

Target set to launch around 200 chip designing startups in India

NEW DELHI: Union Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw announced that a target has been set to launch approximately 200 chip&designing startups in India under the Semicon 2.0 scheme. The Central Government had approved the Semicon 1.0 scheme in December 2021 to boost semiconductor manufacturing. Approvals were granted for 12 semiconductor manufacturing plants with a total value of ₹1.64 lakh crore.

Information from Union Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw

Similarly, the Central Government approved the Semicon 2.0 scheme last July, with an allocation of ₹1.275 lakh crore. Following this, the Semicon India conference was held yesterday at Bharat Mandapam in Delhi. Prime Minister Modi inaugurated the event. Speaking at the inaugural session, Union Minister

for Electronics and Information Technology Ashwini Vaishnaw said: “Through Semicon 1.0, India has laid the foundation for the domestic semiconductor industry over the past few years. At that time, Prime Minister Modi advised, ‘Do not think short&term; think long&term.’ Now, we need to build the



superstructure upon that foundation. Six pillars must be established for this: design, machinery and raw materials, manufacturing plants, advanced packaging, research and development, and skills. Under the Semicon 2.0 scheme, chip design is the first pillar. In the Semicon 1.0 scheme, 105 startups ventured into chip design and secured investments totaling ₹800 crore. That was merely the beginning. This time, our ambition is much greater.” “We have set a target to launch 200 chip&designing startups across the country to meet semiconductor needs. Talent serves as the sixth

pillar; under this initiative, the goal is to train 85,000 design engineers over the next decade. Already, 70,000 design engineers have been trained in just four years. Through ‘Semicon 2.0,’ an additional one lakh skilled technical personnel will be developed for semiconductor manufacturing facilities. The foundation laid so far will pave the way for realizing India’s goal of becoming a developed nation.” He spoke in this manner.

The Modi Era: Grassroots People Rising to the Forefront

Ram Nath Kovind, Former President of India

NEW DELHI: During the five years I served as the President of India (2017–2022), I observed Prime Minister Narendra Modi very closely. Drawing upon that experience and my long&standing association with him in public life, I wish to share a few thoughts on the occasion of his birthday. Having served as the head of an elected government for over 25 years—first as the Chief Minister of Gujarat starting in October 2001 and then as Prime Minister since 2014—Modi has consistently championed the simple yet transformative vision of “Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas” (Together with all, Development for all). For decades, the North&East region was often described as a remote, peripheral area of India.



However, under Prime Minister Modi’s leadership, it has been projected as a progressive face of India and a gateway to Southeast Asia. Since November 2014, Prime Minister Modi has visited the region more than 83 times.

These initiatives are linked to transport, infrastructure, investment, and sustained efforts toward peace; notably, 12 major peace agreements have been signed in the region. Furthermore, an allocation of over ₹7 lakh crore has been made for development during the period from 2014–15 to 2025–26.

This is manifold higher than the approximately ₹1.4 lakh crore allocated in the preceding decade. The ‘Vibrant Villages Programme’ gives a structured meaning to this vision by focusing on roads, transport, tourism, livelihoods, and essential services in border areas. This initiative transformed 112 historically backward districts—moving

them beyond the label of “permanently backward areas”—by introducing a development model based on specific targets, convergence, and healthy competition to accelerate progress in health, education, infrastructure, and livelihoods.

The Prime Minister’s JANMAN scheme focuses specifically on 75 Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs), ensuring they receive quality housing, roads, potable water, healthcare, and other basic amenities. More than 59 crore people from previously neglected families have been brought into the formal financial system through bank accounts. The Saubhagya scheme paved

the way for 100% rural electrification. The Ujjwala scheme, which provides free cooking gas cylinders, has extended smokeless cooking fuel facilities to over 10 crore households.

The Jal Jeevan Mission has provided piped drinking water connections to 13 crore rural households. Women have received 68% of Mudra loans. Furthermore, women account for 46% of the beneficiaries under the Prime Minister’s Street Vendor’s Atmanirbhar Nidhi (PMSV-ANidhi) scheme.

The ‘Lakhpati Didi’ scheme prioritizes women’s economic empowerment as the focal point of rural transformation. The true measure of progress lies not in how high the ceiling has been raised, but rather in how many people have been brought beneath it. That, indeed, is the defining policy of the Modi era: those who once stood on the margins no longer need to wait to enter the nation’s mainstream—they are defining it themselves.



The Chairman, Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC), Ministry of Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises, Shri Manoj Goel, inaugurates the ‘Seva Sankalp & Khadi Mahotsav 2026’ and distributes machines, tool kits and training certificates under various entrepreneurship programmes being implemented across the country, in New Delhi

Maduranthakam and Dharapuram By elections: CM Vijay to Campaign for 4 Days

CHENNAI: Chief Minister Vijay is set to undertake a four-day campaign for the Maduranthakam and Dharapuram by-elections. The by-election arena is heating up for the Maduranthakam (Reserved) constituency in Chengalpattu district and the Dharapuram (Reserved) constituency in Tiruppur district, Tamil Nadu.

The ruling TVK, the main opposition DMK, AIADMK,

Naam Tamilar Katchi, and Communist parties are all contesting independently, resulting in a five-cornered contest. In the Maduranthakam constituency, Maragatham Kumaravel (TVK), Paranthaman (DMK), Kanitha Sampath (AIADMK), Suganthi (Marxist Communist Party), and Janakiraman (Naam Tamilar Katchi) have entered the fray. In Dharapuram, the contestants include Sathyabhama (TVK), Suganya (DMK), Bhanumathi (AIADMK), Lakshmanan (Communist Party of India), and Karthika (Naam Tamilar Katchi).

The final list of candidates for both constituencies is set to be released tomorrow.

Following this, leaders from various political parties have decided to engage in intensive election campaigning starting after the 20th (next week). Party functionaries are making the necessary arrangements for these campaigns. Against this backdrop, Chief Minister Vijay is scheduled to conduct an intensive four-day campaign across the Maduranthakam and Dharapuram constituencies.

He will campaign for a total of four days—two days in each constituency—spanning the end of this month and the beginning of next month. Arrangements are

under way for massive public meetings in Maduranthakam and Dharapuram, where Chief Minister Vijay is set to speak; the venues for these events have already been selected.



It has been decided to hold the public meeting in the Thirumalaipalayam area along the Dharapuram-Udumalpet road. Party functionaries are confident that Chief Minister Vijay’s campaign will prove beneficial, given the imperative for TVK to secure a victory in this by-election. During the previous assembly election, massive crowds flocked to see Chief Minister Vijay whenever he campaigned, and restrictions had to be imposed on his campaign meetings. Now, he is set to campaign as the Chief Minister, and elaborate security arrangements are being made in both constituencies.

There is immense anticipation surrounding these

public meetings, as they mark the first time Chief Minister Vijay will campaign after TVK has assumed power. Leaders such as DMK President M.K. Stalin, Leader of the Opposition Udhayanidhi



Stalin, AIADMK General Secretary Edappadi Palaniswami, Naam Tamilar Katchi Chief Coordinator Seeman, and Communist leaders are also preparing to campaign in both constituencies. M.K. Stalin plans to campaign for two days in both Maduranthakam and Dharapuram, and a campaign schedule is being finalized for the Leader of the Opposition, Udhayanidhi Stalin, as well. With leaders gearing up for a high-intensity campaign, the electoral atmosphere in Maduranthakam and Dharapuram is heating up. Functionaries and cadres from all parties are making full-scale preparations to welcome their respective leaders.

Freezing of Trinamool Congress Party Symbol

Rahul Gandhi Condemns Move

NEW DELHI: Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha, Rahul Gandhi, has condemned the freezing of the Trinamool Congress party’s symbol. Amidst a conflict between two factions regarding the Trinamool Congress party’s name and election symbol, the Election Commission has frozen both as an interim measure.

The Commission stated that neither faction may currently use the name “All India Trinamool Congress” or the party’s flower symbol. The Trinamool Congress party split into two factions following the assembly election defeat in

West Bengal. Factions led by former Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee and Ritabrata Banerjee have both claimed to be the genuine Trinamool party. Consequently, the Election Commission decided to freeze the name and symbol pending consideration of the claims made by both factions. By&elections for the Nandigram and Rejinagar constituencies in West Bengal are scheduled for October 6. Neither faction can contest these elections under the “Trinamool Congress” name or the “twin flower” symbol. Both factions have been ordered to select their preferred names and

choose three symbols each from the list of symbols designated for independent candidates by the Election Commission, submitting their choices by 11:00 AM on September 18. The Election Commission stated that this interim arrangement enables both factions to contest the by&elections using distinct names and symbols. This interim order will remain in effect until a final decision regarding the party’s name and symbol is reached. In this context, Leader of the Opposition Rahul Gandhi has accused the Central Government—which he alleges “stole

votes”—of now engaging in the “theft of parties.” Regarding this, he stated the following on X (formerly Twitter): “First Shiv Sena, then NCP...” (NCP), and now the Trinamool Congress. The pattern is the same every time: the BJP and the Election Commission join hands to split a party, and subsequently, that party’s election symbol is confiscated. When an entire party can be completely usurped, it is hardly surprising that the votes of millions of Indians could also be stolen. The theft of votes, the capture of the government, and now

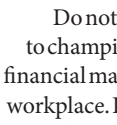


the hijacking of a party—all these have become hallmarks of the erosion of our democracy. Safeguarding the people’s mandate is the Election Commission’s constitutional duty; yet, instead of doing so, it sides with the very forces that seek to overturn that mandate. This struggle is not Mamata Banerjee’s alone; it is a fight for every political party and every voter who desires free and fair elections. This is what has been stated therein.

Today horoscope



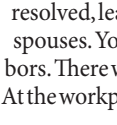
You will gain through your siblings. Your speech will become clear and articulate. Children who were previously stubborn will now listen to you. Your mother's health will be a source of relief. You will make efforts to expand your business. Avoid interfering in others' affairs at the workplace.



Do not tarnish your reputation by trying to champion the cause of others. Be firm in financial matters. Do not criticize anyone at the workplace. In business, acting upon the advice of new partners will prove beneficial.



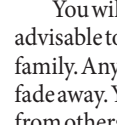
You will complete certain tasks through your external contacts. You will have heart-to-heart conversations with your family members. Your interest in spirituality will increase. Out-of-town trips will bring gains. You will earn the nuances of the trade. Avoid arguments at the workplace.



You will successfully complete tasks that had previously stalled. Ego clashes will be resolved, leading to greater closeness between spouses. You will receive support from neighbors. There will be moderate profits in business. At the workplace, it is best to focus solely on your own duties.



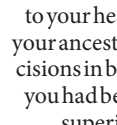
Differences of opinion between spouses will vanish. Journeys will be satisfying. Your words will command greater respect in social circles. You will make efforts to clear old debts. A crucial document you were searching for at work will be found. You will expand your business.



You will feel a sense of contentment. It is advisable to be accommodating within the family. Any bitterness with your children will fade away. You will repay money borrowed from others. There will be profits in business. Avoid making enemies at the workplace.



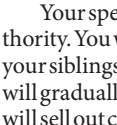
You will gain from influential people. Out-of-town trips will bring peace of mind. The arrival of guests will fill your home with happiness. Your superior at work will be supportive. In business, you will attract customers by employing new strategies.



You may face some affectionate yet bothersome interference from relatives. Pay attention to your health. You will renovate and expand your ancestral home. It is best to avoid hasty decisions in business. You will locate a document you had been searching for at work, and your superior will appreciate your efforts.



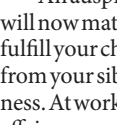
You will effectively counter covert competition. Your interest in spirituality will grow. You will attempt to sell ancestral property, such as a house, plot, or agricultural land. Business will pick up pace, leading to profits, and you will receive support from your partner. You will complete your tasks at work quickly.



Your speech will exude confidence and authority. You will receive expected assistance from your siblings. Your mother's medical expenses will gradually decrease. In business, your stock will sell out completely, and you may relocate your shop. You will see progress in your career.

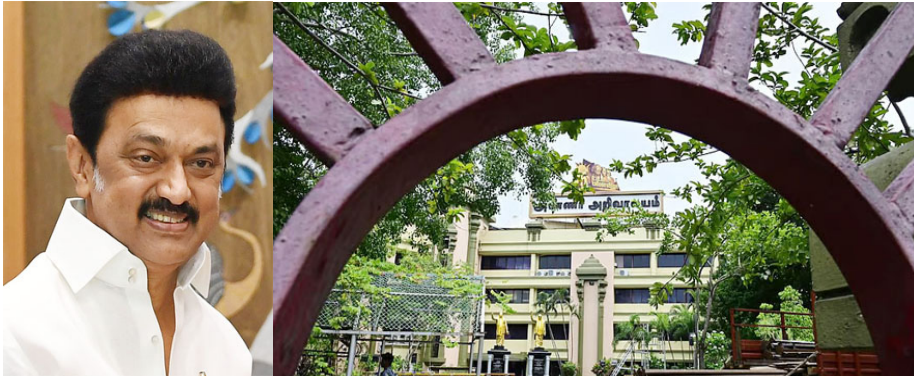


Acting with agility and enthusiasm will ensure success in your endeavors. You will receive support from family members, and your children's health will improve. Expensive clothing and jewelry will be acquired for your home. You will see progress in both business and your job.



An auspicious event that had been delayed will now materialize. You will understand and fulfill your children's wishes. You will benefit from your siblings. You will expand your business. At work, avoid interfering in other people's affairs.

DMK's 'Mupperum Vizha' to be held in Chennai tomorrow under M.K. Stalin's leadership



CHENNAI: The postponed DMK 'Mupperum Vizha' is set to take place in Chennai tomorrow (September 19) under the leadership of M.K. Stalin. Every September, the DMK celebrates the 'Mupperum

Vizha'—a grand tripartite event—combining the birth anniversaries of Anna and Periyar with the founding day of the party.

This year, the event was originally scheduled for

September 15 at the party headquarters, Anna Arivalayam. It had been announced that DMK leader and former Chief Minister M.K. Stalin would participate as the special guest, deliver a keynote

address, and present awards to senior party veterans for their outstanding contributions.

However, the event was postponed due to a sudden health issue faced by M.K. Stalin. A revised date has now been announced.

In a statement regarding this, DMK General Secretary Duraimurugan announced, "The postponed DMK 'Mupperum Vizha' will be held tomorrow (September 19) at around 5 PM at Anna Arivalayam, Chennai, under the leadership of M.K. Stalin."

Former Union Minister of State Sudarsana Nachiappan Passes Away

Leaders Offer Condolences Congress Party Functionaries Pay Tribute



SIVAGANGAI: Former Union Minister E.M. Sudarsana Nachiappan (79) passed away yesterday in Sivaganga due to ill health. A senior Congress leader hailing from Eriyur near Sivaganga, Nachiappan served as the Member of Parliament (MP) for the Sivaganga constituency from 1999 to 2004 and as a Rajya Sabha member from 2004 to 2016. Additionally, he served as the Union Minister of State for Commerce and Industry in the Manmohan Singh-led cabinet during 2013–2014. A law graduate, he also practiced as a Supreme Court advocate and held a Ph.D. from

Madurai Kamaraj University. He held various positions, including Head of the Tamil Nadu Congress Human Rights Wing (2000), Vice President of the Tamil Nadu Congress (2002), Chief Whip of the Congress Parliamentary Party (2003), and Secretary of the All India Congress Committee (2004). He passed away yesterday at his residence in Sivaganga due to ill health.

He is survived by his wife, Devaki; two sons, Jayasimha and Chanakya Madhavan; and a daughter, Yamuna Nachiar. He was the paternal uncle of Congress leader Manickam Tagore. Manickam Tagore, Higher Education Minister

Viswanathan, MP Karti Chidambaram, and C.R. Sundararajan (representing TVK) paid their respects to his mortal remains. His last rites are being performed today in his native village, Eriyur.

Condolence messages issued by leaders on the passing of Sudarsana Nachiappan: Tamil Nadu Congress leader Manickam Tagore: He raised his voice to protect the reservation rights of backward and oppressed communities. PMK leader Anbumani: He was committed to Congress ideologies from a young age and deeply concerned about social justice. CPI State Secretary M. Vee-

rapandian: He represented India and spoke at the United Nations General Assembly.

Deep condolences on his passing. TMC leader G.K. Vasan: He had the distinction of serving the public from a young age and worked excellently for the party during the Kamaraj era. AMMK General Secretary T.T.V. Dhinakaran: The news of the passing of senior Congress leader Sudarsana Nachiappan is deeply distressing. Former MP Su. Thirunavukkarasu: He actively participated in both Houses of Parliament and was acclaimed as an outstanding parliamentarian. Observance of Mourning: Following Sudarsana Nachiappan's passing, a condolence meeting was held yesterday evening at Sathyamurthy Bhavan in Chennai, attended by All India Congress General Secretary and Tamil Nadu in-charge Ghulam Ahmed Mir, along with other office-bearers.

Additionally, the party has announced a three-day mourning period, during which all party events will be cancelled.

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Birth and Death Registration Amendment Act Comes into Effect on October 1

The Birth and Death Registration Amendment Act, passed by Parliament, comes into force on October 1. The original Birth and Death Registration Act was enacted in 1969, making the registration of births and deaths mandatory. An amendment to this Act was introduced in 2023. The Central Government amended Section 13(3) of the Act with the aim of encouraging the public to register births and deaths in a timely manner and to tighten the regulations regarding delayed registration. This amendment bill was passed by both Houses of Parliament and became law last month following the President's assent. The Birth and Death Registration Amendment Act is now set to come into effect on October 1. Mrityunjay Kumar Narayan, the Registrar General of India, announced this via a gazette notification. Under the new amendment, registering a birth or death between one and two years after the event occurs still requires obtaining an order from the District Collector, Assistant Collector, or an authorized Executive Magistrate, just as before. However, if registration is sought more than two years after the birth or death, the process will be subject to rigorous judicial scrutiny at a higher level. Specifically, it has been made mandatory to obtain an order from a First Class Judicial Magistrate to proceed with the registration.

Nigeria: 33 Prisoners Die Mysteriously in Jail A Shocking Incident

ABUJA: Nigeria is a country located in West Africa where various illegal mining operations are active. The government



has been taking measures to curb these illegal mines, which extract gold and other mineral resources. Recently, security forces arrested 65 individuals who had been working at an illegal mine in the country's Niger State. All those arrested were lodged in a local prison. Prison officials have reported that 33 of them died under mysterious circumstances, attributing the deaths to a mysterious illness that afflicted the prisoners. However, allegations have arisen suggesting that the deaths were caused by suffocation resulting from overcrowding in the small prison facility. Officials are currently investigating the incident.

TVK stands for 'Thallippodum Vetri Kazhagam' (Postponing Victory Party)

Tamilisai Soundararajan's criticism



CHENNAI: Former BJP State President Tamilisai Soundararajan has criticized TVK as the "Postponing Victory Party" because all planned initiatives are being deferred. A tree-planting event was held yesterday at Valluvar

Kottam in Chennai to mark Prime Minister Modi's birthday. Former BJP State President Tamilisai Soundararajan participated in the event. Speaking to reporters later, she said: "We are celebrating Prime Minister Modi's birthday from September 17 to October 17.

Various programs, including blood donation camps and medical camps, have been organized for this occasion. Amidst politicians who merely make noise, BJP members are politicians who actually

donate blood. Pattinapakkam belongs to the fishermen; the Secretariat should not be built there.

Chief Minister Vijay must reconsider this. In the current situation, a decision also needs to be made regarding whether a new Secretariat is even necessary. The Chief Minister claims to have attracted investments worth ₹15,000 crore in London. It is unclear whether he attracted investments from foreign companies or from a company based in Uttar Pradesh. Therefore, Chief Minister Vijay must clarify to the pe-

ople of Tamil Nadu exactly which companies are truly set to invest in the state. One might rewrite scripts repeatedly for a screenplay, but one should not write a flawed script while in governance. TVK stands for 'Thallippodum Vetri Kazhagam' (Postponing Victory Party).

This is because the Chief Minister's 'Gold Ring' scheme is being postponed. The Mid-day Meal Scheme, introduced in Kamaraj's name, is being delayed. Airport development is being postponed. This is the current state of the TVK government."

Prime Minister Modi's Fitness Secret Energetic even at 76, Drumstick Leaf Roti, Yoga, and Exercise

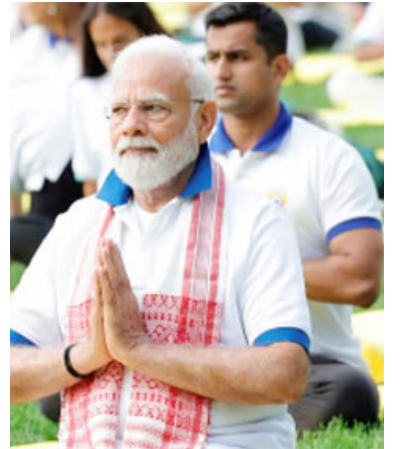
NEW DELHI: Prime Minister Narendra Modi celebrated his 76th birthday yesterday. Even at this age, he remains in good health and works with great energy.

His yoga and exercise routines are the reasons behind this. These topics often dominate conversations about his health. At the same time, his dietary habits—which are quite simple—play a crucial role. He does not follow a strict, elaborate diet chart. During a 'Fit India' interaction with nutritionist

Rujuta Diwekar in 2020, he mentioned that he eats rotis made with drumstick leaves once or twice a week. Drumstick leaves are rich in nutrients, including fiber, vitamins, and minerals. In the same conversation, he also recalled, "My mother would unfailingly ask me from time to time if I was consuming turmeric."

Modi noted that his diet includes items such as roti, vegetables, lentils (dal), rice, flattened rice (poha), and upma, alongside various regional dishes. A key message from his

conversation was the importance of consuming freshly cooked food while reducing the intake of packaged and processed foods. He did not present lentils, rice, and ghee as trendy health foods, but rather as familiar staples of traditional Indian cuisine. Frequent fasting is also a major factor contributing to Prime Minister Modi's excellent physical health; he has mentioned in



a conversation that during Navaratri, he completely abstains from food for nine days, consuming only warm water.

Educational funds will be provided to Bharathidasan within two days; Minister Vanni Arasu assures



CHENNAI: Minister Vanni Arasu has confirmed that the funds required for student Bharathidasan's research will be

released within two days. Stating that the Tamil Nadu government supports the education of all students—not just

Bharathidasan—he emphasized that there is no politics involved in the matter of educational financial assistance.



CHENNAI: Police sources state that complaints have been received from 177 private

Anbil Mahesh to Appear for Police Inquiry Today

schools alleging the collection of money to secure recognition during the previous DMK regime, with the fraud estimated to be worth up to ₹100 crore. In connection with this, the

Chennai Central Crime Branch police conducted searches on the 16th at nine locations linked to Anbil Mahesh, the then Minister for School Education. He was also issued a

summons to appear for questioning before the Central Crime Branch at the Chennai Police Commissioner's office on the 18th (today). Accordingly, he is expected to appear today.

India, Nepal review trade, transit issues at inter governmental meeting in New Delhi

NEW DELHI: India and Nepal reviewed a wide range of trade, transit and connectivity issues during the meeting of the India-Nepal Inter-Governmental Sub-Committee (IGSC) on Trade, Transit and Cooperation to Control Unauthorised Trade held in New Delhi on September 16&17, according to the Ministry of Commerce and Industry.

The Indian delegation was led by Joint Secretary, Department of Commerce, Ujjwal Kumar Ghosh, while the Nepali delegation was led by Joint Secretary, Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Supplies, Buddha Bahadur Gurung. Senior officials from the concerned ministries and departments of both countries participated in the meeting.

The IGSC serves as an institutional mechanism for detailed examination of trade and trade-related issues and for facilitating bilateral trade and transit, the ministry said.

During the meeting, both sides discussed market access, Customs and trade facilitation, standards, food safety, phytosanitary measures, pharmaceuticals, medical devices, AYUSH products, border infrastructure, and rail and road connectivity.

The two sides considered measures to facilitate greater market access for Indian and Nepali products, including agricultural and dairy products, food products, pharmaceuticals, medical devices and

AYUSH products. They also discussed strengthening Customs cooperation through measures such as pre-arrival exchange of information, electronic verification of Certificates of Origin, Customs automation and digitalisation. The discussions focused on facilitating legitimate trade while strengthening mechanisms to ensure compliance with applicable rules and prevent misuse of preferential trade arrangements, according to the press release. Transit and connectivity also featured prominently, with both sides reviewing rail and road connectivity, freight movement, Integrated Check Posts and land&port infrastructure. The two sides discussed improving the utilisation of existing infrastructure and addressing operational bottlenecks affecting bilateral and transit trade.

India and Nepal also welcomed continued cooperation in standards, food safety, plant quarantine and conformity assessment, including institutional cooperation and capacity&building initiatives.

Both sides emphasised continued cooperation among relevant agencies to facilitate legitimate cross-border trade and address issues related to unauthorised trade and commercial fraud. The meeting was held in a cordial and constructive atmosphere, with both sides agreeing to maintain close engagement through established institutional mechanisms and pursue

time&bound follow&up on issues requiring further technical examination. India and Nepal share close historical, cultural and economic ties, with India remaining Nepal's largest trading partner and an important source of investment, the ministry said.

The developments come as Nepal's Finance Minister Swarnim Wagle is on a three&day visit to Delhi starting Thursday. On Thursday, Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman met Nepal's Finance Minister Swarnim Wagle in New Delhi to discuss bilateral economic ties and India's commitment to supporting Nepal's flood recovery and rehabilitation efforts. The high&level meeting took place during Wagle's first official visit to India since assuming office as Nepal's Finance Minister. India's Foreign Secretary and the Secretary of the Department of Economic Affairs also attended the discussions.

Expressing sympathy over the destruction caused by recent natural calamities in Nepal, the Ministry of Finance said in a post on X, "FM Smt. Nirmala Sitharaman conveyed her condolences on the loss of lives in the recent floods in Nepal, and conveyed India's continued support for Nepal's recovery and rebuilding efforts." The ministry noted that the dialogue centred



on "the impact of the floods and Nepal's priorities for reconstruction and rehabilitation". The Nepali delegation acknowledged the prompt assistance provided by New Delhi. "Dr Wagle thanked the Union Finance Minister for India's support and expressed appreciation for the assistance extended by India, including relief supplies and technical support for rescue and relief efforts," it added.

Beyond disaster response, both finance ministers discussed key areas of bilateral collaboration, focusing on infrastructure and cross&border connectivity to strengthen economic ties. "The discussions covered strengthening of bilateral economic ties in various areas, as well as initiatives to enhance connectivity for deepening of trade, investments and people&to&people exchanges." "Both sides emphasised the importance of further strengthening the trade and economic partnership between India and Nepal." Following the bilateral talks, Charge d'Affaires Surendra

Thapa hosted a dinner in honour of the visiting Nepali Finance Minister in the national capital. The Embassy of Nepal in India said in a post on X that during an interaction with diplomatic staff, Wagle "exchanged views with Embassy officials on Nepal&India economic relations and encouraged them to continue working proactively to further strengthen bilateral economic engagement." Ahead of Nepal Finance Minister Swarnim Wagle's arrival in Delhi on Thursday, the Nepal Ministry of Finance outlined the purpose of his three&day visit, which includes a bilateral meeting with External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar.

The Nepal Ministry of Finance said in an X post that Wagle is on a three&day visit and "will hold meetings with Indian Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman and Foreign Minister Dr S Jaishankar."

"Post&disaster reconstruction and bilateral economic cooperation will be the main topics of the visit," the ministry said.

Indian Man Living in the US Dies 17 Days After Wedding



BOSTON: An Indian man residing in the United States was found dead just

17 days after his wedding. Mohammed Jaffer Hussain, 28, lived in the city of Lowell, Massachusetts. He hailed from Santosh Nagar in Hyderabad, Telangana. Having moved to the US in 2021 for higher education, Mohammed Jaffer had been working there as a civil engineer after completing his studies. He got married in Texas on August 28 and

subsequently returned to Lowell. Two days ago, he was found dead in the bedroom of his home. The cause of his death remains unknown. Amanullah Khan, an official from the Majlis Bachao Tehreek (MBT) organization, has appealed to the Union Ministry of External Affairs to assist in repatriating Mohammed Jaffer's body to India.

Assam Speaker Ranjeet Kumar Dass prays for PM Modi's good health in Cape Town

SOUTH AFRICA: Assam Legislative Assembly Speaker Ranjeet Kumar Dass visited the Hindu Sewa Samaj Vishnu Temple in Cape Town's Gateville and offered prayers for the good health of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

It was PM Modi's 76th birthday on Thursday. Dass is currently in South Africa to attend the 69th Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference, being held in Cape Town from September 13 to 19. Earlier, on Thursday, Prime Minister Narendra Modi expressed gratitude to leaders from across the world for their wishes on the occasion of his 76th birthday.

In a series of posts on X, PM Modi thanked the World Health Organisation (WHO) Chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni, Bhutanese Prime Minister Tsering Tobgay and Dominican's President Roosevelt Skerrit. President Droupadi Murmu also extended birthday greetings to Prime Minister Modi, referring to his 25 years of public service and his contribution to good governance and inclusive development. Prime Minister Narendra Modi was born in 1950 to Hiraba and Damodar Das Modi in Vadnagar in Gujarat's Mehsana district. On May 26, 2014, he took the oath as the Prime Minister of India, becoming the first Prime Minister to be born after India attained Independence.

The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) is organising the 'Seva Sankalp Abhiyan' across the

country from September 17 to October 17 to mark Prime Minister Modi's birthday, with a series of service&oriented programmes and public outreach initiatives. Ahead of the 69th Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference, Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla chaired a high&level briefing meeting to review preparations and emphasised the role of the Indian delegation in discussions, according to an official release. He urged all members of the delegation to actively participate in the sessions and workshops. He emphasised that members should articulate their views effectively during discussions so that India's national interests and viewpoints can be strongly presented and safeguarded on the global stage.

He specifically underscored that India's active participation in such global fora further strengthens the scope of our parliamentary traditions and democratic values. Additionally, he instructed all members to strictly maintain punctuality and discipline in all meetings and negotiations during the conference, ensuring that the country's delegation sets an exemplary standard. The main conference theme has been set as: "Strengthening International Law and Parliamentary Democracy in a Changing World Order: Commonwealth Leadership," under which deliberations are taking place regarding the role of parliaments in the changing global landscape.



During the meeting, the agenda for six key Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference (CPC) workshops for the Indian delegation was outlined. These workshops cover critical subjects including promoting inter&parliamentary dialogue for inclusive and fair trade in diverse economies, accessible parliaments and inclusion for persons with disabilities, parliamentary leadership in promoting climate adaptation and resilience, artificial intelligence (AI) in parliaments (current applications, prospects, and implementation strategies), protecting human rights and promoting peace, and post&legislative scrutiny, the release stated. In addition to the main sessions, a Youth Roundtable focused on "Rebuilding Youth Trust and Participation in Democracy" and a CPA General Assembly debate were scheduled to be held. Furthermore, under the 10th Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians (CWP) Conference, four special workshops based on the theme "Making Gender Sensitivity an Institutional Mandate: Ethics, accountability, and structural change" to serve as major highlights of the event.

Tragedy in Sivakasi: Woman Dies After Getting Caught in Cutting Machine



SIVAKASI: A woman tragically lost her life after getting caught in a cutting machine in Sivakasi. Pandiyammal, a resident of Sivakasi, was employed at a local paperboard manufacturing unit, where she worked on a cutting machine.

While she was working this morning, her saree accidentally got caught in the machine, pulling her into it. In the accident, Pandiyammal's arm was severed, resulting in severe blood loss. She tragically died at the scene. Upon receiving information about the incident, the Sivakasi East Police rushed to the location, recovered Pandiyammal's body, and sent it to the Sivakasi Government Hospital for a post&mortem examination. The police have launched an investigation into the matter. The incident has caused a stir in the area.

Mandatory CCTV Surveillance in Pharmacies Proposed to Monitor Sales Without Doctor's Prescriptions

Recommendation by the Union Ministry of Health

NEW DELHI: The Union Ministry of Health has recommended making CCTV surveillance mandatory in pharmacies across the country to prevent the sale of Schedule H, H1, and X drugs without valid prescriptions. Some pharmacies sell medications—including sleeping pills and painkillers—without a doctor's prescription. These drugs are often misused for intoxication or for suicide attempts.

Consequently, the Ministry has proposed mandatory CCTV surveillance to curb such sales. In a statement regarding this, the Ministry noted that mandatory CCTV surveillance is being recommended as an additional regulatory measure to strengthen the monitoring of the sale and distribution of Schedule H, H1, and X drugs.

The Ministry has invited



objections and suggestions from stakeholders and the general public concerning

this proposal. Comments and recommendations may be sent to the Deputy Secret-

ary (Drugs) of the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare or to the email address drugsdiv&mohfw@gov.in. Schedule H drugs are those that can be sold only against a valid prescription from a registered medical practitioner; Schedule H1 is a sub&category of this, while Schedule X comprises drugs that are habit&forming, including psychotropic and narcotic substances.

Shiv Sena's Novel Protest to Curb Stray Dog Menace



NASHIK: A protest organized by Shiv Sena to demand action against the stray dog menace in Nashik has gone viral online. The nuisance caused by stray dogs has escalated in Nashik, Maharashtra. Amidst this situation, Vikram Randhave, the district chief of the Shiv Sena (UBT) youth wing, visited the office of Dheeraj Bamre, the Chief Officer of the Niphad Nagar Panchayat, and released dogs onto his desk. Explaining the move, Randhave stated, "The stray dog population in Nashik has risen. I have been repeatedly urging Niphad Nagar Panchayat Chief Officer Dheeraj Bamre to take measures to control them for the past six months." "A child was bitten by a dog, yet no action was taken. Consequently, I released two dogs onto his desk. This is a final warning: if action is not taken within eight days, we will bring even more dogs," he added.

India Affirms Continued Crude Oil Imports from Russia Response to US Move to Impose 100% Tariffs

NEW DELHI: India has stated that it will continue to procure crude oil from various countries, including Russia, to meet the nation's energy requirements. A bill imposing sanctions on Russia and Iran has been passed in the United States. This legislation empowers US President Donald Trump to impose customs duties of up to 100% on the top five importers of Russian oil: China, India, Slovakia, Hungary, and Azerbaijan.

The bill will come into effect once it is sent to the President for appro-

val and signed into law. Regarding this, the Indian Ministry of External Affairs stated: India remains com-

mitted to meeting the energy needs of its 1.4 billion people. Crude oil procurement from various countries will continue based on market conditions. All necessary measures will be taken to safeguard the country's trade and economic

interests. The government will work in coordination with Indian industry bodies to address the impact of these developments. Russia is India's primary crude oil supplier. In July, Russia accounted for 51.

1 percent of India's total crude oil imports. This figure exceeds the combined supply from the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, Venezuela, Brazil, Oman, and the United States. However, India is increasing its purchases from the United States and Venezuela as part of an effort to diversify its energy sourcing



Unveiling of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Wax Statue



KOLKATA: A wax statue of Prime Minister Modi was unveiled yesterday at the West Bengal BJP headquarters to mark his birthday.

Yesterday marked Prime Minister Narendra Modi's 76th birthday. Additionally, he has completed 25 consecutive years in public office, having served as the Chief Minister of Gujarat and as Prime

Minister. To commemorate this, the BJP organized various special events across the country.

A wax statue of the Prime Minister was unveiled at the party's headquarters in Kolkata, West Bengal. Sushanta Ray, the sculptor who created the statue, said, "It was my long-held dream to create a wax statue of Prime Minister Modi. The statue is made of wax and

iron and stands 5.7 feet tall. To give it a distinctive look, I have dressed it in a Bengali 'dhoti' and 'kurta'.

It took two months to create this statue.

I modeled the statue based on the Prime Minister's appearance during the celebrations held at the BJP headquarters in Delhi following the party's victory in the West Bengal Assembly elections."

India, Bhutan welcome Rs 4000 crore Line of Credit for energy projects during EAM Jaishankar's visit

NEW DELHI: India and Bhutan welcomed the signing of an agreement on a concessional Line of Credit of INR 4,000 crore for energy projects in Bhutan during External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar's official visit to the country, according to a joint press release issued by the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA).

As per the official press release issued on Friday, Jaishankar paid an official visit to Bhutan from September 16 to 18 at the invitation of Bhutanese Foreign Affairs and External Trade Minister DN Dhungyel. During the visit, the two ministers reviewed all aspects of bilateral cooperation as well as regional and international issues of mutual importance and expressed satisfaction with progress in the India-Bhutan energy partnership. The two sides recalled recent developments in energy cooperation, including the inauguration of the 1020 MW Punatsangchu-II Hydroelectric Project and the signing of its Tariff Protocol, as well as the resumption of dam construction of the 1200 MW Punatsangchu-I Hydroelectric Project.



They also welcomed the active engagement of Indian companies in hydropower projects in Bhutan, which the two sides said was adding dynamism to existing energy cooperation. The two ministers jointly inaugurated or launched several development projects, including the 65-bedded Gyaltsuen Jetsun Pema Mother and Child Hospital in Mongar, the Jaganathan Bridge on the Samdrup Jongkhar-Trashingang Highway and the 500 kW Lunana Hydropower Project.

The two sides also welcomed the handing over of 54 electric vehicles to the Royal Government of Bhutan and the

transfer of 43 Jersey cows from India to the National Cattle Breeding Centre in Bumthang, the MEA said. Jaishankar reaffirmed India's support for Bhutan's developmental goals and priorities, while Bhutan appreciated India's support for programmes under its 13th Five Year Plan (2024-29).

The two sides also discussed the Gelephu Mindfulness City, trade and transit, cross-border connectivity, digital payments and space cooperation. India reaffirmed its commitment to establish an Immigration Check Post at Hatisar in Assam to facilitate movement of investors and visitors to Gelephu. The

two sides also noted progress on the Gelephu-Kokrajhar and Samtse-Banarhat cross-border rail links. The ministers welcomed the operationalisation of a UPI-based facility enabling Bhutanese nationals to make digital payments in India using Bhutanese mobile applications.

They also welcomed cooperation in education, including doubling the number of Bhutanese students eligible under the Indian Council for Cultural Relations scholarship from 30 to 60 and increasing seats under the Nalanda University Scholarship Scheme from 30 to 55. India thanked Bhutan for its support for India's candidature for a non-permanent seat on the United Nations Security Council for the 2028-2029 term, while India welcomed Bhutan's ratification of the Framework Agreement of the International Big Cat Alliance. Jaishankar also invited the Bhutanese Foreign Affairs and External Trade Minister to visit India at his earliest convenience.



The Union Minister of Health & Family Welfare and Chemicals & Fertilizers, Shri Jagat Prakash Nadda launches the 'Quality and Safety Handbook: A Guide to Policies, Protocols and Patient Safety' on the occasion of World Patient Safety Day – 2026 at Ram Manohar Lohia Hospital, in New Delhi.

London Investments and New Projects Chief Minister Vijay Holds Consultations

CHENNAI: Chief Minister Vijay is holding consultations today regarding investments and new projects from London. Having traveled to London to attract industrial investments to Tamil Nadu, Chief Minister Vijay visited the renowned Silverstone motor racing circuit on the 12th. To implement the announcement regarding the establishment of a world-class motorsports city in Tamil Nadu, he personally inspected the 'Race Control' and track areas there.

On the 14th, in the presence of Chief Minister Vijay, Memoranda of

Understanding (MoUs) and letters regarding new industrial investments were signed in London.

These agreements—covering sectors such as automotive component manufacturing, research and development, renewable energy, power infrastructure equipment, and Global Capability Centers—secured investments totaling ₹15,300 crore and paved the way for creating direct and indirect employment for over 10,000 people.

Against this backdrop, Chief Minister Vijay is currently consulting with



ministers and officials on operationalizing these investment agreements worth ₹15,300 crore. He is also discussing procedures for the expansion of the break-fast scheme (scheduled for the 22nd) and the launch of the 'Thaimaman Thanga Mothiram' (Maternal

Uncle's Gold Ring) scheme (scheduled for the 25th). Under this scheme, a one-gram gold ring is to be gifted to babies born in government hospitals; the Chief Minister is consulting officials regarding the date and venue for the launch of this initiative.

Parliamentary Elections in Russia Begin Today



MOSCOW: Russia is deeply engaged in the war with Ukraine. Ukrainian drone attacks have damaged Russian oil refineries, leading

to a severe economic crisis in the country.

Despite this challenging situation, parliamentary elections are set to take place in Russia over three days, starting today (Friday). Political analysts believe that a 100 percent victory for Pres-

ident Putin's 'United Russia' party is virtually assured in this election. This is because the Putin administration took the drastic step of revoking the legal recognition of 'Yabloko'—the only opposition party that had voiced dissent against the war. Furthermore, key

leaders who criticized the war have been sidelined, either by being imprisoned or forced into exile. Even amidst public discontent, it is certain that Putin will once again secure control of the parliament through the sheer strength of his authority.

By 2030, India will emerge as the global hub with the largest number of developers

Microsoft Chairman and CEO Satya Nadella



SEATTLE: Microsoft Chairman and CEO Satya

Nadella has stated that India will emerge as the global hub with the largest developer community by 2030. A conference titled 'IDEAS4INDIA', bringing together technology CEOs from India and the US, was held in Seattle. More than 40 CEOs and technology experts of Indian origin—representing leading companies such as Amazon, OpenAI, and

Anthropic—participated in the event. Microsoft Chairman and CEO Satya Nadella attended as a special guest. Speaking at the event, he said, "I take pride in witnessing the growth of the Seattle technology community over the past 35 years.

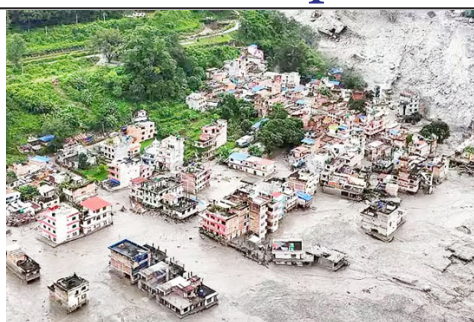
I am delighted to see it strengthening its ties with India. AI is a general-purpose technology; its benefits depend on how widely it is adopted across the nations, communities, and sectors involved." He praised India's human cap-

ital, stating that the country is poised to emerge as the home to the world's largest developer community by 2030. Microsoft has announced an investment of \$17.5 billion in India—its largest investment in Asia—spanning the period from 2026 to 2029, focused on cloud and AI infrastructure as well as skill development. Similarly, Amazon plans to invest a total of \$48 billion between 2026 and 2030, which includes the expansion of AWS data centers in Mumbai and Hyderabad.

The death toll from the floods in Nepal has risen to 1,410, 6,145 people are missing search and relief operations are ongoing

KATHMANDU:

The death toll from the devastating flash floods in Nepal has risen to 1,410. Search operations for the 6,145 missing persons and relief efforts are ongoing. On August 26, our neighboring country, Nepal, suffered severe damage due to massive floods and landslides triggered by the bursting of a high-altitude lake in Chinese-controlled Tibet. Affected areas across Nepal were submerged in silt and mud washed in by the flood-



waters.

Efforts to rescue those trapped in the debris are continuing. The death toll has now reached 1,410. Search operations for the 6,145 missing individuals and

relief activities are underway. Security forces are actively engaged in intensive rescue operations; so far, 13,756 people have been rescued.

Relatives who have lost their loved ones in the floods are in deep distress. Similarly, 305 tourists from Tamil Nadu were stranded; while 220 have been rescued, 85 remain missing.

Their families are in a state of anxiety due to the lack of information regarding their whereabouts. The search for those missing in the Nepal floods continues, with three officials stationed in Kathmandu to oversee the process. The mobile numbers of the missing persons are linked to various government services, causing further complications for their families. Relatives are facing difficulties, such as being unable to book gas cylinders or withdraw money from banks.

Escalation in Saudi-Houthi Conflict; 5 Dead



RIYADH: Five people have lost their lives in the conflict between Saudi Arabia and Houthi rebels. A conflict has persisted for years in Yemen between government forces and Houthi rebels. In this civil war, Saudi Arabia supports the government forces, while Iran supports the Houthi rebels.

Houthi rebels hold control over several areas, including the Yemeni capital, Sana'a. Iran provides various forms of assistance, including weaponry, to the Houthi rebels. Amidst the long-standing adversarial relationship between Iran and Saudi Arabia, both nations are engaged in a proxy conflict in Yemen.

Meanwhile, during the standoff between the US and Iran, Houthi rebels operating in Yemen launched attacks on Saudi Arabia. In retaliation, Saudi Arabia struck Houthi-controlled areas in Yemen. Furthermore, clashes between Yemeni government forces and Houthi rebels have intensified over the past few weeks.

As the civil war escalates, Houthi rebels are capturing territories previously held by Yemeni government forces. They continue to launch attacks on Saudi Arabia, drawing retaliatory

strikes from the Kingdom. The conflict between the two sides has heightened tensions across the Middle East. In a recent incident, Houthi rebels launched missile and drone attacks yesterday on the city of Taif, located in southeastern Saudi Arabia. One person was killed, and two others sustained serious injuries in the attack. Similarly, Saudi Arabia launched an attack on the city of Taiz in Yemen, which is under the control of Houthi rebels. Four people, including three children, lost their lives in the attack.

16 year old girl gang raped in Delhi; Stabbed to death (stabbed more than six times)

NEW DELHI: A shocking incident has come to light in Delhi where a 16-year-old girl was gang-raped and stabbed to death—sustaining over six stab wounds—after she went to meet a friend. The decomposed body of the 16-year-old girl was discovered on September 13 in an open area near Kushak Road in Delhi's Swaroop Nagar locality. She had gone to meet a



17-year-old boy known to her on September 10. Investigations revealed that the perpetrators gang-raped the girl inside a

tempo vehicle, stabbed her six times, and dumped her body in the bushes. Delhi Police have arrested four individuals in con-

nection with the incident, including a 19-year-old man named Shivam and three minors. Police identified the suspicious tempo vehicle after analyzing footage from over 50 CCTV cameras in the area. All four accused were arrested within 72 hours. The knives used in the murder have also been seized. The Delhi Police are conducting a thorough investigation.