

CM Vijay congratulates Baby Sahana on winning bronze at the Asian Para Games

CHENNAI: "Athlete Baby Sahana Ravi has achieved this feat through her hard work and dedication. Her success will serve as a new source of inspiration for young para-athletes in Tamil Nadu," said Chief Minister Vijay with pride. In a post shared on social media, he stated,

"I extend my heartfelt congratulations and best wishes to athlete Baby Sahana Ravi, who has brought pride to both Tamil Nadu and India by winning a bronze medal in the women's Class 9 table tennis event at the 5th Asian Para Games currently being held in Japan."

An incentive of Rs. 30 lakh from the Government of Tamil Nadu

"To honor her achievement, the Government of Tamil Nadu will provide a cash incentive of Rs. 30 lakh. Baby Sahana Ravi has reached this milestone through her hard work and dedication. Her success will inspire young para-athletes across Tamil Nadu."

I wish her continued success in the future, bringing further glory to Tamil Nadu and India," the Chief Minister added.

The 5th Asian Para Games

began on the 18th in the Aichi-Nagoya region of Japan and will continue until the 24th. India is participating in this tournament with a contingent of approximately 168 athletes competing across 11 different sports disciplines. In the 2023 games held in Hangzhou, China, 303 participants from India took

part. India secured a total of 111 medals—comprising 29 gold, 31 silver,

and 51 bronze—placing the country 5th in the medal tally. In recognition of her achievement, the Government of Tamil Nadu will provide

a substantial incentive of Rs. 30 lakh. Athlete Baby Sahana Ravi has attained this feat through her hard work and dedication. Her success will serve as a new source of inspiration for young para-athletes in Tamil Nadu.



I wish her continued success in the future, bringing further



glory to both Tamil Nadu and India! – the statement reads.

Albertans Reject Separation, Choose Unity with Canada: PM Carney Welcomes Decision

CANADA: Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney has welcomed the clear decision by Albertans to remain part of Canada, rejecting a proposal for a binding vote on separation.

Early referendum results indicated that over 76% of voters chose national unity, a significant outcome for the country.

In a statement, Prime Minister Carney emphasized that Albertans made a clear choice for unity, to build together, and to support each other. He



stated, "Above all, Albertans chose Canada." This decision allows Alberta and the rest of Canada to move forward with renewed purpose, as votes on other referendum questions

continue to be tallied.

Carney highlighted his government's commitment to expanding trade, accelerating major infrastructure projects, and strengthening Canada's energy sector, with Alberta playing a crucial role. He reiterated that Canada is greater than the sum of its parts and stressed the opportunity to build a better country for all.

The referendum also included questions on immigration, social services, and

the distribution of powers between provincial and federal governments.

Early results showed support for several proposed changes, including immigration control, social services for newcomers, and requiring non-permanent residents to pay for healthcare.

However, a proposal to give Alberta laws priority over federal laws in cases of conflict received less support, indicating a preference for maintaining federal authority.

India to Host First SCO Civilisation Dialogue Forum This Year

Rajnath Singh Announces in Tajikistan

NEW DELHI: Defence Minister Rajnath Singh announced in Dushanbe, Tajikistan, that India will host the inaugural Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) Civilisation Dialogue Forum by the end of this year. He extended an invitation to all member nations to participate in this initiative, aimed at strengthening cultural ties and fostering mutual understanding across the region.

Addressing the SCO Council of Heads of Government

meeting, Singh highlighted India's enduring friendship with Tajikistan and its strong connections with Central Asian countries. He recalled Prime Minister Narendra Modi's emphasis on strengthening security, connectivity, and opportunities within the SCO region, a message that remains particularly relevant for the Council.

During his address, Singh underscored the critical need for a united and uncompromising approach to combating



terrorism, describing it as a significant threat to global peace and development. He stressed that there should be no double standards in tackling terrorism, and no safe havens for those who finance

or support such activities. Singh called for the collective dismantling of the entire ecosystem that fuels terrorism, emphasizing that it not only causes loss of life but also hinders investment, commerce, and societal progress. Pakistan's Deputy Prime Minister Ishaq Dar was also present at the meeting. On the sidelines, Singh held discussions with Tajikistan Prime Minister Qohir Rosulzoda and Iran's First Vice President Mohammad Reza Aref.

China's Coast Guard Patrols East of Taiwan 'Highly Destabilizing', Says US Commission Chair

CHINA: China's increasing Coast Guard patrols east of Taiwan are a major concern, described as 'highly destabilizing' by Randall Schriver, chair of the US&China Economic and Security Review Commission.

These patrols, which have intensified since June, are seen as part of Beijing's broader strategy to assert its claims over Taiwan through legal, political, and informational means.

Schriver, speaking at a forum in Taipei, warned that China is using seemingly civilian law enforcement



activities to reinforce its sovereignty claims.

Taiwanese officials believe these patrols could be a precursor to a maritime blockade. Joseph Wu, Taiwan's National

Security Council Secretary-General, emphasized that China has no legitimate claim to these waters.

Amidst these developments, the United States

remains Taiwan's key international supporter and arms supplier. However, a proposed US\$14 billion arms package for Taiwan awaits approval from US President Donald Trump, who previously called such sales a 'negotiating chip'. Schriver, a former US assistant secretary of defense, expects the package to progress next year, possibly restructured into smaller portions to facilitate approval. Support for the arms package is strong within the US Congress and government bureaucracy.

Deputy Prime Minister of the United Arab Emirates visits Mumbai

NEW DELHI: Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of the United Arab Emirates, has arrived in Mumbai for a two-day official visit.

He was accorded a warm welcome. At the airport, he was received by Union External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar and Mangal Prabhat Lodha, a Minister in the Government of Maharashtra (in charge of the Skill



Development Department). The UAE Deputy Prime Minister and Union

External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar are set to hold discussions on further strengthening the relationship between India and the UAE. They will also deliberate on the current situation in West Asia and various global issues. In a post on social media, Union Minister S. Jaishankar stated, "Delighted to welcome UAE Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed Al Nahyan to Mumbai. Look forward to our discussions."

Baloch Student Body Alleges Leadership Failure, Seeks Protection for Student Democracy

NEW DELHI: The Baloch Student Action Committee (BSAC) has voiced serious concerns regarding the conduct of Baloch nationalist leaders. The committee alleges that certain sections of the political leadership are undermining the movement and failing to adequately support students facing significant hardships and deprivation across Balochistan.

In a recent statement, BSAC highlighted the political activities of figures like Abdul Baloch, also known as Banjara Kameash, and the

overall state of democratic institutions in the region. They argue that the current political leadership is straying from the core principles of truth and justice, which are crucial for the Baloch cause.

According to BSAC, many Baloch political leaders are primarily focused on power struggles and internal political maneuvering. This preoccupation, they claim, is creating substantial challenges for nationalist political organizations in maintaining their operational work and fostering internal discussions.

Such actions, the committee emphasizes, are disrupting the mental peace and security of the Baloch people.

BSAC further stated that individuals genuinely striving for political advancement are not receiving sufficient backing from Baloch nationalist groups, leaving students to bear the brunt of ongoing difficulties.

The committee strongly criticized what it perceives as the detrimental role of some nationalist leaders, accusing them of actively sabotaging objectives or remaining silent

on critical student issues.

BSAC stressed that even minor inactions or ill-conceived decisions by political leaders can severely harm the broader national movement. They urged for greater attention to be paid to the aspirations of the Baloch people, particularly the struggling student community.

The committee underscored that all political and national efforts must prioritize student democracy, rather than contribute to further unrest or damage the student movement.

Special officers appointed for rural local bodies in 9 districts: Tamil Nadu government issues order

TENKASI: The Government of Tamil Nadu has issued an order extending the tenure of special officers for rural local bodies in 28 districts of the state for another six months. Furthermore, as the terms of elected representatives in rural local bodies—including those in Tenkasi and Tirunelveli districts—have concluded, the government has issued an order appointing special officers for these areas as well. In 28 districts across Tamil Nadu, the terms of elected representatives for village panchayats, panchayat union councils, and district panchayats ended on January 5, 2025. Following this, the state government directed that officials from the Department of Rural Development and Panchayat

Raj be appointed as special officers for a six-month period to manage these rural local bodies. Accordingly, Block Development Officers (BDOs) were appointed as special officers for village panchayats; Assistant Directors from the Department of Rural Development and Panchayat Raj were appointed for panchayat union councils; and Project Directors of the District Rural Development Agency (DRDA), Additional Collectors, Joint Directors, or Project Directors were appointed as special officers for the district panchayats. Since then, the Tamil Nadu government has periodically extended the tenure of these special officers every six months. Most recently, the tenure of the special officers serving in the

village panchayats, panchayat union councils, and district panchayats across these 28 districts concluded on October 19 (yesterday). Following this, the Government of Tamil Nadu has issued an order extending the tenure of special officers in these 28 districts until April 19, 2027. Meanwhile, the term of the elected rural local body representatives in 9 districts—Kanchipuram, Chengalpattu, Villupuram, Kallakurichi, Vellore, Ranipet, Tirupattur, Tirunelveli, and Tenkasi—concluded yesterday, October 19. Consequently, the state government has issued an order appointing special officers to manage the rural local bodies in these 9 districts for a period of six months (up to April 19, 2027). It has been clarified that

this does not include the 9 newly formed Panchayat Unions and 93 Village Panchayats. According to the government order, the Zonal Deputy Block Development Officers of the respective areas have been appointed as special officers for the respective Village Panchayats. For the Panchayat Unions in each district, the Assistant Director (Panchayats and Audit) of the Rural Development and Panchayat Raj Department has been appointed as the special officer. For the District Panchayats in each district, the Additional Director of the District Rural Development Agency, the Additional Collector, the Joint Director, and the Project Director have been appointed as special officers.

Today horoscope



Your confidence and courage will increase. You will receive help from the sources you approach. By speaking tactfully, you will successfully accomplish important tasks. Money will arrive from unexpected quarters, and you will find joy in purchasing valuable items.



Your basic comforts and amenities will improve. Long-pending issues regarding ancestral property will finally reach a resolution. You will receive special recognition and priority at auspicious events—such as weddings or baby showers—as well as at public gatherings.



You will effortlessly complete even the most challenging tasks, earning you praise. Your wealth and influence will grow in various ways. You will emerge victorious in competitions and debates, and you stand to gain from connections with prominent or influential individuals.



Avoid letting any chaos or discord arise within your family. Even if friends seem to neglect or overlook you, respond with magnanimity and move on. Business will be profitable, and you will extend whatever help you can to those who come to you seeking support.



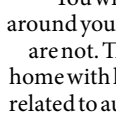
Relatives who had drifted away will come to your home to reconnect. Your children will act responsibly. You will make new professional contacts, and long-pending dues will finally be recovered.



You will handle tasks with confidence and authority. Your siblings will provide strong support. You will attend auspicious events with your family. You will get vehicle repairs done, and you may find yourself drawn toward spirituality and meditation.



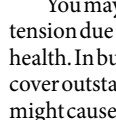
The influence of your adversaries will diminish. Any misunderstandings between you and your spouse will fade, leading to greater harmony. The arrival of guests and friends will bring joy to your home. Trips to other towns or cities will prove satisfying.



You will gain clarity on who among those around you are truly well-intentioned and who are not. The arrival of relatives will fill your home with happiness. You may incur expenses related to auspicious occasions, and your business will yield profits.



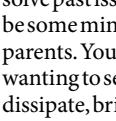
You will gain new experiences in your external social circles. You will understand and fulfill the wishes of your children. Relatives from your mother's side will provide help when needed. Competition in business and trade will subside, and you will acquire new possessions.



You may experience unnecessary distress or tension due to your children. Pay attention to your health. In business and trade, you will be able to recover outstanding dues. The actions of neighbors might cause you some irritation or anger.



You will devise new plans for future growth. You will secure the bank loans you were hoping for. Your status and reputation among friends and relatives will rise. Your workload at your job will decrease.



Your circle of friends will expand. You will resolve past issues through discussion. There may be some minor, pointless arguments with your parents. You will meet someone you have been wanting to see for a long time. Any confusion will dissipate, bringing you clarity.

6 people, including NTK official Karthika, arrested in Coimbatore Contested in the Dharapuram by election

COIMBATORE: Police have arrested six individuals, including Karthika—who contested the Dharapuram by-election representing the Naam Tamilar Katchi (NTK)—and her husband. The arrests were made today (Oct 20) at her residence in Coimbatore.

Following the arrest, the police took her to Dharapuram. During the by-election for the Dharapuram assembly constituency, actor Vijay (leader of the TVK) campaigned in support of the TVK candidate, Sathyabama, on October 4. Shortly before Vijay's arrival in the Veeraac-



himangalam area, NTK candidate Karthika arrived with her supporters in a vehicle rally. Police officers, who were stationed there for security ahead of Vijay's arrival, instructed the group to take an alternative route. At this point, the NTK members entered into an argument with the police. Meanwhile, Vijay's vehicle began approaching the area.

A case was subsequently registered in connection with this incident. Furthermore, when an election campaign banner was removed, Karthika led a group of NTK members to lay siege to the police station.

to the police station.

A case was registered against her regarding this incident as well. She has now been taken into custody. Sathyabama, who contested the Dharapuram constituency on behalf of the TVK, emerged victorious.

NTK candidate Karthika secured only 5,268 votes and lost her deposit. It is noteworthy that this figure is even lower than the 6,026 votes received by the party's candidate.

Divya, in the previous general election in Dharapuram. Consequently, the party's vote share also saw a decline.



The Union Minister of Culture and Tourism, Shri Gajendra Singh Shekhawat attends the Ustad Bismillah Khan Yuva Puraskar ceremony, in New Delhi.

Judicial Custody Extended for CJP Coordinators Saurav Das and Ashutosh Ranga



NEW DELHI: A special judicial magistrate has extended the judicial custody of Saurav Das and Ashutosh Ranga, co-coordinators of the 'Cockroach Janata Party' (CJP), by two more days. Saurav Das and Ashutosh Ranga were arrested for entering and staging a protest on Octo-

ber 13 at Jantar Mantar—a site that had been removed from the list of designated protest locations in Delhi.

Following the completion of their initial five-day custody, they were produced before special judicial magistrate Ritu Raj by the Delhi Police. The police requested an additional

five-day extension, citing security concerns during the festive season and the duo's history of such activities. Observing that the individuals showed no respect for the law and had a persistent tendency to engage in protests despite prohibitions, the magistrate extended their judicial custody by two days. During the scrutiny of the bail documents, a discrepancy was found in one of the applications, where the photograph provided did not match the image on the individual's identity card.

Furthermore, Saurav Das failed to provide basic information, including de-

tails regarding his parents. Consequently, the bail pleas were rejected. Abhik Chinnai, the lawyer representing Das and Ranga, expressed disappointment, noting that bail was denied based on a photo mismatch, even though the duo had not issued any new calls for protests.

Meanwhile, Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) leader Saurabh Bharadwaj criticized the move, alleging that it was a deliberate attempt to keep them in jail throughout the festive season. It is noteworthy that one of the two cases registered against them has been transferred to the Crime Branch, given its serious nature.

Puppet Show at the Ramanathapuram Sethupathi Palace: Enjoyed by a Large Gathering

RAMANATHAPURAM: A puppet show was held with great grandeur at the Ramanathapuram Sethupathi Palace, drawing a large audience. It is customary for the Ramanathapuram Sethupathi Palace to host cultural events annually during the Navaratri festival.

As part of this year's Navaratri and Ayudha Puja celebrations, a traditional puppet show was staged with vivid realism in the historic Ramalinga Vilasam hall. This tradition was initiated in the early 1900s by the th-

en Sethupathi King, who brought a troupe of puppeteers from Kumbakonam. Since then, for generations, these artists have consistently participated in the palace festivities. In this year's performance, the puppet show presented not only traditional tales but also messages on social awareness, woven into engaging dramatic narratives.

Even in this era of mobile phones and modern technology, a large crowd—comprising both children and adults—gathered at the palace grounds to watch the performance with great



enthusiasm. Social activists and members of the public who attended the event have urged the Tamil Nadu government to take appropriate measures to preserve this traditional puppetry—an art form currently on the verge of extinction—and to support the artists who rely

on it for their livelihood.

They have requested that the government introduce this art form to school students and provide the artists with monthly financial assistance, as well as state recognitions such as the 'Kalaimamani' award.

Ayudha Puja at the Subramanya Swamy Temple in Tirupparankundram

MADURAI: On the occasion of Ayudha Puja at the Subramanya Swamy Temple in Thiruparankundram, special prayers and *deeparadhana* (ritual offering of lamps) were performed for the various *vahanas* (ceremonial mounts) used during festival processions—including the golden peacock, golden horse, silver *bhutam* (celestial spirit), silver ram, golden *sapparam* (palanquin), *an-nam* (swan), *shesham* (serpent), silver *rishabham* (bull), and silver elephant—as well as for the grand diamond-studded chariot stationed in front of the temple. Additionally, the sword, shield, *vel* (spear), and bow and arrows—used during the *Soorasamharam* (the divine act of vanquishing the demon Soorapadman)—were placed before the presiding deities, Lord Subramanya Swamy and Goddess Devasena, and consecrated with special prayers and *deeparadhana*.

Violence in France; Curfew Imposed

PARIS: A curfew has been imposed in the tense areas of France affected by the recent outbreak of violence.

Students in France have been protesting to demand reforms to the education system. Since last month, they have been voicing concerns over issues such as changes to educational policies, a shortage of teachers, overcrowded classrooms, a lack of infrastructure, and excessively long class hours.

The situation across France has

become tense as these protests have escalated into widespread violence. Following the unrest, Prime Minister Sébastien Lecornu held an emergency meeting with high-ranking officials. Speaking to reporters afterward, he stated:

"Despite the scenes of intense violence and extensive property damage, it is a miracle that no one has been killed." He further commended the police for their effective response in confronting the violent groups. He added



that, following the violence over the weekend—which target-

ed municipal buildings, other public facilities, and hundreds of

businesses—he has instructed local authorities to implement targeted, localized curfews to prevent further rioting and looting.

Due to the violence, partial curfews were enforced starting at midnight last night in the affected, high-tension areas. More than 2,400 people have been arrested across the country in connection with the riots, which have taken place in cities including Paris, Marseille, Lyon, and Limoges.

October 20 Armenia 2026

Biodiversity Loss: Global Leaders Convene in Yerevan to Save Nature

The world's dwindling biodiversity is under the global spotlight as the 17th Conference of the Parties (COP 17) to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) commenced on October 19 in Armenia. This crucial meeting brings together 196 nations to address the urgent crisis of nature loss, impacting billions worldwide.



"No nation, no economy, no society is immune from the impacts of biodiversity loss," stated the Executive Secretary of the UN Convention on Biodiversity. She emphasized the

critical role of Indigenous Peoples, local communities, women, and youth, alongside businesses and financial institutions, in finding solutions.

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres echoed these concerns, highlighting the 'triple planetary crisis' of pollution, biodiversity loss, and climate chaos. He warned that humanity is rapidly making the world uninhabitable through overfishing, excessive fertilizers, pesticides, and plastics. While acknowledging progress since the 2022 Kunming-Montreal Framework, which led to the protection of 1.3 million sq km of land and 6 million sq km of ocean, Guterres noted that efforts are still too slow. The goal of conserving 30% of the world's land and sea by 2030 remains a significant challenge.

COP17 will also host the twelfth meeting of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety and the sixth meeting of the Nagoya Protocol. A key focus will be the first global review of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework. The Yerevan Declaration, adopted earlier, reaffirms the commitment to halt and reverse biodiversity loss by 2030, aiming for a harmonious coexistence with nature by 2050. This conference is a direct outcome of the landmark 1992 Rio Earth Summit, underscoring its historical significance.

Misconduct towards women

TVK MLA takes swift action; private bus staff suspended



VIRUTHUNAGAR: TVK MLA Selvam has ordered the suspension of private bus staff for behaving inappropriately towards women. A private bus operates along a route in Virudhunagar.

Recently, complaints arose that the bus staff had behaved improperly toward women, refusing to travel to Virudhunagar. Following this, TVK MLA Selvam visited the site yesterday and questioned the bus staff. After speaking with them, MLA Selvam initially announced a three-month suspension. However, upon hearing the staff explain that they have families to support and that their livelihoods would be severely affected, he showed leniency and reduced the suspension period to one month. He stated that the suspension was imposed to prevent such instances of misconduct in the future.



In the city of Madurai, cinema theaters, commercial complexes, and hotels lack adequate parking facilities; as a result, cars are left parked openly on the streets for hours, causing traffic congestion and leading to law and order issues.



The Secretary, Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE), Shri Santosh Sarangi briefs the media on the 7th Agri Voltaics World Conference 2026, in New Delhi.

Vijayadashami Greetings to All Indians: Droupadi Murmu

NEW DELHI: On the auspicious occasion of Vijayadashami, President Droupadi Murmu has extended her greetings to all Indians, both within the country and abroad. In a message shared on the platform 'X' (formerly Twitter), she stated: "The festival of Vijayadashami holds a special significance. It is celebrated to mark Lord Rama's victory over Ravana. Lord Rama is revered as the embodiment of



Dharma (righteousness) and exemplary conduct. Vijayadashami stands as a celebration of the triumph of *Dharma* and justice over *Adharma* (unrighteousness) and injustice.

Indian culture is rooted in the noble principles of morality and a sense of duty. On this auspicious day, let us pledge to uphold these high ideals of our cultural heritage and contribute toward building an inclusive society and a developed India. I extend my heartfelt wishes to all the people of the nation for happiness, good health, and well-being on this sacred day." This was stated in her message.

Bangladesh Seeks Answers After Saudi Arabia Executes Two Citizens, Families Demand Justice



BANGALADESH: Bangladesh has voiced strong dissatisfaction over the execution of two of its citizens in Saudi Arabia, citing a significant lapse in communication and diplomatic protocols. The government in Dhaka is demanding a detailed explanation from Saudi authorities regarding these executions, particularly focusing on the case of Nazrul Islam. State Minister for Foreign Affairs Humaiun Kobir stated that despite the deep relationship between Bangladesh and

Saudi Arabia, both signatories to the Geneva Conventions, a critical information and sharing gap occurred. He described the executions as 'disappointing' and confirmed that discussions are underway to address these shortcomings, though compensation is no longer an option as sentences have been carried out. Nazrul Islam's family, who learned of his execution through media reports, is now demanding the return of his body and justice. His father,

Abdul Basir, had borrowed Tk 7 lakh to send Nazrul to Saudi Arabia as a cleaner to improve their financial situation. The family alleges they were not informed beforehand nor given an opportunity to intervene. Nazrul, 22, was reportedly arrested with Sweety Akhtar on allegations of an 'immoral act' near a mosque in Makkah. His mother, Rahima Begum, confirmed he regularly called from prison, but they received no prior notice of his execution. His paternal aunt reportedly died of a heart attack upon hearing the news. Bangladesh has urged Saudi Arabia to uphold international norms by notifying Dhaka when its citizens face detention or criminal proceedings. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has contacted the Saudi Embassy in Dhaka and summoned Ambassador Abdullah bin Zafer H Bin Abiyah for clarification.

Cash Prizes for Best Reels on Mysuru Dasara Karnataka Government Announces



BENGALURU: The world-renowned Mysuru Dasara festival is currently underway in Mysuru. The

celebrations feature daily traditional art performances, spectacular drone shows, and various events centered

around the Mysuru Palace. Hundreds of thousands of people visit Mysuru every day to witness these festivi-

ties. The 'Jambu Savari' (grand procession)—the highlight of the Mysuru Dasara—is set to take place tomorrow. In this context, Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar has announced cash prizes for the best videos (Reels) capturing the Mysuru Dasara festival and shared on social media. He stated that prizes will be awarded for the top 100 Reels. It is noteworthy that D.K. Shivakumar has introduced this competition with the aim of encouraging content creators.

Possibility of a low-pressure area forming on October 23rd

The India Meteorological Department (IMD) has stated that a low-pressure area is likely to form over the southeast and the adjoining central and east Bay of Bengal on October 23.

This system is expected to move in a north-westerly direction and intensify. The IMD has also advised fishermen against venturing into the coastal areas of Kerala and Karnataka, as well as

the Lakshadweep region, on October 22 and 23. During this period, squally winds with speeds ranging from 35 to 45 kmph—occasionally reaching 55 kmph—are expected in these areas.

Why the Chief Minister's silence on the drug issue? - Edappadi Palaniswami's question

CHENNAI: AIADMK General Secretary Edappadi Palaniswami has questioned why Chief Minister Vijay has yet to provide an explanation regarding a drug seizure case allegedly linked to Boopalan, an official of the TVK (Tamilaga Vetri Kazhagam) in Nagapattinam district.

In a post on the platform 'X' (formerly Twitter), he stated the following: In a press release issued on October 18, 2024, the Union Ministry of Finance (FinMin India) described the incidents "one of the biggest narcotics seizures in Tamil Nadu's coastal region in recent years." Do you realize

how disgraceful this is, Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu? Reports indicate that at this part of a massive drug network. One would expect a Chief Minister—or at the very least, a party leader—to speak up about such "Walter White-like" behavior by a member of his own party. Instead, he remains as silent as a monk—much like how he behaves in the Legislative Assembly whenever the opposition raises issues. During the previous administration, the Jaffer Sadiq case—which involved the seizure of pseudoephedrine, a precursor for manufacturing



methamphetamine—had already caused significant public alarm. In this case involving TVK official Boopalan, 137 kilograms of fully processed meth crystals, valued at approximately 400 crore rupees, have been seized. With such a major inte-

national drug mafia operating against the backdrop of the ruling party, for whom exactly was this "Reels-obsessed" Chief Minister running an "anti-drug marathon"? To make matters worse, it is reported that Balraj, the TVK's Nagapattinam city secretary, has been threatening media outlets that report on this incident. Does this imply that the ruling party leadership is aware of this drug-related affair and that it is taking place with their support? If your party member, unable to take responsibility for a crime

and provide an explanation, resorts to threatening the media—will that make the news disappear, Chief Minister? For your information, it was not your government's police force that seized these narcotics; it was the central government's DRI (Directorate of Revenue Intelligence) that made the recovery. You, and the 'exclamation-mark' government you lead, should hang your heads in shame over this. Will there at least be an explanation from you—who came to power promising 'change'? This is what has been stated therein.

Houthi Missile Attack: 53 Killed at Yemeni Military Camp

SANAA: As the civil war in Yemen intensifies, a ballistic missile attack by Houthi rebels on a military training camp in southern Yemen has left at least 53 people dead and over 200 injured. This marks the deadliest incident since the conflict escalated last September. The attack targeted the Al-Alam camp in Shabwa province—a facility used for recruiting new soldiers to support Yemen's internationally recognized government. Three ballistic missiles struck the camp in succession while new recruits were gathered for a parade in the Jordan district. The wounded were immediately transported

to hospitals in Ataq, the provincial capital, where authorities have appealed to the public to donate blood for their treatment. Describing the attack as a major catastrophe, the government has announced that a high-level inquiry will be launched to investigate why such a large number of soldiers were left exposed in an open area without adequate protection. Yemeni leader Rashad al-Alimi stated that all those killed were new recruits and vowed an immediate retaliation. He condemned the Houthi forces, accusing them of habitually resorting to such cowardly, terrorist-style attacks whenever



their plots fail. Previously, the UN... He contacted Secretary-General António Guterres and requested that the Houthis be designated as a foreign terrorist organization. The administration of Shabwa Governorate has condemned the attack, describing it as a blatant act that

undermines the province's security. The provincial governor, Awad bin al-Wazir, visited the soldiers currently receiving treatment in the hospital. Meanwhile, a Houthi military spokesperson confirmed that the attack on the Al-Alam camp specifically targeted Saudi-backed forces. He claimed that Saudi

officials were also killed at the camp, which is operated by Saudi authorities. Furthermore, he warned new recruits against joining the conflict, urging them not to be swayed by financial incentives offered by Saudi Arabia. Through this new offensive, which began last September, the Houthis have been making a concerted effort to seize control of the Babel Mandeb Strait. In the meantime, tensions in the region continue to escalate, fueled by civilian casualties resulting from Saudi-led airstrikes, as well as attacks targeting Saudi Aramco's oil facilities and the airport in Riyadh.

Illegal Gold Mine Collapses in Colombia: 14 Dead



COLOMBIA: In southwestern Colombia, an illegal gold mine—operating without any proper safety measures—suddenly collapsed, resulting in the tragic deaths of 14 workers at the scene.

Seven others were rescued with severe injuries and have been admitted to hospitals for intensive medical treatment. Upon receiving reports of the collapse in the Champero sector—a rural area within

the municipality of Santa Bárbara de Iscuandé in Colombia's Nariño Department—emergency rescue teams rushed to the site to conduct extensive recovery operations. Nariño Department Governor Luis Alfonso Escobar informed the media that, following a prolonged effort, the operation to recover those trapped in the debris has been completed. Such informal, unregulated, and illegal mining activities continue to take place across various rural regions of Colombia.

Conducted on an ad-hoc basis—lacking significant investment or proper safety infrastructure—these mining operations frequently lead to accidents, making the loss of lives among innocent workers a recurring tragedy. Meanwhile, Governor Luis Alfonso Escobar has urged the Colombian government to take necessary measures to prevent such tragic incidents. Specifically, he has called on the National Mining Agency and the Ministry of Mines and Energy to work together to bring the operations of small-scale

and informal miners under a formal legal framework. He stated that such formalization is the only way to improve working conditions for miners and ensure adherence to international safety standards. Previously, in August, 13 workers lost their lives in an accident at another illegal mine in the municipality of Policarpa, also located in the department of Nariño. It is noteworthy that another large-scale loss of life has occurred in the same department within a span of just a few months.

Dasara Holidays for Madurai High Court until the 25th

MADURAI: In observance of the Dasara festival, holidays have been declared for the Madurai High Court until the 25th of this month. Consequently, a vacation court will function on the 23rd. On that day, a division bench comprising Justices G.R. Swaminathan and Murugan will hear all matters pertaining to division benches.

Justice Dileepkumar will hear all appeals that fall under the jurisdiction of a single judge bench. Following the division bench proceedings, Justice Murugan will hear all types of criminal cases. Only urgent matters—such as those involving stay orders or interim applications—may be filed with the vacation court officials on the specified date and time. No cases will be accepted after the designated date and time. Matters requiring stay orders, interim applications, or urgent hearings, along with the relevant documentation, must be submitted at the Madurai

High Court on Wednesday, October 21, 2026, between 10:30 AM and 1:30 PM. Standard procedures—such as filing case documents, submitting applications for copies, withdrawing or re-submitting documents, and obtaining copies of orders—must be followed as usual. Only petitions filed online between 10:00 AM and 2:00 PM on

Wednesday, October 21, 2026, will be accepted. Should any highly urgent situation arise after this date, the matter may be brought before the respective vacation & duty judges. Under no circumstances will previously pending cases be taken up for hearing by the vacation court. Existing pending cases or matters requiring special sittings will be heard

only upon the orders of the Chief Justice. Petitions must not be submitted at the residences of the vacation & duty judges. Furthermore, 'afternoon urgent petitions' will not be accepted during the Dussehra holidays. This information has been published by the Registrar of the Madras High Court on the court's website.



Tourists have been granted permission to bathe once again at Kumbakkarai Falls—nestled amidst mountain ridges at the foothills of the Western Ghats near Periyakulam in Theni district—after a four-day closure.

Summons issued to DMK councillor for derogatory remarks about CM Vijay

CHENNAI: A summons has been issued to DMK councillor Sudha Deenadayalan in connection with a case involving derogatory remarks made about Chief Minister Vijay.

Members of the Tamizhaga Vetri Kazhagam (TVK) have expressed strong opposition, alleging that Sudha Deenadayalan made disparaging comments about Chief Minister Vijay during a DMK meeting held in Chennai on



nister Vijay during a DMK meeting held in Chennai on

October 7.

Furthermore, TVK members have alleged that although Chennai Mayor Priya, MP Kanimozhi, and former Minister Sekar Babu were present on the stage when the DMK councillor made these uncivil remarks, none of them intervened to stop her. Consequently, a case has been registered at the B&2 Esplanade Police Station

against DMK councillor Sudha Deenadayalan for her offensive comments about the Chief Minister, as well as against Muralidharan, who organized the event.

Following a complaint filed at the Esplanade Police Station by TVK functionary Udhayakumar, the police have registered a case against Sudha under three sections and have now issued a summons to her.

RSS Chief Mohan Bhagwat Praises Captain Smit Machchhar's Bravery in Foiling Hijack Attempt

NAGPUR: RSS chief Mohan Bhagwat recently lauded Captain Smit Machchhar for his exceptional bravery in foiling a hijacking attempt, citing his actions as an example of values inspiring individuals to risk their lives for others.

Speaking at the RSS Centenary Vijayadashami Utsav in Nagpur, Bhagwat emphasized the organization's mission to awaken the 'Hindu spirit' and build a strong, organized society.

Captain Machchhar, who averted a potential catastrophe aboard a flydubai flight on September 30, recounted

the terrifying incident. He suffered multiple blows from his Omanico pilot, Hamam al-Hammami, who attacked him with an axe in a bid to crash the plane. Machchhar's quick thinking allowed him to unlatch the cockpit door, enabling passengers and off-duty crew to restrain the attacker. The flight was diverted to Tabuk, Saudi Arabia, where all 180 occupants disembarked safely.

Machchhar shared that he recited the Hanuman Chalisa during the attack, finding strength in his faith.



His heroism has garnered international recognition, with Israel's President Isaac Herzog announcing the Presidential Award for Civilian Heroism, and the Gujarat government bestowing the Visisht Gujarat

Garima Award.

Consul General of Israel in Mumbai, Yaniv Revach, also present at the event, highlighted the shared values and challenges between India and Israel. He commended Bhagwat's emphasis on engaging the younger generation with their heritage, aligning with Israel's approach. Revach stressed the importance of strengthening bilateral ties and preserving cultural identity against external forces.

Son-in-law chases and stabs father in-law at Erode Government Hospital



ERODE: A dispute between a man and his son-in-law at the Erode Government Headquarters Hospital—where the man's wife was undergoing treatment—has ended in a stabbing.

The incident, in which the son-in-law allegedly attacked his father-in-law with a knife, reportedly stemming from a disagreement over the care of his mother

and son-in-law, has caused a stir. Vadivel, a resident of Melatheru in Kumarapalayam, Namakkal district, is said to have had a long-standing feud with his son-in-law, Arokiam, due to ongoing family issues. When Vadivel's wife fell ill, she was admitted to the Erode Government Headquarters Hospital for treatment. It is reported that a dispute arose between Vadivel and Arokiam

regarding the care of the patient.

The existing animosity between the two escalated during this argument, leading an enraged Arokiam to pull out a knife he had concealed and stab Vadivel repeatedly. Vadivel sustained stab wounds to his neck and back. He collapsed in a pool of blood, crying out in pain. Hearing his cries, hospital staff and members of the public rushed to the scene and intervened. Vadivel was subsequently admitted to the hospital's emergency ward, where he is currently receiving intensive medical care. The incident, which took place within the hospital premises, left patients and the public in

a state of shock.

Meanwhile, police officers on security duty at the hospital managed to intercept and arrest Arokiam as he attempted to flee the scene. The incident in Erode, where a person was stabbed with a knife in broad daylight at a government hospital—a place frequently visited by a large number of patients and their relatives—has caused a stir. The occurrence of such an incident within a hospital raises serious questions about the adequacy of existing security arrangements. Beyond concerns regarding law and order, a broader discussion has emerged on how to ensure the safety of patients and the general public in government hospitals.

Panic in the Nilgiris: Leopard enters school premises and hunts dogs

NILAGIRI: Local residents are gripped by fear after a leopard entered a school campus and hunted dogs. A private school is located near Kotagir in the Nilgiris district. On the 10th of this

month, a leopard entered the school premises and began hunting the dogs present there. It managed to seize one of the dogs and carried it away. Fortunately, no students were on the

school grounds at the time, averting a potential tragedy. The incident was captured on CCTV cameras in the area. The school administration has requested the Forest Department to take

immediate action to capture the leopard. The presence of a leopard that hunted dogs within the school campus has left both the local residents and the students in a state of great alarm.

Paddy seedlings awaiting the rain, ready for transplanting

MADURAI: In the rain-fed (manavari) areas of the Thiruparankundram region, paddy seedlings are now ready for transplantation. Many farmers are eagerly awaiting the arrival of rain. Farmers from Thenpalanjhi, Sivaraman and Pandian, stated: "Typically, we sow paddy seeds between the 18th of the Tamil month 'Aadi' and the first week of 'Aavani'. We complete the transplantation by the 30th of 'Purattasi' and carry out weeding by the



first week of 'Aippasi'. This schedule ensures the crop is ready for harvest by the month of 'Thai'.

Following this cycle allows the seedlings to grow vigorously, free from disease, and results in a higher yield. This year, however, the lack of rain and intense heat have caused local irrigation tanks (kan-

mais) to dry up, and the water table in borewells has also dropped significantly. Rice is a dietary staple, and its price has risen sharply of late.

Driven by the need for food, some of us have gone ahead and sown paddy seeds, pinning our hopes on the rain. The costs—covering land preparation, the purchase of seeds, and the sowing process—have amounted to approximately ₹10,000 per acre. The seedlings are now ready for transplantation, but the rains have yet to arrive.

They must be transpla-

nted within 25 to 30 days of sowing;

otherwise, they will become over-matured, rendering them fit only as fodder for livestock. While areas like Madurai and parts of Thiruparankundram have received good rainfall, in the Thenpalanjhi region, it has amounted to nothing more than a light drizzle.

We can only begin transplantation if it rains within the next 10 days. If there is no rain after the seedlings are planted, they will wither and be lost entirely," they explained.



At the Thalasaana Perumal Temple in Mamallapuram, the temple chariot procession (Thiruthalwar festival) took place this morning, marking the 9th day of the Bhuthathalwar festival.

Devotees Flock to Kulasekarapattinam for Dasara; Elaborate Security Measures in Place!

THOOTHUKUDI: With the *Soorasamharam*—the pinnacle event of the Kulasekarapattinam Dasara festival—set to take place tonight at midnight, hundreds of thousands of devotees have begun arriving since the early hours of the morning. To ensure the safety of the devotees, 4,000 police personnel from 12 districts have been deployed for security duties.

The world-renowned Dasara festival at the Kulasekarapattinam Mutharamman Temple commenced with the flag-hoisting ceremony on the 11th. The *Soorasamharam* (the ritual slaying of the demon Soorapadman) will be held tonight on the shores of Kulasekarapattinam. Under the leadership of the Superintendents of Police from the districts of

Thoothukudi, Tirunelveli, Tenkasi, and Palani, a force of approximately 4,000 police officers from 12 districts across Tamil Nadu has been mobilized for security. Furthermore, 240 special buses

cameras. Additionally, the Coastal Guard is monitoring the coastal areas. The temple administration has provided essential amenities for devotees, including drinking water and medical

of over 1.5 million devotees is expected; consequently, additional basic amenities have been provided to accommodate them.

For the convenience of the devotees, more than 200

temporary toilets have been set up along the beach, in addition to over 100 permanent ones. Ten surveillance towers have been erected along the beach and in key areas, and more than 300 CCTV cameras have been installed in locations with high footfall to ensure

monitoring; furthermore, seven mobile CCTV units are being deployed for intensive surveillance. The temple authorities and the district administration have ensured that all necessary basic facilities are in place for the hundreds of thousands of devotees attending the Soorasamharam event tonight.



"Even if they kill me, I will return to Bangladesh in December: Sheikh Hasina

NEW DELHI: Former Prime Minister of Bangladesh, Sheikh Hasina, has stated that she will definitely return to her homeland, Bangladesh, this coming December. In 2024, violent protests by students erupted in Bangladesh. Following this, Sheikh Hasina resigned from her position as Prime Minister, left the country,



and sought refuge in India. The government of Bangladesh has been requesting that

India hand over Sheikh Hasina, who has been residing in India; however, India has not provided any response to this request. Meanwhile, participating via video conference in an event organized by the 'Center for Bangladesh-US Relations' in Washington, Sheikh Hasina addressed the gathering. "I will return to Bangladesh

this coming December. There is no change in this plan. I am not afraid of anything. The government there might arrest me, subject me to severe torture, or even attempt to kill me—I am well aware of that. Nevertheless, returning to my homeland is my primary duty. I will go there to do whatever I can for my people; this is certain," she declared.

China Closes Three Tibetan Schools in Golog, Sparks Assimilation Fears



HIMACHAL PRADESH: Chinese authorities have reportedly shut down three privately run Tibetan schools in Golog Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, impacting hundreds of children's access to Tibetan medium education. This move, within a few weeks, has intensified concerns about the preservation of Tibetan language and cultural identity.

The Central Tibetan Administration (CTA) reported that these closures are part of a broader government strategy to enroll Tibetan children in state-run institutions where Mandarin Chinese is the primary language of instruction. Increased surveillance of phone and internet communications in Tibetan areas makes independent information difficult to obtain.

Among the closed institutions is the Golog Tadrak Orphan School in Tabo Vil-

lage, Machen County, which was shut down on September 2, 2026. Established in 2005, it provided education and shelter to over 300 orphaned or disadvantaged children. A week prior, on August 27, the Ra & Gya Jigme Gyaltsen Grassland Girls' School, known for offering education and vocational training to nomadic girls, was also closed. This school, founded in 2005, taught Tibetan language, Buddhist philosophy, science, and traditional arts.

The third institution, the Jasak villages school in Machen County, was reportedly closed in late August after local authorities mandated the use of 'national common language' (Mandarin Chinese) instead of Tibetan. Its students were subsequently transferred to

government boarding schools. Villagers had crowdfunded this school to preserve the Tibetan language for future generations.

These recent closures follow earlier shutdowns in Golog, including the Sengdruk Taktse School in July 2021 and seven other private schools. The CTA views these actions as violations of educational, linguistic, and cultural rights, warning that transferring Tibetan children to Mandarin medium boarding schools threatens their connection to their mother tongue and cultural traditions. UN human rights experts in 2023 also flagged China's boarding school system for Tibetan children as potentially involving 'forced assimilation'.