve them.

Later, at a joint press interaction alongside his German counterpart Annalena Baerbock, Jaishankar suggested including Russia in any discussions on the issue.

"When there's a discussion, we also think it is essential to have Russia in it. Otherwise, the discussions don't gain further movement. As far as India is concerned, it's up to what the two parties want. We continuously talk to them," he said.



# Enough is enough

THE ongoing protest by junior doctors in West Bengal, following the horrific rape and murder of a colleague, has garnered widespread attention and sympathy. Their demands for justice and safety in the workplace are entirely understandable. However, healthcare services cannot be paralysed indefinitely. Despite the Supreme Court's clear directive to them to resume work by Tuesday evening, the doctors remain on strike, a month after the horrible crime.

Public service, particularly in the healthcare sector, carries a profound responsibility. The lives of countless patients depend on the availability of medical professionals, and the prolonged absence of these doctors has already caused significant disruption in healthcare. According to the state government, 23 patients have lost their lives and an astounding six lakh individuals

have been denied essential treatment since the strike began. These statistics



offer a sobering reminder of the real-world consequences of halting medical services. While the SC has expressed sympathy for the doctors' concerns, it has rightly emphasised that protests should not be organised at the cost of duty. It has assured the doctors that safety measures,

including installation of CCTV cameras and separate duty rooms for female staff, will be implemented in hospitals. The doctors must trust the judicial process and reciprocate by returning to work. Their continued absence not only compromises patient care, but it also erodes public trust in this noble profession.

The doctors' refusal to comply with the SC order can lead to disciplinary action, including punitive transfers, as warned by the court. Their concerns over unsafe working conditions are valid and must be addressed, but prolonged defiance undermines justice itself. It is time for West Bengal's doctors to return to their posts, allowing both healing and justice to proceed without further delay.

// satyasya paramarṇ nidhānam //

We would like to hear from you. Please share your comments on [editor.acrossstate@gmail.com](mailto:editor.acrossstate@gmail.com)

*The way to get started is to quit talking and begin doing.*

-Walt Disney

## GST Council meet

### Wait gets longer for health insurance relief

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IN its outcomes, the 54th meeting of the Goods and Services Tax (GST) Council has been a mixed bag. The wait for relief on 18 per cent GST on health insurance and life cover premiums has got longer. The council has chosen the standard response to the growing clamour to reduce the levy. A Group of Ministers has been asked to review the demand. That said, the stiff 50-day deadline for a relook at the tax structure indicates a sense of urgency. There is little to justify the high GST on insurance policies. A political consensus on rationalisation of the tax slabs will help in the quick resolution of the matter, hopefully in the November meeting of the council. A rate cut could significantly



lower insurance costs for policyholders.

A welcome course correction is the exemption of GST on research and development grants from the private and public sectors to recognised

educational institutions. Several institutions across India had received show-cause notices last month, demanding unpaid taxes. Allegations of tax terrorism had put a question mark on the Centre's R&D

policy push. The relief is expected to boost research programmes and achieve global tax parity. The decision to lower the GST on some cancer drugs from 12 to 5 per cent is in line with the Budget announcement on lower customs duty.

GST collections have risen steadily after the Covid-led dip. There's a perception, and not without reason, that both the Centre and the states are averse to changing the taxation structure when revenues are healthy. The multiplicity of slabs runs contrary to the aim of streamlining the complex taxation system. An organic tax readjustment based on positive or negative end results is essential.



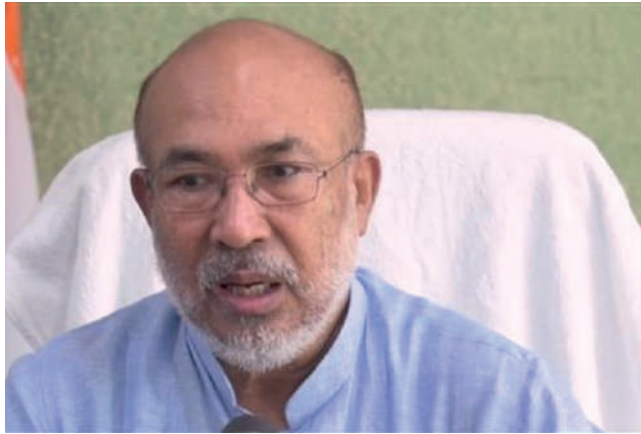
## Manipur in a mess

Central, state govts have fared poorly

MANIPUR has become a rather bad advertisement for a double-engine government. The left hand doesn't seem to know what the right one is doing. Amid a fresh surge in violence, Chief Minister N Biren Singh has appealed to the Centre to take steps to protect the state's territorial integrity. At the same time, he has demanded that the charge of the Unified Command — including the Central Armed Police Forces — be handed over to the state government. He is asking too much of the Centre, considering that his own handling of the situation since the Meitei-Kuki clashes broke out in May last year has left a lot to be desired. Despite his underwhelming performance, the ruling BJP has persisted with Biren. Even the outcome of the 2024 Lok Sabha elections — the Congress won both seats in Manipur, defeating the saffron party and the Naga People's Front — has not triggered a much-needed shakeup.

Both the Central and state governments have let things drift for far too long in the troubled northeastern state. Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who has been visiting one country after another, has not set foot in Manipur after February 22, 2022.

That election-related trip took place just a couple of days before the Russia-Ukraine war began, and the PM has toured both nations in recent months. Defending the indefensible, Biren has stated that the PM did send Home Minister Amit Shah to the state and also spoke about Manipur



in Parliament as well as in his 2023 Independence Day speech. But all that has certainly not proved enough to defuse tensions and reduce hostilities.

The use of drones by militants to carry out bombings has caught the security forces off guard. They need to recalibrate their strategy to curb violence and restore the rule of law. Also, the Centre must be proactive about bringing the warring sides to the negotiating table. The PM's direct intervention is a must to save Manipur.

THE upcoming Haryana Assembly elections mark a critical juncture in the state's political landscape. The elections have taken a decisive turn, with the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) releasing its first list of 20 candidates, effectively ending alliance talks with the Congress. This development transforms the contest from a straightforward Congress-AAP vs BJP battle into a multi-cornered fight, adding complexity to an already charged political atmosphere. By fielding candidates in key Congress strongholds such as Rohtak, Bahadurgarh and Samalkha, AAP has made its intentions clear. Leaders like Anurag Dhanda contesting from Kalayat and Kuldeep Gadhrana taking on the Jannayak Janta Party's (JJP) Digvijay Chautala in Dabwali signify that AAP is positioning itself as a serious contender. The decision to go solo, particularly in segments

with sitting Congress MLAs, shows the party's ambition to gain ground beyond its urban base. AAP's electoral success in constituencies

## Take balanced stance

Amend law to avoid ASI-Waqf boards conflict

THE ongoing dispute between the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) and various Waqf boards over the control of heritage monuments underscores the need for a balanced and thoughtful approach. The government must ensure that it upholds secularism while addressing this sensitive issue. At a recent parliamentary panel meeting, the

constructions like madarsas or washrooms built by Waqf boards have reportedly altered the original fabric of some protected sites. However, it is important to acknowledge that such structures are often linked to religious practices.

Instead of adopting a confrontational stance, both the ASI and Waqf boards should engage in dialogue to resolve these differences. A collaborative approach would help protect these monuments while also respecting religious



ASI named over 120 monuments under its protection that are also claimed by Waqf boards. The ASI contends that some of these sites were declared Waqf properties long after being classified as protected heritage. The Opposition, however, accuses the ASI of misrepresenting facts and displaying political bias.

The ASI has flagged valid concerns that religious bodies are modifying or adding to the original structures, compromising the historical authenticity of these monuments. Unauthorised

sentiments. This conflict highlights a larger issue: many heritage sites in India also have religious significance, such as the Babri Masjid in Ayodhya or the Gyanvapi mosque in Varanasi. The government must clearly define the responsibilities of both the ASI and religious bodies to prevent disputes. Amending the Waqf Act and related laws could help manage such sites without infringing on heritage or religious rights, ensuring a harmonious balance between preservation and faith.

## Haryana polls

**AAP goes solo; task gets tougher for Congress**



like Kalayat in the 2024 Lok Sabha elections adds weight to this bold strategy.

Meanwhile, this shift leaves

the Congress vulnerable as the splintering of the Opposition vote is likely to benefit the BJP. The ruling BJP, already facing factionalism and rural discontent, may use the fractured Opposition to its advantage, although anti-incumbency remains a formidable challenge for it.

As AAP and the Congress intensify the battle, regional players like the JJP and the Indian National Lok Dal (INLD) are increasingly fading away. The JJP, which once helped the BJP form the government, is struggling to maintain its rural base, particularly after the farmers' protests. The INLD, banking on its traditional agrarian support, remains relevant in only a handful of constituencies. The election, hitherto expected to be essentially a contest between the BJP and the Congress, now sees AAP turning it into a competition that will shape Haryana's political future.



# Paralympics champs

## Indian athletes deserve recognition, support

DHARAMBIR, Harvinder Singh, Nitesh Kumar, Sumit Antil and Avani Lekhara are not household names in India, but they should be. What makes them special? They are all Paralympics gold medallists. Overcoming enormous odds, they have excelled in the world's biggest sporting extravaganza for the differently abled. Their stories are awe-inspiring. Harvinder, an archer hailing from Haryana, was just a toddler when he was stricken by dengue; his treatment went horribly wrong, and he ended up with impaired legs. However, he had dreams far bigger than his disability. On Wednesday, he became the first Indian archer to win a Paralympics gold.

Dharambir, also from Haryana, was left paralysed from the waist down when he misjudged a dive into a canal and fell on rocks. Confined to a wheelchair, his future looked bleak. But he relied on the power of his shoulders and arms to become the Paralympics champion in club throw. Yet another Haryanvi, javelin thrower Sumit Antil, and Rajasthan shooter Avani Lekhara saw their world turn upside down by road accidents. But they rose from the ashes like the proverbial phoenix. With back-to-back gold medals



(Tokyo and Paris Games), Sumit has done what even his famous compatriot Neeraj Chopra failed to do.

Unfortunately, Paralympic Games don't excite too many sports buffs in India, and para-athletes are not regarded as 'real' athletes. This flawed mindset must change. Sports Minister Mansukh Mandaviya has rightly urged people to cheer for the athletes

participating in the Paris Paralympics, but a lot more needs to be done to support sportspersons who defy disabilities to win laurels. Most of us might be unaware of the myriad categories of competitions, but that should not stop us from saluting those who epitomise the triumph of the indomitable human will.

## The Kargil admission

### Pakistan must do more to bridge trust deficit

PAKISTAN army chief Gen Syed Asim Munir has uttered the K-word. K stands for Kargil, not what the Rawalpindi Generals are perennially obsessed with — Kashmir. Addressing the Defence and Martyrs' Day event on Friday, Gen Munir mentioned the 1948, 1965, 1971 and Kargil wars — all in the same breath. This public acknowledgement of the 1999 conflict by none other than Pakistan's top military officer debunked the improbable theory that 'private freedom fighters' were solely involved in the intrusions. Even former PM Nawaz Sharif had stopped short of naming Kargil when he admitted earlier this year that Islamabad had violated an agreement with Delhi, signed by him and then PM Atal Bihari Vajpayee in February 1999.

It is common knowledge that the Kargil misadventure was orchestrated by then army chief Gen Pervez Musharraf. Smarting from the 1971 defeat, Pakistan tried to turn the tables on India but came a cropper. Why would Gen Munir mention it now,

weeks after India celebrated 25 years of the Kargil triumph? After all, the Pakistani military is firmly in the saddle, with the Sharif brothers under its control and the 'uncooperative' ex-PM Imran Khan behind bars. This could be an attempt to give the impression that Pakistan is finally coming to terms with its unpleasant past and is keen to learn from its historical blunders. Notably, PM Shehbaz Sharif said at the same event that his country desired peace with all neighbours.

Despite these statements, coupled with overtures such as Pakistan's invitation to PM Narendra Modi to attend the SCO meeting in Islamabad next month, India has no reason to let its guard down. The trust deficit persists, with the Jammu region reeling under a spate of attacks linked to Pakistan-trained terrorists. Ironically, Pakistan is itself battling a surge in terrorism in Balochistan and Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa. Gen Munir would be well advised to clear the air about his military's role in terror attacks across the LoC.

## SC rap to Dhambi

### Blocks feudal approach to appointment

THE Supreme Court's rebuke to Uttarakhand Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhambi on Wednesday over his decision to appoint IFS officer Rahul as the director of the Rajaji Tiger Reserve underscores the critical importance of public trust in governance. The choice of Dhambi, made against the objections of the principal secretary and forest minister, signals a troubling disregard for institutional checks and balances. The appointed officer was removed two years ago from the Corbett Tiger Reserve for alleged involvement in illegal tree felling, and the case is still being investigated.

In its sharp criticism, the Supreme Court reminded the CM that we were not living in a 'feudal era' in which leaders could bypass the due process. Justice BR Gavai's remark that Dhambi should have provided detailed reasoning for his decision reflects a broader concern about the transparency of executive actions, particularly in matters involving environmental conservation. Even though the officer concerned has since been removed from the post,

the court's timely intervention shows that it takes swift action when deemed fit. The prompt action in this case underscores the need to preserve the delicate ecological balance in wildlife reserves, as also the fact that compromises with the integrity of the system, including in appointments, undermine conservation efforts.

This episode serves as a reminder to all authorities across the country that governance must remain accountable, transparent and in the service of public and environmental interests. It raises concerns about political influence over appointments critical to environmental conservation. Political leaders must remember that their decisions can have long-lasting repercussions on sensitive ecological matters. Dhambi's decision to ignore the objections of experts and sideline the due process reflects a worrying trend in which political considerations take precedence over environment. In a country already grappling with ecological degradation, such decisions jeopardise the wildlife and weaken the campaign against environmental crises.



# Strike halts Samsung production at electronics plant in Tamil Nadu



## Chennai

Samsung Electronics' production at a key plant in Tamil Nadu was disrupted for a second day by hundreds of employees striking for higher wages on Tuesday, as top executives sought to resolve a rare episode of labour unrest.

South Korea-based Samsung, India's biggest consumer electronics company, counts the country as a key growth market, competing with the likes of LG Electronics to make everything from televisions and refrigerators to smartphones.

The strike-hit plant in Sriperumbudur, the smaller of

Samsung's two Indian factories, employs around 1,800 people and makes electronic products rather than smartphones. But it still contributes 20% to 30% of Samsung's annual \$12 billion revenue in India, said two sources with direct knowledge of the matter, speaking on condition of anonymity. Posters saying "Indefinite Strike" went up outside the factory near the city of Chennai, where hundreds of workers in company uniforms set up tents to shade themselves from the heat. Union leader E Muthukumar said "the strike will continue for a third day" on Wednesday.

About half of the factory's daily production was affected when many workers stayed away on Monday, and the protesters continue to press their demands for higher wages, better hours and most importantly want Samsung to recognise the formation of a union backed by the Centre of Indian Trade Unions group.

Samsung's Southwest Asia CEO, JB Park, and other senior executives are visiting the factory to find a resolution, people with direct knowledge of the situation said. Park oversees the India market for Samsung from Gurugram. Samsung did not respond to a request for comment.

# Import services by foreign airlines get GST exemption

## New Delhi

Giving a major relief to foreign airlines, the Goods and Services Tax (GST) Council has decided to exempt import of services by an establishment of a foreign airlines. The relief was given citing the Indian carriers get similar tax benefits in abroad.

The matters assume significance as the Directorate General of Goods and Services Tax Intelligence (DGGI) recently issued show cause notices to ten foreign airlines operating in India for allegedly evading taxes amounting to Rs 10,000 crore.

Earlier, the International Air Transport Association (IATA), the global trade body for airlines also criticised the show-cause notices and said it could act as stumbling block to the country's strong aviation potential.

According to them, India is alone in its approach, nowhere else around the world is this

practiced.

The headquarters of these airlines which is ideally overseas have been handling services like aircraft maintenance, crew payments, and rentals. These services are provided by foreign airlines to their Indian operations.

The DGGI were of the view that since these services are provided from one legal entity to another, they are subject to GST, which the airlines have not remitted. Foreign airlines cited that the GST should only be applied to taxable services within India, given that the place of service included both the head office and branch office. As a result, the matter was referred to the GST Council's fitment committee.

"We have decided to give branch exemption to foreign airlines as Indian carriers gets similar exemption abroad," said FM Nirmala Sitharaman.

# Google, Apple lose EU appeals, to pay billions in fines



## New Delhi

Google lost its last bid to overturn a European Union antitrust penalty, after the bloc's top court ruled against it Tuesday on a case that came with a whopping fine and helped jumpstart an era of intensifying scrutiny for Big Tech companies.

The European Union's top court rejected Google's appeal against the 2.4 billion euro (USD 2.7 billion) penalty from the European Commission, the 27-nation bloc's top antitrust enforcer, for violating antitrust rules with its comparison shopping service.

Also Tuesday, Apple lost

its challenge against an order to repay 13 billion euros (USD 14.34 billion) in back taxes to Ireland, after the European Court of Justice issued a separate decision siding with the commission in a case targeting unlawful state aid for global corporations.

Both companies have now exhausted their appeals in the cases that date back to the previous decade. Together, the court decisions are a victory for European Commissioner Margrethe Vestager, who's expected to step down next month after 10 years as the commission's top official overseeing competition.

The shopping fine was one of three huge antitrust penalties that the commission hit Google with, which together ushered in the current wave of stepped-up efforts to regulate tech companies.

# IIFT tops LinkedIn Global MBA Ranking in networking; ranks 51st among top 100 programmes

## New Delhi

India's premier business school Indian Institute of Foreign Trade (IIFT), under the commerce ministry, has topped the chart in the networking category in the LinkedIn's Top 100 MBA Programmes in the world.

The institute was ranked 51st among the top 100 programmes, the ministry said in a statement on Tuesday.

Hailing the institute's achievement, Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal said the recognition indicates IIFT's growing dynamism with emphasis on its networking strength worldwide.

Commerce Secretary Sunil Barthwal stated that the achievement is a testament

to the institute's consistent efforts to achieve excellence in academic and research besides forging strong links with

with global reach with support of its stakeholders such as students, alumni, corporate and government.

The institute is establishing a state-of-the-art Centre for International Negotiations (CIN) to offer world-class training for corporates and policymakers on international negotiations, it said.

The institute is also in the process of setting up its International Business Case Study Centre to bring out world-class case studies to highlight achievement and experience of Indian companies and policymakers on the lines of Harvard in close collaboration with exporters, corporate and government.



alumni, corporates, multilateral organisations and governments.

IIFT Vice Chancellor Rakesh Mohan Joshi said he is working to transform the institute into a world-class centre of excellence in academic, research and training



## Tata Motors reduces electric vehicle prices



### New Delhi

In order to make Electric Vehicles (EVs) more accessible to customers, Tata Motors have reduced the prices of Nexon.ev by up to Rs 3 lakh and Punch.ev by up to Rs 1.20 lakh.

Tata.ev has been passing on the benefits of localisation and technology improvements to customers, and has been able to bring ICE price parity with Curvv.ev launched last month. With this special offer, Tata.ev is bringing the prices of the best-selling Nexon.ev on par with ICE models for a limited time.

In addition, festive offers on Punch.ev and Tiago.ev have also brought their prices closer to that of their ICE counterparts. Apart from these irresistible prices, customers will enjoy extremely low running costs, silent and easy

drives, and features from two segments above.

Further, customers can enjoy six-month free charging at over 5,500 Tata power charging station across the country, making both inter and intra-city journeys hassle-free.

This festive offer is available till October 31, 2024.

Chief Commercial Officer Vivek Srivatsa at Tata Passenger Electric Mobility Ltd said, "Our singular purpose at TATA.ev is to mainstream EVs, by breaking barriers and making them more accessible to regular car buyers. With these special, limited period prices, we are breaking the high acquisition cost barrier for EVs, and bringing them closer to similar petrol and/or diesel-powered vehicles."

## CEA bats for autonomy of policy to boost growth

### New Delhi

Retaining policy autonomy and creating space to insulate our economy from the volatility of global capital flows is critical at a time when global capital flows have remained robust while trade globalisation has slowed down, said Dr V Anantha Nageswaran, Chief Economic Advisor to the Centre Government. He was speaking at the inaugural session on "Is India's financial sector geared up to support our country's sustained double-digit growth?" at Financing 3.0 Summit of the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) in Mumbai today.

With a modest current account deficit, India relies on global capital flows, but India has one of the brightest global economic growth prospects. It is up to us to

sustain this momentum and use it to our advantage in carving out policy space for ourselves," he said. Nageswaran said the phenomenon of financialisation, characterised by a high level of market capitalization relative to GDP, leads to a disproportionate focus on market expectations and trends which can distort macroeconomic outcomes and policy discourse. "As India looks ahead to 2047 with optimism and hope, this is what we must avoid because the consequences of such financialisation are evident in many advanced economies, including unprecedented levels of public and private debt, economic growth increasingly dependent on continued asset price inflation, and a massive surge in inequality," he said.

## Government aims to operate 400 airports in 25 yrs

### New Delhi

Union Civil Aviation Minister Kinjarapu Rammohan Naidu today announced plans to significantly expand regional air connectivity across the country.

"We are imagining India being at a place where it can operate 350 to 400 airports in the coming 20 to 25 years," he said while addressing the Ministry of Civil Aviation and FICCI's India Regional Air Mobility Conference 2024 in Delhi.

Naidu stated the government's intention to extend the regional connectivity scheme UDAN (Ude Desh ka Aam Nagrik) for another ten years beyond its current end date in 2027. "Our vision is to extend the RCS UDAN scheme for a further 10 years," Naidu



said.

"We are already preparing a new programme to make it even more impressive, not only for the civil aviation sector but keeping in mind the common man of this

country and making air travel more affordable for them."

The UDAN scheme, launched in 2016, has enhanced regional air connectivity in India.

## Revenue from online gaming increased by 412% in six months



### New Delhi

The GST Council on Monday reviewed the GST rates for online gaming and casinos, and race courses. However, no decision was taken to alter the rates.

Post the GST Council meet, in a press conference, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman announced that the Centre has seen a 412 per cent jump in revenue in last six months from the

increased levy on online gaming, according to a status report submitted to the fitment committee.

"Revenue from online gaming has increased 412 per cent reaching Rs 6,909 crore in six months while revenues of casinos have "jumped by 30 per cent", the finance minister added.

Online games, including skill-based and chance-based, were placed in the 28 per

cent GST slab in the 50th GST meeting in July 2023. It came into effect from October 1, 2023. Earlier, skill based games were taxed at 18 percent.

From October 1, 2023, entry-level bets placed on online gaming platforms and casinos were subject to 28 per cent GST and the council had then decided that the taxation on the online gaming sector would be reviewed after six months of its implementation.

Prior to that many online gaming companies were not paying 28 per cent GST, arguing that there were differential tax rates for games of skill and games of chance. The GST Council in its meeting in August 2023 had clarified that online gaming platforms were required to pay 28 per cent tax and subsequently, Central GST law was amended to make the taxation provision clear.



## Won't oppose incentives to e-vehicles, says Gadkari

**New Delhi**

With falling lithium-ion battery prices, electric vehicles can now maintain cost without subsidies but it is for the finance and heavy industries ministries to decide if incentives need to be given to electric vehicles, Union Minister Nitin Gadkari said on Monday.

Speaking at the annual session of Automotive Components Manufacturers Association (ACMA), Gadkari, the Minister for Road Transport and Highways, said within two years, the cost of EVs will be the same with their petrol and diesel counterparts.

"First of all, I am not against any subsidies. I don't have any problem," Gadkari said when asked if more incentives were needed to accelerate electric



mobility as adoption in India has not been as expected.

Elaborating his views, he said at one point the price of the lithium ion battery was USD 150 per kilowatt hour. Now it is something USD 108 to 110 per kilowatt hour. "I am confident it will come to USD

100," he asserted. Moreover, he said the manufacturing of EVs has witnessed an increase in volume terms.

"My assessment was that without subsidy, you can maintain that cost (of EVs) because the cost of production is less," Gadkari said.

He further said, "I feel that within two years, the cost of the petrol vehicle and the diesel vehicle will be the same as electric."

On incentives to EVs, HE said still if the finance minister and the heavy industries minister, if they want to give subsidies it will be beneficial for the automotive industry. "I don't have any problem. I will not oppose that," he asserted.

## GST cut on cancer drugs; research funds exempted from tax

**New Delhi**

The 54th GST Council headed by Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman met in New Delhi on Monday and decided to reduce the GST on certain cancer drugs (Trastuzumab Deruxtecan, Osimertinib and Durvalumab) from 12 per cent to 5 per cent; cut GST prospectively from 18 per cent to 12 per cent for savoury items; and set up a Group of Ministers (GoM) on reducing tax related to medical insurance.

In another decision, universities and research centres that have been established by a law of the Central and state governments, and institutions that have obtained income tax exemption can receive research funds, both government and private. Such research-related funds would not attract taxes as they have been exempted from the GST. Addressing the media after the meeting, Sitharaman said, "The GST Council has decided that the funds given for research and development to Central and state government universities, and those who have obtained income tax exemption would be exempted from GST." Delhi Education Minister Atishi had flagged the matter at a press conference on Sunday, when she said the AAP government would demand the withdrawal of GST notices to premier institutions at the GST Council meeting, and would also demand that research be kept out of the GST ambit. In August, many premier institutions, like IIT-Delhi and Panjab University, received show-cause notices, asking them to pay the GST on the research grants received since 2017.

## Musk may be world's first trillionaire by 2027, Adani in 2028, Ambani in 2033: Report

**New Delhi**

Elon Musk, the charismatic CEO of electric car maker Tesla and rocket manufacturer SpaceX, may become the world's first trillionaire by 2027, while Indian tycoon Gautam Adani may attain that status in the following year, and Asia's richest man Mukesh Ambani may do so in 2033, according to an Informa Connect Academy report.

For Musk, the richest in the world with USD 237 billion net worth, to become the world's first trillionaire needs to grow at an average annual growth rate of 110 per cent, the report said.

Adani, who is ranked 13th on the world billionaire index with a wealth of just under USD 100 billion, maybe the second trillionaire (net worth equal to at least one trillion US dollars) if his ports-to-power conglomerate was to continue growing at the current 123 per cent average annual rate, it added.

Rival Ambani, now ranked Asia's richest



with a net worth of USD 111 billion, may achieve the same status in 2033, according to the report.

His oil-to-telecom-and-retail conglomerate is slated to hit trillion-dollar market cap status in 2035. Ambani's Reliance Industries Ltd is

the only Indian company projected to hit that mark.

The companies that will hit the trillion-dollar market cap mark include Taiwan's semiconductor maker TSMC, which has a market cap of USD 893.7 billion now and is expected to achieve that

status in 2025.

It will be closely followed by Berkshire Hathaway, pharma giant Eli Lilly, technology company Broadcom and electric automobile firm Tesla.

The report said, "No one in the world has

claimed trillionaire status – at least not yet. However, there are some likely candidates. The following are multi-billionaires who will probably become trillionaires sooner or later."

After Elon Musk and Gautam Adani, NVIDIA founder Jensen Huang, Indonesian mogul Prajogo Pangestu, French businessman Bernard Arnault, and Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg come next as prospective trillionaires.

Currently, there are only a handful of companies that have crossed the USD 1 trillion in valuation. This includes Microsoft, Nvidia, Apple, Alphabet, Amazon, Saudi Aramco, and Meta. The most recent case is that of Warren Buffett's Berkshire Hathaway in late August.

Nvidia also joined the USD 1 trillion club in May 2023 and reached USD 3 trillion in June, becoming the second most valuable company in the world, with Microsoft ahead and Apple behind.



# Where is India's new National Water Policy?

In 2019, the Ministry of Jal Shakti, Government of India, set up a committee of independent experts—led by Mihir Shah—to draft a new National Water Policy. The draft of the National Water Policy was submitted almost four years ago. The draft policy document has not been spoken of much since. In doing so, India is being made bereft of moving towards what Mihir Shah described as a “new water governance paradigm” delineated by a multi-disciplinary and multi-stakeholder approach to water management.

## The war of paradigms

Over the last decade, India has been witnessing a quiet conflict between opposing paradigms of water governance. On one hand, the existing water dispensation led by institutions like the Central Water Commission has been at the forefront of endorsing, adopting and propagating the colonial water engineering paradigm rooted in water supply augmentation plans through structural interventions like dams, barrages and diversion channels over rivers and water bodies. On the other hand, such traditional engineering thinking has been challenged by state-of-the-art water professionals who endorse and propose a more comprehensive and holistic water governance paradigm that is socially and ecologically informed and is still emerging with the accrual of new knowledge. This new emerging paradigm is embodied in the knowledge base and interdisciplinary framework known as Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM).

The existing water dispensation led by institutions like the Central Water Commission has been at the forefront of endorsing, adopting and propagating the colonial water engineering paradigm rooted in water supply augmentation plans through structural interventions like dams, barrages and diversion channels over rivers and water bodies.

This paradigm shift from traditional water supply-augmentation plans to innovative modes of water demand management, keeping in view the integrity of the natural ecosystem, represents the global trend over the past five decades. From the 1970s onwards, global water professionals started questioning the wisdom of following the traditional structural paradigms, noting their harmful effects on the basin ecosystem. The European Union (EU) and the United States (US) shortly recognised



the detrimental effects of such anthropogenic interventions, which fragmented river systems and caused irreversible damage to community livelihoods. The structural interventions changed the structure and functions of natural ecosystems and dented the ecosystems' capacity to provide important ecosystem services (i.e., services provided by the ecosystem to the human community like fisheries, water, climate moderation, carbon sequestration, etc), on which the basin community was dependent.

As the scale of the problem amplified over time, corrective steps followed. With the EU adopting the Water Framework Directive in 2000, approximately 5,000 such structural interventions were dismantled in France, Sweden, Finland, Spain, and the United Kingdom over a decade. In conformity with the directive, EU member states have been taking big strides to promote water demand management (as opposed to supply development) and attempting to maintain the natural hydrological flow regime by keeping water instream. This is helping enhance the ecological health of rivers and water bodies. Similarly, the US, which was once the biggest exponent of structuralist thinking exemplified by its creations of engineering marvels like the Hoover Dam and Tennessee Valley projects, removed over 1,000 such structures over rivers in recent decades.

With the EU adopting the Water Framework Directive in 2000, approximately 5,000 such structural interventions were dismantled in France, Sweden, Finland, Spain, and the United Kingdom over a decade.

The solution is not confined to dam removals and decommissionings only. Institutional approaches are also being utilised to preserve water in rivers. For instance, Chile introduced the 1981

National Water Code to trade water rights independently of land ownership. Water markets have been established over the Murray-Darling Basin in Australia to enable farmers to enhance water productivity and contribute to sustainable water management. The most recent example is the commencement of water derivatives trading in California, started in 2019, through the Chicago Mercantile Exchange platform to mitigate water availability risks in the western US.

## Trends in India

Much opposed to this global trend and call for change, India's water technocracy has revealed inimicality to the plea for transition to the emerging new paradigm. Any attempt to move forward to the new paradigm has been vociferously opposed by this hydro-technocracy, which clung to many outdated concepts of water resource development, prioritising immediate economic gains at the expense of long-term sustainability issues. The last decade, however, witnessed specific initiatives to guide the nation towards comprehensive water governance. Two bills were formulated: the Draft National Water Framework Bill 2016 (NWFB) and the Model Bill for the Conservation, Protection, Regulation, and Management of Groundwater 2016. Concurrently, a report titled, A 21st Century Institutional Architecture for India's Water Reforms was published in the same year. The last report that talked of dismantling the existing governance institutions like the Central Water Commission (CWC) and Central Ground Water Board (CGWB) and forming an integrated National Water Commission met with extensive opposition from the hydro-technocracy that represents not only the brick-and-mortar institution but also the institutionalised thought process dominating the water

governance system in India. The National Water Policy 2020 is the latest document, which as per newspaper articles mostly by Mihir Shah, seems the latest addition to the call for change. However, the document, though submitted long ago, is yet to be tabled.

The National Water Policy 2020 is the latest document, which as per newspaper articles mostly by Mihir Shah, seems the latest addition to the call for change.

What is to be expected from the new National Water Policy?

A series of op-eds written by Mihir Shah suggest that the new National Water Policy is going to be the game-changer in the water policy spectrum of India. There is no doubt that Indian rivers—both Himalayan and Peninsular—have suffered due to the outdated myopic thought process propagated by the colonial engineering paradigm. The interstate Cauvery conflict and the associated problems with the Final Award by the Tribunal on the conflict, the allegation of the floods in Bihar due to the Farakka barrage in West Bengal, and the apprehended ecological impacts of river interlinking projects—all conform with the thinking that the inherent reductionism of the colonial engineering paradigm will only aggravate water insecurity, and is antithetical towards meeting the future development challenges. Embracing the new emerging paradigm will help in rendering a systems approach to water governance, encompassing both general water management and, more specifically, the governance of river basins.

A recent paper published by the Observer Research Foundation summarises the tenets of IWRM and emphasises the need to embrace them in the new National Water Policy. These tenets are the following:

Water is an integral component of the organic eco-hydrological cycle and should be understood as a flow. It is not a resource stock to be stored and used as per human needs and convenience.

Water's intrinsic value needs to be understood through its various uses, including its ecological use. This is made possible through a holistic and integrated valuation framework entailing the valuation of the economic, social, cultural and ecosystem services linked to water and its flow regimes.

Therefore, water should be viewed as an economic good, necessitating the establishment of appropriate institutional mechanisms to recognise its value to ensure its judicious and

sustainable use.

Equity and distributive justice are important, and hence human basic needs should be met by ensuring accessibility.

The river basin should be treated as the fundamental unit of governance.

Neither economic growth nor food security can be treated as a function of increasing water availability under conditions of scarcity and climate change. Instead, the focus should shift towards demand management through various other means.

A comprehensive assessment of water development projects is important with a view to the benefits and the perceptible and imperceptible costs over time and space.

A solid foundation, knowledge base, and repository of transparent and multidisciplinary is crucial for understanding the social, ecological, and economic roles of water resources, and the trade-offs thereof.

Droughts and floods should not be treated as extreme events, but as integral components of the global eco-hydrological cycle.

Gender considerations are critical, as emphasised in the Dublin Statement, which recognises that "women play a central role in the provision, management, and safeguarding of water".

A comprehensive assessment of water development projects is important with a view to the benefits and the perceptible and imperceptible costs over time and space.

As stated earlier, this paradigm is emerging and provides broad guidelines for a policy framework to evolve. Therefore, the above points cannot be treated as exhaustive and will be subjected to changes based on a better understanding of future challenges and greater accrual of knowledge over time. As the broad contours of the emerging paradigm, the above pointers reflect the present state-of-the-art thinking. The author of this piece presented these points in front of the National Water Policy Drafting Committee in 2020, and it is expected that the new National Water Policy has already embraced these pointers. However, whether they have been incorporated or not can only be known if the Policy is brought to the surface and discussed and debated. This is of utmost need as water governance and security is already a big developmental challenge that will only amplify as a bigger challenge for the future of the Indian economy if not addressed effectively now.



# Prioritising non-motorised transport in India



Rapid urbanisation has placed a significant burden on urban services. Poor transport management has increased traffic congestion and air pollution, and brought about a shortage of parking spaces, which has been exacerbated by the growing purchasing power of urban residents, who prefer private vehicles rather than public transportation options.

Government policies have often prioritised the construction and expansion of infrastructure for private vehicles, such as roads and highways, to accommodate the growing demands of urban residents rather than investing in developing and improving public transport systems. This approach has created a vicious cycle, where increased private vehicle ownership has prevented the creation of sustainable and inclusive transport systems in cities.

Poor transport management has increased traffic congestion and air pollution, and brought about a shortage of parking spaces, which has been exacerbated by the growing purchasing power of urban residents, who prefer private vehicles rather than public transportation options.

A nationwide review of urban modal share statistics indicates that 36 percent of Indians walk or cycle to work while 30 percent do not travel "given their close proximity to their workplaces". Additionally, 18 percent use public transport, and 16 percent use private vehicles, with 3 percent using cars and 13 percent using two-wheelers. This indicates that approximately 54 percent of people rely on non-motorised transport (NMT) for at least part of the commute. The significant share of NMT in Indian cities can be attributed to their relatively compact urban form, high population density, and mixed land-use patterns, which result in shorter travel distances. The neglect of NMT infrastructure has led to high rates of road accidents involving pedestrians and cyclists.

NMT scenario in Indian cities Indian cities face significant challenges concerning NMT despite its substantial modal share. Safety concerns are

particularly critical, as many roads are unsafe for walking and cycling. According to the accident data for 2022, released by the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (MoRTH), pedestrians are more frequently involved in fatal accidents compared to car occupants. In 2022, 32,825 pedestrians were killed in road accidents, marking a 12.7 percent increase from 2021. Additionally, 4,836 cyclists lost their lives in 2022, representing an approximate 2.8 percent increase from the previous year. These statistics underscore the lack of safe and adequate infrastructure for pedestrians and cyclists, as well as a general insensitivity towards vulnerable NMT users.

The quality of infrastructure for NMT in Indian cities remains a significant concern. There is a notable deficiency in dedicated pedestrian pavements and cycling paths. Dedicated pedestrian and cycling infrastructure, where present, is poorly maintained. A qualitative analysis of NMT infrastructure, conducted on a scale of one to five as part of the Ease of Moving Index 2022, revealed that the average perception score regarding the existing width and condition of footpaths was 2.8 out of five. Similarly, the perception score for the availability of dedicated, safe pedestrian crossing facilities, such as foot over bridges and subways and adequacy of street lighting was 2.8. In terms of cycling infrastructure, the perception score for the adequacy of cycle tracks across the city was 3.0. In contrast, the score for the adequacy of cycle parking provisions at transit hubs was slightly lower, at 2.9. These

results emphasise the urgent need for improved infrastructure and maintenance to enhance safety and usability for NMT users.

Dedicated pedestrian pavements and cycling paths. Dedicated pedestrian and cycling infrastructure, where present, is poorly maintained.

Additionally, there are considerable gaps in data collection and analysis related to NMT infrastructure and usage. Data inconsistencies are prevalent, with different agencies reporting varying statistics for the same city. Traffic studies at the city level typically focus on predicting an increase in motorised transport demand, often neglecting the component of NMT travel demand. Moreover, accident data collected by the police is frequently misrepresented or lacks thorough investigation. Policy implementation remains weak in addressing these challenges. Before 2006, transport policies primarily focused on motorised transport investments.

The Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA) has promoted NMT through various initiatives, such as the National Urban Transport Policy (NUTP), which envisions NMT as both a last-mile connector and an independent mode of transport for short trips. The National Mission for Sustainable Habitat and MoHUA's Service Level Benchmarks (SLBs) emphasise integrating NMT into broader urban transport frameworks and assessing infrastructure quality and performance. Programmes like the Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission (JNNURM) and

recommendations from the 12th Five-Year Plan have also advocated for NMT by linking funding to NMT components and suggesting dedicated funds for enhancing walking and cycling infrastructure. The Smart City Mission has conducted initiatives, including Cycle4Change and Transport4All, to promote and improve the NMT transport ecosystem. Despite these policies and efforts, there has been limited success due to gaps in implementation, inadequate multi-modal integration, and disproportionate allocation of transport funding, which continues to prioritise heavy transport infrastructure over NMT development.

## The way forward

To effectively address these issues, it is crucial to develop infrastructure that corresponds with the actual level of NMT usage. Urban planning has traditionally prioritised the uninterrupted flow of motorised vehicles, but there is a pressing need to shift towards creating environments that support and enhance NMT. This requires the redesign of streets to incorporate dedicated pedestrian pathways and bicycle lanes that comply with established urban planning guidelines such as IRC 103 and the "Better Streets, Better Cities - Street Design Guidelines" (by the Institute for Transportation & Development Policy), which are tailored for Indian cities. Additionally, cities should establish dedicated NMT cells within the existing institutional framework of urban local bodies (ULBs) to ensure the effective evaluation, design, construction, and implementation of revised street infrastructure.

Urban planning has traditionally prioritised the uninterrupted flow of motorised vehicles, but there is a pressing need to shift towards creating environments that support and enhance NMT.

To ensure the development of inclusive and user-friendly infrastructure, conducting a socio-technical audit of transport infrastructure is crucial, particularly from the perspectives of gender and older age groups. Such an audit would help to assess

the accessibility and usability of current transport infrastructure for these demographic groups in their daily lives. However, conducting this audit presents several challenges, including manual data collection and analysis, the identification and prioritisation of issues, and the allocation of resources.

Using advanced technologies and social media platforms can significantly streamline the audit process. For example, social media campaigns focusing on "NMT infrastructure" within cities, combined with online surveys conducted by government authorities, could facilitate the efficient collection of data on the issues and challenges faced by city residents in their day-to-day lives. Additionally, technologies such as Geographic Information Systems (GIS), Global Positioning Systems (GPS) and sensors can be employed to conduct walkability and cycling audits, providing valuable insights into the usability of urban environments for NMT users. This will ultimately enable cities to establish a clear baseline assessment of NMT usage and infrastructure, which can further assist city authorities in formulating effective strategies.

Technologies such as Geographic Information Systems (GIS), Global Positioning Systems (GPS) and sensors can be employed to conduct walkability and cycling audits, providing valuable insights into the usability of urban environments for NMT users.

Urban policymakers must urgently reconsider their strategies and prioritise the enhancement of NMT and public transportation infrastructure. This strategic shift would not only mitigate the current issues associated with the excessive use of private vehicles but also foster the development of more sustainable, inclusive, and liveable urban environments. Investing in creating integrated transport services will contribute to the creation of balanced transport networks that address the needs of all residents while simultaneously promoting environmental sustainability and economic efficiency.



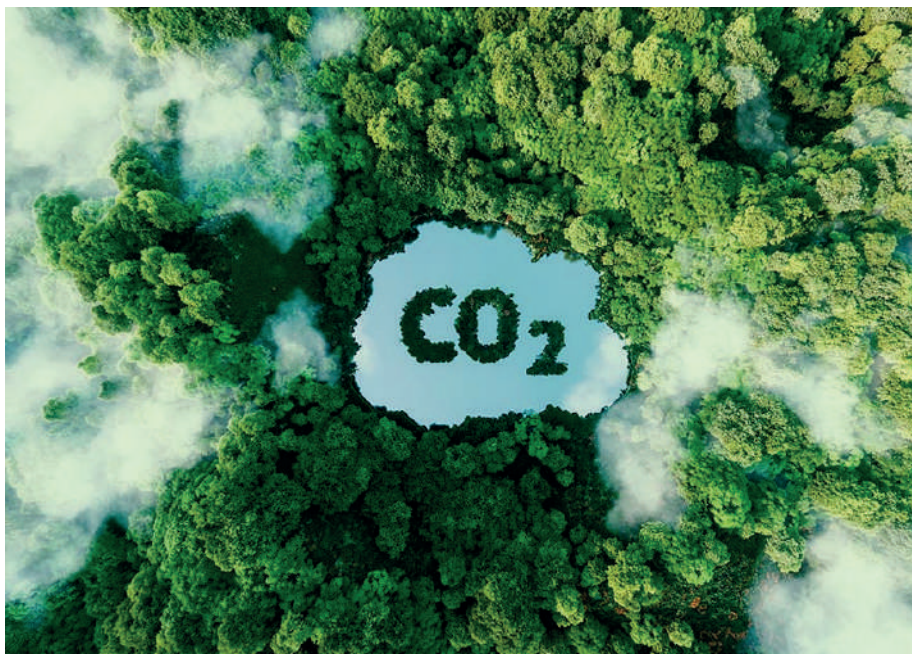
# Carbon emission reduction: negotiating guilt

Since the Kyoto Protocol was signed in 1997, CO<sub>2</sub> (carbon dioxide) emissions have grown by an annual average of 1.7 percent. This is faster than the 0.9 percent annual average growth of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions in the seven-year period (1990-97) prior to the signing of the Kyoto Protocol. The failure of the Kyoto Agreement is attributed mostly to the fact that the largest emitters were not included. The United States of America (US), top emitter at that time, was not part of the agreement by choice, and China and India, the second and third largest emitters, were not included by design. In 2015, the Paris Agreement introduced the concept of nationally determined contributions (NDCs), to eliminate differences between countries in terms of historic contribution to climate change and capability to address it. The result was that countries offered CO<sub>2</sub> reductions close to what they would have achieved without the agreement. The Conference of Parties (COP) sessions that followed the Paris Agreement have ended with similar agreements, but CO<sub>2</sub> emissions continue to increase.

In the period 2019-2023, CO<sub>2</sub> emissions increased by an annual average rate of 0.8 percent, notwithstanding the fact that CO<sub>2</sub> emissions decreased substantially during the pandemic period of 2020-22. If CO<sub>2</sub> emissions continue to increase at the same pace, the Intergovernmental panel on climate change (IPCC) estimates that the carbon budget for high probability of limiting average global temperature to 2°C will be exhausted by 2040. A new paper that investigated 1500 climate policies across countries and sectors between 1998 and 2022 concluded that their impact on emissions has so far been highly uncertain.

## Disciplining the Global South

In 1967, Prof. Horst Rittel suggested the term “wicked problem” for a class of social system problems which are poorly formulated, where the information is confusing, where there are many clients and decision-makers with conflicting values, and where the ramifications in the whole system are thoroughly confusing. The adjective “wicked” described the mischievous and even evil quality of these problems, where proposed “solutions” often turn out to be worse than the symptoms. Although Prof. Rittel was referring to problems in urban planning, some narratives on climate change fit this description. The climate crisis is wicked because three-quarters of the world’s population is yet to industrialise and develop, and there is no perfect substitute for fossil fuels, that enabled one-fourth of the population to industrialise and develop. Science has enabled development of clean energy sources, but these are expensive as they require a completely new support infrastructure. Wealthy countries can subsidise the adoption of clean energy, but



poor countries cannot subsidise to the same extent. Climate change is wicked because the majority of the population that made little or no contribution to climate change are also the victims of most of the natural disasters influenced by it.

Responses to climate change proposed by academics and analysts are also wicked, as most attempt to invoke guilt, assign blame and consequently responsibility to address climate change. The Global South blames overconsumption by the Global North, the North blames overpopulation in the South, clean energy producers blame fossil fuel producers, socialists blame capitalists, the young blame the old and the dead and private business blames complacent politicians and bureaucrats. Technology optimists and ecomodernists blame no one, believing technology can potentially solve all problems. However, the dominant narrative promoted by the Global North and by the IPCC blames everyone (democratises guilt). This enables universal culpability that conveniently avoids inequalities; climate change is framed as a folly of humanity, rather than the Global North’s exploitation of the rest. Social theories have shown that, risk and their associated discourses of culpability (such as in the case of climate change), are socially constructed and irrevocably political in nature. The Global North has constructed climate risk by selecting universal destruction as the danger for attention, and assigned culpability for the threat largely on the Global South and its overpopulation, a preconceived Malthusian fear. The South, the victim, is deemed blameworthy, and the North is authorised to take action against the South’s choices. The South, which carries over 80 percent of the middle- and low-income populations can easily be cast as the dominant carbon emitter based on the Malthusian fear of large numbers.

The Global South blames overconsumption by the Global North, the

North blames overpopulation in the South, clean energy producers blame fossil fuel producers, socialists blame capitalists, the young blame the old and the dead and private business blames complacent politicians and bureaucrats.

The case of India is illustrative. India’s CO<sub>2</sub> emissions was over 3 billion tonnes (BT) in 2023, the third largest after China and the United States. India’s total emissions was above that of the whole of the African continent (1.78 BT) and also that of the Middle East (2.899 BT). As the third largest emitter, India is criticised for its energy choices. In 2023, 89 percent of India’s primary energy (not including unprocessed biomass) was derived from fossil fuels. But, India’s per person commercial energy (not including unprocessed biomass) consumption of 27 gigajoules (GJ) in 2023 is below world average and well below minimum energy required for achieving high levels of human development. India’s per person carbon emission of 2.1 tonnes in 2023 was less than half of 4.75 tonnes per person, the world average in 2023. Despite its low per person CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, India emerges as the third-largest carbon emitter because of its large population size. Hypothetically, if India is considered as two countries, with half the current population each, the total emissions of each will slip below that of Africa, the European Union and the Middle East. If divided into three countries with one third of the population in each, each will have an emission below that of Japan. Each of these countries would have more than three times Japan’s population but lower total emissions, thus making them more carbon-efficient than Japan. A mere rearrangement of numbers will not only remove India (by three!) from the top emitters list but also make it a more carbon-efficient country than Japan. The total carbon emitted into the atmosphere would remain unchanged, but the countries that can be blamed for emissions changes.

Maldives, a small island state that has a population just over 500,000, emits twice as much CO<sub>2</sub> as India. The GDP per person of Maldives is more than four times that of India, and fossil fuels are used for everything, including power generation. Though each island measures only a few square kilometres, many residents own large sports utility vehicles, and petroleum-powered boats take tourists from island to island. However, the low population numbers enables Maldives to project itself as a victim of climate change rather than a perpetrator. Counterfeiting the World with numbers is convenient, but it does not constitute a solution for climate change.

## Issues for thought

It cannot be denied that delayed development in the Global South is one of the key reasons behind the increase in CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. As the per person incomes in most of the Global South is yet to cross US\$ 5000, many countries are burning coal, that is both affordable and abundant. To shift out of fossil fuels, the Global South requires financial support.

Raghuram Rajan, a noted economist, suggests to create a global carbon incentive (GCI) programme. Under GCI, every country that emits more than the global average of around 5 tonnes of carbon per person would pay annually into the GCI, with the amount calculated by multiplying the excess emissions per person by the population and the GCI. If the GCI started at US\$10/tonne, large sums can be raised from high per person carbon emitters. Countries below the global per person average would receive a commensurate payout. This way, every country would face an effective loss of \$10/tonne for every additional tonne of carbon it emits per person. This would be a rule, like a speeding fine rather than compensation for carbon sin.

More recently, Avinash Persaud, another noted economist and special advisor on climate change to IDB, and his colleague propose that low-cost foreign equity and debt commitments to fund purchase existing performing bank loans in renewable energy (RE) across the developing world, used to create a decarbonisation fund. These loans will be purchased at an attractive premium, on condition that the proceeds are invested in new RE loans. If the commitment is broken, banks will lose half the premium. This can double local investment in RE. The economists suggest that the purchased loans be repackaged into diversified, low-cost portfolio of securities. The sale proceeds of these new global low risk securities would be used buy new RE loans from banks doubling investment again. According to the economists, more than US\$200 billion per year of new RE loans can be created, that would bridge the local finance gap and in addition create global markets for carbon mitigation.



# Leveraging policy to drive advanced biofuel commercialisation in India

Drawing lessons from policies in the US related to sustainable fuels can greatly help in the commercialisation of Sustainable Aviation Fuel & other sustainable biofuels in India.

"India is emphasising the development of environmentally conscious energy sources to enhance

our energy mix."

"A robust energy sector bodes well for national progress."

These are just a few of the quotes by Prime Minister Modi at his inaugural speech at the India Energy Week 2024, highlighting India's progress towards the energy transition and self-reliance. Indeed, the rapid progress towards achieving its Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) puts India at the forefront of the global energy transition.

India's Biofuel Mission

In the business-as-usual scenario, India's transport sector's per capita Greenhouse Gases (GHG) emissions are expected to rise from 0.24 tons in 2019 to 0.35 tons in 2030, with the road sector contributing almost 85% of total emissions. India has already embarked on ambitious programmes of blending of bioethanol and biodiesel with petrol and diesel respectively, which has resulted in a reduction of GHG emissions by more than 42 million tons per year. As per the estimate of the International Energy Agency (IEA), India could triple its biofuel use in the next seven years. India also has an ambitious target of achieving 30% share of Electric Vehicles (EVs) in passenger Light Duty Vehicle (LDV) sales by 2030.

India has already embarked on ambitious programmes of blending of bioethanol and biodiesel with petrol and diesel respectively, which has resulted in a reduction of GHG emissions by more than 42 million tons per year.

Generally, GHG emissions, produced as an unwanted by-product of activities such as transport, is considered a negative externality. While conventional biofuels and EVs are contributing towards reducing GHG emissions from the transport sector in India, rapid commercialisation of advanced fuels such as Sustainable Aviation Fuel (SAF), Bio-Hydrogen and Second-Generation Ethanol is imperative for India to further decarbonise the transport sector and achieve the Net-Zero target. Currently, very few advanced fuels for the transport sector are viable to produce commercially. Government policy can greatly help in commercial production of these fuels, thereby internalising the negative externality of GHG emissions.

Supporting advanced biofuels

Typically, policies for commercialisation of sustainable and advanced biofuels come in various categories, such as regulations, incentives (e.g. Viability Gap Funding), subsidies, blending mandates etc. Some of the advanced biofuels such as SAF have been successfully commercialised in the United States (US), mainly due to an ambitious programme to accelerate the use of SAF and the implementation of various policies and regulations. These efforts can provide valuable lessons for India.

Sustainable Aviation Fuel (SAF) is a drop-in fuel complying with the

Fuel

Considering the significant cost gap between SAF and Aviation Turbine Fuel (ATF), initially, very few airlines embarked on voluntary use of SAF in the US. In 2022, the US Department of Energy (USDOE) announced the 'SAF Grand Challenge', an ambitious target of using 3 billion gallons of SAF per year by 2030 and supplying sufficient SAF (of ~35 billion gallons per year) to meet 100% aviation fuel demand in the US by 2050. The USDOE, along-with other government agencies, developed a comprehensive strategy roadmap with the

conventional jet fuel. These credits can incentivise SAF production as they can then be sold to other obligated parties under the Low Carbon Fuel Standard (LCFS) programme, which is applicable in multiple states.

These policies of tax credit and revenue from national and state level credits help in bridging this cost gap between SAF and ATF to a large extent. This enables SAF producers to sell SAF to airlines at the price point close to the price point of fossil jet fuel and makes SAF projects commercially viable, despite having SAF cost ~3X the cost of fossil jet fuel. SAF projects of almost 2 billion gallon per year capacity have already been announced in the US as the result of this conducive policy.

The Indian imperative

In India, the government has already announced an indicative target to blend 1% of SAF in jet fuel for international flights from 2027. Taking a cue from government policies, the private sector has also become active in this sector. For instance, Praj Industries Ltd. has already embarked on developing indigenous SAF technology suitable to process feedstock available in India. India's first commercial passenger flight using indigenously produced Sustainable Aviation Fuel (SAF) blend was successfully flown on Friday, 19 May 2023. Air Asia flight (I5 767) flew from Pune to New Delhi powered by the blend of conventional Jet Fuel and SAF produced by Praj in India using indigenous feedstock. The fuel was tested, blended and distributed by Indian Oil Corporation Ltd.

India's first commercial passenger flight using indigenously produced Sustainable Aviation Fuel (SAF) blend was successfully flown on Friday, 19 May 2023.

Although India has embarked on the path of use of SAF, the commercial viability of SAF production poses a significant challenge to the successful commercialisation of SAF in India. Drawing lessons from policies in the US related to sustainable fuels can greatly help in the commercialisation of SAF & other sustainable biofuels in India.

Also, India has plans to establish the Indian Carbon Market (ICM), intending to decarbonise the Indian economy through the energy transition. Establishing a national Carbon Market that provides economic benefits to the fuel producers and tax incentives, both in line with the Carbon/GHG emissions savings from Sustainable Fuels, can contribute in bridging the viability gap for SAF production, as well the production of other sustainable fuels, such as Bio-Hydrogen in India.



sustainability criteria as laid out by the International Civil Aviation Organisation. SAF is produced using sustainable feedstock such as biomass, waste lipids/oils, CO<sub>2</sub> etc. through various technology pathways. The sustainability of feedstock and carbon intensity of the technology pathway determines the overall potential of carbon savings by replacing fossil jet fuel with SAF, which is typically in the range of 50% to 90%.

Some of the advanced biofuels such as SAF have been successfully commercialised in the United States (US), mainly due to an ambitious programme to accelerate the use of SAF and the implementation of various policies and regulations.

Although emissions savings are high, the current cost of producing SAF ranges between 3 to 8 times the cost of fossil-based jet fuel, and the production of SAF is commercially un-viable without policy support. Considering that green hydrogen-powered or battery-powered aircrafts are still in the nascent stage of development, SAF is considered as the imminent solution for the 'hard to abate' aviation sector.

Policy support for Sustainable Aviation

objective to expand SAF supply and use, reducing cost of SAF and enhancing its sustainability.

A wide range of US federal/national and state incentives are already in place for various biofuels, including SAF. Here is the summary of these policies at national and state level:

Tax Credit by national/federal government: 'Inflation Reduction Act' (IRA) provides tax credit to SAF producers in the range of US\$ 1.25 to US\$ 1.75 per gallon, depending on the GHG emissions savings of the SAF.

Renewable Fuel Standard (RFS – national/federal level credits): RFS allows SAF (and other biofuels) to generate compliance units (Renewable Identification Number) that becomes usable as credit once SAF is blended with jet fuel. These tradable credits are calculated considering the lifecycle GHG emissions savings from the use of SAF.

Low Carbon Fuel Standard (LCFS – State level credits): The greenhouse gas benefits of SAF are quantified through life cycle assessment modelling that calculates the avoided emissions compared with



## Actor Malaika Arora's stepfather dies by suicide in Mumbai: Police

Actor-model Malaika Arora's stepfather Anil Mehta allegedly committed suicide by jumping from a building in Mumbai on Wednesday morning, a police official said.

Mehta allegedly jumped off the sixth floor of a building in Bandra area at around 9 am, he said.

A team of Bandra police rushed to the spot and shifted him to a hospital, where he was declared dead before arrival, he said.

The exact reason behind the incident was not yet known, the official said, adding an investigation was underway.

Police conducted 'panchnama' (inspection) of the spot and have started collecting evidence, he said.

They also video recorded the building premises, where the body was recovered, as part of the procedure, the official said.



The police also examined CCTV footage of the building premises to ascertain details of the incident, he said.

The postmortem process was underway at a hospital, the police said.

Meanwhile, a source told PTI, "It's true that Malaika's stepfather passed away this morning. He has not committed suicide, it's an accident. They all are shocked because he had no ailment or anything as such."

"We will be sending you

the police panchnama when we receive it. That will be the accurate information for this unfortunate incident," the source said.

Malaika Arora and her sister Amrita Arora Ladak did not respond to queries on the incident.

After getting information about the incident, Malaika Arora's former husband Arbaaz Khan, who is also an actor and producer, visited the building.

Arbaaz Khan's parents Salim Khan and Salma Khan, brother Sohail Khan, Malaika Arora's son Arhaan Khan, her former boyfriend actor Arjun Kapoor and producer Ritesh Sidhwani arrived at the residence of Malaika's mother.

Arbaaz Khan's stepmother Helen, his sister Alvira Agnihotri, Sohail Khan's former wife Seema Sajdeh, and actors Kim Sharma and Shibani Dandekar were also present there.

## Zeenat Aman reveals why she finds 'most designer outfits unwearable'

Veteran star and fashion icon Zeenat Aman is a casual dresser and said that she finds most designer outfits unwearable.

Zeenat took to Instagram, where she shared a picture of herself wearing a sculpted 3D dress in earthy shade, which she said is giving her best dog breed 'Komondor' impression.

"I've been blessed by the hand of many a genius in my life. The very best in not just cinema, but also fashion. The formidably talented Bhanu Athaiya, India's first Academy award winner, designed my costumes for over 15 movies including Satyam Shivam Sundaram," she wrote.

She said Athaiya was prolific and meticulous, and soon after our first partnership had a mannequin made to her measurements.

"It would stand in her studio, and on this inanimate bust she would actualise the fantastical ideas that appeared in her mind. I only had to pop

in very occasionally for trials, an arrangement that was most suitable to my schedule."



Zeenat minced no words when she said that no other designer in the actress' life has come close to creating outfits for her 'that were as comfortable as they were sensual'.

"I am constantly tickled by my persona as a woman of high fashion. Those who know me know that I am quite the casual dresser. One who finds most

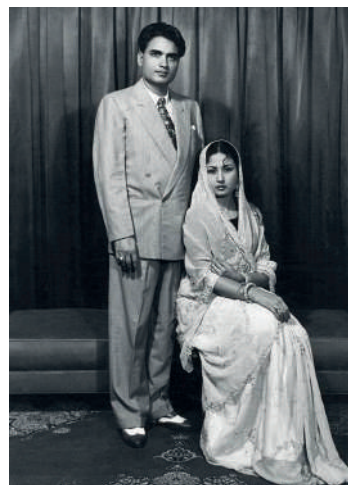
designer outfits unwearable!' she said.

The actress added, 'An impossibly wealthy friend of mine, with museumesque mansions in Dubai and London, would routinely gift me haute couture and then rue the fact that their fate was to moulder in my wardrobe. It's an unfortunate fate shared by my most prized heirlooms.'

Talking about her most meaningful clothing, Zeenat said, 'My mother's exquisite saris, the most meaningful clothing I own, also languish in the depths of my closet. Perhaps one day I will have the wherewithal to wear them or repurpose them into new outfits more suitable to my taste.'

'Anyway, here I am. Giving my best Komondor (it's a dog breed, look it up and tell me if I'm wrong) impression. All in the name of fashion,' she added, describing her look.

## Meena Kumari, Kamal Amrohi's timeless love story to be turned into film by Siddharth P Malhotra



Bollywood star Sanjay Dutt on Wednesday shared a glimpse of 'tragedy queen' Meena Kumari and filmmaker Kamal Amrohi's poignant love story that will be revisited soon in a feature film, which will be helmed by Siddharth P Malhotra.

The Hindi film will chronicle their 20-year journey, culminating with the 1972 masterpiece, 'Pakeezah', which also stars Raaj Kumar and Nadira.

Sanjay took to Instagram, where he shared a teaser of the film, which begins with letters featuring their pictures and a voice over saying, "Mere aadeb, mere mirsha, mere shehzaade, meri rubayi. "A Filmmaker, a muse... their star crossed love story... A dream that refused to die... A love that went beyond the grave... Kamal Aur Meena."

The iconic number 'Chalte Chalte Yun Hi Koi' from the 1972 film 'Pakeezah' could be heard playing in the background.

Sanjay captioned, 'Dear Saachi and Bilal, all the best for your new venture. May it be a successful one! Love always, from Sanjay Mamu. It's a must-watch. @saachikumaramrohi @bilalamrohi.'

Director Siddharth P Malhotra said in a statement, "It's a profound privilege to direct this incredible true story, though the responsibility is immense. Their relationship was one of deep love and artistic collaboration, spanning over 20 years—from their first meeting when she was just 18 and he was 34, from the creation to shoot and release, the

legacy of 'Pakeezah'; their story gives me an opportunity to create a cinematic world where love, passion, emotion and music plays a huge part."

"I'm glad to be allowed to get a stellar team of Bhavani Iyer and Kausar Munir along with Irshad Kamil and the maestro himself AR Rahman sir to score the music of the film. Kamal sir and Meena ji have long been idols of mine, not only for their unmatched contributions to cinema but also for the indomitable spirit they brought to their craft. I'm beyond excited to bring their story to life on the silver screen."

Bilal Amrohi, grandson of the two icons, said it was a great honour to bring the untold love story and struggle behind making of the film to screen.

"Their story is a beautiful yet tragic chapter in the legacy of Indian cinema. With access to over 500 handwritten letters exchanged between my grandparents Kamal Sahab and Meenaji as well as personal journals detailing their life together thanks to my 'Aphua', Rukhsaar Amrohi, who has selflessly preserved them and my father Tajdar Amrohi who has lived so closely with them both on and off film shoots. I would like to show the world audience the real heart wrenching story which no else knows." He concluded by quoting, "Jo chup rahegi zabaan-e-khanjar, lahoon pukarega aasteen ka'." However, no details were shared about the film, which was announced by Saregama and Lionheart Cinema.

Amrohi and Meena met during the filming of the 1952 film 'Tamasha' through veteran actor Ashok Kumar. The two fell in love and got married in the same year. According to reports, only Amrohi's friend Baaqar Ali and Meena Kumari's younger sister Madhu were aware of this.

The two then worked on films such as 'Daera' in 1953, which traced their love story. However, the movie tanked at the box office. They have also worked together in the iconic film 'Pakeezah', which hit the screens 14 years after it first began.



# 'They called me back after 10 years: Shah Rukh Khan's epic IIFA return

Superstar Shah Rukh Khan has teased his friend and filmmaker Karan Johar for hosting more chat shows and directing lesser films.

Shah Rukh and Karan, who are set to host the International Indian Film Academy (IIFA) Awards 2024, have worked together in several hit movies such as "Kuch Kuch Hota Hai", "Kabhi Khushi Kabhie Gham...", "My Name is Khan", and "Kabhi Alvida Naa Kehna".

At the press conference of the IIFA Awards on Tuesday evening, Shah Rukh pulled Karan's leg for being less active on the directorial front.

"He hosts chat shows, film shows. Picturein bhi toh bana mere bhai (When are you going to make films, my brother?)" said the superstar, eliciting laughter from the filmmaker.

Karan, whose last directorial was 2023's "Rocky Aur Rani Kii Prem Kahaani", admitted Shah Rukh was right.

"This is sounding so wrong on so many levels for a filmmaker. That I should be making movies. (But) That is exactly what I should be doing," said the filmmaker, who also hosts the popular celebrity chat show "Koffee With Karan".

IIFA Awards, the three-



day award gala, returns to Yas Viceroy Hotel, Abu Dhabi, for the third consecutive year and will be held from September 27 to 29.

Actor Vicky Kaushal will join Shah Rukh and Karan on the stage as a host.

There will also be performances by veteran actor Rekha and stars such as Shahid Kapoor, Janhvi Kapoor, and Kriti Sanon.

"I'm so privileged to be hosting this show with Vicky and Karan, and all the amazing talent. Some of us are present here this evening. And of course, there's going to be great performances to follow. There's going to be

Shahid, Vicky, Janhvi, Kriti, and of course, the most wonderful star of them all, Rekha ji," said Shah Rukh.

The "Pathaan" star, who is returning to the IIFA stage as a host after almost a decade, said he wanted to present all editions of the awards show but the dates didn't match.

"They called me once to host (IIFA), they are calling me back after 10 years," he quipped, saying these days it's important to "clarify" when it's a joke.

"IIFA is being hosted all around the world, which makes us very proud. And more often than not I've had to beg them

"I'm shooting but you are in Vancouver, Toronto, Malaysia, do it (IIFA) here in Borivali or in film city like others do. But their vision is big," he added.

For the first time, IIFA Awards 2024 is bringing together the best of both Hindi and South film industries—Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam, and Kannada, with an aim to celebrate and honour the richness and diversity of Indian cinema by showcasing Bollywood flair at the IIFA Awards and vibrant South Indian cinema at IIFA Utsavam, which marks the beginning of the grand event.

Telugu star Rana Daggubati, who will host IIFA Utsavam with Teja Sajja, also attended the press conference on Tuesday.

Shah Rukh said this year's edition of IIFA is "more Indian" than ever.

"IIFA has always thought of taking Indian cinema, now with the inclusion of Malayalam, Kannada, Tamil and Telugu and Hindi cinema (to the world)..."

"This is even more Indian than it has ever been before. Keeping up with your vision, I'm thankful now for trying to come back after so many years, I hope we can present it well and keep people entertained." Rana

recalled being hosted by Shah Rukh at his house in Dubai for an after-party some time ago.

"He is so hospitable. He has actually entertained the entire four (South) industries, not only as an actor but also as a human being," he said.

The actor also thanked Karan, who presented the Hindi version of his two-part epic fantasy film "Baahubali", for supporting South cinema.

"And really Karan, it started with you. The fact that we got 'Baahubali' here (in the north)... (It was) the first time all the languages started speaking cinema in some form. Thank you for that," Rana added.

The press conference was also attended by "Yudhra" actor Siddhant Chaturvedi and "Street 2" star Abhishek Banerjee. They will host IIFA Rocks 2024, the musical extravaganza which will bring down the curtain on the event.

As he stepped on to the stage, Shah Rukh took a moment to congratulate Abhishek on the success of "Street 2", his latest release.

"Abhishek, it's so wonderful to see you live after watching your wonderful film. I've been wanting to call you," he said.

## Govt ropes in Amitabh Bachchan for anti-cyber crime efforts

Superstar Amitabh Bachchan will power the government's anti-cyber crime efforts and has joined the Ministry of Home Affairs campaign to prevent cyber frauds in India.

Bachchan made the announcement of his decision to join the Indian Cybercrime Coordination Centre's anti cyber crime campaign on Wednesday morning asking citizens to stay alert and mindful of their vulnerabilities.

Bachchan said he had joined on the request of Home minister Amit Shah.

Later, Shah thanked the actor and said, "Pursuing Modi Ji's

vision, the Ministry of Home Affairs is resolved to creating

accelerate our mission to build a Cyber-Secure Bharat."



a safe cyberspace in the nation. The I4C has taken several steps in this direction. I thank Shri @SrBachchan Ji for joining this campaign. Amitabh Bachchan Ji's active involvement will further

The Centre in a separate post said, "Supporting PM Shri @narendramodi Ji and HM Shri @AmitShah Ji's vision, the iconic actor Shri @SrBachchan Ji has joined I4C's campaign to make India cyber secure. You too can join this initiative, stay vigilant against cyber fraud, and contribute to building a

#CyberSecureBharat." Shah had on Tuesday, while addressing the Centre's first foundation day event, said cyber security was key to national security.

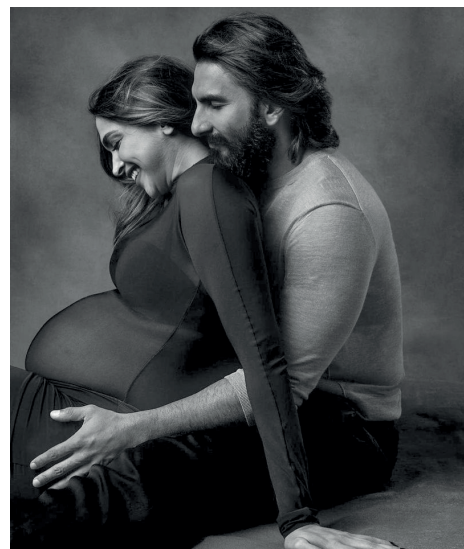
## The baby has arrived

Bollywood superstars Deepika Padukone and Ranveer Singh have become proud parents to a baby girl.

As per reports, it is confirmed that the couple have been blessed with a baby girl.

Earlier, on Saturday, the actress was spotted at the H N Reliance Hospital in the Girgaon area of Mumbai.

Prior to her delivery, on Friday, the actress, her husband and their families paid a visit to the Siddhivinayak Temple in Mumbai. With Ganeshotsav starting from Saturday, the families perfectly timed the delivery to welcome the baby on the auspicious day.





# All grit, no glory

## New Delhi

It was a day when the medal winners from the Paris Paralympics were to be felicitated by Sports Minister Mansukh Mandaviya. The Indian contingent returned with its best result at the Paralympics — winning 29 medals, including seven gold medals. Yet the setting of the function — the VIP hall at the Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium with an ineffective air conditioning system — left a sour taste.

It was a big reminder to the Paralympians that despite their medals, they will never be treated the same as their able-bodied counterparts.

Yogesh Kathunia, who won the silver medal in the men's discus throw F56 event, called it a societal issue.

"We Indians are not inclusive. The government has maintained equality but the private sector thinks we are not equal," he said. "We don't get to win medals easily. We have been fighting our disability for years before



performing well to win. I suffer from a neurological disorder, it weakens my muscles. For me to improve my performance I have to work doubly hard. Sumit (Antil) is throwing 70 metres with a prosthetic leg. If he was able-bodied, how far do you think he would throw?" he added.

"I sat on a platform and threw 48.34 metres to win the discus medal. I challenge anyone to match it. The point I am making is that we need inclusivity, and only then will things change for

many of us," he added.

Kathunia explained how there was a world of difference between how big brands treat able-bodied athletes and para-athletes.

"We want to use a certain brand, do you think we will get the same amount of money if we become ambassadors? We will never get it. Brand people never think like that, they think we are not equal," he said.

Harvinder Singh, who created history after becoming the first

para archer from India to win a gold medal, shared Kathunia's grouse. Singh said that there are distinctions being made in state government jobs in which para-athletes are getting ignored.

"It is the conditioning in which some people rate us lower than able-bodied athletes. Those people should spend a day with para-athletes. They will see what hardships we have to go through on a daily basis. You go back and see my final. Can anyone tell me that my performance was any way lesser than normal archers?" he said.

"The Haryana government has downgraded para-athletes' recruitment. Now they will not give Grade A jobs to us. I am doing a doctorate. We have engineers, IAS officers, doctors in the team, we have the same qualifications. They give the same amount of money to all medal winners but where is the parity in jobs? Para gold medallists will only get a Grade B job. This is wrong," he added.

Mariyappan Thangavelu

became the most consistent Paralympian after winning the men's high jump T63 bronze, his third successive Paralympics medal. But he doesn't understand why Indians celebrate a bronze winner in the Olympics but fail to recognise a Paralympics gold medallist.

"People go crazy if a normal athlete wins a bronze medal. They make them a big star but if a para-athlete wins a gold medal no one cares. When both have played in the Olympics and performed to win, why the different treatment? It has to change," the 29-year-old, who won gold in 2016 and silver in 2021, said.

"I have won three medals in three successive Paralympics but till today I have no sponsor backing me. No one is coming to me. I have discussed with a lot of companies but they never come back. All they say is 'please wait'. Three Paralympics have passed and I have not got one sponsor," he added.

## Focus on Rinku Singh, Shreyas Iyer, Washington Sundar in round 2 of Duleep Trophy

Fringe players like Rinku Singh along with some seasoned names who have been ignored by the national selectors will be aiming to attract their attention when round two of Duleep Trophy begins here on Thursday.

The star power in the season-opening red-ball event will be reduced significantly for round two with India squad players released for a national camp ahead of the first Test against Bangladesh in Chennai from September 19.

Sarfaraz Khan is the lone India squad member who will be featuring in the domestic competition.

In the absence of national regulars, the focus will shift on the likes of Rinku, who was surprisingly not picked for the first round despite having an impressive first-class record. The spirited southpaw has also done well for India in T20 cricket.

Shubman Gill joining the



national team has led to Mayank Agarwal captaining the India A unit. Having played his last Test in March 2022, Agarwal needs a bagful of runs to get back into national reckoning.

Pacer Prasidh Krishna, who missed the Duleep Trophy opener having not fully completed his rehab for a left quadriceps tendon,

has been named in the India A squad. With the Australia tour on the horizon, the performance of the lanky pacer will be keenly observed.

In the India B squad, captain Abhimanyu Easwaran will need to lead from the front following a forgettable outing in Bengaluru last week.

Sarfaraz, who made a successful Test debut against England earlier this year, was upstaged by his brother Musheer in the opening game, the latter's 181 taking India B to a fine win over India A.

The elder brother will be eyeing a big knock before joining the national team in Chennai.

Washington Sundar also features in the India B squad and his all-round abilities keep him in the mix for all formats. Pacer Mukesh Kumar, who was pipped by Akash Deep for the first Test, will have a point to prove.

India C openers Sai Sudharsan and Ruturaj Gaikwad will be looking to pile on the runs to make a case for the reserve opener's role in the India setup.

Left-arm spinner Manav Suthar will be aiming to build on his match-winning performance against India D.

Rajat Patidar, dropped from the Indian team following a

disastrous debut series against England, will need to show the hunger for red-ball runs.

Shreyas Iyer, captain of India D, is another player who has been sidelined from the Test squad and only a mountain of runs can bring him back into the national reckoning.

The same goes for Devdutt Padikkal and Sanju Samson, who was a notable name missing from India D's playing eleven against India C.

Left-arm pacer Arshdeep Singh too needs to do a lot more to enhance his red-ball credentials.

Squads:

India A squad: Mayank Agarwal ©, Riyan Parag, Tilak Varma, Shivam Dube, Tanush Kotian, Prasidh Krishna, Khaleel Ahmed, Avesh Khan, Kumar Kushagra, Shaswat Rawat, Pratham Singh, Akshay Wadkar, SK Rasheed, Shams Mulani, Aaqib Khan.



## Avinash Sable to join Neeraj Chopra in Diamond League finale in Brussels

New Delhi

National record holder 3000m steeplechaser Avinash Sable will run in his maiden Diamond League Final in Brussels, joining star javelin thrower Neeraj Chopra in the season-ending event, as he is listed among 12 participants for the winner-takes-all race on Friday.

Sable finished 14th in the overall Diamond League standings with three points he garnered from two meetings. But four athletes ranked higher than him — Lamecha Girma (injured) of Ethiopia, Geordie Beamish of New Zealand, Ryuji Mura of Japan and Hillary Bor of the USA — are not taking part in the final.

The season finale will be a two-day affair on September 13-14. The men's 3000m steeplechase is scheduled for September 13 while the men's javelin throw event will be held the next day.

Five meetings out of the 14 in the DL series across the world this season had men's 3000m steeplechase event.

The 29-year-old Sable had finished sixth



with a national record time of 8 minutes, 9.91 seconds — bettering his own earlier mark — in the Paris leg on July 7. He was 14th at the Silesia leg with a time of 8:29.96 on August 25. He had finished 11th at the Paris Games in 8:14.18 after becoming the first Indian to enter the Olympics final in men's 3000m steeplechase.

## Wrestler Bajrang Punia moves Delhi High Court against suspension by NADA



New Delhi

Ahead of the Senior World Wrestling Championships to be held in Albania in October, wrestler Bajrang Punia has approached the Delhi High Court challenging his suspension by the National Anti-Doping Agency (NADA).

The grappler has claimed that the conduct of the agency is in violation of his fundamental rights to practice a profession and earn a livelihood under the Constitution of India, and that he would be "forced to retire" if the "arbitrary" suspension is not lifted.

On June 21, the National Anti-Doping Agency suspended Punia for a second time and issued the formal "notice of charge", rendering him ineligible to train and participate in competitions.

The move came three weeks after an Anti-Disciplinary Doping (ADDP) panel had revoked the earlier suspension on the ground that NADA had not issued a "notice of charge" to the wrestler.

NADA had first suspended Punia on April 23 for refusal to give his urine sample for a dope test during the selection trials held in Sonapat on March 10. The sport's global governing body, United Wrestling World (UWW), had also suspended him.

In his petition filed through lawyer Vidushpat Singhania, Punia -- who was at the forefront of last year's

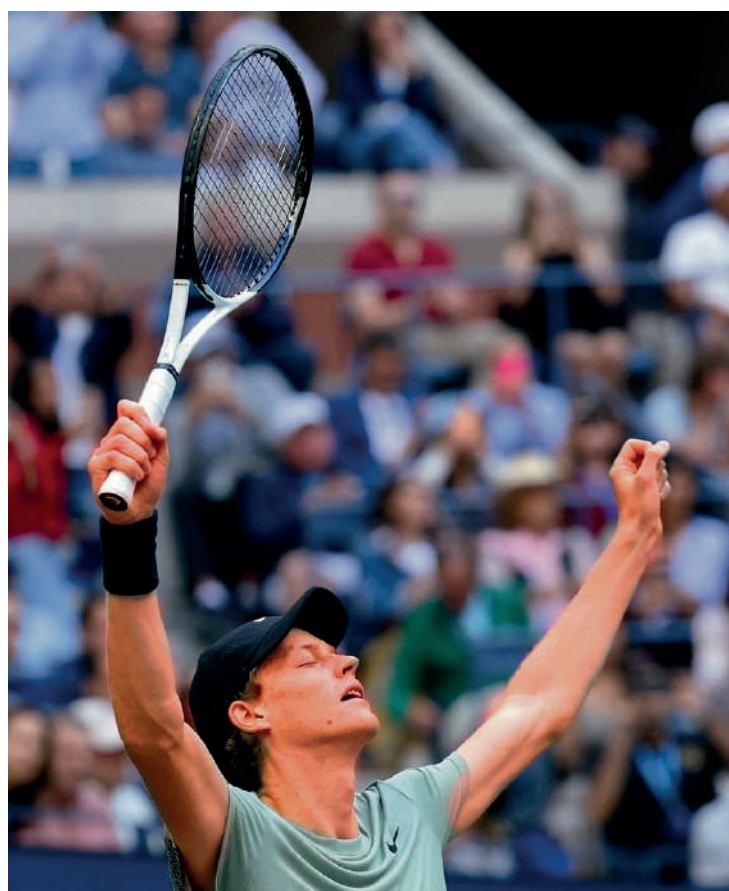
protest at Jantar Mantar demanding the arrest of then WFI chief Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh for the alleged sexual harassment of seven women grapplers-- argued that NADA has acted in violation of the testing guidelines and protocols.

He prayed for a direction to suspend and/or quash the June 21 suspension order, which was passed "without application of mind and without even considering the explanations and evidence" given by the petitioner.

The present Petition is filed.. by the Petitioner being aggrieved inter alia, by the illegal conduct of the Respondent i.e. the National Anti-Doping Agency of India whilst undertaking the sample collection of the Petitioner by using expired test kits and subsequently suspending him on arbitrary grounds," the petition said.

"The Petitioner will be forced to retire from wrestling due to the arbitrary actions of the Respondent. In particular, the Petitioner may lose out on competing at the Senior World Wrestling Championships set to be held in Albania from 28th to 31st October 2024, which is the last major event that he shall have the opportunity to compete in for a period of two (2) years. Consequently, the Petitioner will have no other option but to officially retire from the sport of wrestling," added the plea.

## Bravo: Sinner first Italian man to win US Open crown



New York

Jannik Sinner produced a brutal display of baseline power as he became the first Italian man to win the US Open with a 6-3 6-4 7-5 win over American

Taylor Fritz in the final. Sinner held aloft his arms in celebration after breaking Fritz to clinch the title and cheers rang around Arthur Ashe Stadium, even though

home fans had hoped to see Fritz end a 21-year US men's Grand Slam drought.

Sinner was under a cloud of controversy at the start of the tournament after revelations that he tested positive twice for an anabolic agent in March but avoided a ban. An independent tribunal accepted his claim that the positive tests were the result of an unintentional contamination. The top seed blocked out the furore in New York and with the win claimed his second Grand Slam title after winning the Australian Open earlier this year.

"We just went day-by-day, trying to practise well, even on the days off, believing in ourselves which is the most important. I understood, especially in this tournament, how important the mental part is in this sport," said Sinner.

"Here was difficult because also the pretournament circumstances weren't easy," said Sinner, who climbed the stands to celebrate with his team as fans shouted "Bravo!" around him.



# Everyone Over 70 To Be Covered Under Health Insurance Scheme: Centre

## New Delhi

The Union government has approved health coverage to everyone who is 70 and above under the national insurance scheme Ayushman Bharat.

The Union Cabinet, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, in a statement said the Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB PM-JAY) will benefit 4.5 crore families with six crore senior citizens. The free cover is worth ₹ 5 lakh and will be on a family basis.

"With this approval, all senior citizens of the age 70 years and above irrespective of their socio-economic status would be eligible to avail the benefits of AB PM-JAY. The eligible senior citizens would be issued a new distinct card under AB PM-JAY," the government said in the statement.

Senior citizens of the age 70 years and above belonging to families already covered under AB PM-JAY will get an additional top-up cover up to ₹ 5 lakh per year for themselves (which they do not have to share with other members of the



family who are below the age of 70 years), the government said.

Senior citizens above 70 who are already getting benefits of other public health insurance schemes such as Central Government Health Scheme (CGHS), Ex-Servicemen Contributory Health

Scheme (ECHS), and Ayushman Central Armed Police Force (CAPF) may either choose their existing scheme or opt for AB PM-JAY.

It has been clarified that senior citizens of 70 years and above who are under private health insurance policies or

Employees' State Insurance Scheme will be eligible to avail benefits under AB PM-JAY.

The AB PM-JAY is the world's largest publicly funded health assurance scheme which provides health cover of ₹ 5 lakh per family per year for secondary and tertiary care hospitalisation to 55 crore people, corresponding to 12.34 crore families.

All members of eligible families irrespective of age are covered under the scheme. The scheme has covered 7.37 crore hospital admissions including 49 per cent women beneficiaries. The public has benefited to the extent of over ₹ 1 lakh crore under the scheme, the government said.

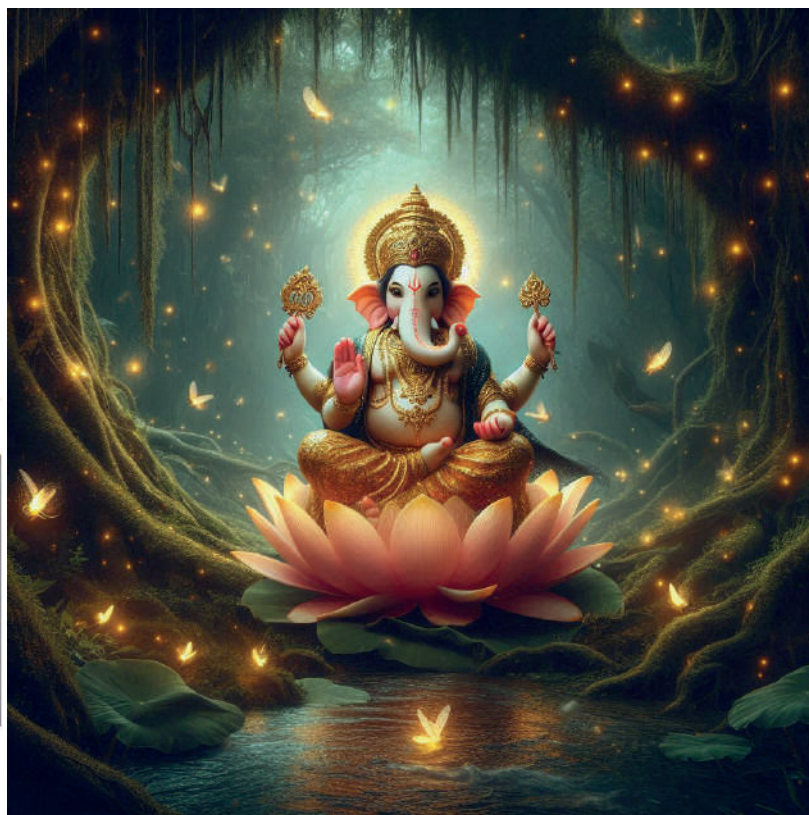
The expansion of cover to senior citizens of 70 and above was announced by PM Modi in April.

The government said the AB PM-JAY scheme has seen continuous expansion of the beneficiary base. Initially, 10.74 crore poor and vulnerable families comprising the bottom 40 per cent of India's population were covered under the scheme.

**Across State** अक्रॉस मुंबई



युनायटेड महाराष्ट्रीय  
साऊथ इंडियन फाऊंडेशन



**May the divine blessings of Lord Ganesha bring you eternal bliss and peace, protect you from evil and wrongdoings, and fulfill all your wishes and desires.**

**Happy Ganeshotsav !**

**संजय मंगेश भैरे**  
संपादक

मुंबई अध्यक्ष  
डिजिटल मिडीया संपादक संघटना