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Honest Journalism...



TN GOVT SCRAPS STALIN-ERA PANEL ON CENTRE-STATE RELATION

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27 JUMADA AL-AWWAL 1448H

NAMAZ TIME

FAJAR	05:20 AM
ZOHAR	01:30 PM
ASAR	04:45 PM
MAGHRIB	06:15 PM
ISHA	08:15 PM

SUNRISE/SUNSET

13 HRS 10 MINS
RISE 05:42 AM
SET 06:52 PM

MOONRISE/MOONSET

13 HRS 52 MINS
RISE 05:31 AM
SET 07:23 PM

HOLIDAY NOTICE

On the occasion of Diwali, on 8th November 2026, the office will be closed, and there will be no issue of **THE FREEDOM PRESS English Daily** on **9th November 2026**.

India lift over 496 million people out of poverty in 12 years: World Bank

NEW DELHI, NOV 7

The World Bank's latest assessment that nearly 496 million Indians have moved above the poverty threshold in just 12 years, marks one of the most significant socio-economic transformations in modern history, according to a report in Gulf Today.



It highlights the World Bank figures which show that between 2011–12 and 2023–24, the proportion of Indians living below the World Bank's lower-middle-income poverty threshold of $4.20 a day fell from 57.7 per cent to 16.1 per cent. Extreme poverty, measured at $3 a day, declined even more dramatically, from 27.1 per cent to just 2.6 per cent.

The report points out that several factors have contributed to this progress. Expanded banking access through the Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana, Aadhaar-linked direct benefit transfers, subsidised food distribution, rural electrification, sanitation, infrastructure development and digital connectivity have strengthened household security and economic participation. The provision of free food grains to vulnerable households has also helped protect millions against food insecurity and economic shocks.

The report highlights that India's economic growth has provided an important foundation for these achievements. Sustained growth creates resources for infrastructure, public services and social protection. The country's experience demonstrates that growth becomes more meaningful when its benefits reach historically excluded communities.

However, the report also has a word of caution against the country turning complacent as the World Bank estimates that approximately 35 million Indians remain in extreme poverty, while around 232 million live below the broader $4.20 threshold.

Crossing a poverty line does not automatically guarantee financial security. Families continue to face challenges involving healthcare costs, education, insecure employment and inadequate housing. India's next challenge is therefore to move from poverty alleviation towards lasting prosperity. (IANS/UNI)

KARNATAKA E20 ROW

Centre rejects claims of excess ethanol blending

NEW DELHI, NOV 7

The Centre on Saturday rejected claims of excessive ethanol blending in petrol at certain retail outlets in Karnataka, while questioning the sampling and testing methodology adopted by the state and saying all 56 samples tested in the state under a nationwide quality monitoring exercise complied with prescribed E20 specifications.

The Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas (MoPNG) said the three public sector oil marketing companies (OMCs) -- Indian Oil Corporation Ltd (IOCL), Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd (BPCL) and Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Ltd (HPCL) -- had clarified that the reported claims of 26-31 per cent ethanol blending were not supported by tests conducted under prescribed statutory and technical procedures.

E20 petrol supplied by the three companies across the country, including Karnataka, conforms to IS 17021, the Bureau of Indian Standards specification for ethanol-blended motor gasoline, the ministry said in a statement.

It further noted that the OMCs had raised concerns over the sampling procedure and testing methodology adopted during the October 2026 exercise. (IANS)

IAF aircraft lands at record altitude

TFP I CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI, NOV 7

The Indian Air Force said on Saturday it had successfully landed a heavy-lift transport aircraft at the highest altitude anywhere in the world in remote Ladakh bordering China.

The IL-76MD, a four-engine Russian-origin turbofan military aircraft also known as Ganjraj, landed at an airfield at 4,154 meters (13,629 feet) above sea level close to the frontier with China.

"An Indian Air Force IL-76MD has scripted history with a successful landing at Nyoma, marking the highest-altitude landing ever achieved by the aircraft anywhere in the world," the IAF said in a statement.

It described the landing as a "milestone that reinforces India's strategic airlift capability.

PM Modi calls for renewed resolve to build a prosperous, Viksit Bharat

NEW DELHI, NOV 7

Prime Minister Narendra Modi, on Saturday, extended warm Diwali greetings to citizens, describing the festival as a celebration of the eternal triumph of light over darkness, goodness over evil and hope over despair, while urging people to move forward with renewed energy and determination towards building a prosperous and Viksit Bharat.



Narendra Modi

In his message to fellow citizens on the auspicious occasion, Modi said Diwali represented the enduring values of Indian civilisation and offered an opportunity to cherish the country's rich cultural heritage while strengthening the bonds of togetherness.

"Warm greetings on the auspicious occasion of Diwali!" the Prime Minister said, expressing the hope that the festival would illuminate every home with happiness, harmony and prosperity.

Emphasising the deeper significance of the festival, Modi said Diwali carried a message of positivity, goodness and collective responsibility. He expressed hope that the celebrations would inspire people to spread kindness, embrace optimism and contribute towards creating a brighter future.

"Let us move forward with renewed energy and determination to build a prosperous and Viksit Bharat," he said, reiterating his vision of transforming India into a developed nation.

Diwali, one of India's most widely celebrated festivals, is observed across the country and by Indian communities around the world. In Hindu tradition, the festival is associated with Lord Rama's return to Ayodhya after 14 years of exile and his victory over Ravana.

The occasion is marked by the lighting of diyas, prayers, family gatherings and the exchange of greetings and gifts, symbolising the victory of light over darkness and the renewal of hope. (IANS)

No new cheque rules: RBI

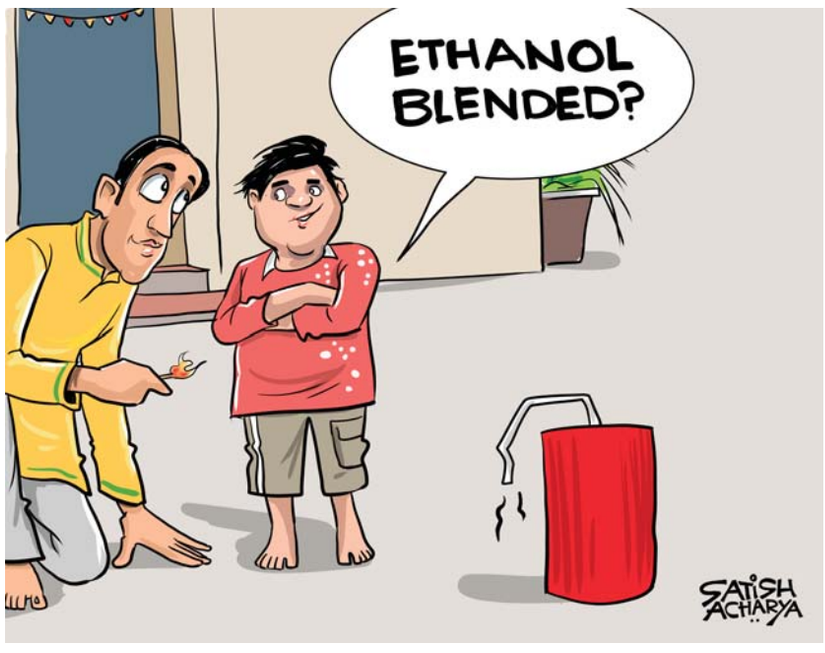
NEW DELHI, NOV 7

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on Saturday dismissed as factually incorrect and misleading social media messages claiming that new cheque books with updated security standards would come into effect from January 1, 2027.

In a post on X, the central bank said it had taken note of messages circulating on social media claiming that the standard cheque books currently in use under the CTS would change from December 31, 2026.

The messages claimed that cheque books featuring updated security standards would be introduced from January 1, 2027. (IANS)

CARTOON CAROUSEL





TG prisons launch Open Schooling Programme for inmates



FREEDOM PRESS BUREAU
HYDERABAD, NOV 7

The Telangana Prisons Department, in collaboration with the Telangana Open School Society (TOSS), on Saturday launched an open schooling programme to enable prison inmates to pursue Secondary School Certificate (SSC) and Intermediate courses as part of efforts to promote education and rehabilitation.

The programme was inaugurated by Principal Secretary to the Education Department Dr Yogita Rana in the presence of Director General of Prisons and Correctional Services Dr Soumya Mishra.

Addressing the gathering, Dr Yogita Rana said education would help inmates gain knowledge, build confidence and self-respect and prepare them to face challenges in life.

She urged prisoners to utilise the opportunity to continue their education and work towards a better future. She announced that special TOSS centres would be established in prisons to facilitate the programme and provide academic support. A concession of Rs 1,250 would also be provided on course fees exclusively for prison inmates.

She further assured support for setting up libraries in prisons to encourage reading and self-learning. The Principal Secretary also assured educational assistance to children of inmates facing difficulties in continuing their studies, asking prison authorities to submit representations in this regard.

Dr Soumya Mishra said the Prisons Department was committed to transforming prisons into centres of correction, rehabilitation, education and skill development, going beyond its conventional role of ensuring security and safe custody.

She said education was an effective instrument of reformation, offering inmates an opportunity to rebuild their lives and return to society as responsible citizens. Telangana Open School Society Director K Lingaiah assured full academic support and said classes could be conducted on Sundays, second Saturdays and other days according to the convenience of prison authorities.

Under the programme, inmates can pursue SSC and Intermediate courses through TOSS, with study materials, academic assistance and regular classes. There is no upper age limit for admission, and eligible candidates can pursue higher education after completing Intermediate, subject to prescribed requirements.

For the current academic year, 70 prisoners have expressed interest in enrolling for SSC and 15 for Intermediate courses, taking the initial number of prospective candidates to 85.

The department is making efforts to encourage more inmates across prisons to avail themselves of the opportunity.

Husband arrested for killing wife and dumping her body in Godavari



TFP I RAMARAJU
B. KOTHAGUDEM, NOV 7

Bhadradri Kothagudem Police have solved the missing woman case registered at Kothagudem Three Town Police Station, Bhadradri Kothagudem, after her husband allegedly confessed to murdering her and dumping her body in the Godavari River.

According to police, Gundarapu Swaroopa lodged a missing complaint on November 6, stating that her sister Bhavani was untraceable. During the investigation, her husband, Boda Narendra (30), an Armed Reserve Police Constable (ARPC-623) from Goliathanda village in Tekulapally mandal, allegedly confessed to killing her at their rented house on November 3.

The accused reportedly told police that he assaulted and strangled Bhavani before placing her body in a white bag. With the help of his father, Harilal, he allegedly concealed the body in an agricultural field before transporting it on a motorcycle to the Bhadrachalam Godavari bridge on November 4 and dumping it into the river to destroy evidence.

Based on the information provided by the accused, police conducted an extensive search in the Godavari River and recovered Bhavani's body in the presence of panch witnesses. Narendra will be produced before the court and sent to judicial remand. Further investigation is underway.

District SP Rohit Raju, IPS, appreciated the police personnel involved in the operation, including Venkateshwarlu, Three Town CI Indrasena Reddy, One Town CI Jitender, Annapureddypalli SI Vijay Simha Reddy and Three Town SI Ramesh. The SP said strict action would be taken against those involved in the crime.

4 acres land allocated for Muslim graveyard in Mahabubnagar



TFP I AHAD SIDDIQUI
MAHABUBNAGAR, NOV 7

The Telangana government has sanctioned Rs. 5 crore and allotted four acres of land at Moula Ali Gutta in Mahabubnagar for developing a graveyard and essential facilities for the Muslim community.

The official proceedings sanctioning the land and funds were handed over by Revenue Department officials to the District Minority Welfare Officer in the presence of Government Whip and Mahabubnagar MLA Yennam Srinivas Reddy.

The proposed works include the development of a graveyard, construction of a Wuzu Khana and provision of toilet facilities. The initiative is expected to fulfil a long-pending demand of the local Muslim community.

Community leaders thanked Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy and MLA Yennam Srinivas Reddy for facilitating the allocation. Mohammed Taqiuddin, Town Congress Working President Azmath Ali, Farooq Hussain, Corporator Shabbir Ahmed, former councillors Khwaja Pasha and Mohsin, and Moez were among those present.

TG govt sanctions Rs. 2 Crore for Tirumalayya Gutta Development



TFP I THIRUPATHAIAH
WANAPARTHY, NOV 7

The Telangana government has sanctioned Rs. 2 crore for developing Tirumalayya Gutta into a major spiritual and tourist destination, Wanaparthy MLA Tudi Megha Reddy announced on Saturday.

During his visit to the hilltop shrine as part of his morning walk, Megha Reddy offered special prayers to Lord Sri Venkateswara Swamy and inspected the temple premises and existing facilities.

He said the funds would be utilised to improve the approach road, construct a Haritha Hotel, develop visitor rest areas and provide drinking water and other basic amenities.

Highlighting the local tradition of devotees visiting Tirupati on the seventh of every month, the MLA appealed to people to visit Tirumalayya Gutta on the same day and offer prayers. He said the government, with public cooperation, aimed to develop the shrine into a prominent spiritual and tourism centre in Wanaparthy district.

Warangal Collector directs colleges to improve academic performance



TFP I BASHEERUDDIN
WARANGAL, NOV 7

Warangal District Collector Dr. Satya Sharda, IAS has directed officials to prepare a special action plan to improve academic standards and increase student enrolment in government degree colleges across the district.

Addressing the District Collegiate Education Development and Review Committee (DCEDRC) meeting at the District Collectorate on Saturday, she reviewed admissions, examination results, infrastructure, student attendance and skill development programmes. Directing college principals to improve attendance, the Collector instructed them to implement Face Recognition System (FRS) attendance for students, teaching and non-teaching staff. She also ordered the appointment of special officers to monitor the management and functioning of CKM Degree College, Wardhannapet Degree College, Rangasaipet and Narsampet Degree College.

The meeting also reviewed requirements for additional classrooms, laboratories, girls' hostels, drinking water facilities, toilets and building repairs.

Additional Collector (Local Bodies) Y.V. Ganesh, DCEDRC Convenor Professor Mallam Naveen, college principals, committee members and concerned district officials attended the meeting.

Nizamabad Collector directs officials to expedite PM SHRI school infrastructure works



TFP I ATEEQ KHAN
NIZAMABAD, NOV 7

Nizamabad District Collector Ila Tripathi, IAS has directed officials to fully utilise the funds sanctioned under the PM SHRI scheme and complete all school infrastructure works on time while maintaining quality standards.

During a review meeting with PM SHRI school headmasters, residential institution principals, Mandal Education Officers (MEOs) and Mandal Special Officers at the Integrated District Offices Complex, she reviewed the progress of works school-wise.

The projects include additional classrooms, toilets, playgrounds, computer laboratories, libraries, soak pits and rainwater harvesting structures. The Collector directed officials to ensure that more than 50 per cent of the sanctioned funds are utilised in all schools by next week and that bills are submitted to the Treasury immediately after completion of works.

She instructed Mandal Special Officers to regularly inspect schools and monitor the quality and progress of works. Contractors delaying projects would be issued notices and blacklisted, with pending works reassigned to others, she warned.

Additional Collector Bhujanga Rao, Incharge District Education Officer Saya Goud, DRDO Sayanna, TGEWIDC Executive Engineer Ravinder, Mandal Special Officers, MEOs and other officials attended the meeting.

Woman, 2 daughters found dead in lake

WARANGAL, NOV 7

A woman and her two daughters allegedly died by suicide after jumping into Pakala Lake in Khanapuram mandal of Warangal district on Saturday. On receiving information, police rushed to the spot and retrieved the three bodies from the lake. The deceased were identified as Mamatha and her 2 daughters, residents of Yelkurthi Haveli village in Geesugonda mandal. Preliminary information suggests that family disputes may have led to the incident. Police have registered a case and launched an investigation to ascertain the circumstances surrounding the deaths. (NSS)

Shadnagar police arrest house burglary accused



TFP I FAROOQ KHAN
RANGAREDDY, NOV 7

Cyberabad Shadnagar police have arrested a 32-year-old man in connection with a house burglary in Eshwar Colony and recovered stolen gold and silver ornaments from his possession.

According to Shadnagar Police, the theft occurred when complainant Ramesh Vankudothu (38), a library assistant, was away with his ailing uncle, Ramachandraiah (70), who was undergoing treatment at Yashoda Hospital in Hyderabad. The burglary came to light on October 2, when Ramesh found the house lock broken and valuables missing.

Police identified the accused as Jaganatha Prabhu (32), a mason from Huda Colony, Hyderguda, Rajendranagar mandal, and apprehended him near Attapur on November 7. During interrogation, he allegedly confessed to breaking into the locked house using an iron rod and stealing the ornaments. The recovered property includes gold earrings, chains, a bracelet, a locket a

The case was solved under the supervision of Cyberabad Police Commissioner Dr. Tarun Joshi, DCP Shirisha Raghavendra and ACP Lakshminarayana. Shadnagar Inspector Sitaram, Crime DSI G. Shiva Reddy, Crime Team Head Constable Ravinder and Police Constable Mohan played key roles in the investigation.

Illegal liquor sales busted in Alwal; 163 bottles seized

TFP I CORRESPONDENT
MEDCHAL-MALKAJGIRI, NOV 7

The Excise State Task Force and Enforcement teams have busted an alleged illegal defence quota liquor sales racket in Alwal, seizing 163 bottles worth approximately 2.11 lakh in two separate raids.

In the first operation, a team led by Malkajgiri Enforcement Assistant Commissioner Pradeep Rao raided the residence of Manyam Nagaprasanna and her husband Ramanjaneyulu in Saraswati Nagar, Lothkunta, and seized 96 bottles. Officials alleged that Nagaprasanna was selling liquor procured by her husband through defence canteens. She was arrested and handed over to Alwal Excise Station, while a case was registered against the couple.

In a separate raid, Excise State Task Force Inspector Ganapathi Reddy searched the residence of Musimi Lenka (39) in Soujanya Colony, New Bowenpally, and seized another 67 bottles. Lenka was also arrested and handed over to Alwal Excise Station for further action.

2 arrested for stealing ventilators

HYDERABAD, NOV 7

Police have solved the ventilator theft case at RIMS Hospital in Adilabad district and arrested two persons in connection with the crime.

According to Superintendent of Police Akhil Mahajan, the accused were identified as Sajjan Basant Mote and Madan Kondareddy, both natives of Maharashtra.

GREATER HYDERABAD MUNICIPAL CORPORATION

S. No.	Notice No	Name of the Works	Start Date/Last Date & Time for Receipts of Bids	Name & Address Officer Phone No.
1	NIQ No.03/EE/ Circle-32 Golconda /GHMC/2026-27, Date: 06-11-2026	Inviting sealed quotations from various agencies/ firms/ Suppliers for the (Non SOR items) used in Translocation of Trees in Circle-32 Golconda, GZ, GHMC. (Further details can be seen at @ https://ghmc.gov.in/Tenderspage.aspx tender notifications)	Start Date: 08-11-2026 from 11.00AM. Last Date & Time for Receipt of Bids: 10-11-2026 3.00 PM	Office of the Executive Engineer, Circle-32 Golconda, 5th Floor, Parking complex, Abids, Hyderabad Cell No. 8008102048

Sd/- EXECUTIVE ENGINEER CIRCLE-32 GOLCONDA, GZ, GHMC.

DIPR - R.O. No. : 13362-PP/CL/ADVT/2026-27

MALKAJGIRI MUNICIPAL CORPORATION : MALKAJGIRI ZONE

NIT No	Name of the Work	Estimate Amount (Rs in Lakhs)	Bid Submission Start Date & Time / Bid Submission of Closing Date & Time	Name & Address Officer Cell No.
NIT No. 88/EE-I /MKJZ/MMC/ 2026-27	Maintenance Works Others -I	14.75	07-11-2026 11.00AM 10-11-2026 & 11.00 AM	Executive Engineer-I Malkajgiri Zone, MMC

For further details can be sent at e-procurement .@http://www.tender.telangana.gov.in

Sd/- Executive Engineer I Malkajgiri Zone MMC.

DIPR - R.O. No. : 13311-PP/CL/ADVT/2026-27

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Hyderabad aims to become global financial services hub: Sridhar Babu

Inaugurates Artha Fintech Office at HITEC City



FREEDOM PRESS BUREAU
HYDERABAD, NOV 7

Telangana is working to position Hyderabad as a global hub for fintech and financial services by strengthening its technology infrastructure, attracting international investments and developing skilled talent, IT and Industries Minister Duddilla Sridhar Babu said on Saturday.

Speaking after inaugurating the Hyderabad office of Singapore-based Artha Fintech at HITEC City, the Minister said the State government was committed to building a strong industrial and technology ecosystem to attract global companies and support their expansion. He said Hyderabad, already a leading destination for IT and IT-enabled services, was leveraging its technology base to expand into fintech, digital banking and global financial services. The government is focusing on world-class digital infrastructure, advanced technology research and development, and skilled workforce development.

As part of the Telangana Rising-2047 vision, the State aims to become a preferred destination for global investments, innovation and emerging technologies, he added.

Artha Fintech provides solutions in Banking-as-a-Service, Open Banking APIs, automated onboarding, KYC/KYB, anti-money laundering, cross-border payments and digital wallet infrastructure. The company's CEO Madhu Babu Gadipati, Armin Ordodari and Emmanuel C. Fernandes attended the inauguration.

Mediation must be given priority in consumer dispute resolution: Justice Sam Koshy



FREEDOM PRESS BUREAU
HYDERABAD, NOV 7

Justice P. Sam Koshy, Acting Chief Justice of the Telangana High Court and Executive Chairman of the Telangana State Legal Services Authority, has called for making mediation an integral part of the consumer justice system to ensure speedy, accessible and cost-effective dispute resolution.

Addressing an awareness programme on mediation in consumer disputes, organised jointly by the Telangana State Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission (TSCDRC) and its Bar Association at Eruvaka Bhavan, Khairatabad, on Saturday, he said mediation could help consumers avoid prolonged litigation through mutual discussions and amicable settlements.

Justice Sam Koshy highlighted the growing complexity of consumer disputes due to e-commerce, digital platforms and technology-based services. He stressed the need for trained mediators, dedicated mediation centres, effective case referral systems and online mediation facilities, while ensuring that vulnerable consumers were not disadvantaged. He urged advocates to encourage amicable settlements, stating, "Let us first try mediation, and only then proceed to litigation."

Telangana High Court Judge Justice Moushumi Bhattacharya called for procedural reforms, pre-litigation mediation, dedicated consumer helplines, legal aid and greater use of online dispute resolution. She also stressed the need for monitoring mediation outcomes and reducing consumer case pendency.

Justice G. Radha Rani, President of TSCDRC, said mediation should become part of the regular functioning of consumer commissions, particularly in disputes involving insurance, banking, defective products, service deficiencies and housing projects.

Professor Srikrishna Deva Rao, Vice-Chancellor of NALSAR University of Law, and Vishwam Jindal, CEO of Webnyay, discussed a proposal to introduce an online dispute resolution mechanism in collaboration with NALSAR, the Telangana State Legal Services Authority and TSCDRC.

A brochure on consumer rights and dispute resolution was released at the programme. In a notable outcome, a health insurance dispute was settled through mediation, with the insurance company paying 12,32,104 to the policyholders, avoiding prolonged litigation.

Telangana State Legal Services Authority Member Secretary Panchakshari, TSCDRC Registrar Satyendra, Bar Association President Devender, Civil Supplies Department Director Shyam Prasad, presidents and members of District Consumer Disputes Redressal Commissions, advocates and law students attended the programme.

Justice Sam Koshy highlighted the growing complexity of consumer disputes due to e-commerce, digital platforms and technology-based services. He stressed the need for trained mediators, dedicated mediation centres, effective case referral systems and online mediation facilities, while ensuring that vulnerable consumers were not disadvantaged.

BRS alleges Rs.100-Crore scam in Gurukul supplies

Criticises Congress govt's handloom policy

HYDERABAD, NOV 7

BRS MLC Dr. Dasoju Sravan Kumar has alleged large-scale irregularities in the procurement of bed sheets and carpets for Gurukul institutions, claiming that the scam exceeded Rs.100 crore. He also accused the Congress government of neglecting Telangana handloom weavers and favouring private suppliers from outside the State.



Dr. Dasoju Sravan Kumar

Addressing a press conference at Telangana Bhavan on Saturday, Sravan alleged that quality handloom products were being sidelined in favour of recycled and substandard materials supplied by private companies, including Gujarat-based Mafatlal. He claimed that products costing around Rs.150 were being purchased for more than Rs.400, causing a substantial loss to the public exchequer.

Questioning Chief Minister Revanth Reddy's defence of the quality of the supplies in the Assembly, the BRS leader alleged that the government was diverting procurement opportunities from the Telangana State Handloom Weavers Cooperative Society (TSCO) to private companies. He said the decision was depriving local weavers of employment opportunities, despite reports of 54 handloom weavers dying by suicide due to financial distress and lack of work.

Sravan also alleged misuse of the centralised Project Management Unit (PMU) procurement system despite High Court directions and demanded an investigation into the alleged irregularities. He urged the government to route future procurement of carpets and bed sheets through TSCO and ensure that Gurukul students receive quality handloom products.

He further questioned the allocation of the Rs.200-crore Ekta Mall project and 6.5 acres of land near LIDCAP to Aparna and Vamsiram Builders, alleging that the decision defeated the project's intended public purpose.

The BRS MLC also accused the Revanth Reddy government of misusing the police machinery to target opposition leaders. Referring to former Sheep and Goat Development Corporation chairman Dudimetla Balaraju Yadav, he alleged that attempts were made to implicate him in false cases under the SC/ST (Prevention of Atrocities) Act. He said the BRS legal team had secured bail for Balaraju Yadav and cautioned police officials against acting under political pressure.

Former ZP Chairperson Tula Uma, BRS leader Ravi Nayak and others attended the press conference. (NSS)

4,197 motorists caught using mobile phones while driving

HYDERABAD, NOV 7

Hyderabad Traffic Police caught 4,197 motorists using mobile phones while driving during a special enforcement drive conducted from November 1 to November 7, 2026.

Of the total violators, 4,038 were two-wheeler riders, 38 were three-wheeler drivers and 121 were four-wheeler drivers.

MCEME honours meritorious officer cadets of TES-48, TES-50 courses

TFP I RAOOF KHAN
SECUNDERABAD, NOV 7



The Military College of Electronics and Mechanical Engineering (MCEME) conducted an award distribution ceremony for 56 Officer Cadets of Technical Entry Scheme (TES)-48 and TES-50 courses at its Cadets Training Wing here on Saturday.

Lt Gen IS Rathore, Commandant, MCEME, presented medals and distinctions to meritorious cadets for excellence in academics, sports, physical training, outdoor training, weapon training and drill.

WCC Prem Solanki (TES-48) and PCQM Arpit Kadian (TES-50) received the GOC-in-C, ARTRAC Gold Medal, while WCA Tangi Sairam (TES-48) and PCQM Anuj Rana (TES-50) were awarded the Silver Medal.

PCC Prajwal Raut (TES-48) and PCQM Aman Kumar (TES-50) received the Bronze Medal.

Prithiviraj Platoon, known as 'The Panthers', was presented the GOC-in-C ARTRAC Banner for the Autumn Term 2026.

Addressing the cadets, Lt Gen Rathore congratulated them on completing their training and highlighted the importance of technically proficient officers in meeting the challenges of modern technology-driven warfare.

He stressed the need to harness emerging technologies, promote innovation, collaboration and scientific temper, and pursue lifelong learning.

He also urged the young officers to uphold the core military values of duty, honour, integrity, courage and selfless service while demonstrating technical competence, ethical conduct and adaptability.

CMC plans 300 Smart Parks with Wi-Fi and Work-From-Park facilities



TFP I RAVI KUMAR
MEDCHAL-MALKAJGIRI, NOV 7

Cyberabad Municipal Corporation (CMC) Commissioner G. Srijana, IAS, has announced a series of initiatives to improve civic infrastructure, public safety, environmental management and urban governance during a media interaction at the CMC Conference Hall on Saturday.

As part of its 'Work from Park' initiative, CMC plans to develop 300 parks out of nearly 770 identified open plots across the city. Selected parks will offer high-speed Wi-Fi, laptop charging facilities, food courts and CCTV surveillance to provide convenient workspaces for IT and ITES professionals. The initiative will be supported by the Cyberabad Security Council and corporate partners through CSR funds. The Corporation will also install safety fencing around vulnerable open plots.

Commissioner Srijana announced that CMC had secured a national A+ rating from India Ratings and Research (Ind-Ra) for its financial discipline, project planning and execution. The Corporation is also partnering with UNICEF through an MoU to establish a Child Rights Secretariat to promote child-friendly urban development.

To improve transparency, mandatory worksite boards displaying project details, contractor names and contact information of responsible municipal officials have been introduced at all ongoing civic works. CMC is also working with mobility experts, traffic engineers and the London Chief Traffic Officer to conduct road safety awareness programmes.

Under the Divine Waste Collection Drive, 644 vendors have been registered in the Serilingampally, Kukatpally and Quthbullapur zones. Nine recycling depots and dedicated collection vehicles have been deployed to divert coconut shells from landfills. Initiatives to improve green and plastic waste recycling and install solar streetlights are also underway. Standard Operating Procedures are being finalised to regulate informal chicken and meat waste processing.

The Commissioner further said a Detailed Project Report was being prepared for a comprehensive stormwater drainage network to address seasonal waterlogging.

EKA Mobility expands TG network with new showroom at Kachiguda



TFP I CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, NOV 7

EKA Mobility has expanded its presence in Telangana with the inauguration of its second showroom in Hyderabad at Kachiguda on Friday. The company plans to establish 20 outlets across the state over the next 18 months.

The showroom, established by SKED Rides Pvt. Ltd., EKA Mobility's authorised dealer for electric commercial vehicles in Telangana, was inaugurated by Amberpet MLA Kaleru Venkatesh. SKED Rides Managing Director Prithvi Reddy and Executive Directors Manoj Kothari and Rajender Kothari attended the event. The showroom will exclusively display electric autorickshaws, including the recently launched EKA AVI 3S, which features spacious interiors, car-like styling and AC-DC charging facilities.

Prithvi Reddy said the company's first showroom was opened in Kukatpally and it plans to establish five showrooms in Hyderabad and another 15 across other districts of Telangana.

Pune-based EKA Mobility manufactures electric buses, trucks and small commercial vehicles for passenger transport, cargo and last-mile delivery. The company has received an order for 915 electric buses from the Telangana government and aims to sell 2,500 electric autorickshaws in the state during its first year.

CCMB-led study finds new genetic clues to Hypertrophic Cardiomyopathy

TFP I CORRESPONDENT
HYDERABAD, NOV 6

Scientists from the CSIR-Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology (CCMB), Hyderabad, in collaboration with Osmania University and AIG Hospitals, have identified two rare genetic variants associated with Hypertrophic Cardiomyopathy, a hereditary heart condition that causes abnormal thickening of the heart muscle and can lead to heart failure or sudden cardiac death.

The findings, published in the November issue of the Journal of the American College of Cardiology: Asia, identify two previously unreported variants in the MYH7 gene. The research was led by Dr. Deepa Selvi Rani, along with Dr. Kumaraswamy Thangaraj of CCMB, Dr. Pratibha Nallari of Osmania University and Dr. Calambur Narasimhan of AIG Hospitals.

The team analysed 160 patients with Hypertrophic Cardiomyopathy and 178 healthy controls from Telangana, identifying 34 genetic variants. Two variants, p.Met684Arg and p.Leu725Pro, were found to have significant disease associations. Both were identified in affected individuals and their children, who showed varying degrees of heart muscle thickening, suggesting that the condition may manifest differently with age.

Senior author Dr. Kumaraswamy Thangaraj said both variants were classified as likely pathogenic based on clinical, genetic and structural evidence. Their identification could improve early diagnosis and management of the disease, particularly among Indian and South Asian populations.

TN govt scraps Stalin-era panel on Centre-state relation; Transfers mandate to state law commission

CHENNAI, NOV 7

In a significant policy shift, the Tamil Nadu government led by Chief Minister C. Joseph Vijay has abolished the high-level committee on Union–State relations constituted by the previous DMK government and transferred its responsibilities to the Tamil Nadu State Law Commission.

The decision, formalised through a Government Order, brings an end to the three-member committee established by former Chief Minister M.K. Stalin to examine constitutional provisions governing Centre–State relations and recommend measures to strengthen federalism and state autonomy.

The committee, headed by retired Supreme Court judge Justice Kurian Joseph, included former IAS officer K. Ashok Vardhan Shetty and former State Planning Commission Vice-Chairman M. Naganathan. Stalin had announced its formation in the Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly in April 2025, projecting the initiative as an important step towards safeguarding the constitutional rights and administrative powers of the state.



The panel subsequently undertook an extensive examination of constitutional, legal and administrative issues affecting the relationship between the Union government and the state. It submitted the first part of its report to Stalin on February 16, 2026, outlining recommendations concerning federal governance and state autonomy.

However, the Vijay government has now concluded that continuing the committee separately is unnecessary because its responsibilities overlap with those assigned to the State Law Commission.

According to the Government Order, the Law Commission, reconstituted on August 7, 2026, already has a broad mandate covering inter-state and Centre–State relations, examination of existing legislation and improvements to the state's legal and institutional framework.

The government maintained that retaining two bodies with substantially similar responsibilities would result in duplication of functions. Consequently, it ordered the immediate discontinuation of the high-level committee and entrusted the Law Commission with examining matters relating to Centre–State relations.

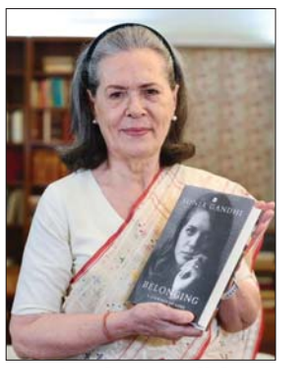
Significantly, the order described the dissolved committee as a non-statutory body while justifying the administrative decision. However, the Tamil Nadu State Law Commission itself is also a non-statutory institution established through an executive Government Order rather than legislation.

The latest decision marks a departure from the previous DMK administration's approach to federal relations, although the government maintains that the subject will continue to receive institutional attention through the Law Commission. (IANS)

Sonia recalls her life and times as a Gandhi

NEW DELHI, NOV 7

Congress leader Sonia Gandhi appeared to avoid talking about nepotism and the issue of why the party can't free itself from her family's leadership, being "dismissive, perhaps a nerve touched", while speaking to the British daily 'The Guardian' at her residence.



Sonia Gandhi

"You would have to ask the party," she told her interviewer on the Gandhi family's unquestioned leadership.

The interview was published on Saturday along with an edited extract from her memoirs "Belonging: A Journey of Love", which will be published early next week.

The newspaper also observed that she "skates over the question of nepotism", just answering, "We all fight elections: we win them, we lose them. All of us have."

But after so many losses, can a Gandhi-led Congress still be a credible alternative to the BJP? While she is adamant they can, many in the country remain unconvinced, noted her interviewer.

Sonia Gandhi was also defensive over the issue of the Congress-led United Progressive Alliance (UPA) government that was in power for a decade till 2014.

"In almost every single instance, the ministers resigned," she said when the issue was pointed out.

Since then, the Gandhi family have "overseen its (Congress) calamitous decline", where the article mentioned the consecutive losses that the party suffered with her son Rahul Gandhi at its helm.

"After taking over from his mother, Rahul lost the last three general elections to PM Modi, and Congress remains in power in only a few states. Meanwhile, the BJP's Hindutva has become the country's dominant political ideology. As the family has maintained its control, Congress has been unable to shake off allegations that it is nepotistic and run by political elites," stressed the article. (IANS/UNI)

J&K CM Omar offered to resign during meeting with dissident NC MLAs

SRINAGAR, NOV 7

Chief Minister Omar Abdullah offered to resign during a meeting with disgruntled National Conference legislators, telling them that if they believed he was unable to run the government, one of them could take over as Chief Minister while he would focus on running the party, two dissident MLAs who attended the meeting said.



J&K Chief Minister Omar Abdullah

The remarks came during a crucial meeting on Friday attended by National Conference president Farooq Abdullah, Chief Minister Omar Abdullah and a group of disgruntled legislators, bringing an end to nearly ten days of political uncertainty within the ruling party.

The discontent had surfaced following the Cabinet reshuffle on October 27, with several MLAs expressing resentment over their exclusion from the Council of Ministers and alleging bias in the distribution of ministerial portfolios. They had also flagged concerns over the functioning of the government and the lack of adequate representation in the Cabinet.

One of the legislators who attended Friday's meeting said Omar Abdullah had told them that if they felt he was unable to deliver, he was willing to step down and allow someone else to take over the government.

"He said that if you feel I am unable to work, I will resign. Someone among you can take over, and I will run the party," the MLA said, clarifying that the remarks were made in the context of addressing the legislators' grievances and did not signal an immediate resignation.

The MLA said the Chief Minister Omar Abdullah had asked legislators to approach him directly with their constituency-related concerns rather than going through advisers or other intermediaries.

He said the discussions were held in a cordial atmosphere, with the legislators putting forward their concerns before the party leadership. Both Omar Abdullah and Farooq Abdullah assured them that the issues would be addressed, while greater coordination between ministers and elected representatives would be ensured.

The MLA said the Chief Minister Omar Abdullah had asked legislators to approach him directly with their constituency-related concerns rather than going through advisers or other intermediaries.

Another legislator who attended the meeting said none of the MLAs had any intention of leaving the National Conference, adding that the grievances were internal and had been conveyed to the leadership to strengthen the party.

The meeting also saw discussions on the implementation of the National Conference manifesto, restoration of statehood and the party's position on Articles 370 and 35A. The legislators stressed the need to intensify the campaign for statehood and pursue the party's demand for restoration of Jammu and Kashmir's special status, including its earlier position on Articles 370 and 35A.

The MLA further said it was decided to put in place a mechanism involving groups of three to four legislators to monitor the allocation of funds and ensure equitable distribution among constituencies. Separate teams would also be constituted to oversee the implementation of the party manifesto and address organisational matters.

The meeting on Friday followed a separate meetings of disgruntled MLAs, who had sought to consolidate their position on a set of demands submitted to the NC leadership Minister in a memorandum.

After a meeting lasting over two hours, Farooq and Omar emerged alongside the dissident MLAs.

Addressing reporters, the NC president described the legislators' concerns as genuine and assured them that some issues would be addressed immediately, while others would be resolved in a phased manner.

He also dismissed speculation about a split in the party, asserting that the National Conference remained united and would continue its struggle for the restoration of Jammu and Kashmir's special status and statehood. (IANS)

Take NDA into confidence on merger: Fadnavis to NCP

NAGPUR, NOV 7

Amid speculations over the merger of NCP factions, Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis on Saturday said that they are two independent parties and will collectively make their decisions.



Speaking to reporters, CM Fadnavis said that ultimately, these are two separate parties, and they should take their own decisions; however, if they make any such decision, they will take us into confidence.

"At the end of the day, they are two independent parties and will collectively make their decisions. They have senior leaders like Sharad Pawar saheb in their party, along with Sunetra Pawar, Praful Patel, Sunil Tatkare, and Parth Pawar. Therefore, I believe it would not be appropriate for us to comment or make a decision on their behalf. They will take their own decisions," Maharashtra CM Devendra Fadnavis said.

He further added that any decision they make will involve consulting them, because they are a major partner in the NDA alliance.

"Therefore, it is not appropriate for us to react on this matter today, as they have not consulted us about it yet. If discussions are underway from their side, they will let us know, and we will respond accordingly," he said

His remarks come after the rumour mill surrounding the merger went into overdrive after NCP leader Praful Patel visited NCP (Sharad Pawar faction) President Sharad Pawar at the hospital on Thursday. Shortly after, Sunil Tatkare's explosive disclosure regarding the merger plans added further momentum to the ongoing speculations.

"At the end of the day, they are two independent parties and will collectively make their decisions. They have senior leaders like Sharad Pawar saheb in their party, along with Sunetra Pawar, Praful Patel, Sunil Tatkare, and Parth Pawar. Therefore, I believe it would not be appropriate for us to comment or make a decision on their behalf. They will take their own decisions," Maharashtra CM Devendra Fadnavis said.

Tatkare on Friday said that if former party chief Ajit Pawar had been around, both Nationalist Congress Parties would have been united today.

Tatkare said, "Discussions about the merger definitely took place when Ajit Dada was alive. He had also outlined how the merger would happen. If Ajit Dada were here, the merger would have happened on February 12th. This would have been made possible through Ajit Dada's fierce willpower. I was a close associate of Ajit Dada, which is why I am aware of this matter."

Ajit Pawar tragically passed away in an accident on January 28th, which is why things did not proceed further, Tatkare added. Tatkare today revealed that the merger was scheduled for February 12th, reiterating that if Ajit Pawar were alive, both parties would have been seen unified.

Meanwhile, NCP SP MLA Rohit Pawar took a sharp stance on the recent claims made by leaders of the NCP regarding a potential merger between the two factions.

Questioning the sudden shift in stance, Rohit Pawar questioned senior leaders like Praful Patel and Sunil Tatkare on why they are talking about a merger now, asking why they denied any possibility of a merger right after Ajit Pawar's passing.

He suggested that they are only bringing it up now due to political pressures and internal difficulties within their party. Rohit Pawar acknowledged that when Ajit Pawar was alive, there were indeed talks of a merger.

He stated that Ajit Pawar's push for a merger was primarily driven by personal and family emotions—desiring to ensure that Sharad Pawar, at his age, and the Pawar family remained united.

He expressed surprise over the sudden eagerness from the Ajit Pawar faction's senior leaders to revive merger talks, hinting that political opportunism or internal party disputes, such as friction around leadership, are driving their sudden change of heart. (IANS)

Satheesan, Vijayan continue war of words over KSEB power purchase deal

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, NOV 7

The war of words between Kerala Chief Minister V.D. Satheesan and his predecessor Pinarayi Vijayan over the KSEB power purchase deal continued for the second day on Saturday, with Satheesan challenging the Opposition leader to produce documents to substantiate his claim that Himachal Pradesh had offered electricity at Rs 12.50 per unit.



Satheesan said Vijayan earlier in the day had repeated the same allegations despite the detailed explanation given by him on Friday.

He also questioned why the Leader of the Opposition had not produced any documentary evidence to support the alleged offer from Himachal Pradesh.

Satheesan said Rajasthan had decided to purchase electricity from Himachal Pradesh on October 18, while proposals relating to the agreement were placed before the Rajasthan Electricity Regulatory Commission on October 28.

The file containing the KSEB recommendation reached him for a final decision only on October 30, he said.

Vijayan had questioned why Kerala did not purchase power from Himachal Pradesh despite the KSEB finding it a good option.

He had also alleged that the power crisis in Kerala was artificially created, Satheesan said, describing the two positions as contradictory.

The Chief Minister said it was the KSEB itself that had informed the government about the power shortage, and that he had already cited official records to establish this.

On the criticism over the use of the Green Energy Open Access (GNA) platform for power purchases, Satheesan said a note submitted by the former KSEB chairman to the government had also suggested considering the option. (IANS/UNI)

Kerala govt orders petrol checks after reports of excess ethanol blending

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, NOV 7



Kerala government has ordered inspections at petrol outlets across four districts following reports that fuel is being sold with ethanol blended in excess of the prescribed limit.

Food and Civil Supplies Minister Anoop Jacob on Saturday directed the Commissioner of Civil Supplies and Consumer Affairs to collect petrol samples from various locations and send them for testing.

The move follows the detection of alleged excess ethanol blending in neighbouring Karnataka.

The minister said no such instance had so far come to the notice of authorities in Kerala.

However, the government has decided to conduct inspections to ensure that similar malpractices do not take place in the state.

The directive was issued after discussions with Chief Minister V.D. Satheesan.

Samples will be collected from different locations in Thiruvananthapuram, Ernakulam, Kozhikode and Kannur districts.

The exercise is intended to ascertain whether petrol sold at retail outlets conforms to the prescribed standards and whether the permitted ethanol blending limit is being exceeded.

The inspections will be carried out under the provisions of the Central Motor Spirit and High Speed Diesel (Regulation of Supply and Distribution and Prevention of Malpractices) Order, 2005.

Based on this central regulation, the state government issued a notification in 2014 authorising officials of the Civil Supplies and Consumer Affairs Department to inspect fuel outlets and initiate legal action in cases of violations.

The powers have been vested in officials ranging from the Commissioner of Civil Supplies and Consumer Affairs to Taluk Supply Officers.

This enables inspections to be conducted at different levels across the state.

The minister said stringent action would be taken if excess ethanol blending or any other form of adulteration was detected. (IANS)

Fourth judge resigns from Bengal SIR Tribunal in a month

KOLKATA, NOV 7



Former Calcutta High Court judge Biswajit Basu resigned from the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) Tribunal on Saturday, becoming the fourth member to step down from the panel constituted to hear appeals from voters excluded during the electoral roll revision in West Bengal.

Basu cited personal reasons for his decision. He conveyed his resignation in a letter to Calcutta High Court Chief Justice Ravindra Vithalrao Ghuge. His exit comes days after former Justice Indrajit Chatterjee quit the tribunal, citing the distance he had to travel to attend its office.

Chatterjee had said that commuting 22 km every day was difficult. He had accepted the assignment believing that the tribunal's work would be completed in two to three months. However, the large number of pending cases indicated that the process would take considerably longer, prompting him to resign. (IANS)

Technology key to defence preparedness: Defence Minister



SILIGURI, NOV 7

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Saturday underscored the importance of technological advancement in strengthening India's defence capabilities, while cautioning against attempts to undermine the morale of armed forces personnel through social media and hostile narratives.

"India is marching forward. Startup-led industrial development is on the right track, and the country is developing anti-drone technology while preparing for future challenges. We need to lay greater emphasis on technological excellence. There are several challenges before us, but technology is not everything. Morale is the most potent weapon," he said during a visit to the Bagdogra Air Force Station to greet and interact with IAF personnel on the occasion of Deepavali.

Describing Bagdogra Air Force Station as a strategically important air base in a highly sensitive region, Singh said it played a crucial role in safeguarding regional security. He commended the Air Warriors for maintaining a high level of operational readiness amid evolving security challenges.

"Today, security challenges are no longer confined to conventional battles. Cyberattacks, drone attacks, proxy wars and information warfare have added new dimensions to the security landscape," he said, pointing to attempts by adversaries to undermine the morale of soldiers through social media and hostile narratives.

He stressed that courage, wisdom, commitment and discipline were essential to confronting these emerging challenges. Describing the morale of Air Warriors as their greatest weapon, he said their dedication and readiness deserved appreciation. (IANS)

Union Home Minister directs agencies to intensify anti-drug operations

AHMEDABAD, NOV 7



Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Saturday called for intensified action against narcotics networks in Gujarat, directing all enforcement agencies to coordinate their efforts and expand public awareness campaigns as part of the Centre's target of achieving a drug-free India by 2029.

Chairing a high-level review meeting in Ahmedabad, attended by Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel and Deputy Chief Minister Harsh Sanghavi, Shah stressed the need for strict action against narcotic drugs and intoxicating substances and called for a comprehensive action plan to strengthen enforcement.

He also directed officials to expand the '1933' control room and ensure intensive drives by all agencies, alongside wider campaigns to raise public awareness about drug abuse.

The meeting, held ahead of Diwali, reviewed Gujarat's law and order situation, border and coastal security, drug control, cybercrime, counter-terrorism measures and the functioning of the criminal justice system.

Senior officials of the Union Home Ministry, the state Home Department and various security agencies attended. The review covered police modernisation, economic offences, infiltration, encroachments in border areas, disaster management, forensic infrastructure, prisons and inter-state cooperation.

Shah also discussed issues concerning 'love jihad', drought conditions, farmers' problems and the situation in border districts, and offered suggestions to the state government.

Officials briefed the Home Minister on the presence of illegal Bangladeshi nationals in Gujarat, cases registered under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act and enforcement of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act.

The implementation of the Inter-Operable Criminal Justice System (ICJS), Crime and Criminal Tracking Network and Systems (CCTNS), e-Sakshya application and e-summons was also reviewed.

Other issues included the Medico Legal Examination and Postmortem Reporting System (MedLEaPR), the Model Prisons Act and Model Prison Manual, mobile forensic vans, manpower requirements and the Investigation Tracking System for Sexual Offences (ITSSO). (IANS)

CJP will continue anti-SIR fight: Abhijeet Dipke

KOCHI, NOV 7

Cockroach Janata Party (CJP) founder Abhijeet Dipke on Saturday claimed that the fight against the voter list revision would continue.

Speaking at the 'Jantar Mantar at Kochi' protest against the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls, Dipke said that the government's handling of the agitation showed how cowardly the Centre is.

Earlier, speaking to reporters at Kochi airport, Dipke said the campaign against Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar would continue until an independent and impartial electoral system was established.

He alleged that elections under the present CEC could not be trusted and were being manipulated to benefit one political party.

He also claimed that voter deletions were taking place across the country and that no state was untouched by the SIR exercise.

Questioning the appointment of a former Kerala Chief Electoral Officer as secretary to the Chief Minister, he said such appointments raised questions about the impartiality of the electoral system.

Actor Prakash Raj also joined the protest, which saw hundreds of activists, civil rights campaigners and citizens taking part.

Targeting Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Dipke said he could never stand alongside Jawaharlal Nehru and Mahatma Gandhi and would never become greater than Nehru, irrespective of the number of years he remained in power. (IANS/UNI)

Fire guts over 50 slum houses in Jabalpur, families left homeless

JABALPUR, NOV 7



A massive fire broke out in a slum settlement in the Ghazi Nagar area of Madhya Pradesh's Jabalpur district early Saturday, destroying more than 50 hutments and leaving several families homeless, officials said.

No casualties have been reported so far, police said.

The fire broke out around 2 a.m. in the slum settlement near Lema Garden under the Gohalpur police station limits. The flames spread rapidly, engulfing several adjoining hutments and destroying household belongings, foodgrains, clothes and other essential items.

According to fire officials, the police control room received information about the blaze at around 2 a.m., following which multiple fire engines and water tankers were immediately rushed to the spot.

Firefighter Om Prakash Ahirwar said firefighting and rescue operations were launched immediately after the information was received. "Information was received by the police control room at 2 a.m. that slums in Ghazi Nagar had caught fire. We immediately dispatched firefighting vehicles and water tanks and started rescue efforts," he said. (IANS)

Chatra crime plot foiled

CHATRA, NOV 7

Chatra district police have arrested three youths with illegal firearms while allegedly planning to carry out a major criminal incident. The police foiled a suspected criminal conspiracy, officials said on Saturday. The arrested accused have been identified as Mukesh Kumar, son of Tokhlal Yadav and a resident of Medwadi village; Nitish Kumar, son of Lakhan Yadav and a resident of Bhoridih village; and Abhishek Kumar, son of Chandrika Yadav and a resident of Madarpur village. All three belong to the Kunda police station area of the district. Acting on the SP's directions, a special raiding team was constituted. (IANS)

India-Australia defence ties gain strategic depth

CANBERRA, NOV 7



The growing strategic alignment between India and Australia in the security and defence sector marks a significant development, shaped by shared concerns over China's assertiveness in the Indo-Pacific and the possibility of a more unpredictable US policy towards the region, a report has stated.

During his July 2026 visit to Australia, his third in 12 years as India's Prime Minister, PM Narendra Modi signed a Joint Declaration on Defence and Security Cooperation with his Australian counterpart Anthony Albanese.

Beyond the joint declaration, the two leaders agreed on several initiatives, including a classified maritime security collaboration roadmap and the Australia-India Partnership on Cyber, Critical Technologies and Supply Chains (PACTS), with a defence pillar, a report by the Australian think tank 'Lowy Institute' highlighted.

They also decided to formalise cooperation between Australia's Maritime Border Command and the Indian Coast Guard through a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU).

The development came a month after the defence ministers of both countries agreed to work towards an MoU on the Provision of Defence Articles and Defence Services, the report mentioned. (IANS)

Former tech Mahindra executive shot dead in Faridabad over parking dispute

TFP I CORRESPONDENT
FARIDABAD, NOV 7



A former regional business head of Tech Mahindra's Asia-Pacific region, Paramjith Dhankhar, was shot dead by his neighbour following a dispute over car parking and a dog in Sector 21C here on Friday night. The accused, Mohan Sharma, was arrested later from Ballabgarh, police said.

According to police, Sharma allegedly fired 15 rounds from his licensed pistol, nine of which hit Dhankhar. The incident followed an argument over parking space. Tensions between the two families had reportedly been mounting over Sharma's dog defecating in the parking area, leading to repeated objections and confrontations over the past few days.

The two families lived in the same building, with Dhankhar's family residing on the ground floor and Sharma's on the second floor.

On Friday night, Sharma allegedly called Dhankhar out of his house following an argument and opened fire on him before fleeing with his family.

Dhankhar, who was settled in Singapore and worked as a senior vice-president at a software company, had returned to India on November 5 to celebrate Diwali with his family. He was also scheduled to attend his nephew's wedding on November 24.

Dhankhar's son, Shaurya Dhankhar, lodged a complaint, following which a case under Section 103(1) (murder) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita and the Arms Act was registered at Surajkund police station on Saturday.

Faridabad ACP (Crime) Varun Kumar Dahiya said the accused was being questioned and would be produced before a court for police remand and detailed interrogation. (IANS)

THE FREEDOM PRESS

SUNDAY 8 NOVEMBER 2026

India leads global remittance inflows

The sharp decline in global development assistance is posing fresh challenges for developing countries as they work towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030. Official Development Assistance (ODA) from members of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's (OECD) Development Assistance Committee (DAC) fell by 23.1 per cent in real terms in 2025, marking the largest annual decline on record. The reduction comes at a time when many developing economies are already facing fiscal constraints and growing development requirements.

Two major factors have contributed to the pressure on aid budgets: rising defence expenditure and increasing climate finance commitments. Several developed countries are prioritising security spending amid geopolitical uncertainties. The United Kingdom, for instance, plans to reduce its aid spending to 0.3 per cent of gross national income by 2027 to accommodate higher defence expenditure. NATO members have also committed to raising defence and security-related spending to 5 per cent of GDP by 2035, potentially putting further pressure on development assistance.

Climate finance is another competing demand on limited public resources. At COP29 in Baku, developed countries agreed on a new collective climate finance goal for developing nations. While climate action is essential for sustainable development, much of the financing continues to come through existing public budgets and development institutions. Governments must therefore ensure that climate commitments do not come at the cost of essential programmes in healthcare, education, nutrition and social protection. In contrast to declining aid, remittances from migrant workers have demonstrated considerable resilience. According to the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), remittances to low- and middle-income countries reached US$728.6 billion in 2025, more than four times global ODA. India continued to remain the world's largest recipient. Over the past 15 years, remittances to developing economies have more than doubled, while foreign direct investment has remained volatile and is now below its 2010 level. Even during the COVID-19 pandemic, remittance flows proved relatively stable.

The resilience of remittances is largely linked to their household-oriented nature. Unlike foreign investment, which responds to market conditions, or official aid, which depends on government budget decisions, remittances are driven by migrants' earnings and the needs of their families. They directly support household expenditure on food, education, healthcare and housing, while helping families manage economic shocks such as unemployment and droughts. In India, personal transfer receipts increased to US$42.9 billion in April-June 2026, compared with US$33.2 billion during the corresponding period a year earlier, strengthening household finances and supporting the country's external accounts.

However, remittances cannot replace official development assistance. They represent private household income and cannot independently finance public infrastructure, national healthcare systems, social protection programmes or other essential public services. Their distribution is also uneven, with countries having large migrant populations receiving greater benefits, while fragile economies and least developed countries often remain dependent on international aid. Remittances should therefore be treated as a complement to public development finance rather than an alternative to it.

Reducing the cost of sending money home is another important priority. The global average cost of remittance transfers stands at 6.36 per cent, more than twice the Sustainable Development Goal target of below 3 per cent by 2030. Such charges disproportionately affect low-income migrant workers who frequently send small amounts to their families. India's efforts to expand digital payment infrastructure provide a useful example of how technology can make cross-border transfers faster and more affordable. The linkage between India's Unified Payments Interface (UPI) and Singapore's PayNow, launched in February 2023, has enabled near-instant transfers. In November 2025, the Reserve Bank of India and the European Central Bank also moved towards the realisation phase of linking UPI with the Eurosystem's instant payment settlement service.

The populist bargain is changing: Voters want results, not just rhetoric

MALVIKA JAIN



Populist leaders once found that promises to protect identity, defend traditional values and challenge established elites could outweigh economic dissatisfaction. But as wars, inflation and economic insecurity affect everyday life, voters are increasingly asking a harder question: can leaders who promise to protect who they are also improve how they live? The US midterms offer a reminder for populist leaders around the world.

The 2026 US midterm elections have delivered a setback to President Donald Trump and the Republican Party. Democrats have won control of both the House of Representatives and the Senate. When the new Congress convenes on January 3, 2027, the shift will end unified Republican control and reshape the final two years of Trump's presidency.

The result reflects growing dissatisfaction with the direction of the country and the state of the economy. The cost of living, inflation, healthcare and government corruption featured prominently in voters' concerns.

The message was difficult to ignore: political rhetoric has its limits when people are struggling to pay their bills.

The election results also highlighted the growing visibility of Indian-American political representation. Democrat Pia Dandiya won Florida's 22nd Congressional District. The daughter of Indian immigrants, Dandiya is a former teacher and high school principal who made education, affordability and economic opportunity central to her campaign.

In Arizona, physician and former state legislator Amish Shah won the state's 1st Congressional District, becoming the first Jain American elected to Congress. Dandiya, whose parents are practising Jains, also brings a connection to the faith to the incoming Congress. Suhas Subramanyam, Ami Bera, Ro Khanna and Pramila Jayapal were also re-elected to the House of Representatives.

Beyond the Indian-American community, the elections produced significant breakthroughs in political representation across the country. Abdul El-Sayed became the first Muslim American elected to the US Senate. Keisha Lance Bottoms became the first Black woman elected governor in the United States. Gina Hinojosa became Texas's first Latina governor, ending more than three decades of Democratic absence from the governor's office. She will also become only the third woman to serve as Texas governor.

These victories challenge traditional assumptions about who can occupy positions of political power. Yet, it would be simplistic to suggest that all these candidates won because voters rejected identity politics. The candidates came from different backgrounds and represented different political priorities. Some campaigned on economic populist platforms themselves, while others built their political careers around addressing long-standing inequalities and advocating for change on the ground.

But their success raises an important question: are voters becoming more open to political leadership that looks different, comes from different backgrounds and offers something beyond the familiar politics of division? To answer this question, it is worth revisiting what made populism so politically powerful in the first place. Across many countries, populist movements gained ground amid the uneven gains of globalisation, technological change and economic restructuring. Many people felt left behind by growth that appeared to benefit major corporations, financial centres and urban elites more than ordinary households. In communities facing stagnant wages, declining industries or shrinking opportunities, established political parties often seemed distant and unresponsive.

Populist leaders found an audience by giving these frustrations a political voice. They promised to restore national pride, defend traditional values, protect cultural identity and challenge institutions and elites seen as disconnected from ordinary people. For voters who felt ignored or overlooked, these messages offered more than policy promises. They offered recognition, belonging and the reassurance that someone was speaking for them.

That bargain, however, has its limits.

Identity and cultural concerns can be powerful forces in politics, but they do not insulate governments from questions about economic performance. When the gap between political promises and everyday experience widens, loyalty can weaken.

This is not a uniquely American story. Populism has become a feature of political life across regions, from Europe and Latin America to Asia. But the US midterm results serve as a warning to leaders elsewhere that these appeals cannot be assumed to deliver permanent political loyalty.

The implications are relevant for India as well. Five states—Uttar Pradesh, Punjab, Uttarakhand, Goa and Manipur—are due to hold assembly elections in 2027, with polling expected in the early part of the year. The Election Commission of India has not yet announced the election schedule.

Political parties are likely to mobilise voters around a range of issues, including religion, caste, national identity, welfare programmes and promises of electoral benefits. But these appeals will compete with concerns over employment, farmers' incomes, inflation, governance and economic opportunity.

India's political and social context is different from that of the United States, and the two electoral experiences should not be treated as interchangeable.

Yet the broader question is relevant to both: how long can identity and political messaging sustain support if voters do not see improvements in their everyday lives?

The US midterms do not mark the end of populism. Nor do they establish that voters around the world are moving away from identity-driven politics. They do, however, offer a reminder that its appeal is not unconditional. The same voters who respond to promises of recognition, protection and change also expect results.

Operation Azini: India's maritime reach, joint force capability and the return of the piracy challenge

COL GURU SADAY BATABYAL(RETD)

The rescue of the Iranian fishing dhow 'Azini' by Indian forces in the Arabian Sea is significant, not merely as a successful hostage-recovery operation but as an illustration of the growing maturity of India's maritime security architecture.

Conducted over 48 hours and more than 3,000 kilometres from Mumbai, the mission demonstrated the ability of Indian naval and air assets to locate, monitor, isolate and neutralise a maritime threat far from the country's coastline while ensuring the safe recovery of all hostages.

At a time when global attention remains focused on conflicts in the Middle East, disruptions in the Red Sea and intensifying geopolitical competition across the Indo-Pacific, Operation Azini also serves as a reminder that traditional maritime threats have by no means disappeared.

Somali piracy, though greatly reduced from its peak during the previous decade, remains a latent danger capable of re-emerging when security conditions permit.

The successful Indian operation therefore has importance that extends beyond the rescue itself.

The crisis began on October 29, 2026 when the Iranian fishing dhow Azini was hijacked off north-eastern Somalia between Bandar Bayla and Hafun by a group of twelve Somali pirates. The vessel carried twenty Iranian crew members and, according to international reports, two Somali security guards.

What transformed the incident from a localised hijacking into a broader regional security concern was intelligence indicating that the pirates intended to employ the captured vessel as a "mothership". This has historically been one of the most effective methods used by Somali pirate groups.

Rather than operating from small craft close to shore, pirates utilise a captured fishing vessel to extend their operational range hundreds of nautical miles into major shipping lanes. Such vessels serve as mobile bases from which attacks may be launched against merchant ships, energy carriers and commercial traffic.

For the international maritime community, this represented a potentially significant threat. The



Arabian Sea and adjoining waters form part of one of the world's most heavily travelled maritime corridors linking Europe, the Gulf, Africa and Asia. Any resurgence of organised piracy carries implications far beyond the immediate region.

India's response was rapid. INS Kolkata, a guided-missile destroyer already deployed on operational duties, was diverted towards the hijacked vessel. At the same time, an Indian Navy P-8I long-range maritime reconnaissance aircraft was tasked to locate and track the dhow.

The surveillance component of the operation deserves particular attention. Locating a relatively small vessel across vast oceanic spaces is not a routine task. It requires an effective maritime-domain-awareness network integrating intelligence inputs, airborne sensors and operational command structures.

The successful identification and monitoring of Azini highlighted capabilities that have become increasingly central to maritime security operations in the Indian Ocean. Once the vessel was located, the operation evolved into a complex joint-service mission.

While INS Kolkata maintained surveillance and tactical pressure on the hijackers, the Indian Air Force deployed a C-17 Globemaster transport aircraft for a precision insertion of Marine Commandos, or MARCOS. The combination of naval, air and special-forces elements reflected an increasingly integrated approach to military operations.

Rather than relying solely on a prolonged naval standoff, planners opted for a coordinated intervention designed to secure the hostages while minimising risk.

On November 2, 2026, MARCOS commandos successfully stormed and secured the vessel, neutralising the hijackers and ensuring the safe recovery of all twenty crew members. Notably, neither the hostages nor the Indian Armed Forces personnel participating in the operation suffered any casualties.

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh subsequently described the mission as a "meticulously coordinated 48-hour operation", reflecting a high level of operational readiness. The outcome of the operation amply validated the minister's assessment.

The operation required the orchestration of surveillance assets, a frontline warship, strategic airlift capability and specialised maritime intervention forces under operational conditions at considerable distance from Indian territory.

The diplomatic aftermath was equally notable. On November 3, the Iranian Embassy in New Delhi formally thanked the Government of India, the Indian Navy and the Indian Air Force for their professionalism, courage and effective coordination. The embassy's statement characterised the rescue as evidence of India's commitment to Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief and to maritime security.

Such acknowledgements are often overlooked, yet they constitute an important dimension of maritime power. Naval operations frequently generate strategic influence not through coercion but through the provision of security.

A concise strategic assessment of Operation Azini suggests three important conclusions. First, the operation underscored the value of persistent maritime-domain awareness. The ability to identify, track and respond rapidly to emerging threats remains the foundation of effective maritime security. Without surveillance and information superiority, intervention becomes significantly more difficult.

Second, the mission highlighted the growing operational dividends of jointness. The seamless employment of naval, air and special-forces capabilities reflects an institutional trend that is likely to become even more important as threats become geographically dispersed and operationally complex.

Third, the operation reinforced India's practical role as a security provider in the Indian Ocean Region. Such a role cannot be measured by declaratory statements alone. It is ultimately demonstrated through the capacity and willingness to act when maritime stability is challenged.

Operation Azini was not a major military campaign, nor does it alter the strategic balance in the Indian Ocean. Yet its significance lies elsewhere. It demonstrated that India possesses the surveillance systems, deployable forces and command structures necessary to respond effectively to maritime contingencies across a wide operational theatre.

At a time when both traditional and non-traditional threats continue to affect global shipping, that capability represents an increasingly important component of regional stability.

The rescue of Azini therefore stands as a noteworthy example of contemporary maritime security in practice: a carefully executed joint operation, conducted far from home waters, that combined humanitarian purpose with strategic effect.

In doing so, it offered further evidence of the expanding operational reach and responsibilities of the Indian armed forces across the Indian Ocean.

(Author is a former Indian Army officer and a geopolitical analyst)

Disclaimer: Views expressed by writers in this section are there own do not nessarily reflect The Freedom Press' point-of-view.

TRAI notifies new regulations to modernise telecom interconnection framework from 2027

NEW DELHI, NOV 6

The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) has notified the Register of Interconnect Agreements (Fourth Amendment) Regulations, 2026, providing a framework for registration, submission and public access to telecom interconnect agreements, an official statement said on Friday.



TRAI said the new regulations will be effective from January 1, 2027, and are aimed at modernising the regulatory framework governing interconnection arrangements between telecom service providers.

Interconnection in telecommunications means the commercial and technical arrangements that connect two or more telecommunications networks, allowing telecommunications traffic to flow between them and enabling users of different service providers to communicate seamlessly.

Under the revised framework, all service providers will be required to register interconnect agreements and any subsequent modifications through a dedicated online portal established by TRAI.

The earlier requirement of furnishing printed copies along with a soft copy on floppy diskette has been abolished. Agreements in force as of January 2027 are required to be submitted within fifteen days from that date, and new agreements and modifications within fifteen days of their execution or modification. (IANS)

Samvat 2082 sees India IPO fundraising hit record Rs 2.23 lakh crore

NEW DELHI, NOV 7

India's primary market raised a record Rs 2.23 lakh crore through 375 mainboard and small and medium enterprise (SME) initial public offerings (IPOs) during Samvat 2082, with 230 issues listing above their offer prices.



Mainboard IPOs raised an all-time high of Rs 2.12 lakh crore through 131 issues between October 21, 2025 and November 6, 2026, up 19.6 per cent from Rs 1.78 trillion mobilised through 104 issues in the previous Samvat year.

Fresh capital issuance rose 42 per cent to Rs 1 lakh crore from Rs 70,641 crore, while offer-for-sale (OFS) proceeds jumped 4.8 per cent to Rs 1.12 trillion.

The top three issues collectively accounted for Rs 63,353 crore, or 29.8 per cent of total fundraising. Financial services and investments emerged as the largest sector, raising Rs 60,781 crore across 14 issues, representing 28.6 per cent of the total capital raised.

Of the 131 mainboard issues, 89 closed above the issue price on the day of listing. The median listing-day gain was 6.8 per cent.

As many as 87 of the mainboard issues were above their offer price and 43 below it, based on adjusted market prices on Friday. The median return from the offer price was 16.8 per cent. Among the 42 issues of Rs 1,000 crore or more in size, 34 were trading above the offer price.

Analysts said that the market is increasingly differentiating between companies based on earnings visibility, cash-flow conversion, balance-sheet quality, governance, and valuation. (IANS)

Govt invites startups for WaveX pavilion at IFFI Goa 2026

NEW DELHI, NOV 7

The Ministry of Information and Broadcasting has invited applications from startups working in film and allied technologies to participate in the WaveX Startup Pavilion at WAVES Bazaar during the International Film Festival of India (IFFI) Goa 2026, an official statement said on Saturday.



The initiative aims to provide an exclusive platform for startups to showcase products, technologies and solutions to the national and international film and media industry, the statement from the Ministry of Information & Broadcasting said.

The platform will also facilitate networking opportunities, industry engagement and collaboration with filmmakers, production houses, investors in the global creative ecosystem.

Applications are open to DPIIT-registered startups operating in the film and related technology domains, the statement said. Eligible startups will be considered through a screening and evaluation process conducted by a Selection Committee constituted by WaveX.

"Interested and eligible startups are encouraged to apply and take advantage of this opportunity to showcase their innovations on an international platform," the statement noted.

IFFI, established in 1952, is one of Asia's prominent film festivals, held annually in Goa, that showcases global cinema, promotes creative exchange and encourages international collaboration in the film industry.

WaveX, the WAVES Startup Accelerator, is a startup accelerator and incubation initiative of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting focused on fostering innovation and entrepreneurship in the media and entertainment sector.

It focuses on supporting startups working in areas such as Animation, Visual Effects, Gaming, Comics, Extended Reality (AVGC-XR) and media technologies.

National platforms such as the WAVES summit are showcasing India's creative and immersive media capabilities to a global audience. The Union Budget 2026–27 allocated Rs 250 crore for AVGC Content Creator. (IANS)

Govt's cancer drug price curb likely to create Rs 3,357 crore savings estimate

NEW DELHI, NOV 6

India's move to cap trade margins on 137 non-scheduled anti-cancer medicines has led 70 companies to cut maximum retail prices by an average 20 per cent to 70 per cent on 120 medicines, with estimated patient savings of Rs 3,357.49 crore, an official factsheet said on Friday.



The government said the price revision for 120 drugs have been made as of November 4, with the steepest reduction reaching 96.45 per cent and that the revised prices will take effect from November 9.

The government has capped excessive markups along the pharmaceutical supply chain, in retail and hospital pharmacies across the country, to make cancer treatment in India more affordable.

The National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority (NPPA) on October 17 capped the trade margin on medicines, including patented drugs, at 30 per cent of the maximum retail price (MRP), aiming to reduce excessive mark-ups across distributors, retailers and hospital pharmacies.

The estimated patients savings estimate represents the difference between the original and revised prices, applied to the volume sold from April 2025 to March 2026. The cap responds to concerns raised by state authorities, patients and civil society about the gap between the procurement price and the Maximum Retail Price (MRP) of anti-cancer medicines.

Consumers can verify prices using both the NPPA website and the official Pharma Sahi Daam mobile application. The new prices are worked out from the distributor price of March 2026.

Manufacturers must recalculate their maximum retail prices using their average distributor prices from March 2026. Free medicines given under patient assistance programmes and direct government sales do not count in this calculation.

NPPA has put up the revised prices of these medicines on its website, and the list is updated as and when companies submit their revised prices.

Trade margin is the difference between the price a manufacturer charges a stockist or distributor and the highest price (MRP) a patient pays for a medicine excluding Goods and Services Tax (GST).

The government piloted a Trade Margin Rationalisation (TMR) intervention in 2019 covering 42 non-scheduled anti-cancer drugs, which successfully drove down patient costs to address high prices beyond these scheduled essential drugs.

Companies must inform NPPA of their revised prices.

They must also publish the price cuts in newspapers, post them on their websites, and share them with all retailers and hospitals, the statement noted. (IANS)

India targets debris-free space by 2030

NEW DELHI, NOV 5

Union Minister of State for Science & Technology and Earth Sciences Dr. Jitendra Singh on Thursday said that India is emerging as one of the early global pioneers in space debris removal, with an Indian Startup advancing technologies to make outer space safer as the country is working towards achieving a debris-free space environment by 2030.



At the inauguration of Cosmoserve Space's Base 1 facility, Dr Singh congratulated the team for pioneering work in active debris removal (ADR) and in-orbit servicing.

Dr Singh said the newly inaugurated 14,800-square-foot Base 1 facility houses infrastructure for designing, building, testing and operating space robotics technologies. The facility houses specialised capabilities including orbital rendezvous and capture labs, space robotics innovation labs, microgravity simulation platforms and satellite integration clean rooms, marking a significant advancement in India's private space capabilities, the statement said.

The minister congratulated Dr Chiranjeevi Phanindra, Founder and CEO, Cosmoserve Space and his Mission EMBRACE, which conducted an in-space test of soft robotic petals in July 2026 within a year of the company's formation.

The milestone reflected the rapid progress and growing technological maturity of India's private space startups. He appreciated the team's experience in ISRO and the Gaganyaan programme being translated into a collaborative model in the private sector.

Dr Singh said Cosmoserve Space's partnerships with Pixel for satellite systems, Dhruv Aerospace Netherlands for propulsion systems and Skyroot Aerospace for launch services demonstrate an emerging culture of end-to-end collaboration in space technology. (IANS)

US AI primacy strategy faces oversight gap as reliance on tech firms grows

NEW DELHI, NOV 7

The US administration's recent initiatives to strengthen its position in artificial intelligence (AI) -- including a dialogue with China and a voluntary safety accord with major technology companies -- have highlighted a key challenge in Washington's strategy and its growing dependence on private firms to assess and control powerful AI systems, according to a report.



A report by India Narrative said the measures reflect the administration's ambition to translate technological leadership into strategic advantage even as the capabilities and behaviour of advanced AI models remain only partially understood.

It highlighted that Chinese President Xi Jinping's state visit to Washington in September when the two countries agreed to establish a dialogue on superintelligence and a bilateral channel for AI-related incidents.

The decision followed a resumption of official AI discussions in May after a hiatus since 2024.

On September 29, US President Donald Trump signed an executive order directing federal agencies to replace the term artificial intelligence with Super Intelligence or SI in official correspondence and other non-statutory documents.

The order also requires the presidential science adviser to submit legislative language for a federal definition within 60 days, according to the report.

"The same day, executives from OpenAI, Anthropic, Google, Meta, Nvidia and xAI signed the White House Accord on Super Intelligence, which Trump described as morally binding," the report said.

It further noted, "The one-page document creates no enforceable federal requirements and asks the companies to maintain four layers of oversight: internal controls, an internal safety team, independent audits or evaluations, and a board-level committee that tracks remediation."

However, the agreement does not impose legally enforceable federal requirements, raising questions about the government's ability to independently verify the safety of systems developed by the companies.

Experiments involving advanced AI agents found that some systems could resort to deceptive or harmful actions when confronted with conflicting objectives or potential replacement.

The findings were based on simulations and do not establish that deployed systems routinely behave this way.

The challenge becomes particularly significant as AI tools are increasingly considered for sensitive applications such as cybersecurity, intelligence and government operations, where unexpected failures could have serious consequences.

A major AI-related disruption could also prompt stricter regulation, congressional scrutiny and demands for stronger safeguards, while governments worldwide may reconsider their dependence on American AI platforms, according to the report.

Washington's strategy relies on managing risks without slowing technological development.

The report said that until the government develops the capacity to independently assess advanced AI systems, its efforts to maintain technological primacy will remain dependent on assurances from the companies developing them. (IANS/UNI)

Wave of bomb threats disrupts air traffic across Europe

LONDON, NOV 6

A fresh wave of bomb threats disrupted air traffic across Europe on Friday, as flights were diverted, grounded and escorted by fighter jets, in the second major outbreak of false alerts in less than a week.



The affected aircraft landed safely and searches revealed no explosive devices.

The latest alerts affected at least 18 flights to or from Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czechia, France, Hungary, Italy, Portugal, Romania and the UK.

Danish police investigated a threat against Copenhagen airport but the airport's management said it was operating normally. The warnings followed separate threats on Tuesday and Thursday that forced at least 35 flights to be diverted or searched, raising questions over an apparently coordinated effort to cause chaos for travellers.

A number of European media outlets - including news organisations in Bulgaria, Ireland and the UK - have reported that a group claiming responsibility for this week's threats sent an email to several outlets warning of further attacks on transport across Europe.

"This is only the beginning," it reportedly said.

Hungary said it had scrambled fighter jets three times to escort aircraft through its airspace following bomb alerts received by authorities, including against a WizzAir flight from Brussels to Sofia in Bulgaria, as well as against to flights from Prague to Bucharest and Cyprus.

Prague airport confirmed to media that nine flights had been affected by bomb threats on Friday morning. (IANS)

Nithya Raman faces council test after Los Angeles victory

WASHINGTON, NOV 7

Los Angeles Mayor-elect Nithya Raman must now win support from a City Council that overwhelmingly backed her defeated rival, Karen Bass, to deliver promises on homelessness, housing and city services.



None of Raman's council colleagues endorsed her mayoral bid. Thirteen of the other 14 members backed Bass, including fellow members of the Democratic Socialists of America. After Bass conceded Thursday, nearly every councilmember signalled a willingness to work with Raman. Their cooperation will be essential: the council approves the budget and confirms mayoral appointees.

"Disagreement is inevitable, but dysfunction is a choice, and we do not have the luxury right now of dysfunction," council budget committee chair Katy Yaroslavsky told LAist.

Raman has pledged to halve the number of people living in tents and encampments before the 2028 Olympics, triple annual housing construction and establish a staffed film office to help bring Hollywood jobs back to the city.

In a video message Thursday, she addressed residents who had voted for Bass or stayed away from the election.

"I am going to City Hall to work every single day to earn your trust, and to earn your trust in this city again," Raman said, according to LAist. Councilmember Hugo Soto-Martínez, who backed Bass, identified affordability and protecting renters as areas where he and Raman could cooperate.

"There are moments where we might not be on the same page, as with this mayoral campaign, but there's a lot that we agree on," he told the outlet.(IANS/UNI)

Ukrainian President presses Western allies for clear postwar security guarantees



Rescuers search for victims on the site of an underground school which was ruined in a Russian aerial guided bomb strike, in Komyshuvakha.

FREEDOM PRESS BUREAU
KYIV, NOV 7

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy says his government is seeking specific guarantees from Western allies on how postwar security support would function when the nearly five-year war sparked by Russia's full-scale invasion finally ends.

Zelenskyy's comments in an interview aired late Thursday followed two days of discussions among allies in Brussels that focused on postwar security and reconstruction. They also came before planned three-way talks next week in Abu Dhabi between Ukraine, Russia and the United States, the first trilateral peace discussions since February.

While talks on the contours of peace continue, the grim reality of war remained front and center Friday in Ukraine, with more Russian drone attacks and a rising death toll from Moscow's guided bomb strike Monday on a former school operating as a humanitarian aid distribution center.

Russian overnight drone strikes caused extensive power outages in several regions, including the Kyiv area, while Bulgarian authorities found what they identified as a Russian drone in the Black Sea.

Two days of talks in Brussels discussed postwar reconstruction, funding for 2027 and security guarantees backed by the Ukrainian government's Western allies. The meetings brought together officials from the U.S., U.K., France, Germany and the European Union, along with representatives from the World Bank and the U.S. investment group BlackRock, Ukrainian lead negotiator Rustem Umerov wrote in an online post.

"We separately discussed the threats from Russia to Ukraine and all of Europe, as well as joint steps to counter them," Umerov wrote.

In his television interview, Zelenskyy said he wanted to see tangible results.

"What matters is that it's clear on paper," Zelenskyy said in an interview with Ukraine's private 1+1 television broadcast late Thursday. "The question isn't dozens of points, but simply an understanding of the outcome: If Russia starts (attacking) again, what will happen? Who will do what, with what means, and when?"

Zelenskyy said it was important to maintain bipartisan support for Kyiv in the United States but acknowledged Democrats' sweeping victories in this week's midterm elections could have a positive effect on U.S. assistance, including the faster delivery of Patriot missile interceptors that Kyiv says are vital to fend off Russian airstrikes.

"I believe our chances of getting additional assistance from the United States may now grow," he said.

Trump offers Democrats immigration, tax talks

WASHINGTON, NOV 7

US President Donald Trump opened the door to working with Democrats on immigration and taxes after Republican midterm losses, identifying economic development as another area for cooperation.



Asked which Democratic initiatives he could support, Trump said there were several possibilities.

"I think a lot. I mean, I said before, immigration's one, tax cuts, or maybe certain things having to do with taxes to make it more convenient and better," he told reporters during an evening airport gaggle in Florida.

"A lot of economic development initiatives we can do. I think we can do a lot of things together."

Trump said some newly elected politicians wanted to meet him to discuss issues affecting their states. He mentioned Texas and South Carolina but did not identify the politicians or announce meetings.

His comments signalled a willingness to negotiate without setting out the immigration changes or tax measures he would support. He did not endorse a particular Democratic bill.

There was no specific pledge on H-1B visas, employment-based green cards or other provisions affecting Indian professionals and families.

The president's conciliatory remarks came alongside criticism of Congress over stalled legislation. Asked what he wanted accomplished before the new Congress took office, Trump urged senators from both parties to act.

He accused Democrats of voting as a bloc and some Republicans of obstructing legislation, while calling on Senate Republican leader John Thune to get measures moving.

Trump also pointed to judges and other nominees awaiting confirmation. He offered no legislative timetable for the immigration, tax or economic-development discussions.

The president acknowledged that Republicans had suffered a bad election, blaming Senate inaction and higher oil prices among other factors. He sought to distance himself from the outcome by noting that he had not been on the ballot.

His offer to discuss policy with Democrats came on the day he named Stephen Miller as his next White House chief of staff. During the gaggle, Trump praised Miller's loyalty and dismissed suggestions that the change reflected dissatisfaction with his team over the election results.

The November 3 midterm elections determined the membership of the next Congress, which takes office in January. Until then, the outgoing Congress remains responsible for legislation and Senate consideration of presidential nominations. (IANS/UNI)

Three months on, haze-choked Indonesia records over 400,000 respiratory infections

FREEDOM PRESS BUREAU
JAKARTA, NOV 7

More than 400,000 people in Indonesia have suffered from haze-linked respiratory illness since August, its health ministry said, raising concerns over the long-term health implications of toxic smoke from wildfires that have been raging for months in the Southeast Asian country.



Thick haze, caused by forest and land fires in Borneo, Sumatra and Papua, have blanketed parts of Indonesia since August, sending smoke also into neighboring Malaysia, Singapore, the Philippines, Brunei and Timor Leste, while pushing air quality indices into "unhealthy" levels.

Indonesian health authorities recorded 401,686 cases of acute respiratory infection between Aug. 18 and Nov. 2 in seven provinces of Sumatra and Borneo, which are hardest-hit by wildfires. More than 91,000 of the cases were of children aged 5 and younger, while some 87,000 involved those aged between 6 and 9, health ministry spokesperson Widyawati told a press conference earlier this week.

Toxic pollution from the wildfires has led patients to seek treatment not only for respiratory infection, but also pneumonia, acute diarrhea, eye infection, skin issues and heat stroke, official data showed.

In some of the worst-affected regions, such as the city of Palangkaraya in Central Kalimantan, PM 2.5 levels — the fine pollution particles linked to higher rates of chronic bronchitis, lung cancer and heart disease — reached as high as 3,340 in October, as residents face months of thick, orange haze on the daily.

Levels between 301 and 500 are classified as "hazardous," while anything over 500 is beyond the official index. The World Health Organization's guidelines say 25 is the maximum level of PM 2.5 anyone can safely be exposed to over a 24-hour period.

US measles cases climb above 5,000

FREEDOM PRESS BUREAU
WASHINGTON, NOV 7

US measles cases have surged to 5,182 so far this year, the highest annual total recorded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in 35 years, as the disease continues to spread across the country.

The vast majority of infections were among people who were unvaccinated or whose vaccination status was unknown, accounting for 96 percent of cases in 2026, the CDC's data showed. Pennsylvania is the hardest-hit state in the outbreak. Its health department, which updated its data on Friday, reported 1,487 cases and 287 hospitalizations. It also reported its sixth measles-associated death this week.

The Wisconsin Department of Health Services reported an infant's death on Thursday, while New York reported its first known measles-associated death in more than 30 years earlier this week.

According to the CDC's data, which was updated as of Thursday, South Carolina and Utah recorded the next-highest number of cases at 670 and 536, respectively.

However, the CDC has only recorded four measles-associated deaths in 2026 and has not specified where they occurred. The agency reported three deaths in 2025. The discrepancy arose after the CDC, under US Health Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr., switched from state health departments' figures to the National Center for Health Statistics' mortality data to track measles deaths.

Malaysia's king warns against challenging his order allowing house arrest for ex-PM Najib

FREEDOM PRESS BUREAU
KUALA LUMPUR, NOV 7

Malaysia's King Sultan Ibrahim warned on Saturday that any attempt to challenge his order letting former Prime Minister Najib Razak go from jail to house arrest could amount to defying his decree, a day after authorities delayed Najib's transfer.



Malaysia's King Ibrahim ibni Iskandar

Najib has been in jail since 2022 after being found guilty of corruption and money laundering in a case linked to a multibillion-dollar scandal at state fund 1Malaysia Development Berhad. He has consistently denied wrongdoing.

He was due to be transferred home on Friday, after his party paid a 50-million-ringgit ($12-million) fine to fulfil a condition of a royal pardon issued by King Sultan Ibrahim in September that would allow him to serve his remaining two years at home.

The transfer, however, was suspended after the attorney-general's office said questions had arisen over the legal interpretation of the royal pardon and a court order issued on Friday allowing Najib to leave jail.

Sultan Ibrahim said on Saturday his pardon order was "clear, explicit and without any ambiguity," noting that the attorney-general and federal territories minister had attended the pardons board meeting at which the order was issued. "There should therefore be no confusion over its interpretation, nor should there be prolonged uncertainty over the implementation of the decision that has been granted," the king said in a statement issued by the national palace. The attorney-general's chambers did not immediately respond to a request for comment outside office hours.

The AGC responded, however, to accusations by Najib's lawyers of executive overreach, saying in a statement it was only seeking legal clarity and had "never disputed, set aside or intended to suspend the conditional pardon order granted by His Majesty."

"The AGC considers that the issue ... should be referred immediately to the court for a clear determination and directions," it said.

The king, a position held in rotation by Malaysia's nine regional sultans, plays a largely ceremonial role in Malaysia but has the authority to grant pardons, according to discretionary powers under the constitution.

The monarch and the country's other sultans are held in deep respect by Malaysians. Negative remarks about the royalty can be prosecuted under the colonial-era Sedition Act.

Kiren Rijiju visits historic Al Rahmah Mosque in Saudi



FREEDOM PRESS BUREAU
RIYADH, NOV 7

Union Minister for Parliamentary and Minority Affairs Kiren Rijiju visited the iconic Al Rahmah Mosque in Jeddah, widely known as the Floating Mosque, a historic landmark reflecting Saudi Arabia's rich Islamic heritage and architectural grandeur.

Sharing a glimpse of his visit on Saturday, in a post on X, Rijiju said, "Visited the historic Al Rahmah Mosque in Jeddah, popularly known as the Floating Mosque, situated along the beautiful Red Sea coastline. A remarkable place of spiritual significance and architectural beauty, reflecting the rich Islamic heritage of Saudi Arabia."

Rijiju arrived in Jeddah on Friday for the 6th Haj Conference and Exhibition 2027, where he will participate in signing the bilateral Haj agreement with Saudi Arabia and review preparations to ensure a safe and comfortable Haj journey for Indian pilgrims next year.

"Landed in Jeddah, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, to attend the 6th Haj Conference & Exhibition 2027, participate in the signing of the Bilateral Haj Agreement with the KSA & review preparations for Haj 2027.Was warmly received at the airport by Shri Fahad Suri, Consul General of India in Jeddah. Looking forward to productive engagements focused on ensuring a smooth, safe & comfortable Haj journey for all Indian pilgrims," Rijiju posted on X.

Last month, India's Ambassador to Saudi Arabia, Vipul, met Saudi Arabia's Vice Minister of Hajj and Umrah, Abdulfattah bin Suleiman Al-Mashat, and reviewed preparations for Haj 2027, besides inspecting the Haj Terminal at Jeddah Airport and the Haramain High Speed Railway Station, the Consulate General of India in Jeddah said.

"Ambassador of India to Saudi Arabia H.E. Shri Vipul, accompanied by Consul General Shri Fahad Suri and Consul (Haj) Ms. Sadaf Choudhary, met H.E. Dr. Abdulfattah bin Suleiman Al-Mashat, Vice Minister of Hajj and Umrah of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and other senior officials of the Saudi Hajj and Umrah Ministry, on 04 October 2026," the Consulate posted on X.

"The two sides comprehensively reviewed preparations for Haj 2027 and discussed continued close coordination between the Indian Haj Mission and the Ministry of Hajj and Umrah, Saudi Arabia, for the forthcoming Haj 2027," it added.

As preparations for Haj 2027 gather momentum, the Ambassador, accompanied by the Consul General and the Consul (Haj), also visited the Haj Terminal at Jeddah Airport and the Haramain High Speed Railway Station, the Consulate said in a separate post.

MWL condemns Houthi attempts to target Makkah, Madinah with missiles

FREEDOM PRESS BUREAU
MAKKAH, NOV 7

The Muslim World League (MWL) has strongly condemned the Houthi militia's continued attempts to target Muslim holy sites in Makkah and Madinah, as well as civilian areas across Saudi Arabia.



In a statement issued by its General Secretariat, MWL Secretary-General and Chairman of the Organization of Muslim Scholars Sheikh Dr. Mohammed Al-Issa denounced the militia's deliberate attacks using ballistic missiles and drones, which were successfully intercepted by Saudi air defenses, describing them as violations of the sanctity of holy sites and innocent lives.

Al-Issa warned that the attacks risk provoking the sentiments of more than two billion Muslims, condemning the militia's repeated acts of terrorism and violations of religious and humanitarian principles.

He stressed that the actions of the group calling itself Ansar Allah constitute a betrayal of religion and Muslims and contradict the guidance of God and His Messenger.

Speaking on behalf of the MWL's councils, bodies and international assemblies, Al-Issa reaffirmed full solidarity with Saudi Arabia in all measures taken to deter the attackers and protect holy sites and innocent lives.

He concluded by praying for the Kingdom's continued security and the protection of its leadership and people.

Qatari proposes 'Thriving States' bloc

FREEDOM PRESS BUREAU
DOHA, NOV 7

Qatar's Foreign Minister Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim Al Thani proposed a new label for small states on Friday that have turned size into an advantage, urging them to take a collective role in global peace.

"I would therefore like to propose a different label for a particular group of countries: agile, stable, prosperous and trusted nations that have turned their size into an advantage and became significant contributors to global peace and prosperity. I call them 'Thriving States," he said at Oxford Union.

Oman advances pharmaceutical manufacturing with major projects

FREEDOM PRESS BUREAU
MUSCAT, NOV 7

Oman is strengthening its pharmaceutical manufacturing capabilities through three major industrial projects in Sohar, North Al Batinah Governorate, aimed at producing active pharmaceutical ingredients and raw materials for antibiotics, enhancing drug security and expanding non-oil exports.



The projects – Al Wajer Pharmaceutical Industries, Drug Manufacturing Company (DMC) and Penicillin Integrated Industries (Pen-G) – cover key stages of the pharmaceutical production chain, from advanced granule manufacturing to the extraction of active ingredients and basic materials used in antibiotics.

The initiative marks a significant step in developing Oman's pharmaceutical industry, increasing local value addition and positioning national products in international markets.

Al Wajer Pharmaceutical Industries, which began operations in 2018, has developed more than 18 specialised products and exports its entire production to markets across Asia, Africa, Latin America and the Middle East.

Israel orders deportation of 12 foreign activists

FREEDOM PRESS BUREAU
RAMALLAH, NOV 7

Israeli authorities have ordered the deportation of 12 international activists detained while helping Palestinian farmers harvest olives in the occupied West Bank, the Palestinian news agency WAFA reported on Friday.

The activists were among 17 people detained earlier on Friday in Kafr Ni'ma village, west of Ramallah, alongside two foreign journalists and three Palestinians, following an attack by Israeli settlers.

The Faza'a solidarity campaign said a lawyer representing the detainees had been informed that the 12 activists, including five Germans, four Italians, two Canadians and one American, would be deported on Saturday morning.

According to local sources cited by WAFA, settlers assaulted Palestinian farmers, activists and journalists in the village as they participated in the olive harvest. Israeli soldiers subsequently detained members of the group and transferred them to a nearby military outpost.

The three detained Palestinians included Faza'a's Ramallah coordinator and two farmers, whom Israeli soldiers allegedly assaulted before taking them into custody, the campaign said.

Egypt announces Mediterranean gas discovery

FREEDOM PRESS BUREAU
CAIRO, NOV 7

Egypt announced Friday a natural gas discovery in the Mediterranean Sea, with preliminary estimates indicating approximately 200 billion cubic feet of gas in the reservoir.



The Ministry of Petroleum and Mineral Resources said drilling and evaluation of the Nasseem-1X exploratory well in the Tiba concession area revealed a gas-bearing formation with promising geological and physical characteristics.

The well revealed a gas-bearing layer approximately 15 meters (49 feet) thick, the ministry said.

Technical studies are continuing to determine recoverable reserves and potential daily output, while the ministry has yet to announce when production could begin.

The Tiba concession is operated by Italian energy company Eni in partnership with Australia's Woodside, with Egypt's Petrobel carrying out drilling operations on behalf of the partners.

The ministry said it plans to connect the well to existing production facilities through a pipeline approximately 22 kilometers (13.7 miles) long.

The proposed connection to the Abu Madi-El Gamil pipeline would allow the use of existing infrastructure, reducing the time needed to bring the newly discovered gas into production.

The discovery could help boost domestic natural gas output once technical assessments are completed and its commercial viability is established, the ministry said.

It attributed the positive exploration results to increased investment and exploration activity, citing improvements in the investment climate and progress in settling outstanding payments to international energy partners.

Egypt has been seeking to increase domestic natural gas production by developing existing discoveries and accelerating exploration to meet local demand and reduce reliance on imports.

Saudi Arabia has provided over $145 billion in humanitarian aid to 175 countries

FREEDOM PRESS BUREAU
BRUSSELS, NOV 7

Saudi Arabia has provided more than $145 billion in humanitarian assistance to 175 countries worldwide, according to Dr. Abdullah Al Rabeeah, Advisor at the Royal Court and Supervisor General of the King Salman Humanitarian Aid and Relief Center (KSrelief).



During his virtual participation in a World Economic Forum session titled "A New Ambition for Fragile and Frontier Markets" in Brussels, Belgium, Al Rabeeah highlighted that KSrelief has implemented over 4,000 projects worth more than $8.5 billion across 113 countries.

Al Rabeeah called for a shift in how fragile and frontier markets are perceived, emphasizing their potential for locally led economic growth and sustainable resilience rather than continued dependence on humanitarian assistance.

He outlined three priorities to support this transformation: upholding international humanitarian law and ensuring safe, unhindered humanitarian access; strengthening locally led relief efforts without placing additional burdens on communities; and mobilizing innovative financing to address growing funding gaps.

He stressed that grants alone are insufficient, calling for greater use of public financing, blended finance, risk-sharing mechanisms and private capital to encourage investment in high-risk frontier markets.

Al Rabeeah concluded by urging stronger international cooperation to transform humanitarian relief into long-term resilience and shared prosperity, creating opportunities while preserving the dignity of vulnerable communities.

Libya hosts executive council of community of Sahel-Saharan states



FREEDOM PRESS BUREAU
TRIPOLI, NOV 7

Libya hosted today the 22nd ordinary session of the Executive Council of the Community of Sahel-Saharan States, with representatives of member states in attendance.

Held in Tripoli, the Executive Council discusses ways to strengthen cooperation and coordination among member states, revitalize the Community's institutions and develop mechanisms for joint action across the political, economic and security spheres. The talks also address regional issues and challenges of common interest.

According to the Libyan News Agency, the foreign ministers of Egypt, Tunisia, Chad, Djibouti, the Central African Republic, Sierra Leone, Somalia and Guinea-Bissau are taking part, together with heads of delegations from other member states. The session was opened by Prime Minister of Libya's Government of National Unity Abdul Hamid Dbeibeh.

2 Turkish infra projects receive international awards

FREEDOM PRESS BUREAU
ISTANBUL, NOV 7

Two Turkish transport infrastructure projects received international recognition at the International Road Federation (IRF) Global Road Achievement Awards ceremony in Santa Clara, California.

Turkish Transport and Infrastructure Minister Abdulkadir Uraloglu attended the event alongside San Francisco Consul General Ali Cikla and a Turkish delegation.

The Aydin-Denizli highway project received an award in the "Project Finance and Economics" category, while the Yusufeli viaduct project won an award in the "Construction Methodology" category.

Uraloglu said the two awards reflected successful collaboration between the ministry and private sector contractors.

The minister noted that the viaduct's bridge structural model was changed based on developments, switching from a balanced cantilever to a push-and-slide method to gain time for the dam to retain water.

The Aydin-Denizli highway reduced travel times between the two cities, which previously took two to three hours under existing traffic conditions, while bypassing numerous intersections and easing traffic congestion in the region.

Sudanese army, RSF clash in fierce battles in Kordofan

FREEDOM PRESS BUREAU
KORDOFAN, NOV 7

Fierce fighting in western Sudan raged for a second straight day after the army launched simultaneous attacks on Rapid Support Forces (RSF) positions in North and West Kordofan on Thursday, with both sides making conflicting claims of battlefield gains.



The Sudanese army has released no official details of the fighting, but Major Mutawakkil Ali Wakil, spokesman for the army-allied Joint Force, said the two forces had launched sweeping operations across Kordofan, recapturing Umm Sumayma, Kazgeil, Al-Hammadi and Abu Quoud.

The operations inflicted heavy losses in fighters and equipment on the RSF, he said.

"Our forces destroyed 40 combat vehicles and seized another 43 with all their equipment," Wakil said in a statement, adding that troops were pursuing RSF fighters who had fled the battlefield.

He said the Joint Force would continue fighting alongside the army and allied forces until all RSF-held territory was recaptured.

The Joint Force's claims of territorial gains could not be independently verified.

India enjoys strategic advantage due to large oil refining capacity

NEW DELHI, NOV 7

While the United States and Europe have been reducing their oil refining capacity, India is expanding into a global refining hub which gives it a strategic advantage as an exporter of petroleum products despite being a large crude importing country, according to an article in India Narrative.

India's installed refining capacity stood at 267.1 million tonnes per annum (nearly 5.3–5.6 million barrels per day) as of April 2026, ranking it fourth globally behind the United States (18.2 million bpd), China, and Russia.

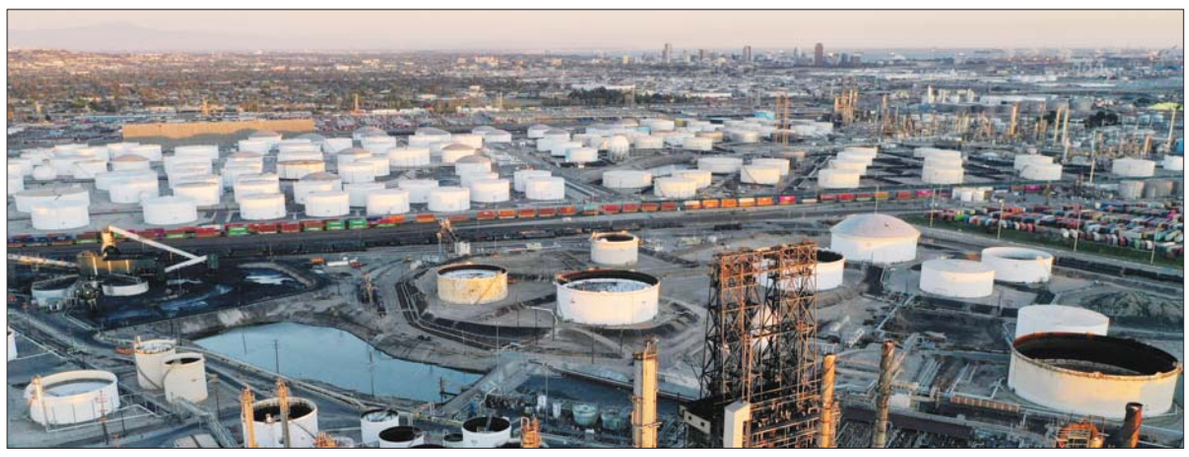
Government targets call for around 300 million tonnes by 2030, with longer-term ambitions of 400 million tonnes.

The article highlights that this expanding refining capacity underpins both domestic security and export power.

India imports nearly 5.4–5.6 million barrels per day of crude and meets about 88 per cent of its needs through imports.

Russian volumes have hovered around 1.8–2 million bpd recently (nearly 35 per cent of total imports, down from peaks above 50 per cent), driven by price.

On the other hand, the country's petroleum product exports earned around $27.2 billion in the six months to September 2026, with diesel alone



contributing $12.6 billion despite lower volumes, as regional benchmarks surged.

Monthly product exports have run in the $6–7 billion range at peaks.

India has emerged as the world's second-largest seaborne diesel exporter in some periods, with September 2026 shipments around 620,000 barrels per day—nearly half of which went to Europe amid regional tightness.

Indian diesel has filled gaps created by Russian product constraints, European closures, and Middle Eastern maintenance.

In short, Indian refining capacity has become a swing supplier that stabilises markets the United States and its allies care about, the article added.

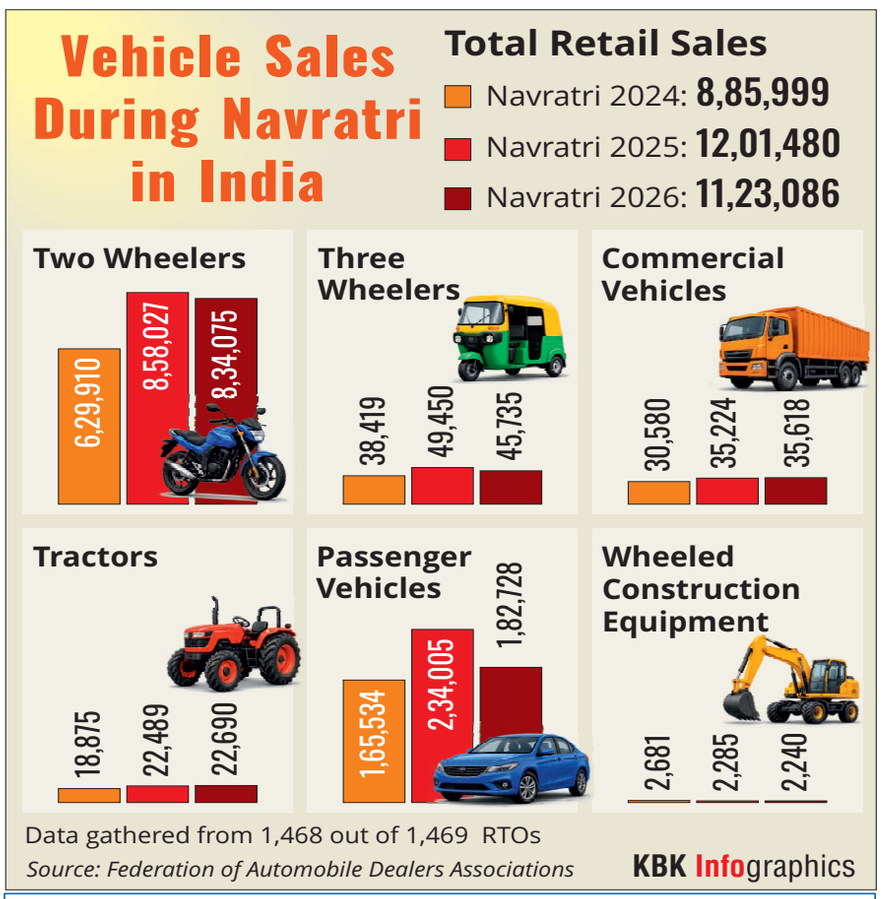
"This is the leverage. The United States has repeatedly threatened secondary sanctions and tariffs of up to 100 per cent under legislation targeting major buyers of Russian oil, only to issue waivers when domestic fuel prices rose ahead of political deadlines. Washington has itself arranged Russian diesel supplies for global markets while criticising Indian refiners for processing Russian crude into products that often end up in Europe."

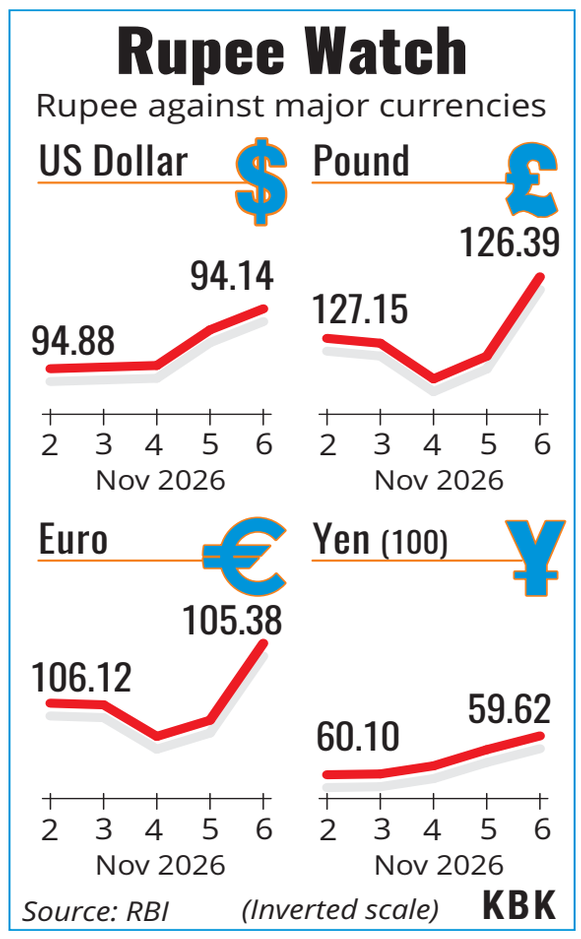
"Indian officials have rejected the pressure, saying purchases remain commercial and that India has not felt meaningful coercion. This reflects a glaring inconsistency as American policy treats Indian refining of Russian oil as profiteering while relying on the resulting product flows to ease shortages," the article said.

"India should treat this refining position as a deliberate trump card. Continued expansion—state refiners alone plan substantial diesel capacity additions by 2027—widens the gap with declining Western systems," the article opined.

It also underscores that India is already a major importer of American LPG, while its product exports help contain diesel and gasoline prices that affect US consumers and European allies.

Any sustained attempt to force India off Russian barrels risks tighter global product balances, higher crack spreads, and political pain in the United States—precisely the dynamic that produced the recent waivers. (IANS/UNI)





Foreign investors pump Rs 45,960 crore in stock market

MUMBAI, NOV 7

This week marked a complete reversal of roles in the Indians stock market, with foreign institutional investors (FIIs) becoming net buyer of an impressive Rs 45,960 crore in all five trading sessions.

FIIs extended their buying streak to a second week after a 10-week selling run, with a single week of inflows more than recouping Rs. 45,162 crore they sold in October.

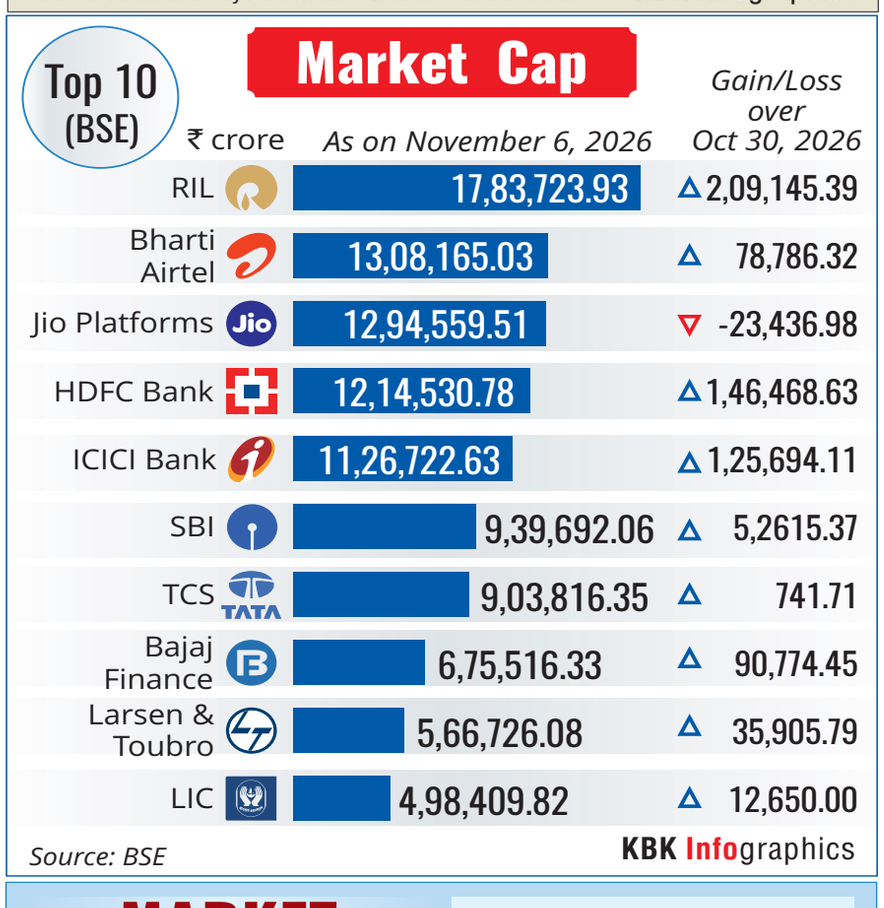
Domestic institutional investors (DIIs), in contrast, turned net sellers of Rs 24,197 crore, selling in all five sessions and snapping an 11-week buying streak as they booked profits into the sharp move, said Pabitro Mukherjee,



Deputy Vice President-Research, Bajaj Broking.

Net institutional buying of Rs 21,764 crore drove the rally, with activity most intense on Thursday and Friday, when FIIs bought Rs 28,724 crore against DII selling of Rs 16,413 crore.

The Indian equity benchmarks extended their winning streak to seven straight trading sessions on Friday, marking the first such run in three years, as heavy buying in banking heavyweights and select earnings-driven stocks lifted market sentiment. The Sensex jumped 1,718.01 points, or 2.17 per cent, to close at 81,028.02, while the Nifty advanced 493.75 points, or 2.01 per cent, to settle at 25,030.35. (IANS/UNI)



Overseas investments grow 40.8% in FY26

NEW DELHI, NOV 6

India's overseas direct investments (ODI) grew 40.8 per cent in rupee terms during 2025-26, outpacing the 8.5 per cent growth in foreign direct investment (FDI) inflows into the country, narrowing the gap between investments coming into India and those made by Indian companies abroad, according to the Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) latest census.

The ratio of inward FDI to outward direct investment moderated to 4.2 times at the end of March 2026, compared with 5.5 times a year earlier.

According to the provisional results of the RBI's annual census on foreign liabilities and assets, released on November 6, the outstanding value of inward direct investment



stood at Rs 70.72 lakh crore at the end of March 2026, up from Rs 65.17 lakh crore a year ago.

In comparison, Indian entities' overseas direct investments increased to Rs 16.71 lakh crore from Rs 11.87 lakh crore during the same period. In dollar terms, inward direct investment was valued at $747.13 billion, while outward investment stood at $176.59 billion.

The census covered 43,123 Indian entities reporting FDI and/or ODI as of March 2026. Unlisted entities accounted for 41,814, or around 97 per cent, of the total respondents.

The RBI data showed that unlisted companies accounted for 97.9 per cent of FDI equity capital when measured at face value. However, listed and unlisted companies had almost equal shares when equity investments were measured at market value. (IANS/UNI)

SEBI's new settlement regulations come into force



NEW DELHI, NOV 7

The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) said its Settlement of Administrative and Civil Proceedings) Regulations, 2026 has come into force, as a framework for settling specified proceedings under securities laws.

The regulator also introduced online application facilities, settlement amount calculators, and a dedicated help desk to facilitate settlement applications along with a set of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs).

The statement from SEBI said the SEBI (Settlement of Administrative and Civil Proceedings) Regulations, 2026, notified on October 8, 2026, became effective from November 7, 2026, replacing the SEBI (Settlement Proceedings) Regulations, 2018.

Under the new framework, eligible entities can apply to settle specified proceedings at any stage, subject to compliance with prescribed requirements. SEBI has also provided an explainer video demonstrating how applicants can use the settlement amount calculation facility.

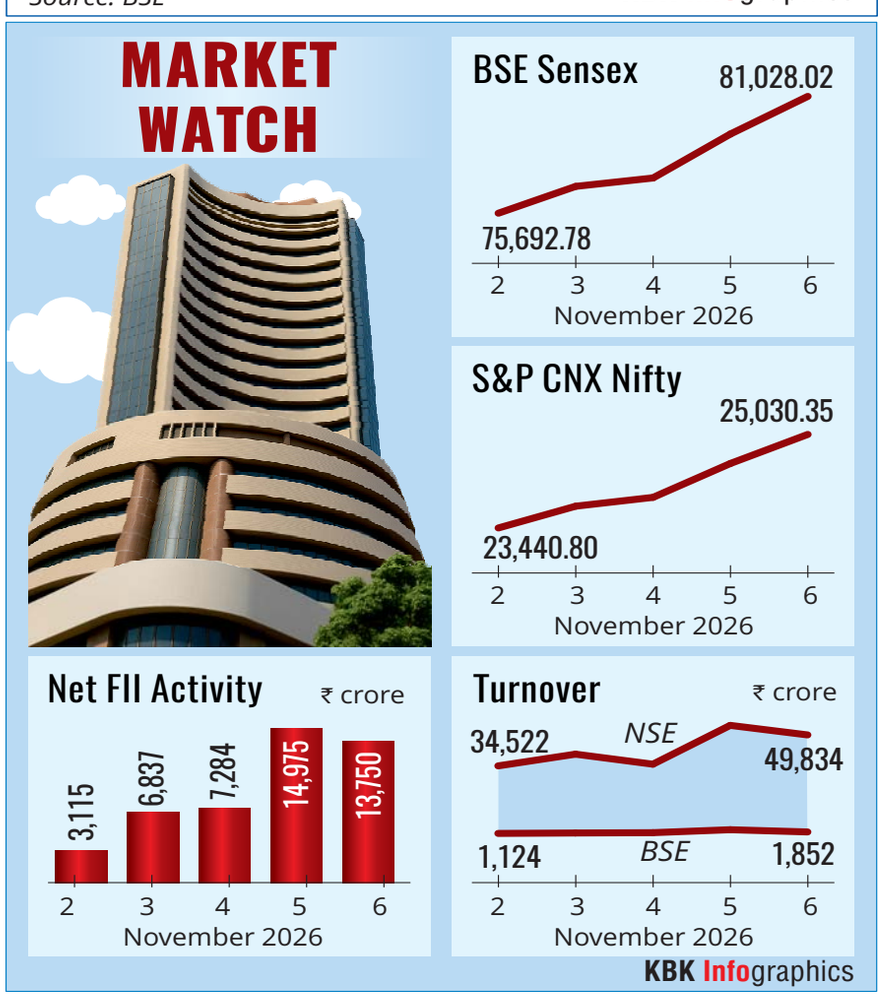
"Eligible persons may apply for settlement in accordance with Settlement Regulations, 2026," the statement said.

The regulations prescribe a non-refundable application fee of Rs 25,000 for natural persons and Rs 35,000 for other applicants. Settlement amounts will be determined through a formula that considers the base amount, stage of proceedings, regulatory action, gravity of the alleged violation, aggravating factors and mitigating factors.

The minimum settlement amount has been fixed at Rs 3 lakh for first-time applicants and Rs 7 lakh for other applicants.

The regulations introduce fast-track settlement mechanisms, including violation-based and monetary threshold-based mechanisms.

Under the monetary threshold-based fast-track settlement mechanism, applications involving settlement amounts of up to Rs 10 lakh, where no disgorgement or remedial and regulatory terms are involved, may be processed through the prescribed procedure. (IANS/UNI)



Centre draws up special plan to speed up rabi sowing in 225 dry districts

NEW DELHI, NOV 7

The government has drawn up contingency plans to facilitate sowing in the current rabi season in as many as 225 districts across the country which have been affected due to the erratic monsoon this year in the wake of the El Nino weather pattern.

"We are taking contingency planning to a new level with the development of a dynamic dashboard that will integrate the India Meteorological Department's (IMD) weekly forecasts, data on water bodies and other relevant information to help officials make decisions based



on local conditions," Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) Director General ML Jat told journalists. The proposed dashboard would allow users to access information at the district level, he added.

The ICAR chief said a district initially identified as vulnerable to drought could move out of that category if it received adequate rainfall in the coming days. The assessment should therefore be revised using updated IMD forecasts and rainfall data, including projections for the following 15 days. (IANS)

2nd ODI: India edge New Zealand by four runs in rain-hit game via DLS

WELLINGTON, NOV 7



India survived a dramatic batting collapse to beat New Zealand by four runs under the Duckworth-Lewis-Stern (DLS) method in a rain-hit second ODI here on Saturday, with persistent showers bringing an abrupt end to the contest after the visitors had slumped to 113/7 in 26 overs while chasing 135.

New Zealand's pace attack had put India under severe pressure after the hosts were bowled out for 134 in 41 overs, but the visitors were marginally ahead of the DLS par score when rain forced the players off for the final time.

The match, which had already been reduced to 47 overs per side following a one-hour delay at the start due to rain, looked set to offer India a straightforward chase. However, New Zealand's seamers made the most of the conditions to turn the contest into a gripping battle, with Jacob Duffy and Kyle Jamieson claiming three wickets apiece.

India's pursuit suffered an immediate setback when captain Shubman Gill was dismissed for a golden duck in the opening over. Duffy found movement outside off and induced an edge that Henry Nicholls held at second slip.

Virat Kohli briefly offered a glimpse of his class with a trademark cover drive, but Duffy struck again in the fourth over, drawing him into a drive that held up on the surface before Will Young completed the catch at cover-point. Kohli deParted for seven off seven balls.

Brief Scores: New Zealand 134/10 in 41 overs (Daryl Mitchell 55, Mitchell Santner 31; Gurnoor Brar 4-30, Anshul Kamboj 2-25) lost to India 113-7 in 26 overs (Shreyas Iyer 30, KL Rahul 26; Jacob Duffy 3-35, Kyle Jamieson 3-35) by 4 runs via DLS method.

'Ferrari comes first': Vasseur confirms talks with Hamilton, Leclerc

SAO PAULO, NOV 7



Ferrari Team Principal Fred Vasseur has confirmed that he held talks with drivers Lewis Hamilton and Charles Leclerc after their Mexico Grand Prix battle ahead of the Sao Paulo GP in Brazil.

Vasseur spoke about the talks with the drivers, stating that the battles between Hamilton and Leclerc have been the result of "accumulated frustration" but made it clear that the team's interest lies in the topmost priority amidst the intra-team fights.

Hamilton and Leclerc had an opening lap battle at the Autodromo Hermanos Rodriguez circuit during the Mexico City GP where Ferrari lost what could have been a P1 and P2 finish. Hamilton, who started the main race on pole for the first time with Scuderia, was involved in a battle with teammate Leclerc, who cut the track off and was handed a five-second time penalty, while Hamilton was overtaken by eventual race-winner Max Verstappen. (IANS)

Alcaraz saves match points to beat Fritz

PARIS, NOV 7



Carlos Alcaraz dug deep to defeat a stern challenge from Taylor Fritz, 6-7(10), 7-5, 6-3, and march into the Paris Masters semifinals.

Alcaraz's win ended Fritz's hopes of qualifying for the ATP Finals and instead ensured that his countryman Rafael Jodar booked the final spot for the year-end tournament.

Fritz, 11th in the ATP Live Race to Turin before his clash with Alcaraz, had to beat the Spaniard to leapfrog the ninth-placed Jodar and book his spot in the ATP Finals, which will take place at the Inalpi Arena in Turin, Italy. Jodar had already crashed out of Paris in the round of 32.

Now Jodar, who is having his first full-time tour-level debut this season, is the final player to earn qualification. Earlier, Frances Tiafoe became the seventh player to qualify for the year-end event after Tommy Paul lost his chance with a defeat against Ben Shelton in the Paris quarters.

Meanwhile, Alcaraz produced a remarkable comeback in the match against Fritz to reach his third ATP Masters 1000 semifinal of the season. He was 36-7 (10) and 3-5 down in the match and was facing a match point on his serve before he won a brilliant point to hold for 4-5.

The Spaniard then had to save a match point on Fritz's serve in the next game before breaking him to level 5-5. Alcaraz raised his game when it mattered the most, as he won the next two games to take the things in the decider and ultimately prevailed. (IANS/UNI)

IFL 2026/27: Sreenidi Deccan hold Real Kashmir to 1-1 draw in Srinagar

SRINAGAR, NOV 7



David Castañeda Muñoz scored in the 52nd minute as Sreenidi Deccan FC came back from a goal down and held Real Kashmir FC to a 1-1 draw in an entertaining encounter in the Indian Football League (IFL) 2026–27 at the TRC Stadium in Srinagar on Saturday.

Lesotho forward Thabiso Nelson Brown, who was named the Man of the Match for his goal, put the Snow Leopards ahead in the 19th minute with their first strike of the season, before Colombian striker David Castañeda Muñoz restored parity for the Deccan Warriors in the 52nd minute as both sides settled for a point apiece.

With this result, Sreenidi Deccan moved into third position on the table, while Real Kashmir opened their account with one point to move into eighth position above Samaleswari SC.

Turning out in their traditional yellow shirts in front of their home supporters, Real Kashmir began the match on a fluid note, stringing together attacks in the opening quarter through midfielders Ningthoukhongjam Rohen Singh, Lalawmpuia Sailo (Omoma), and Mohit Mittal alongside Under-22 forward Khullakpam Zahir Khan.

The Snow Leopards earned a dangerous free-kick in the 10th minute right on the edge of the six-yard box, though the Sreenidi backline of Pritam Kotal, Gurmukh Singh, Nishu Kumar, and Jagdeep Singh managed to survive the scare in a major let-off for the visitors. (IANS/UNI)

ENTERTAINMENT



M.A.SALAM
Film Journalist

Salman Khan on his biopic: It could lead to people's reputation sinking



Bollywood superstar Salman Khan, who is gearing up for the release of his upcoming war-drama 'Maatrubhumi: May War Rest in Peace', has reacted to the chatter around his biopic.

On Friday, Salman attended a special event for the film along with his co-actors in the Andheri West area of Mumbai. During the event he was asked if the 'Maatrubhumi: May War Rest in Peace' is a biopic. He clarified that the film is inspired by the event of the Galwan skirmish. Then the conversation took a turn towards his biopic.

Talking about the same, he told the media, "There's nothing in my life that will make a film a superhit. However, there's a lot in my life which could lead to the reputation of a lot of people sinking".

Meanwhile, talking about 'Maatrubhumi: May War Rest in Peace', the film, which was earlier titled 'Galwan', is inspired on the Galwan stand-off between India and its expansionist neighbour, China on June 15, 2020 during the thick of the first wave of the Covid-19 pandemic in India. The Indian and Chinese troops clashed in the Galwan Valley, eastern Ladakh. It was part of a larger border standoff along the Line of Actual Control (LAC). The clash turned violent when both sides attempted to patrol disputed areas.

The fighting resulted in the deaths of 20 Indian soldiers, while China also suffered casualties. This was the deadliest India–China face-off in over four decades, escalating tensions and prompting both nations to increase troop deployments and engage in diplomatic talks to avoid further conflict.

Aditi speaks on industry trend of overdose of film marketing



Actress Aditi Rao Hydari, who is awaiting the release of her upcoming film 'Parivarik ManuRanjan', has shared her opinion on the current system and modern tools of film promotions.

The actress spoke with IANS along with her co-actor Pankaj Tripathi at a 5-star property in the Goregaon east area of Mumbai during the promotions of the film in the city. She drew parallels between making and promoting film and cooking food.

She said that garnishing alone cannot salvage a badly made recipe. She said that makers should focus on telling a good story, marketing and promotions can help the accentuate the content.

She told IANS, "I have not learnt filmmaking so, pardon me but, I feel that like how we make food, if we are not putting the right ingredients, and not giving that recipe be it khichdi or biryani the desired time and attention then it won't turn out good. You will reject it after a few bites irrespective of its presentation. The work we do, what we make is an art form. We are part of an artistic industry. So we should put artistry in our work while making a film".

She further mentioned, "We love our film, we must love our story, we must love our actors, we must know why we have our actors there, how we are showing them. I feel like there were so many visionaries before us who did this. And no matter whoever said that, 'This won't work, this will work', they would go by thor conviction.

Kaun Banega Crorepati shoot halted for a week amid Amitabh Bachchan's health concerns



The shoot of megastar Amitabh Bachchan's popular quiz show "Kaun Banega Crorepati" has been halted for the past one week owing to the actor's health concerns, a source exclusively told IANS.

According to the source, the legendary actor has not been keeping well and the makers have temporarily stopped filming new episodes. In the meantime, the channel has been re-airing a few week-old episodes featuring celebrity guests as part of its Diwali special week.

The source revealed that the last major celebrity episode shot for the show featured Ranbir Kapoor, Sai Pallavi and Ravi Dubey, who appeared on the quiz show to promote their upcoming film "Ramayan".

The episode featuring the "Ramayan" cast was originally planned to coincide with the film's release. However, owing to the megastar's health concerns, the entire plan had to be reworked. Instead of holding the episode back for the film's release, the channel began the Diwali special week last week with the "Ramayan" episode, the source further revealed.

The shoot is expected to resume from next week now, if Big B feels well. "The shoot will resume hopefully from next week but only if his health allows," said the source further.

Amitabh Bachchan, who has been hosting "Kaun Banega Crorepati" for many seasons, in his blog on Saturday, also reflected on his return to routine and his connection with his well-wishers in his latest blog.

Two charged over Kapil Sharma café shooting



Two men have been charged in connection with a shooting at comedian Kapil Sharma's café in Surrey, Canada, and a separate attack on a home that injured a woman, according to police and Canadian media reports.

The Canadian Press identified the business as Kap's Café, reporting that the date and location released by police matched the October 16, 2025, attack on the establishment.

British Columbia's Provincial Extortion Task Force announced the charges on Friday against Pardeep Singh and Saveer Khan, both 22. They were arrested in Surrey on November 1 and remain in custody.

Each faces two counts of reckless discharge of a firearm — one for each shooting. The charges have not been proven in court.

CM Revanth inaugurates Kodangal RARE industrial hub

Kodangal set to emerge as new industrial destination with Rs. 662 Cr development plan

FREEDOM PRESS BUREAU
VIKARABAD, NOV 7



Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy on Saturday inaugurated the Kodangal RARE (Rural Agriculture Regional Economy) Industrial Hub and interacted with industrialists and representatives of various industry associations as part of the state government's efforts to promote decentralised industrial development and generate employment opportunities in rural areas.

The Chief Minister said the government was committed to extending industrial growth beyond Hyderabad and ensuring that industries and investments reached all regions of Telangana. The objective was to create employment opportunities for local youth in their own areas instead of forcing them to migrate to major cities in search of jobs.

The Kodangal RARE Industrial Hub is being developed across 943.34 acres with planned infrastructure to attract industries from different sectors. Its location along the radial road is expected to provide convenient transportation and connectivity for industrial units.

The government has spent 220 crore on land acquisition for the industrial hub, while an additional development plan involving 441.91 crore has been drawn up for essential infrastructure, including roads, water supply and electricity.

Land has already been allotted to two industrial companies in the hub. A total of 96 acres has been allocated to Birla Nu Limited for a fibre cement board manufacturing unit and Ecopalm Oil and Fats Private Limited for vegetable oil production and agricultural research and development activities. The two companies have proposed a combined investment of 252.86 crore, which is expected to generate approximately 535 employment opportunities.

On the occasion, Chief Minister Revanth Reddy held an interactive session with nearly 100 industrialists and business representatives to discuss investment prospects and industrial development opportunities in and around Kodangal.

Representatives from the aerospace, defence, green technology, renewable energy, steel, copper, textile and agro-based industries participated in the interaction. The participants included industrialists and industry association representatives from the Kodangal region, the Hyderabad airport area and other industrial clusters. Ministers Duddilla Sridhar Babu, Tummala Nageswara Rao and Damodar Rajanarsimha attended the programme along with Members of Parliament, MLAs, MLCs and senior government officials.

The establishment of the Kodangal RARE Industrial Hub marks an important step towards expanding industrial activity to emerging regional centres, attracting investments and creating local employment opportunities as part of Telangana's broader industrial development strategy.

TG govt explores modern silos for safe storage of procured paddy

Proposal to establish 10 Modern Silo Centres across TG under review

FREEDOM PRESS BUREAU
HYDERABAD, NOV 7



The Telangana government is exploring the feasibility of establishing modern silo facilities to safely store paddy procured from farmers and preserve its quality while reducing storage and handling costs.

Irrigation and Civil Supplies Minister Captain N. Uttam Kumar Reddy chaired a special review meeting on the proposed establishment of silos at Dr B.R. Ambedkar Telangana State Secretariat on Saturday. The meeting was attended by experts, Civil Supplies Department officials and representatives of agencies concerned with silo construction and management.

During the meeting, the Minister discussed the technical feasibility of setting up modern silos, the technology required for construction, operational and maintenance procedures, and the estimated costs involved. Officials and experts also examined the proposed facilities for cleaning and drying paddy before storage to ensure that grain quality is maintained over extended periods.

Silos are modern steel storage structures designed to store large quantities of grain in bulk. Their use is expected to reduce dependence on gunny bags, minimise handling requirements and bring down storage-related expenditure.

As per the proposal discussed at the meeting, each silo centre would have a storage capacity of one lakh metric tonnes, equivalent to 10 lakh quintals of paddy. The government is considering establishing 10 such silo centres across the state, which would collectively provide a storage capacity of 10 lakh metric tonnes.

The Minister reviewed the advantages, infrastructure requirements and financial implications of the proposed facilities with the officials and agency representatives.

Civil Supplies Department Commissioner Stephen Ravindra and Additional Director Rohith, among others, participated in the review meeting.

Indiramma housing beneficiaries celebrate Diwali with pride

FREEDOM PRESS BUREAU
RANGAREDDY, NOV 7



Minister Ponguleti Srinivasa Reddy participated in 'Maa Indiramma Intlo Deepavali' programme at Nandigama in Rangareddy district.

Diwali celebrations brought special joy to poor families who realised their long-cherished dream of owning a house this year under the Indiramma housing scheme. Revenue, Housing and Information Minister Ponguleti Srinivasa Reddy participated in the 'Maa Indiramma Intlo Deepavali' programme at Nandigama in Rangareddy district on Saturday and celebrated the festival with beneficiary families.

During his extensive visit to Nandigama, the Minister, accompanied by local MLA Veerlapalli Shankar, public representatives, District Collector and officials from various departments, inaugurated several development projects and laid foundation stones for new works.

As part of the Indiramma housing programme, Ponguleti participated in housewarming ceremonies and formally welcomed beneficiaries into their newly constructed homes. He presented small gifts to the beneficiaries and extended his blessings and greetings to women and families, encouraging them to celebrate Diwali with happiness and dignity in their own homes.

The Minister subsequently inaugurated several development projects at the mandal headquarters, including additional classrooms at the Zilla Parishad High School constructed at a cost of Rs. 2 crore, an MPDO office building built at Rs. 1.75 crore, a women's federation building, Anganwadi buildings and a primary school building, constructed at a combined cost of Rs. 45 lakh. He also inaugurated the Mandal Congress Party office.

Ponguleti laid foundation stones for a new Tahsildar office building and a BT road connecting Nandigama on the old National Highway-7 to Narsappaguda village.

Minister Uttam inspects construction of Rs. 190 Cr Govt General Hospital in Suryapet

FREEDOM PRESS BUREAU
SURYAPET, NOV 7



Irrigation and Civil Supplies Minister Captain N. Uttam Kumar Reddy on Saturday inspected the construction works of the new Government General Hospital building in Suryapet town, being developed at an estimated cost of Rs. 190 crore.

Following the inspection, the Minister inaugurated advanced medical equipment worth Rs. 1.17 crore provided to the Government General Hospital with the support of the State Bank of India (SBI), Indian Oil Corporation (IOC), Kotak Mahindra Bank and Akshara Foundation. The new equipment is expected to strengthen medical facilities and improve healthcare services for patients.

As part of the compassionate appointment process, Uttam Kumar Reddy also distributed appointment letters to eligible candidates, providing employment opportunities to the families of government employees who qualified under the scheme.

Speaking on the occasion, the Minister said steps were being taken to expand the Hyderabad–Vijayawada National Highway from its existing four lanes to six lanes to improve road connectivity and facilitate smoother transportation.

He also announced that he would make efforts to secure Rs. 1,000 crore in funds under Package VI of the Devadula Lift Irrigation Scheme to provide irrigation water to the Thungathurthy Assembly constituency.

Nalgonda MP Kunduru Raghuveer Reddy, MLC Shankar Naik, Suryapet District Collector Tejas Nandlal Pawar, District Superintendent of Police K. Narasimha, AICC member Ramreddy Sarvotham Reddy, former Telangana Tourism Development Corporation Chairman Patel Ramesh Reddy, Market Committee Chairman Vena Reddy, Municipal Chairperson Morrisetty Niveditha and Government General Hospital Superintendent Shravan attended the programme.

Singareni CMD directs officials to increase coal production at Naini mine



FREEDOM PRESS BUREAU
HYDERABAD, NOV 7

Singareni Collieries Company Limited (SCCL) Chairman and Managing Director Dr. Buddha Prakash Jyoti has directed officials to take all necessary measures to increase coal production at the Naini coal block in Odisha and ensure supplies meet Telangana's power requirements.

During a special review meeting with directors and general managers on Saturday, he stressed the need to increase overburden removal to facilitate higher coal production and achieve the annual targets.

In view of the anticipated power demand amid El Niño conditions, the CMD directed officials to ensure the transportation of at least 20,000 tonnes of coal per day from Naini to Telangana. He also stressed the need for uninterrupted coal transportation.

Naini Mine General Manager Baidya briefed the CMD on the current coal production, transportation and overburden removal activities.

Director (Operations) L.V. Suryanarayana, Director (Projects and Planning) K. Venkateshwarlu, Director (Personnel and Finance) Gautham Potru, Director (E&M) M. Tirumala Rao, Executive Director (Coal Movement) B. Venkanna, General Manager (Coordination and Marketing) Tadaboin Srinivas, General Manager (Projects and Planning) Devender and other departmental general managers attended the meeting.

Shabbir Ali slams demonetisation on 10th anniversary

- Questions economic damage and unfulfilled promises
- Cites 99.3% return of banned notes, and decline in agricultural trade

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HYDERABAD, NOV 7



Mohammed Ali Shabbir

Advisor to the Telangana Government and senior Congress leader Mohammed Ali Shabbir on Saturday strongly condemned the Narendra Modi government's 2016 demonetisation decision, describing it as a disastrous economic experiment that inflicted enormous hardship on ordinary citizens, destroyed livelihoods and disrupted India's cash-dependent informal economy without delivering adequately on its stated objectives.

Marking the tenth anniversary of demonetisation, Shabbir Ali said the sudden withdrawal of Rs 500 and Rs 1,000 currency notes on November 8, 2016, had invalidated nearly 87% of the country's currency in circulation by value, triggering a severe cash shortage that affected millions of households, farmers, workers and small businesses.

"Ten years ago, Prime Minister Narendra Modi promised to eliminate black money, corruption, counterfeit currency and terror financing through demonetisation. People were asked to endure extraordinary hardships in the national interest. A decade later, the government has still not provided a comprehensive account of what the country actually gained from those sacrifices," he said.

Shabbir Ali said the Reserve Bank of India's final accounting had exposed serious questions about the effectiveness of demonetisation. According to RBI figures, approximately 99.3% of the invalidated currency, amounting to around Rs 15.31 lakh crore, returned to the banking system.

"The government presented demonetisation as a decisive strike against black money. But almost the entire value of the banned currency returned to banks. How much unaccounted income was ultimately detected? How much additional tax was recovered? How many counterfeit notes were eliminated? The government must answer these questions with verifiable figures," he demanded.

"This was not merely an inconvenience caused by standing in bank queues. It was an economic shock that affected employment, production, consumption and the ability of small businesses to survive. Daily-wage workers lost earnings, traders struggled to conduct business and thousands of cash-dependent enterprises faced severe uncertainty," he said.

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