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LPDD Presents Proposals For Electrification Of Border Posts In Ladakh's DBO **Sector: Officials**

LT NEWS SERVICE

LEH/JAMMU, Nov 12: The Ladakh administration is contemplating the electrification of border posts in the Daulat Beg Oldie sector through grid connectivity in the Union Territory, officials said.

Daulat Beg Oldie (DBO), located along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) with China, houses military outposts and the highest airstrip in the Ladakh region. manned by the Army and the Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP).

The Ladakh Power Development Department (LPDD) has presented proposals for the electrification of Army and ITBP border posts in the DBO sector through grid connectivity, officials said.

This was revealed during a high-level meeting chaired by Prince Dhawan, Executive Director, Revamped Distribution Sector Scheme, to review power sector initiatives in the Union Territory-- Contd. on P2

Cold Wave Sweeps Kashmir; **Srinagar Records Coldest Night At Minus 1.6**

LT NEWS SERVICE

Srinagar, Nov 12: Jammu and Kashmir's Srinagar city witnessed the coldest night of the season on Wednesday as the minimum temperature dropped to minus 1.6 degrees Celsius, while the Pahalgam hill station recorded minus 3.8.

The Meteorological (MeT) Department officials said the minimum temperature dropped to minus 1.6 degrees Celsius in Srinagar city on Wednesday

"As expected, the minimum minus 1.6 degrees Celsius in Srinagar today, which is the lowest this season so far. The night temperature is likely to drop further in the coming days. Pahalgam recorded minus 3.8 while Gulmarg recorded minus 1 today as the minimum temperature.' the MeT officials said.

Jammu city recorded 10 degrees, Katra town 9, Batote 4.5 and Bhaderwah 1.2 as the minimum temperature. Due to -- Contd. on P2

Red Fort Blast: PM Modi Meets Survivors, Says Those Behind Conspiracy To Be Brought To Justice



LT NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, Nov 12: Prime Minister Narendra Modi visited the LNJP Hospital on Wednesday and met the survivors of the Red Fort blast, saying the perpetrators will be brought to justice. "Went to LNJP Hospital and met those injured during the blast in Delhi. Praying for everyone's quick recovery. Those behind the conspiracy will be brought to justice!" Modi said in a post on X.

Upon landing from Bhutan, the prime minister went straight to the hospital to meet those injured after the blast, officials said.

There was heavy security deployment in and around the hospital where the injured are undergoing treatment.

He met and interacted with the injured and wished them a speedy recovery, officials said, adding that he was also briefed by officials and doctors at the hospital. A powerful explosion ripped through a

slow-moving vehicle on Monday near the Red Fort traffic signal, claiming the lives of 12 people.

Union Home Minister Amit Shah visited the hospital to meet the survivors on Monday, Besides An analysis of dump data retrieved from the mobile phone of Dr Muzammil Ganaie, who was arrested after police busted a white-collar terror module recently, showed that he conducted multiple reconnaissances of the Red Fort area in January this year, officials said.

Police said they suspect these recces were part of a larger conspiracy to target the historic monument on Republic Day, but were foiled due to intensified patrolling in the area at the

Hours after police busted the terror module with links to Jaish-e-Mohammed and Ansar Ghazwat-ul-Hind, and arrested eight people including three doctors, a highintensity blast ripped through a slowmoving car near Delhi's Red Fort area. killing 12 people and injuring several

Around 2,500 kilograms of ammonium nitrate, potassium chlorate and sulphur were seized after police busted the terror module, which spanned across Jammu and Kashmir, Haryana and Uttar Pradesh.-- Contd. on P2

Women Athletes making Ladakh proud: LG Kavinder Gupta

Reinforces UT Admin's commitment to Sports & Holistic Development in Ladakh



LT NEWS SERVICE

Leh, Nov 12: The Hon'ble Lieutenant Governor of Ladakh, Shri Kavinder Gupta, lauded the region's women sportspersons for bringing immense pride to Ladakh through their exceptional achievements. He said these athletes are powerful role models whose success breaks stereotypes and motivates younger generations, showcasing

the values of dedication, resilience, and talent across diverse sporting disciplines.

The Lieutenant Governor made these remarks during interactions with the Women's Horse Polo Team and members of the Ladakh Pencak Silat Association at the LG Secretariat.

Emphasising the transformative power of sports, the Lt Governor said that women's $active -- \textbf{Contd.} \, \textbf{on} \, \textbf{P2}$

UPS

Unified

Chief Secretary chairs 5th Governing Council meeting of Ladakh Skill



LT NEWS SERVICE

Leh, November 12, 2025: Chief Secretary of Ladakh, Dr. Pawan Kotwal, chaired the 5th Governing Council Meeting of the Ladakh Skill Development Mission (LSDM) at the $Civil\,Secretariat, Leh.\,The\,meeting\,focused$ on key agenda points aimed at strengthening and expanding the skill development ecosystem in the Union Territory.

During the session, the council discussed and approved several important proposals including the finalization of the Annual Action Plan for FY 2025-26 and the upgradation and establishment of laboratories for skill courses in

The meeting also reviewed initiatives related to expert lectures in ITIs and polytechnics, the establishment of incubation -- Contd. on P2

Development Mission (LSDM)



Government Degree Colleges.

LG Manoj Sinha Inaugurates The International Film Festival Of Srinagar

LT NEWS SERVICE

Srinagar, November 12: "We must eliminate every single terror element within the society to completely restore the peace and this effort requires the cooperation of all sections of the public," the Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha said on Wednesday. The Lieutenant Governor was speaking at the inauguration of the International Film Festival of Srinagar, organised by Vomedh

The Lieutenant Governor exhorted the film-makers to come up with films, which narrate ordeal of terror victims, expose ringleaders of terror ecosystem and showcase the transformation after August 2019.

"People must expose the enemies of peace by providing information about them to the Police and Security Agencies, so that entire terror ecosystem hiding behind the cover in the society is neutralised and a befitting reply is given to the evil intentions of the neighbouring country," the Lieutenant Governor

The Lieutenant Governor said that after the last 5-6 years of tireless, dedicated work and many sacrifices of the J&K Police, Army, Intelligence and Security Forces, we have been able to create a fear-free environment in J&K



and established a safe, supportive and inclusive system for youth to realise their dreams.

"Society must come together to guard this peace, progress, joy and renewed hope," the Lieutenant Governor said. The Lieutenant Governor shared the efforts taken by the UT Administration to facilitate ease of film shooting and revive J&K's bond with the film industry.

He also called upon the film-makers to strike a balance between entertainment and social responsibility.

"Cinema is one of the most powerful tools for shaping social narratives, fostering cultural unity, and promoting the spirit of Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat," the Lieutenant Governor said.

The 4th edition of The International Film Festival of Srinagar (TIFFS) received over 100 film entries from 20 countries. An eminent jury panel has shortlisted 20 short films, 6 feature films, and 4 documentaries for screening. The selected feature films represent countries like India, Poland, Russia, and Sri Lanka. Other nations represented in the selections include the USA, France, Germany, Turkey, and Switzerland, among others.

The 3-days of cinematic celebration will showcase cinema that bridges cultures and celebrates storytelling. The vibrant -- Contd. on P2

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Blast

According to Forensic Science Laboratory (FSL) that collected around 40 samples from the blast site, preliminary analysis suggested that one of the explosive samples is likely to be ammonium nitrate.

A senior police officer, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said that analysis of the dump data showed Dr Muzammil's repeated presence in and around the Red Fort area in the first week of January

Along with Dr Umar Nabi, an assistant professor at the Al-Falah Univesity who is said to have been driving the car that exploded on Monday, Dr Muzammil visited the Red Fort multiple times to study the security arrangements and crowd density patterns. Their movements were corroborated through tower location data and CCTV footage collected from nearby areas, officials said.

"These visits were part of a detailed reconnaissance ahead of a planned attack on January 26," the officer said.

Meanwhile, the forensics team has collected around 40 samples from the blast site, including two cartridges, live ammunition, and samples of two different types of explosives

Preliminary analysis suggests that one of the explosive samples could be ammonium nitrate, officials said.

During the investigation on Monday, 360 kilograms of ammonium nitrate was recovered from Faridabad, where Dr Muzammil Ganaie and Dr Shaheen Sayeed, both connected to Al-Falah University, were arrested.

"The second explosive sample is believed to be more powerful than ammonium nitrate. Its exact composition will be confirmed after detailed forensic examination," an official said.

According to officials, the forensics team found the cartridges while inspecting the spot.

Further investigation is underway to determine the nature of the explosives and how they were used in the blast, they said. As part of the ongoing probe into the module's activities, Jammu and Kashmir Police on Wednesday detained a preacher from Mewat in Haryana.

Maulvi Ishtiyaq, who has been brought to Srinagar, was staying in a rented house within the Al Falah University complex in Faridabad. It was from his home that police had recovered more than 2,500 kilograms of explosives, officials

Maulvi Ishtiyaq, who will be the ninth person to be nabbed in the case, is likely to be placed under arrest.

Meanwhile, Delhi Police has been carrying out massive checking across the national capital in the aftermath of the explosion.

Police personnel and paramilitary forces have been deployed in large numbers at all the entry and exit points of Delhi. Vehicles entering and leaving the city are being thoroughly checked as part of the intensified security measures.

Senior police officers are personally supervising the security checks at interstate borders, including Ghazipur, Singhu, Tikri, and Badarpur. Vehicles are being checked randomly at markets, metro stations, railway terminals and bus stands, officials said.

A senior police officer said that all district units and specialised wings have been directed to remain on alert and increase patrolling in crowded areas.

"We are taking no chances. The focus is on maintaining public confidence and ensuring that the city remains secure." the officer said.

Sniffer dogs, metal detectors and anti-sabotage teams are pressed into service at sensitive locations. Activists affiliated with the Shiv Sena (UBT) and Rashtriya Bajrang Dal on Wednesday staged separate anti-Pakistan protests here and demanded stern action against the culprits behind the recent Delhi car bomb blast.

The protests at Indira Chowk and outside the Jammu bus stand concluded peacefully, as the participants shouted slogans and burnt effigies of the Pakistani flag, along with the photographs of terrorists, including Jaish-e-Mohammad chief Masood Azhar and Lashkar-e-Taiba founder Hafiz Mohd Sayrod

Hours after police busted the terror module with links to Jaish-e-Mohammed and Ansar Ghazwat-ul-Hind and arrested three doctors and five others, a high-intensity blast ripped through a slow-moving car near Delhi's Red Fort area, killing 12 people and injuring several others.

Around 2,900 kilograms of explosive and inflammable materials were seized after police busted the terror module, which spanned across Jammu and Kashmir, Haryana, and Ultar Pradech

"Pakistan has learnt no lesson from Operation Sindoor and has spread its nefarious activities from Jammu and Kashmir to other parts of the country. Prime Minister Narendra Modi had announced that any terror act in the country would be treated as an act of war, and it is time to finish the mother of terrorism," J&K Shiv Sena (UBT) president Manish Sahni

He said the involvement of white collar people in terrorism is a major concern, and all those who are working against the nation should be identified.

"The culprits behind the Delhi blast should be brought to book and handed exemplary punishment," the Shiv Sena leader said.

Rashtriya Bajrang Dal leader Rakesh Bajrangi also demanded tough action against Pakistan for its continued support to terrorism.

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SpecialCorrespondent:

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Phone Nos: 9818069272, 8287390112

Email id: ladakhtoday@gmail.com,

BinnyY adav

Executive Editor

SaifUllahSkar a

Ph.No.6005565035

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of Ladakh.

Dhawan appreciated the initiative, emphasising the strategic importance of providing a reliable and sustainable power supply to remote border areas, and directed concerned officials to expedite necessary approvals and coordination with relevant agencies for early implementation.

He also reviewed progress of the Border area package for Nubra and Changthang executed by the turnkey contractor GEPDEC.

He examined the status of the upstream network, the upcoming 220 kV transmission system of Nubra, and ongoing smart metering works across the Union Territory. Dhawan took a detailed assessment of the Unified Billing System (UBS) and smart metering implementation for the remaining consumers under the Special Development Package (SDP).

He also reviewed the status of UBS implementation across the UT and the proposals submitted by LPDD for the installation of smart metres for the remaining 18,279 consumers yet to be covered under the scheme, pending approval. (Agencies)

Chief Secretary

centres in degree colleges to strengthen the Skilling Ecosystem in the UT of Ladakh. Emphasis was laid on ensuring quality infrastructure, advanced equipment, and effective teaching methods to enhance practical learning outcomes among students.

Highlighting the achievements of LSDM, the Chief Secretary appreciated the integration of industry-aligned skill courses under the NEP 2020 in collaboration with the Higher Education department and Sector Skill Councils, making it one of the pioneering initiatives in the country. The council noted that 16 well-equipped Skill Centres have been established across seven higher education institutions offering 11 skill courses, with over 400 college students successfully completing certification programs.

Smt. Bhanu Prabha, Administrative Secretary, School Education Department, informed that the Entrepreneurship Development Institute of India (EDII) has recently onboarded with LSDM, leading to the launch of 150 local products in the last four months. She also highlighted the recognition received by LSDM, which was awarded the "Centre for Innovations in Public Systems (CIPS) Award 2024" in the Education Sector on August 22,

Dr. Kotwal emphasized the need for high-quality training facilities and the use of modern machinery in skill centres, ensuring students gain hands-on exposure to the latest tools and technologies. He further directed that in the current scenario; skilling has to be the priority for the youth. This would not only strengthen them as individual but would also strengthen the UT towards a Viksit Ladakh and enable us to realize the dream of Viksit Bharat.

The meeting was attended by Smt. Bhanu Prabha, Administrative Secretary, Higher Education Department; Shri Bhupesh Chaudhary, Administrative Secretary, Transport Department; Shri Sanjeet Rodrigues, Administrative Secretary, Tourism and Culture Department; and other senior officials.

Director, Social Welfare; Deputy Commissioner, Kargil; Chief Planning Officer, Leh; representatives from RDSDE, and NSDC also joined the meeting virtually.

A two-day training workshop on Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) concluded today with great enthusiasm and active participation from officials of the Planning Development and Monitoring Department (PD&MD).

The workshop was organised by the Directorate of Economics & Statistics (DES), UT Ladakh, under the Statistical Strengthening (SSS) Sub-Scheme of the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI). The training was conducted in collaboration with expert resource persons from the Development Monitoring & Evaluation Office (DMEO), NITI Aayog.

Sh Konchok Gyalson, Joint Director, Directorate of Economics and Statistics, UT Ladakh, graced the inaugural session along with Sh. Tsewang Gyalson, Chief Planning Officer, Leh; and Sh. Kacho Mohd, District Statistics & Evaluation Officer, Kargil.

The workshop was successfully facilitated by resource persons from DMEO, Ms Ishika Kumar, Ms Aditya Kumari, and Ms Renu Agarwal, who shared their expertise and guided participants through practical exercises and discussions. A total of 55 officials from PD&MD attended the training with keen interest and active engagement.

Over the course of two days, participants were introduced to the core concepts, tools, and methodologies of Monitoring and Evaluation, aimed at enhancing their capacity for evidence-based planning and performance tracking of government programmes and schemes.

The first day focused on foundational concepts of M&E, including the Theory of Change analysis, Logical Framework Approach (LFA), Designing SMART indicators, Group exercises on Logical Framework formulation, Hands-on training on developing logical frameworks and designing measurable indicators for monitoring projects and schemes.

Similarly, the second day emphasised the evaluation aspect of M&E, covering Evaluation processes and impact assessment, Differences between Monitoring and Evaluation, Types, and approaches of evaluation, REESI + CE Framework for evaluation, Data collection methodologies, also the hands-on exercises on developing Evaluation Matrices Throughout the sessions, participants engaged in interactive discussions and group activities designed to bridge theory and practice. The resource persons from DMEO provided valuable insights into modern evaluation techniques and emphasised the importance of data-driven decision-making for effective governance.

LG Sinha

cultural and cinematic festival serves as a powerful symbol of Jammu Kashmir's artistic resurgence, drawing filmmakers and audiences from across the globe and solidifying its standing as a global platform for creative exchange.

Rohit Bhat and Rakesh Roshan Bhat, Festival Directors, TIFFS, Prof. Nazir Ahmad Ganai, Vice Chancellor, SKUAST-Kashmir; Anshul Garg, Divisional Commissioner Kashmir; Rajiv Pandey, DIG CKR; Akshay Labroo, Deputy Commissioner, Srinagar; members of Vomedh group, Avanti Foundation, and Landmark Crafts Limited, prominent artists, film personalities and Cinema lovers attended the inaugural ceremony. Terrorism is the biggest threat to peace and development, Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha said on Wednesday as he called upon people to help security forces identify the elements supporting terror.

Addressing a function at the Islamic University of Science and Technology (IUST) in the Awantipora area of south Kashmir's Pulwama district, the LG also expressed condolences to the families of those killed in the Red Fort car blast on November 10. "I pay homage to the victims of the terror attack near Red Fort on November 10, and express sympathies with their families," he said. Sinha said it is a fact that terrorism is the biggest threat to peace and development and is its greatest enemy. "It not only spreads hate and violence among the people, but also weakens the brotherhood and unity among the public," he added.

Emphasising that terrorism has devastated the lives of the youth of J-K over the last three decades, the LG said, "Today, our youth are fulfilling their aspirations, but the neighbouring country and its supporters, the terror elements, cannot tolerate it. They want to kill your dreams through terror in J-K and the country," he said. Calling for collective responsibility to destroy the terror ecosystem, Sinha said it is the duty of the public to identify such elements and inform the security forces.

CISF Celebrates 150 Years of "Vande Mataram" with Public Participation and Digital Campaigns Nationwide.



New Delhi:In compliance with the directions of the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) to commemorate 150 years of the National Song "Vande Mataram." all units of the Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) enthusiastically participated in the inaugural ceremony held today. To mark the occasion, a mass singing of the full version of "Vande Mataram" was organised at 1000 hrs across all CISF units, including the Force Headquarters in New Delhi, where over 200 personnel took part with patriotic fervour. With its vast geographical presence across the nation, CISF ensured wide dissemination of this noble message. Units located in major cities as well as in

remote regions organised events encouraging maximum public participation, thereby connecting citizens with a shared sense of cultural pride and national unity. CISF personnel across all units & formations took part in the digital campaign titled "Karaoke with Vande Mataram," wherein they recorded and uploaded renditions of the full version of the National Song. In several locations, singing competitions were also held to add to the festive spirit. All units and formations actively participated in the live telecast of the Hon'ble Prime Minister's address, marking the beginning of this nationwide commemoration. Approved branding collaterals such as hoardings,

banners, website creatives, and a short film were also unveiled to promote the campaign's message. Further programmes have been planned throughout the year to sustain the momentum of this nationwide celebration. The commemoration of "Vande Mataram" stands as a tribute to India's spirit of unity. pride and patriotism—encouraging every citizen to reflect upon the enduring values that bind the nation together. All CISF units have been encouraged to involve the public alongside Force personnel in these activities, fostering a collective sense of responsibility and reinforcing the timeless relevance of our National Song in contemporary society.

Cold Wave

the present cold wave in the Valley, people have started wearing woollens, including the traditional tweed overgarment called the 'Pheran'. An earthen pot woven in a willow wicker basket filled with live charcoal called the 'Kangri' is kept under the 'Pheran' to ward off cold during the winter months.

People with a history of chest ailments, elders and children have been cautioned by local doctors not to expose themselves for longer periods of cold, as the air inhaled by people with lower immunity causes chest-related diseases.

The 40-day-long period of harsh winter cold called the 'Chillai Kalan' begins each year on December 21 and ends on January 30. During this period, most water bodies in the Valley freeze either partially or completely, depending upon the severity of winter cold.

Drinking water taps also freeze during the Chillai Kalan, and locals have to battle with small fires lit around the water taps to de-freeze them. Roads become slippery, and pedestrians and motorists have to negotiate pedestrian malls and roads with caution to avoid accidents.

During extreme winter cold, even the day temperature rarely rises above 7 degrees Celsius in the Valley.

The Centre has issued an updated advisory to all states and Union territories asking them to ensure chest clinics in government health facilities and medical colleges under its National Programme on Climate Change and Human Health (NPCCHH) to tackle air pollution-related diseases.

During the peak air pollution months (usually from September to March), the clinics are expected to function for a fixed duration of at least two hours daily.

Issuing instructions for immediate action, the Union health ministry has sent 33-page guidelines to the states and Union territories stating that cases of respiratory and cardiac diseases tend to rise due to pollution and therefore, hospitals must maintain special preparedness.

These chest clinics can be established at community health centres, district hospitals, and medical colleges in urban areas, covering all such facilities in cities under National Clean Air Programme (NCAP) initially.

They will screen the patients for risk factors, confirm diagnosis, give treatment and long-term care to patients suffering from respiratory and heart diseases aggravated due to pollution, the advisory said.

The ministry also asked the facilities to maintain records of these patients through state or national level digital tools such as (Integrated Health Information Platform) IHIP. A register of individuals identified as being at high risk is to be maintained, and details of the high-risk individuals may also be shared with the respective blocks for community-based follow-up through ASHA, ANM, and CHO.

The advisory called for training of doctors and staffs to manage respiratory and cardiovascular cases strengthening support to manage cases attributed to air pollution.

These clinics should also promote behaviour change and adoption of healthy practices to potential and diagnosed cases of air pollution-related cardio-pulmonary illnesses. In a letter to the chief secretaries, Union health secretary

cases of air pollution-related cardio-pulmonary linesses. In a letter to the chief secretaries, Union health secretary Punya Salila Srivastava said during the winter months, air quality in several regions across the country frequently reaches poor to severe levels, posing a significant health

challenge.
"Together, we can work towards a healthier, cleaner and more resilient ecosystem." she said.

The advisory stated that children particularly under 5 years, elderly, pregnant women, patients with asthma or heart diseases, those from low socio-economic conditions having poor nutritional status and belonging to outdoor working groups are at the highest risk.

The ministry also advised healthcare facilities to ensure adequate medicines, oxygen cylinders, nebulizers, ventilators, and hospital beds, sketchers, Wheelchairs, and ambulances and have proper referral mechanisms in place. Health departments including healthcare facilities have been asked to strictly monitor daily AQI levels during such high air pollution days or months as reported from pollution control boards

States have been asked to minimise pollution by mitigating or reducing from sources such as construction sites and burning of wastes, crop residues, plastics, bottles and food wrappers etc.

Construction workers should be provided with masks or personal protection to safeguard against the inhalation of fine particulate matter (PM2.5), dust, and odours.

Regular use of water sprinkling or fine sprays from nozzles

Regular use of water sprinkling or fine sprays from nozzles should be adopted to suppress dust at the site, preventing its resuspension into the air.

There should also be regular health check-ups and training sessions for construction workers and their duties should be rotated to minimize extended exposure to high-dust environments.

advisory also listed precautions and avoidance of outdoor activities in schools if AQI levels is poor and above.

It suggested schools to limit outdoor activities during days of higher pollution levels, staying indoors during break sessions and minimizing outdoor exposure and avoiding physical activities like running, jogging, playing, school activities, functions, celebrations and even birthday celebrations. Medical officials and staffs at school should be sensitised on air pollution related health issues and ways to manage such cases for support also from nearby emergency health facilities if required. School health authorities, head. teachers and parents have been asked to develop mechanisms to create awareness and motivate in adopting better practices among students to mitigate and adapt to air pollution. The advisory stated that children should be awarded by organising activities and events on air pollution at school level. The health impacts of air pollution depend on the level of pollution and exposure duration. The individuals' vulnerability to the health impacts of pollution can also differ based on demographic factors and predisposing health conditions, the document said.

Women Athletes

participation builds discipline, confidence, and independence while challenging traditional gender roles and fostering social progress. "Sports not only promote physical and mental well-being but also open new career avenues for women, contributing to national development," he noted. Highlighting the stellar performances of Ladakh's women

athletes, Shri Kavinder Gupta mentioned their success in traditionally male-dominated sports such as ice hockey, where they have won laurels at events like the Khelo India Winter Games and the IIHF Asia Cup. He said the UT Administration continues to strengthen support through modern sports infrastructure, equipment, and expert coaching facilities.

The Lt Governor also observed that more girls are now joining sports clubs and participating in national-level competitions, making Ladakh a model of gender empowerment through athletics. Reaffirming the Administration's commitment, he assured continued efforts to promote varied sports disciplines and facilitate national and international exposure for local athletes.

In addition, the Lieutenant Governor met delegations from Yes Bank, IndusInd Bank, Temisgam village, and Ladakh Rikjung Public School. He held constructive discussions on collaborative initiatives for Ladakh's progress and reiterated the Administration's focus on holistic development in sectors like health, education, tourism, and renewable energy. He also assured that the Administration is actively addressing local concerns such as waste management and stray dog issues through sustainable and practical solutions.

delegation of JKAS officers heading various departments called on the Hon'ble Lieutenant Governor of Ladakh, Shri Kavinder Gupta, to convey their gratitude and warm felicitations on the elevation of Shri Moses Kunzang to the position of Administrative Secretary in the UT Ladakh Administration.

Shri Moses Kunzang, a senior JKAS officer of the 1999 batch, has been serving as Director, Housing and Urban Development Department, UT Ladakh. As per an order issued by the General Administration Department (GAD), he has now been entrusted with the charge of Administrative Secretary, Department of Youth Services and Sports.

The visiting officers lauded the Lt Governor's leadership and his instrumental role in ensuring due recognition of Shri Moses Kunzang's exemplary service and commitment.

Congratulating Shri Moses on his new assignment, the Lt Governor commended his professionalism, integrity, and over two decades of dedicated service to Ladakh. He expressed confidence that Shri Moses will continue to uphold the highest standards of public service and contribute meaningfully to the growth, development, and welfare of the people of Ladakh.

The meeting was attended by JKAS officers Dr Zahida Bano, Sonam Nurboo, Sonam Chosjor, Ghulam Ahmed, Shabbir Hussain, Zakir Hussain, Mohd Taqi, Dorjey Gyalson, Rigzin Yangdol, Faisal Tantray, and Nilza Angmo.

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GMDC Zanskar, Disaster Response Force Kargil conducts Civil Defence Volunteers Enrollment Programme

Zanskar, November 12, 2025: Government Model Degree College (GMDC) Zanskar, in collaboration with the Disaster Response Force Kargil (DRFK) UT Ladakh, organized a Civil Defence Volunteers enrollment Programme aimed at promoting disaster preparedness and civic responsibility among students and staff.

The programme was held under the supervision of Dr. Amjad Ali Abassi, Principal, GMDC Zanskar. In his welcome address, Principal Dr. Abassi extended a warm welcome to the guest speaker, Inspector Mohd Baqir from DRFK UT Ladakh, along with faculty members and students of the college. He emphasized the importance of having trained civil volunteers available across different regions to assist during disasters and emergencies, highlighting their vital role in community resilience and disaster management.

In his lecture, Inspector Mohd Baqir briefed the audience about the significance of civil defence volunteers and their contribution during emergencies and disaster situations. He explained that in many cases, the official disaster response teams might not be able to reach the affected areas immediately, and the



presence of trained local volunteers can greatly enhance timely rescue and relief operations.

During the session, Inspector Baqir distributed Civil Volunteer Oath Forms among faculty members and students, encouraging them to register as civil defence volunteers and actively participate in community service. He expressed his gratitude to the Principal, faculty, and students of the college for their cooperation and enthusiastic participation in the programme.

The event concluded with a vote of thanks by Dr. Mohd Hussain, Assistant Professor Zoology. The outreach campaign "MimangsSi-Sjabstogs "Administration at Your Doorstep" was hosted today at the community hall in Chuchot Shamma, bringing multiple departments directly into the community. Nodal Officer Deldan Angmo extended a warm welcome to department officials and village residents who actively participated in the event

The camp featured participation from the Agriculture, Animal & Sheep Husbandry, Health (PHC Chuchot), Agriculture & Horticulture, Education, Cooperatives, Social Welfare department, Soil Conservation, RDD, PDD and PHE departments, with around 15 departmental representatives and 100 villagers present.

CEO Leh, Deldan Angmo, elaborated on various initiatives being implemented under the Samagra Shiksha scheme, including Bal Vatikas, NEP implementation, school upgradation, and the provision of free textbooks and uniforms. She also highlighted the potential to establish Atal Tinkering Labs

under innovation components of the scheme. Further, she assured that, based on the enrolment strength at Alchirong School, it would be considered for upgradation into a model school. She also mentioned the PM SHRI scheme, and the details of its objectives and implementation were explained during the session.

Chuchot Shamma Nambardar Manzoor Hussain thanked the administration for this initiative, noting that it enhances awareness and requested a hostel facility for the higher secondary school in Chuchot Shamma.

In the sheep and animal-husbandry segment, officials briefed villagers on schemes including NADCP, artificial insemination, and the KCC loan (not requiring collateral), as well as the importance of mineral mixtures and salt for livestock health.

The agriculture department described scheme details and practical solutions for daily challenges such as infestation and greenhouse management, explained the PDMC CSS scheme use, and introduced agro-forestry and vermicompost training for women farmers. They noted grievances regarding need for more field-workers and heavy rainfall damage to farms, which will be addressed.

Awareness/Breeders Camp at Liker Village, Saspol Block under ICAR-TSP NBAGR



Liker: The Sheep Husbandry Department, Leh, successfully organized an Awareness/Breeders Camp at Liker village, Saspol Block, under the ICAR-Tribal Sub-Plan (TSP) of NBAGR, aimed at promoting the conservation and improvement of the indigenous Malra and Malluk sheep breeds. The programme was inaugurated by Chief Guest, SDM Liker, Shri Gurmet Namgial, in the presence of District Sheep Husbandry

Officer Leh, Dr. Tsewang Morup; Technical Officer to DSHO Leh, Dr. Padma Yangzom; and Block Officer Saspol.

Ms. Phuntsog Dolma, Flock Supervisor, extended a warm welcome to the dignitaries and participants, underscoring the vital role of such awareness initiatives in bolstering the livestock sector and empowering local breeders through scientific interventions.

Dr. Padma Yangzom elaborated on the ICAR-TSP NBAGR initiative, emphasizing breed conservation of Malra and Malluk sheep, adoption of scientific management practices, and strategies to boost productivity and ensure livelihood security for breeders.

Dr. Tsewang Morup highlighted the department's sustained commitment to breed conservation and sustainable livestock development in the region.

Shri Gurmet Namgial lauded the department's proactive outreach in remote areas and urged farmers to embrace scientific and sustainable rearing practices for long-term economic growth.

As part of the event, pelleted feed was distributed to progressive sheep rearers to promote enhanced feeding practices and support the conservation of native sheep breeds.

Successful Mimang-Si-sJabstogs Outreach Camp Held at Partapur Skampuk, **Ensuring Doorstep Governance**

Leh: Mimang-Si-sJabstogs Outreach Camp Successfully Held at Partapur Skampuk, Nubra Nubra, Ladakh – The Mimang-Si-sJabstogs – Administrative at Your Doorstep initiative brought government services directly to Partapur Skampuk village today. The Numberdar of Parta welcomed the gathering, and villagers participated in large numbers, availing various services on the spot.

Tehsildar Diskit Shri Tufail Iqbal (JKAS) led the camp, accompanied by BMO Diskit, ZEO Diskit, BVO Diskit, LDO Diskit, Chief Inspector Food, CDPO Diskit, and officers from PWD, Irrigation, Agriculture, Horticulture, PHE, PDD, BDO, Social Welfare, and Handicrafts departments. Each department explained its schemes in detail and addressed public grievances immediately.

and addressed public grievances immediately. The Revenue Department issued domicile, residence, income, and ST certificates, updated electoral rolls, and provided revenue extracts. Agriculture completed eKYC updates and registered a new PM-Kisan beneficiary.

Horticulture facilitated onion-garlic storage, vermicompost pits, and apricot orchard benefits. Social Welfare accepted new pension applications and resolved grievances. The Food Department issued new ration cards and completed eKYC, while the Medical Department generated PMJAY Golden Cards and ABHAIDs.

Tehsildar Diskit praised the Numberdar of Parta Skampuk and all officials for their active involvement and efficient service delivery.



Public Outreach Camp at Rumbak Village under the "Mimangs-Si-sJabstogs" Initiative



Leh: A public outreach camp was organized at Rumbak village under the "Mimangs-Si-sJabstogs" (Administration at Your Doorstep) initiative, aimed at bringing essential government services directly to the villagers. The camp saw active participation from the community, and Shabir Hussain, (ACR, Leh)Nodal Officer, expressed his gratitude to the residents for engaging in the process. In his address, he highlighted the importance of such outreach initiatives in addressing public grievances and resolving issues at the grassroots level.

The main focus of the camp was to tackle a range of issues faced by the villagers. ACR Leh explained that land-related matters, including land mutation and compensation for land taken during road construction, were major concerns for the residents. He took responsibility and assured the villagers that these issues would be addressed in collaboration with the concerned departments. Many households also raised concerns about pending compensation for land taken for

 $road-building \ purposes, as \ well \ as \ issues \\ with land \ extension (Aabadi).$

Apart from land-related issues, several other key matters were discussed. The villagers raised concerns related to electricity connectivity, particularly for one household in Yurutse, which is still a waiting a connection. Telecommunications also remained a challenge, with many villagers requesting the restoration of the nonfunctioning BSNL tower. Furthermore, the need for better flood control measures along river channels, especially in relation to road construction, was emphasized by the concerned departments

A key aspect of the outreach initiative was raising awareness about various government schemes. Officers from the Power Development Department (PDD) promoted the Rooftop Solar Subsidy Scheme, encouraging villagers to take advantage of the subsidy offered by both the UT Administration and the central government. Additionally, the camp addressed ongoing issues under the Jal

Jeevan Mission (JJM), which aims to provide safe drinking water to rural households. The Labour Department and Cooperative Department briefed the villagers on employment opportunities through MGNREGA, as well as cooperative schemes designed to support local livelihoods.

BPL (Below Poverty Line) and APL (Above Poverty Line) categorization issues were also raised by several villagers, who requested clarification and assistance in accessing welfare benefits. Furthermore, concerns about road connectivity, especially in rural areas, were discussed, with an emphasis on improving access and infrastructure for remote villages like Rumbak.

ACR Leh, Shabir Hussain, urged the concerned departments to prepare detailed reports addressing the grievances raised during the camp and explaining how these issues were resolved. These reports will be submitted to the Deputy Commissioner (DC) of Leh for prompt action. He further stressed the importance of ensuring that these concerns are resolved in a timely and efficient manner, reaffirming the administration's commitment to serving the public through such outreach initiatives.

ACR leh visited the drip irrigation based cultivated site of village Rumbak near Phey Village. The area is cultivated through drip irrigation and an approximate area of 500 Canal has been successfully cultivated with the help of various department like horticulture, rural development and

The "Mimangs-Si-sJabstogs" initiative proved to be an effective platform for connecting the government with the people, fostering a deeper understanding of the challenges faced by the villagers, and offering a way forward to resolve



WORLD www.ladakhtoday.com

China, Spain sign agreements to strengthen cooperation on Spanish king's visit

BEIJING, Nov 12: Spanish King Felipe VI and Chinese President Xi Jinping signed agreements on language exchanges and other areas Wednesday as both sides vowed to strengthen their cooperation.

The monarch's visit comes as Spain, the eurozone's fourthlargest economy, continues its courtship of China and Chinese investment while the relationship with the United States is strained under President Donald Trump.

In April, Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez, head of the country's government, made his third visit to China in as many years.

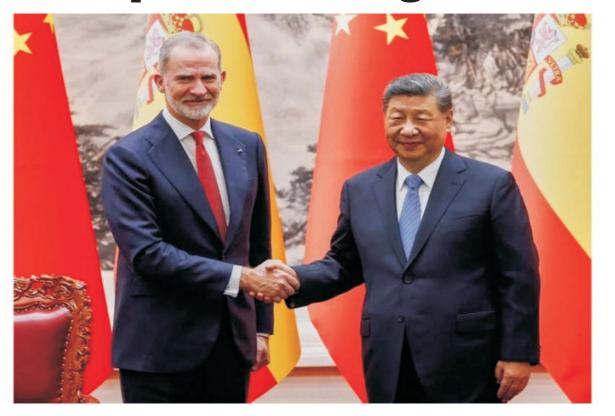
Spain is one of the more friendly countries to China relative to others in the European Union in recent years

Felipe and Queen Letizia were met by Xi and his wife Peng Liyuan in front of Beijing's Great Hall of the People, and were greeted with a performance by the military band and a 21-gun salute.

This is the first state visit for the Spanish king to China, and he was also accompanied by Spanish Foreign Minister José Manuel Albares

"China stands ready to work hand in hand with Spain to build a comprehensive strategic partnership that is more strategically steady, more dynamic in development, and more influential internationally," said Xi in his opening remarks, particularly while the international situation is "complex and volatile." He said that China would also import more Spanish products, without specifying, according to a readout of the meeting from the official

Felipe and Xi signed agreements promoting cooperation in language exchanges, economic issues, and exporting



aquatic products to China.

Felipe is also scheduled to meet with Chinese Premier Li Qiang and Zhao Leji, chairman of China's top legislative

The monarch's first stop in China was the city of Chengdu, where alongside Spain's foreign minister and economy minister, he attended a Spain-China business forum with several Spanish business leaders.

Spain has taken a less adversarial stance toward China, and has sought to reposition trade relations with the country, whose exports to Spain are far greater than those of the Iberian nation of 49.4 million people to China, which has a population of more than 1.4 billion.

After meeting with Xi in April, Sánchez said Spain was in favor of "more balanced relations between the European Union and China." The EU negotiates trade terms on behalf of all 27 member countries.

The last time a Spanish monarch visited China on an official state trip was in 2007. Xi last visited Spain in 2018.

Spain generated more than half of its electricity last year from renewable sources, and needs Chinese critical raw materials, solar panels and green technologies in its transition away from fossil fuels, similar to other EU countries. Xi said both sides could further explore $cooperation\ in\ renewable\ energy\ and\ artificial\ intelligence.$ Last year, Chinese electric battery company CATL announced a joint venture with automaker Stellantis to build a battery factory in northern Spain. That followed deals between Spain and Chinese companies Envision and Hygreen Energy to build green hydrogen infrastructure in the country

PM Modi's Bhutan visit focuses on connectivity, border infrastructure and clean energy cooperation

Thimpu/New Delhi

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday reaffirmed India's commitment to deepening its partnership with Bhutan through improved connectivity, enhanced border infrastructure, and expanded clean energy collaboration.

His two-day visit to Thimphu highlights the growing synergy between the two Himalayan neighbours, particularly in the fields of transport, trade, and renewable energy. During the visit, Prime Minister Modi, welcomed by Bhutanese Prime Minister Tshering Tobgay, attended a special event commemorating the 70th birth anniversary of former King Jigme Singye Wangchuck.

Modi praised the former monarch for his vision in promoting democracy, peace, and sustainable development in Bhutan, and for laying the foundation of the two nations' enduring friend-

A key highlight of the visit is the inauguration of a 1.020megawatt hydroelectric power plant, a major milestone expected to boost Bhutan's hydropower capacity by about 40 per cent.

The project is part of the broader Indo-Bhutan energy partnership that has made Bhutan a leader in renewable energy and the world's first carbon-negative country. Modi also confirmed that work would soon resume on

KYIV

A Ukrainian anti-corruption

detained five people and identified seven other suspects in

a major graft investigation that

centres on alleged kickbacks

worth some \$100 million in the

The National Anti-Corruption

Bureau did not name the sus-

pects in its statement but said

they included a businessman

believed to be the scheme's

mastermind; a former advisor

country's energy sector.

agency said on Tuesday it has



project and announced new ioint efforts in solar energy. Emphasizing the role of con-Modi said the new rail links between Gelephu and Samtse in Bhutan and India's rail network would open new trade opportunities for Bhutanese industries and farmers. "Improved connectivity creates new pathways for prosperity," he noted. India will also assist in developing infrastructure for Bhutan's ambitious Gelephu Mindfulness City, an economic and cultural hub envisioned by King Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck.

To facilitate smoother cross-border travel and

to the country's energy minis-

ter; and an executive of the

national atomic energy

after the agency revealed some

details of a 15-month investiga-

tion into suspected energy

sector corruption, including

Large amounts of Ukrainian

and foreign funds have flowed

into the energy sector as infra-

structure is repeatedly repaired

following relentless Russian

aerial attacks. Ukraine's Energy

The statement came a day

company Energoatom.

at Energoatom.

Ukraine detains 5 in energy sector graft investigation

investment, Modi announced that India would set up an immigration checkpoint near Gelephu. New Delhi has allocated `10,000 crore for Bhutan's current five-vear development plan, supporting initiatives in roads, healthcare, agriculture, and financial services.

Modi reiterated that the prosperity of Bhutan and India is "intertwined through geography, culture, and shared progress." Digital and youth collaboration also featured prominently in the discussions. The two sides are expanding India's Unified Payments Interface (UPI) services in Bhutan, while young innovators from both countries continue to collaborate

Ministry said Tuesday that

Russia attacked energy infra-

structure in the Kharkiv, Odesa

and Donetsk regions overnight

and that scheduled power

outages were in place in

tasked with rooting out

entrenched corruption, which is

widely regarded as an impedi-

ment to Kyiv's efforts to obtain

membership in the European

Union. It targets high-level cor-

ruption, particularly cases involv-

ing senior officials and state-

The Anti-Corruption Bureau is

mostregions of Ukraine.

in space technology, education, and entrepreneurship including the development of a joint satellite. Modi also underscored the importance of cultural bonds, citing the opening of the Royal Bhutanese Temple in Rajgir, India, and announcing that land has been provided in Varanasi for a Bhutanese temple and guesthouse.

Closing his address, Modi lauded Bhutan's guiding philosophy of Gross National Happiness, saying it continues to inspire nations worldwide to measure progress through well-being, not just wealth. "Our friendship stands on the solid foundation of trust, respect, and shared values," he said.

owned enterprises. It has pre-

viously been reported that

uncovered a major graft scheme

involving inflated military pro-

curement contracts and the

embezzlement of millions of

dollars' worth of funds ear-

marked to buy mortar shells for

Ukraine's efforts to foil Russia's

all-out invasion. Ukrainian

President Volodymyr Zelenskyy

"Any effective action against

corruption is an urgent need," he

said in his Monday night address

welcomed the latest probe.

US close to seal trade deal with India: Trump

New York/Washington

The US is "pretty close" to reaching a "fair trade deal" with India, President Donald Trump has said, adding that he will lower the tariffs imposed on Indian goods at 'some point".

This is the second time in less than two weeks that the US president held out hope to seal the proposed bilateral trade deal with India. It is not immediately clear whether it was Trump's usual hyperbole or there was some progress in the negotiations for the muchawaited deal between the

"We're making a deal with India, a much different deal than we had in the past. So right now, they don't love me, but they'll love us again," Trump said on Monday without elaborating. He made the remarks during a ceremony in the Oval Office where Sergio Gor was sworn in as the US Ambassador to India by Vice President J D Vance. "We're getting a fair deal, just a fair trade deal. We had pretty unfair trade deals. They're very good negotiators. Sergio, so you have to take a look at that, if you would please." Trump said.

"But we're getting close. Scott, I think we're pretty



close to doing a deal that's good for everybody." Trump said to Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent, who was present at the ceremony."That's right," Bessent responded to Trump. "In the old days, do you think (former US President Joe) Biden would ask that question? I don't think so, 'How are we doing with India?' He didn't know about India. He didn't know a damn thing. That's okay," Trump said.

Trump was asked about the trade deal with India and whether he is willing to consider lowering the current tariff rate imposed on India. "Well, right now the tariffs are

stopped doing the Russian oil.

It's been reduced very substantially. Yeah, we're going to be bringing the tariffs down," Trump said. "At some point, no, at some point, we're going to be bringing them down. Without tariffs, this country would be in such trouble as they were for

Relations between New Delhi and Washington have been reeling under severe stress after Trump imposed 50 per cent tariffs on India including 25 per cent for New Delhi's procurement of

India had described the US action as "unfair, unjustified and unreasonable" while maintaining that its energy policy is guided by its own national interest.

Five rounds of talks have been completed so far for the first phase of the bilateral trade agreement between the US and India. Last month. an official had said in New Delhi that the two countries are "very near" to concluding the proposed bilateral trade agreement, as both sides are converging on most of the issues. The official had said that the two countries are sorting out the language of the agreement."

Pak PM Sharif calls upon world to stand united in promoting peace

Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday called upon the world to stand united in promoting peace, advancing sustainable development and strengthening collective security. "Pakistan has always advocated for peace through dialogue and diplomacy. We firmly believe that peace and security form the foundation of sustainable national and regional development," Shehbaz said while addressing the Interparliamentary Speakers' Conference here.

He noted that the true value of peace is most pro-



foundly understood when "we are confronted with the conflicts that continue to plague our world," according to state-run Radio Pakistan. He mentioned that Pakistan. too, has faced this turbulence both directly and indirectly. "However, we have remained steadfast in our

commitment to maintaining peace and tranquility," he said. Pakistan believes in a peaceful neighbourhood and has been striving hard for this purpose, but militant groups continue to imperil peace not only within Afghanistan but also beyond its borders, he said.

Subjanto to visit Australia

Melbourne

Indonesian President Prabowo Subianto will visit Australia on Wednesday for the first time since taking office last year

Australian Minister Anthony Albanese announced the visit Tuesday, but provided few details.

Prabowo most recently visited Australia as minister of defence and presidentelect in August last year.

He was inaugurated that October. Albanese met Prabowo in Jakarta in May this year for the Australia-Indonesia annual leaders' meeting during the prime minister's first overseas trip following his reelection



Marionette festival defies militants threats

In a residential neighbourhood in Malis capital, a parade of giant marionettes marched through the streets as motorcycles and taxis squeezed through the busy road, stopping at intervals to give way for the puppets. Rendez-Vous Chez Nous, which translates to "come to us" or "meet at our place" in French, was a three-day festival organised by the Nama marionette and dance group. The ninth annual edition of the event, held in Bamako Nov. 6-8, featured dance performances, concerts and plays. But the spectacle of colours, raucous music and merriment belied the fear that Bamako residents have lived with in recent weeks. The city of more than 3 million people is being squeezed by al-Qaida-backed jihadi militants who have imposed a monthslong blockade on fuel imports.



Thailand demands apology from Cambodia

Thailand said it has indefinitely paused implementation of a US-brokered ceasefire until Cambodia apologises for a land mine explosion on Monday that injured four Thai soldiers at their border. Thai Prime Minister Anutin Charnvirakul visited the injured troops at the border on Tuesday as the Thai army accused Cambodia of laying new mines in violation of the truce agreement Thailand and Cambodia signed last month. Territorial disputes between the Southeast Asian neighbours led to five days of combat in late July that killed dozens of soldiers and civilians. Others have been injured by land mine explosions before and after July s combat, and tensions have simmered despite the truce. The Thai army said one soldier lost his right foot after stepping on a land mine.

Red Fort Blast: 2 Cartridges, Explosives Among Over 40 Samples Collected From Site



NEW DELHI, Nov 12: Two cartridges, including a live ammunition, and samples of two different types of explosives are among more than 40 samples that have been collected by the Forensic Science Laboratory (FSL) team from the blast site near the Red Fort, officials said on Wednesday

Preliminary analysis suggests that one of the explosive samples appears to be ammonium nitrate, they said.

On Monday, 360 kg of ammonium nitrate was recovered from Faridabad during an investigation in Faridabad when Dr Muzammil Ganaie and Dr Shaheen Sayeed, both connected to the Al Falah university were arrested.

"The second explosive sample is believed to be more powerful than ammonium nitrate. Its exact composition will be confirmed after detailed forensic examination," an official said.

According to the officials, the FSL team found the cartridges while inspecting the spot.

More than 40 samples have been collected till now. A high-intensity explosion ripped through a slow moving vehicle near Red Fort traffic signal on Monday, claiming 12

Further investigation is underway to determine the nature of the explosives and how they were used in the blast, the officials added.

The FSL has constituted a special team to analyse the samples. The team has been directed to expedite the examination and submit the report without delay, officials

The lab has been functional round the clock since the blast : Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta on Tuesday announced an ex gratia of Rs 10 lakh for the families of each of those killed in the blast near the Red Fort on Monday that claimed 12 lives

The chief minister said in a statement that a compensation of Rs 5 lakh will be provided to those rendered permanently disabled, Rs 2 lakh to those who sustained serious injuries and Rs 20,000 to those who sustained minor injuries in the

The high-intensity blast took place in a car at a traffic signal near Gate No. 1 of the Red Fort Metro station on Monday evening, killing at least 12 and injuring 20 others, officials

said."An ex gratia amount of Rs 10 lakh will be given to the families of those who lost their lives, Rs 5 lakh to those who have been permanently disabled, and Rs 2 lakh to those who are seriously injured. The government will also ensure proper and quality medical treatment for all the injured," Gupta said in a post on X.

The concerned departments have been instructed to prioritise the relief distribution process, and make sure that every eligible person receives compensation without any delay.

"The unfortunate incident in Delhi has left the entire city in shock. In this difficult time, the Delhi government extends its deepest condolences to all the families who lost their loved ones and to those injured in the incident," Gupta said in the post.

The incident in the Red Fort area is not only a deep shock to the affected families but also to the entire city, she said. Emphasising that all Delhi residents stand united in this time of grief, the chief minister said the government will ensure that no affected family feels alone.

The untimely loss of any life is an irreparable tragedy for

any family, and it can not be truly compensated, Gupta said, adding that Delhi government stands firmly with every affected family in this difficult time.

Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Tuesday said that his government was steadfast in freeing encroached lands from infiltrators and restoring them to the indigenous people.

He said that due to rampant encroachment, ethnic and tribal communities in Goalpara and Kamrup districts had lost 'both their political and economic rights'.

'The indigenous people are the true custodians of Assam's 'Jaati, Maati and Bheti' (nationality, land and the foundation of the state). It is our solemn pledge to ensure justice, dignity and empowerment for every community, who have nurtured these lands for generations,' Sarma said after handing over land title certificates under the Forest Rights Act, 2006 to 4,673 tribal families at Chaygaon in Kamrup district.

'Guided by the vision of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, we have safeguarded Boko, Dudhnoi and West Goalpara assembly constituencies and ensured that our indigenous people reclaim their land and dignity,' Sarma said.

He said that the indigenous communities had traditionally inhabited these constituencies, but today the demographic pattern has changed so drastically that 'our people have become a minority in their own lands'.

'The main reason behind this is the encroachment of our lands by illegal immigrants who often disguise themselves as flood affected people and settle here. Sadly, we, too, at times have given them an opportunity to occupy our lands,'

He urged the people that they should not be content merely with receiving land pattas but must always remain alert to ensure that no illegal immigrant encroaches upon forest

'Let us stay vigilant and committed to protecting our lands', he added.

The chief minister said that his government was on a mission to protect the state's forests but in Goalpara and Kamrup districts, some doubtful people have entered the forests and destroyed them and subsequently, a large portion of land has been occupied by these unknown

"Our aim is to provide land rights to every tribal person residing in Assam's forest areas. I am happy that as a result of the government initiatives we have been able to empower the tribal communities, and the land issues of these communities are gradually being resolved," he said. 'Earlier, no government ever tried to evict them but after our government came to power, we have freed 193 sq kms of forest land from encroachers and we will continue with eviction of illegal settlers from these land', he said.

He said that after assuming office as the CM in 2021, he had directed the departments concerned to take measures to ensure that every tribal family living in forest areas of the state is granted land rights

Mamata flags off 110 mobile medical units to cater patients in remote corners

Kolkata

West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Tuesday flagged off 110 'mobile medical units', which would cater to patients in remote rural areas of the State.

Banerjee, who is also the State's health minister, launched the units at a programme organised by the health department at the 'Swasthya Bhawan', after returning from a north Bengal visit. Describing it as a milestone in the State's efforts to expand medical access, she said the move reflects her government's commitment to ensuring that Maa. Mati. Manush receive quality healthcare regardless of geographical or socio-economic barriers.

"A total of 210 mobile medical units have been readied. Today, I'm flagging off 110. These units have facilities for blood test, chest X-ray apart from 35 other clinical examinations free of cost. There are over 29 equipment inside these units. This is like duare swasthya (healthcare services at doorstep)," the CM said.

Each MMU functions as a self-sufficient health clinic on the wheels, staffed with doctors, nurses, pharmacists, and technicians, she said.

"These vehicles are designed to reach the most remote corners of the state. including hilly terrains, tribal areas, and backward regions, offering maternal and child care, general consultations, and a wide range of diagnostic tests." Baneriee said.

Several MMUs deployed in regions like the Sundarbans will also have ultrasonography machines to provide prenatal care and other diagnostic services, she said.

West Bengal The Government has spent `84 crore on procuring these vehicles, with around `2.5 crore per month required for operational expenses, the Chief Minister said.

Karnataka to set up five aerospace, defence parks: CM

Bengaluru

Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on Tuesday announced that the state Government is developing five world-class aerospace and defence parks in strategic locations across Bengaluru, Belagavi, Mysuru, Tumakuru Chamarajanagar.

He said the parks will offer "plug-and-play" facilities to drastically reduce setup time for industries.

"We are developing five world-class Aerospace & Defence Parks in strategic locations — Bengaluru. Belagavi, Mysuru, Tumakuru and Chamarajanagar. These parks will offer 'plug-andplay' facilities to drastically reduce setup time for industries," Siddaramaiah said.

He was speaking after inaugurating the Collins India Operations Centre developed by Collins Aerospace at the KIADB Aerospace Park in Devanahalli. The Chief



Minister said the new 26-acre facility marks a major milestone in Karnataka's journey as a global hub for advanced

aerospace manufacturing. "The decision by Collins Aerospace, a global major with over a century of aviation legacy, to establish this comprehensive centre in Bengaluru is a powerful

endorsement of Karnataka's robust industrial ecosystem and its future potential," he said. "Collins Aerospace is investing \$25 million in Karnataka. This new facility will create over 2,000 skilled jobs in research, development and advanced

manufacturing. Karnataka

contributes nearly 65 per

cent to India's aerospace and defence sector,' Siddaramaiah was quoted as saying in a statement.

He described the centre as a "shining example" of a successful public-private partnership that aligns with the state's goals and the national 'Make in India' mission. Siddaramaiah said more than 2,000 small and medium enterprises are engaged in the aerospace and defence sectors across the State.

'Companies such as Mahindra Aerospace and Rangsons have made substantial investments, and 48 agreements have been signed in this sector. Rangsons, in partnership with Boeing, is investing 2,915 crore. The state aims to attract `45,000 crore in investments and create 60,000 jobs over the next

five years," he said. Inviting global aerospace leaders to invest in Karnataka, the Chief Minister added, "Our policies, our people and our proven track

record make us the ideal partner for your success."

Large and Medium Industries Minister M B Patil, who also attended the event, said this is Collins Aerospace's first facility in India under the Production Linked Incentive (PLI) scheme. "The unit will cater to leading global aviation majors such as Boeing and Airbus," he said, adding that KIADB and Karnataka Udyog Mitra provided all necessary approvals, infrastructure and support to operationalise the facility.

Patil said Karnataka's new industrial policy places strong emphasis on hightech sectors such as aerospace, defence and electronics. "The investment by Collins Aerospace is a historic milestone and aligns with the State Government's long-term vision. This manufacturing facility stands as a fine example of 'Ease of Doing Business' and demonstrates Karnataka's industry-friendly ecosystem," he added.

Gehlot calls for deep probe into Delhi blast

Former Rajasthan chief minister Ashok Gehlot on Tuesday called for a thorough investigation into the Delhi Red Fort blast and alleged cash distribution in the Bihar election.

Speaking to reporters at his residence in Jaipur. Gehlot, about the blast, said any such incident, regardless of location, was "tragic and deeply disturbing."

"As I said yesterday, the Delhi incident must be investigated thoroughly. It is important that the truth comes out before the country. Many such incidents have taken place in the past where inquiries were announced but never

The Congress leader also openly distributed to influ-

"We are hearing that

`10,000 were distributed to women. This has never happened before. The Election

large-scale

completed " he said

alleged that money was ence voters in Bihar.

Commission of India is sitting with its eyes closed while money is being transferred even as the polling happened," Ashok

Gehlot said.

He claimed that despite such tactics, people, especially women voters were wise and would vote independently. "Women are smart; they will not be influenced by money. Bihar is a politically aware State, and we hope voters will make a fair choice."

Gehlot criticised the EC for "failing to act" despite clear violations of the Model Code of Conduct.

"When Atal Bihari Vajpayee's government was in power, even signboards on national highways were removed after the code of conduct was enforced. But now, despite cash being distributed, no one is taking action," he said.

HC takes serious note of deteriorating condition of roads in Madhya Pradesh multiple instances where

Bhopal

The Madhya Pradesh High Court has taken serious note of the deteriorating condition of roads and the alarming rise in fatal accidents across the State, issued notices to the Central and State Governments as well as major road agencies. The court's intervention follows a Public Interest Litigation (PIL) alleging gross negligence and administrative apathy in maintaining road infrastructure, which has resulted in thousands of preventable deaths.

A division bench comprising Chief Justice Sanjeev Sachdeva and Justice Vinay Saraf has directed the Union Ministry of Road Transport and Highways, the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI), the Madhya Pradesh Development Corporation (MPRDC), and

the Madhya Pradesh Rural Road Development Authority (MPRRDA) to submit detailed reports within two weeks. The reports must outline measures taken to repair critical road stretches, fill potholes, and strengthen road safety mechanisms.

The PIL, filed by retired Indore banker Rajendra Singh and argued by advocate Abhinav Malhotra, paints a grim picture of the state's road safety record. Citing official data, the petitioner stated that Madhva Pradesh reported 5.840 road accidents in 2023, resulting in 2,161 deathsa sharp 31.4 per cent increase over the previous year.

The petition described the state's highways and district roads as "death traps." where poor maintenance, lack of signage, and unregulated construction have turned commuting into a daily gamble with life.

During the hearing, the High Court expressed deep concern over the systemic neglect and observed that the "poor condition of roads is not merely an inconvenience but a serious public safety hazard." The bench questioned how such widespread deterioration could occur while toll collection and maintenance contracts continue unabated. "The State cannot abdicate its constitutional responsibility to protect lives," the court observed, adding that recurring accidents reflect both governance failure and

The court's directive mandates a status report identifying accident-prone stretches, ongoing repairs, and accountability for lapses in supervision. The bench has fixed December 15, 2025, as the next date of hearing.

The PIL also highlighted

administrative indifference.

newly constructed roads developed cracks and potholes within months, indicating substandard material use and weak quality control. It sought judicial intervention to ensure that officials and contractors responsible for such lapses face penalties under the Prevention of Damage to Public Property Act and related provisions.

Officials from the PWD and MPRDC have claimed that inadequate budget allocations and delays in contract renewals have hampered timely repairs. However, the court's tough stand is expected to trigger stronger accountability and tighter monitoring mechanisms across departments.

For citizens across the State — from Bhopal to Betul and Gwalior to Guna — the court's notice has come as a step toward safer travel.

Ensure timely implementation of solar programme: Andhra chief secretary Vijayanand in an official Emphasising that rooftop

Tirupati

Andhra Pradesh Chief Secretary K Vijayanand on Tuesday directed the distribution companies to ensure timely and effective implementation of the NABARD-ADB backed solar rooftop investment programme.

The chief secretary reaffirmed that the State Government is committed to accelerating the rollout of rooftop solar systems to promote clean, affordable, and sustainable energy with financial support from the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD).

"Ensure timely and effective implementation of the NABARD-ADB supported Solar Rooftop Investment Programme (SRIP) across Andhra Pradesh," said

release. While reviewing the power distribution companies (DISCOMS) along with the representatives of ADB and NABARD, he checked the progress of SRIP under Pradhan Mantri Surya Ghar: Muft Bijli Yojana (PMSGMBY) through the Utility-Led Aggregator (ULA) model.

NABARD has been onboarded as the financial intermediary to provide concessional financing to the state DISCOMs. According to the chief secretary, Andhra Pradesh has accorded high priority to rooftop solar power adoption as part of its broader commitment to clean and sustainable energy.

He said the State has been actively promoting solar energy deployment across residential, institutional, and Government sectors to ensure affordable and reliable power for all.

solar power is a key pillar in achieving the state's renewable energy targets and reducing dependence on conventional power, Vijayanand said it contributes to empowering consumers through decentralised power generation.

"The State Government remains fully committed to supporting DISCOMs and collaborating with development partners like ADB and NABARD to make Andhra Pradesh a leader in rooftop solar (power) implementation in the country," he said.

Delving on the Government's special focus on solarisation of the Kuppam constituency, represented by Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu, Vijayanand stated that the southern state aims to make it a 100 per cent solar and net zero constituency.

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EDITORIAL

Well Done, Delhi. You've **Turned Lung Sacrifice Into A Badge Of Honour**

firefighter who would spray kerosene at raging flames. The rationale was simple - the house is burning down anyway, why not expedite the process? He was thrown out of his job and declared mentally unstable. Turns out he wasn't wrong; he was just in the wrong

Had he been in Delhi, he would have found takers for his worldview - there is pollution anyway, why not add to it by bursting crackers? Research shows that toxic air is reducing the life span of Delhi residents by a decade. So, why not get it over with? As they say, "dhuan dhuan kar do". The smog on the streets is dense, but not as much as the combination of political failure, whataboutery and public indifference that has made bad air days a part of our calendar

Collective Resignation

A couple of years ago, we ranted about bad air days. We posted pictures wearing masks, using hashtags such as #righttobreathe, and criticised authorities. Some of us still do. but many have now given up. Instead, many of us are trying to work around it. We are stocking up on medicines and masks, buying air purifiers, opting for WFH, and those who can are leaving the city for a week or two. Not everyone has these options, and those who don't have stopped caring.

But something has changed this year that has brought the illusion... er...delusion of relief to many. Every year, it would be a morning ritual to check the AQI before stepping out. Depending on whether the ranking was 'very poor', 'severe' or 'hazardous', curbs would be imposed and people would prepare themselves for the day ahead. This year, this ritual has become immaterial. Because no matter how bad it looks, the AQI remains in the same range. Multiple reports claim tampering with AQI data and the spraying of water at pollution sensors to keep the numbers at saner levels. Irrespective of whether these allegations are true, people know they cannot trust the data anymore.

So, the lungs are not getting enough oxygen, and the brain is not getting reliable information. We can't breathe,

We're Still Asking Questions But, this is not where it ends. Till some years back, Delhiites would ask angry questions to those in power about the

capital's annual tryst with toxic air. Ministers and officials would mumble some complex numbers and assure that the issue would be resolved next fulfilled. This has changed. Those in the driving seat don't need to answer now The people are doing it for them.

Try this: post about pollution or crackers in your residential society's WhatsApp group or on social media Some may express solidarity, but a large section would throw a bunch of questions at you. "Why are farmers previous government do?", "Why only our festivals are targeted?", "Can you live without your AC?". "Delhi was always like this". The government is not on trial, the citizen is. You are. You have to defend your own questions, justify

It is difficult to keep arguing with a headache, sore throat and a persistent cough, so many of us choose silence and repeat to ourselves: this too shall

your demand for clean air.

Swift Policing ... Only On Occasion Some of us, however, muster enough will and courage to hit the streets. A protest call is given, placards drawn and slogans readied. The venue is India Gate. But as soon as the agitation begins, police arrive and tell the protesters they do not have permission to protest at India Gate (it is a wonder that they spotted the monument in the thick smog). Protesters are detained, loaded onto buses and driven away as senior officers explain why people cannot protest at India Gate, but can do so at Jantar Mantar. The policing is swift, unlike the Diwali night when the two-hour window specified by the Supreme Court for bursting crackers

was royally flouted. So, you can't breathe, can't know how bad the situation is, and can't protest. What can you do? You can wait. There will be some Supreme Court hearings, some political blame-game and some social media fights. These will keep you engaged till this passes. And when it will, we shall all pretend to forget about it. Until next year. Sadly, our lungs won't forget. The poisonous air does not discriminate between those who celebrate Diwali and those who don't, those who burst crackers and those who don't, and those who support a particular party and those who don't. One of us may win the debate, but none of us will win the fight to breathe.

'PhD' Handlers To Faridabad 'Doctors', How 'White-**Collar' Terrorism Isn't New**

Syed Zubair Ahmed

octors are meant to save lives, not take them, no matter what the cause is. That concept is supposed to be so basic that we rarely feel the need to articulate it. The detention of several doctors and the seizure of nearly 3,000 kilograms of explosive material from two houses in Faridabad, followed by a deadly car explosion near Red Fort that killed nine innocent people, has forced us to confront a far more unsettling reality. Many have started calling this a "white-collar" terrorism module. The shock comes not only from the scale of the plot but from the profile of those accused of planning it.

The first reaction is disbelief. We are conditioned to imagine terrorists as desperate youth, school dropouts, unemployed, with little education and no hope. But the blast in Delhi is a reminder that violent extremism does not always arrive wearing the faces we expect. Sometimes it is the physician who examined your child last month. Sometimes it is the engineer who tinkers with gadgets in the flat next door. Sometimes it is the software developer who smiles politely in the lift. They are our next door neighbours - the so-called "white-collar" neighbours who blend in without raising suspicion.

The LSE Student For me, the profile is disturbing, yes, but not surprising. I have reported on terror long enough to know that the middle classes are not immune. If anything, they often produce the most ideologically rigid foot-soldiers. Men who speak fluent English, quote philosophy, argue with you believing they are fighting for a just cause.

I remember one such encounter vividly. In 1994, I met Omar Saeed Sheikh in a private hospital in Ghaziabad. He was barely 18, recovering from a bullet wound after a shootout with the Saharanpur police. He looked gentle, soft-spoken, almost scholarly. He had studied at the London School of Economics and was a mathematics topper. He spoke to me of Bosnia, where he claimed to have gone earlier for 'jihad'. He had come to India, he said, to abduct foreign tourists in order to secure the release of Pakistani militants. He was wounded precisely during a daring abduction of a few foreign tourists whom he was taking to Kashmir. The moral clarity with which he justified his action came from conviction - though I told him his conviction was misplaced and that his action was terrorism. I told him he was brainwashed by the nowbanned British outfit, Hizb ut Tahrir, often busy on campuses.

Years later, when I saw him on television - being freed as part of the Kandahar hijack exchange on the last day of 1999 - my heart sank. And then again, when he was convicted for the kidnapping and beheading of American journalist Daniel Pearl, the memory of the soft-spoken voung man in that hospital room came rushing back. Brilliant student. Charming. Polite.

The Architect, The Physicians

This is not an Indian anomaly. The 9/11 hijackers included men who had had higher education. They were your normal guys, the ones you would hang out with. They were modern and cool. They came from stable, middle-class families in Saudi Arabia and Egypt, and had studied or lived abroad. Mohamed Atta, the lead hijacker, studied architecture and urban planning at Cairo University and later completed a postgraduate degree in urban design in Hamburg. Marwan al-Shehhi and Ziad Jarrah also studied in Germany, the latter coming from a well-off Lebanese family; he attended Hamburg University of Applied Sciences. Investigations and testimony later showed that some members of the Hamburg cell went to parties, drank alcohol, took driving lessons, rented apartments, used gyms and did not outwardly display religious extremism in their early

ISIS is known to have successfully recruited medical students and young physicians from the UK and Sudan to serve its project. Closer home, the Sri Lanka Easter bombers came from affluent merchant families. From ISIS chief Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, who held a PhD in Islamic Studies, to Al-Qaeda's Ayman al-Zawahiri, a trained surgeon, and Osama bin Laden, a civil engineering graduate - some of the world's most violent extremist leaders have come not from illiteracy or deprivation, but from classrooms, universities and privileged backgrounds. The 'Educated' Ones:It is also important to recognise that educated militants are not unique to Kashmir or to Muslim-majority contexts. The phenomenon has appeared across ideologies and geographies. The Tamil LTTE drew heavily from Jaffna's educated middle class; many of its senior leaders were graduates, teachers and engineers and its suicide attack squads were often $composed\ of\ young\ people\ who\ had\ excelled\ in\ school.\ The$ Irish Republican Army (IRA) recruited university students, civil servants and professionals who believed they were waging a legitimate political struggle.

In India's own recent past, the Sikh militancy of the 1980s included doctors, government employees and young men studying in colleges in Punjab and Delhi, some of whom were pulled into underground cells through networks of identity, grievance and belonging. In 1997, I travelled to Pakistan to report a series for the Western media outlet I was working with at the time. There, I met Dal Khalsa founder Gajinder Singh, the man who led the 1981 hijacking of an Indian Airlines flight in the name of Khalistan. He was soft-spoken, widely read and spoke with the intensity of someone who believed history had chosen him. He sounded convinced that the hijacking was not a crime, but a moral act in service of the Khalistan movement. During our conversations, he gave me a list of addresses in one of Jammu's most affluent neighbourhoods and said, almost casually, "They will open the door if you take my name." They did. The people who welcomed me lived in spacious kothis, held secure government jobs and were fully embedded in middle-class respectability.

Yet, they spoke with unwavering conviction about Khalistan.

Years later, in Pulwama, I met the family of the young suicide bomber who carried out one of the deadliest attacks on Indian security forces. They lived in a large, well-maintained home with manicured gardens, not the poverty-stricken stereotype often imagined in narratives of militancy, mistakenly perpetuated by Bollywood. The living room was warm and the surroundings comfortable. The parents and relatives were unrepented and said their child was a martyr for the cause of 'azadi' (freedom).

These cases underline that radicalisation does not require poverty or illiteracy. It perhaps requires a narrative powerful enough to justify violence as duty. Why Is Violence So Seductive?

So, why do doctors, engineers and ordinary middle-class professionals drift towards violence? These are people raised with the presumed "middle-class values" of careers, stability and coexistence. Yet, some embrace the logic of killing. What breaks inside them? One of the clearest explanations comes from political psychologist Dr. Fathali Moghaddam, who studies radicalisation at Georgetown University. He says, "Radicalisation is not born in poverty or ignorance alone. It happens when people feel morally humiliated, socially disrespected and politically unheard. Educated individuals are often more vulnerable because they seek meaning and grand narratives. Violence becomes, in their mind, not destruction but purpose."

Scholar Arun Kundnani, in his book The Muslims are Coming! Islamophobia, Extremism and the Domestic War on Terror, explains why radicalisation is not "the product of a sudden psychological vulnerability" but "a political response to a political context".

Many scholars suggest a more complex situation: moral outrage at perceived injustices; a "cognitive opening" triggered by personal or political shocks; tight peer networks that normalise radical ideas and, crucially, a yearning for certainty and status that ideologies theatrically supply.

This Is A Moral Challenge

Which is exactly why the Faridabad and Delhi cases must not be dismissed as aberrations. The question is not simply what these educated individuals allegedly did. The real question is why they believed they were right to do it. Many white-collar recruits do not join terror networks because they are jobless. They join because they feel morally superior and are possibly psychologically disturbed. They believe they have seen something others refuse to see. Or they feel betrayed by their fellow faith followers. I would like to emphasise this is not about demonising a community or a state. Nor is it about dismissing legitimate grievances. It is about recognising why violence becomes seductive.

White-collar terror is not just a security challenge. It is a moral challenge. A civic challenge. A challenge beyond normal policing and security. They do not come from the shadows or caves.

Why Bihar Saw Highest Gap In Male-Female Turnout In **Phase 1 Voting**

he voter turnout in the first phase of voting for the Bihar ssembly polls has surpassed all records at 65.08%, much higher than the overall turnout of 57.29% in 2020. However, nothing can be said conclusively about these figures unless one analyses the respective turnouts for men and women. Many believe that deletions under the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) process have contributed to the increased turnout. However, this is a misconception. That is because at 7.42 crore, the total size of the electorate has increased, too, up from 7.36 crore in 2020. A high turnout in the first phase this time shows that the absolute number of votes polled is higher by 35 lakh from that in 2020. Hence, even without SIR, the turnout would likely have increased by around 4%.

A Significant Gap Between Male And Female Voters

The male-female dynamic is important here. According to reports, the female turnout this time was 69.04%, significantly higher than the male turnout of 61.56%. This gap of 7.5 percentage points underlines a unique reality of Bihar. For the last three elections, women have outnumbered men by three to seven percentage points in terms of voter turnouts. Though official Election Commission data is awaited, the trend has

only grown stronger. Why Women Outvote Men

In October 2005, when Nitish Kumar won the election in Bihar, fewer women (2.6 percentage points less than men) came out to vote. However, later, thanks to marked improvements in law and order and the introduction of women-centric schemes, such as distribution of bicycles, reservation in jobs and local bodies, Jeevika Didi programme, and liquor bans, more women started coming out to vote.

In 2010, the female turnout was higher than that of men by 3.35percentage points. In 2015, this gap widened to 7.2 percentage points, though in 2020, it dropped to 5.3 percentage points. The 7.5 percentage point-gap in the first phase of polling this time simply reinforces this trend.

High women's turnout in Bihar can also be explained by the state's socioeconomic situation. As men migrate to other states and cities in search of work, they often miss out on voting. How JD(U) Has Benefited

In any case, the trend has been helpful for the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) - especially the Janata Dal (United). Both in 2010 and 2020, the NDA won the elections on the back of women. The JD(U) has a high strike rate of 70-90% in seats where women outvote men: 37 out of the 43 seats it won in 2020, 61 out of 71 in 2015, and 79 out of 115 in 2010.

In 167 out of the total 243 seats where women outvoted men in 2020, as many as 99 were won by the JD(U). In contrast, the Mahagathbandhan won 49% of the 76 seats where men's turnout was higher than women's. In fact, in 2020, women played a huge role in the NDA's close win against the Mahagathbandhan. While the NDA led by 1% amongst women, the Mahagathbandhan had a 2% lead amongst men. The Trends This Year

According to the VoteVibe tracker, in the beginning of October this year, the NDA was leading by 6% amongst women, while the Mahagathbandhan was ahead by 2% amongst men. Among young male voters, the Mahagathbandhan is ahead by 7%, though the Jan Suraaj Party (JSP) is also fragmenting votes, according to an analysis by Ascendia Strategies. Thus, while the Mahagathbandhan is expected to get 41 % of the male votes, the NDA may get 34%, and the JSP 18%.

On the other hand, among young female voters, the NDA enjoys



a lead of 14%. So, while it is expected to bag 48% of the female vote, the Mahagathbandhan may get 34%, and the JSP 8%. The JSP's announcement that it'd enforce prohibition if elected is adding to the confusion among women voters.

Even so, the point is that in absolute numbers, the size of the female electorate in Bihar is smaller than that of men. However, according to reports, both men and women voters were equal in number in the first phase: 1.22 crore. The number of votes cast by women has doubled during the 2005-2020 period, from 1.04 crore to 2.08 crore, while that of men has grown 1.5 times, from 1.41 crore to 2.11 crore. The total number of votes cast by men in March 2005 was 1.41 crore, compared to 1.04 crore for women - a lead of 37 lakh for men. Similarly, the number of votes cast by men in 2020 was 2.11 crore against 2.08 crore for women - a lead of 3 lakh for men. The share of votes cast by women in Bihar elections has increased from $42.48\,\%$ in 2005 to 49.62 % in 2020.

Women As A Vote Bloc: In sum, the 7.5 percentage point gap in male and female turnouts indicates that the Mahila Rozgar Yojana under the Nitish Kumar government has been effective. Many are calling this contest a "das-hazariya" election, referring to the Rs 10,000 sum given under the women's employment scheme.

In some ways, thus, Nitish Kumar has been successful in

creating a caste-neutral female vote bank. According to the VoteVibe tracker, 58% of women have used the money they've received to start small businesses. Many also hope that they may receive Rs 2 lakh after six months. The identity of Jeevika Didis, too, which is independent of their roles as wives or daughters, appears to have had a significant impact among women. The rising trend of women's turnout in Bihar indicates an important shift in the state's politics. Women's empowerment schemes, improved law and order, and increased political awareness among women have made them a decisive voter group. The results of the 2025 elections will determine whether this trend continues and which alliance benefits most from this shift. The working people of New York have been told by the wealthy and the well-connected that power does not belong in their hands... And yet, over the last 12 months, you have dared to reach for something greater. Tonight, against all odds, we have grasped it. The future is in our hands. My friends, we have toppled a political dynasty."

These words, by now, have been heard by millions across the globe. They have leapt out of newspapers, televisions, and, perhaps most potently, Instagram. All this has happened because Zohran Mamdani, a 34-year-old migrant Muslim, a self-declared democratic socialist of mixed parentage - a man who might easily have been consigned to the margins of

contemporary political economy - has become the new mayor of New York City.

Mamdani's success has signalled a system reset: a toppling of a political dynasty that sought legitimacy from the common people even as it worked to de-power them. Who was Mamdani fighting? On the road to New York's City Hall, he met with intense opposition from the business and financial community. Mamdani's progressive platform - freezing rent prices, taxing the city's wealthiest one per cent, and demanding $corporate \ accountability \ \hbox{-} \ alarmed \ traditional \ Democratic$ donors and real estate magnates. Advertisement - Scroll to continue

Over 20 billionaires spent millions to back his opponents, including former Governor Andrew Cuomo. Figures like Michael Bloomberg, Bill Ackman, and Ronald Lauder funded an unprecedented campaign against him, terrified that his economic agenda would drive away corporations and $destabilise the {\it real estate market}.$

And yet, he won. A 2019 meeting of right-wing donors - from Peter Thiel to J.D. Vance and Tucker Carlson - had sought to make the MAGA movement an enduring political machine. Mamdani confronted a similar corporate-political nexus in New York and beat it. He re-centred democracy around people rather than profit.

Diverse, resilient energy production is needed to meet future demand, global report says

PARIS, Nov 12: Electricity demand will rise much faster than overall energy growth in the coming decades, underscoring the need for diversified energy sources, according to an analysis released Wednesday

The report by the International Energy Agency said renewable energy, led by solar power, will grow faster than any other major source in the next few years and that coal and oil demand will likely peak globally by the end of this decade. The report noted that many natural gas projects were approved in 2025, due to changes in US policy, indicating worldwide supply will rise even as questions remain about how it will be used. Meanwhile, global nuclear power capacity is set to increase by at least a third by 2035 after being stagnant for years.

The release of the annual World Energy Outlook coincided with UN climate negotiations in Brazil this week, where global leaders are calling for ways to curb the planet's warming. Regional dynamics

The IEA says building greater resilience in energy systems is especially important as data centres, heating and cooling, electrification and more drive energy demand. Investment in data centres is expected to reach USD 580 billion this year, $exceeding \ investment \ in \ the \ oil \ supply, according \ to \ the \ report.$ Growing economies, including India and nations in Southeast Asia, the Middle East, Africa and Latin America, will "increasingly shape energy market dynamics in the years," the IEA said, noting their potential for solar power.

China, meanwhile, has accounted for half of the global growth in demand for oil and gas, and more than half for electricity,

"In a break from the trend of the past decade, the increase in electricity consumption is no longer limited to emerging and developing economies," IEA Executive Director Fatih Birol said in a release. Birol said that electricity use is also rising in advanced economies.

Nations are grappling with meeting demand while preparing for the risks brought on by the planet's warming. The IEA says the world is falling short on universal energy access and climate change goals. Around 730 million people still live without electricity, according to the IEA, and despite progress. nearly one-quarter of the global population still relies on inefficient cooking methods that hurt their health or the



environment. 2024 was also the hottest year on record. Nations should diversify their energy sources and cooperate to expand supply chains for critical minerals, the IEA said. This also includes making quick improvements to the grid, energy storage and broader infrastructure

"When we look at the history of the energy world in recent decades, there is no other time when energy security tensions have applied to so many fuels and technologies at once," Birol

said. "With energy security front and centre for many governments, their responses need to consider the synergies and trade-offs that can arise with other policy goals – on affordability, access, competitiveness and climate change.' Global reaction

Wednesday's edition of the yearly report is the first released since the start of President Donald Trump's second term. Trump's administration has, for a second time, opted out of the Paris agreement, rolled back dozens of climate regulations, slashed federal support for renewable energies such as wind and solar power and is reversing the "endangerment finding" that sits at the core of US climate policy.

Trump has pledged his support instead to the fossil fuel industry, investing in coal and loosening restrictions on pollution.

But energy analysts said the shift to clean power is happening $regardless\,of\,climate\,policy\,around\,the\,world.$

"The evidence on the ground is overwhelming. EV sales are $taking\,off\,in\,many\,emerging\,countries, and\,solar\,is\,permeating$ even through the Middle East," said Dave Jones, chief analyst at global energy think tank Ember. "Renewables and electrification will dominate the future.'

Maria Pastukhova, energy transition program lead at climate change think tank E3G, said the report makes "the choices for the global energy system and the global economy unambigu-

"If countries want to grow their economies and protect their citizens from roller-coaster energy prices, they need to focus relentlessly on energy efficiency and the (decarbonisation) of energy demand." Pastukhova said.

Others, however, were critical. Ben Backwell, CEO of the Global Wind Energy Council, said the outlook does not fully capture the momentum in renewables, and that it should have emphasised the trajectory for renewable energy is accelerating, driven by the decreasing cost of the technologies, strong

policy support and the move toward electrification. "We're accelerating," he added. "You can see it all around the world, and we can see it in our numbers for last year, but also in our numbers for the first half of this year. It looks very, very exciting, both for wind and for solar, in fact, and for next year,

SPIL maintains solid

Q2 FY26 results

Shakti Pumps India Limited (SPIL) reported a robust performance for Q2 and H1 FY26, delivering one of the highest quarterly revenues in its history despite operational challenges posed by an extended monsoon and raw material cost increases The company posted consolidated revenue of `666.4 Crores in Q2 FY26, a 5 per cent YoY growth, taking H1 FY26 revenue to

1288.9 Crores, up 7.2 per cent YoY. EBITDA stood at 136 Crores for the quarter with margins at 20.4 per cent, impacted by a 3-4 per cent rise in prices of copper, steel and solar panels. PAT came in at `90.7 crores in Q2 and `187.5 crores for H1 FY26. Dinesh Patidar, Chairman & Managing Director, said, Despite prolonged monsoon conditions and raw material inflation, we delivered one of the highest quarterly revenues in our history. Maharashtra has led strongly in order inflows and our pipeline across states remains robust. Our solar rooftop business is scaling rapidly and emerging segments are showing encouraging growth. With strong execution capabilities, a diversified order pipeline and strategic investments, we remain confident of delivering our FY26 guidance and sustaining long-term growth.

Awfis Q2 profit down 59% to `16 cr on high base effect

Realty firm Awfis Space Solutions Ltd on Tuesday reported a 59 per cent decline in its consolidated profit to `15.97 crore in the latest September quarter on a high base effect. Its net profit stood at `38.67 crore in the year-ago period, helped by an exceptional gain of ` 24 crore. Total income, however, grew to ` 392.97 crore in the July-September quarter of this fiscal from `301.95 crore in the corresponding period of the preceding year, according to a regulatory filing. Awfis, which has recently been listed on stock exchanges, provides flexible managed office spaces to corporates of all sizes. It takes office space from property owners to establish centres and then sub-lease the workspaces to enterprises.

World Bank debarred Transformers and Rectifiers shares tanks 28%

New Delhi

The World Bank's debarring has seriously affected Transformers and Rectifiers (India) Ltd (TARIL). 'The Pioneer' reported on Sunday that the Indian company was debarred by World Bank for fraudulent corruption practices in Nigerian powergrid supply. The company's shares were `396 on `313 on Friday tanked to Monday after the report and on Tuesday further collapsed to `282 in Stock Exchanges.

Interestingly, TARIL shares were only priced `7.40 only in January 1, 2020 and in January 2025, the company shares shot up to to 650. 'The Pioneer' reported that more than 50 Indian companies and individuals were debarred by the World Bank for corruption, bribery and fraudulent practices.

The company CFO Chanchal S Rajora on Tuesday told media that the firm was caught in Nigerian politics. Explaining the issues in supply of equipments in the Nigerian projects, he said that the issues will be sort out in six months.

The World Bank has banned the company for four years till June 2029. Guiarat based TARIL was debarred by the World Bank on November 4 for 486 Million Dollars contract in Nigerian power sector.

Share price of Transformers and Rectifiers (India) Ltd (TARIL) extended their sharp fall on Tuesday, slipping 10 per cent to a oneyear low of `282.80 on BSE. With this, the stock has lost nearly 28 per



cent over the last two trading sessions, following a World Bank debarment notice.

The company issued a clarification stating, "We wish to inform that Transformers and Rectifiers (India) Ltd has received a Notice of Uncontested Sanctions Proceedings dated November 4, 2025, from the World Bank in connection with Sanctions Case No. 788 relating to the Nigeria Electricity Transmission Project (IDA Credit Nos. 6185-NG and 6186-NG).

TARIL said the communication referred to an earlier Notice of Sanctions Proceedings dated July 30, 2025, which the company had not received. "Accordingly, the Company has initiated steps to contest the matter and will submit

its reply to the World Bank, seeking an opportunity to review and address the allegations in detail," it added. The proceedings have been initiated under the Sanctions Proceedings and Settlements in Bank-Financed Projects, issued by the World Bank

on November 30, 2023 Providing background, TARIL said it had received an order worth \$24.74 million in FY20 for the supply of 70 transformers on a CFR basis to Nigeria. The order was executed in FY22 and as per the terms, 90 per cent payment was received under a letter of credit during the same year

"During shipment of last consignment, while it was being transported from Nigerian Port to its Storage,

3 Nos transformers got damage due to accident. Claim filed by TCN and Insurance was passed during FY22, but payment was received under the insurance during FY24 in staggered manner, due to shortage of USD in Nigeria. We manufactured new Transformers against the previous 3 Nos damaged and supplied them during FY25 end, against which balance payment of 10 per cent was released by World Bank and received during Q1 FY26."

The company clarified that the debarment relates to "certain alleged irregularities concerning a past supply order executed under a World Bank-funded project for Transmission Company of Nigeria Plc (TCN), Abuja.'

It further noted that all required

during the World Bank's 2023 enquiry and since then, there had been no communication.

"The Company believes that the findings referred to in the notice are not conclusive and do not constitute proof of any misconduct. The Company reiterates that it has acted in good faith and in compliance with all applicable laws and contractual obligations," it said.

TARIL added that it will "reply to World Bank for chance to represent the case and get the debarment uplifted. TARIL will represent its case with World Bank and prove that TARIL is not involved into any illegal or restricted transactions with any of the thirdparty."

The company also said it will work to "satisfy World Bank's requirement (a) and (b) as mentioned in page 2 of the notice, which would enable withdrawal of its ineligibility for participation in World Bank funded projects.'

For the July-September quarter (Q2 FY26), TARIL reported flat revenue of `460 crore on a year-on-year (YoY) basis. Margins declined, with EBITDA down 26 per cent YoY to Rs 52 crore and PAT falling 19 per cent to Rs 37 crore, mainly due to higher employee costs.

In the corresponding quarter last year, the company had posted an EBITDA of `80.97 crore and a PAT of `46.02 crore. As of September 2025, promoters held a 64.36 per cent stake in the small-

Dish TV partners with Amazon Prime

New Delhi

Dish TV, one of India's leading content distribution companies, has partnered with Amazon Prime to offer Prime Lite benefits to its customers, reinforcing its commitment to innovation, convenience and customer value.

The collaboration spans the Dish Group's entire ecosystem — including its DTH services, Watcho streaming platform, VZY Smart TVs and extensive ISP partner network. Eligible Dish customers will gain seamless access to Prime Video's premium entertainment library, featuring award-winning Indian and international Originals, blockbuster films and more, all on a single device of their choice in HD quality.

In addition to unlimited entertainment, Prime members will also enjoy shopping benefits such as free unlimited Same-Day and Next-Day delivery on eligible products, as well as early access to major sales events like Prime Day. This partnership marks another milestone in Dish TV's journey to



FLIQS platform. The recent launch of VZY Smart TVs has further expanded its footprint into connected entertainment devices, offering viewers a complete and integrated experience. By integrating Prime Lite, Dish TV continues

the Watcho OTT Super App

and the creator-driven

to uphold its commitment to delivering unmatched value, innovation and entertainment to millions of Indian households, blending its DTH legacy with next-generation streaming technology to create a truly seamless and immersive viewing experience. Prime Video offers consumers access to one of the largest selections of the latest and exclusive Indian and

Amazon Original series. stand-up comedy, popular kids' shows and more. Speaking about the collab-

international movies and TV

shows, award-winning

oration, Manoj Dobhal, CEO and Executive Director of Dish TV India Limited, said, "Entertainment today is all about accessibility, simplicity and personalisation. Dish TV has always believed in empowering viewers with the freedom to choose how and where they watch content. Partnering with Amazon Prime, renowned for its vast library of movies, series and acclaimed Originals worldwide, further strengthens our commitment to delivering worldclass entertainment experiences across every screen."

DGCA asks pilots, air traffic controllers to report GPS spoofing within 10 mins of occurrence

New Delhi

Aviation watchdog DGCA has asked airlines, pilots and air traffic controllers to report GPS spoofing incidents within 10 minutes of the occurrences, amid recent such incidents at the Delhi airport.

In recent days, incidents

of GPS spoofing and interference has been reported in and around the national capital's Indira Gandhi International Airport (IGIA). the country's busiest airport that handles over 1,500 flight movements daily.

Against this backdrop, the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) has decided to put in a place system to ensure real time reporting of GPS interference and spoofing incidents.

Global Positioning System (GPS)/ Global Navigation Satellite System (GNSS) spoofing and jamming refers to attempts to manipulate a user's navigation system by giving false signals.

"Any pilot, ATC controller, or technical unit detecting abnormal GPS behaviour (eg. Position anomalies. navigation errors, loss of GNSS signal integrity, or spoofed location data) shall initiate real time reporting (within 10 minutes of occurrence)," the regulator said in a threepage circular issued on

The initial report should compulsorily have details such as date and time of occurrence, aircraft type and registration, airline name, flight route and coordinates of occurrence or area affected.

November 10.

Also, the watchdog has said the entities should mention about the type of interference as to whether it was "jamming / spoofing / signal loss / integrity error" as well as aircraft equipment affected by the inter-

According to the DGCA, airline operators, pilots and ATS units may include further supporting details such as preservation of system logs, screenshots or

images of the Flight Management System (FMS) and records of effects on connected systems and platforms.

ATS refers to Air Traffic Services. All aircraft operators, flight crew and Airports Authority of India (AAI), including Air Traffic (ATC) Control Communication, Navigation, Surveillance (CNS) units, operating in and around the Delhi airport have been asked to follow the instructions in the circular

The CNS is the main function of Air Navigation Services (ANS) and Air Traffic Management (ATM). These critical functions are provided by the AAI.

"In view of the recent occurrences of GPS spoofing and GNSS interference reported in and around IGI Airport, New Delhi, it is imperative that all aviation stakeholders ensure prompt detection and real-time reporting (within 10 minutes of occurrence) of such events to maintain flight

safety and operational integrity," the circular said.

The DGCA is probing the incidents of GPS spoofing at the Delhi airport and is also collecting such occurrences to have a better understanding of the situation.

In India, as many as 465 GPS interference and spoofing incidents were reported in the border region, mostly in the Amritsar and Jammu areas, between November 2023 and February 2025.

Several airlines had reported that aircraft operating in and around Amritsar have experienced GPS/GNSS interference.

Airlines have been reporting GPS interference with their flights in different parts of the world, especially while flying near or over

conflict zones. Both the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) and the International Air Transport Association (IATA) have been looking at the issue of GPS spoofing and jamming and looking at ways to deal with them

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Stokes urges England players to go full throttle in intrasquad Ashes warm-up

Sydney: England captain Ben Stokes is confident he can manage a gruelling workload during the Ashes having bowled at intensity over the past two months. He will make his return to competitive cricket in a three-day intrasquad game with England Lions starting on Thursday, urging England's players to go "balls to the wall" in their sole warm-up ahead of the first Test.

There has been uncertainty over the fitness of Stokes, who has been sidelined since late July with a shoulder injury. But he has been bowling flat out at England's training sessions at Lilac Hill, a suburban ground in Perth's outskirts that once hosted light-hearted 50over games for touring teams.

"I've been bowling like that for two months now," Stokes said. "It was nice to put the feet up but once the rehab started, I've hit the ground running. There has been a lot of hard work to get my body in a good place. I've had two-three months of building up to get here and that's where all the hard work comes in."

Stokes was ruled out of the fifth Test against India with a torn shoulder muscle after a heavy workload with the ball, claiming 17 wickets for the series in performances marked by long, gut-busting spells.

"[Injuries] could happen any time, one of those things when you're an athlete you're always exposing yourself to injuries," he said. "It's part of what we do. I bat, bowl and field. It's a pretty high intensity role that I do.

"It's frustrating, but also a little bit of realisation that I might have a little niggle here and

Stokes will test his fitness in England's practice game at Lilac Hill. The exact details of the match are vet to be known, but Stokes confirmed that it would be an XI vs XI contest and that the full Ashes squad will take part along with England Lions players.

"Next few days is balls to the wall for everyone, no easing into it and it will be a good run for everyone," he said. "We're going to be giving



everyone in our squad time out in the middle. Everyone will be getting an opportunity. "It will be proper and taken very seriously the next few days. We've got nine days until the

first Test and a lot of things can happen." Other than Stokes, a lot of focus will be on the fitness of quicks Jofra Archer and Mark Wood

with England contemplating selecting them in tandem for the first Test on an expected fiery surface at Optus Surface.

"It's great to have the x-factor that Jof and Woody possess in terms of pace," Stokes said. "Woody's got over his knee surgery he had quite a while ago, he's overcome that, and he's

looking really, really good.

"Jofra's been out on the park for two-and-a-half years now, so it's great seeing those two flying in and sending some fast balls down there at our guvs as well

"He's going really well. He's been looked after with workloads to get to this point. He's in a Ben Stokes speaks to the media at Lilac Hill in

Ben Stokes speaks to the media at Lilac Hill in

Perth•Getty Images As hinted by assistant coach Marcus Trescothick, England appears likely to back incumbent Ollie Pope at No.3 although Stokes remained coy. "We've been very consistent with our team selections. We know exactly

what we want," he said. "Pope's done a great job for us at number three. There are nine days to go. There's a lot of things that can go right. There's a lot of things that can go wrong. We'll have a team one-two days [ahead of the first Test] as normal."

About 30km away from England's training hub, nestled in a popular wineries region, a Sheffield Shield match is ongoing at the WACA where Cameron Green and Marnus Labuschagne have had eye-catching contribu-

"I think a couple of their players have put in some good performances out in the field for their states," Stokes said. "But when you get out there in the field and the heat for the Ashes on that first day, you know that you're expected to go and deliver for your team. That's a completely different ball game."

Stokes has arrived in Perth as the pantomime villain - branded a 'cocky captain' on the front page of the city's tabloid newspaper - but he remains focused on a series that looms as legacy-shaping for his side.

"That's part of being in Australia. It's another one of those things that we're going to have to deal with," Stokes said of the media scrutiny. "Especially for some of the guys who are here for the first time, just letting them know that's what it is going to be like.

"I would love to come back [to England] in January and say that I've helped the team win an Ashes in Australia. That's obviously the goal. We are very, very determined to walk away with the goal that we want."

Shaheen accepts captaincy after Rizwan steps down

Rawalpindi (Pakistan)

In an interesting revelation. Pakistan's ODI captain Shaheen Shah Afridi has claimed that he only accepted the captaincy after his predecessor Mohammad Rizwan said he would step down.

"I took this responsibility from the Pakistan Cricket Board after discussing the matter with Rizwan," Shaheen told the media on Monday.

"Rizwan was the only person I had a discussion with and I asked him how he felt about me accepting the captaincy.

"Rizwan decided himself he would make way for me and that is how things worked out," said Shaheen, who was also appointed national T20 skipper in 2023 but was dismissed after just one series in New Zealand.

Shaheen had taken over as the T20I skipper after Babar Azam resigned following Pakistan's poor run in the Cricket World Cup

months after the appointment, Shaheen was removed from the post with Babar being reinstated as the captain.

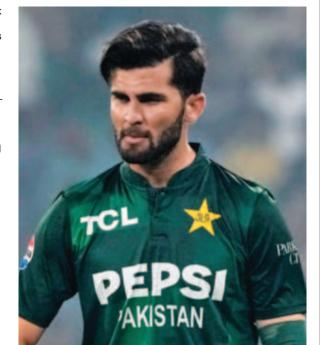
The left-arm pacer had led in only one T20I series a five-game encounter against New Zealand away from home — in this period.

Shaheen said Rizwan had assured him of full support. He added that as captain he would back Babar and Rizwan as they were key players in the side with lots of experience.

"I have no ego and I talk to everyone for advice, even our former captains. I don't look at things that happened in the past," he said.

"Everyone has to take responsibility if you want to improve as a team," the 25year-old said, adding, "You can't keep on saving Babar, Rizwan or Fakhar will do it, it is as a team we have to click and take responsibility.

"As far as Rizwan is concerned, he is Pakistan's topscorer in one-dayers since

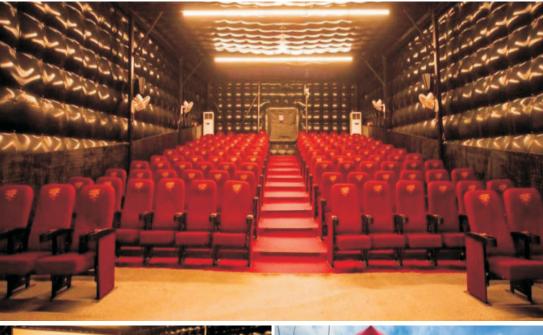


2023. We are trying to back players who are not in form so that they can do well in future matches.

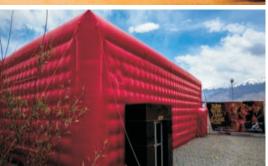
"Babar can falter in one or two matches but he is in good touch and I hope he

will score a hundred soon,' he said. Shaheen said that while the PCB had not given him a specific time frame for captaincy, he was looking forward to leading the side in the 2027 World Cup

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Hussain advances to pre-quarterfinals; Haohui stuns Advani



Unheralded Indian cueist Hussain Khan scored a thrilling 4-3 over Australia's Hassan Kerde to enter the men's pre-quarterfinals of the IBSF World Snooker Championships on Tuesday.

The 29-vear-old Indian. who came through the first stage qualification, played the important points well to win his match and set up a last-16 meeting with teen sensation Michal Szubarczyk of Poland.

Earlier, India's celebrated three-time champion Pankaj Advani bowed out of the tournament after losing 1-4 to Deng Haohui. China's Haohui ran up a

quick 3-0 lead in the best-of-seven-frame match. It spurred Advani. who replied with a break of 53 in the fourth to pull

However, the Chinese cueist regrouped quickly to take the next frame and march into the pre-quarterfinals.

In the women's draw, four Indians advanced to the knockout rounds with Amee Kamani topping Group D with an all-win record to enter the last-eight stage as the second seed.

Yamal, Mbappé, Ronaldo near 2026 World Cup



Paris

Spain and Lamine Yamal, France and Kylian Mbappé plus Portugal and Cristiano Ronaldo are close to confirming their places at the 2026 World Cup.

Erling Haaland's 12 goals

so far have Norway even nearer to sealing the team's first World Cup qualification since before he was born, and edging Italy toward the playoffs where the fourtime champion was shockingly eliminated in the past two editions. Germany also risks not advancing directly as a European group winner.

The Germans have a possible showdown game on Monday against Slovakia in Leipzig. World Cup qualify-

ing in Europe resumes on Thursday and six days later, 11 more group-winning teams will have joined England at the first 48-team finals tournament that the United States, Canada and Mexico will co-host.

Europe has 16 places at the expanded World Cup there were 13 in the last 32team World Cup in Qatar in 2022 - and the last four entries will be decided by playoff brackets in March. Croatia, the Netherlands,

Switzerland, Belgium all are

well set to confirm their

returns to the World Cup.

tively, Scotland and Bosnia-

Denmark, Austria head into the final week favored to top their groups, though they could be overtaken in final games against, respec-