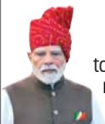


PAGE 5

NATION

Ladakh youth to get quality education, new technologies: PM



PAGE 8

GLOBAL

Hezbollah claims explosives, denies assassination plot



PAGE 10

BUSINESS

Mahindra enters the CNG race with XUV 3XO ZNG



PAGE 11

LAW & JUSTICE

SC seeks Centre's reply on police-media interaction



PAGE 12

SPORTS

We want to play fearless and smart T20 cricket: Shafali



BR Shetty sues BoB for \$15 Billion

GOPIKRISHNAN in New Delhi

In a bizarre move, NRI industrialist BR Shetty filed a legal suit of \$15 billion (1.44 lakh crore) in the Bombay High Court against Bank of Baroda (BoB) and its top officials and its ex-CEOs for conniving, leading to the collapse of NMC Healthcare, headquartered in Abu Dhabi. Debt-sunk Shetty's move came within three months after BoB paid \$5,700 crore, after it was found violating anti-money laundering norms by Abu Dhabi Global Market Courts (ADGM). BoB was facing the charges in an insolvency case of NMC Healthcare in Abu Dhabi and London courts from 2020.

On July 2, BoB declared to Stock Exchanges that it decided to pay \$5,700 crore without admitting any guilt in a bid to close long time legal case in foreign courts. Citing the judgment of the Abu Dhabi Court, The



Pioneer on August 3 reported that Bank of Baroda was accused for violating anti-money laundering norms. In court proceedings, Shetty accused his CEO Prasanth Manghat for conniving with BoB's officials, leading to such a huge financial burden during 2012-2020 operations. The Administrators of Insolvency in ADGM alleged that BoB's Abu Dhabi branch facilitated financing arrangements and banking transac-

tions that allowed NMC Healthcare and related 37 entities to conceal their actual financial position. They also claimed that the bank failed to carry out adequate Anti-Money Laundering (AML), Know-Your-Customer (KYC) and due diligence checks, contributing to the continuation of the alleged fraud. "Claims are brought against Bank of Baroda based on allegations that it acted fraudulently and

without proper care in contract (under Article 246 of the Civil Code) and in tort (under Articles 282 and 285 of the Civil Code). Secondly, there are the so-called "insolvency claims", which are made by the Joint Administrators under Section 251 of the ADGM Insolvency Regulations 2022 (the "IR 2022") in fraudulent trading against Shetty, Manghat and Bank of Baroda, and under Section 252 of the IR 2022 in wrongful trading against Shetty and Manghat. For present purposes, it is the civil claims that are relevant; it is common ground that they are all governed by UAE law. The insolvency claims are governed by ADGM law," said the Judgment of Justice Sir Andrew Smith of Abu Dhabi Global Market (ADGM) Court of First Instance Commercial and Civil Division, dated March 25, 2025.

CONTINUED ON P4

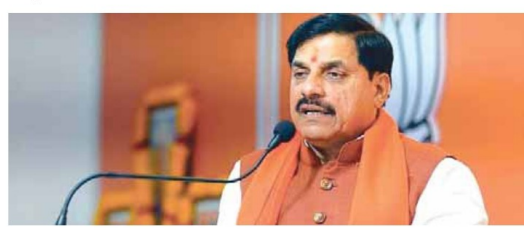
MP Cabinet approves company for Jabalpur-Indore corridor

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE in Bhopal

The Madhya Pradesh Cabinet, chaired by Chief Minister Mohan Yadav on Thursday, approved development proposals worth around 27,050 crore, including the formation of a wholly State-owned company to develop the Jabalpur-Indore Economic Corridor and implementation of a price difference payment scheme for soybean farmers.

The Cabinet approved the formation of the Jabalpur-Indore Economic Corridor Development Company Ltd to promote industrial investment and develop selected industrial and economic hubs along the corridor. The State Government will retain complete ownership and control of the special purpose vehicle (SPV) and provide initial paid-up capital of 100 crore.

A governing council, headed by the chief minister, will oversee policy decisions, while an executive body led by a vice-chairperson he nominates will manage the company's operations. The



company will identify, acquire, and develop land; conduct zoning; prepare master plans; allocate land; and develop internal infrastructure within designated economic hubs. The company will not construct the main road or corridor.

The company will facilitate industrial parks, food and agro-processing parks, logistics and technology parks, IT parks, global capability centres and related residential and social infrastructure. Projects may be implemented through public-private partnerships, engineering, procurement and construction

contracts, concessions, leases and joint ventures. In a decision aimed at supporting farmers, the Cabinet approved the implementation of the Bhavantar Bhugtan Yojana under the PM-AASHA scheme to ensure minimum support price-related benefits for soybean growers during the 2026 kharif season.

The Cabinet also approved the continuation of irrigation projects in Burhanpur, Raisen, Mandasaur and Singrauli with an allocation of 3,076.37 crore. The Cabinet also approved schemes worth more than 15,557 crore under the Law and

Affairs Department for continuation during the 16th Finance Commission period.

Other approvals included 5,232 crore to expand AYUSH healthcare and the National AYUSH Mission, and 2,875.20 crore for infrastructure development in government schools. The Cabinet also approved 24 new posts for Women and Child Development offices in the newly formed districts of Niwari, Mauganj, Pandhurna and Mahmar, besides allocating 241.88 crore for student transport in tribal Sandipani schools.

Nobody can browbeat judiciary: CJI

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE in New Delhi

Taking a serious view of Rahul Gandhi's protest march to the Supreme Court on Monday, Chief Justice of India (CJI) Surya Kant was heard on Thursday that "Nobody can browbeat the judiciary."

Making this observation while listening to petitions by Rahul Gandhi and other INDIA bloc leaders regarding SIR, the bench, headed by the CJI and comprising Justice Jaymya Bagchi, issued notice to the Election Commission of India (EC) but added that serving notice does not mean conceding to the demand of the political leaders. The bench was hearing various pleas related to the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls, Delhi protests, march to the Supreme Court and alleged assault on journalists and lawyers on Thursday.

The court's observations came after Solicitor General Tushar Mehta and associate counsel Bhatia raised the issue of the protest at the Supreme Court. "It is unacceptable that this court is seized with political procession. What happened in SC should not have happened," Bhatia pointed out. At this point, the CJI stated, "Nobody can browbeat the judiciary."

On Bhatia's assertion that the



protest and protest march was an attempt to pressurise the court, the CJI called the attempts "feeble." "These are feeble attempts that nobody takes note of. Outside they make statements... We are not sitting in ivory towers. We know what statements they make outside and what they say in court. We know everything," the CJI observed.

The bench, however, did not name the petitioner. The observation assumes significance as one of the state units of the Congress recently sought the CJI's resignation while commenting on his observations that the law and order fall under the executive domain.

CONTINUED ON P4

CJP's Tricolour march faces police curbs

ABHINAV KUMAR JHA in New Delhi

The Cockroach Janta Party's (CJP) plan to march with Tricolours at Central Park in Connaught Place on Friday may not get off the ground. The New Delhi Municipal Council (NDMC) has shut the park to the public on October 16 and 17 for "administrative reasons", and Delhi Police has told people to stay away, saying prohibitory orders under Section 163 of the BNSS are already in force in the area.

The NDMC said in a notice dated October 15 that the park would stay closed on October 16 and 17 "due to administrative reasons". The NDMC director issued the notice. The closure falls on the day the CJP has called people to the park at 5 PM with Tricolour flags.

The civic body has also told Delhi Police about the closure. Police said in a statement on Thursday that it has asked for adequate security to prevent unauthorised access to the park. Police said Section 163 of the BNSS is already in force in Connaught Place and adjoining areas to maintain peace and protect lives and property. The statement said police would take legal action against those who defy the orders. People were urged to cooperate.

CONTINUED ON P4

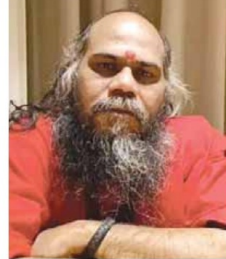
Mirchi Baba seeks EC reply on voter list deletion

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE in Bhopal

Mahant Swami Vairagyanand Giri Maharaj, popularly known as Mirchi Baba, has questioned the removal of his name from the voter list, alleging that the names of poor people, street vendors and several saints have also been deleted. He has demanded an explanation from the Election Commission, asserting that voting is a fundamental right of every citizen.

In a video released on Thursday, Mirchi Baba said that while removing the names of deceased voters was justified, deleting the names of living citizens without a valid reason raised serious questions. "I am alive, not dead. On what basis has my name been removed?" he asked.

Referring to the traditions of sannyas, he said saints were being asked to provide proof of their birthplace and details of their parents. According to him, after taking sannyas, a person's identity is linked to the guru tradition rather than the family, and the previous



name is abandoned. He said he was now known as Mahamandaleswar Swami Vairagyanand Giri Maharaj.

Baba said he had contested elections in the past and also paid income tax. As a citizen, he maintained that he had the

right to vote and would not remain silent over the deletion of his name. He said he would approach the court under the Constitution and seek an explanation for the decision. He also claimed that the names of several other saints had been removed, although they were reluctant to raise the issue publicly.

Speaking to Dainik Bhaskar over the phone, Baba said he had been in Dubai for the past few months and had not paid attention to the matter. After seeing media reports about protests against the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls, he contacted a local teacher in the Hazira area of Gwalior. The teacher reportedly told him that his name had been deleted because his father's documents were unavailable.

Mirchi Baba was arrested in August 2022 following a rape complaint by a 28-year-old woman from Raipur. A court acquitted him on September 5, 2023, and he was released the following day after spending about 13 months in custody.

SC draws line on caste quotas after conversion

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE in New Delhi

In a significant verdict, the Supreme Court on Thursday held that a Hindu belonging to a backward class could not claim the same reservation benefits as a Muslim member of a backward class merely on conversion to Islam. The court also said that a person professing a religion other than Hinduism, Sikhism, or Buddhism cannot be considered a member of a Scheduled Caste. The ruling highlights how religious conversion affects eligibility for caste-based reservation and legal protections.

A bench of Justices Prashant Kumar Mishra and Shree Chandrasekhhar clarified the law while dismissing a Tamil Nadu Government appeal seeking confirmation of the State's policy to provide reservation benefits to members of backward classes, most backward classes, denotified communities and scheduled castes who embrace Islam.

"No statutory benefit, protection, reservation, or other entitlement under Article 16(4) of the Constitution, the enjoyment of which is predicated upon a particular Hindu social order, can be claimed or extended merely based on such antecedent membership after the person has converted to Islam, Christianity, or any other non-Hindu social order," the bench held.

It said the court concluded that a person who converts from the Hindu social order to a non-Hindu social order cannot claim affirmative action under Article 16(4) of the Constitution merely because of the social backwardness associated with his pre-conversion status.

"A backwardness suffered in the antecedent social order cannot by itself be carried forward to confer upon him the status of a backward class in the region to which he has converted..." it said.

CONTINUED ON P4

INDIAN RAILWAY FINANCE CORPORATION
Future on Track

Propelling Progress. Creating Value.

Extract of Statement of Unaudited Financial Results for Quarter & Half Year Ended on 30th September, 2026
(Pursuant to Regulation 47 of SEBI (LODR) Regulations, 2015)

HIGHLIGHTS - H1

TOTAL REVENUE ₹ 16,127.52 Crore	PROFIT AFTER TAX (PAT) ₹ 3,885.69 Crore	NET WORTH ₹ 60,573.35 Crore	EPS ₹ 2.97 Per Share	INTERIM DIVIDEND ₹ 1.15 Per Share
---	---	---------------------------------------	--------------------------------	---

Total Revenue Growth (in % crore) 13,287.27 16,127.52 21.38%	PAT Growth (in % crore) 3,822.67 3,885.69 10.31%
--	--

FINANCING A STRONGER, MORE CONNECTED INDIA

Rolling Stock | Railway Infra Assets | Mining | Power Generation | Renewable Energy | Power Transmission | Hotel & Catering | MMIP | Port | Metro

INDIAN RAILWAY FINANCE CORPORATION LIMITED
(A Navratna CPSE under Ministry of Railways)
CIN: L65910DL1986GOI1026363
Regd. Office: 10 Floor, East Tower, NCC Plaza, Bhimlal Puri Marg, Pragati Vihar, Lodhi Road, New Delhi-110003
Phone: 011-243511400, Email: investor@irfc.co.in, Website: https://irfc.co.in/

Follow us on:

Note: Shareholders are requested to update their KYC, Bank mandates, Nominee & contact information and to claim their unpaid / unclaimed dividend, if any, by writing to company at its Registered Office or email at investor@irfc.co.in or to RTA of the company at irfcinvestor@bseindia.com. Dividends if not encashed for a consecutive period of seven (7) years lying with the Companies unpaid dividend accounts, are liable to be transferred to the Investor Education and Protection Fund ("IEPF") along with the shares in respect of such unclaimed dividends.

Scan the QR code to view full results

By order of the Board
(Manoj Kumar Dubey)
CIN: L65910DL1986GOI1026363
Date: 15-10-2026
Place: New Delhi

MP targets Rs 3 lakh crore investment through industrial corridor

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
n Bhopal

Madhya Pradesh Cabinet has approved the development of an integrated industrial corridor connecting Jabalpur, Bhopal and Indore, with plans to establish world-class industrial and economic hubs across seven districts.

The project aims to attract investment, create employment opportunities and promote balanced regional development by extending industrial growth beyond major cities to urban and rural areas.

The corridor will cover Indore, Bhopal, Jabalpur, Narsinghpur, Raipur, Sehore and Dewas. In its first phase, three to five priority industrial hubs will be developed across approximately 10,000 acres.

The government estimates that the corridor could attract more than Rs 1 lakh crore in private and institutional investment by March 2028, generating one lakh direct and over two lakh indirect jobs. With the corridor's further development over the following three years, total investment is projected to exceed Rs 3 lakh crore, creating more than six lakh direct and indirect employment opportunities.

The initiative is intended to provide local youth with employment opportunities closer to home and reduce migration in search of work. Specialised industrial clusters will be developed according to the economic strengths of

different regions. Narsinghpur and Raipur will focus on food processing, agricultural processing units, warehousing and cold-chain facilities to support farmers and add value to agricultural produce.

Jabalpur and its surrounding areas will be developed as centres for heavy engineering, advanced manufacturing, defence-related industries, aerospace ancillary units and logistics.

Bhopal and its surrounding areas will focus on information technology, IT-enabled services, knowledge services, electronics system design and manufacturing, and research and development. Sehore and Dewas will see the development of food-processing units, manufacturing facilities, warehouses and logistics hubs. Indore's existing strengths in advanced manufacturing, IT and global services will be further expanded, with stronger links to the industrial ecosystems of Dewas and Pithampur.

The corridor will also feature planned industrial townships with residential facilities, hospitals, schools, childcare centres, skill-development institutions, sports facilities and green spaces for workers and their families. Investors will be offered ready-to-use infrastructure under a plug-and-play model, including developed land, internal roads, reliable power supply, industrial water, waste man-

agement systems, common effluent treatment facilities and high-speed digital connectivity.

To implement the project, the Cabinet has approved the formation of the Jabalpur-Bhopal-Indore Economic Corridor Development Company Ltd, a wholly state-owned company. The state government will provide Rs 100 crore as initial paid-up capital and an interest-free loan of Rs 20 crore for initial working capital.

The company will focus on industrial cluster planning, internal infrastructure, plug-and-play facilities, investment promotion and employment generation. It will not undertake construction of the main highways or primary road network, which will remain the responsibility of the Public Works Department and other designated agencies. The project will also explore public-private partnerships, institutional financing and land monetisation for long-term funding.

The government has outlined a phased implementation plan, beginning with the company's incorporation and appointment of professional teams, followed by land mapping, master planning, statutory approvals and infrastructure development. Sites for industrial hubs will be selected through technical assessments using the PM Gati Shakti National Master Plan portal, taking into account water and power availability, connectivity, environmental impact and investor demand.

FIR filed over illegal pandal

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
n Indore

The Madhya Pradesh High Court on Thursday questioned the delay in action against an unauthorised pandal obstructing a road in Indore's Gandhi Nagar area and directed the state government to submit a response within two weeks on measures to prevent similar incidents.

During the hearing of a public interest litigation, DCP Narendra Rawat appeared before the court and informed it that a 10-foot-wide passage had been opened through the pandal. He also said an FIR had been registered against the organiser for illegal encroachment.

The court questioned why action was not taken earlier despite the road being obstructed. Rawat submitted that a notice had previously been issued to the organiser.

During an earlier hearing, the government had informed the court that no valid permission had been granted for erecting the pandal. The court had then questioned how the structure was allowed without authorisation and why officials failed to intervene promptly, directing the DCP to appear personally.

Petitioner advocate Charchit Shastri submitted that the obstruction had inconvenienced thousands of families and affected local businesses.

Madhya Pradesh ministers flag rural power cuts

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
n Bhopal

Unscheduled power cuts in Madhya Pradesh have become a concern within the state government, with ministers raising questions over inadequate electricity supply in rural areas during an Energy Department meeting on Thursday. Chief Minister Mohan Yadav said efforts were underway to address the power crisis and that positive results were expected within a day or two.

Water Resources Minister Tulsiram Silawat questioned officials over the disparity in electricity supply between urban and rural areas. He asked why villagers were not receiving adequate power when cities were reportedly not facing similar difficulties. Other ministers, including

Karan Singh Verma, also highlighted public resentment and complaints over power cuts.

Explaining the situation, Chief Minister Yadav said below-normal rainfall this year had affected electricity supply, while increased demand in districts due to paddy sowing had added to the pressure. He said Madhya Pradesh was receiving 800 MW of electricity from Gujarat and the Sarda Sarovar project. Efforts were also being made to procure additional power from Punjab and Uttar Pradesh.

Energy Minister Pradyumn Singh Tomar said low rainfall and technical faults had affected power generation. The department was working to restart units that had been shut down to ensure a smooth electricity supply.

According to the Energy Department, around 4,000 MW of additional power could

become available by next week, which is expected to ease the supply situation. The government is also making advance power-banking arrangements for the upcoming rabi season.

The department said advance banking for the season had been increased by around 225 million units compared with 3,600 million units last year. Under the arrangement, power availability ranging from 407 MW to 3,900 MW is expected between November 1, 2026, and March 10, 2027.

The government is banking on additional power procurement, the restoration of generation units and advance arrangements to meet rising demand. However, rural electricity supply remains a key concern, with ministers seeking timely relief for residents affected by unscheduled outages.

AIR Ujjain wins record recognition

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
n Ujjain

All India Radio (AIR), Ujjain, has earned recognition in the London World Book of Records for its live coverage of the royal procession of Lord Mahakaleshwar on September 7, 2026.

Certificates were presented to the team members at a ceremony held on Thursday in the presence of Additional Inspector General of Police Rakesh Gupta and Superintendent of Police Pradeep Sharma.

Congratulating the team, Gupta said covering the procession for several hours amid massive crowds was a challenging task. He highlighted the enduring importance of radio, recalling its popularity before the 1982 Asian Games, when live sports commentary connected listeners across the country. He said AIR continued to reach areas inaccessible to other communication platforms and expressed confidence that the Ujjain station would achieve more milestones.

AIR Ujjain official Brahman Prakash Chaturvedi said the live broadcast began at 2 pm and continued until 10 pm, with the team reporting directly from the crowded streets. The programme was relayed by 19 AIR stations across Madhya Pradesh, while Vividh Bharati stations in Indore, Jabalpur and Bhopal also carried the coverage. The broadcast enabled devotees living far from Ujjain to listen to the procession.

World Book of Records representatives Suchita Shukla and Apoorva Menon welcomed the guests. AIR Indore announcer Sudha Sharma conducted the programme, while AIR Ujjain programme officer Anamika Chakravarty proposed the vote of thanks.



Thai artists perform during International Ramleela Utsav at Ravindra Bhawan in Bhopal on Thursday. Pioneer photo



Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Mohan Yadav releases the book Environment and Sustainable Development by senior writer Dr. Chitraloka Soni (Kade) at the Chief Minister's residence in Bhopal on Thursday.

Indore police book two clinic operators after girl's death

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
n Indore

Indore police have registered a case of culpable homicide against two clinic operators following the death of a 10-year-old girl allegedly due to negligence during treatment at a clinic in the Junjindore police station area.

The case concerns Harsh Clinic, in Khatwala Tank, which had previously been sealed by the Health Department. The operators allegedly reopened the clinic and resumed treatment despite the action. The girl, Divyanshi, was taken there with complaints of fever and cough. Her condition reportedly deteriorated after treatment, and she died while being taken to MY Hospital.

According to Junjindore police, Divyanshi was the daughter of Manoj Solanki, a resident of Ganesh Nagar near Ganesh Nagar Force Academy in the Khandwa Naka area. Her family took her to Harsh Clinic on August 30.

Police allege that clinic operator Shrichand Bageja

Class 5 student beaten in school

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
n Balaghat

A Class 5 student was allegedly beaten with a wooden stick by his teacher at Vishnupada Primary School in Bargon-K village, Lanji area of Balaghat district, on Wednesday.

The student alleged that teacher Rupchand Khare beat him for failing to solve a mathematics question. He also claimed that the teacher warned him against telling anyone at home about the incident.

After the student returned home, his grandmother, Pramila Ghoramare, noticed injury marks on his back while asking him to hand over his school uniform for washing. The boy broke down and told her about the alleged beating. His grandmother said she confronted the teacher, who claimed the injuries resulted from a fall. She later took the student to Civil Hospital in Lanji, where he was admitted late Wednesday night.

The hospital management informed police about the incident for investigation. Police action and the teacher's response were awaited.

Administration prepares for Ijtema from December 4 to 7

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
n Bhopal

The Bhopal district administration has begun preparations for the annual Ijtema, scheduled to be held at Ektinkhed from December 4 to 7, with lakhs of people from the Muslim community expected to attend. Divisional Commissioner Kamveer Sharma on Thursday directed officials to prepare a minute-to-minute action plan to ensure smooth arrangements for security, traffic management and fire safety.

The meeting was attended by ACP Shailendra Singh Chauhan, Collector Priyank Mishra, Municipal Commissioner Sanskriti Jain, Ijtema committee representatives and officials from various departments.

Sharma instructed officials to complete their assigned tasks within the stipulated time and accord the highest priority to the safety and convenience of the groups arriving at the venue. He also stressed the need for effective coordination and communication between the district administration and the Ijtema committee.

ACP Chauhan said adequate security arrangements would

be made at the venue, with sufficient CCTV cameras installed and measures put in place to manage crowds. He also directed officials to establish help desks at railway stations and bus stands to assist visitors arriving from outside Bhopal.

The divisional commissioner asked officials from all concerned departments to inspect the venue and review the progress of their respective responsibilities. He also directed that electrical installations be inspected both before and after the work is completed to minimise safety risks.

Officials were instructed to prepare a list of volunteers and familiarise them with arrangements at the venue so that they could assist visiting groups promptly and effectively.

Health and food safety have also been identified as priorities. Sharma directed officials to ensure the availability of healthcare facilities throughout the event and minimise response time in emergencies. Food safety officials have been asked to check the quality of food items and arrange testing of drinking water to prevent health risks and unhygienic conditions.

FIR filed over New Market fire

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
n Bhopal

Bhopal police have registered an FIR against the Bhopal Municipal Corporation (BMC) following a major fire at New Market on October 8.

The investigation found that negligence allegedly led to the blaze, which spread from cloth kept near a burning furnace. Meanwhile, the BMC had begun preparations to shift hawkers to the market near TT Nagar Stadium and make New Market a no-hawker zone.

The fire engulfed four nearby shops and more than 12 street cars, causing losses estimated at crores of rupees. The affected establishments included Amrapali Restaurant, Vijay Store, a cafe and a mobile shop. Amrapali Restaurant owner Pawan Agrawal subsequently lodged a complaint with the police.

Police station in-charge Gaurav Singh Dohar said the investigation indicated that the fire started when cloth kept near the furnace at the Balaji Chole Bhature shop caught fire.

Former ASI gets life terms for wife, sister-in-law murders

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
n Bhopal

A Bhopal court has sentenced a former Assistant Sub-Inspector (ASI) Yogesh Maravi to two separate terms of life imprisonment for murdering his wife and sister-in-law. The court also awarded him a three-year prison term under the Arms Act.

Special Judge Suchita Srivastava pronounced the verdict on Thursday afternoon after a trial lasting nearly 16 months. The prosecution presented 11 witnesses, all of whom reportedly testified against the accused. Technical evidence, including CCTV footage from cameras installed near the crime scene, also played an important role in the case.

The murders took place on December 3, 2024. According to the available information, Maravi's wife, Vinita, was living separately from him in Bhopal with her sister, Megha Ukey. The accused was reportedly unhappy with Vinita for supporting her sister's education. Megha wanted to

continue her studies and build a career, and had cleared the written stage of the Bhopal-Inspector recruitment examination.

Police said Maravi had taken leave and travelled to Bhopal before the incident. CCTV footage from the area reportedly showed him entering and leaving the building where his wife lived. During the investigation, Maravi was found to have travelled to Bhopal in a car bearing registration number CG04HS1052, accompanied by a driver. The vehicle was parked near Vinita's flat.

Police circulated photographs of the car and the driver, and requested their assistance in identifying the vehicle. Acting on the information, personnel at the Pindrai outpost under Nainpur police station in Mandla district intercepted the vehicle and detained Maravi and his driver. Three police teams had been involved in the search, following which Bhopal police travelled to Pindrai to take custody of the accused.

Megha, a resident of Baihar, had studied at MH College in Jabalpur.

Weak monsoon raises water crisis concerns

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ Indore

Indore is facing the prospect of a water crisis following deficient monsoon rainfall, with the city receiving only 23 inches against its normal average of around 37 inches. Mayor Pushyamitra Bhargava has sought a Rs 50 crore package from Chief Minister Dr Mohan Yadav to strengthen water management measures. A meeting was held on Thursday morning to discuss measures to tackle the situation, attended by Urban Development and Housing Minister Kailash Vijaywargiya, Water Resources Minister Utsiram Silawat and officials of the Indore Municipal Corporation and other departments. Indore received only around 20 inches of rainfall

in 2008, triggering a water crisis. After 18 years, the shortfall has again raised concerns over water availability during summer. The city, with a population of around 40 lakh, requires approximately 62 million litres per day (MLD) for domestic use, including industrial, commercial, institutional and other requirements, the total demand reaches 750-800 MLD. Adding to the concerns, a Narmada water pipeline burst near D-Mart between Bengal Square and the bypass on Thursday morning. The forceful water jet disrupted traffic, while waterlogging led to the closure of an underpass. Experts say a large section of the city depends on Narmada water, which supplies around 440 MLD daily. Up to 22% of the water is lost

due to leakages and other factors. The city has more than one lakh private borewells, besides around 6,500 borewells and hydrants maintained by the municipal corporation. A 2025 Central Ground Water Board report placed urban and rural areas in the critical category, with groundwater extraction estimated at around 90%, raising concerns about further depletion. Last summer, around 40% of the population dependent on borewells faced severe water shortages, forcing authorities to deploy nearly 700 tankers. Low reservoir levels, continued groundwater extraction and losses in the supply network could worsen the situation this year. Indore has 27 ponds, seven of which are monitored by

the municipal corporation. Their combined capacity is around 2,880 crore litres, while another assessment puts the available water at approximately 2,260 crore litres. Below-normal rainfall has prevented the ponds from filling to expected levels. Several city wards lack overhead water tanks and depend on supplies routed from tanks in other wards, putting additional pressure on distribution timings and volumes. Last year, the hydrant at Malwa Mill also had to be shut for the first time. Water quality is another concern. In 2019, the Pollution Control Board tested borewell water samples from 70 locations in Indore, of which 69 reportedly failed to meet prescribed standards.

MP aims to become India's milk capital

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ Bhopal

Chief Minister Mohan Yadav said animal husbandry plays a vital role in increasing farmers' income. The state government is promoting milk production, cow conservation and support for livestock farmers to make Madhya Pradesh the country's milk capital. He said the Mukhyamantri Vindavan Gram Yojana, being implemented in all 208 rural Assembly constituencies, would serve as a model for other villages and boost dairy farming. At a review meeting, he directed all concerned departments to coordinate for effective implementation. The scheme aims to strengthen rural livelihoods by creating model villages centred on cow rearing and dairy development.



Artists dressed as Lord Ram and Lakshman in a Ram Barat procession taken out during the Navratri festival in Bhopal on Thursday. Pioneer photo



Deviotes light earthen lamps at a Goddess Durga temple during the Navratri festival in Bhopal on Thursday. Pioneer photo

Kheoni tribals seek land rights, shelter and compensation

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ Sehore

Tribal residents from more than 35 villages in the Kheoni Sanctuary region will reach Bhopal on Thursday to meet Chief Minister Mohan Yadav and present documents related to their land rights. They are protesting the demolition of houses belonging to 12 tribal families in Kosmi village, Sehore district. A sit-in against the action has been continuing for three days. The Forest Department carried out an anti-encroachment drive in Kosmi on October 11, demolishing houses and filling a well with

soil. Union Agriculture Minister Shriya Singh Chouhan also visited the affected families and objected to the department's action. Ramesh Barela, who is participating in the protest, said the community is demanding action against officials responsible for the demolition, land titles for plots cultivated by families for years, arrangements for shelter, food and healthcare, and compensation for crop losses. He said the families had lived in the forest region for generations and depended on it for their livelihood. The demolition has left 12 families homeless.

MP Semicon Summit to feature investment talks and MoUs

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ Bhopal

Madhya Pradesh is gearing up to showcase its semiconductor investment potential at the MP Semicon Summit 2026, scheduled for October 23 and 24 at the Brilliant Convention Centre in Indore. More than 1,000 participants are expected to attend the two-day event, which aims to accelerate investment, industry participation, start-ups, research and skill development in the semiconductor sector. Chief Minister Mohan Yadav reviewed preparations for the summit at

the Chief Minister's Residence on Thursday and directed officials to ensure that investors, business partners and participants are provided with information about the features and opportunities offered under the Madhya Pradesh Semiconductor Policy. The summit will feature more than 75 exhibitors, business-to-business meetings, eight major panel discussions and five round-table meetings. It will also provide students and young innovators with an opportunity to interact directly with industry experts and policymakers. Senior Central government officials, NITI Aayog

members, the chief executive officer of the India Semiconductor Mission, industry leaders and representatives of leading companies are expected to participate. The programme will include presentations on the state's semiconductor policy and investment opportunities, along with memorandums of understanding (MoUs), letters of intent (LoIs) and investment announcements. The summit will be inaugurated by Chief Minister Yadav on October 23. He will present the state government's vision for developing Madhya Pradesh into a semiconductor hub and visit the exhibition show-

casing the sector's capabilities and opportunities. The Principal Secretary of the Science and Technology Department will brief participants on the state's semiconductor policy, while industry leaders from India and abroad will address the gathering. Yadav will also hold one-to-one meetings with investors to discuss potential investment opportunities and partnerships. The state government aims to highlight its policy framework, industrial land availability, infrastructure and skilled workforce to attract semiconductor and electronics investments.

Drone ban at Neemuch factory

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ Neemuch

District Magistrate Himanshu Chandra has prohibited drone operations within the premises of the Government Opium and Alkaloid Factory and in the airspace above it, citing security concerns. The order came into immediate effect and will remain in force until November 27, 2026. The restriction has been imposed under Section 163(1) of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023. Violations will invite legal action under Section 223 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023, and other applicable provisions. According to the district administration, the factory manufactures life-saving medicines and is considered a sensitive establishment from a security perspective. The possibility of security risks arising from drone activities prompted the administration to enforce the restriction. An Intelligence Bureau report has also recommended declaring the airspace above the factory a 'no-drone zone' for the next two months. Acting in view of the prevailing circumstances, the District Magistrate issued the order with immediate effect. Under the directive, drone operations by any person within the factory premises and the airspace above them are strictly prohibited. The restriction is intended to prevent potential security threats and safeguard the sensitive facility.

Bharat Yadav takes charge as Public Relations Secretary



Senior IAS officer Bharat Yadav assumed charge as Secretary of the Public Relations Department at State Mantralaya on Thursday. Deputy Secretary Kailash Bundela welcomed Yadav on the occasion. After taking charge, Yadav reviewed the department's work and issued necessary instructions. Department employees were also present on the occasion. Pioneer photo

Free e-rickshaw service for women, elderly

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ Dhar

Dhar-based social worker and industrialist Vijay Bahadur Singh has gifted an e-rickshaw to Shradhdhalaya Old Age Home on his birthday to facilitate the mobility of elderly residents. The management has decided to extend the service free of cost to all senior citizens, persons with disabilities and women in the city. Bhaj Research Institute Director Dr Dipendra Sharma said the transport service would operate seven days a week between the old age home, bus stand, district hospital and court premises. A one-week trial run has begun while the formal launch is



scheduled for Vijay Parv (Dussehra). A GPS tracker and music system are also being installed in the vehicle for passengers' safety and convenience. Singh celebrated his birthday at the old age home on Thursday, where he joined the residents for a meal after offering prayers at a temple. His initiative was appreciated by members of the old age home, the pensioners' association and Super 60 Plus, who expressed gratitude for the public welfare measure.

Several associates, including Amitabh Vyas, Amit Thakur, Manoj Panwar, Vijay Raju Thakur and Dhirendra Dighe, attended the programme. Meanwhile, supporters gathered at Singh's office to greet him with sweets, bouquets and fireworks on the occasion.

Roadshow promotes ELECRAMA

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ Bhopal

The Indian Electrical and Electronics Manufacturers Association (IEEMA) held a roadshow in Bhopal to promote ELECRAMA 2027, its flagship exhibition for the global electrical industry, highlighting Madhya Pradesh's growing role in India's power sector development. The roadshow was inaugurated by Chief Minister Mohan Yadav on February 20 to 24, 2027. ELECRAMA 2027 is expected to feature more than 1,100 exhibitors, attract 50,000 visitors and facilitate over 25,000 business-to-business meetings. The event will

also host more than 500 hosted buyers and feature over 10 country pavilions. Germany will be the partner country for the upcoming edition. Speaking at the roadshow, IEEMA Western Region Council Chairman Sanjay Kulkarni said Madhya Pradesh had made notable progress in power sector development. He described ELECRAMA as a platform to advance India's energy ambitions by connecting industry stakeholders with new opportunities, innovation and growth.

Namami Gange project to curb Shipra pollution

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ Ujjain

Ujjain Mayor Mukesh Tatwal and Municipal Commissioner Abhilash Mishra inspected the ongoing sewage treatment plant (STP) and sewage pumping station works under the Namami Gange project, aimed at preventing polluted water from entering the Shipra river and ensuring a clean water flow ahead of Simhashtha 2028. During the inspection, the mayor reviewed the progress of the works and directed the executing agency and municipal officials

to complete the project within the stipulated timeline while maintaining quality standards. He also reviewed the proposed designs and instructed officials to expedite the remaining work after approval. A 22-million-litre-per-day (MLD) sewage treatment plant is being constructed behind Ayurvedic Dhanwantari College at a cost of Rs 82 crore. The project also includes a sewage pumping station, a 920-metre-long, 600-mm-diameter ductile iron (DI) main pipeline and a 2,000-metre-long treated wastewater pipeline. Under the project, a 22-MLD pumping station will also be established opposite Mangalath Temple, while a wastewater treatment plant with a capacity of 2.38 MLD will be set up at the Bhairavgarh drain. The associated infrastructure will include a 500-metre-long, 200-mm-diameter DI sewage pumping main pipeline and a 1,500-metre-long, 200-mm-diameter treated wastewater pipeline. The project aims to treat polluted water flowing from the Piliya Khal and Bhairavgarh drains before it enters the Shipra river.

Temple priests oppose road widening ahead of Simhashtha

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ Ujjain

Preparations for Simhashtha 2028 in Ujjain have triggered concerns among priests after the Ujjain Development Authority (UDA) marked ancient temples and religious sites for road widening along the route from Ankaapat to Khakh Chowk. The proposed project aims to widen the existing road from around 45 feet to nearly 100 feet, or 30 metres, potentially affecting more than two dozen religious structures on both sides. The temples reportedly falling within the proposed widening zone include the prominent Uttarmukhi Hanuman Temple, Avighna Vinayak Ganesh Temple, one of the six Vinayak temples, and Handiphod Bhairav

Temple. Priests have objected to the markings, saying development is necessary for Simhashtha but should not damage the city's ancient religious heritage. According to Pandit Amit Pathak, priest at the Uttarmukhi Hanuman Temple, a red marking extending 7.64 metres, or around 25 feet, has been made on the temple. He fears the proposed widening could completely affect its ancient assembly hall, leaving only the sanctum intact. The ancient Brihaspatheshwar Mahadev and Annapurna Mata temples within the complex are also reportedly at risk. Other temples in the area could lose around six to seven metres of their structures. However, the exact extent of demolition will become clear

only after the administration completes measurements and finalises the proposed boundaries. Priests point out that the Ankaapat area is among Ujjain's old religious centres and houses numerous ancient temples, including Sandipani Ashram. Pandit Harinarayan Shastri said the road had also been widened during the 2004 Simhashtha, when platforms and portions of several temples were affected. The priests maintain that the existing road is already sufficiently wide and have urged authorities to explore alternatives that protect the temples. Pathak has requested that the marking on his temple be reduced from around 25 feet to 10-15 feet to preserve its original structure. He has also sought a meeting involving

UDA officials, the administration, priests and saints to find an acceptable solution. According to Pathak, no formal discussion has yet taken place with temple management. Priests are waiting for official notices before deciding their next steps. Shastri said a meeting would be held after the notices are received. Pathak warned that the priests would launch a protest if dialogue fails and demolition begins. They stress that preparations for Simhashtha should not repeatedly come at the cost of Ujjain's ancient temples. Priests say Handiphod Bhairav Temple is associated with the city's Navratri Nagar Puja, while Avighna Vinayak Ganesh Temple and the temples of the nine Narayans hold special significance in religious traditions and pilgrimages.

पंजाब नैशनल बैंक
punjab national bank

Circle Office : Jharra Tikuriya 1st Floor,
Asthia Plaza, Katni - 483501(M.P.)
Email - cirktnsmd@pnb.bank.in

SALE NOTICE FOR SALE OF IMMOVABLE PROPERTIES

E-AUCTION SALE NOTICE for sale of immovable assets under the Securitisation and Reconstructions of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest (E-AUCTION SALE NOTICE) under Rule 8(b) & 9(1) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002

This is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the borrower(s) and guarantor(s) that the below described immovable property(ies) mortgaged/pledged to the Secured Creditor, the symbolical/physical (whichever is applicable) possession of which has been taken by the Authorized officer of Punjab National Bank, Secured Creditor, will be sold on "As is where is", "As is what is", and "Whatever there is" basis on the date as mentioned hereinbefore for recovery of amount, due to the Punjab National Bank Secured Creditor from below named borrower(s), mortgagor(s) and guarantor(s). The Reserve price and the earnest money deposit will be as mentioned below against the respective properties. A short description of the immovable property(ies) with known encumbrances, if any, are mentioned as under.

Date and Time of E-Auction – 26.11.2026 between 11:00 A.M. to 05:00 P.M. (with extensions of 10 minute duration after 05:00 P.M., if required), Last date of submission of EMD – 25.11.2026	
Borrower/Mortgagor/ Guarantor Name	Description of Immovable Properties/Secured Assets
1. Branch : Bina (MP)	
1. Ms. Netaja Jind/W Deep Chand Jind, A/cd: P.H. No. 21/51, Kharsa No.-165/3/5, Pratap Ward No-01, Near Katra Mandi, Tehsil-Bina, Distt. Sagar (Borrower), 2. Mr. Shri. Suresh Kumar Ahirwar/S/O Kamnand Prasad Ahirwar, A/cd: 43, Jawahar Road, Bina Distt. Sagar (M.P.)-470115 (Guarantor)	All that part & parcel of immovable property situated at P.H. No. 21/51, Kharsa No.- 165/3/5, Pratap Ward No-01, Near Katra Mandi Tehsil-Bina, Distt. Sagar (M.P.), Area 1250 Sq. ft. Boundaries : North - H/O Pramod Tiwari, South - Road, East - H/O Gopal Yadav, West - Road
	Details of encumbrances known to the secured creditor: Not known
STATUTORY SALE NOTICE UNDER RULE 8(b) & 9(1) OF SECURITY INTEREST (ENFORCEMENT) RULES, 2002 AND SARFAESI ACT, 2002	
TERMS AND CONDITIONS: (1) The sale shall be subject to the terms and conditions prescribed in the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 and to the following further conditions: (2) The properties being sold on "AS IS WHERE IS", "AS IS WHAT IS" AND "WHATEVER THERE IS" basis. (3) The particulars of Secured Assets specified in the Schedule hereinabove have been stated to the best of the information of the Authorized Officer, but the Authorized Officer shall not be answerable for any error, misstatement or omission in this proclamation. (4) The sale will be done by the undersigned through e-auction platform provided at the website – https://banknet.com , on mentioned dates at the given time. (5) For detailed terms and conditions of the sale, please refer to www.pnbindia.in , https://banknet.com . Date : 15.10.2026, Place : Katni	
Authorised Officer, Punjab National Bank	



Big items done in US-India trade deal: Sergio

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
n New Delhi

US Ambassador to India Sergio Goro on Thursday said negotiations for a bilateral trade deal were moving at an "incredible pace", and the "big items are done", underlining that he was confident that both sides will get the pact through.

During an interactive session at the Bloomberg New Economy Forum here, Goro also echoed External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar's assessment of the progress in the proposed India-US trade pact, saying "we are very close to landing it".

Asked about the status of the negotiations, Goro said, "I won't like to get into too many details at this stage."



US Ambassador to India Sergio Goro

and let the ministers announce that. But in the grand scheme of things, big items are done."

"We're actively engaged... Within three weeks of arriving here, we announced a trade deal. The European Union trade deal took almost 20 years. So we're at an

long way, but the most important chapter is still ahead. At the

@BBGNewEconomy Forum, I spoke about the enormous potential of the US-India partnership, and why now is the time to turn commitments into real results of peace... So I am confident that we will get it (the deal) done."

The two sides continue to engage to iron out differences on the proposed deal, and negotiations are heading towards a "landing point",

Jaishankar had said at an earlier session at the Forum, noting that the core fundamentals of the bilateral strategic partnership remained unchanged.

Goro said, "We are getting there. I am confident that we will have a trade deal here, as you heard Dr Jaishankar say right on this stage, and we are very close to landing it."

He was also asked about the Lindsey O Graham Sanctioning Russia and Iran Act of 2026, and if there is any room for some sanctions relief or exemptions related to it for India. "That is a decision for the president," Goro said, adding the legislation gives the US president that authority.

He has not imposed sanctions on any country yet. The

bill was passed recently, and "he has to make a determination within the next 10 days or so, and I am sure we will see an announcement from the White House soon," Goro said.

On September 18, US President Donald Trump signed into law the Lindsey O. Graham Sanctioning Russia and Iran Act of 2026, which authorises him to impose tariffs of up to 100 per cent on countries buying Russian oil and gas, including China and India. Foreign Secretary Vikram Misra, during his meeting with a bipartisan US Congressional delegation in Delhi, had conveyed India's "concerns" over the implications of the recently enacted Act on bilateral ties and the international energy market.

Ankita murder: UKD, Congress protest outside governor house



PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
n Dehradun

The Congress in Uttarakhand on Thursday staged a protest outside the Lok Bhawan here demanding that the appointment of Bushyunt Kumar Gautam as Sikkim governor be put on hold till the probe into the Ankita Bhandari murder case is complete. Several senior leaders including former chief minister Harish Rawat were among 50 odd people to be detained.

State union chief Ganesh Godiyal, former minister Harak Singh Rawat and MLA Pritham Singh were also detained. The Uttarakhand Congress began its protests a day after Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi on Wednesday met Ankita's parents, who were protesting at India Gate demanding justice for their daughter, and expressed solidarity with them.

EC orders special summary revision of voters list in 17 States

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
n New Delhi

Election Commission of India (ECI) on Thursday ordered holding the annual special summary revision (SSR) of electoral rolls in 17 States and Union territories, including those where assembly polls are due "early next year". The final rolls in these states and Union territories will be published on January 4. A senior EC functionary explained that SSR is an annual exercise mandated under election law. It is specially held in poll-bound States. In these 17 States, special intensive revision of voters' list has been completed. In Assam, a special revision instead of SIR had taken place due to legal reasons.



For the first time, parties will be shared "readable" electoral rolls at draft and final stages in both hard and soft versions. Candidates in poll-bound states will also be

18 on or before January 1 next, will be encouraged to fill enrollment forms. This will help them become voters ahead of polls in Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Goa, Manipur and Punjab. The ECI told its poll officials that polls in these states are due "early next year". In its letters to chief electoral officers of these states, the poll authority said January 1, 2027, will be the qualifying date.

The poll roll revision aims to enrol eligible voters, particularly young and first-time electors, correct electoral roll entries and improve the purity of voter lists.

In SSR, there will be no house to house visits by BLOs to electors as SIR has already taken place and electors have more or less been

identified. The states where SSR will be held are: Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Assam, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Goa, Gujarat, Kerala, Lakshadweep, Madhya Pradesh, Manipur, Puducherry, Punjab, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, and West Bengal.

While the term of the 403-member UP assembly ends on May 22 next year, the terms of 60-member Manipur, 40-member Goa, 117-member Punjab and 70-member Uttarakhand assembly end on different dates in March, 2027.

Provisions of the Representation of the People Act, 1950 allows EC to hold polls "earlier than six months before the term expires".

Anti-drug activist murder sparks Punjab bandh: Markets shut, roads blocked in protest

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
n Hoshiarpur/Ludhiana

A State-wide 'bandh' call on Thursday over the murder of anti-drug activist Parvinder Singh Jhota in Mansa evoked a strong response in Punjab, with markets and educational institutions remaining shut and protesters blocking roads at several places, disrupting transport.

Jhota's family had given the 'Punjab Bandh' call from 6 am till 5 pm with support from the Congress, Akali Dal, BJP and Akali Dal Waris

Punjab De, the Samyukta Kisan Morcha and other farmer unions, and state government employee bodies. Known for raising his voice against drug abuse and illegal sale of addictive substances at chemist shops, Jhota was shot in broad daylight inside a medical store at a busy market place in Mansa on Tuesday.

Ashwani Kumar, the store owner who opened fire on Jhota after he questioned him for selling addictive drugs to an elderly man, was taken into custody from

Salasar in Rajasthan. The incident, which took place while Jhota was hosting a Facebook Live, triggered a political slugfest in Punjab, which goes to polls early next year. While Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann has vowed the strictest punishment for those behind the killing, opposition leaders have claimed a complete breakdown of law and order amid a "junglera" in the State.

Jhota's father Bhim Singh, an ex-serviceman, had urged everyone to support the bandh call. A joint action



Protesters chant slogans from a top of a vehicle as they block traffic during a Punjab Bandh protest following the killing of anti-drug activist Parvinder Singh Jhota in Amritsar on Thursday

committee comprising various organisations and social activists formed after

Jhota's murder has demanded the resignations of Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann and

DGP Gaurav Yadav and the dismissal of the Mansa SSP, DSP, SHO and the drug inspectors. They are also demanding a CBI probe into the matter.

The family has refused to perform the last rites of Jhota, whose body is lying at the mortuary of the civil hospital in Mansa, until justice is delivered. In response to the bandh call, shops and markets remained shut at several places on Thursday, including Hoshiarpur, Amritsar, Ferozepur, Ludhiana, Jalandhar, Sangrur, Barnala,

Moga, Patiala and Mansa. However, emergency services remained operational. Protesters blocked several roads, including national highways, at multiple locations, prompting authorities to divert traffic through alternative routes.

BR Shetty sues BoB for \$15 Billion

The number of this judgment was quoted by the BoB to the Stock Exchanges without explaining why it paid "5,700 crore in public money as a settlement and not challenged in higher courts. Bank of Baroda was represented by noted lawyer.

Now, two days ago, Shetty filed law suit against BoB in Mumbai High Court demanding 15 billion dollars (1.44 lakh crores) for the collapse of empire NMC Healthcare. Shetty has sought \$5 billion in direct damages, \$5 billion for consequential losses, including lost business opportunities, and another \$5 billion for reputational damage. The first two claims are against NMC, while the reputational damages claim is against Bank of Baroda alone. He has sought 18% annual interest on the amounts claimed.

The suit names 26 defendants, including the bank, 10 of its officials, former NMC executives Prasanth Manghat and Promoth Manghat, their associates and two Indian companies, Avitis Super Speciality Hospitals Pvt Ltd and SMARD Health Solutions Pvt. Ltd. Shetty accuses the bank of processing suspicious transactions, ignoring repeated anti-money laundering alerts and allowing transfers based on signatures and instructions he claims were forged or unauthorised. The allegations have not been established in court.

Shetty alleged that the bank's Abu Dhabi branch "advised the Manghat team how to structure the payments, so that they would pass scrutiny". It also accused the bank of executing "every leg of the round tripping" of funds from NMC. Shetty accused that about AED42 million was allegedly paid to Prasanth Manghat between May 2018 and January 2019 through an account linked to Guide General Contracting and Maintenance. Shetty questions the purpose of these payments and alleges that the bank failed to address compliance concerns. Shetty claimed that he often signed large numbers of documents presented by people he trusted, sometimes signing between 100 and 200 documents a day. He alleges that some signatures were obtained by misleading him, while others were copied electronically or forged. He also alleges that two accounts were opened in his name at the National Bank of Fujairah in December 2017 and March 2019 without his knowledge. The documents used to open the accounts allegedly carried forged signatures and authorizations. He claimed that the accounts were later used to move money from group com-

panies to the Manghat brothers, their associates and companies they controlled.

Citing series of charges, Shetty alleged that Bank of Baroda accepted instructions on his personal account from people who were not authorized to operate it, even though Joseph Pinto was the only authorized signatory. He claims the bank also honoured cheques bearing forged signatures.

Nobody can browbeat judiciary: CJI

The court directed that the court's CCTV recordings from the INDIA bloc's protest be preserved.

The bench issued notice to the poll panel, Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Gyanesh Kumar, and Election Commissioners Sukhbir Singh Sandhu and Vivek Joshi, seeking their responses to the plea filed by Gandhi and others.

During the hearing in a packed courtroom, the moment Rahul Gandhi's plea was called out, senior advocate Abhishek Singhvi commenced the submissions, saying the case pertains to the issue of collective decision-making by the poll panel and the alterations made in Form 6. Form 6 is an application through which an eligible person seeks inclusion in the electoral roll. Simultaneously, senior advocate Kapil Sibal told the bench that he was appearing in the case for Rahul Gandhi. This led Solicitor General Tushar Mehta to ask who was representing Gandhi in the case.

Besides the plea filed by Rahul Gandhi and others, the apex court also dealt with petitions concerning protests, including alleged assault on journalists and lawyers, and SIR. The top court also issued notices to Rahul Gandhi, Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge, Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav, TMC MP Mahua Moitra and the Congress party on a plea against the October 12 march to the top court. The bench also issued notices to the poll panel and others on a plea filed by AIMIM chief Asaduddin Owaisi seeking to set aside the SIR.

The bench also told the Centre that it was not taking cognisance of media reports suggesting that government authorities tendered unconditional apologies in contempt proceedings over alleged violations of its directions concerning Metro and train services in Delhi during a protest against SIR on October 10.

FROM PAGE - 1

affidavits filed by the Union Home Secretary, DMRC and Delhi Police staff with the averment that unconditional apologies are tendered, the top law officer said. The CJI responded that media coverage was not relevant to the court's proceedings. "What the media does is not relevant. We are not holding proceedings for the media," the CJI said. Justice Bagchi then said the court was not taking cognisance of the unqualified apology referred to by the Solicitor General, adding that, in view of Mehta's submissions, the apology appeared to be qualified.

The top court also sought responses from the Centre and the Delhi Police on a separate plea challenging the de-notification of Jantar Mantar as a designated protest site in the national capital. Among other issues, the bench dealt with the matter relating to a woman journalist, whose complaint alleging molestation by a senior police officer is pending consideration. The bench directed the police not to take any coercive action against the journalist.

When this plea was entertained, Bhatia urged the bench also to consider the case of a pregnant woman journalist, who, he said, was allegedly pushed by Gandhi in the apex court premises during the October 12 march. The bench asked him to file a plea seeking guidelines governing how police and law-enforcement authorities interact with journalists during protests and crowd-control operations. The bench directed that no coercive action be taken against a woman journalist, against whom a case has been filed by a Delhi Police officer alleging casteist remarks and public humiliation against him during a protest near Jantar Mantar here.

The bench also sought responses from the Centre and others on a plea seeking a direction that those who organise or call for protests be held responsible for loss of life, injury, and damage to public or private property.

CJP's Tricolour march faces police curbs

Police did leave a small opening. They said a select group could wave the national flag and sing the national anthem at a suitable place. Only a limited number would be allowed. Police

added that the flag must be carried and the anthem sung in the prescribed manner, with respect, dignity and decorum.

For traders, the stakes are about business. Police said market and trader associations in Connaught Place and nearby areas had sought protection for their establishments from unruly elements and unlawful assemblies. They fear "trouble" could hurt sales during the festive season.

Heavy security has been put in place in and around Connaught Place and Jantar Mantar. Several paramilitary units are already in the capital. Police officials said they will place personnel at strategic locations. Barricades will go up, and the movement of protesters and commuters will be regulated to prevent any untoward incident. For those travelling through the area, that could mean checks and delays.

A senior police officer said Connaught Place is not a designated protest site. He said Jantar Mantar has been identified as a protest site. Protesters can hold demonstrations at Ramliya Maidan, Burari Ground or CBD Ground after obtaining the requisite permission, an official said.

The stand-off has been building through the week. Delhi Police denied that Jantar Mantar's status as a designated protest site earlier this week. The CJP responded by returning to the venue with the national flag.

On Wednesday, CJP leaders Saurav Das and Ashutosh Ranks were sent to five days of judicial custody. They were arrested after entering Jantar Mantar and raising slogans demanding the resignation of Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar. The party then announced the march at Central Park.

Addressing a press conference on Thursday, CJP founder Abhijit Dipke appealed to people to join the march carrying the national flag. He also made a wider call. "I request all political parties and civil society groups to rise above ideology and come together. If the right to vote is not saved, democracy will not be saved," Dipke said. The party has spread its appeal through social media and the press conference. Whether the crowd gathers is now uncertain. With the park gates closed and prohibitory orders in place, the venue the party chose will not be open to the public on the day it asked them to come.

SC draws line on caste quotas after conversion

The top court further held that a person who professes a religion other than Hinduism, Sikhism, or Buddhism cannot be believed to be a member

of a scheduled caste. "Consequently, upon conversion to a religion not specified therein, such person ceases to possess the scheduled caste status attached to his antecedent caste and cannot claim any affirmative action benefit of a backward class under Article 16(4) of the Constitution, which is predicated upon membership of a scheduled caste status," it said. It said that conversion to a non-Hindu social order does not by itself confer membership of any particular notified backward class community.

"A person's pre-conversion caste or community status cannot, merely by reason of conversion, be transposed into membership of a distinct notified backward class community in the post-conversion social order," it said, adding that social backwardness, which forms the basis of the person's pre-conversion status, cannot by itself be the only legal foundation for conferring upon a person membership of a different notified backward class community after conversion.

Conversely, where a person converts from the Hindu social order to a non-Hindu social order and then reconverts to the Hindu social order, the question of his entitlement to affirmative action under Article 16(4) cannot be determined merely by reference to his antecedent status. "Such entitlement would require an independent fact-specific determination by the competent authority as to whether the original caste or social identity has genuinely revived upon reconversion, and whether the person satisfies the applicable constitutional and legal requirements for such affirmative action," it held.

It concluded, "We, therefore, affirm the conclusion of the High Court, though our reasoning focuses on the constitutional foundation set out above. A person who converts to Islam does not, by that act alone, become a member of any one of the seven notified backward-class communities in the state. These former caste or community patterns cannot automatically be transposed into the Muslim backward-class category, nor can a private religious body conclusively determine such statutory entitlement."

On August 7, the top court reserved its decision on the plea the state government filed against the high court verdict. The state government had contended that the object behind its order of March 9, 2024 was to ensure that persons belonging to socially and educationally backward communities are not deprived of reservation benefits solely on account of conversion to Islam. The high court verdict came on a petition filed by one Sameer Ahmed, who converted from Hinduism to Islam in 2015, with the conversion being notified through a Gazette notification in 2016.

250 idol collection kiosks to come up across Delhi



PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
n New Delhi

Delhi residents will soon have designated kiosks to deposit damaged idols and worship materials instead of dumping them in parks, streets or water bodies, with the Municipal Corporation of Delhi signing an agreement with Plastindia Foundation to set up 250 such collection centres across MCD wards in the first phase. Of these, 60 kiosks have already been installed at designated locations, Plastindia Foundation Chairman Alok Tibrewala said, adding that the foundation had developed, supplied and installed the centres free of cost as part of its commitment to environmental protection and responsible waste management.

The MoU signed on Monday underlining the understanding was signed on the initiative of Chief Minister Rekha Gupta, with the agreement formalised at a programme held at the Delhi Secretariat on Thursday. The event was attended by Delhi Mayor Praveesh Wahi, Standing

Committee Chairperson Sabya Sharma, Leader of the House Jaibhawani Yadav, Municipal Commissioner Sanjeev Khirwar and officials from concerned departments.

Under the initiative, residents will be able to deposit damaged idols and related religious materials at the kiosks after performing rituals, instead of leaving them in open spaces or immersing them in water bodies. The collected materials will then be segregated and recycled through a proper management process.

The Chief Minister said the initiative was aimed at ensuring that citizens could continue their religious practices while also fulfilling their responsibility toward keeping the city clean. She appealed to residents to use the designated centres rather than leaving idols and worship materials on roads, in open spaces or in water bodies, saying even small individual efforts could meaningfully improve cleanliness and environmental protection across the city.

Ladakh youth to get quality education, new technologies: PM

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
n Jammu

Emphasising that Ladakh's development is a top Centre priority, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on Thursday that the Union Territory's youth are receiving special attention for quality education and new technologies. As a result, they no longer need to leave for other cities. Virtually inaugurating five major projects worth around "3,350 crore, covering airport infrastructure and strategic road connectivity, he stressed that the Government will build modern infrastructure while fully protecting the local environment. Prioritising the younger generation's educational empowerment, Modi highlighted plans to build a major centre of excellence in Leh and advanced proposals for satellite campuses of IIT Jammu and IIM Jammu. These premier institutions will equip local students with

advanced research and modern technological skills right at their doorstep, Modi said. "Our special focus is on the new generation of Ladakh. The youth of Ladakh will now be able to get better opportunities for higher education, research, and new skills right in their own region," he said. The prime minister also said that Ladakh is adding another chapter to its progress and development today, and he was happy to be part of the occasion virtually. "Several important development projects have been inaugurated today. These projects will make travel easier for many people in Ladakh, improve electricity facilities in some areas, increase water availability in others, and strengthen the preservation of our ancient heritage," he said. Hailing the Centre's initiatives, Lieutenant Governor Vinai Kumar Saxena said the region has seen a major



Prime Minister Narendra Modi during the launch of multiple development projects for Ladakh via video conferencing

transformation in infrastructure and living standards under the Prime Minister's leadership since it became a Union Territory in 2019. Saxena said, "Five new infrastructure projects would prove to be milestones in Ladakh's development, strengthening connectivity, water security, power supply and preservation of cultural heritage." The Lieutenant Governor (LG) thanked Narendra Modi for his leadership and support, saying the

people of Ladakh's seven districts looked forward to his address with high hopes and aspirations. The projects include a new passenger terminal at the Kushok Bakula Rimpochee Airport in Leh, built for "640 crore". Recalling his earlier laying of the foundation stone for the Kushok Bakula Rimpochee Airport terminal in Leh, the Prime Minister expressed delight at inaugurating the facility, which triples flight capacity and expands annual passenger handling from 10 lakh to 35 lakh. He highlighted that the terminal is India's first to feature geothermal heating alongside solar energy usage to suit the harsh climate, energising local tourism while balancing infrastructure growth with ecological care. "Our effort is to develop modern infrastructure in Ladakh while taking full care of the local environment," asserted the PM. Underscoring the strategic

and economic value of regional connectivity, the Prime Minister also dedicated the 2,500-crore-ruppee Nimmu-Padum-Darcha road to the citizens, noting that it slashes travel time from 12 hours down to just 3 hours. He emphasised that beyond saving commuters' time, this vital corridor will significantly boost local commerce. "This road will also greatly help trade and business," noted PM Modi. Modi also dedicated a 9 MW Hanu small hydroelectric project and the 66kV double-circuit Dah-Hanu-Khalti transmission line to the nation. In addition, the prime minister inaugurated India's first Petroglyph Conservation Park at Sindhu Ghat in Leh and 40 water bodies developed across 40 villages under Project Him Sarovar. "I extend my heartfelt congratulations to all the people of Ladakh for these projects. I also congratulate all the

engineers, workers and local colleagues involved in these projects. I specially appreciate the colleagues of the BRO," he said. Modi said Ladakh has immense sports potential, and the youth of the Union Territory have carved out a unique identity in fields like ice hockey, winter sports, and mountaineering. The PM said he was pleased that Ladakh is promoting sports talent through the new sports policy. "Our effort is to ensure that the youth receive better training and facilities, and achieve new accomplishments at national and international levels," he said. Addressing a long-standing regional demand for closer judicial access, Modi said the Government in August officially approved the establishment of a high court bench for Ladakh, and fulfilling this crucial institutional requirement will streamline both governance and legal

recourse for the citizens. "This will make the justice system accessible alongside administration," he said. Praising the craftsmanship of local artisans and farmers, the prime minister shared how he frequently gifts Ladakhi products to world leaders, including the German chancellor and the Swedish PM. He stressed that the Government is actively strengthening Pashmina's global identity and expanding market branding for regional goods. "Our effort is to ensure that local products get new markets, get better branding, and their benefits reach the producers directly," he said. Expressing optimism about the UT's trajectory, Modi hoped that collective action would help the region reach unprecedented developmental milestones. "Together, we will take Ladakh to new heights of development," he said.

Pakistan drone drop in Rajasthan exposes terror-drug nexus, raises festive season alarms

PRAMOD KUMAR SINGH n New Delhi/Jaipur

Early in the morning of 13th October, the Rajasthan Anti-Narcotics Task Force was on the lookout for when they expected to be another fairly routine narcotics drop along the India-Pakistan border. Instead, they found a terror consignment ready to go. It was located in a field near village 12 KD, Raola, Sri Ganganagar district, and comprised RDX, IEDs, pistols, remote detonators, batteries, and hundreds of rounds. Three drone packages were seen after flying about five kilometres from the international border. They were launched from a spot between five and ten kilometres inside Pakistan. This discovery highlights an ongoing issue in the Sri Ganganagar area, where drones are often used at night to deliver heroin and other illegal goods. This time, however, the cargo was different. Investigators believe the materials were meant for a possible attack during the festive season or before elections in Punjab. They have not identified a specific target yet and are still working to trace the packages from where they were launched to their intended destination.



The flat terrain in Sri Ganganagar and its proximity to the border make it a common route for low-flying, short-range drones that sometimes evade radar detection. On the night of October 12th and 13th, visibility was low, similar to previous incidents that tested Indian border security. Local teams retrieved the packages before others could get to them, preventing the material from spreading further into the country. Forensic tests on the RDX and remote detonation parts will be crucial. RDX is a powerful explosive usually found with military or state actors. The use of commercial batteries and remote triggers suggests a plan to quickly assemble and arm the devices once they reached local contacts. The pistols and large amount of ammunition point to a plan to equip small armed groups, not just build one big device. It is still unclear if the shipment was meant for a single major incident or to supply

several groups. This incident also shows that drones serve more than one purpose along the border. The same drones and drop methods used for smuggling drugs now seem to be used, or copied, to deliver explosives and weapons. Indian agencies have seen similar cases in Punjab and Rajasthan, where drug networks sometimes work with groups looking for help with their operations. This recovery by itself does not prove a coordinated state operation. However, since the drones came from inside Pakistan and carried this kind of cargo, authorities will watch border security gaps and possible support networks even more closely. Authorities have not shared details about the drones, like their type, how much they could carry, or how they were controlled. They also have not said if any signals or recovery attempts were noticed at the time. At first, the Anti-Narcotics Task Force thought the flight was for drug smuggling, which may have influenced their early response. If it is a counter-terrorism case, they need to work with state police, the Border Security Force, and central agencies. Questions remain about whether other flights like this have gone unnoticed in recent months and whether more hidden packages are out there.

CBI arrests SFIO Deputy Director and two others in ₹ 1 crore bribery case linked to DHFL probe

PRAMOD KUMAR SINGH n New Delhi

The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has arrested a Deputy Director-level officer from the Serious Fraud Investigation Office (SFIO), along with two private individuals, including a Delhi-based advocate. They are accused of demanding ₹ 1 crore to influence an ongoing SFIO investigation into the DHFL scam. The CBI registered a case against the SFIO officer, who was posted in Chennai under the Ministry of Corporate Affairs, along with the advocate and others. They were accused of demanding "1 crore from a complainant to influence the SFIO's investigation into the DHFL case. After checking the complaint and filing an FIR, the agency set up a trap. The arrests were made when the advocate accepted "20 lakh from the complainant as part of the bribe, acting on behalf of the SFIO officer. The DHFL investigation has received significant attention because of the



material clearly connected to the case. The investigation is still in progress, with the CBI examining how the demand was made, the advocate's role as a middleman, and any other potential links. This case involves the alleged misuse of official power within the SFIO, the agency responsible for investigating complex corporate fraud and serious financial crimes. The DHFL investigation has received significant attention because of the

large amount of money involved and the number of parties connected to it. In this situation, the complainant went to the CBI after being asked for money during the ongoing inquiry. The trap, where part of the payment was handed over, led to the immediate arrests of the Deputy Director-level officer, the Delhi-based advocate, and the third private individual. The material found during the searches is expected to

be important evidence as the agency pieces together the communications and deals that led to the demand. Officials have not shared more details, such as the names of the individuals involved in the investigation or the complainant's identity, because the investigation is still ongoing. These arrests show the CBI's push to curb corruption in agencies that handle major financial cases. The SFIO, part of the Ministry of Corporate Affairs, often looks into corporate groups. Claims of bribery in such cases raise questions about the fairness of the process. Here, the CBI checked the complaint, filed the FIR, and caught the accused while they took the "20 lakh payment. The CBI has three accused in custody and is tracing the money, reviewing digital and paper records, and looking for others who may be involved. The investigation is ongoing, and the CBI is expected to provide further updates as it reviews the evidence and the ₹ 1 crore demand.

Actor Imran Khan to move Bombay High Court against leave India order

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE n Mumbai

Actor Imran Khan, a US citizen and an Overseas Citizen of India (OCI) cardholder, will move Bombay High Court challenging a notice issued by the Mumbai Police directing him to leave India by October 28 for allegedly violating rules by participating in a political demonstration. The 43-year-old actor, OCI cardholder, is likely to file a petition in HC by Friday or Monday through his advocate Zulfiqar Khan. In the draft petition, the actor has termed the "leave India" directive "drastic" and argued that no provision under the current law or statutory rules prohibits an OCI cardholder from participating in a peaceful protest. Instead, the plea is expected to be mentioned for an urgent hearing before a division bench comprising Chief Justice Mahesh Chandra



Imran Khan during a protest over Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar's resignation in Mumbai on October 10, 2026

Tripathi and Justice Advait Sethna. The police action follows Khan's brief detention during an agitation at Mumbai's August Kranti Maidan on October 10. Protesters had gathered at the historical site in solidarity with the Bharatiya Janata Party in Delhi demanding the resignation of Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh

Kumar over the SIR issue. According to officials, Khan was served departure order after authorities invoked statutory provisions under Section 7 (2)(C) and Section 29 of the Immigration and Foreigners Act, which gives powers to the government to restrict the movement of foreign nationals and enforce their mandatory removal.

Determined to eliminate remaining traces of Naxalism: Shah

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE n New Delhi

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Thursday said the Government is determined to eliminate the remaining traces of Naxalism and restore Bastar as a peaceful and prosperous region. He said efforts are being made to improve primary infrastructure and facilities in Chhattisgarh, where the Congress rule had failed to provide even basic amenities for decades. Outlining the BJP Government's efforts to rebuild Bastar and rehabilitate victims of Left-Wing Extremism, Shah said eliminating Naxalism was not enough; the Government is also addressing the suffering it had caused over five decades, particularly among the region's poor tribal communities. Addressing virtual audiences during a ceremony of assistive devices for Divyangians, including those affected by Naxal violence, under the Seva Sankalp



Home Minister Amit Shah virtually addresses a ceremony to provide assistance to Chhattisgarh's Naxal-affected people from New Delhi

Abhiyan' organised to mark 25 years of Prime Minister Narendra Modi in public service, Shah said the end of Naxalism alone would not erase five decades of suffering. Under the campaign, assistive prosthetic devices are being provided in Chhattisgarh to make life easier for tribal persons with disabilities who have suffered as a result of Naxal violence, a Government statement said. Shah said Naxalism had inflicted immense suffering on the poor tribal communities of

Bastar. Using IEDs to inflict disabilities on innocent civilians in pursuit of political objectives was the gravest violation of human rights, the minister said. "We must heal the wounds inflicted by this suffering, help victims stand on their feet again, and ensure they can live with dignity and respect," he said. Shah said under the Niyad Nellanar scheme, significant efforts had also been made to expand basic infrastructure and extend essential services to Bastar, which had remained deprived of such

facilities under Congress Governments for five decades. He said the Government was determined to eliminate the "remaining traces of Naxalism" and restore Bastar as a peaceful and prosperous region. Shah said the Modi Government is committed to providing every person with a disability and every victim an opportunity for rehabilitation. Shah said the Centre stood firmly alongside the Chhattisgarh Government in supporting these efforts. "Traditional tribal leadership in the Bastar region had also been a major contribution," he said. Shah said by providing persons with disabilities with wheelchairs, tricycles, crutches, hearing aids, smart walking sticks, artificial limbs and other assistive devices, the Government could help them in the new era of hope and happiness in Bastar. He said the Bastar Olympics has brought people together for sports in

places where gunfire and bomb blasts once created an atmosphere of fear. Through Bastar Pandum, the Government seeks to revive tribal art and culture, while the Niyad Nellanar scheme will improve basic facilities in remote areas, he said. He said that in a region where the sounds of gunfire and bomb blasts once prevailed, and fear was widespread, thousands of young people are now participating in sports and keeping their traditions alive. He said bank accounts have been opened for 7,328 former Naxalites who do not have accounts. "A total of 1,620 people have received reward money, 7,882 have received incentives, 455 have been provided jobs, and 129 have been allotted land. In addition, under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana, 4,014 beneficiaries have received houses, and more than 2308 tribal people have undergone skill development training," he said.

UPSIDA's 52nd board meet approves key growth proposals

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE n Lucknow

Uttar Pradesh State Industrial Development Authority (UPSIDA) approved key proposals on industrial land acquisition, industrial parks, land allotment policy reforms and infrastructure development at its 52nd Board Meeting held on Thursday under the chairmanship of Alok Kumar, Chairman of the UPSIDA Board and Additional Chief Secretary, Infrastructure and Industrial Development Department. The decisions aim to strengthen Uttar Pradesh's industrial infrastructure, attract investment,



improve administrative transparency and generate employment opportunities. The Board approved proposals for additional expenditure on land purchases in Sandila tehsil, Hardoi, and Mautehsil, Chitrakoot, along with land acquisition proposals in Hardoi and Mirzapur districts. It also approved a land exchange proposal for the proposed Lalitpur Pharma Park, to be developed under the Public-Private Partnership (PPP) model. The committee will refer the proposal to the next committee for further consideration. The project is expected to promote pharmaceutical manufacturing, research, investment and employment in the Bundelkhand region. Land acquisition for Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited (BPCL) LPG Bottling Plant and Bulk Dispatch

Terminal in Kanpur Nagar was also approved, retaining the total green area while incorporating amenities such as a golf course, club and villas. Additionally, the Government will fill certain vacant engineering positions through deployment. Alok Kumar emphasised the importance of industrial land availability, infrastructure development, transparent allotment procedures and simplified regulations. He expressed confidence that these measures would strengthen manufacturing, accelerate regional economic development and reinforce Uttar Pradesh's position as a major industrial hub.

for Trans Ganga City in Unnao was also approved, retaining the total green area while incorporating amenities such as a golf course, club and villas. Additionally, the Government will fill certain vacant engineering positions through deployment. Alok Kumar emphasised the importance of industrial land availability, infrastructure development, transparent allotment procedures and simplified regulations. He expressed confidence that these measures would strengthen manufacturing, accelerate regional economic development and reinforce Uttar Pradesh's position as a major industrial hub.

for Trans Ganga City in Unnao was also approved, retaining the total green area while incorporating amenities such as a golf course, club and villas. Additionally, the Government will fill certain vacant engineering positions through deployment. Alok Kumar emphasised the importance of industrial land availability, infrastructure development, transparent allotment procedures and simplified regulations. He expressed confidence that these measures would strengthen manufacturing, accelerate regional economic development and reinforce Uttar Pradesh's position as a major industrial hub.

Rahul urges President to review Gautam's Governor appointment

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE n New Delhi

Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi on Thursday wrote to President Droupadi Murmu to ask the Government to reconsider the appointment of Dushyant Gautam as governor till the CBI completes its probe into the Anika Bhandari murder case. In his letter to the President, Gandhi said he is writing to her as a "last resort" as she has the right to warn the Government and ask it to reconsider the advice to appoint Gautam as governor. Gautam was appointed the governor of Sikkim on Monday. Gandhi also accused Prime Minister Narendra Modi of having no regard for women's safety by advising Gautam's appointment as governor. The parents of Anika, who protested at India Gate on



Wednesday against the appointment, have alleged the involvement of Gautam in the 2022 murder case. The Congress leader has said that no criminal proceedings can be instituted or continued against a governor, and by appointing Gautam as governor places him "out of reach" of the CBI, which is probing the case.



Editor's
TAKE

Hunger in a world of plenty

On this World Food Day, the measure of progress must not be how much food the world produces, but how many people go to sleep hungry?

There are several UN days that highlight important aspects of human life. But World Food Day, observed every year on 16 October, is special, as it affects all of humanity in one way or another. As they say, it is bad to die of thirst, but it is worse to die of thirst on a riverbank. That is exactly the case with food – we have enough to feed every mouth, but unfortunately, millions go hungry every day. The reason is that it never reaches them. Several factors are responsible for this – sometimes natural calamities, wars, unaffordability or simply a lack of awareness.

World Food Day is a reminder of this moral dyslexia: while enormous quantities of food are wasted at affluent gatherings or lost for want of adequate storage facilities, millions of people continue to suffer from hunger and malnutrition. The irony is particularly stark in developing nations, where food insecurity and nutritional deficiencies undermine health, stunt children's development and claim lives. The tragedy is not merely a shortage of food, but a failure to ensure that what is produced reaches those who need it most.

It marks the founding of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) in 1945 and asks an uncomfortable question: why, in a world capable of feeding everyone, do millions still go to bed hungry? This year's theme, "Innovate today. Nourish tomorrow," is a call to turn science, technology, traditional knowledge and political will into food systems that are fair, resilient and sustainable. World Food Day is marked in about 150 countries. Its purpose is to raise awareness of hunger and malnutrition and to push for practical action on food, people and the planet. Its significance lies in its refusal to treat hunger as inevitable. The FAO notes that the world already produces enough food to nourish everyone, yet an estimated 645 million people faced hunger in 2025, while 2.69 billion could not afford a healthy diet. That contradiction is the scandal at the heart of the modern food economy.

Conflict, economic shocks and climate extremes continue to disrupt farming, supply chains and household incomes. In Africa, hunger remains especially severe, and projections warn that hundreds of millions may still face chronic undernourishment by 2030. Food security, therefore, is not merely an agricultural issue. It is a question of peace, climate justice, public health, gender equality and economic dignity.

Incremental charity cannot solve hunger. What is needed is a transformation of agrifood systems. World Food Day should not end with speeches. Governments must treat food as a national security priority. Businesses must shorten supply chains, reduce waste and pay fair prices. Consumers must waste less and support local producers. It is the least we can do to ensure that no one goes to bed hungry.

Rahul's Satyagraha: The road to 2029

With his new digital platform, Rahul Gandhi seeks to unite scattered protests, amplify marginalised voices and sharpen Congress's challenge to the Modi Government. The test lies in turning public discontent into a cohesive political movement and electoral gains in 2029



KALYANI SHANKAR

A truly effective politician values long-term political influence and a lasting impact. Congress leader Rahul Gandhi also shares this understanding after many ups and downs.

One key aspect of Gandhi's plan is to engage directly with the public, as his grandmother did, and also to use digital platforms effectively. The launch of the 'Satyagraha' platform exemplifies this strategy. In a country where many voices – particularly those of marginalised communities such as students and farmers – are often overlooked, this initiative aims to amplify their concerns and promote inclusivity.

By giving people a platform to register protests and share their stories, Gandhi seeks to build a collective narrative that resonates with a broader audience.

Gandhi's approach questions the Government's narrative by engaging sympathetic media and sharing critical information about the ruling party. This strategy aims to create doubt even among Modi's strongest supporters, reflecting an understanding of how quickly public perception can change in the age of social media. Ultimately, he wants to shift the conversation to issues that matter to ordinary citizens.

Through the 'Satyagraha' initiative, Rahul Gandhi seeks to unite various voices and provide hope to those who feel overlooked. Gandhi understands that if Modi is re-elected as Prime Minister in 2029, Congress may face even greater challenges in reclaiming power.

Through the 'Satyagraha' initiative, Rahul Gandhi aims to unite diverse voices and offer hope to those who feel marginalised.

On Saturday, Rahul Gandhi accused the Government of suppressing the truth and launched the 'Satyagraha' digital platform to unite various issue-based protests occurring across the country.

Launched the day after Mahatma Gandhi's 157th birthday, the 'Satyagraha' platform aims to support those facing injustice. 'Satyagraha' is an initiative designed to bring these voices together on one platform," he said in a post on X. Many individuals, including Gen Z students and farmers, fight for their rights and often feel isolated. The platform encourages people to register their protests in support of those affected by oppression.

Around the country, various groups fight for their rights but often do so in isolation. Gen Z students, farmers, Adivasis, Dalits and women each have unique struggles. It is often easier to



GANDHI'S
APPROACH
QUESTIONS THE
GOVERNMENT'S
NARRATIVE BY
ENGAGING
SYMPATHETIC
MEDIA AND
SHARING CRITICAL
INFORMATION
ABOUT THE RULING
PARTY. THIS
STRATEGY AIMS TO
CREATE DOUBT
EVEN AMONG
MODI'S STRONGEST
SUPPORTERS,
REFLECTING AN
UNDERSTANDING OF
HOW QUICKLY
PUBLIC PERCEPTION
CAN CHANGE IN THE
AGE OF SOCIAL
MEDIA

The writer is a popular columnist

silence a single voice.

At the party level, Priyanka Gandhi Vadra plans election strategies and drafts the party's manifesto, while Rahul Gandhi focuses on reaching the public and campaigning intensively. Gandhi's plans include direct-action protests, social media engagement and targeting younger voters, specifically Gen Z, along with women, Dalits, Other Backward Classes (OBCs), gig workers and the unemployed.

The first phase of Rahul Gandhi's initiative focuses on appointing new secretaries to the All India Congress Committee (AICC) to strengthen party operations across states. Strengthening the party's presence in key states such as Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha and Maharashtra, where it has faced challenges, is crucial for a successful bid in 2029.

Rahul Gandhi is focusing on long-term political influence with his 'Satyagraha' initiative, aiming to engage directly with the public and amplify the voices of marginalised communities. Launched after Mahatma Gandhi's birthday, the platform encourages people, especially Gen Z students, farmers and other underrepresented groups, to unite and share their struggles.

His strategy includes social media engagement, direct-action protests and targeting younger voters, alongside restructuring party operations to strengthen Congress in key states such as Uttar Pradesh and Maharashtra. Following the Bharat Jodo Yatra, Gandhi's approach has become more confrontational towards the Modi administration, positioning him as a key Opposition figure willing to challenge the Government boldly. He under-

stands the importance of shifting public perception and intends to solidify his role and collaborate with supportive media in the lead-up to the 2029 elections.

Rahul Gandhi's 'Satyagraha' initiative seeks to unite diverse voices and inspire those who feel overlooked. It remains to be seen whether he can translate these plans into political success as India approaches a key election.

Gandhi understands the current political situation well. He recognises that if Modi is re-elected as Prime Minister in 2029, Congress may face even greater challenges in reclaiming power.

In the next three and a half years, Rahul Gandhi plans to solidify his position. He plans to collaborate with friendly media outlets.

He plans to engage Gen Z voters, ultimately helping develop a younger leadership team.

The Congress party has historically struggled with perceptions of Muslim appeasement, which has led many non-Muslim citizens to feel that Muslim leaders sway law and order. This focus on vote-bank politics over effective governance presents significant challenges for the party. Public opinion can shift quickly with economic conditions, government performance and political events making opinion polls snapshots rather than reliable forecasts for future elections. With the 2029 general election not far away, India's political landscape could transform substantially.

The key question remains whether current shifts in public perception will endure or be short-lived. Ultimately, India's democratic process will decide the electoral outcome when voters go to the polls.

Daiv Vani

WISDOM FOR A MEANINGFUL LIFE

The Grace of Letting Go

Some of the deepest strength is shown not in fighting back, but in releasing what cannot be changed, without letting it harden the heart.

Sita endured abduction, prolonged captivity in Ravana's garden, a trial by fire to prove her purity, and later, painful banishment to the forest while pregnant, based on public doubt about her own conduct despite her unwavering devotion. Through every ordeal, she neither collapsed into despair nor hardened into permanent bitterness toward those who wronged her, including Rama himself. She raised her sons with dignity in sage Valmiki's hermitage, and when finally reunited with Rama, chose to return to the earth rather than prove her innocence yet again, releasing the need for continued vindication entirely.

Her strength lay not in loud resistance, but in her consistent refusal to let repeated injustice define who she remained at her core.

We often let one significant wrong done to us permanently shape our identity, carrying it forward as bitterness into every relationship that follows.

Today, identify one past hurt you're still carrying as bitterness, and consciously practice releasing its grip on how you see yourself now.

-DAIV

Wisdom or resistance to change?



SAKSHI SETHI

2ND OPINION

Experience is sometimes worn as a badge of indisputable authority in the hallways of education. These individuals are admired for their decades of classroom management, twenty years of teaching and thirty years of service. However, there is an awkward point that needs to be addressed: Does experience always equate to knowledge, or can it occasionally be used as a handy justification to oppose change? One of the rare occupations where using the same techniques for decades can still be misconstrued as career advancement is probably education. Even if a teacher has twenty-five years of experience, it is really twenty-five years of learning, or just one year repeated twenty-five times if classroom procedures, viewpoints and methods have not changed?

The difference is important.

Without question, experience imparts patience, insight and an awareness of the intricacies of the classroom. Experienced teachers frequently have knowledge that cannot be found in textbooks or training courses.

However, when experience becomes intolerant of younger viewpoints, dismissive of new ideas or resistant to introspection, it loses its instructional usefulness. Paradoxically, although schools support children's curiosity, experimentation, questioning and innovative thinking, instructors' own workplaces can hinder these same traits. A child's curiosity is celebrated, but instructors' inquiry is sometimes viewed as disobedience.

Young educators frequently bring new insights, confidence with technology and a passion for cutting-edge methods to the teaching profession. However, seniority may be used to measure their accomplishments rather than merit. Sometimes, well-known rebuttals to suggestions are used, such as "We have always done it this way" or "You will understand when you gain experience." A troubling conflict is revealed by such remarks. Why should educators themselves become reluctant learners if education is really about learning? The issue is not limited to specific courses. The leadership of the school must likewise face its obligations. Organisations may designate coordinators, implement complex administrative frameworks and hold workshops for professional growth. However, real cooperation cannot be replaced by titles. Innovation becomes little more than a catchphrase in institutional presentations

when communication is still disjointed, duties are not well integrated and professional hierarchies stifle discussion.

Adopting technology, implementing smart classrooms or setting up training sessions is not enough to make a school innovative. The propensity to conflate unthinking obedience with professional respect is also troubling. Respect must continue to be reciprocal, but seniority deserves recognition. To gain professional legitimacy, younger instructors should not have to give up their uniqueness or inventiveness. However, innovation should not be used as a justification for ignoring experience. New strategies must be implemented carefully, and seasoned educators can offer the discernment required to separate essential advancements from passing fads in education.

A conflict between seasoned and up-and-coming educators is not necessary for the future of education. It necessitates a collaboration in which innovation keeps knowledge from becoming outdated and wisdom directs innovation.

The willingness to keep learning over the years may be a better indicator of an educator's worth than the number of years they have spent in the classroom. After all, a teacher who stops learning runs the risk of losing the essential essence of education, even though they can still teach lessons.

The writer is an educator and counsellor

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

IDBI Bank and the push for disinvestment

The sale of a 60.72 per cent stake in IDBI Bank to Fairfax Financial Holdings reflects the BJP Government's policy that "commercial banking is not a core state function". Established in 1964 as a Development Financial Institution (DFI), IDBI Bank aimed to support heavy industries, manufacturing plants and infrastructure projects, boosting economic development. However, following economic liberalisation in the early 1990s, commercial banks began offering project finance, making the role of DFIs less relevant. Consequently, in 2005, IDBI merged with its banking subsidiary to offer retail, corporate and commercial banking services.

Legacy projects turned into NPAs, causing heavy losses and RBI restrictions. The Government and LIC infused nearly ₹49,000 crore to revive the bank. With the bank returning to profitability, the Government is now disinvesting its stake. In the coming years, more government-owned entities may be sold to private owners. The message is clear: if public sector and wholly government-owned companies are deemed unviable, they may be sold, whether in banking, insurance, airlines, telephony or other sectors.

J VAYARAMAN | CHENNAI

The right to protest

Since when has holding the national flag high become a "crime" in this country? This question arises following the arrest and imprisonment of Satyav Das and Ashutosh Ranka in Tihar Jail for holding the Tricolour and raising the slogan "Bharat Mata Ki Jai" at the iconic Jantar Mantar.

No place on Indian soil, including one denotified as a designated protest site, should be off-limits to citizens wishing to wave the national flag. Holding the Tricolour as an act of resistance cannot be treated as a punishable offence. The CJP leaders are within their rights to "sneak" into Jantar Mantar and reclaim the popular protest site.

Their imprisonment is all the more striking because it has been carried out by a ruling dispensation that claims a "patent on nationalism". It indicates that the Government may be using its authority to silence dissent for political reasons. The incarceration of these young leaders, instead of engaging with them, illustrates that all is not well with our democracy.

Any political system that refuses to allow protests risks becoming tyrannical. Preserving space for peaceful dissent is essential to the continued existence of democracy.

D GADVID MILTON | MARUTHANCODE

Turning Kalam's vision into reality

This refers to the editorial "Kalam's Unfinished Dream: A Developed India" (October 15). API Abdul Kalam's vision of a developed India remains relevant, but his legacy demands more than speeches and ceremonies. His belief in young people must translate into measurable reforms in education, research, employment and social development. His legacy should be judged by improvements in people's lives. Schools must develop critical thinking, practical skills and problem-solving abilities, while colleges need better laboratories, research facilities and industry partnerships. Rural and disadvantaged students must receive quality education through improved infrastructure, digital access and targeted support. Education must be supported by policies that promote sustainable development, research, entrepreneurship, employment, affordable healthcare, environmental protection and equal opportunities.

Kalam's dream requires accountable institutions, capable citizens and sustained public investment. Policymakers must set clear targets and ensure that economic growth benefits all sections of society. His best tribute would be meaningful reforms that nurture young minds, reward merit and promote equal opportunities, social inclusion and environmental responsibility.

ABHARNA BARATHI | CHENNAI



People take shelter under a plastic sheet during heavy rainfall as the IMD issues a red alert for rain, thunderstorms, lightning and gusty winds. PHOTO: PTI

PHOTO: PTI