

PM Narendra Modi virtually inaugurates 5 development projects worth Rs 3,350 crore

LADAKH Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday virtually inaugurated and dedicated to the nation five major development projects worth around Rs 3,350 crore in Ladakh through video conferencing, covering airport infrastructure, strategic road connectivity, renewable energy, cultural heritage conservation and water security. Addressing the gathering virtually, PM Modi said the projects would improve connectivity and access to essential services while strengthening the preservation of Ladakh's ancient heritage.

Another chapter being added to Ladakh's progress

am pleased to be a part of this occasion through technology. Several important development projects have been inaugurated in Ladakh today. These projects will make travel easier for many people, improve electricity facilities in some areas, increase water availability in others, and strengthen the preservation of our ancient heritage," he said. He congratulated the people of Ladakh and those involved in the projects. "I extend my heartiest congratulations to all the people of Ladakh for these projects. I also congratulate all the engineers, workers, and

local colleagues involved in these projects. I also specially appreciate the colleagues of the BRO," he said.

Among the key projects inaugurated was the new passenger terminal building at Kushok Bakula Rimpochee Airport in Leh, constructed at a cost of approximately Rs 640 crore. Spread across 23,800 square metres, the terminal is designed to handle 3.5 million passengers annually.

Highlighting the airport's sustainable features, PM Modi said the terminal incorporates geothermal technology



and solar energy to address the region's harsh climatic conditions.

"Another special feature of this terminal is that, keeping Ladakh's harsh climatic conditions in mind, geothermal

technology has been used in its construction. Solar energy has also been utilised. This is the first airport terminal in India to feature geothermal heating. Congratulations to all of you," he said.

Recalling that he had earlier laid the foundation stone for the terminal, PM Modi said it was a matter of satisfaction that he had the opportunity to inaugurate the project. "Built at a cost of approximately Rs 650 crore, the terminal will increase the airport's annual passenger capacity from 1 million to 3.5

million, while the number of flights could also increase up to threefold," he said. The Prime Minister also dedicated the 298&km&long Nimmu&Padum&Darcha Road to the nation. Constructed by the BRO, the road connects Nimmu in Leh with Darcha in Himachal Pradesh through the remote Zaskar Valley, providing an alternative connectivity corridor to Ladakh.

The strategically important road is expected to improve logistical support for the Armed Forces while enhancing access to healthcare, education, markets

and other essential services for residents of the region.

In the energy sector, PM Modi inaugurated the 9 MW Hanu Small Hydroelectric Project and the 66 kV double-circuit Dah&Hanu&Khaltsi Transmission Line.

The projects are aimed at strengthening electricity supply, improving power transmission and harnessing Ladakh's hydropower potential.

The Prime Minister also inaugurated India's first Petroglyph Conservation Park at Sindhu Ghat in Leh to protect the region's prehistoric rock

carvings, which offer insights into its ancient history and cultural heritage.

Additionally, 40 water bodies developed across 40 villages under Project Him Sarovar were inaugurated to improve water conservation and availability.

The initiative seeks to address seasonal water shortages, support irrigation and strengthen agricultural livelihoods in the region. The projects collectively aim to improve infrastructure, enhance strategic connectivity, strengthen energy security, conserve cultural heritage and ensure better water management in Ladakh.

Chief Minister Vijay to Participate in Thevar Jayanthi Celebrations

CHENNAI: Chief Minister Vijay will participate in the Thevar Jayanthi and Guru Puja celebrations to be held in Pasumpon on the 30th of this month to pay his respects. The 119th Jayanthi (birth anniversary) and 64th Guru Puja (commemoration day) of Muthuramalinga Thevar will commence on the 28th of this month in Pasumpon, near Kamuthi in the Ramanathapuram district.



The first day will focus on the spiritual aspects of Thevar's legacy, featuring rituals such as Ganapathi Homam, Laksharchana, Thiruvilakku Puja (lamp worship), and a chariot procession.

The following day (the 29th) will be dedicated to his political legacy. On the 30th—the day of the Guru

Puja—a Yagasalai ceremony will take place at 6:00 AM.

Subsequently, on behalf of the Government of Tamil Nadu, Ramanathapuram District Collector Sivaguru Prabhakaran will lead the floral tributes.

At around 9:00 AM, Chief Minister Vijay, along with

various ministers and office-bearers of the Tamila Vetti Kazhagam (TVK), will pay their respects. Extensive preparations and stringent security arrangements are currently being planned for the arrival of the Chief Minister and other dignitaries. Chief Minister Vijay is scheduled to arrive in Madurai on the morning of the 30th.

He is expected to garland and pay tribute to the statue of Thevar at Goripalayam, followed by the statues of the Marudu Pandiyar brothers. It is reported that he will then travel by road to Pasumpon, acknowledging the welcome from the public along the way.



On behalf of the Government of Tamil Nadu, and to mark the 96th birth anniversary of former President Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam, Legislative Assembly Speaker J.C.D. Prabhakar, along with Ministers P. Venkataramanan, Rajmohan, and Ja. Mohamed Parvez, paid tribute today at the Anna University campus in Chennai by garlanding the statue of the former President and offering flowers to his portrait.

Chief Minister Vijay to visit Kerala following his trip to Andhra Pradesh

CHENNAI: The inauguration of the Periyar Library, constructed in Gandhipuram, Coimbatore district, is scheduled for tomorrow, the 16th. Chief Minister Vijay will inaugurate the library, travelling from Chennai to Coimbatore by air for this purpose. It has been announced that ministers, government officials, and others will attend

the event. Furthermore, the Chief Minister is set to launch new projects and inaugurate completed ones in Coimbatore, with a total value of approximately 200 crore rupees. Security arrangements have been intensified in view of the Chief Minister's visit to Coimbatore. Meanwhile, reports have emerged that the Chief Minister will travel from Coimbatore to the state of Kerala tomorrow.

It is understood that a helipad has been set up near Avinashi Road in Coimbatore, from where the Chief Minister will travel to Thrissur by helicopter. No official announcement has been made regarding this visit to Thrissur; it is suggested that the itinerary is being kept confidential to

prevent large crowds from gathering during his visit. Chief Minister Vijay recently received a warm welcome during his visit to Andhra Pradesh, where he also offered prayers at the renowned Durga Amman Temple in Vijayawada. Given this, the news of his upcoming visit to Kerala has generated significant interest within political circles.

"Voting for Israel in world's largest democracy" Amb Azar casts ballot as diplomatic missions open polls for Oct 27 election

NEW DELHI: Israeli Ambassador to India Reuven Azar on Thursday cast his vote in the national capital at the Israeli Embassy as Israeli diplomatic missions across the world opened polling stations ahead of Israel's October 27 elections, with diplomatic staff and their families casting their ballots early to ensure they reach the country in time for counting.

The Israeli Embassy in India shared the development on X, highlighting Azar's participation in the early voting process and describing it as voting for Israel in the world's largest democracy.

"Voting for Israel in the world's largest democracy! Ambassador Reuven Azar casts his vote in New Delhi ahead of Israel's October 27

elections. Fun fact: Israelis serving at embassies around the world vote early so their ballots make it home in time!" the Israeli Embassy in India



said in a post on X.

According to The Times of Israel, the first ballots of Israel's 2026 election were cast overnight as voting opened at Israeli diplomatic missions around the world ahead of the

October 27 election.

The voting period for eligible personnel serving at diplomatic missions abroad and their families will last around 30 hours, with polling stations opening during local daytime hours at respective locations.

In total, 101 polling stations are scheduled to operate across 99 diplomatic missions, allowing around 4,800 eligible people to cast their votes, as reported by The Times of Israel.

Voting abroad is not available to most Israeli citizens and is restricted to envoys, diplomatic staff and their families.

The Israeli Embassy in Wellington, New Zealand, was the first to open its polling station, with voting beginning

at 9 am local time, equivalent to 11 pm the previous night in Israel, as per The Times of Israel.

Staff at the newly opened Israeli Embassy in Fiji followed, with its polling station opening an hour later.

The final diplomatic missions scheduled to close their polling stations are the Israeli consulates in San Francisco and Los Angeles, where voting will end at 8 pm local time, corresponding to 6 am on Friday in Israel.

Following the completion of voting, the ballot slips will be flown to Israel and sent to the Knesset for counting.

Ambassador Azar's participation in New Delhi marks part of the early voting process for Israeli diplomatic personnel stationed overseas, allowing their ballots to be transported back to Israel ahead of the October 27 election.

Taking Friendship to the Next Level

New Bridge Between China and North Korea Opens Today



BEIJING: A new bridge across the Yalu River, connecting China and North Korea, is set to be officially opened

today (Thursday)—a development that marks a new chapter in the friendship between the two nations. Spanning 3 kilometers and featuring four lanes, the bridge connects the Chinese city of Dandong with the North Korean city of Sinuiju. Although originally scheduled to open in 2014, the project remained stalled for over a

decade, largely due to delays on the North Korean side. The massive bridge is now being opened with the aim of boosting trade between the two countries.

It is expected to strengthen both the movement of goods across the border and the overall economic relationship between the two nations.

Today horoscope



—You will successfully complete challenging tasks. Expected funds will arrive. Discord within the family will fade, giving way to unity. Your children will act with a sense of responsibility. Avoid getting into arguments at your workplace.

Due to 'Chandrashtama' (the Moon's transit through the eighth house from your sign), you may experience minor, vague anxieties. Be careful not to fall out with relatives or friends. You will face competition in business; employ new strategies to attract customers.



You will reminisce about happy moments from the past. You can expect a favorable outcome in legal matters, and you may receive support from government-related sources. Pending tasks will finally be completed. You will receive assistance from your paternal side and see progress in both your business and career.

You will attend auspicious family events. Your interest in yoga and spirituality will grow. Conflicts with relatives will be resolved. You may undertake work-related travel. In business, long-stagnant stock will finally be sold off.



You will complete your tasks. Financial inflow will be satisfactory. Confusion will dissipate, and peace will prevail within the family. You will make new acquaintances. Avoid creating any enmity at your workplace. In business, you will receive support from new partners.



You will hold a dominant (influential) position within your family. Conflicts with your spouse will be resolved. Students will feel enthusiastic. You will learn the nuances and intricacies of business. At the workplace, your leadership abilities will grow, leading to an increase in your stature.



Misunderstandings between spouses will be cleared up. You will be able to recover money that you had lent to others. You will receive timely assistance from expected sources. Business will pick up momentum and yield decent profits. Maintain a calm demeanor at your workplace.



With the Moon positioned within your zodiac sign, it is advisable to practice mutual adjustment and compromise between spouses. You may continue to face a sense of financial shortage, regardless of how much money comes in. In business, you will earn the profits you anticipated. At the workplace, your colleagues will hold you in high regard.



You will engage in public affairs with self-confidence. You will listen to your children's wishes and fulfill them. In business, you will have the opportunity to meet prominent individuals.



You will achieve your goals by taking advantage of small opportunities. You will receive cooperation from your parents. Good news will arrive from out of town. In business, old stock will be cleared, and you will receive support from your partners. At the office, your superior will commend your work.



Your mental confusion will dissipate. You will feel energized by the introduction of new friends. You will avoid unnecessary expenses related to your vehicle. At the workplace, you will be recommended for a new position; you will earn the favor of the higher authorities and achieve success.



You will find peace of mind through your family members. Issues related to debts will come to an end. At the office, you will complete tasks that had been pending or stalled. In business, you will take steps to attract former customers.



“CM Vijay should visit grocery stores to inquire about price levels” – M.K. Stalin



CHENNAI: “Tamil Nadu Chief Minister Vijay travels to London, Karnataka, and Andhra Pradesh. Let him do so. But he should also take a moment to visit a local grocery store and find out about the rise in prices,” said DMK leader M.K. Stalin. In a post on his social media page, M.K. Stalin wrote: “The Chief Minister travels to London, Karnataka, and

Andhra Pradesh.

Let him do so. But he should also take a moment to visit a local grocery store and find out about the rise in prices. Please, do not bother asking the Minister for Food—he will simply claim that everything is ‘normal.’ Instead of the joy that should accompany the festive season, the people are gripped by fear. Ask them instead.”

Over the past three months—since July—the price of rice has risen by up to ₹27 per kilogram, with the cost of a 26&kilogram sack increasing by as much as ₹700. In Tamil Nadu, the price of a 26&kilogram sack of common&variety parboiled rice has climbed from ₹1,100 in July to ₹1,800 today.

This translates to an increase from ₹42 to ₹70 per kilogram.

Similarly, the price of a sack of Ponni parboiled rice has risen from ₹1,400 to ₹1,900, while the price of a sack of Sona Masoori rice—sourced from Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka—has gone up from ₹1,400 to ₹2,000. With the retail price of rice rising by up to Rs. 27 per kilogram, and the prices

of pigeon peas (toor dal) and black gram (urad dal) increasing by Rs. 6 and Rs. 11 per kilogram respectively, poor and middle&class families have been severely affected.

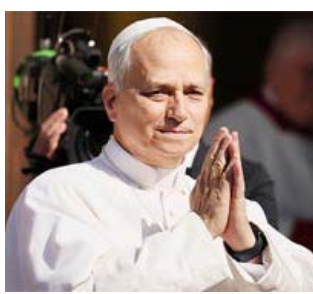
In this context, the Minister for Food stated that the government is monitoring the prices of 11 essential commodities, including rice, and claimed that the price of rice has not increased at all—dismissing the reports as a false narrative constructed by opposition parties.

Against this backdrop, DMK leader M.K. Stalin has criticized the situation, noting that instead of experiencing the joy of the festive season, people are left frozen in fear due to the skyrocketing prices.

Pope Leo diagnosed with lung cancer admitted to hospital, Vatican reports

VATICAN CITY: The Vatican has announced that Pope Leo has been diagnosed with lung cancer. A medical examination recently conducted on Pope Leo, the spiritual leader of Catholics, revealed a tumor in his lungs.

To have the tumor removed, the Pope was admitted to the Gemelli Hospital in Rome last Tuesday. The Vatican initially reported



that the surgery, which lasted approximately 90 minutes, was completed without any complications and that the Pope is doing well.

Subsequently, the Vatican released further details provided by Professor Stefano Margaritora, the head of the hospital's thoracic surgery department and the Pope's lead surgeon.

It was reported that 71&year&old Pope Leo has been diagnosed with lung adenocarcinoma, a common type of lung cancer. A medical report regarding this stated, “In line with the

findings suspected prior to the surgery, the rapid analysis of tissue samples taken during the procedure confirmed that Pope Leo has lung cancer.” However, no further details regarding his health condition were provided.

The Vatican announced that Leo is expected to remain in the hospital for about a week, and all his public engagements have been cancelled until October 20.

Tender for Procurement of 1,000 AC Electric Buses Cancelled

CHENNAI: The Metropolitan Transport Corporation (MTC) has announced the cancellation of the tender for the procurement of 1,000 AC electric buses.

The Chennai Metropolitan Transport Corporation has been operating electric buses with the objective of reducing environmental impact. Currently, 310 AC electric buses and 400 non-AC electric buses are in operation. These electric buses are operated on a contractual basis.

Under the agreement, a private entity operates the buses, while the Transport Corporation provides payment for the service.

Specifically, each bus is required to cover 200 km daily; the MTC pays Rs. 80.82 per kilometer for AC buses and Rs. 77.12 per kilometer for non-AC buses. Meanwhile, in March, a tender was invited for the procurement of 1,000 low&floor electric buses, each 12 meters in length.



The opening of this tender was postponed several times because not enough companies participated. Meanwhile, although it had been announced that the

tender would be opened yesterday, it has now been cancelled. Officials stated that the reason for this is the lack of sufficient participation from companies.

US Ambassador Gor says Rubio's visit to India “more business focused”, to meet EAM Jaishankar in Mumbai

NEW DELHI: US Ambassador to India Sergio Gora on Thursday described US Secretary of State Marco Rubio's upcoming visit to India as “more business&focused”, highlighting growing bilateral trade, energy cooperation, technology partnerships and investment opportunities, while confirming that External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar is expected to meet the US Secretary in Mumbai.

advancing commercial ties between the two countries, with Rubio scheduled to travel to Mumbai and Jamnagar during his India. “This is Secretary's second official visit to India,” Gora said. “This trip is a little more business focused, and so once again, if you look at our bilateral trade between the United States and India, it's been an incredible up through,” he added. According to a media note issued by the US Department of State, Rubio will visit Uzbekistan and India between October 17 and 22.

Following engagements in Samarkand, Uzbekistan, the US Secretary of State will travel to Mumbai and Jamnagar, where he is scheduled to meet senior Indian government officials and business leaders.

The State Department said the visit would aim to “strengthen the US&India strategic partnership, exchange views on regional and global dynamics, and

discuss prospects for enhanced energy cooperation”.

Outlining Rubio's itinerary, Gora said the Secretary would hold meetings with business representatives in Mumbai before travelling to Jamnagar to engage with Reliance, one of the world's largest oil refining companies. “The Secretary will be going to Mumbai, and he'll have a lot of meetings there. He'll also be going to Jamnagar, where he'll meet some of the folks at Reliance. Reliance is one of the biggest oil refinery companies in the world, but we are also proud because they are also opening the first refinery in the United States in 50 years,” Gora said.

He also confirmed that Indian government representatives were expected to join the discussions in Mumbai, including External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar. “While he's in Mumbai, he will be meeting with government of India officials. We expect Minister Dr Jaishankar will be joining us there, along with other individuals here from Delhi,” the US Ambassador said. Gora emphasised India's growing importance as a commercial partner for the United States, pointing to cooperation across sectors ranging from defence and information technology to semiconductors and data infrastructure. Highlighting India's approach towards foreign investment, the Ambassador said New



Delhi had provided opportunities for American companies to participate in its expanding economy, describing the relationship as mutually beneficial for both countries.

“For the private sector to be able to come to India to compete, to have their foot in the door, you have a very pragmatic Prime Minister here that welcomes outside investment; pick any sector, and we're working together on it,” Gora said. He cited defence cooperation and the presence of major American technology companies in India as examples of the growing commercial relationship. “So, if you look at the defence world, we have co&production happening here in India. If you look at IT, it's unmatched. Google, Microsoft, Adobe, and Microsoft—everyone of them is opening data centres and chip manufacturing here that work with our companies hand in hand in the United States,” he said.

Gora argued that investments in In-

dia could also support employment in the United States, describing the economic relationship as a shared opportunity. “So when a job is created in India, a counter job is created in the United States, and so it's an incredible win&win situation that I would say is unmatched. There are not a lot of countries in the world that have that liberalist potential,” he added. Gora also highlighted India's role in emerging technologies, particularly artificial intelligence and semiconductor manufacturing, describing the country's participation in technology initiatives as a reflection of mutual trust between New Delhi and Washington.

Referring to the Global AI Impact Summit hosted by India earlier this year, he said the United States had also participated in the event and pointed to India's invitation to the Pax Silica initiative as another indication of the relationship. “They hosted the Global AI Summit, and where they brought the whole world. The United States participated that in that also earlier this year. One of the things that resulted from it, and it's another sign of our relationship with India. He was among the first 10 countries invited into Pax Silica, and the reason for that is because they are a trusted partner,” Gora said.

He stressed that trust was central to India's potential role in supply chains,

particularly as the two countries deepen cooperation in advanced technology and manufacturing. “So for them to be an essential part of our supply chain, that the trust is there,” he said. The Ambassador also referred to the recent presence of American F&35 fighter aircraft in India for a joint exercise, describing it as another indication of Washington's confidence in its partnership with New Delhi.

“Just last week, we had for the first time ever F&35s in India. Our F&35s don't go all over the world. They don't go to places we don't trust, and they came here for a joint exercise with the Indians,” Gora said.

His remarks placed defence cooperation alongside investment and technology as key elements of the broader relationship, highlighting the range of sectors in which India and the United States are working together.

Rubio's planned visit to Jamnagar and Mumbai is expected to provide an opportunity for discussions on energy cooperation, commercial investment and the wider strategic partnership.

The visit follows Rubio's planned engagements in Uzbekistan, where he will participate in the C5+1 Ministerial and hold bilateral meetings with senior officials from Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and the Kyrgyz Republic.

October 15 Coimbatore 2026

A great human being who rescued the destitute and reunited 400 people with their families!



A social activist from Coimbatore has achieved a remarkable feat by rescuing over 1,000 destitute individuals found living on the streets and successfully reuniting more than 400 of them with their families. Mahendran (50), a resident of the R. S. Puram area in Coimbatore, founded the ‘Eera Nenjam’ (Compassionate Heart) Trust in 2012. Through this organization, he and his team rescue elderly people, individuals with mental health challenges, and pregnant women who are left stranded on streets, at bus stands, or in other public spaces. Upon rescue, these individuals are provided with haircuts and clean clothing. They are then given temporary shelter in a facility managed by the Coimbatore City Municipal Corporation, where they receive urgent medical care and professional mental health counseling. Mahendran and his team engage with those staying in the shelter with great care and compassion, gathering information about their hometowns and families. By leveraging online resources and collaborating with local police, they have successfully located the families of these individuals and safely reunited over 400 people with their loved ones. In the unfortunate event that someone passes away while under the care of the Trust, Mahendran ensures that they are not left unclaimed; instead, he carries out their final rites with full dignity, strictly adhering to government protocols. It is noteworthy that Mahendran has been carrying out this noble service consistently, without any major financial support from the government, relying solely on his own savings and contributions from friends. This service of his has earned him praise from all across Tamil Nadu.



The Nandi statue of the Jalakanteswarar Temple, fully visible within the Mettur Dam reservoir area.

House of man arrested for murder of social activist demolished



PUNJAB: Ashwani Kumar, a pharmacy owner from Mansa, Punjab, shot and killed social activist Parvinder Singh following a dispute over the sale of banned medicines. After the incident, Ashwani Kumar went into hiding, prompting the formation of special police teams to track him down.

He was eventually arrested by the police while hiding in Salasar, Rajasthan. Following his arrest, his house was demolished using bulldozers. A relative of his, Vipin, had already been taken into custody. There is a growing demand that not only Ashwani Kumar but everyone else involved in the crime should be arrested. Protesters have announced that they will not perform the last rites for Parvinder Singh's body until justice is served and all the primary perpetrators are arrested. Furthermore, they have called for a state&wide shutdown (bandh) in Punjab today (the 15th) to condemn the murder.



The DefenceAccounts Departmentorganised a nationwide Shramdaan under the 'Swachhata Hi Seva 2026' campaign, with field offices participating in the two-week-long Swachhata Pakhwada and planting over 25,000 trees under the 'Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam' initiative led by Controller General of Defence Accounts (CGDA) on October 12.

Chief Minister Vijay to meet Governor Arlekar today



CHENNAI: R. N. Ravi, who served as the Governor of Tamil Nadu, was appointed as the Governor of West Bengal on March 5th. Instead of a new appointment, R. V. Arlekar—the Governor of Kerala—was given additional charge as the Governor of Tamil Nadu. It is worth noting that it was he who administered the oath of office to Chief Minister Vijay.

however, no such announcement was made. Recently, President Droupadi Murmu issued an order appointing new Governors for six states, including Tamil Nadu. Under this order, R. V. Arlekar, the Governor of Kerala, has been appointed as the full-time Governor of Tamil Nadu. This significant change follows a one-day visit to Tamil Nadu by Prime Minister Modi a few days ago. In the meantime, Chief Minister Vijay extended his congratulations to Governor Arlekar via social media. Furthermore, the Chief Minister is scheduled to meet Governor R. V. Arlekar in person today (Thursday) at the Raj Bhavan in Guindy to offer his congratulations.

23,241 People Affected by Dengue in Tamil Nadu Minister Arunraj's Statement

CHENNAI: Minister for Medical and Family Welfare, Arunraj, spoke to reporters in Kilpauk, Chennai, yesterday. He stated the following: In 2025, 25,585 people in Tamil Nadu were affected by dengue fever. So far this year, 23,241 people have been affected. In Chennai alone, 118 cases of dengue were confirmed the day before yesterday.



not be alarmed. Efforts to eradicate mosquito larvae are being carried out intensively. Preventive measures have been accelerated through fever & screening camps, and all necessary medicines are in stock.

To address the shortage of nursing staff, 4,724 nurses are being recruited through a transparent process. He said this.

Death Sentence for Wife and Her Lover in Murder of Merchant Navy Officer Landmark Verdict by Uttar Pradesh Court



MEERUT: A district court in Meerut, Uttar Pradesh, has sentenced a woman and her lover to death for the murder of her husband—a merchant navy officer—and the concealment of his body inside a blue plastic drum. Saurabh Rajput, a merchant navy officer from Meerut, Uttar Pradesh, was married to Muskan Rastogi. While Saurabh was working in London, Muskan began an affair with a man named Sahil Shukla. Saurabh's return from London in February last year became an obstacle

to their illicit relationship. Consequently, on March 3 of last year, the pair stabbed Saurabh to death, dismembered his body, placed the remains in a blue drum, and covered them with a cement mixture. The two fled to Himachal Pradesh, where they were subsequently arrested by the police and imprisoned. Presiding over the case, the Meerut court delivered its verdict yesterday, sentencing both Muskan and Sahil to death. Following the announcement of the verdict, chants of "Bharat Mata Ki Jai" (Victory to Mother India)

were heard in the courtroom. Saurabh's mother, Renu Rajput, welcomed the judgment. Meanwhile, Muskan's parents had previously informed the court that they would not object if their daughter were to be sentenced to death.

Let us pledge to build the strong India envisioned by Abdul Kalam: CM Vijay



CHENNAI: On the occasion of the birth anniversary of former President and missile scientist Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam, Chief Minister Vijay shared a post on the platform 'X' (formerly Twitter), which reads as follows: "On the birth anniversary of the 'Missile Man' and former President Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam—who contributed significantly to India's scientific advancement, inspired the dreams of students and youth, and served as a guiding light for their aspirations—I recall and honor his invaluable service to the nation. Despite holding various high-ranking

positions—such as an ISRO scientist, Principal Scientific Advisor to the Government of India, and President—he considered his identity as a 'teacher' to be the crowning achievement of his life. He dedicated his entire existence, until his very last breath, to the progress of students. His simplicity, integrity, and scientific temperament remain forever worthy of admiration. Let us keep the noble thoughts and visionary perspective of Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam in our minds, and on this day, let us pledge to build a prosperous and strong India."

Man left hanging outside a moving train after passengers grab his hands during an attempted mobile phone theft



PATNA: A video has gone viral on social media showing a man hanging outside a moving train in Bihar, terrified for his life, after passengers grabbed his hands through a window as he attempted to steal a mobile phone. The incident occurred a couple of days ago near Shivanarayanpur railway station

in the Bhagalpur district of Bihar. An unidentified individual tried to snatch a passenger's mobile phone through the train window. Passengers inside the carriage reacted quickly, grabbing the man's hands before he could escape. As the train began to move, they continued to hold on, leaving the man dangling outside the train. As the train picked up speed, the man struggled desperately—in a state of sheer terror—to free himself. Onlookers at the railway station were left horrified and distressed by the sight. The individual was dragged for a short distance before falling onto the platform.

He survived with only minor injuries. Following the incident, Railway Protection Force (RPF) personnel apprehended him for questioning. A video of the event has gone viral online, highlighting the dangers passengers face due to attempted mobile phone thefts at railway stations. Meanwhile, the railway administration has advised passengers to avoid taking any actions—when attempting to apprehend suspected thieves—that could endanger themselves or others. In the event of an attempted theft, passengers are urged to report the incident to railway staff, the Government Railway Police (GRP), or the Railway Protection Force (RPF).

Air France restricts crew from 31 countries, including Pakistan, in compliance with new Israeli government regulations

PARIS: Following an incident involving a Flydubai, the Israeli government has imposed new restrictions regarding crew members from certain countries serving on flights to Israel. Air France has confirmed that it will fully comply with these regulations. In a statement, Air France noted, "Like all airlines, Air France is obligated to ensure that both its customers and staff adhere to the entry regulations imposed by the authorities of the countries it serves. Accordingly, the relevant staff members have been informed of the new regulations implemented by Israeli authorities for flights to Tel Aviv."

Due to this new policy by Israel, Air France will impose restrictions on flight crew members who hold citizenship from 31 Muslim-majority nations, including Pakistan, Iran, Saudi Arabia, Algeria, and Tunisia. According to information released by the Israeli news channel 'N12', Israel's Ministry of Transport and Road Safety issued a new directive to foreign airlines on October 1st. The directive stipulates that pilots and cabin crew on flights entering Israeli airspace must not hold citizenship—or dual citizenship—from countries that do not maintain diplomatic relations with Israel. Legal experts have warned that this move by Israel constitutes discrimination against personnel based on their nationality and could lead to legal challenges under French labor laws. It is reported that this new regulation by Israel could affect several international airlines that operate flights to Israel or through Israeli airspace. According to officials from the United Arab Emirates and Israel, on September 30, a co-pilot from Oman attempted to hijack a Flydubai flight traveling from Dubai to Tel Aviv, with the intent of crashing it into Israel's Ben Gurion Airport. It is in the wake of this incident that Israel has imposed such stringent restrictions.



The Union Minister for Defence, Shri Rajnath Singh at the launch of IIT Kanpur's 'Greater Than Us' fundraising campaign, in New Delhi.

Punjab Police officer arrested with heroin worth Rs 40 crore



CHANDIGARH: A Punjab Police officer, who was tasked with preventing drug smuggling via drones along the international border, has been arrested in Tarn Taran district with 15 kilograms of heroin. The seized heroin is estimated to be worth over Rs 40 crore. The arrested officer has been identified as Karandeep Singh. He was apprehended during a joint operation conducted by the Border Security Force (BSF) and investigative agencies in the Sarai Amanat Khan area of the border district of Tarn Taran. It is alleged that he was transporting the heroin from the border area to his hometown, Busse. Authorities are conducting an intensive investigation to determine the origin of the heroin, its intended recipient, and whether others are involved in the smuggling attempt.



Rajendra Vishwanath Arlekar took charge as the Governor of Tamil Nadu today at Raj Bhavan in Chennai.

Fire in Germany 3 Indians killed

NEW DELHI: A fire broke out the day before yesterday in an apartment building in the German city of Bochum. Three people—two young women aged 25 and 27, and a 26-year-old man—lost their lives in the incident. Five others sustained injuries. The injured have been admitted to a hospital for treatment. Reports from the region indicate that the three deceased were Indian nationals. Meanwhile, police have arrested a Romanian man on suspicion that he may have started the fire, potentially with the intent to commit murder.



54 year old elephant 'Prashantha' to carry the 750kg golden howdah at the Mysuru Dasara festival.

Why did Vijay roll a pineapple at the inauguration of CapitaLand in Ambattur?

CHENNAI: During the inauguration of the Singapore-based data center company 'CapitaLand' in Ambattur, Chennai, Chief Minister Vijay and Singapore Deputy Prime Minister Gan Kim Yong rolled a pineapple—a gesture that carries a specific meaning. The Singaporean firm CapitaLand has established a new 46-megawatt data center in the Pattaravakkam area of Ambattur, Chennai. This facility, which spans 4 acres,

was developed following an agreement signed during the 2024 Global Investors Meet. Designed to strengthen Chennai's IT infrastructure, the data center represents an investment of ₹5,000 crore and has a power capacity of 56 megawatts. It houses 4,900 server racks. Chief Minister Vijay and Singapore Deputy Prime Minister Gan Kim Yong visited this massive facility, where they inaugurated it by

rolling a pineapple—a traditional Singaporean custom. Once fully operational, the facility is expected to create 5,000 job opportunities. One might wonder why both the Chief Minister and the Singapore Deputy Prime Minister were each given a pineapple to roll during the ceremony. In Singaporean culture, rolling a pineapple is a traditional practice often observed during the inauguration of new offices or business establishments.

In the Hokkien language, a pineapple is called "Ong Lai," a term believed to signify the arrival of good fortune and the growth of wealth. Consequently, the pineapple is viewed as an auspicious symbol. In Singapore and Malaysia, it is customary to roll a pineapple from the entrance into the interior when opening a new home, office, or business. It is also customary to utter the phrase "Huat ah!" while rolling the object.

The belief is that this ensures any new beginning will be successful and profitable. This is the reason why, at the inauguration of a Singaporean company in Ambattur, Chennai, a pineapple was presented to Vijay, who then performed the ritual of rolling it. In India, it is believed that bringing a cow along with its



calf during a housewarming ceremony (*grihapravesha*) for a new home invites the blessings of Goddess Lakshmi. Similarly, various other countries have their own unique customs rooted in their respective beliefs.



Alleged foreign funding for the Cockroach Party Mary Millben — American singer and actress

AIADMK lodges complaint with the Governor regarding Minister Sengottaiyan's remarks

CHENNAI: peaking in Gobi, Erode district, the day before yesterday, Minister Sengottaiyan stated, "Very soon, 15 MLAs will leave the AIADMK. We will have to wait and see who exactly will leave. From now on, it is Edappadi Palaniswami



and S.P. Velumani who mu-

st decide what the next steps for the AIADMK should be."

These remarks sparked a major controversy. In light of this, the AIADMK has submitted a formal complaint to Governor Arlekaraga-

inst Minister Sengottaiyan. The party's whip, Agri' Krishnamurthy, has urged action against the Minister, arguing that his claim—that 15 members would leave the AIADMK—amounts to encouraging 'horse&trading' (poaching of legislators).



Tirumala: On the third day of the Tirupati Navaratri Brahmotsavam, Lord Malayappa was taken out in a procession—mounted on the 'Simha Vahana' (lion vehicle) in the morning and seated in a 'Muthu Pallakki' (pearl&adorned palanquin) at night.

The voice for justice cannot be suppressed; the struggle cannot be halted

Rahul Gandhi extends support to Ankita Bhandari's parents



DELHI: "The voice for justice cannot be suppressed; the struggle cannot be halted," stated Rahul Gandhi, Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha, in a post expressing support for the parents of Ankita Bhandari. Ankita Bhandari's parents were arrested by the police while they were protesting against the appointment of Dushyant Gautam—who has been linked to the murder case of the young woman, Ankita Bhandari—as the Governor of Sikkim.

Condemning this action, Rahul Gandhi shared his thoughts on social media. Vinod Arya, a senior BJP leader in

Uttarakhand and a former state minister, had a son named Pulkit Arya, who owned a luxury resort near Rishikesh. Ankita Bhandari worked as a receptionist at this resort. She went missing on September 18, 2022. Her father filed a police complaint, reporting that his daughter had not returned home after leaving for work; Pulkit Arya, the owner of the resort where she was employed, was also involved in the reporting process. Police investigations revealed that it was Pulkit Arya who murdered Ankita.

Subsequently, the police arrested three individuals, including Pulkit Arya and

two resort employees. The police also recovered Ankita's body. Following an order from the state's Chief Minister, parts of the luxury resort were demolished. Pulkit Arya and his associates have been sentenced to life imprisonment. From the very beginning, Ankita's family and social activists have alleged that Dushyant Kumar Gautam—a former national general secretary of the BJP—is linked to this murder. Against this backdrop, it was announced on October 12 that Dushyant Kumar Gautam has been appointed as the Governor of Sikkim. In protest against this, Ankita Bhandari's parents have been staging a demonstration at India Gate in Delhi.

Rahul Gandhi and Priyanka Gandhi met with them last night. Meanwhile, Ankita Bhandari's parents were arrested in the early hours of the morning; reports suggest they

have since been released. Condemning the arrests, Rahul Gandhi wrote on X (formerly Twitter): "At 4:00 AM, while everyone was asleep, Ankita Bhandari's parents were taken into custody.

Their 'crime'? Sitting peacefully at India Gate, demanding that Dushyant Gautam should not become the Governor of Sikkim until the CBI investigation is concluded! Priyanka and I met Ankita's parents yesterday. Their only question was: why the rush to appoint Gautam as Governor before the investigation is even complete? But then, isn't it the hallmark of this regime to silence the voices of victims who dare to ask questions? Nevertheless, the voice for justice cannot be silenced, and the struggle for justice will not cease.

The Congress party stands with Ankita Bhandari's family—and will continue to stand with them until they receive justice."

American Hindu Mandir Council urges temples, devotees to stay vigilant after teen's arrest in alleged temple shooting plot

USA: The Hindu Mandir Empowerment Council (HMEC) in the US on Wednesday (local time) urged temples and devotees to remain vigilant and promptly report suspicious activity following the arrest of a 19-year-old man accused of plotting a mass shooting targeting a Hindu place of worship in Aurora, Illinois, describing the alleged incident as part of a troubling pattern of threats against Hindu religious institutions.

The council strongly condemned acts of hatred and violence directed at faith communities, noting that the alleged attack was thwarted through timely reporting and swift action by law enforcement authorities.

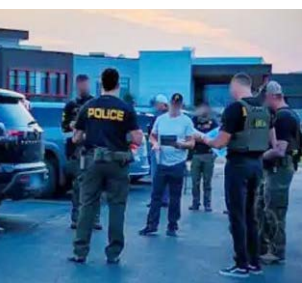
"HMEC is deeply concerned by reports of an alleged plot targeting a Hindu temple in Aurora, Illinois. We strongly condemn all acts of hate, violence, and intimidation directed at any faith community. The planned attack was fortunately thwarted through timely reporting and swift action by law enforcement, preventing what could have been a devastating tragedy," the Hindu Mandir Empowerment Council said in a statement on X. The council's appeal comes as Hindus observe Hindu Heritage Month and the ongoing festival season, when devotees gather at temples for prayers and celebrations. It also referred to a recent attack on a Hindu temple in Ohio, saying

the latest incident underscored the need for continued vigilance across Hindu communities.

"As we observe Hindu Heritage Month and celebrate the ongoing festival season, we encourage mandirs and devotees to remain vigilant and promptly report any suspicious activity. Coming shortly after the recent attack on a Hindu temple in Ohio, this incident underscores a troubling pattern of threats directed at Hindu places of worship and the need for continued vigilance across our communities. As we come together in prayer, celebration, and service, let us stand united against hate and reaffirm our commitment to ensuring that every devotee can worship freely, peacefully, and without fear in our sacred spaces," HMEC said.

Ajay Jain Bhutoria, a prominent Indian-American community leader and former US President Joe Biden's Advisory Commissioner, also condemned the alleged plot and called for greater protection of Hindu temples across the United States. "Strongly condemn the thwarted attack on the Chicago Hindu temple. Temples are centers of peace. Hate vs Indian Americans is real. I urge @POTUS & DOJ to secure all temples & combat hate. Our 5.2M community

contributes \$300B+ in taxes to USA," Bhutoria said in a post on X. According to the Palatine Police Department, the 19-year-old suspect, identified as Alexandros Paporakis, was arrested following an investigation into threats involving a potential mass shooting at a Hindu temple. The investigation began on October 11, when the Palatine Police Department



was contacted by the Mount Prospect Police Department regarding information it had received about a potential mass shooting. The information originated from an individual who reported receiving concerning electronic communications from Paporakis. Investigators said Paporakis had shared a document outlining an alleged plan to carry out a mass shooting at the Hindu temple. He had also shared images depicting a rifle, rifle magazines, body armour and other tactical equipment and accessories.

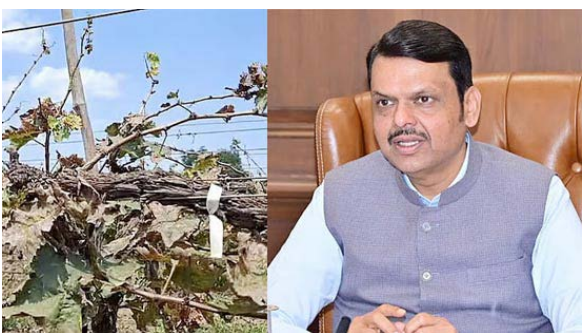
Paporakis was located and taken into custody as he was leaving his residence. Palatine Police detectives subsequently executed a search warrant at

his home, recovering a rifle, multiple loaded rifle magazines, hundreds of rounds of additional rifle ammunition, tactical equipment and other items believed to be relevant to the investigation.

Among the recovered items was a tactical vest containing body armour and a patch displaying imagery associated with white supremacist extremism. Investigators also examined electronic communications and a document attributed to Paporakis titled "Why I Fought: A.K.A.: (Aurora Shooter's Manifesto)." According to investigators, the document contained statements expressing white supremacist and extremist ideologies, including references to violence directed towards individuals of South Asian heritage, particularly those of Indian descent. Detectives believe Paporakis may have been planning to carry out an attack on October 11, potentially targeting a Hindu place of worship in the Aurora area. Following the investigation, police coordinated outreach to Hindu places of worship in their jurisdiction to alert them to the information.

Paporakis was charged with one count of Making a Terrorist Threat, a Class X felony, and one count of Unlawful Possession of Weapons. He appeared for a detention hearing on Wednesday, where a judge ordered him detained.

Rs. 5,000 for Drought, Affected Farmers Maharashtra Government Announces Relief



MUMBAI: Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis has ordered the disbursement of Rs. 5,000 to farmers in Maharashtra who have been severely affected by drought. Due to a failure of the monsoon this year, more than 85 percent

of the state is currently in the grip of a severe drought. In several regions, including Marathwada, groundwater levels have plummeted to unprecedented lows—dropping more than 3 meters. With wells and borewells

running dry, the public is forced to travel for miles just to secure drinking water.

Under the scorching October sun, crops—including sugarcane and sorghum—planted across hundreds of thousands of acres are withering away due to a lack of water. Faced with massive crop losses and the burden of debt, farming families are struggling to sustain their livelihoods. There is also an acute shortage of fodder for livestock. To manage the drought situation, the distribution of drinking water via tankers has already

begun in the affected areas. In light of this, Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis has announced a series of immediate relief measures to support farmers who have lost their livelihoods due to the failure of the rains. Speaking to reporters following a cabinet meeting in Mumbai yesterday, Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis announced that an interim relief payment of Rs. 5,000 would be provided to each drought-affected farming family as a 'Diwali gift.'

Those who have converted to Islam cannot claim reservation benefits – Supreme Court

NEW DELHI: The Supreme Court has stated that individuals who have converted to Islam cannot claim reservation benefits under the Other Backward Classes (OBC) category. A person who converts to Islam is simply a Muslim; they cannot claim to belong to a sub-category such as "Backward Class Muslim." The Madurai Bench of the Madras High Court had previously ruled that a Government Order (GO) issued by the Tamil Nadu government—which provided for the issuance of "Backward Class Muslim" certificates for the purpose of availing reservation benefits—was unlawful. This ruling was delivered by a division bench comprising Justices G.R. Swaminathan and P.B. Balaji. Following this, on the 8th of this month, the Tamil Nadu government filed an appeal in the Supreme Court challenging the High Court's order, which had barred converts to Islam from claiming such reservation benefits. The case came up for hearing in the Supreme Court today. A Supreme Court bench comprising Justices Prashant Kumar Mishra and Sri Chandrashekar delivered a verdict today, ruling that individuals who have converted to Islam are not entitled to

reservation benefits. The judges stated: "An individual who converts from the Hindu social order to a non-Hindu social order cannot claim reservation or special privileges under Article 16(4) of the Constitution of India based solely on the social backwardness they experienced prior to their conversion. The backward status they held within their former social structure does not serve as a basis for attaining the status of a 'backward class' within the new religion to which they have converted. According to Paragraph 3 of the Constitution (Scheduled Castes) Order, a person who professes a religion other than Hinduism, Sikhism, or Buddhism cannot be considered a member of a 'Scheduled Caste.' Consequently, an individual who converts to a religion not included in this provision loses the 'Scheduled Caste' status associated with their former caste. In such circumstances, they cannot claim reservation or special privileges granted to members of 'Scheduled Castes' under Article 16(4) of the Constitution. The social backwardness an individual experienced before conversion cannot provide the legal foundation for them to be classified as a member of a specific backward social group following their

conversion. Conversely, if an individual who had moved from the Hindu social order to another social order returns to the Hindu fold, they may [become eligible for] affirmative action measures under Article 16(4) of the Constitution." Whether one is entitled to [certain benefits] cannot be determined solely based on their previous status. A 1951 judgment by the Madras High Court clearly states: "When a Hindu converts to Islam, they become a Muslim and nothing else; their former caste identity is completely erased." This ruling was subsequently upheld by the Supreme Court. Such definitive judicial pronouncements cannot be overturned by an executive government order; doing so would violate the principle of the separation of powers. Consequently, the government order issued by the Tamil Nadu administration is hereby quashed. Furthermore, the Supreme Court dismissed an appeal filed by the Tamil Nadu government against a Madras High Court judgment, which held that individuals who have converted to Islam are not eligible for reservation under the Other Backward Classes (OBC) category and cannot be granted special concessions reserved for the 'backward classes.'



Chennai: The Madras High Court has issued an interim stay on the tender announced for the distribution of palm oil packets through ration shops in view of the Deepavali festival.