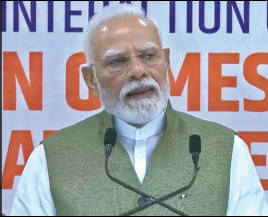




Women Farmers' Day Celebrations at NAARM

Statewatch, Page 3



PM Modi meets Asian Games participants, gets mementoes

Nation, Page 4



Trump: 'Pretend I'm Running' Ahead of US Midterms

Horizons, Page 5



Vice-captaincy a big responsibility, India aims to play fearless: Shafali

Sports, Page 7

Caller Name Display Mandatory from 1st of November

DoT directs telecom operators to roll out CNAP service to identify incoming callers



IANs News
New Delhi, Oct 15

- Caller names will appear alongside phone numbers on eligible mobile networks.
- Service will be activated automatically, without separate subscriber requests.
- Unserved domestic numbers will display names from telecom subscriber records.
- Businesses can use registered trade names or trademarks.

The Department of Telecommunications (DoT) has directed telecom operators to implement Calling Name Presentation (CNAP) services across their service areas from November 1, 2026, enabling users to see callers' names alongside phone numbers.

The service, tested on 4G and higher-generation wireless networks, will be available automatically without requiring separate requests. Its rollout on 2G, 3G and landline networks will be considered separately.

Under the system, saved contacts will continue to display their stored names, while unsaved domestic numbers will show the caller's name recorded in the originating tele-

com operator's subscriber database. International calls will be identified as "International Call".

The guidelines, issued under the Telecommunications (Authorisation for Provision of Principal Telecommunication Services) Rules, 2026, require operators to protect privacy and prevent caller identification data from being retained after a call ends. They must also ensure their networks can handle CNAP requests without affecting service quality.

Businesses and bulk customers may display preferred names instead of subscriber-record names, provided these are registered trademarks or trade names listed on the Goods and Services Tax portal.

El Niño impact severe, may peak by February: Telangana CS

Munsif News Bureau
Hyderabad, Oct 15

Jaju reviews reservoir levels, warns of critical 15-20 days for standing crops

Telangana Chief Secretary Sanjay Jaju on Thursday said the impact of El Niño was "very severe" and could peak by February 2027, warning of mounting concerns over water availability and standing crops.

After inspecting the Singur and Manjira reservoirs in Sangareddy district, Jaju said the monsoon had been significantly affected and temperatures had risen by 2-3 degrees Celsius. He directed officials to ensure efficient use of available water and prioritise drinking water supplies to Hyderabad and the districts of Sangareddy, Kamareddy, Nizamabad and Medak.

With groundwater levels declining, Jaju warned that water might not be available to farm-



ers even when electricity was supplied. He stressed that the next 15-20 days were critical for standing crops and asked agriculture officials to guide farm-

ers on measures to protect them.

The Chief Secretary directed the deployment of nodal officers in every district to coordinate with electricity and agriculture

- Temperatures have risen by 2-3 degrees Celsius, says Chief Secretary Sanjay Jaju.
- Falling groundwater and reservoir levels raise drinking water concerns.
- District-level nodal officers to coordinate power, agriculture and water management.
- Officials asked to protect standing crops over the next 15-20 days.

departments under the supervision of District Collectors. He also called for an assessment of water availability over the next 15 days and coordinated contingency plans to meet drinking water and irrigation needs.

Jaju said the situation would be discussed at the state Cabinet meeting and urged officials to assess ground conditions, engage with farmers and residents, and closely monitor the impact of changing weather patterns.

Telangana suspends Yadadri power station chief engineer

NSS News
Hyderabad, Oct 15

Action follows CM's warning over outages: uninterrupted supply ordered to protect crops

Telangana has suspended B. Suresh, Chief Engineer of Yadadri Thermal Power Station (YTPS) Stage-I, for alleged negligence in power generation, hours after Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy warned of strict action over power outages.

TG Genco CMD S. Harish issued the suspension order, citing "gross negligence towards duty" and supervisory lapses in planning and monitoring works to improve generation. Suresh will remain under suspension pending

a departmental inquiry.

At a review meeting on Wednesday, Reddy questioned why YTPS was not operating at full capacity despite coal linkages from the Naini and Mahanadi blocks. He warned that Energy Department Special Chief Secretary Navin Mittal and Harish would also face suspension if found negligent.

With the next 20 days crucial for standing crops amid deficit rainfall and El Niño concerns, the Chief Minister directed



officials to ensure round-the-clock power supply until harvest and immediately report the reasons for outages. He also ordered increased supply in areas with high agricultural demand, stressing that farmers must not suffer crop losses due to power shortages.

Bihar freezes teachers' salaries over alleged fraud

IANs News
Patna, Oct 15

The Bihar government has temporarily halted salary payments to education and police personnel following an Accountant General (AG) audit report that flagged alleged irregularities in salary disbursements across several districts.

Deputy Chief Minister and Finance Minister Bijendra Prasad Yadav said payments would be released after the discrepancies were investigated. The Finance Department has directed officials to verify records and identify those responsible for any confirmed irregularities.

The suspected fraud reportedly involves inflated salary entries and questionable employee records in the Human Resource Management System (HRMS) and Comprehensive Financial Management System (CFMS). Around 5,000 suspicious entries have reportedly been identified in the Education Department.

In one case, an alleged ₹76.71 lakh scam was detected at a school in Patna City. In Supaul, a clerk has been accused of creating fake records for 11 teachers and diverting ₹1.83 crore into accounts belonging to his mother and mother-in-law. The allegations are yet to be established.



Neglect of the functional Moazzam Jahi Market Clock Tower has disappointed tourists and visitors from neighbouring states, raising concerns over the poor maintenance of this iconic heritage landmark. Authorities are urged to take immediate steps to restore the clocks and preserve the historic monument's charm and significance.

Photo: Syed Omar

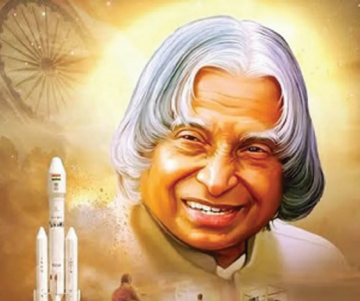
Ex-IAS officer launches party, to contest UP polls

IANs News
Lucknow, Oct 15

Former IAS officer Divya Mittal on Thursday launched her political party, Jan Neeti Bharat, announcing plans to contest the 2027 Uttar Pradesh Assembly elections. In a post on X, Mittal said the party would prioritise public concerns and remain accountable to people throughout the year, not just during elections. An IIT Delhi and IIM Bengaluru alumna and former Wall Street trader, Mittal resigned from the IAS on August 30 after 13 years of service. She served as District Magistrate in Mirzapur and Deoria and was recognised for efforts to provide piped water to remote villages in Mirzapur.

Telugu states pay tributes to Abdul Kalam on birth anniversary

NSS News
Hyderabad, Oct 15



Chief Ministers and Governors of Telangana and Andhra Pradesh on Thursday paid tributes to former President and Bharat Ratna Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam, recalling his contributions to science, defence and nation-building. Telangana Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy and Governor Shiv Pratap Shukla hailed Kalam as an inspiration to youth, highlighting his scientific achievements, simplicity and emphasis on education. Andhra Pradesh

Governor S. Abdul Nazeer, Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu and Deputy Chief Minister Pawan Kalyan also remembered Kalam's contributions to technology, missile development and youth empowerment. Former Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy praised his vision of education-led growth and national development.

Net direct tax collections rise 13.2% to Rs 13.38 lakh crore

IANs News
Mumbai, Oct 15



India's net direct tax collections rose 13.21% year-on-year to ₹13.38 lakh crore as of October 14 in FY27, driven by higher corporate, non-corporate and securities transaction tax receipts, according to Income Tax Department data released on Thursday.

Gross collections increased 14.89% to ₹16.03 lakh crore, while refunds rose 24.22% to ₹2.65 lakh crore.

Net corporate tax collections grew to ₹5.99 lakh crore from ₹4.97 lakh crore a year earlier, while non-corporate tax receipts increased to ₹6.92 lakh crore from ₹6.54 lakh crore.

Net Securities Transaction Tax collections surged to ₹46,840 crore from ₹30,902 crore in the corresponding period last year.

The figures include taxes paid by companies, individuals and other non-corporate entities.

MP Congress receives 600 'ghar wapsi' applications: Patwari

IANs News
Bhopal, Oct 15

The Madhya Pradesh Congress has received over 600 applications from leaders and workers seeking to return to the party, including more than 200 from current and former district presidents, legislators and former ministers, state Congress chief Jitu Patwari said on Thursday.

Patwari said the proposed 'ghar wapsi' drive would be taken up after consultations with the respective district Congress committees. The party aims to strengthen its grassroots organisation ahead of the 2028



Assembly elections.

Meanwhile, several Bhim Army office-bearers, including state secretary Vilas Bale and general secretary Satyendra Vimal, joined the Congress. MLA Arif Masood and state media department chairman Mukesh Nayak attend-

ed the induction programme.

The Congress won 66 of Madhya Pradesh's 230 Assembly seats in 2023, while the BJP secured 163. The party is now seeking to rebuild its organisation and expand its support base ahead of the next elections.

goal of creating "Crorepati Didis".

Murmu said SARAS Melas were connecting rural women entrepreneurs directly with consumers and expanding their access to urban markets. She urged SHGs to help ensure that development reaches every village and household as India works towards the goal of a developed nation by 2047. Union Rural Development Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan announced plans to organise SARAS Melas across states and establish SHE Marts in every district to market products made by SHG members.

NSS News
Vijayawada, Oct 15

beneficiaries of government schemes to become wealth creators and drivers of development.

Inaugurating the National SARAS Mela in Vijayawada, she highlighted the role of Self-Help Groups (SHGs) and the Centre's 'Lakshpati Didi' initiative in promoting women's financial independence. She said more than 10 crore women are now associated with SHGs and called for a

Rural women now wealth creators, says President Murmu



Andhra Pradesh transfers IAS officer after alleged Bengaluru pub brawl

Munsif News Bureau
Amravati, Oct. 15:

The Andhra Pradesh government has transferred IAS officer Vikas Marmat following a controversy over an alleged altercation with police personnel at a pub in Bengaluru.

Marmat, who was serving as Project Director of the Kuppam Area Development Authority (KADA), has been directed to report to the General Administration Department (GAD) for further posting.

According to a government order issued by Chief Secretary G Sai Prasad, the 2019-batch IAS officer has been transferred with immediate effect.

The Chief Secretary has asked the Chittoor District Collector and District Magistrate to make the neces-

sary in-charge arrangements for the post of Project Director, KADA.

The transfer comes after Bengaluru’s Cubbon Park police registered a case against Marmat and three others over an alleged confrontation with police officers during a late-night inspection.

The incident occurred around 1.30 am on October 10 at a pub on Residency Road in Bengaluru.

A police team conducting checks at bars and restaurants asked customers to produce identification documents to verify their ages.

Marmat and his companions allegedly argued with the officers, abused them and assaulted or threatened police personnel on duty.



A case was registered against Marmat and the others at Cubbon Park Police Station following a complaint filed by Police Inspector Arun Salunke. The other accused were identified as Abhay Uday Singh, Nitesh and Roshan.



Governor Shiv Pratap Shukla on Thursday called for greater emphasis on research, technological advancement and innovation in the seed sector, with farmers’ welfare at the centre of agricultural development.Addressing a commemorative programme honouring late Mandava Venkatramaiah, founder of Nuziveedu Seeds Limited, at Kandlakoya in Medchal–Malkajgiri district.

National Seminar on Deccan Textile Traditions Held at MANUU

Hyderabad, Oct 15: Maulana Azad National Urdu University (MANUU), through its H.K. Sherwani Centre for Deccan Studies, organised a national seminar on “Deccan Textile Traditions: Materiality, Labour and Technology” on October 15, 2026.

The seminar examined textile traditions as an important component of the material culture and historical experiences of the Deccan. It highlighted the interconnections between textile production, artisan communities, traditional knowledge, labour and technological practices. The seminar provided an academic platform to discuss the evolution of textile traditions.

District Collector Ila Tripathi Inaugurated German Language Training Classes

Munsif News Bureau
Nizamabad, Oct. 15:

District Collector Ila Tripathi advised that eligible young women and men should utilize the free German language training classes being provided through the Employment and Training Department to enable them to get jobs with attractive salaries in Germany. Collector Ila Tripathi formally inaugurated the training classes set up at the Government Girls’ ITI in the district headquarters on Thursday.

Speaking on this occasion, the Collector said that as there are extensive job opportunities in Germany in many fields like Nursing, Carpenter, Physiotherapy, the State Government has entered into an



agreement with that country for providing jobs. She said that as part of this, these classes have been arranged to provide free training in German language to eligible persons. She said that after providing training for three months, those who pass will be provided with a visa and given job opportunities

in Germany on an attractive salary. She advised them to attend the training classes that will continue for three months regularly and achieve good proficiency.

She said that to excel in the jobs they work in, it is very necessary to have command over the language.

TELANGANA PUBLIC SCHOOLS TO BE ESTABLISHED TO INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS

Munsif News Bureau
Nizamabad, Oct. 15:

District Collector Ila Tripathi said the state government was establishing Telangana Public Schools by spending crores of rupees to provide quality education to students in line with international standards.

On Thursday, Collector Ila Tripathi, accompanied by Nizamabad Urban MLA Dhanpal Suryanarayana and Mayor Uma Rani, inspected the premises of Kotagalli Girls’ School in the Nizamabad Urban Assembly constituency to assess the site for establishing a Telangana Public School. She obtained details from the officials concerned about the available land and other basic facilities for the proposed school.

The Collector said the government had sanctioned Rs 6 crore to establish a Telangana Public School by integrating the existing primary school, high school and junior college



located on the same premises. The plan is to provide education from Class I to Class XII on approximately three-and-a-half acres of land, equipped with modern facilities.

She added that the government had also sanctioned a Telangana Public School at Novipet in the Bodhan Assembly constituency. Modern Educational Facilities to Be Provided

Collector Ila Tripathi directed the officials concerned to prepare a comprehensive plan and take all necessary steps for the construction of the proposed Telangana Public School. S

he stressed the need to provide additional classrooms, laboratories, a library, computer rooms, an RO water plant,

YS Jagan says CJP leaders’ arrests will only aggravate situation

Munsif News Bureau
Amravati, Oct. 15:

Former Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy has said that the arrests of Cockroach Janata Party (CJP) leaders Saurav Das and Ashutosh Ranka will only aggravate the situation.

The YSR Congress Party President took to social media platform X on Wednesday to react to the arrests of the CJP leaders in Delhi for trespassing into Jantar Mantar.

“A proactive approach always yields better results than a reactive stance. The system has a flaw that needs to be corrected. Trust in the electoral process must be restored,” Jagan Mohan Reddy said.

“The arrests of Saurav Das and Ashutosh Ranka do not solve anything; it only aggravates the situation. I empathise with Saurav Das and Ashutosh Ranka,” the former Chief Minister added.

A Delhi court sent the CJP leaders to judicial custody for five days.

Earlier, Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) Working President K.T. Rama Rao had criticised the arrest of CJP leaders. He termed the five-day judicial custody a new level of Emergency. “If there is one group of people really fighting for this country’s future, it is the youth, the Gen Z of this nation. To imprison them because they are trying to clean up the system reeks of insecurity,” the former

Telangana Minister said in a post on X.

“Slapping trespassing cases on Saurav Das and Ashutosh Ranka is absolutely uncalled for. Five-day judicial custody for waving Indian flags at Jantar Mantar is a new level of Emergency! Don’t forget that the country attained its freedom through protests and movements like these. Dissent is the cornerstone of any democracy,” Rama Rao said.

CJP founder and Convenor Abhijeet Dipke thanked Rama Rao for speaking out against the ‘illegal arrests’ of Saurav Das and Ashutosh Ranka.

“We are all in this together brother. Let’s fight for a better India. Jai Hind,” BRS leader Rama Rao said.

Adluri orders strict monitoring of provisions in residential schools

Hyderabad, Oct.15 (NSS): Welfare Minister Adluri Lakshman Kumar on Thursday directed officials to strengthen monitoring mechanisms to ensure an uninterrupted supply of essential provisions to students in residential schools, colleges and hostels across Telangana.

In a statement, the Minister said that with the tendering process for supplying provisions to institutions under the Telangana Social Welfare Residential Educational Institutions Society (TGSWREIS) and the Telangana Tribal Welfare Residential Educational Institutions Society (TGTWREIS) completed.

Keesara Deputy Tahsildar caught in ACB trap over Rs 2.5 lakh bribe

Munsif News Bureau
Hyderabad, Oct. 15:

The Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) officials on Thursday caught Keesara Deputy Tahsildar Sandeep Reddy when allegedly accepting a bribe of Rs 2.50 lakh.

According to information available, the official allegedly demanded the amount from a complainant in exchange for performing an official duty.



The complainant approached Sandeep Reddy while he was allegedly accepting the money. ACB officials continued

their searches at the Keesara Tahsildar office following the arrest.

They reportedly seized several documents and files that may be relevant to the investigation.

Officials are also said to be questioning other staff members at the office as part of the probe.

Further details regarding the alleged bribery, the official work involved and the outcome of the searches will be known later, officials said.

Gadwal: Paddy farmers haul water in tankers to save paddy crops

Munsif News Bureau
Jogulamba, Oct. 15:

Despite the Jurala project being barely 10 km away, farmers in Dharoor, Gadwal and other mandals of Jogulamba Gadwal district are relying on water tankers to save their paddy crops amid inadequate irrigation water, power cuts and depleting groundwater levels.

In villages such as Neelahlali in Dharoor mandal, farmers who cultivated paddy using borewells

are now forced to transport water to their fields in tankers to prevent their standing crops from drying up. Jammanna, a farmer from Neelahlali, is struggling to save his two-acre paddy crop cultivated during the Vanakalam season. The crop has reached the harvesting stage, when it requires an adequate supply of water. However, the falling groundwater level has left his borewell unable to meet the crop’s irrigation needs.

With no other option,

Jammanna is transporting water to his field in a 2,000-litre tanker, paying Rs.500 for each trip. Despite the additional expenditure, the water supplied is insufficient to meet the crop’s requirements.

Irregular power supply has further compounded his difficulties. With the crop at a critical stage, Jammanna has appealed to the authorities to intervene and address the irrigation water shortage.

He has also urged the gov-



ernment to extend support to farmers struggling to protect their crops.

Farmers have expressed frustration over the situation, pointing

Nizamabad Residents Must Strictly Follow These Rules: Police Commissioner

Munsif News Bureau
Nizamabad, Oct. 15:

Nizamabad Police Commissioner P. Sai Chaitanya, IPS, has issued a set of guidelines directing people across the Nizamabad Police Commissionerate limits to strictly follow rules concerning statue installations, noise pollution, public gatherings, drone usage, Gulf agents, cinema screenings and consump-

tion of alcohol in public places. The orders will remain in force from October 16 to October 31, 2026. Police station SHOs and SIs in Nizamabad, Armur and Bodhan divisions have been instructed to take appropriate legal action against those violating the rules. 1. Rules for Installation of Statues

Statues must not be installed in locations that cause inconvenience to the public, particularly at crowded places, parks, traffic

islands, government buildings and other similar locations. Prior permission from the committee constituted under the District Collector is mandatory for installing statues.

2. Restrictions on Noise Pollution

People have been advised against using DJs at excessively high volumes, as loud noise can cause inconvenience to elderly people suffering from chronic illnesses, children and women.

Malayappa Swamy Blesses Devotees on Kalpavriksha

NSS
Tirumala, Oct. 15:

On the fourth day of the Navaratri Brahmotsavams, Sri Malayappa Swamy, along with His consorts, blessed devotees

on the Kalpavriksha Vahanam in the Bakasura Vadha alankaram on Thursday morning. The procession was marked by majestic elephants, auspicious music, devotional bhajans, kolatams and Divya Prabandham recitations by

Jeeyangars. Devotees offered camphor harati and sought the blessings of the Lord. The Kalpavriksha, regarded in Hindu tradition as the divine wish-fulfilling tree, symbolises prosperity and the fulfilment of devotees’ aspirations.

Mission Bhagiratha to Extend Safe Drinking Water Supply to Remote Tribal Hamlets

Munsif News Bureau
Nizamabad, Oct. 15:

District Collector Ila Tripathi said steps were being taken to provide clean and safe drinking water through Mission Bhagiratha to remote tribal

areas and thandas across the district.

On Thursday, she visited Amrabad Thanda in Mopall Mandal to assess the feasibility of supplying drinking water and issued necessary instruc-

tions to the officials concerned. The Collector explained that the construction of the Manchippa reservoir had raised the possibility of several thandas being submerged.

As a result, Mission

Bhagiratha pipelines had not been laid in approximately 11 habitations, including Amrabad Thanda, in the past. She visited the area to assess the situation and explore the possibility of extending drinking water fa-

cilities to these settlements. During the visit, local tribal residents informed the Collector that they were facing difficulties in accessing drinking water and were entirely dependent on borewell water.



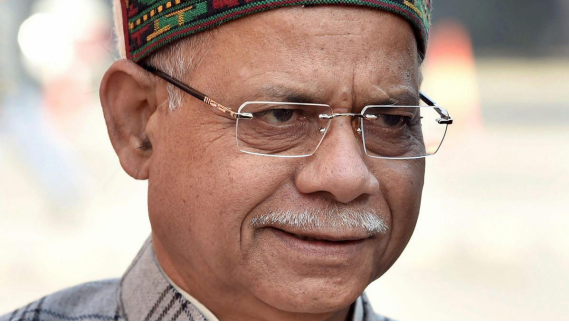
National Academy of Agricultural Research Management (ICAR–NAARM), Hyderabad, celebrated Women Farmers’ Day 2026 on Thursday wherein United Nations has designated 2026 as the International Year of the Woman Farmer. The celebrations marked sharing of success stories and experiences of women farmers, hands-on demo of vermi-compost preparation, and an expert talk on “Socio-economic empowerment of farm women”.

Governor calls for greater research, innovation in seed sector

NSS
Hyderabad, Oct. 15:

Governor Shiv Pratap Shukla on Thursday called for greater emphasis on research, technological advancement and innovation in the seed sector, with farmers’ welfare at the centre of agricultural development.

Addressing a commemorative programme honouring late Mandava Venkatramaiah, founder of Nuziveedu Seeds Limited, at Kandlakoya in Medchal–Malkajgiri district, the Governor said that innovations in agriculture must



translate into tangible benefits for farmers, including higher productivity and improved livelihoods.

The Governor paid floral tributes to Venkatramaiah’s portrait and planted a sapling in his memory.

Recalling the founder’s contribution to the seed industry, Shiv Pratap Shukla said Venkatramaiah had demonstrated vision and commitment by recognising farmers’ needs and advancing agricultural development through an empha-

sis on quality, reliability and innovation. His life exemplified how professional success could acquire greater significance when directed towards social good and the betterment of people’s lives, he said.

Describing farmers as the backbone of the country’s economy, the Governor said their hard work and dedication were fundamental to India’s food security. He stressed the need to strengthen scientific research, promote modern agricultural technologies and develop quality seeds to enhance farm productivity and improve farmers’ economic conditions.

Encourage Students to Excel in National-Level Sports: MLA Naini

Hanamkonda, Oct. 15: Warangal West MLA Naini Rajender Reddy inaugurated the Telangana State-Level School Games Lawn Tennis Championship 2026 as the chief guest at the JNS Indoor Stadium in Hanamkonda.

Addressing the gathering, Naini Rajender Reddy said students should strive for excellence in sports alongside their academic pursuits.

He observed that sports not only promote physical fitness and strength but also instil discipline, perseverance.

Telangana to digitise market yards, boost storage capacity to 2 lakh tonnes

NSS
Hyderabad, Oct. 15:

Agriculture and Marketing Minister Tummala Nageswara Rao has directed the officials concerned to modernise market yards across Telangana through digitalisation, solar power installations and improved storage facilities.

During a review meeting with Marketing department director Rahul Raj at the state Secretariat here on Thursday, the minister called for end-to-end digital management

of market operations, covering vehicle entry, weighing, sales, transactions and payments. He directed the officials to develop an online payment system for farmers to ensure transparency and eliminate irregularities.

The minister instructed officials to submit a comprehensive market digitalisation plan within 15 days. He was informed that solar power systems were being installed at 10 market yards, with plans to extend the initiative to others in phases.

Emphasising improved

storage infrastructure, Nageswara Rao suggested adopting silo-based warehouses to maximise storage capacity and directed officials to increase the department’s total capacity to two lakh metric tonnes. He also called for expediting the recruitment of engineering personnel through TGPSC or JNTU.

The minister further directed officials to establish a new market at Aziznagar and revive unused integrated markets in Toopran, Gajwel, Suryapet and other areas to benefit farmers.



Minister for IT and Industries D. Sridhar Babu on Thursday categorically ruled out any move to privatise Singareni Collieries Company Limited (SCCL), asserting that the Congress government was committed to protecting the public sector coal mining company.Speaking to the media at the CLP office, the Minister launched a sharp attack on BRS working president K.T. Rama Rao, questioning why he had remembered Singareni only after 12 years.

CBIC CHIEF EXPLAINS NEXT-GEN GST REFORMS TO HYD BUSINESSES

NSS
Hyderabad, Oct. 15:

Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC) Chairman Vivek Chaturvedi on Thursday outlined proposed GST process reforms aimed at reducing compliance burdens, improving transparency and facilitating ease of doing business during an interaction with taxpayers and industry representatives

in Hyderabad. The meeting, held here on Thursday, was attended by around 250 representatives from MSMEs, large industries, service providers, traders, exporters, startups and e-commerce businesses.

CBIC Member (GST) Sanjay Mangal and senior Central and State GST officials also participated.

Chaturvedi said the 57th GST Council meeting had

recommended a new set of process reforms to simplify tax administration and ease the burden on compliant taxpayers. Key proposals included automated refunds, fewer manual interventions, changes to arrest and prosecution provisions, and restrictions on vehicle inspections to cases supported by specific intelligence and authorised at the appropriate level.

NSS
Hyderabad, Oct. 15:

Telangana and Tamil Nadu can strengthen each other’s industrial growth through strategic partnerships, Minister for IT and Industries D. Sridhar Babu said on Thursday, inviting Tamil Nadu industries to participate in the Invest Telangana Global Summit 2026, scheduled for

Women Farmers’ Day Celebrations at NAARM

NSS
Hyderabad, Oct. 15:

National Academy of Agricultural Research Management (ICAR–NAARM), Hyderabad, celebrated Women Farmers’ Day 2026 on Thursday wherein United Nations has designated 2026 as the International Year of the Woman Farmer. The celebrations marked sharing of success stories and experiences of women farmers, hands-on demo of vermi-compost preparation, and an expert talk on “Socio-economic empowerment of farm women”.

Women farmers should prioritize their health and take adequate precautions against occupational hazards while working in the fields, said Dr. Ch. Radhika

Rani, Former Professor, NIRDPR, Hyderabad. She was delivering the Chief Guest address during the Women Farmers’ Day celebrations at the Academy. Highlighting the role of Self-Help Groups (SHGs) in empowering women in the Telugu states, she noted that they have emerged as a strong platform for promoting self-reliance and empowerment among women. She cautioned women farmers to adopt appropriate safety measures, including the use of masks, hand gloves and other protective equipment while spraying chemicals, pesticides and herbicides, to minimize exposure and prevent health hazards.

Dr. Gopal Lal, Joint Director, ICAR-NAARM, urged women farmers to

leverage modern technologies, including drones and farm machinery, to reduce drudgery and improve efficiency in agricultural operations.

Recognising their significant contribution to the country’s agricultural workforce, he appreciated their efforts and extended greetings on the occasion.

Lavanya, an ICAR Best Woman Farmer Awardee from Telakapally village, Nagarkurnool district, shared her inspiring journey of overcoming challenges to cultivate 70 acres of land. She highlighted her practices in organic and multi-crop farming, including the cultivation of saffron rice, and explained how she manages the entire value chain, from seed selection to marketing,

setting an example for aspiring women farmers.

Ms. Rajeswari, a small-holder woman farmer from Siddapur village, Ranga Reddy district, shared her experience of adopting sustainable farming practices using cow dung, neem-based inputs and other organic methods.

Progressive women farmers Saraswathi, Laxamma, Prabhavati, Y. Rajeswari and Lavanya were felicitated on the occasion. Earlier, Dr Surya Rathod, Principal Scientist, NAARM welcomed the gathering, and Dr Venkattakumar, Head, XSM division, NAARM narrated the significance of the day.

Dr Yamini, Principal Scientist, and Dr Supriya, Scientist, facilitated the programme conduction.

President Murmu pays floral tributes to Abdul Kalam on his 95th birth anniversary

NSS
Vijayawada, Oct. 15:

Vijayawada: President Droupadi Murmu said on Thursday that rural women were no longer mere beneficiaries of government schemes but had become wealth creators and were emerging as drivers of development.

Inaugurating the National SARAS Mela, organised by the Union Ministry of Rural Development and the Andhra Pradesh government in Vijayawada, she said the Centre had given a distinct momentum and direction to the empowerment of rural women through the ‘Lakhpati Didi’ initiative.

“Increased participation in various modern sectors, such as digital services and renewable energy, has opened up



new avenues for skill development for our rural sisters. Today, rural women are no longer merely beneficiaries of government schemes; they have become wealth creators and are emerging as drivers of development,” she said.

She said that, under the comprehensive vision of

Antyodaya, the Centre had placed women-led institutions at the heart of the Rural Livelihood Mission. As a result, women were leading the transformation of villages.

She said women’s Self-Help Groups (SHGs) had made significant contributions to the rural economy. In

about 12 years, the number of women associated with these groups had increased to more than 10 crore.

The President said the goal should not be limited to making women ‘Lakhpati Didis’; in the coming years, efforts should be made to help them become ‘Crorepati Didis’.

Singareni will not be privatised, asserts Sridhar Babu

NSS
Hyderabad, Oct. 15:

Minister for IT and Industries D. Sridhar Babu on Thursday categorically ruled out any move to privatise Singareni Collieries Company Limited (SCCL), asserting that the Congress government was committed to protecting the public sector coal mining company.

Speaking to the media at the CLP office, the Minister launched a sharp attack on BRS working president K.T. Rama Rao, questioning why he had remembered Singareni only after 12 years.

He alleged that the previous BRS government had treated the company as an “ATM” and accused KTR of making statements that could damage its reputation.

Sridhar Babu maintained



that tenders in Singareni had been conducted transparently since the Congress government assumed office.

He alleged that the criticism was being levelled by certain forces unhappy with the changes introduced by the present government.

Claiming that the previous BRS regime had left thousands of crores of rupees in dues to Singareni, the Minister questioned whether members of KTR’s family had effectively controlled the organisation over the past decade.

Students and Teachers Must Make Reading a Daily Habit in the Digital Age

NSS
Parbhani, Oct. 15:

Reading Motivation Day was celebrated with great enthusiasm on Thursday, October 15, 2026, at the renowned Naumania Urdu Primary School, Pathri Road, Parbhani, under the guidance of Headmaster Syed Yusuf Syed Musa, to mark the birth anniversary of former President of India, Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam.

On the occasion, students from Classes I to VII presented brief introductions to Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam’s life and personality, displaying his colour photographs.

They actively participated in various reading-related activities.

TELANGANA, TAMIL NADU MUST GROW TOGETHER: MINISTER SRIDHAR BABU

December 7–9 at Bharat Future City, Hyderabad.

Addressing the Chennai roadshow organised in association with the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), Sridhar Babu said the two states’ industrial strengths were complementary, not competing.

He highlighted investment opportunities in textiles, automobile components, engineer-

ing, electronics and emerging technologies.

The Minister outlined Telangana’s Rising 2047 vision, which aims to build a \$1 trillion economy by 2034 and a \$3 trillion economy by 2047. He showcased Hyderabad’s technology ecosystem, Genome Valley, aerospace manufacturing and startup network, along with Bharat Future City and the pro-

posed Mobility Valley.

He invited Tamil Nadu entrepreneurs to leverage the Kakatiya Mega Textile Park, Telangana’s MSME Policy and the TG-iPASS single-window clearance system for faster industrial approvals. He also highlighted opportunities for Coimbatore engineering firms, Tiruppur textile manufacturers and Chennai’s automobile component suppliers to expand

operations in Telangana.

On the sidelines of the roadshow, the minister held one-on-one meetings with senior industry leaders and interacted with diplomats and trade representatives from Taiwan, Singapore, Japan, Australia, Sri Lanka, Russia, Thailand and Malaysia, discussing investment and collaboration opportunities in Telangana.



At a Glance

Kerala records 5,991 NH road deaths in 3 years

IANS
Thiruvananthapuram, Oct. 15



Kerala recorded 5,991 road accident deaths on national highways between 2023 and 2025, accounting for more than half of the 11,697 fatalities reported across the state during the period.

Public Works Minister P.K. Basheer told the Assembly on Thursday that overspeeding and traffic violations were the main causes of accidents, though road deficiencies also contributed.

Accident-prone black spots have been identified through studies by NATPAC. Safety measures include blinkers, rumble strips, speed humps, reflective signs, road markings and crash barriers. Joint inspections by police, the Motor Vehicles Department and road agencies are conducted to identify hazards and recommend corrective action. The minister said road conditions and safety risks were assessed before rehabilitation plans were prepared.

Man Held in Rs 40 Lakh Scam

IANS
Surat, Oct. 15

Surat Cyber Crime Branch arrested Haryana resident Naveen Jat, 26, for allegedly supplying accounts in a Rs 40 lakh 'boss scam'.

Police said a fake WhatsApp profile of a company owner tricked an accountant into transferring Rs 40 lakh. Jat allegedly arranged three accounts.

Rs 18.5 lakh has been refunded. One account on Jat's phone was linked to a separate alleged Rs 87.60 lakh scam in Maharashtra. Amit Chamar, 21, was arrested earlier.

Police urged caution with ZIP files and advised calling 1930 after fraud cases.

PM MODI INTERACTS WITH ASIAN GAMES PARTICIPANTS, RECEIVES SPECIAL MEMENTOES

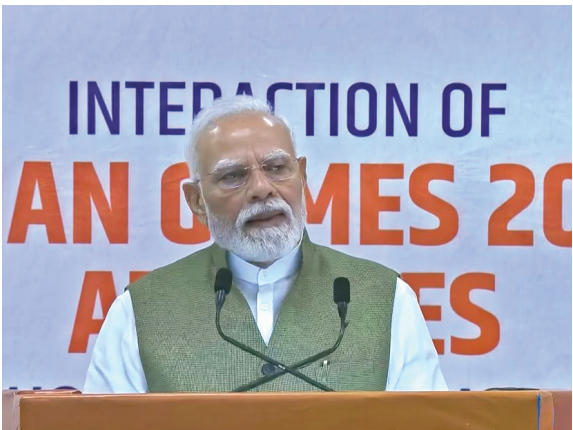
IANS
New Delhi, Oct. 15

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday interacted with India's Asian Games 2026 contingent at the Major Dhyan Chand National Stadium here, where sportspersons from several disciplines presented him with special mementoes celebrating their achievements at the Aichi-Nagoya Games.

The interaction brought together athletes, coaches, support staff, and officials from the Indian Olympic Association (IOA), the various national sports federations and the Sports Ministry, following India's fourth-place finish at the continental sporting event with 85 medals.

Among those who presented mementoes to the Prime Minister was Wushu exponent Naorem Roshibina Devi of Manipur, who won silver in the women's 60kg category. She gifted Modi a traditional Manipuri Lengyan, a handwoven loincloth featuring the Sangai deer.

Golfer Pranavi Urs,



who scripted history by winning India's first women's individual golf gold at the Asian Games, presented the Prime Minister with her glove and a golf ball.

Recurve archer Kumkum Mohod gifted a wooden bow decorated with shells and other embellishments. Mohod was among India's standout performers at the Games, winning two gold medals and a silver across archery events.

Jay Meena, who secured bronze in the men's singles soft tennis event, presented his racquet to Modi. His podium finish marked India's first-ever medal in soft tennis at the Asian Games.

The Indian women's cricket team presented a

signed Team India jersey, while the women's hockey team gifted the Prime Minister a hockey stick and an orange jersey bearing the signatures of all its players. Both teams were among the highlights of India's campaign, with the cricketers successfully defending their Asian Games title and the hockey team claiming its first gold since 1982.

India concluded the Aichi-Nagoya Games with 21 gold, 27 silver, and 37 bronze medals, finishing fourth in the overall standings behind China, Japan, and South Korea. The tally was India's second-highest at the Asian Games, behind the record 106 medals won at Hangzhou in 2023.

SC REFERS RAJPAL YADAV CHEQUE BOUNCE CASES TO MEDIATION FOR AMICABLE SETTLEMENT

IANS
New Delhi, Oct. 15

The Supreme Court on Thursday referred cheque dishonour cases against actor-comedian Rajpal Yadav and his wife, Radha Yadav, to mediation to explore an amicable settlement with complainant Murli Projects Private Limited.

A Bench of Chief Justice of India Surya Kant and Justice Joymalya Bagchi passed the order after Yadav's counsel informed the court that Rs 85 lakh had been deposited in the court registry on October 13, taking the total deposit to Rs 2 crore.

The Bench asked both parties to approach the Supreme Court Mediation Centre with an open mind and make efforts to resolve the dispute. Counsel for Yadav and the complainant agreed to the proposal.

The court noted that Yadav had earlier agreed to sell his ancestral property to arrange the payment. It also permitted him to seek the release of

his passport for professional travel abroad, subject to conditions imposed by the trial court.

The latest order follows the Supreme Court's October 7 direction to deposit Rs 1.15 crore immediately and arrange the remaining Rs 85 lakh through a prospective buyer of his ancestral property.

At the time, the Bench expressed displeasure over Yadav's failure to comply with earlier directions and indicated that it was inclined to enhance his three-month imprisonment sentence to two years. The court granted him a final opportunity to arrange the payment.

The Supreme Court is hearing petitions filed by Yadav and his wife challenging a Delhi High Court judgment upholding their conviction in seven cheque dishonour cases under the Negotiable Instruments Act.

On July 10, the High Court upheld Yadav's conviction but reduced his sentence from six months to three months' simple imprisonment in each case. It



also reduced the fine from Rs 1.60 crore to Rs 1.05 crore in each case, directing the sentences to run concurrently.

The High Court had considered payments already made by Yadav during the proceedings.

Before the Supreme Court, the couple argued that a subsequent consent agreement between the parties had not been properly considered by the lower courts. Citing the Supreme Court judgment in M/s Gimpe Private Limited v. Manoj Goel, they contended that the agreement should have brought the original complaint proceedings to an end.

ECI ISSUES SCHEDULE FOR SSR; FINAL LIST TO BE OUT ON JAN 4

IANS
New Delhi, Oct. 15

The Election Commission on Thursday issued the schedule of Special Summary Revision (SSR) of Photo Electoral Rolls, with respect to January 1, 2027, as the qualifying date.

According to the SSR schedule, the final electoral rolls will be published on January 4, 2027.

In a letter written to CEOs of 17 States and Union Territories, including Uttar Pradesh, Punjab, Gujarat and West Bengal, the ECI said, "In States/UTs where SIR is going on or has just been completed (viz. Andhra Pradesh, Arunachal Pradesh, Chandigarh, Dadra and Nagar Haveli, Daman and Diu, Haryana, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, NCT of Delhi, Odisha, Sikkim, Tripura, and Telangana), the schedule for SSR will be announced later."

"Also, for the three States/UTs namely Himachal Pradesh,



Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh, where SIR has not been started so far, the schedule for roll revision will be announced in due course of time, keeping in view their weather conditions," said the official circular.

According to the SSR schedule, the rationalisation and re-arrangement of polling stations will be completed by November 2, followed by publication of integrated draft electoral rolls by November 12.

The claims and objections related to SSR will be disposed of by December 28, and the final electoral rolls will be published on

January 4, it said.

The ECI's letter dated October 15 was addressed to CEOs of A&N Island, Assam, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Goa, Gujarat, Kerala, Lakshadweep, Madhya Pradesh, Manipur, Puducherry, Punjab, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand and West Bengal.

The letter said, "As you are aware, the Commission has issued instructions dated September 29, 2026 to undertake a special drive for the enrolment of left out/young/first time eligible electors."

"Now, to facilitate the enrolment of eligible elec-

tors with reference to the qualifying date of January 1, 2027, along with seeking advance applications for the three subsequent qualifying dates of April 1, July 1 & October 1, 2027, the Commission hereby directs that the existing electoral rolls shall be revised by conducting a Special Summary Revision (SSR)," it said.

The SSR shall be conducted "under Section 21 of the Representation of the People Act, 1950, with reference to January 1, 2027 as the qualifying date, in the above-mentioned States/UTs including the states where elections to the Legislative Assemblies are due early next year".

Clarifying the official stand on the use of Aadhaar number, the ECI said, "The applicant can voluntarily furnish Aadhaar Number in Form-6 and Form-8. However, no application for inclusion of name in electoral roll shall be denied, and no entries in electoral roll shall be deleted for inability of an individual to furnish or intimate Aadhaar Number."

GUJARAT GIRL SELECTED AMONG 20 STUDENTS NATIONWIDE FOR SATELLITE TECHNOLOGY MISSION

IANS
Gandhinagar, Oct. 15

A Class 11 student from Gujarat's Mahisagar district has been selected among 20 students from across India for Mission ShaktiSAT, a space science initiative offering practical training in satellite technology.

Vipa Bariya, from Padhara village in Kadana taluka, is the only female student from Gujarat selected for the mission. She studies in the Science stream at Eklavya Model Residential School in Vejalpur, near Godhra, and aspires to become a pilot or an astronaut.

Organised by Space Kidz India, Mission ShaktiSAT has brought together around 12,000 female students from 108 countries, providing them with opportunities to explore science and space technology.

As part of the programme, Vipa attended a 10-day international workshop at Gautam Buddha University in Greater Noida, Uttar Pradesh, from August 22 to 31. She received hands-on

training in satellite coding, design and assembly alongside participants from other countries.

She was also presented with a special award and trophy at the event.

"I have been interested in space science and satellite technology since childhood. Being selected for Mission ShaktiSAT and getting the opportunity to visit ISRO feels like a dream come true," Vipa said.

During the first phase of the competition, she completed all 21 modules, comprising 550 lessons, within the stipulated time with guidance from her schoolteachers.

Vipa is scheduled to attend a space technology event organised by Viasat in New Delhi from October 26 to 28. She may also get an opportunity to visit the Indian Space Research Organisation's space centre at Sriharikota in Andhra Pradesh after the satellite launch date is finalised.

According to Vipa, the mission involves two satellites, one intended to land on the Moon's surface and the other to orbit the Moon.



Her interest in space science has been encouraged by her father, Gulabbhai Bariya, who teaches Mathematics and Environmental Studies to students of Classes 3 to 5 at a primary school. Her schoolteacher and mentor, Deepika Sharma, has also guided her in developing her skills and pursuing her ambitions.

Vipa's achievement highlights the opportunities available to students from tribal communities through residential schools and specialised science education.

Eklavya Model Residential Schools provide education to tribal students, including those from remote areas. The Gujarat government said

its efforts to improve educational opportunities for tribal children were aligned with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of "Viksit Bharat 2047".

Under Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel and Tribal Development Minister Naresh Patel, the state's Tribal Development Department is implementing schemes to improve educational quality and access to modern learning facilities.

For Vipa, the selection marks an opportunity to pursue her longstanding interest in space technology beyond the classroom, with further participation in space-related activities expected in the coming weeks.

RBI CLARIFIES SCOPE AND CALCULATION OF FOREIGN EXCHANGE RISK RESERVE

Munsif
Mumbai, Oct. 15

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Thursday issued FAQs clarifying the scope and calculation of the 20 per cent Foreign Exchange Risk Reserve (FERR).

FERR applies to derivative contracts exceeding \$2 million equivalent in which users buy foreign currency against the rupee to hedge current-account transactions. Contracts involving the sale of foreign currency against the rupee, and those hedging



capital-account transactions, are excluded. Contracts worth \$2 million or less are exempt, but authorised dealers must guard against attempts to structure transactions to avoid the rules.

The reserve does not apply to hedges of cur-

rent-account outflows arising from capital-account transactions, including interest on External Commercial Borrowings, coupons on resident debt instruments held by non-residents, and dividends payable to non-resident investors. FERR covers only foreign exchange derivatives involving the rupee. Banks' own qualifying hedges of currency risks remain subject to the requirement.

FERR equals 20 per cent of each applicable contract's rupee-equivalent notional amount. For

a \$10 million contract at Rs 95 per dollar, the notional value is Rs 95 crore and the reserve is Rs 19 crore.

The reserve must be deposited in the authorised dealer's current account with the RBI and maintained daily from the working day after the contract is undertaken. It is calculated gross for each qualifying transaction, with detailed records kept for audit.

RBI said the reserve earns no interest and must be maintained until a day after contract termination.

Building collapses in Varanasi due to firecracker explosion, two rescued

IANS
Varanasi, Oct. 15

A suspected firecracker explosion caused a two-storey building to collapse in the Paigambarpur area of Uttar Pradesh's Varanasi on Thursday, injuring two people and leaving a woman feared trapped under the debris, officials said.

The incident occurred under Sarnath police station limits. Preliminary information suggests an illegal firecracker manufacturing unit was op-

erating inside the house, though the cause has not been confirmed.

The injured were taken to hospital, while rescue teams continued efforts to locate the woman.

DCP Rajesh Pandey told IANS police received information about the collapse at around 5 p.m. Officers found firecrackers scattered around the site, prompting suspicion that an explosion had brought the building down.

Pandey said local residents reported that a woman was trapped un-

der the debris and a rescue operation was underway.

Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath directed officials to reach the site, expedite relief operations and ensure medical treatment for the injured, NDTV reported. Officials were also told to contact their families and provide assistance.

The incident follows an August explosion at an illegal firecracker manufacturing and storage facility in Chilla Shahbazi village, Kaushambi district. Eleven people were

killed and five others seriously injured.

After that blast, the state announced a reward of Rs 25,000 each for three absconding suspects: Shakeel, Kahaksha Bano and Adil, an official statement said. Police had earlier arrested the main accused, Naushad, following an encounter in the Charwa police station area.

Authorities have yet to confirm the cause of Thursday's explosion or announce the rescue operation's outcome.

The woman's condition was not yet known.



At a Glance

Four Punjabis Rescued in Ethiopia

IAN S
Addis Ababa., Oct. 15

Four Punjab nationals kidnapped in Ethiopia on September 25 were rescued on October 1, the Indian Embassy said Thursday.

The Embassy stayed in contact with local authorities. Consular officers met the four on October 14 and provided Indian food and basic amenities. Arrangements are under way for their return to India.

Separately, External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar met Ethiopian Foreign Minister Gedion Timothewos on October 9. They discussed education, culture, trade, investment and digitalisation, global affairs and India's partnership with the African Union on X.



U.S. Bill Seeks \$140,000 H-1B Wage Floor

IAN S
Washington, Oct. 15

A Republican lawmaker introduced a bill to raise the salary threshold allowing H-1B-dependent employers to bypass worker protections, potentially affecting Indian IT firms.

Rep. Glenn Grothman introduced H.R. 10799 on October 13. It would replace the \$60,000 threshold, unchanged since 1998, with twice the national wage index, estimated at nearly \$140,000. It mirrors a Senate bill introduced by Jon Husted on September 30.

Current law requires dependent employers to try hiring Americans unless workers earn \$60,000 or hold a master's degree. House is unlikely to act before November 3. Rep. Beth Van Duyne proposed \$250,000 penalties for wilfully displacing American workers.

TRUMP URGES VOTERS TO 'PRETEND I'M RUNNING' AHEAD OF US MIDTERMS

IAN S
Washington, Oct. 15

US President Donald Trump has urged voters to turn out in large numbers for the November 3 congressional midterm elections, asking them to "pretend" he is on the ballot to prevent Democrats from reversing his administration's policies.

Speaking at an election rally in Bullhead City, Arizona, and later to reporters before departing for Montana, Trump said he planned to hold around 32 or 33 campaign rallies despite not being a candidate himself.

"So essentially I'm saying, 'Please pretend I'm running.' And in a true sense, I am running because I don't want them tearing down what we've built," he told reporters.

Trump said he had already completed approximately eight rallies and expected to campaign extensively in the run-up to the elections. He described the response from Republican supporters as extraordinary.

The President claimed Republican voter turnout fell by 49 per cent when he was not personally contesting an election, but did not provide evidence



to support the figure.

"When I don't run, which, you know, in theory I'm not running, but I feel that I'm running. When I don't run, we get 49 per cent less turnout," he said.

At the Arizona rally, Trump made a similar appeal while campaigning for Republican gubernatorial candidate Andy Biggs. "So I'm here to say, please pretend I'm on the ballot," he told supporters.

Trump portrayed the midterm elections as a referendum on his administration's economic, immigration and social policies. He warned that Democratic control of Congress could threaten Republican-backed tax

measures, border enforcement policies and other priorities.

He also conditionally promised to distribute \$5,000 to adult American citizens if Republicans retained control of both chambers of Congress. Trump said the proposed payments would be funded by tariff revenue and economic growth and would have to be spent within the United States. However, he did not explain how the payments would be authorised or administered.

Trump said his campaign schedule included Republican strongholds and states where congressional contests could influence control of Washington. He cited Montana, Michigan, Ohio

and Texas among the states he planned to visit.

Asked why he was travelling to Montana, which he described as overwhelmingly supportive of him, Trump said he wanted to thank voters and help Republican candidates win.

"Montana, because we wanna make sure we win," he said.

Trump expressed confidence that his campaign appearances would generate enthusiasm and help Republican candidates secure victories.

The November 3 midterm elections will determine control of the US House of Representatives and a substantial portion of the Senate. Although Trump is not on the ballot, the results will shape his ability to advance legislation and influence congressional scrutiny during the remaining two years of his term.

Midterm elections have often proved challenging for the party occupying the White House. Losing either chamber could complicate Trump's legislative agenda, strengthen congressional oversight and reshape the political balance in Washington ahead of the next presidential election.

US PLANS MILLIONS OF DRONES FOR FUTURE WARS



IAN S
Washington, Oct. 15

The United States plans to deploy hundreds of thousands of one-way attack drones this year and expand their numbers into the millions in coming years, Secretary of War Pete Hegseth said, announcing a command dedicated to autonomous warfare.

Speaking at the Association of the US Army's annual meeting in Washington, Hegseth said the Pentagon would accelerate unmanned systems production using artificial intelligence, robotics and commercial manufacturing.

The proposed Autonomous Warfare Command, or AutoWarCom, would co-ordinate the development, acquisition, training and

use of autonomous weapons across the armed services.

"Ultimately we will be dealing with hundreds of thousands of one-way attack systems this year and into the millions in years to come," Hegseth said.

The Pentagon is seeking around \$50 billion in additional funding for autonomous and robotic systems, separate from its fiscal 2027 budget request, which includes \$53.6 billion for the broader Drone Dominance initiative. Both proposals remain subject to congressional approval.

Hegseth said the military needed to overcome lengthy procurement procedures that had slowed the adoption of inexpensive unmanned systems. The proposed command would be led by a four-

star officer and coordinate efforts across the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps and Space Force.

The Pentagon announced plans for AutoWarCom on September 30, with Project Agincourt serving as an interim initiative. The command is expected to be established by October 1, 2027, subject to approvals.

The Pentagon also plans autonomous systems for intelligence, surveillance, strikes and logistics. Hegseth said personnel should be able to test technologies, provide feedback and adapt equipment without lengthy delays.

Drones are increasingly important in modern conflicts. Funding and deployment targets will depend on Congress and the Pentagon in future years.

South Korea concerned over USFK chief's OPCON remarks: Minister

IAN S
Seoul, Oct. 15

South Korean Defence Minister Kang Shin-chul said Thursday that Seoul had conveyed concerns to the United States over remarks by the chief of US Forces Korea (USFK) that conditions for transferring wartime operational control (OPCON) had changed.

Kang spoke during a parliamentary audit of military courts, a day after USFK Commander Gen. Xavier Brunson said conditions for transferring wartime OPCON from the United States to South Korea had changed amid evolving security circumstances.

"We have already conveyed our position on that matter," Kang said after Rep. Son Sol of the progressive Jinbo Party asked whether Seoul should strongly protest Brunson's comments, Yonhap News Agency reported.

"Though (Brunson's) comments were made from a military perspective, we are concerned about their broader im-



plications and are making our position clear," he added.

Brunson said the allies had "new standards which we have to uphold" for the transfer, citing North Korea's recent missile launches. On Monday, Pyongyang test-fired tactical ballistic missiles towards the East Sea. North Korean state media described the launches as a success in upgrading a key component of the country's weapons systems.

Asked whether South Korea agreed that the conditions had changed, Kang said the requirements for transferring OPCON remained unchanged. However, assessments of how fully

those requirements had been met could vary depending on one's perspective.

"The transfer of OPCON takes place with mutual trust ensured and within the framework of the South Korea-U.S. alliance," Kang said, adding that decisions on the transfer would not be based on political considerations.

Seoul now aims to regain wartime OPCON from Washington before President Lee Jae Myung's five-year term ends in 2030. Washington has expressed reservations about accelerating the transition for political reasons.

Kang said there would be "no problem at all" if

the transfer took place now, as it would create "a stronger command structure" than the current arrangement.

After the transfer, a South Korean commander familiar with the country would lead the combined forces, while the US military would provide support, Kang said.

Asked about a possible postponement of the annual South Korea-U.S. Security Consultative Meeting (SCM), which brings together the two countries' defence chiefs, Kang said: "I am not the only one who holds the SCM."

His response followed reports that the meeting, usually held in late October or early November, could be postponed until December. The possible delay may reflect the November 3 U.S. midterm elections and domestic considerations in Washington, as well as differences between Seoul and Washington over the OPCON transfer.

SHIP CATCHES FIRE IN BLACK SEA NEAR ROMANIA, EIGHT PEOPLE MISSING

IAN S
Sofia, Oct. 15

A vessel sailing under the flag of San Marino caught fire in the Black Sea near Romania on Thursday morning, with eight of the 12 crew members missing, Romanian media reported.

The accident occurred some 13 nautical miles southeast of Sulina, the Romanian Naval Authority announced. Twelve people were on board the vessel. Four were safe, while eight others were still missing.

A search-and-rescue operation was underway.

This is the latest incident involving ships in the Black Sea, which has recently seen drone attacks. Comoros-flagged chemical and oil tanker Yara J, anchored in Romania's territorial waters, was reportedly struck by a drone and caught fire on Wednesday, Xinhua News Agency reported.

Earlier, Secretary-General Antonio Guterres condemned the attacks on civilian shipping, the



most recent of which were in the Black Sea on Tuesday, his Spokesman Stephane Dujarric said.

"It's very worrisome because these attacks on ships carrying grain, food, and other products destined for the global market have multiplied and have expanded recently", he told reporters at his briefing.

"Also, it has a terrible knock-on effect on the price of commodities worldwide", he said.

According to Bulgarian officials, two cargo ships were attacked by drones off its coast and one of them sank.

Eleven sailors were missing, they said, but did not give their nationalities.

Dujarric said, "We all

owe a debt of gratitude for all of these seafarers who continue to operate in extremely dangerous circumstances, just so that all the goods that we rely on for our daily lives keep moving".

He noted the toll on seafarers also in the Strait of Hormuz and the Red Sea, which are fallout of the Iran conflict.

According to Bulgarian officials, the 11 missing seafarers were from the Guinea-Bissau-flagged cargo ship HS Dignity that sank off its coast on Tuesday, and five were rescued.

The Maltese-flagged Chelsea 3 was also hit by drones and 15 members of its crew from Ukraine and Ukraine were rescued, they said.

Militant threat mounts in Bangladesh with emergence of new extremist outfit

IAN S
Dhaka, Oct. 15

Bangladesh faces renewed concerns over militancy following reports of a new extremist group, Itiihadul Ummah, whose possible foreign links are under investigation, the Daily Sun reported.

Home Minister Salahuddin Ahmed said phone analysis and questioning of people detained at Tejgaon College mosque revealed plans to form the group, which allegedly aimed to establish



a caliphate.

Police detained 23 people at the Dhaka mosque on suspicion of links to banned militant organisations. The Anti-Terrorism Unit and Counter Terrorism and Transnational Crime unit

questioned them, the report said.

The arrests heightened concern amid reports of arson and crude-bomb explosions in the capital. On September 19, three buses were set on fire in Mirpur and Madhya Badda, while a pickup van was torched in South Keraniganj. Further blasts were reported the next day.

The report said a Bangladesh Air Force warrant officer who went missing from a base in Chattogram was later traced to a hideout of the

banned Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan.

In August, the UN Security Council warned that Al-Qaida in the Indian Subcontinent was seeking to establish terrorist cells in Bangladesh. The warning appeared in the 38th report of the UN Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team, submitted to the committee overseeing Islamic State, Al-Qaida and associated groups. The developments have renewed scrutiny of national security.

PAKISTAN RECORDS 237,216 CRIMES AGAINST WOMEN, GIRLS IN FIVE YEARS

IAN S
Islamabad, Oct. 15



Pakistan recorded 237,216 crimes against women and girls between

2021 and 2025, according to a report by the Peace and Justice Network (PJN) Pakistan, as cited by local media.

The National Gender-Based Violence (GBV) Crime Report 2021-2025, prepared under its National Data for Justice Development initiative, highlights regional disparities in reported cases.

Punjab accounted for 195,787 cases, or 82.5 per cent of the national total, despite having 51.5 per cent of Pakistan's

population. The province recorded more than 90 per cent of nationally registered gang rape, custodial sexual violence and incest cases.

Sindh reported 25,107 cases, with kidnapping and abduction accounting for 19,289. Khyber Pakhtunkhwa recorded 10,210 cases. Of 2,334 domestic violence cases reported to police there, 1,197 resulted in murder, the report said.

Balochistan recorded 3,108 cases, followed by Pakistan-occupied

Kashmir with 1,572 and Pakistan-occupied Gilgit-Baltistan with 161. The report warned that low figures could reflect barriers to reporting rather than lower levels of violence.

Voice of Pakistan Minority expressed concern over the figures, citing failures in governance, policing and justice delivery. It said delayed investigations and fear of approaching police continued to undermine women's safety and equal citizenship.

Dr APJ Abdul Kalam: A Life That Taught India to Dream Beyond Limits

From a humble childhood in Rameswaram to the highest constitutional office in the country, the life of India's 'Missile Man' remains an enduring lesson in knowledge, perseverance, humility and national service.

By Arshiya Rafiq Sheikh, Akola

tions as profoundly as Dr Avul Pakir Jainulabdeen Abdul Kalam. A renowned aerospace scientist, educationist, author and the 11th President of India, he was admired for his scientific achievements, simplicity and dedication to the nation. Fondly remembered as the ‘Missile Man of India’ and the ‘People’s President’, Dr Kalam showed that determination, knowledge and hard work can transform even the humblest beginnings into an extraordinary journey.

Born on October 15, 1931, in Rameswaram, Tamil Nadu, Kalam grew up in a modest family. His father, Jainulabdeen, was a principled man, while his mother, Ashiamma, was known for her kindness and generosity. Facing financial difficulties during childhood, he helped support his family by distributing newspapers. However, these challenges never weakened his determination to learn and succeed. His early interest in mathematics, science and aircraft eventually shaped his future.

Education: The Foundation of Success

Kalam studied physics at St Joseph’s College in Tiruchirappalli before pursuing aerospace engineering at the Madras Institute of Technology. His education laid the foundation for a distinguished career in India’s scientific and technological institutions.

His journey highlights the importance of perseverance and access to quality education. He demonstrated that talent can emerge from any background and that dedication, discipline and the willingness to learn can open doors to remarkable opportunities.

Transforming India’s Space and Missile Programmes One of Dr Kalam’s major contributions was to India’s space programme. At the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO), he served as project director of the Satellite Launch Vehicle-III (SLV-III), India’s first indigenous satellite launch vehicle. In 1980, the vehicle successfully placed the Rohini satellite into orbit, marking a significant milestone in India’s space journey.

Kalam also played a leading role in strengthening India’s indigenous defence capabilities through the Defence

Research and Development Organisation (DRDO). He was closely associated with the Integrated Guided Missile Development Programme, which advanced the development of missile systems such as Agni, Prithvi, Akash, Nag and Trishul. These contributions earned him the title of the ‘Missile Man of India’.

He also played an important role in the scientific teams associated with India’s Pokhran-II nuclear tests in May 1998. His work reflected a broader vision of making India technologically self-reliant and strengthening its scientific institutions.

Kalam’s achievements were not the work of an individual alone. They represented the collective efforts of scientists, engineers and researchers, with his leadership helping inspire teams to pursue challenging national goals.

The People’s President

On July 25, 2002, Dr Kalam became the 11th President of India, serving until July 25, 2007. Despite occupying the country’s highest constitutional office, he remained approachable, humble and deeply connected to ordinary citizens.

He particularly enjoyed interacting with students and young people, encouraging them to pursue knowledge, ask questions and contribute to the nation’s development. His simple lifestyle and commitment to public service earned him widespread affection as the ‘People’s President’.

Kalam believed that education, scientific thinking, ethical leadership and responsible citizenship were essential for national progress. He encouraged young Indians to look beyond personal success and use their knowledge and abilities for the benefit of society.

His life demonstrated that true leadership is not defined merely by authority or position, but by humility, integrity and the ability to inspire others.

A Vision of a Developed India

One of Kalam’s most enduring aspirations was to see India emerge as a developed nation through education, innovation, scientific research and inclusive growth. He believed that the country’s greatest strength lay in its people, particularly its young population.

For him, development meant more than economic

progress. It included quality education, better health-care, rural advancement, technological innovation and opportunities for people from all sections of society.

His vision remains relevant today, when rapid technological change and global competition demand creativity, knowledge and adaptability. Kalam encouraged young people to identify challenges, develop solutions and transform ideas into practical achievements.

He also emphasised that ambition must be accompanied by integrity, discipline and compassion. In his view, personal achievement becomes truly meaningful when it contributes to the welfare of society and the progress of the nation.

The Author Who Inspired Millions

Apart from his scientific and public contributions, Dr Kalam was a celebrated author whose writings continue to motivate readers.

His autobiography, Wings of Fire, describes his early life, education and professional journey. Ignited Minds highlights the potential of India’s youth, while India 2020, co-authored with Y. S. Rajan, presents a vision for the country’s development.

His other notable books include My Journey: Transforming Dreams into Actions and Turning Points: A Journey Through Challenges. Through his writings, Kalam encouraged readers to dream boldly, work consistently and learn from failures.

His simple language and optimistic outlook made his ideas accessible to students, teachers and professionals. His books continue to reinforce the importance of education, teamwork, perseverance and responsible citizenship.

Honours and Recognition

In recognition of his contributions to science, technology and public life, Dr Kalam received several prestigious honours. He was awarded the Padma Bhushan in 1981, the Padma Vibhushan in 1990 and the Bharat Ratna in 1997, India’s highest civilian honour.

He also received honorary degrees from numerous institutions in India and abroad. Yet, his greatest achievement was arguably the lasting influence he had on millions of people who came to regard education, hard work and scientific inquiry as pathways to a better



future.

Lessons for the Young Generation

Dr Kalam’s life offers valuable lessons for every generation. He believed in dreaming big, working hard and treating failure as an opportunity to learn. He encouraged young people to pursue education, develop their abilities and remain committed to their goals despite difficulties.

He also emphasised the importance of honesty, discipline, respect and service to humanity. His message crossed religious, linguistic and social boundaries, reminding people that shared aspirations and mutual respect can unite a diverse nation.

At a time when young people face academic pressure, employment challenges and rapid technological change, his example remains relevant. He urged them to remain curious, develop useful skills and approach the future with confidence and responsibility.

A Legacy That Lives On

Even after completing his presidential term, Dr Kalam continued to teach and interact with students. On July 27, 2015, while delivering a lecture at the Indian Institute of Management Shillong, he collapsed after suffering a medical emergency and was taken to hospital, where he was declared dead at the age of 83.

His passing was a profound loss for the country. India lost a distinguished scientist, a dedicated teacher and a respected former President. However, his ideas, books and contributions continue to inspire people across generations. Dr APJ Abdul Kalam’s life proves that humble beginnings need not limit extraordinary achievements. From distributing newspapers as a schoolboy to becoming the President of India, his journey stands as a testament to the transformative power of education, determination and service.

His enduring legacy lies not only in India’s scientific achievements but also in the dreams he inspired in millions of young minds. He taught the nation that progress begins with an aspiration and becomes possible through sustained effort, knowledge and integrity.

For India’s youth, Dr Kalam remains a symbol of hope and possibility—a reminder to dream with courage, learn with curiosity, work with dedication and use success for the greater good of society.

Rupee to remain in appreciating mode despite global volatility



The Indian rupee is likely to remain in an appreciating territory even as global markets remain engulfed in turbulence, while the government and the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) may need to consider further policy steps to shore up resilience, a report said on Thursday.

The report from SBI Research forecasted inflation to peak at around 6.8 per cent in November 2026. It predicted that India’s 10-year yield will likely touch 7.6 per cent which will aid in price discovery in the future as well. “The USD/INR forward implied yield opened at 4.60 per cent, around 42 bps higher than yesterday’s close,” the report noted.

Higher hedging costs make dollar funding more expensive and could encourage corporates to shift towards INR-denominated borrowing, supporting demand for the rupee, it added.

“The RBI has done a stupendous job and now the government must step up in reducing structural frictions on the taxation front, European Central Bank policy, ODI and AI policy,” the report noted.

The RBI could adopt a calibrated tightening approach through an asymmetric corridor adjustment, raising the MSF rate by 50 bps from 5.75 per cent to 6.25 per cent in the interim. This could be followed by a 25 bps

repo rate hike in December, taking the repo rate to 5.75 per cent and the MSF rate to 6.50 per cent, it forecasted. Global financial markets are likely to remain volatile amid persistent geopolitical uncertainties, elevated US yields and evolving inflation dynamics.

The RBI has taken salutary steps to stabilise market conditions and can act up to a point, but further measures by the government on the taxation front, particularly concerning G-secs and ECBs clarity on AI policy, could help deepen domestic borrowing avenues and support capital flows.

The report also highlighted the importance of improving domestic financial markets to reduce dependence on external funding sources. Greater clarity on taxation rules for government securities (G-secs) and external commercial borrowings (ECBs) could help attract investments and expand financing options for Indian companies. It further noted that policy clarity on overseas direct investment (ODI) and artificial intelligence (AI), along with measures to address structural challenges, would strengthen investor confidence. Such steps, combined with the RBI’s efforts to maintain stability, could help India navigate global financial uncertainty and reinforce the rupee’s resilience.

India’s small home appliances market to hit Rs 20,000 crore by FY30



India’s small home appliances market is projected to hit Rs 20,000 crore by FY30, up from Rs 13,800 crore in FY25 -- growing at about 8 per cent annually -- with emerging categories leading the expansion, a report showed on Thursday.

According to a report by Redseer Strategy Consultants, emerging categories are expected to grow at 18 per cent, expanding from Rs 1,850 crore to Rs 4,200 crore during the period.

Air fryers are expected to be the fastest-growing category with a projected CAGR of 22.5 per cent between FY25 and FY30, followed by garment steamers at 19.6 per cent, air purifiers at 15.3 per cent and coffee makers at 14.1 per cent, it said.

However, penetration of emerging categories remains low at 0.1-2.4 per cent of Indian households despite rapid growth compared with 33 per cent for mixer grinders and 71 per cent for gas stoves.

Online marketplaces are driving adoption, accounting for 68 per cent of air fryer sales and 50 per cent of air purifier sales in FY25.

Overall online penetration in small appliances is expected to increase to 37 per cent by FY30 from 31 per cent in FY25, the report said.

Moreover, air fryers recorded 103 per cent year-on-year GMV growth on a leading marketplace in August 2026, followed by flat grills at 94 per cent and coffee and espresso appliances at 82 per cent.

However, the top three brands already control about 70 per cent of air fryer and flat grill sales.

New-age brands account for 54 per cent of online OTG sales and 48 per cent of food processor sales but hold only 14 per cent of air fryer sales.

The report further showed that specialty electrics and contact grills are relatively open opportunities with around 70 per cent growth and top-three brand concentration below 35 per cent.

It noted that expansion beyond a single successful product is critical for long-term growth.

India’s ethanol supplies reach 987 crore litres by Sep end



India’s ethanol blending programme continues its strong momentum with cumulative ethanol receipts reaching 987 crore litres by the end of September 2026, driven heavily by grain-based feedstocks, according to the latest data released by the All India Distillers’ Association (AIDA) on Thursday.

Grain-based feedstocks accounted for 705 crore litres, representing 71.4 per cent of cumulative ethanol receipts under Ethanol Supply Year (ESY) 2025-26. Total receipts by oil marketing companies stand at 987 crore litres against a total contracted allocation of 1,197 crore litres, achieving an overall supply fulfillment rate of 82.5 per cent, according to the data.

The September figures demonstrate the rapid-

ly strengthening role of grain-based feedstocks in providing steady, scalable fuel supplies. Maize continues to be the single largest feedstock contributor, accounting for 413 crore litres (over 41 per cent of total receipts), followed by surplus FCI rice at 222 crore litres and damaged foodgrains at 70 crore litres, according to an AIDA statement.

The strong reliance on multiple grain streams underscores the domestic ethanol industry’s expanding processing capacity and its ability to absorb diverse agricultural feedstocks without compromising food security, the statement said.

Sugar-based feedstocks, including sugarcane juice and heavy molasses, supplied 282 crore litres out of a total allocation of 289 crore litres, achieving an

outstanding 97.6 per cent fulfillment rate. The seamless performance across both “B Heavy and C Heavy Molasses” highlights the operational flexibility and resilience of sugar mills in meeting contracted supplies.

AIDA deputy director general Bharati Balaji said, “The September-end data clearly illustrates the maturing landscape of India’s ethanol ecosystem. Crossing the 980-crore litre mark is a major milestone, with grain-based sources — led by maize at 413 crore litres — contributing over 71 per cent of total supplies. Simultaneously, sugar-based feedstocks have shown remarkable delivery efficiency, fulfilling nearly 98 per cent of their allocated quantities”.

“Building a robust, multi-feedstock supply network is vital for long-term energy security. As production and supply infrastructure scale up, maintaining policy continuity and expanding utilization avenues — such as Flex-Fuel Vehicles (FFVs), Sustainable Aviation Fuel (SAF), and Compressed Bio-Gas (CBG) — will be essential to sustain investment momentum and empower agricultural value chains across India,” Balaji added.



Vice-captaincy a big responsibility, India aims to play fearless cricket in

Raipur, Oct. 15:

India's newly appointed T20I vice-captain Shafali Verma said her role involves more than just a title, stressing that she would focus on supporting captain Smriti Mandhana and ensuring every player remains confident and comfortable.

India will begin its preparations for the inaugural six-team T20 Champions Trophy, scheduled to be held in Mumbai and Vadodara in February 2027, with a T20I series against Zimbabwe starting on Friday.

Shafali said India aims to adopt a fearless yet smart approach to T20 cricket. She also credited former captain Harmanpreet Kaur for her contribution to the growth of women's cricket, adding that the team had held several meetings to prepare for the upcoming challenges.



The opener attributed her recent resurgence to the hard work she put in after being dropped from the ODI side in 2025. Following Pratika Rawal's injury, Shafali returned to the ODI World Cup squad and delivered a Player of the Match performance in the final against South Africa.

She said consistency, fitness and mental strength were the key areas she worked on during her

time away from the team. Shafali also expressed confidence in her off-spin bowling, saying she had been preparing for an international role with the ball since playing for Haryana.

With Jemimah Rodrigues recovering from injury, Shafali backed the team's middle-order options, including young batter Niki Prasad, and said India would work on improving areas where it had made mistakes in the past.

'Australia's Pace Trio Is Extremely Dangerous in Tests,' Says Faf du Plessis

Raipur, Oct. 15:

Former South Africa captain Faf du Plessis has praised Australia's formidable pace attack, saying batters face a tough challenge against Mitchell Starc, Pat Cummins and Josh Hazlewood in Test cricket.

His remarks came after Australia defeated South Africa by 214 runs in the Durban Test, handing the hosts their first home Test defeat in two years and taking a 1-0 lead in the three-match series.

Speaking to ESPNcricinfo, du Plessis highlighted the different strengths of the Australian pace trio. He said Starc's left-arm pace and ability to swing the new ball, along with his reverse swing with the older ball, make him a major threat. Cummins,



meanwhile, combines accuracy with aggressive short-pitched bowling, while Hazlewood uses his height to generate extra bounce and maintains exceptional line and length. Du Plessis said Australia's fast bowlers consistently test batters and can be difficult to handle in Test cricket. He added that disciplined batting and sound technique are essential to counter their attack.

Hazlewood played a decisive role in the Durban

victory, recording career-best match figures after taking six wickets in South Africa's fourth innings. The defeat also saw South Africa slip from second to third in the World Test Championship standings, while New Zealand moved up to second.

Australia, currently at the top of the standings, will look to strengthen their advantage in the second Test, scheduled to begin on October 18 at St George's Park in Gqeberha.

Natarajan returns to Sunrisers; Zeeshan Ansari moves to DC ahead of IPL 2027

New Delhi, Oct. 15:

Indian left-arm pacer T. Natarajan will return to Sunrisers Hyderabad (SRH), while leg-spinner Zeeshan Ansari will move to Delhi Capitals (DC) following a player trade ahead of the IPL 2027 season.

Natarajan, who represented Sunrisers Hyderabad from 2020 to 2024, will rejoin the franchise at a revised fee of Rs 5 crore. Delhi Capitals had acquired the Tamil Nadu pacer for Rs 10.75 crore at the IPL 2025 mega auction.

The 35-year-old featured in two matches for Delhi in the 2025 season before taking five wickets in 10 appearances in 2026. His most successful IPL campaign came in 2024, when he claimed 19 wickets to finish as SRH's leading wicket-taker and help the team reach the



final.

Across his IPL career, Natarajan has played 73 matches and taken 72 wickets. Known for his accurate yorkers and death-over bowling, he is expected to strengthen Hyderabad's pace attack led by captain Pat Cummins.

Meanwhile, Ansari will join Delhi Capitals at his existing fee of Rs 40 lakh. The leg-spinner represented SRH in 10

matches during IPL 2025 but did not feature in the team's playing line-up in the 2026 edition.

Ansari made an impressive IPL debut against Delhi Capitals, taking three wickets in the match.

He has claimed six wickets in 10 IPL appearances and is expected to add depth to Delhi's spin department, which includes Kuldeep Yadav and Axar Patel.

Shai Hope's Ton Powers West Indies to 24-Run Win Over India in Hyderabad T20

Hyderabad, Oct. 15:

Captain Shai Hope struck a magnificent unbeaten century and pacer Keemo Paul claimed five wickets as West Indies defeated India by 24 runs in the fourth T20 International at the Uppal Stadium on Wednesday, levelling the five-match series 2-2.

After being asked to bat first, West Indies piled up a formidable 247 for three in 20 overs, powered by Hope's unbeaten 102 off just 50 balls, including four fours and nine sixes. Sherfane Rutherford provided an explosive finish with an unbeaten 49 off 26 deliveries, hitting four fours and three sixes.

India's bowlers struggled to contain the Caribbean batters on a batting-friendly pitch. Mayank Yadav conceded



52 runs without taking a wicket, while Arshdeep Singh gave away 52 runs and claimed one wicket.

Chasing a daunting target of 248, India were bowled out for 223 in 19.3 overs despite an aggressive batting display from Sanju Samson, Tilak Varma and Nitish Reddy. Samson blazed his way to

56 off 23 balls, striking six fours and four sixes, to give India a flying start.

Tilak Varma contributed 43 off 25 balls, while Nitish Reddy scored a quickfire 41 off 20 deliveries, including four sixes. The pair briefly revived India's hopes with an attacking partnership of 70 runs for the sixth

wicket. However, Tilak's dismissal at a crucial stage shifted the momentum back in West Indies' favour.

Keemo Paul proved decisive with the ball, finishing with figures of five for 41. Gudakesh Motie supported him with two wickets for just 13 runs, as West Indies struck

back in the closing overs to seal the victory. Hope was named Player of the Match for his match-winning century.

Hope's innings also marked his third T20 International century, taking him past Chris Gayle and Evin Lewis, who have two centuries each, to become the West Indies batter with the most hundreds in the format.

The match drew a packed crowd of 35,817 spectators to the Uppal Stadium, which hosted an international fixture after a gap of nearly two years. Despite India's defeat, fans were treated to an entertaining display of power-hitting from both sides.

The series-deciding fifth and final T20 International is scheduled to be played in Bengaluru on Saturday.

Nissanka out of Sri Lanka's ODI tri-series in Pakistan

New Delhi, Oct. 15:

Sri Lanka have suffered a setback ahead of the ODI tri-series in Pakistan, with opener Pathum Nissanka ruled out due to a hamstring injury. The tournament, featuring England, is scheduled to begin in Rawalpindi on Sunday.

According to reports, Nissanka is yet to receive medical clearance, as his recovery has not progressed sufficiently for him to return to competitive cricket. Lahiru Udara has been named as his replacement.

Nissanka had earlier missed Sri Lanka's T20I matches against Pakistan and was included in the ODI squad subject to fitness. He has also been named in the squad for the upcoming two-Test series against Pakistan, but his participation will depend on fitness clearance.

The opener has endured an injury-hit year, undergoing surgery in the United Kingdom for a recurring wrist problem



before returning for Sri Lanka's white-ball tour of England. He subsequently sustained a hamstring injury during the ODI series.

Sri Lanka have also left out former captain Charith Asalanka following a disappointing run of scores against England. Avishka Fernando and all-rounder Sahan Arachchige have been recalled, replacing Asalanka and injured all-rounder Wanindu Hasaranga.

Kusal Mendis will lead the Sri Lankan side in the tri-series as the team prepares for the upcoming international assignments.

Carlos Alcaraz accepts wildcard for Vienna Open after Six Kings Slam postponement

New Delhi, Oct. 15:

Spanish tennis sensation Carlos Alcaraz will be returning to the Erste Bank Open in Vienna later this month after accepting a wildcard for the ATP 500 event.

The World No.3 will return to Vienna for the first time since 2021, which was also his debut in the indoor event. The Spaniard didn't want to enter the ATP 250 event and hence chose to go with Vienna, where he reached the semifinal and defeated Andy Murray before losing to eventual winner Alexander Zverev.

Alcaraz's return to the Austrian capital comes after the Six Kings Slam was postponed in Saudi Arabia due to the attacks on the host city Riyadh. The Vienna organ-

isers took the opportunity to contact Alcaraz's management and got the seven-time champion on board.

"When indications emerged on Wednesday that the Six Kings Slam, originally scheduled to take place in Saudi Arabia next week, would be postponed until the end of December, Tournament Director Hervig Straka reacted immediately and contacted Carlos Alcaraz's management," Vienna organisers said.

Meanwhile, tournament director Straka stated that Alcaraz accepted the wildcard without hesitation. "Everything happened very quickly after that, and Carlos agreed to come to Vienna without much hesitation. I am delighted that we will be

Mandhana captaincy era set to begin as India take on Zimbabwe

Raipur, Oct. 15:

Smriti Mandhana will begin her tenure as India's full-time T20I captain when the women's team takes on Zimbabwe in the opening match of their three-game series at Raipur's Shaheed Veer Narayan Singh International Stadium on Friday.

The match will mark Zimbabwe's first-ever bilateral series against India and the first women's international fixture at the Raipur venue. India enter the series on the back of winning the Asia Cup and Asian Games gold medal, while Zimbabwe are searching for their first T20I victory of the year.

Mandhana, who succeeds Harmanpreet Kaur after serving as vice-captain for nearly a decade, brings considerable leadership experience, having captained India in 18 T20Is and guided Royal Challengers Bengaluru to two Women's Premier League titles. She has also enjoyed a prolific



run with the bat, recording two centuries and 15 half-centuries in T20Is over the past three years.

India's main selection concern is the number-three position, with Jemimah Rodrigues recovering from a right hamstring injury. G Kamalini, Anushka Sharma and Niki Prasad are among the options for the role. Vice-captain Shafali Verma and left-arm spinner N Sree Charani will also be expected to continue their recent strong performances.

Zimbabwe, led by Josephine Nkomo, will look to opener Kelis Ndhlovu, their only batter

to score a T20I half-century this year, to provide stability. The visitors will draw confidence from their maiden ODI victory over the West Indies at home in September.

The three-match T20I series will be followed by a three-match ODI series in Vadodara from October 23 to 28.

Match details: India vs Zimbabwe, 1st T20I; October 16, 2026, at 7 pm IST; Shaheed Veer Narayan Singh International Cricket Stadium, Raipur. The match will be televised on Star Sports Network and streamed live on JioHotstar.

Vishwajit More Wins Silver at U-23 Worlds

Las Vegas, Oct. 15:

Indian wrestler Vishwajit More scripted history by becoming the first Indian to reach the Greco-Roman final at the Under-23 World Wrestling Championships in Las Vegas, clinching the silver medal in the men's 55kg category.

More narrowly missed out on the gold medal after suffering a thrilling 12-13 defeat against Georgia's Koba Karumidze in the final on Thursday.

The Indian wrestler put up a determined fight and kept the contest closely balanced, but ultimately fell short by just one point.

Despite the narrow defeat, More's silver-medal finish marks a significant milestone for Indian wrestling, particularly in the



Greco-Roman discipline. His achievement is expected to provide encouragement to Indian wrestlers competing at the international level.

Meanwhile, India's Chetan, competing in the 63kg category, and Karan Kamboj in the 87kg category failed to advance to the medal bouts.

In the women's section, Indian wrestlers Komal

and Diksha Malik will have an opportunity to add to India's medal tally as they prepare to compete in the bronze-medal bouts in the 68kg category.

More's performance has brought Indian Greco-Roman wrestling into the spotlight, with his historic silver medal highlighting the country's growing presence in international wrestling competitions.

KTR alleges Rs 3,000 crore coal import scam

BRS leader accuses Revanth government of weakening Singareni, demands independent probe

IANS News
Hyderabad, Oct 15

BRS Working President K.T. Rama Rao on Thursday accused Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy of creating a coal and power crisis to facilitate an alleged ₹3,000 crore scam through proposed foreign coal imports.

In an open letter to Revanth Reddy, Deputy Chief Minister Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka and Union Coal Minister G. Kishan Reddy, KTR alleged that the government was weakening Singareni Collieries Company Limited while planning expensive imports through arrangements involving Bhotra Logistics.

He alleged that the proposed deal could involve commissions



of ₹1,500 per tonne and demanded disclosure of tender documents, pricing, draft agreements and the selection process. He called for an independent probe before the proposed imports proceeded.

Questioning Singareni's production decline from 70.02 million tonnes in 2023-24 to around 58 million tonnes in 2025-26,

KTR sought an explanation for the failure to strengthen domestic supplies. He also demanded details of nearly ₹60,000 crore in outstanding dues reportedly owed to the company.

Referring to the Yadadri Thermal Power Station's annual allocation of 14 million tonnes of G9-grade coal from Singareni, KTR questioned the need for foreign imports and sought transparency in coal and ash-handling contracts.

He demanded a white paper on coal imports, disclosure of Bhotra Logistics-related dealings and audited details of Singareni's dues, warning that the BRS would oppose any move to weaken the state-owned company or burden Telangana financially.

3.6 tonnes of khoa seized during Hyderabad food safety raids

Munsif News Bureau
Hyderabad, Oct 15

The TG Safe Food Wing and enforcement officials on Thursday inspected six dairy manufacturing units and a transport location within Hyderabad's CURE limits, seizing 3.6 tonnes of khoa over food safety concerns.

The inspections began at 5 a.m. and revealed alleged violations, including unhygienic manufacturing conditions, operation without an FSSAI licence and improper temperature con-



trol during storage.

Officials found khoa packed in plastic covers and transported to Hyderabad in buses and DCM vehicles instead of refrigerated vehicles with cold-storage facilities. The team seized 3.6 tonnes of khoa being

transported in buses.

Authorities said some units would be closed, while others would be issued show-cause or improvement notices. Further details will be released after inspections at all locations are completed.

Dr Balakrishnan Nair elected chair of UNESCO-IOC Sub-Commission

NSS News
Hyderabad, Oct 15

Dr. T. M. Balakrishnan Nair, Director of the Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Services (INCOIS), has been elected Chair of the UNESCO-IOC Sub-Commission for the Central Indian Ocean (IOCINDIO).

Dr. Turki Al-Saeed of Kuwait and Dr. Rezah M. Badal of Mauritius have been reported as the newly elected Vice-Chairs, subject to confirmation of their official names and appointments.

Ponnam urges every family to embrace fitness



NSS News
Hyderabad, Oct 13

BC Welfare and Transport Minister Ponnam Prabhakar on Thursday urged people to make physical exercise a daily habit, stressing that fitness and sports were essential for a healthy society.

Accepting a fitness challenge from Jubilee Hills MLA Naveen Kumar Yadav, the minister participated in the "Khelo Telangana Bandhan" programme and urged people to spend at least 30 minutes daily on walking, running, cycling, yoga or other physical activities.

As part of the campaign, he encouraged participants to post 27-second exercise videos on social media, tag

nine friends and challenge nine others. He extended the challenge to Chief Secretary Sanjay Jaju, the Transport Secretary, TSRTC Managing Director and Hyderabad District Collector.

Prabhakar said sports should become part of everyday life in families, villages and educational institutions, rather than being limited to competitions and medals. He stressed the need to encourage children to take up sports early and balance physical fitness with academics.

He said the government would intensify fitness and sports initiatives in BC Welfare educational institutions. Sports Authority of Telangana officials Kannam Madhu, Suresh Kaleru and others attended the programme.

BRS seeks Revanth Reddy's resignation over power, coal row

NSS News
Hyderabad, Oct 15

BRS MLC Dasoju Sravan on Thursday demanded Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy's resignation over the alleged power crisis and irregularities in Singareni Collieries Company Limited.

Thanking Singareni workers and the public for the success of BRS working president K.T. Rama Rao's meeting at Godavarikhani, Sravan accused the Congress government of reversing the achievements of the previous BRS regime. He said former Chief Minister K. Chandrashekar Rao had raised Telangana's power generation capacity from 7,000 MW to 20,000 MW, ensuring uninterrupted supply.

Sravan alleged that the present government was ignoring power cuts affecting farmers and industries despite claims by Revanth Reddy and Deputy Chief Minister Bhatti Vikramarka that there were



no outages. He also questioned reported reductions in the planned capacities of the Yadadri and Jainoor power projects.

On Singareni, the BRS leader alleged that 40 lakh metric tonnes of coal worth ₹1,600 crore had gone missing and demanded a CBI or sitting judge-led probe. He further alleged that the controversy was linked to an attempt to privatise the company and hand it over to

the Adani Group.

Sravan also accused the government of neglecting the Kaleshwaram project for political reasons, claiming that the situation was affecting groundwater levels and farmers in North Telangana. Holding the Chief Minister and his Cabinet morally responsible for the alleged failures, he reiterated his demand for Revanth Reddy's resignation.

Vivek promises labour department overhaul, strict action



NSS News
Hyderabad, Oct 15

Labour Minister G. Vivek Venkatswamy on Thursday announced sweeping reforms in the state Labour department following allegations of fraud in compensation claims under the Telangana Building and Other Construction

Workers Welfare Board.

Speaking to the media at the Secretariat, Vivek said all claims filed since 2018 were being scrutinised following allegations that fake death certificates and bogus documents were used to siphon off welfare funds.

A preliminary inquiry led by the Joint Labour Commissioner resulted in the suspension of two officials. The government has since ordered a comprehensive Vigilance probe, with the final report expected within one to two months.

Vivek said a robust mechanism would be introduced to ensure

Vigilance probe ordered into welfare claims since 2018; two officials suspended over alleged irregularities

welfare funds reached genuine beneficiaries, warning that no official found guilty would be spared, irrespective of rank.

He also announced streamlined claim settlements and transfers of officials who had remained in the same office for years to improve transparency and accountability.

39th Hyderabad National Book Fair from Dec 18

NSS News
Hyderabad, Oct 15

The 39th Hyderabad National Book Fair will be held at NTR Stadium (Telangana Kala Bharathi), near Indra Park, from December 18 to 28. The 11-day event will feature literary discussions, book launches and various other programmes every day.

Publishers, authors and book lovers from Telangana and across the country are expected to participate in the fair. Lakhs of books across genres and catering to readers from different sections of society will be on display, with several titles available at discounted prices.

Kishan Reddy equips Secunderabad UPHCs



NSS News
Hyderabad, Oct 15

Union Minister G. Kishan Reddy on Thursday distributed modern medical equipment to Urban Primary Health Centres (UPHCs) in his Secunderabad Parliamentary constituency to strengthen healthcare services for the poor.

During visits to health centres at DBR Mills in Kavadiguda, Anantham in Musheerabad and Mettuguda, he inspected facilities and reviewed

the availability of free medicines and medical services with staff.

The equipment includes nebulisers for children and adults, 10 digital blood pressure monitors, 10 glucometers, 10 needle hub cutters, digital weighing machines for infants and adults, steel weighing chairs and drinking water dispensers.

Reddy said the equipment would strengthen basic healthcare facilities and help ensure timely, quality medical services for local residents.

Drogo Aerospace's defence UAV gets DGCA nod



NSS News
Hyderabad, Oct 15

Hyderabad-based Drogo Aerospace has secured Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) type certification for its JK 250e fixed-wing vertical take-off and landing (VTOL) unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV), taking its tally of certified platforms to six.

Designed for the Indian armed forces' intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (ISR) missions, the UAV combines fixed-wing flight efficiency with vertical take-off and landing capability, eliminating the need for a conventional runway. It offers two to three hours of endurance. The company said it had delivered JK 250e UAVs to the Indian Army this year. The certification is expected to support operator training and strengthen indigenous UAV training capabilities.

Drogo Aerospace chief Yeshwanth Bonthu said the JK 250e was the only UAV in India with a hybrid fixed-wing and multirotor configuration to receive DGCA type certification for training purposes, calling the approval a milestone for indigenous defence technology.

Bank unions oppose IDBI Bank sale, call for protest

NSS News
Hyderabad, Oct 15

A coalition of bank employee and officer organisations has opposed the proposed privatisation of IDBI Bank, alleging that the move would transfer a major financial institution holding public deposits into private hands.

In a joint statement, the unions said the Centre and Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) together hold around 94% of the bank's shares. They claimed the bank had recovered from earlier financial difficulties and was reporting substantial profits.

Citing public deposits of around ₹3.5 lakh crore and annual net profits of ₹5,600 crore, ₹7,500 crore and ₹9,500 crore over the last three years, the unions alleged that the proposed sale would transfer a 60% stake to Canadian investor Fairfax.

Recalling an earlier assurance that government shareholding would not fall below 51%, the organisations urged the Centre to withdraw the proposed sale.

They called on bank employees and officers to wear black badges on October 16, 2026, in protest. The statement was signed by representatives of AIBEA, AIBOC, NCBE, BEFI, INBOC and INBEF, among other organisations.



TGSPDCL assistant engineer held for Rs 1.2 lakh bribe

Munsif News Bureau
Hyderabad, Oct 15

The Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) officials of City Range-II on Thursday caught Pandala Sandhya Rakesh, Assistant Engineer of TGSPDCL's Madannapet Section under Santosh Nagar Sub-Division, red-handed while allegedly accepting a bribe of Rs.1.20 lakh.

According to the ACB, the of-

ficer demanded the amount in exchange for sanctioning six new electricity meters to replace missing old meters by approving the complainant's online applications.

The ACB recovered the tainted cash of Rs.1.20 lakh from the officer at his instance. The official was allegedly caught while obtaining undue advantage for performing an official favour.

The accused is being produced

before the Principal Special Judge for SPE and ACB Cases at Nampally for judicial remand. The case is under investigation.

The ACB withheld the complainant's details for security reasons.