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Time has come to decriminalise defamation law: SC



MI News Service, New Delhi : The Supreme Court has observed that the time has come to decriminalise the defamation law, while agreeing to examine a plea by the Foundation for Independent Journalism seeking to quash the summons issued to it in a criminal defamation case. A bench of Justices M M Sundresh and Satish Chandra Sharma issued notice to former Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) professor Amita Singh. The apex court passed the remark while hearing the plea of the organisation, which runs The Wire news portal, and its political affairs editor Ajay Ashirwad Mahaprashasta. The Apex Court has signalled that it may be time to decriminalize defamation as both the Judges observed, that "time has come to decriminalize all this. How long will you go on dragging these cases?" Senior advocate Kapil Sibal, representing The Wire, agreed with the bench's remarks, citing the prolonged nature of such proceedings.

The complainant, former JNU professor Amita Singh, had stated that an article published in April 2016 titled "Dossier Calls JNU 'Den of Organised Sex Racket'" alleged that a team of professors led by Prof. Singh had submitted a dossier to the JNU administration claiming the existence of sex rackets in the girls' hostel. Prof. Singh denied any involvement in preparing or submitting the dossier. Her lawyer had said that the article attributed her name without verification, which sparked violent protests, including the burning of her effigy and daily demonstrations outside her office. The lawyer also claimed that the controversy led to her being isolated in academic bodies and committees, both in India and abroad, affecting her post-retirement career. A trial court first issued summons to the portal in 2017. The Supreme Court had earlier set aside the summons and directed a re-assessment after reviewing the content of the article. In January 2025, the magistrate again issued summons, which were upheld by the Delhi High Court in May 2025. The Wire then approached the Supreme Court challenging the renewed summons. Sibal supported the bench's observations and cited several instances, including multiple defamation cases filed against Leader of Opposition Rahul Gandhi, which had reached the apex court. The bench has tagged The Wire's petition with a batch of similar cases including those filed by Rahul Gandhi and said it would hear the matter after Prof Singh submits her reply. Criminal defamation remains punishable under Indian law and was upheld as constitutional by the Supreme Court in a 2016 ruling, which cited the protection of reputation under Article 21 of the Constitution. However, the remarks by the bench indicate a willingness to reconsider whether defamation cases should continue to be treated as criminal offences.

CM urges 2-day work-from-home as rains cripple Kolkata

The city of Kolkata continues to reel under the impact of a cloudburst-like downpour that left streets submerged and transport services severely disrupted. At least nine people have died in rain-related incidents across Kolkata and its adjoining districts since Monday night. Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, reviewing the situation, has appealed to private companies to allow employees to work from home for the next two days. She also declared an early Puja vacation in schools from Tuesday, citing both the severity of the situation and the forecast of more showers. Universities have been advised to conduct online classes wherever possible. **PG 3**



Morning India



Unprecedented overnight heavy rain led to severe waterlogging in most parts of Kolkata on Tuesday, crippling life in the city. **Pic Prabir Bhattacharyya**

Ten die of electrocution as heavy rain lashes Kolkata

Mamata blames dredging, CESC

MI News Service, Kolkata : Torrential overnight rain left Kolkata completely paralysed on Tuesday, claiming at least ten lives due to electrocution and bringing life to this Eastern metropolis to a grinding halt as large areas were submerged, transport services crippled, and traffic movement thrown out of gear.

Describing today's "unprecedented" downpour as a massive "cloudburst" of sorts, Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee lashed out at poor dredging of the Farakka barrage and lapses by private power utility CESC, while appealing to people to stay indoors for their own safety. "I have never seen heavy rain like this in my life. I feel so bad and has full sympathy for the people who have lost their lives in the cloudburst. I heard 7-8 people have died due to electrocution by open or unattended



wires. It is so unfortunate... Their families must all be given jobs by the CESC. I am saying this clearly.

"I heard 7-8 people have died due to electrocution by open or unattended wires. It is so unfortunate... Their families must all be given jobs by the CESC. I am saying this clearly. We will also do whatever is possible to help," **--CM Mamata Banerjee**

We will also do whatever is possible to help," Mamata Banerjee said when asked for her reaction

to this unprecedented deluge.

Heavy overnight rains brought Kolkata to its knees since early Tuesday morning as the city was preparing for its biggest festival, Durga Puja, which is only five days away with people eagerly awaiting the four day extravaganza from later this week. Squarely blaming the utility, she said, "Electricity is supplied by CESC, not us. It is their duty to ensure people do not suffer because of this. They will do business here, but not modernise here? They should send people to the field and fix this." "Even our houses are submerged; we are all suffering. I am feeling so bad for the Pujo pandals as well. Schools have been asked to declare their Puja holidays from today itself and office-goers have been advised to work from home

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Rupee depreciation against US dollar set to help Indian exporters

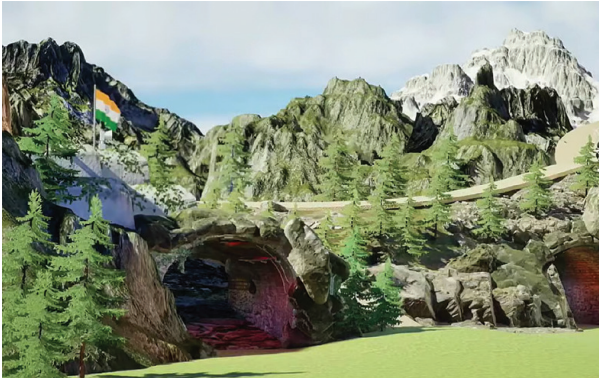
MI News Service, New Delhi : Indian rupee slipping below the record 88.75 level against the US dollar will help enhance price competitiveness of Indian products in the international markets, but exporters cautioned that fluctuations could pose challenges at import front. Import-dependent sectors such as gems and jewellery, petroleum and electronics may see lower benefits due to a rise in input costs, they said.

The rupee depreciated 47 paise to hit an all-time low of 88.75 (provisional) against the US dollar on Tuesday, amid sustained outflow of foreign funds on the back of a steep hike in US H-1B visa fee that is expected to give a big blow to Indian IT services exports. "The depreciation will definitely help exporters in the short run. But we need stability in the value against the USD," Federation of Indian Export Organisations (FIEO) President S C Ralhan said. Sharing similar views, Mumbai-based exporter and Technocraft Industries Founder Chairman S K Saraf said this will benefit the country's exports as domestic goods will become little competitive at a time when the US has imposed high tariffs. "Our hardships will get mitigated to a cer-

tain extent. I expect that the rupee will reach 100 per dollar in the next 4-5 months. I think 100 will be the new normal," Saraf said. Another trader said that the development would make imports of items from crude oil to electronic goods, overseas education and foreign travel costlier. The primary and immediate impact of a depreciating rupee is on the importers who will have to shell out more for the same quantity and price.

However, it is a boon for the exporters as they receive more rupees in exchange for dollars. India is 85 per cent dependent on foreign oil to meet its needs for fuels, such as petrol, diesel and jet fuel. The basket of Indian imports includes crude oil, coal, plastic material, chemicals, electronic goods, vegetable oil, fertiliser, machinery, gold, pearls, precious and semi-precious stones, and iron and steel. According to Mumbai based Growmore International MD Yadvendra Singh Sachan, a balanced rupee value helps both exporters and importers. "Any volatility in the value is not good for both," Sachan said. The country's merchandise exports rose 6.72 per cent to USD 35.1 billion in August.

Operation Sindoor and women empowerment are prime focus in Kolkata Durga Puja



MI News Service, Kolkata : With a view to rekindling the memory of Operation Sindoor and bring about a sense of nationalism and pride among the pandal hoppers, a prominent Durga Puja pandal in central Kolkata's Tara Chand Dutta Street - the Young Boys Club's pandal - has designed by artist Debshankar Mahesh, features replicas of tanks, missiles and several other aspects of the May 7 midnight operation of the Indian Armed forces. "The centrepiece of this tribute is the inclusion of two decorated women officers — Colonel Sophia Qureshi and Wing Commander Vyomika Singh. Their replicas stand as powerful symbols of women's strength and lead-

ership in the military," said Rakesh Singh, chief organiser of the puja. Around 10 km from the Young Boys Club in central Kolkata which is paying tribute to India's armed forces through the theme 'Operation Sindoor', Banerjeepara Puja Mandir Samity in Shyamnagar on the northern fringes of the city has recreated the ghats of Varanasi to highlight the issue of river pollution. Reflecting the diversity of themes among community pujas, Arjunpur Amra Sabai in Baguiati has set up an installation titled 'Mukhomukhi' (Face to Face) where devotees entering the marquee will see their mirror images in hundreds of stainless-steel frames and sheets. Tracing back to Au-

gust 16, 1946, when large parts of Kolkata were engulfed in communal frenzy, residents of a south Kolkata neighbourhood stood firm to prevent troublemakers from disturbing peace in the Hindustan Park-Purna Das Road-Lake area. Nearly eight decades later, Samajsebi Sangha has revisited its first Durga Puja of 1946 through flexes and models. "During those turbulent days of August 16, 1946, when violence gripped many parts of the city, our locality was like an oasis that stood out to spread the message of togetherness and amity by holding hands, not daggers. The Samajsebi Sangha was born on the advice of well-wishers and freedom fighters like Leela Roy, who were touched by our unity. That very year, we organised our first Durga Puja, and it continues to this day," Arijit Moitra, senior functionary of Samajsebi, said. Roy was a leftist Indian woman politician, reformer and a close associate of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose. He said this year's theme is a tribute to the founding members who resisted mindless violence in 1946. "A replica of the truck

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TMC slams BJP for "weaponising pain to spread hate" during people's distress

MI News Service, Kolkata : Lambasting the opposition BJP for allegedly finding faults of the ruling Trinamool Congress in tackling the people's woes after last night's unprecedented heavy rain, inundating large parts of the city on Tuesday, West Bengal Finance minister Chandrima Bhattacharya in a sharp retort accused the BJP of playing politics with people's distress. "Yesterday, Kolkata faced the fury of a rare cloudburst. Nearly 300 mm of rain fell within hours, a scale that overwhelms any city, no matter how efficient are its infrastructure the woes cannot be prevented. Scientists have said the same thing had happened in Mumbai in 2005, Chennai in 2015, Delhi in 2023. No city could escape when the skies open without pause," Bhattacharya wrote on X.

"Yet what does BJP do? They ignore science, they ignore compassion, they ignore climate realities. Their only obsession is to weaponise pain and spread hate. They think people do not understand the difference between a natural calamity and their propaganda," she added. But Bengal can, the minister said, "We know that yesterday

was nature's wrath. We also know that BJP's attempt to inject hatred during Durga Puja is strategic and will fail miserably," she declared.

Women and Child Development minister Sashi Panja claimed that officials of both the KMC and the state government were working relentlessly round the clock on the streets to ease the people's distress. "Amid calamity, leadership is measured in compassion and action. BJP offers neither. Instead, they mock Bengal while their own governments fail their people year after year at the first sign of heavy rain. "Empathy? That's beyond their vocabulary," she wrote on X.

Panja accused the BJP of selective targeting of opposition governments. "When Gurgaon gets flooded, the BJP stays mum. And at a time of calamity, instead of showing compassion for people all BJP does is mock the Bengal government," she said. Earlier in a post on the same social media platform, leader of opposition in Bengal Suwendu Adhikari squarely laid the blame for people's distress on the civic bodies concerned and the state power department. "A procession of deaths in an inundated city!" Adhikari wrote.

PM to inaugurate 'World Food India' to boost investment in food processing sector



Union Minister Chirag Paswan along with other officials at the launch of the publication "Frequently Asked Questions on Different Concepts of Food Processing" ahead of World Food India 2025 in New Delhi.

MI News Service, New Delhi : Prime Minister Narendra Modi will inaugurate the fourth edition of World Food India on September 25, aimed at attracting greater investments in the domestic food processing sector and positioning India as a global hub for food innovation.

The mega event, to be held at Bharat Mandapam in the national capital, will witness participation from Russian Federation Deputy Prime Minister Dmitry Patrishev alongside Union Ministers Nitin Gadkari (Road Transport), Chirag Paswan (Food Processing Industries), and Minister of State Ravneet Singh Bittu. "World Food India is not merely a trade show, but a transformative platform to position India as a global hub for food innovation, investment, and sustainability," Paswan said while briefing the media about the upcoming event.

The government expects a significant leap in investment commitments this year, building on the success of previous editions, he said. During the 2023 edition, MoUs worth Rs 33,000 crore were signed, while the 2024 edition focused on technol-

ogy transfer agreements. Minister Paswan also highlighted the untapped potential in India's food processing sector, noting that despite being among the world's top five producers of key crops, the country's food processing levels remain suboptimal. "Despite huge production, we have not been able to reach higher processing levels. There is concern about post-harvest losses, which can be addressed through processing," he said. To address misconceptions about processed foods, the ministry released a booklet titled "Frequently Asked Questions on different concepts of food processing." "There are misconceptions and misleading advertisements and social media narratives that processed foods lead to weight gain and cause several diseases. These concerns are addressed in the booklet," Paswan explained. The booklet, prepared in consultation with industry stakeholders, provides science-based information to help consumers make informed choices while

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Howrah Car Shed Flooded Following Record-Breaking Rainfall in Kolkata on Tuesday.

Prisoner creates Ruckus with iron rod in Hospital

MI News Service, Coch Behar: Panic gripped the premises of Cooch Behar MJN Medical College and Hospital late Monday night when an undertrial prisoner created chaos inside the facility. The 32-year-old accused, identified as Naveen Kallu, a resident of Hyderabad, allegedly locked himself inside a hospital bathroom armed with an iron rod, threatening violence and sparking fear among patients and their families.

Police sources said Kallu had been arrested on Sunday from the Rail Ghumti area of Cooch Behar town. On Monday, he was taken to the hospital for a routine medical examination. There, under the pretext

of using the washroom, he entered a bathroom and bolted the door from inside, brandishing the rod and behaving aggressively. Witnesses described the situation as tense, with relatives of patients fleeing the area in panic. Alarmed hospital staff immediately alerted police, prompting a swift response from Cooch Behar police personnel. Additional Superintendent of Police Krishna Gopal Meena, along with a large force, reached the spot and led the effort to bring the situation under control. After prolonged persuasion, the police finally managed to rescue Kallu from the bathroom and take him back into custody. ASP Meena later told report-

ers, “The arrested person appears to be suffering from mental health issues. Necessary arrangements for his psychiatric evaluation and treatment will be made after consultation with medical experts.” The incident has raised serious questions about prisoner security and hospital safety, with many pointing out the risks posed to ordinary patients and staff when high-risk detainees are not properly restrained during hospital visits. What was intended to be a routine medical check-up turned into a night of high drama in Cooch Behar—one that exposed glaring lapses in security protocols and left a busy hospital campus rattled.

Drunk driving turns deadly in Malda

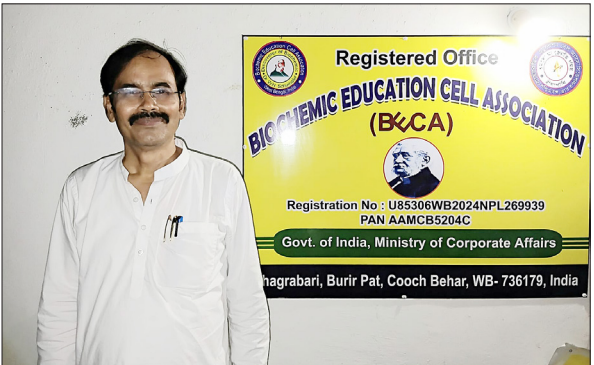
MI News Service, Malda: Festive cheer ahead of Durga Puja was shattered in Malda on Tuesday evening after a speeding car, allegedly driven under the influence of narcotics, ploughed into a passenger-laden Tota on National Highway 34 near Jalalpur Danga in Kaliachak. The violent impact left two people dead on the spot and four others grievously injured, including occupants of the car itself.

According to eyewitness accounts, the four-wheeler was traveling at dangerously high speed when it rammed the Tota from behind, overturning the smaller vehicle within seconds. Three passengers, including the Tota driver, were inside at the time. Two of them—

residents of Brahmatarr and Bamangram in Sujapur—succumbed instantly to the crash impact. Locals rushed to the spot before police arrived and, along with personnel from Kaliachak police station, rescued the injured. They were immediately shifted to Malda Medical College and Hospital. Law enforcement later recovered narcotic substances from inside the car, strengthening suspicions that the driver was intoxicated while at the wheel. The tragedy has reignited debate on two persistent dangers plaguing Bengal's highways—reckless, substance-influenced driving and the unchecked movement of passenger Totos on national highways, despite an official ban. Residents al-

lege that enforcement failures have turned NH-34 into a corridor of daily risk, with frequent accidents claiming innocent lives. “This isn't just an accident, it's murder in slow motion,” fumed a local resident, pointing to the rise in drugged and reckless driving during festive seasons. Community anger is palpable, with locals demanding stronger highway patrolling, random intoxication checks, and a crack-down on both unauthorized totos and intoxicated motorists. With Bengal stepping into the biggest festival of the year, the Kaliachak accident has cast a grim shadow over celebrations—reminding once again how unchecked lawlessness on the roads continues to exact a deadly price.

Just Twelve Remedies To Heal, Ashutosh Dutta shares insights



MI News Service, Coch Behar: Rooted in the principles of biochemistry and beginning with just twelve simple remedies, Biochemic Therapy has carved a distinctive niche as an unconventional yet profoundly effective system of healing. What began as a modest experiment has blossomed into a celebrated medical discipline, admired for

its elegant simplicity and innovative approach. On September 20, eminent biochemic practitioner Dr. C. Bhattacharya reflected on the therapy's origins, tracing it back to 1873, when German medical scientist Dr. W. H. Schuessler first introduced the method. Over time, Indian pioneers such as Dr. K. Bhowmik and Dr. Ashutosh Dutta brought

the discipline into contemporary practice, shaping it into the form in which it is applied today. Highlighting its academic footprint, Dr. Ashutosh Dutta shared that several state-recognised councils now include Biochemic Therapy in their curricula. Among these, the Biochemic Education Cell Association in Khagrabari, Cooch Behar, stands out as a premier centre, nurturing the next generation of practitioners in this distinctive field of medicine—as observed and reported by Tapash Roy. As a testament to his lifelong dedication, Dr. Dutta presented a book authored by him to Dr. Himadri Kumer Ari, Chief Medical Officer of Health, Cooch Behar District—a gesture that symbolises the seamless bridge between pioneering research and institutional healthcare.

A glimpse of theatre will be seen at Khidderpur Yuvo Shangh



MI News Service, Kolkata: The use of puja pandals as stage sets is common during Kolkata's Durga Puja celebrations, where organizers create a stage area inside or adjacent to the pandal to stage plays and performances. These pandals are not limited to religious rituals, but are designed to provide a vibrant cultural experience, showcasing traditional art and contemporary themes. The 88-year-old Yova Shangh

in Ward 76 of the Khidripur area has transformed its pandal into a stage setting this time, using old tali, bichali, village-made fishing nets, and Tera Kot dolls. Dhiman Sutar, who designed the theme, said that after traveling through rural areas, the decision was made to create a puja pandal based on stage.

The idols are painted in simple colors. He said that a stage has been set up outside the pandals to showcase traditional plays, jatra (folk theatre), and other cultural programs, offering visitors a unique experience.

Club Secretary Abhijit Bardhan said that each year the pandals are based on different themes, some reminiscent of ancient theatre, while others are dedicated to popular literature or local art. He added that all safety arrangements have been made in accordance with the guidelines issued by the state government. He also mentioned a medical camp and a separate room where the sick can rest.

Arts and Crafts Display Many pandals also serve as art galleries, where visitors can view elaborate craftsmanship and artifacts, often inspired by a specific theme. Club President Dipendu Hazra, members Chetan Shaw, Nabin Chandra Das, Arindam Adak, Suman Das, Saurav Das, and Sanjib Pandey are contributing their labor to make the puja a success.

Son convicted in mother's murder case

MI News Service, Jalpaiguri: In a chilling case of familial betrayal, the Jalpaiguri court on Tuesday sentenced Vijay Panna to life imprisonment for the brutal murder of his mother, Shidni Panna, nearly two years after the crime shocked the Doars region. The court also imposed a fine of ₹20,000 on the convicted son.

The incident took place in May 2023 at the Goyerkata tea garden in Bigha Line, where the retired tea worker lived in workers' accommodation with her younger son. According to police, Vijay Panna, the elder son, allegedly killed his mother in the absence of the younger

son, reportedly over a dispute concerning her pension money. The case came to light after the younger son lodged a complaint with the local police, prompting an investigation that led to Vijay's arrest. During the trial, prosecutors presented testimony from ten witnesses and multiple pieces of corroborating evidence, including forensic reports and circumstantial evidence linking Vijay to the crime. Assistant Public Prosecutor Subhankar Chanda said, “The court, after examining the evidence and witness statements, found the accused guilty of premeditated murder and handed down the maximum sentence under law.”

Civic Volunteer Dies After Falling From Train

MI News Service, Chakdah: A tragic accident claimed the life of a civic volunteer on Sunday night when he fell from a moving train while returning home after duty.

The deceased has been identified as Subhash Barman (37), a resident of Madanpur under Chakdah police station limits. Police sources said Barman was attached to Chakdah police station as a civic volunteer and was responsible for monitoring the CCTV surveillance system there.

According to officials, after completing his duties around 10 pm on Sunday, he boarded a train from Chak-

daha station to return home. Shortly after the train left the station towards Madanpur, he accidentally fell off. Locals rushed him to Chakdah State General Hospital, where doctors declared him brought dead. The body has been sent to Jawaharlal Nehru Memorial Hospital in Kalyani for post-mortem to ascertain the exact cause of death.

On Monday morning, the mortal remains were brought to Chakdah police station, where the officer-in-charge Arindam Mukhopadhyay, along with other police officials and personnel, paid floral tributes.

Jealously turns deadly! Man kills wife's lover

MI News Service, Canning: A tale of betrayal, jealousy, and revenge culminated in a brutal murder in Canning on the morning of Mahalaya. Police recovered the bloodied body of a 26-year-old man, Shamim Pailan, from a fishpond near Baitarani crematorium. Within 24 hours, investigators cracked the case, arresting a married couple allegedly behind the killing.

According to police, the victim, a resident of Sangrampur under Usthi police station, had been in an extramarital relationship with Devi Sardar for the past six months. Her husband, Soumen Sardar, soon discovered the affair and allegedly plotted to eliminate Shamim.

Police sources revealed that Soumen hatched a plan using his wife as bait. On Sunday, Devi allegedly called Shamim and lured him to a secluded spot near the crematorium grounds. When Shamim arrived, Soumen ambushed him and began assaulting him mercilessly. As the victim tried to flee, he stumbled into a fishpond. Investigators say Soumen then dragged him underwater and strangled him to ensure his death. After the crime, the couple attempted to cover their tracks. However, police, tracing call records from Shamim's mobile phone, tracked down Soumen and Devi and arrested them from the Canning area by Monday.

Vi-John unveils new campaign

MI News Service, Kolkata: Vi-John, India's leading shaving cream brand, has launched a new integrated campaign, “Photocopy Nahi, Original Dikho,” featuring brand ambassador Ranbir Kapoor. The campaign emphasizes grooming as a reflection of individuality and authenticity, rather than imitation.

The campaign, conceptualized by Havas Creative India and executed with Dentsu Media, spans TV, print, digital, and social media. Vi-John's premium shaving range, including sulphate-free and dermatologically tested products, is expected to resonate with young professionals and students in Kolkata.

Trailer of “Nabadurga Maatrirupen Sthita” Released Ahead of Durga Puja



MI News Service, Kolkata: According to mythology, the influence of demonic forces has plagued society across ages. Even today, when violence, greed, superstition, and falsehood overshadow humanity, only the light of compassion and education can show the path to liberation. This very philosophy forms the core of the new Bengali film “Nabadurga Maatrirupen Sthita.”

On Tuesday, the much-awaited trailer of the film was launched at Kolkata Press Club.

The film's director, Satyabrata Kumar—who has also contributed to the screenplay, dialogues, songs, and acting—said at the event:

“We want this film to be more than just entertainment; we wish it to spark a new consciousness in society. Audiences will return from the theatres carrying a

profound message about the true values of life.”

Presented by Krishti Creation, the film highlights the importance of moral values, social harmony, and the unifying power of Goddess Durga in her maternal form. Special guests at the launch expressed that the film is a unique attempt to pierce through the darkness of society and spread the light of humanity.

The film is set to release in theatres on October 10, and excitement among audiences is already building ahead of the festive season.

The cast includes Papia Adhikari, Bilal Chatopadhyay, Arpan Kumar Sharma, Anirban, and Nivedita Sen. On the musical front, Anup Jalota, Pandit Tushar Dutta, Shweta Gupta, and devotional singer Shubha Dasgupta have showcased their artistry.

From classrooms to Mall: Police make Puja special for kids

MI News Service, South Dinajpur: In a heartening gesture ahead of Durga Puja, the Balurghat GRP Police Station has ensured that children from underprivileged families get to wear new clothes and shoes for the festive season. The initiative, aimed at spreading joy and inclusivity, allows students to select garments of their own choice—a rare opportunity in contrast to traditional charitable distributions where sizes are often pre-assigned.

On Sunday, around 40 students enrolled in the Police Winners Education Classes, conducted at the GRP station on Sundays, visited a prominent shopping mall in the city

to pick out clothes and footwear of their preference. The event was met with unbridled excitement from the children, who were thrilled to select outfits that reflected their own tastes. “This initiative is aimed at bringing smiles to children from distressed families and ensuring they can enjoy Durga Puja like any other child,” said Ratan Sarkar, OC of Balurghat GRP. “Alongside buying clothes and shoes, we also plan to take them for a visit to the Thakur Mandapam during the festivities.” The clothing drive was funded through contributions from police personnel themselves, supplemented by assistance

from a few local supporters. The gesture has been widely appreciated by residents of Beeline area, who lauded the police for going beyond their routine duties to support education and festive cheer for local children. For the past two years, the Police Winners Education Classes have been providing educational support to young students in the area. With this festive initiative, the GRP has not only reinforced its commitment to community welfare but also strengthened the bond between law enforcement and local residents, leaving a lasting impression on the children and their families.

Artificial Limb Camp Gives New Life to 50 Needy People

MI News Service, Kolkata: Mahavir Seva Sadan's MSS Research and Rehabilitation Centre organized an artificial limb camp at its Pailan premises. In this camp, 50 beneficiaries received free prosthetic limbs (artificial legs/hands). The camp was held under the spirit of social cooperation, with support from Oscar Equipments Pvt. Ltd. and the student group Kaleidoscope. The camp was inaugurated by State Transport Minister Dilip Mondal.

Veer Prakash Jain, Director of Oscar Equipments Pvt. Ltd., said that since its establishment in 1988, the company



has been working towards innovation and social empowerment under the ‘Make in India’ vision. Through such camps under Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), the company is continuously striving

to give new life to the needy. This initiative not only brought new hope into the lives of the beneficiaries but also set an example of empathy and cooperation in society.

Migrant worker shot dead amid land disputes

MI News Service, Alipurduar: Tensions ran high in Latabari, Alipurduar, on Monday evening after a migrant worker visiting from Delhi was gunned down in a shocking attack. The deceased, identified as 40-year-old Subhash Kujur, was shot multiple times by two assailants on a motorcycle, collapsing at the scene before being declared dead at Alipurduar District Hospital.

According to eyewitnesses, the attackers fired three rounds at Kujur, one of which struck him in the head. They fled immediately after the attack. Police confirmed that an investi-

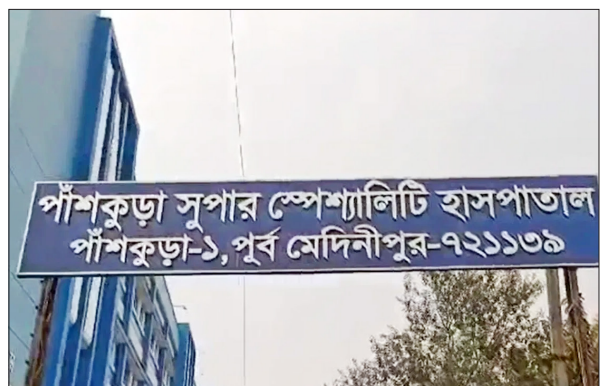
gation has been launched, though no arrests have been made so far. Sources indicate that the murder is linked to a land dispute involving the deceased and his relatives. Family members allege that the perpetrators were relatives of Subhash Kujur. The victim's wife claimed that the killing was orchestrated by those relatives, describing it as a premeditated attack. Local political tensions also surfaced following the incident. While the family and some BJP leaders have claimed affiliations between the accused and political parties, Alipurduar Superintendent of Police Y.

Raghuvanshi clarified that there is currently no evidence of political involvement. BJP leader Shankar Sinha visited the hospital and expressed solidarity with the family, noting that the deceased was reportedly associated with their party. The case has sent shockwaves through the local community, raising fears over the safety of returning migrant workers and highlighting lingering disputes over land ownership in the region. Police have intensified their investigation, interviewing witnesses and reviewing leads, but the culprits remain at large.

Panskura hospital in turmoil: Bribe-for-Job racket exposed

MI News Service, East Medinipore: Explosive allegations of large-scale corruption have rocked Panskura Super Speciality Hospital, with multiple temporary staff accusing the rape-acused facility manager of running a bribe-for-jobs racket inside the government hospital. Workers claim they were forced to pay between ₹3.5 and ₹4 lakh each to secure contractual employment, under the accused's direct or indirect control.

Hospital insiders allege that the man, though officially employed as a facility manager by a private company, had positioned himself as the de facto superintendent—exercising unchecked power over hiring and daily operations. Workers further claim he subjected them to sustained mental and physical harassment, creating a climate of fear. According to testimonies, out of the 133 temporary workers currently employed at the hospital, nearly all except the earliest recruits were compelled to pay hefty sums to secure their positions. In many cases, the payments were reportedly handed directly



to the accused; in others, to his close associates. “Even candidates without relevant skills were appointed if they could pay,” one worker alleged. The revelations have surfaced only after the man's recent arrest on rape charges. Emboldened by his detention, several hospital workers have now begun to come forward with accounts of extortion, intimidation, and abuse of power. One complainant confirmed paying ₹3.5 lakh through an intermediary to obtain his job. The unfolding scandal has raised serious questions about oversight and accountability in government hospitals outsourced

to private contractors. What began as a criminal case of sexual assault is now snowballing into allegations of systemic corruption and exploitation—painting a disturbing picture of how a critical public health facility was allegedly turned into a hub of illegal profiteering. Authorities are expected to widen the scope of investigation as more testimonies surface. For now, the shocking charges have not only tainted Panskura Super Speciality Hospital but have also intensified public scrutiny of the nexus between private contractors and public healthcare institutions.

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Branch Office: ICICI BANK LTD, BP-4, Technopolis Building, 4th Floor, Sector V, Salt Lake City, Kolkata West Bengal - 700091
CIN No: L65190GJ1994PLC021012, www.icicibank.com

The Authorised ICICI Bank Officer under the Securitisation, Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of the powers conferred under section 13(12) read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002, issued Demand Notices to the borrower(s) mentioned below, to repay the amount mentioned in the Notice within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said Notice.

Having failed to repay the amount, the Notice is issued to the borrower and the public in general that the undersigned has taken symbolic possession of the property described below, by exercising powers conferred on him/her under Section 13(4) of the said Act read with Rule 8 of the said rules on the below-mentioned dates. The borrower in particular and the public in general are hereby cautioned not to deal with the property. Any dealings with the property will be subject to charges of ICICI Bank Limited.

Sr. No.	Name of the Borrower(s)/ Loan Account Number	Description of Property/ Date of Symbolic Possession	Date of Demand Notice/ Amount in Demand Notice (Rs)	Name of Branch
1.	Bimal Biswas/ Menas Biswas/ Kajal Biswas/ Chanditola Khantrua Gobardanga District North 24 Parganas West Bengal Kolkata - 743273/ LBCAL00006718503/ TBCAL0000681625	R.S. And L.R. Dag No. 464, Khatian No. 111, L.R. Khatian No. 467, Touzu No. 2012, J.L. No. 165, Re. Sa No. 9, Municipality Gobardanga, Mouza Khatutra Village, Pargana Amirpur, Thana and A.D.S.R. Office Habra, District North 24 Parganas, West Bengal (Admeasuring An Area Of 10 Satak Land In Which 644 Sq. Ft. On The Ground Floor And 644 Sq. Ft. On The First Floor, Total Area 1288 Sq. Ft. Two- Storied Constructed House North: Municipality Road South: House of Bishnu Sadukhen East: Municipality Road West: House of Suniti Bala Biswas/ Date of Symbolic Possession: 19/09/2025	May 31, 2025 Rs. 75,71,741.00/-	North 24 Parganas

The above-mentioned borrower(s)/guarantor(s) is/are hereby issued a 30 day Notice to repay the amount, else the mortgaged properties will be sold after 30 days from the date of publishing this Notice, as per the provisions under Section 13(4) and 9 of Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002.
Date: September 24, 2025
Place: North 24 Parganas

Sincerely Authorised Officer,
For ICICI Bank Ltd.

Kolkata airport hit by heavy rains, flights delayed and diverted

MI News Service, Kolkata: A night of torrential downpour left large parts of Kolkata and its adjoining areas waterlogged, severely affecting both air and road transport. The impact was also felt at Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose International Airport (CCU), where several parts of the premises were submerged. Though the runway itself remained safe from flooding, access roads, aprons, and parts of the parking bays were waterlogged, causing major disruption for passengers, airport staff, and airline crew. Airport authorities confirmed that heavy rains began late Monday night and intensified into the early hours of Tuesday. Waterlogging was reported in multiple pockets of the airport premises, including the apron area used by passengers to board flights. Portable pumps were deployed, with at least six units working through the night to drain accumulated water. Fortunately, no structural damage to the runway was reported. Flight operations, however, suffered delays and diversions. An IndiGo flight from Pune to Kolkata was forced to divert to Bhubaneswar around 3 a.m. following turbulence and poor weather conditions. Aviation sources said parts of the hangar and parking bays were waterlogged, prompting precautionary measures. Several other flights faced delays as crew members, ground staff, and passengers struggled to reach the airport on time due to flooded roads. Passengers reported waiting for hours as airlines issued repeated advisories. IndiGo and SpiceJet both cautioned travelers to check flight status before leaving for the airport, urging them to stay updated through airline websites and mobile apps. Some flights departed late from Kolkata to their destinations, while others were rerouted to nearby airports.

Devastating fire at Mandavilla Gardens, Mayor monitors the situation

MI News Service, Kolkata: As the city struggled under the impact of record-breaking rainfall and severe waterlogging, a fresh disaster struck on Tuesday morning when a massive fire broke out at a shop in Mandavilla Gardens market in central Kolkata. Even as civic workers and officials toiled to drain waterlogged streets, firefighters rushed to battle towering flames in the congested market area.

According to reports, thick black smoke was first spotted rising from one of the shops in the market on Tuesday morning. Within minutes, the blaze spread rapidly to an adjacent shop. Local traders alerted the fire brigade, and four fire tenders were pressed into service. However, heavy rains, flooding, and the cramped nature of the market made firefighting operations extremely challenging. Mayor and Urban Development Minister Firdhad Hakim, who was already supervising water removal efforts in different parts of the city, rushed to the fire site after receiving the alert. He spoke with fire department officials and monitored the situation closely. Hakim later admitted that firefighters faced additional hurdles due to waterlogged lanes and narrow passages, which delayed access to the flames. Eyewitnesses described scenes of panic as residents and traders tried to move goods and valuables away from nearby shops while thick smoke engulfed the locality. The fire raged for several hours before being brought under control after a prolonged operation by firefighters. Preliminary investigations suggest that a short circuit may have triggered the blaze, though officials said the exact cause can only be confirmed after a full inquiry.



Picturesque snapshots across Kolkata display the magnitude of damage being done to the city life as torrential overnight rain brings 'record' rainfall to Kolkata. As the government deals with this tough situation in its own way, the Kolkatans struggle to cope with this unprecedented natural calamity.



CM urges 2-day work-from-home as rains cripple Kolkata



MI News Service, Kolkata: The city of Kolkata continues to reel under the impact of a cloudburst-like downpour that left streets submerged and transport services severely disrupted. At least nine people have died in rain-related incidents across Kolkata and its adjoining districts since Monday night. Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, reviewing

the situation, has appealed to private companies to allow employees to work from home for the next two days. She also declared an early Puja vacation in schools from Tuesday, citing both the severity of the situation and the forecast of more showers. Universities have been advised to conduct online classes wherever possible. "Unless absolutely

necessary, people should not step out of their homes," Banerjee said, stressing that even after the water recedes, normalcy may take at least two days to return. She also pointed out that fresh spells of rainfall could worsen conditions. The Chief Minister said she had directed the Education Department to declare immediate holidays in all schools. She urged ICSE and CBSE-affiliated institutions to follow suit, while requesting universities to opt for online classes wherever possible.

In response, Nabanna has launched a control room to address emergency situations. Citizens can directly call regarding electricity problems or waterlogging at 1070, 8697981070, 22143526, and 22535185. Authorities have assured prompt action if any live electric posts are reported. Following the Chief Minister's instructions, the state electricity department has been directed to immediately coordinate with CESC to ensure employment for one family member of each electrocution victim.

Bratya Basu Announces Holiday for Schools and Colleges Amid Heavy Rainfall



MI News Service, Kolkata: Education Minister Bratya Basu announced that all schools and higher education institutions across West Bengal will remain closed on September 24 and 25 in view of the ongoing record rainfall and severe waterlogging in the city. The decision comes after Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee instructed the Education Department to ensure the safety of students and staff during the unprecedented flooding. Originally, the Puja holidays for schools and colleges were scheduled to begin on September 26. However, with heavy rains disrupting academic activities on Tuesday, the holiday has been advanced, effectively starting the festive break early. Students will now have a two-day reprieve to stay safe and avoid potential accidents caused by the waterlogged streets. The Chief Minister has also urged CBSE and ICSE-affiliated schools to grant at least a two-day closure, taking into account the severe weather conditions.

Ten die of electrocution as heavy rain lashes Kolkata

From PG 1

today and tomorrow," the Chief minister said, adding she was in constant touch with Mayor Firdhad Hakim, Chief Secretary Manoj Pant and senior police officials to know all details. Among those who lost their lives have so far been identified as Firoz Ali Khan (50) of Beniapukur, Pranatosh Kundu (62) of Netaji Nagar, and Mumtaz Bibi (70) of Ekbalpur, besides an unidentified person in Gariahat, all in Southern part of the city. Among the others are three youths and one woman. Also commenting on the situation, Mayor and Urban Development Minister Firdhad Hakim said, "So far, we have received information of six deaths due to electrocution in different parts of the city, but later official tallies placed the figure at ten. Hakim said that most parts of the city were waterlogged and teams of the Kolkata Municipal Corporation (KMC) were working round the clock to drain out water. "If there is no further rain, the situation is expected to be near normal by late tonight", he said. He said KMC officers

are working hard. But the canals and rivers are full of water and every time water is drained out, more is getting inside the city because of the high tide in the river Ganges. "We fear that the high tide in the rain fed river later this afternoon might further complicate the situation and create problem in our efforts to drain out the excessive water. It would be only around the midnight when the situation could improve, provided there is no further rain," Hakim said. Across the city, hundreds of vehicles lay stranded on arterial roads, commuters waded through waist-deep water at several intersections, and Metro services were suspended on a long stretch of the Blue Line following shippage of rain water on to the tracks. Traffic movement was severely affected at key intersections such as Park Circus, Gariahat, Behala, Southern Avenue, Anwar Shah Road, Golf Green and College Street areas, while long snarls were reported on EM Bypass, AIC Bose Road and Central Avenue.

PM to inaugurate 'World Food India' to boost investment in food processing sector

From PG 1

Edispling myths surrounding processed foods. Covering an expansive 1,00,000 square meters, World Food India 2025 will be the largest congregation of stakeholders in India's food processing sector. Over 21 countries, with New Zealand and Saudi Arabia as partner countries,

and Japan, Russia, the UAE, and Vietnam as focus countries, are participating in the event. Around 21 Indian states/union territories, 10 central ministries, and 5 allied government organisations with 1,700 plus exhibitors are expected to participate in the four-day event.

Mayor Hakim takes charge on the ground as Kolkata reels under heavy rainfall



Kolkata Waterlogged by Continuous Rain and High Tides; Bharat Sevashram Sangha Launches Relief Operations. Despite flooding at its Ballygunge headquarters, monks and volunteers prepare and distribute khichuri to stranded residents, with General Secretary Swami Viswatmananda Maharaj personally overseeing the efforts.

Operation Sindoor and women empowerment are prime focus in Kolkata Durga Puja

From PG 1

owned by my father's Swadeshi Chemical Company, which had transported the idol in 1946, will be stationed near the marquee. The idol itself will resemble the quintessential elderly Indian woman who runs the household, symbolising women's empowerment," Moitra said. "Please note that our theme has no relation or references to any film made in the past about the issue and only talks about human resilience, amity, and harmony," he added. At Baguiati's Arjampur Amra Sabai, sculptor Shovin Bhattacharya has used hundreds of stainless-steel frames and

bamboo-wooden poles in its installations, creating an effect of reflection and dynamism. "As you step on the road leading to the pandal, you will first cross an artificial waterbody and then see your own mirror images on the hundreds of stainless steel installations and metal sheets. On the one hand, you face your own self and on the other, the reflections of so many visitors walking alongside will give an impression of mobility, dynamism, and identification," Bhattacharya said. "We have tried to use and explore the concept of space in our work," he said, adding that the pond reflects the flow of life.

MI News Service, Kolkata: Unprecedented rainfall on Tuesday left large parts of Kolkata submerged, crippling daily life and throwing civic authorities into an emergency mode. In a rare gesture of hands-on leadership, Mayor Firdhad Hakim was seen stepping onto the streets of Chetla, clearing garbage with his own hands to facilitate the draining of water. Since dawn, Hakim remained stationed at the Kolkata Municipal Corporation (KMC) headquarters, monitoring real-time updates with his team, including the Mayor-in-Council for drainage. By afternoon, he visited his home turf, Chetla, where the sight of the mayor personally removing plastic bottles and debris from clogged drains caught the attention of residents. Holding an umbrella and ankle-deep in water, he appealed to citizens not to litter recklessly, stressing that blocked drains were worsening the city's woes. "This kind of rain I have not seen since 1978," Hakim remarked, recalling the devastating floods that hit

Kolkata nearly five decades ago. He explained that while KMC had activated drainage pumps across the city, the overflowing Ganga posed a unique challenge. "The canals of Kolkata drain into the Ganga. But today, the river itself is overflowing with water from neighboring states. As a result, even when canal water is released, it flows back. That is our biggest problem." He said, "If there is no fresh spell of rain, the water will recede by tonight. But there is no point in fighting against nature. We must remain patient." The Mayor issued a warning to citizens, stating, "No one should step out of their homes today. Reports of electrocution are coming in from several areas. It is not advisable to risk lives by going outside." Despite the severity of the situation, Hakim expressed cautious optimism, assuring that if no further heavy rain occurred, most of the water would drain by Tuesday night. However, he warned that more showers, as forecast by the Meteorological Department, could aggravate the crisis.

SYMBOLIC POSSESSION NOTICE

Branch Office: ICICI Bank Ltd., BP-4, Technopolis Building, 4th Floor, Sector V, Salt Lake City, Kolkata West Bengal - 700091
CIN No: L65190G1994PLC021012, www.icicibank.com

The Authorised ICICI Bank Officer under the Securitisation, Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of the powers conferred under Section 13(12) read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002, issued Demand Notices to the borrower(s) mentioned below, to repay the amount mentioned in the Notice within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said Notice.
Having failed to repay the amount, the Notice is issued to the borrower and the public in general that the undersigned has taken symbolic possession of the property described below, by exercising powers conferred on him/her under Section 13(4) of the said Act read with Rule 8 of the said rules on the below-mentioned dates. The borrower in particular and the public in general are hereby cautioned not to deal with the property. Any dealings with the property will be subject to charges of ICICI Bank Limited.

Sr. No.	Name of the Borrower(s)/ Loan Account Number	Description of Property/ Date of Symbolic Possession	Date of Demand Notice/ Amount in Demand (Rs)	Name of Branch
1.	Borrower Krishna Drolia & (Guarantor) Sandeep Drolia & (Mortgagor) Krishna Drolia/ Represented By Proprietor Krishna Drolia Bl 404, 237, G T Road, Belur, Axis Bank Belur West Bengal Howrah- 711202/ 160505500522	Flat No. 201, 2nd Floor, R.S. Dag No. 1792, Khation No. 897, Mouza Belur, J.L. No. 15, Premises No. 237, Holding No. 237, G.T. Road, (Zone Belur Bazar- Jaisweel Hospital), Ward No. 56, Howrah Municipal Corporation (Previously Ward No. 11, Bally Municipality), P.S. Belur (Previously Bally), Sub- Registration and District Registration Howrah, District Howrah, West Bengal. Admeasuring An Area of Super Built Up Area Measuring 1295 Sq. Ft. Together With Proportionate Undivided Impartible Share of Land) Bounded By : On The North By: Flat No. 202 & Holding No. 236, G.T. Road, On The South By: By Common Passage, On The East By: By G.T. Road, On The West By: By 237A, G.T. Road/ Date of Symbolic : 18/09/2025	30/06/2025 Rs. 36,29,482.22/-	Howrah

The above-mentioned borrowers(s)/guarantor(s) is/are hereby issued a 30 day Notice to repay the amount, else the mortgaged properties will be sold after 30 days from the date of publishing this Notice, as per the provisions under Rules 8 and 9 of Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002.
Date: September 24, 2025
Place: Howrah

Sincerely Authorised Officer,
For ICICI Bank Ltd.

Name Change
I, Mohammad Zahar Ali Molla (Old Name) S/O Late Osman Molla, Residing At Vill-Chhoto Ajgara, Po-F.S. Hat, Ps-Nazat, Dist-24 Parganas (North), Pin-743329, West Bengal, India, Have Changed My Name And Shall Henceforth Be Known As Jhohr Ali Molla (New Name) As Declared Before The Notary Public At Kolkata Dated 23/09/2025. Mohammad Zahar Ali Molla (Old Name) And Jhohr Ali Molla (New Name) Both Are Same And One Identical Person.

Name Change
I, Mohammad Abdul Alim Molla And Abdul Alim Molya (Old Names) S/O Jhohr Ali Molla, Residing At Vill-Chhoto Ajgara, Po-F.S. Hat, Ps-Nazat, Dist-24 Parganas (North), Pin-743329, West Bengal, India, Have Changed My Name And Shall Henceforth Be Known As Abdul Alim Molla (New Name) As Declared Before The Notary Public At Kolkata Dated 23/09/2025. Mohammad Abdul Alim Molla And Abdul Alim Molya (Old Names) And Abdul Alim Molla (New Name) All Are Same And One Identical Person.

Name Change
I, Prabir Kumar Das S/O, Late Banshidhar Das, R/o. 55 Khan Road Mankundu, Mankundu, Bhadreswar, Hooghly-712139, W.B., declared that my father's name has been recorded as Banshidhar Das in my Secondary Admit Card, my father's Death Certificate (Regn. No. DIH-214/2014, Dt. 15/02/2012) & his Legal Heir's (Ref. No. 261/Deh/13-14) instead of my father's correct name Banshidhar Das. Banshidhar Das & Bansi Dhar Das is the same and one identical person.

Name Change
I, Saikat Kanrar S/O Sisir Kanrar Residing at Dakshin Jhpadadaha, shib-tala, P.O. & P.S.-Domjur, Dist-Howrah (W.B), Pin-711405. That My passport No. N4559813 My Father name wrongly recorded as Sisir Karar (Old name) instead of Sisir Kanrar (New Name) vide an affidavit before the learned 1st class Executive magistrate at howrah. Dated-19.09.2025. That Sisir Karar (Old name) and Sisir Kanrar (New Name) both are the same and one identical person.

Name Change
I, Ashura Khatun D/o Late Abdur Rashid Residing at Vill - Pukurati Subarnapur, P.O - Chakla, Ps - Deganga, District - North 24 Parganas, Pin-743424, West Bengal India that my deceased father who previously known as Md Abdur Rashid (Old Name) shall henceforth be known as Abdur Rashid (New Name) as declared before the Notary public Kolkata vide affidavit dated 23/09/2025. I declare that my deceased father Md Abdur Rashid (Old Name) and Abdur Rashid (New Name) is same and one identical person.

Name Change
I, Kanu Adhikary S/O Late Kamal Adhikari Residing at Vill - Mondalpara, P.O - Matuadham, Ps - Gaighata, District - North 24 Parganas, Pin-743245, West Bengal India that my deceased father who previously known as Kamal Adhikary (Old Name) shall henceforth be known as Kamal Adhikari (New Name) as declared before the Notary public Kolkata vide affidavit dated 23/09/2025. I declare that my deceased father Kamal Adhikary (Old Name) and Kamal Adhikari (New Name) is same and one identical person.

Name Change
I, Shimul Chowdhury (Old Name) S/o Gopal Krishna Chowdhury Residing at Mayer Ashirbad, Boys School Road, Nabapally, Near Shanikallbari, Po-Ps - Barasat, District - North 24 Parganas, Pin - 700126, West Bengal, India have changed my name and shall henceforth be known as Shimul Baran Chowdhury (New Name) as declared before the Notary Public Kolkata vide affidavit Dated 23-09-2025. Shimul Chowdhury (Old Name) and Shimul Baran Chowdhury (New Name) both are same and one identical person.

Name Change
I, Debraprasad Basu (Old Name) S/o Bhattacharan Basu Residing at R.N Bhattacharyya Road, Kodalia, Dadamtala, Po-Kodalia, Ps-Sonarpur, District - South 24 Parganas, Pin-700146, West Bengal, India have changed my name and shall henceforth be known as Debraprasad Basu (New Name) as declared before the Notary Public Kolkata vide affidavit Dated 23-09-2025. Debraprasad Basu (Old Name) and Debraprasad Basu (New Name) both are same and one identical person.

Name Change
I, Manotosh Gharami (Old Name) S/o Madhusudan Gharami Residing at Pritinagar, Po-Pritinagar, Ps-Ranaghat, District-Nadia, Pin-741247, West Bengal, India have changed my name and shall henceforth be known as Monotosh Gharami (New Name) as declared before the Notary Public Kolkata vide affidavit Dated 23-09-2025. Manotosh Gharami (Old Name) and Monotosh Gharami (New Name) both are same and one identical person.

NAME CHANGE
I, Ritesh Kumar Jaiswal, S/O, Kartick Prasad Jaiswal, Resident- 25/2, Kshetra Mitra Lane, P.O. Salkita, P.S. Golabari, Dist.- Howrah, 711106 and do hereby solemnly affirm and declare before the 1st Class Judicial Magistrate vide affidavit No. 6841, Dated- 19/09/2025, That my mother's name has been inadvertently recorded as Nirmala Devi Jaiswal in my Passport vide No. H8970385 instead of her correct name Nirmala Devi. That Nirmala Devi Jaiswal and Nirmala Devi is the same and one identical Person.

Name Change
I Matiuir Rahman s/o Khalaur Rahman, Vill&PO: Khamrampur, PS:Bhabanipur, Dist: Purba Medinipur do hereby solemnly affirm and Declare that by an affidavit (no.9178) in the Court of Judicial Magistrate 1st Class at Holdia on 26.08.2025 that Matiuir Rahman s/o Khalaur Rahman and Matiuir Rahman Sekh s/o Khalaur Rahman Sekh is the same and one identical person.

Name Change
I, BIKAJH CHAKRABARTY (old name) S/O JATINDRA NATH CHAKRABORTY residing at 172/9/4, Banerjee Para Road, P.O.- Shyamnagar, P.S.- Jagaddal, Dist- North 24 Parganas, 743127 in the sate of West Bengal, India, have changed my name and shall henceforth be known as PRAKASH CHANDRA CHAKRABORTY (new name), as declared before the 1ST Class Judicial Magistrate at Kolkata, vide an affidavit dated 22/09/2025. PRAKASH CHANDRA CHAKRABORTY (new name) and BIKAJH CHAKRABARTY (old name) both are same and one identical person.

Name Change
I, MARRY ANTHONY (old name) D/O RAJU ANTHONY residing at 49/5 H 117 C G R ROAD, KHIDDIPORE, KOLKATA-700023 in the sate of West Bengal, India, have changed my name and shall henceforth be known as MARY ANTHONY (new name), as declared before the 1ST Class Judicial Magistrate at Kolkata, vide an affidavit dated 22/09/2025. MARY ANTHONY (new name) and MARRY ANTHONY (old name) both are same and one identical person.

Name Change
I, Md Mijanur Rahaman Molla & Mejanur Rahaman (old names) son of Mansur Ali Molla, residing at Vill-Laskar Ati, P.O.- Chak Panchuria, P.S.- Technicity (New Town), Dist.- North 24 Parganas, Pin- 700156, West Bengal, India, have changed my name and shall henceforth be known as Mijanur Rahman Molla (new name), as declared Before The Notary Public at Kolkata, vide an affidavit dated 23/09/2025. Mijanur Rahman Molla (new name) and Md Mijanur Rahaman Molla & Mejanur Rahaman (old names) all are same and one identical person.

Name Change
I, Dipak Saha (Old Name), Son Of Bimal Kumar Saha, Residing At Choto Chandanpur, Bishnupur, Rajarhat, North24parganas - 700135, West Bengal, India, Have Changed My Name And Shall Henceforth Be Known As Dipak Kumar Saha (New Name) Vide An Affidavit Sworn Before The Notary Public At Kolkata On 09/09/2025. Dipak Saha And Dipak Kumar Saha Both Are The Same And One Identical Person.

Name Change
I, Nazarana (old name) wife of Mo-hammed Shahid Khan, residing at Nazrul Pally, Upper Chelidanga, Asansol (M Corp.), P.O. - U C Danga, Asansol South, Dist.- Paschim Bardhaman, Pin- 713304, West Bengal, India, have changed my name and shall henceforth be known as Nazrana Yazmin (new name), as declared Before The Notary Public at Kolkata, vide an affidavit dated 23/09/2025. Nazrana Yazmin (new name) and Nazarana (old name) both are same and one identical person.

Name Change
I, Twinkle Varyani (Old Name), Wife Of -Vineet Shaw, Residing At 3, Hospital Street, Po- Princep Street, Kolkata-700072, West Bengal, Have Changed My Name And Shall Henceforth Be Known As Twinkle Varyani Shaw (New Name) Vide An Affidavit Sworn Before The Notary Public At Kolkata On 23/09/2025. Twinkle Varyani And Twinkle Varyani Shaw Both Are The Same And One Identical Person.

Name Change
I, Ahmer Nawab S/O Nawab Ul Naque R/O 18, Collin Lane Po Park Street Kolkata 700016, Wb Shall Henceforth Be Known As Ahmar Nawab Vide An Affidavit Sworn Before The Notary Public Kolkata On 18th September 2025 At Bankshall Court Kolkata. That Ahmer Nawab And Ahmar Nawab Both Are Same And One Identical Person Not Two Different Person.

Name Change
I, Mehre Darakhshan @ Mehre Darakhshan W/O Ahmar Nawab R/O 18, Collin Lane Po Park Street Kolkata 700016, Wb Shall Henceforth Be Known As Mehre Darakhshan Vide An Affidavit Sworn Before The Notary Public Kolkata On 18th September 2025 At Bankshall Court Kolkata. That Mehre Darakhshan, Mehre Darakhshan And Mehre Darakhshan All Are Same And One Identical Person Not Different Person.

Name Change
I, Mohammad Moiz S/O Ahmar Nawab R/O 18, Collin Lane, Po Park Street, Kolkata 700016, Wb Shall Henceforth Be Known As Md Moiz Vide An Affidavit Sworn Before The Notary Public Kolkata On 18th September 2025 At Bankshall Court Kolkata. That Mohammad Moiz And Md Moiz Both Are Same And One Identical Person Not Two Different Person

Name Change
I, Khadiza Begum (Old Name) W/O Abdul Alim Molla, Residing At Vill-Chhoto Ajgara, Po-F.S.Hat, Ps-Nazat, Dist-24 Parganas (North), Pin-743329, West Bengal, India, Have Changed My Name And Shall Henceforth Be Known As Khadija Molla (New Name) As Declared Before The Notary Public At Kolkata Dated 23/09/2025. Khadiza Begum (Old Name) And Khadija Molla (New Name) All Are Same And One Identical Person.

Name Change
I, Adifa Bibi (Old Name) W/O Johor Ali Molla, Residing At Vill-Chhoto Ajgara, Po-F.S.Hat, Ps-Nazat, Dist-24 Parganas (North), Pin-743329, West Bengal, India, Have Changed My Name And Shall Henceforth Be Known As Adifa Bibi Molla (New Name) As Declared Before The Notary Public At Kolkata Dated 23/09/2025. Adifa Bibi (Old Name) And Adifa Bibi Molla (New Name) Both Are Same And One Identical Person.

Swasth Nari Sashakt Parivar Abhiyaan (SNSPA) Conducted Across Eastern Railway Divisions

MI News Service, Kolkata:

Eastern Railway organized a series of health check-up and awareness programmes under the Swasth Nari Sashakt Parivar Abhiyaan (SNSPA) on 22nd September 2025 across its divisions and workshops, focusing on women's health and well-being. In Sealdah Division, a health camp was held at Koilaghat Health Unit by Dr. Sanghamitra Chatterjee under the guidance of Chief Medical Superintendent/ Sealdah Dr. Kalpana Mandal, offering anaemia screening, breast examination, pap smear collection, BP and sugar testing, antenatal check-up, nutrition awareness and an interactive session on menstrual hygiene, with additional programmes conducted at Barasat Health unit and B.R. Singh Hospital. Asansol Division organized health talks and medical camps at RPSE/16BN and Barakar Health Unit under Chief Medical Superintendent/



Asansol guidance, covering topics like menstrual hygiene, cervical and breast cancer, mental health, and nutrition, along with screenings such as BMI, ECG, BP and RBS. Malda Division arranged a camp at Bhalgpur Health Unit where 213 cases were screened for hypertension, obesity and anaemia under the supervision of Chief Medical Superintendent/ Malda Dr. Anupa Ghosh. At Kanchrapara Workshop, camps on hypertension, diabetes, sickle cell anaemia and behavioural awareness were conducted under Chief Medical Superintendent/ Kanchrapara Dr. A.K. Roy, including an interactive session with employees

and beneficiaries. Liluah Workshop hosted three camps screening 107 employees for hypertension, diabetes and obesity, along with awareness programmes on tuberculosis, cervical cancer, nutrition and menstrual hygiene. At Jamalpur Workshop, a hypertension screening camp was held under the guidance of Dr. Sanjay and Dr. Rana Nagmani Singh, benefiting 21 participants with a focus on early detection and management. The initiative received wide participation and appreciation, reinforcing Eastern Railway's commitment to preventive healthcare and women's empowerment.

Nationwide radio campaign celebrates mechanic community

MI News service, Kolkata:

Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited (BPCL), a Fortune Global 500 company, and one of India's leading oil and gas companies, through its lubricants brand MAK Lubricants, has launched a nationwide integrated radio campaign through its lubricants brand, MAK Lubricants, to honour the invaluable contributions of automobile mechanics. Themed "Thank you, Mechanics – for Safe and Smooth Journeys," the initiative reflects BPCL's commitment to recognising the unsung heroes who keep India moving and ensure road safety for millions of commuters every day.

Spanning across 116 cities over 30 days, the campaign will air more than 18,000 radio spots across 13 leading stations, delivering over 16 lakh seconds of airtime. MAK Lubricants' brand ambassador, cricketing legend Rahul Dravid, will feature in specially created audio jingles in 13 languages.

S. Kannan, Business Head (Lubes), BPCL said, "As Bharat Petroleum celebrates its 50th year of foundation, MAK Lubricants is proud to dedicate this campaign to the mechanic community, whose relentless efforts keep India moving."

IIT Madras develops chip-based device to detect antibiotic resistance

MI News Service, Chennai:

Researchers at IIT Madras have developed a microfluidic device that can detect bacterial resistance to antibiotics in just three hours. Called e-µD, the device uses electrochemical signals to provide results much faster than conventional antimicrobial susceptibility testing (AST), which usually takes two to three days.

The World Health Organisation (WHO) has identified antimicrobial resistance (AMR) as a top global health threat, linked to 4.95 million deaths in 2019. Delays in diagnosis often push doctors to prescribe broad-spectrum antibiotics, worsening the problem. Unlike methods that rely on costly materials or complex lab setups, e-µD is built with screen-printed carbon electrodes in a simple microfluidic chip, making it suitable for smaller clinics and rural centres.

It uses electrochemical impedance spectroscopy to track bacterial growth in the presence of antibiotics. The study, co-authored by Saranya Gopalakrishnan of Pkvt Ltd, Diksha Mall, and IIT Madras faculty, has been published in Nature Scientific Reports.

Professor S. Pushpanam, Y B G Varma institute chair professor, department of chemical engineering, IIT Madras, explained: "An important aspect of our device is the use of a specially prepared nutrient solution that serves a dual purpose. It not only supports bacterial growth, which is essential for testing, but also enhances the sensitivity of the electrical signals we use for detection. As the bacteria grow, they cause measurable changes in the electrical properties of the solution, which our system can accurately track."

Dr Richa Karmakar, assistant professor, department of biotechnology, IIT Madras, said: "The device monitors how the electrical signal changes over time to determine whether bacteria are continuing to grow in the presence of an antibiotic. If the bacteria are resistant, they multiply despite the drug, and this activity causes a distinct change in the electrical signal. In contrast, if the bacteria are killed by the antibiotic, their growth is inhibited and the signal remains relatively unchanged."

Apple's latest Devices & OPPO's new entrant enthrall consumers

MI News Service, Kolkata: The unveiling of Apple's much-anticipated iPhone 17 series, the latest Apple Watches and AirPods Pro 3, alongside the debut of OPPO's stylish F31 — a confluence of technology, aspiration, and festivity have enthralled the consumers. It has been done at Bhajanlal.

At the heart of the launch was Apple's dazzling lineup: the svelte iPhone Air, starting at ₹1,19,900 in Midnight, Starlight, and Blue with storage up to 512GB; the vibrant iPhone 17, from ₹82,900 in Blue, Pink, Yellow, and Black with options up to 512GB; the consummate professional iPhone 17 Pro, from ₹1,34,900 in Natural Titanium, Blue Titanium, and Black Titanium, extending to 1TB; and the formidable iPhone 17 Pro Max, Apple's most powerful creation yet, starting at ₹1,49,900 and reaching 2TB of storage. Complementing the phones were the AirPods Pro 3 (₹25,900), Apple Watch Series 11 (₹46,900), Watch SE 3 (₹25,900), and the rugged Watch Ultra 3 (₹89,900). Each was launched with attractive offers — cashback of ₹2,000–₹6,000 and six months of no-cost EMIs on SBI and HDFC cards — underscoring Bhajanlal's reputation for consumer-first retailing.

In tandem, OPPO unveiled the F31, priced between ₹24,999 and ₹29,999. The device, available in Astral Black, Jade Green, and Sunrise Orange, exudes youthful élan with its vibrant display, swift charging, and versatile cameras, available in 128GB and 256GB variants.

Miscellaneous

Major Railway development for Punjab: New rail line and Vande Bharat Express

● 12,000 special trains to run during the Chhath & Diwali; up from 7500 last year

MI News Service, Kolkata: Under the leadership of Prime Minister Sh. Narendra Modi another major railway milestone has been achieved for Punjab. The long-awaited rail link in Punjab, Rajpura-Mohali new line has been sanctioned.

Union Minister of Railways Sh. Ashwini Vaishnaw and Minister of State Sh. Ravneet Singh Bittu made this announcement today. It fulfils more than 50-year old demand of the people of Punjab.

This 18 km railway line will cost Rs 443 crores and will directly connect the Malwa region with the state capital Chandigarh.

Key benefits of the New Line
Direct Connectivity: Earlier, trains from Ludhiana had to go through Ambala to reach Chandigarh, adding extra distance and time. Now there will be a direct connection between Rajpura and Mohali, reducing travel distance by approximately 66 km.

All 13 districts of the Malwa region will now be well-connected with Chandigarh. It will ease traffic on the existing Rajpura-Ambala route and shorten the Ambala-Morinda link.

Among all the available options, this route was chosen because it requires the least agricultural land acquisition, ensuring minimal impact on farming activities.

Economic Impact
The project will boost industries including textiles, manufacturing, and agriculture. It will create a comprehensive network connecting Punjab's agricultural heartland with major commercial centers and ports, facilitating:

- Faster movement of agricultural produce
- Reduced transportation costs for industries eg. Rajpura Thermal Power Plant
- Better connectivity for pilgrims visiting religious sites and enhanced tourism potential
- Connectivity to Gurudwara Fatehgarh Sahib, Shrine of Shaikh Ahmad al-Faruqi al-Sirhindi, Haveli Todar Mal, Sanghol Museum etc.

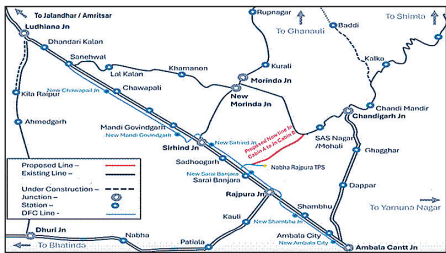
New Vande Bharat Express Service

A new Vande Bharat Express has been proposed connecting:

- Route: Firozpur Cantt. → Bhatinda → Patiala → Delhi
- Service: 6 days a week (except Wednesday)
- Journey Time: 6 hours 40 minutes covering 486 km
- Frequency: Daily service connecting the border district to the national capital

Record Railway Investment in Punjab

- 2009-14 average: Rs 225 crores annually
- 025-26: Rs 5,421 crores annually
- Increase of 24 times higher than the previous government



Major Achievements Since 2014:

- 382 km of new tracks constructed
- 1,634 km electrified - Punjab is now 100% electrified
- 409 rail flyovers and under-bridges built

Current Projects:

- Railway project of Rs 25,000 crores being executed in Punjab
- 9 new track projects covering 714 km worth Rs 21,926 crores
- 30 Amrit stations are being developed at Rs 1,122 crores
- 88 ROB/RUBs (flyovers/underpasses) worth Rs 1,238 crores

Firozpur-Patti rail line will provide crucial connectivity between border districts and Gujarat ports. This service will create an economic corridor connecting Punjab's border districts (Amritsar, Taran Taran, Firozpur).

These will be connected with major cities and eventually to Gujarat ports, significantly reducing logistics costs.

Festival Season: Record train services

For the upcoming Chhath and Diwali season, Indian Railways has announced record arrangements:

Special Train Services:

- Last year: 7,724 special trains
- This year target: 12,000 special trains
- Already notified: Over 10,000 trips
- Unreserved trains: 150 trains ready for rapid deployment
- Additional: 50 more trains to be notified soon

The maximum passenger movement typically occurs between October 15 and November 15, and railways is fully prepared to handle the rush.

Significant service quality improvement
Union Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw announced today that railway operations have shown significant improvement, with above 90% punctuality achieved in 29 out of 70 railway divisions across the country. Some divisions have been performing with a punctuality rate of over 98%.

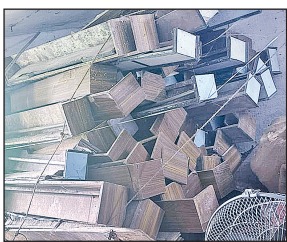
This has been possible because of better infrastructure, planning & smoother operations across the railway network.

Scrap Disposal Drive Organised by Howrah Division under Swachhta Hi Seva 2025

MI News Service, Kolkata:

As part of the ongoing Swachhta Hi Seva 2025 campaign, Howrah Division of Eastern Railway organised a special scrap disposal drive on 23rd September, 2025. The activity was undertaken at Dankuni, Rampurhat, Katwa, Azimganj, Bandel, Bardhaman and Bolpur. The drive focused on the systematic clearance and disposal of unserviceable materials and redundant items lying unused in railway premises. By removing such scrap, the division ensured a cleaner and more organised environment, while also enhancing safety and operational efficiency.

Employees and supervisors at each location actively participated in identifying, segregating, and moving the scrap for disposal. Care was taken to carry out the process in an eco-friendly manner, in line with Indian



Railways' sustainability guidelines. This initiative not only contributed to cleanliness but also supported better asset management and optimum utilisation of space. It further reinforced the message of the Swachhta Hi Seva 2025 campaign—promoting cleanliness, orderliness, and responsible waste management across the railway network. Howrah Division remains committed to such initiatives, continuing its efforts towards building a cleaner and greener railway in sync with the vision of Swachh Rail – Swachh Bharat.

HEAVY TORRENTIAL RAIN RESULTED IN WATER LOGGING AT HOWRAH & SEALDAH YARDS AND CAR-SHEDS

MI News Service, Kolkata: Following torrential rains for long duration in last night, water logging has been observed over Howrah station yard, Sealdah South station yard, Chitpur North Cabin, different car sheds and at different places of Sealdah yard, water has logged on Railway lines of Howrah & Sealdah Divisions. Water pumps have been deployed at several places to pump out the logged water but as the water from the adjacent civil area also logged with water, the water is flowing back to the Railway yard which causing more difficulties.

Due to this, some suburban trains have been short terminated & short originated in this morning and also a service plan has been made to suit the emergency situation.

CONTROLLING OF TRAINS AT SEALDAH DIVISION:

1) Sealdah North & Main : In suburban section skeleton services started from Platform no-7. 2) 13113 Up Hazarduari Exp has been cancelled from Kolkata. 3) 13177 Sealdah Jangipur Exp Cancelled from Sealdah. 4) Train Movement suspended in Sealdah South section due to water login. 5) Train moment suspended in Circular Railway line due to water logging on track and Chitpur yard.

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Regd. Office Address: - 601, 6th Floor, Amiti Building, Agastya Corporate Park, Kamani Junction, Opp. Fire Station, L.B.S. Marg, Kurla (West), Mumbai- 400070
CIN: U64910MH1984PLC032639

PUBLIC NOTICE

NOTICE is hereby given to the public at large that Piramal Finance Limited (Formerly known as Piramal Capital & Housing Finance Limited) a Non-Banking Finance Company (NBFC) registered with Reserve Bank of India (RBI), having its registered office at 601, 6th Floor, Amiti Building, Agastya Corporate Park, Kamani Junction, Opp. Fire Station, LBS Marg, Kurla West, Mumbai – 400070, intends to close one of its branch located at Piramal Finance Limited, Duck Back House, 1st Floor, 41 Shakespear Sarani, Kolkata - 700017, West Bengal, and the same shall be shifted to Piramal Finance Limited, Narayanin Building, 2nd Floor, 112A Rashbikari Avenue, Kolkata – 700029, West Bengal w.e.f. 24/10/2025.

The customers who are being serviced from the location which is being closed will be serviced from the new location from 24/10/2025 onward.

All the concerned persons are requested to take note of same.

Sd/-For Piramal Finance Limited
(Formerly known as Piramal Capital & Housing Finance Limited)

Place: Kolkata
Date: 24/09/2025

H-1B visa fee hike driven by Trump’s domestic politics, says Shashi Tharoor

MI News Service, Delhi: Days after United States President Donald Trump signed a proclamation under which a \$100,000 fee must be paid for every new H-1B visa petition filed after September 21, Congress leader and Member of Parliament, Shashi Tharoor, called it a decision taken to appease Trump’s “so-called MAGA” supporters.

Speaking to ANI on Monday, Tharoor mentioned that the sudden hike in H-1B visa fees is about America’s domestic politics and the President is trying to gain support of the anti-immigration base. It is worth noting that the US legislative elections are set for November this year.

“Again, the motives are principally driven by domestic politics. Trump believes, and the people around him have told him, that the easy H-1B has meant that a lot of Americans who deserve a higher salary from the same companies are being bypassed by Indians who will accept a lower salary,” Tharoor said in an interview with ANI.

Tharoor linked the move to the broader political climate in the US. “Today, the dominant political forces of the so-called MAGA movement are very openly anti-immigrants, and particularly visible immigrants, people of a different colour who can be spotted as not of the white ethnic mainstream,” he said.

The former Union minister explained that Trump’s supporters see Indian professionals as undercutting American workers, who work for a lesser salary than the average American.

“An Indian techie who comes and works for sixty thousand dollars a year is taking away, according to Trump’s supporters, jobs from an American who would not work for less than eighty-five or ninety thousand dol-



lars a year,” he said.

According to Tharoor, the decision to raise visa fees to as high as \$100,000 was meant to make low- and mid-level jobs “unviable.” “So only the high-end, really desirable, irreplaceable top people who are worth it for a company to spend a hundred thousand dollars, only they will come,” he added.

The Congress MP also added that the measure may eventually backfire on the US economy. “The obvious solution will be to outsource the job. What used to be done in America can now be done either in multinational company units in Europe or in their global capability centres in India,” he added. He pointed out that after these increased fees, there is a chance that Indian tech workers may still end up doing the same work for American firms, only from India instead of the US.

Raising concern for Indian IT companies, Tharoor said the new fee structure would make many contracts unviable for Indian tech companies. “We cannot pay a hundred thousand dollars per person to go off and do a contract which is actually a low-end contract,” he said.

Human Rights Watch urges China to Free Tibetan rights advocate Zhang Yadi

MI News Service, Washington: Human Rights Watch (HRW) has urged Chinese authorities to release Zhang Yadi immediately. The 22-year-old student and Tibetan rights advocate faces serious charges that could result in a lengthy prison sentence. HRW reports that Zhang, also known as Tara, was an international student studying in France before she returned to China for her summer break. She was arrested on July 31, 2025, in Shangri-La, located in Yunnan province, and is currently believed to be detained in her hometown of Changsha City, Hunan province.

According to HRW, Zhang is charged under Article 103(2) of China’s Criminal Law, which accuses her of “inciting others to split the country and undermine national unity.” If found guilty, she could be sentenced to up to five years in prison or as long as 15 years if labelled a ringleader.

HRW researcher YalkunUluyol voiced serious concerns about the case, stating that Chinese authorities appear ready to imprison a young student-activist for peacefully expressing opposition to racial injustice, a stance embraced by many young people globally.

Human Rights Watch highlighted that Zhang was an editor of a digital platform that advocates for Tibetan rights and promotes interethnic dialogue in the Chinese language. She belongs to a group called Chinese Youth Stand for Tibet, which formed after the 2022 White Paper Protests against China’s Zero-COVID policy. This group publishes content aimed at confronting ethnic prejudice and presenting Tibetan viewpoints.

HRW also emphasised that Zhang’s legal rights have not been fully upheld. Notably, prominent human rights lawyer Jiang Tianyong, who attempted to provide legal aid to her family, was briefly detained and reportedly had his phone confiscated. Human Rights Watch called on both the French and British governments to raise Zhang’s situation with Beijing, emphasising concerns over freedom of expression and demanding her immediate release so she can resume her studies.

“Gaza must be rebuilt”: EU Chief at UNGA reaffirms two-state solution

MI News Service, Washington: European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen, in her address to the 80th United Nations General Assembly, reaffirmed Europe’s commitment to a two-state solution while announcing new initiatives to support Palestine and rebuild Gaza.

“We will set up a Palestine Donor Group. Because any future Palestinian State must be viable also from an economic point of view. And we Europeans will set up a dedicated instrument for Gaza’s reconstruction. Gaza must be rebuilt,” von der Leyen said.

Underscoring Europe’s role in backing the Palestinian Authority, she noted, “When the night is darkest, we must hold fast to our compass, and our compass is the two-state solution. Since the beginning of this war, Europe has been the lifeline of the Palestinian Authority. But we must all do more, and this is why we will set up a Palestine donor group.”

She further stressed, “We Europeans will set up a dedicated instrument for Gaza’s reconstruction. The only realistic peace plan is based on two states, with a secure Israel, a viable Palestinian state, and the scourge of Hamas removed.”

In line with this emphasis on governance and rebuilding, Palestinian President Mahmud Abbas issued a stern warning to Hamas

After US raises H1B fee, China says it welcomes global talent for technological, economic progress

MI News Service, Beijing: China has stated that it is opening its doors to global talent across various sectors to drive technological and economic advancement.

During a press briefing on Monday, China’s Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Guo Jiakun emphasised the importance of cross-border talent exchange in a globalised world, highlighting China’s commitment to fostering innovation and career opportunities for international professionals.

“In a globalised world, cross-border flow of talents is instrumental in global technological and economic advancement. China welcomes talents from various sectors and fields across the world to come and find their footing in China for the progress of humanity and career success,” Guo Jiakun said.

The spokesperson’s remarks come days after US President Donald Trump signed a proclamation causing a major overhaul of the H-1B visa petitions.

According to the proclamation, there will now be a USD 100,000 fee for new H-1B visa applications, a sharp increase from the previous level of about USD 1,500.

The US State Department later clarified that the new fee requirement applies only to individuals or companies filing fresh H-1B petitions or entering the lottery system after September 21. Current visa holders and petitions submitted before that date remain unaffected.

Under the proclamation, a USD 100,000 payment must accompany every new H-1B visa petition filed after the deadline, including entries in the 2026 lottery.



Earlier in August, China announced a new visa category aimed at attracting young professionals in the fields of science and technology, following the recent approval by the State Council of an amendment to the country’s entry and exit regulations.

According to the Xinhua News Agency, the new visa rules will take effect on October 1.

Premier Li Qiang has signed a decree to implement the new policy, which will introduce a ‘K visa’ under China’s ordinary visa classifications. Xinhua News Agency reported. The visa will be available to eligible young sci-tech professionals who meet the criteria laid out by the relevant Chinese authorities and provide the required documentation. Authorities stated during a press briefing that, compared to China’s existing 12 standard visa types, the K visa will offer greater flexibility, including multiple entries, extended validity periods, and longer permitted stays.

MORE THAN 8.69 LAKH PASSENGERS TRAVELED IN METRO ON 22.09.2025

MI News Service, Kolkata:As Durga Puja is knocking at the doors, passenger count in Metro Railway has been steadily increasing and has crossed 8.5-lakh mark. More than 8.69-lakh commuters have travelled in Metro yesterday i.e. on 22.09.2025 (Pratipad) which was higher than the previous day’s count. This was even higher than last year’s Pratipad day’s passenger count of 7.89 lakhs. More and more commuters have been preferring to use Metro for comfortable, safe and easy commuting and Metro authorities are equally providing services to satisfy them which is getting reflected in passenger count. More than 6.34-lakh passengers travelled in Blue Line. In Green Line more than 2.13-lakh passengers have travelled yesterday. In Purple and Orange Lines more than 8300

passengers and 4800 passengers have travelled. More than 7600 passengers travelled in Yellow Line on 22.09.2025. In each Corridor, passenger count is increasing day by day. Throughout the day most of the train services were run as per the schedule in Blue Line. On Yellow Line, Green Line, Orange Line and Purple Line services were operated almost smoothly and as per the schedule throughout the day. To avoid long queues at counters due to pre-puja rush, commuters are requested to use Digital mode of ticketing like Smart Cards and Mobile QR tickets which comes with 5% bonus/rebate if booked via app or at the time of recharge. They are also requested to download ‘AAMAR KOLKATA METRO’ app to book their tickets or recharge Smart Cards anytime to save time. More and

more commuters are opting for digital mode of ticketing and as a result 2,38,500 commuters have downloaded this app in the period 25.08.25 to 21.09.25. Tourists/Visitors may also use Tourist Smart Cards to avail the facility of unlimited journeys for a duration of 3 and 5 days at a cost of Rs. 250 and Rs. 550 respectively. These Cards are now available at booking counters of every Metro station. We are proud of AAMAR Metro and equally proud of our commuters. Metro is the cost-effective, comfortable and easy mode of commuting so more and more commuters prefer to use it. Passengers are also requested to follow the instructions made through Public Address System by on-duty staff. We thank our commuters for their continued co-operation in running Metro services smoothly.

India, France strengthen civil nuclear ties, discuss Ukraine, West Asia at Special Task Force meeting

MI News Service, Delhi: India and France held the Second Meeting of the India-France Special Task Force on Civil Nuclear Energy in the national capital, co-chaired by Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri and Secretary-General of the French Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs, Anne-Marie Descotes.

The meeting, held on Monday, reviewed progress in bilateral civil nuclear cooperation and explored avenues to deepen the strategic partnership across innovation, defence, and regional issues like the Russia-Ukraine conflict and the West Asia crisis.

According to a press statement by the Ministry of External Affairs, both sides conducted a comprehensive review of advancements made over the past year, emphasising engagement in emerging technologies such as Small and Advanced Modular Reactors (SMRs/AMRs), as outlined in the Declaration of Intent signed in February 2025. Both sides also agreed to maintain close coordination on key aspects of civil nuclear cooperation.

“During the meeting, both sides undertook a comprehensive review of the progress made over the past year through various meetings and consultations. They agreed to remain in close touch over various key aspects of bilateral civil nuclear cooperation. They reaffirmed the importance of engagement in emerging technologies like Small and Advanced Modular

Reactors (SMRs/AMRs), as articulated by the Declaration of Intent on SMRs and AMRs signed in February 2025,” the MEA statement read.

The discussions also covered broader bilateral ties, including innovation, technology, defence, space, counter-terrorism, and trilateral cooperation with third countries. Misri and Descotes exchanged views on global and regional developments, including the ongoing Russia-Ukraine conflict and the situation in West Asia, particularly Gaza.

A press statement from the French Embassy in India highlighted Descotes’ gratitude for Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s invitation to President Emmanuel Macron for the AI Impact Summit in February 2026, noting that 2026 will be celebrated as the India-France Year of Innovation.

“Innovation and new technologies are growing fields of cooperation between France and India, and 2026 will mark the India-France Year of Innovation,” the release stated.

Descotes reaffirmed France’s support for deepening EU-India relations, backing an ambitious EU-India trade agreement following the 2025 Joint Communication on a New Strategic EU-India Agenda.

She also addressed international issues, including the pursuit of a just and lasting peace in Ukraine, the Gaza crisis, and the fight against terrorism.

ADDITIONAL SLEEPER CLASS COACH TO BE AUGMENTED IN FOUR (04) POPULAR EXPRESS TRAINS

MI News Service, Kolkata: The augmentation of additional coaches in popular Express trains is an ongoing initiative aimed at improving overall travel experience for passengers. Accordingly, in response to the overwhelming demand for tickets, Railway has decided to augment additional sleeper class coach in following Express trains on temporary basis:

One additional sleeper class coach will be augmented with 13021/13022 Howrah-Raxaul – Howrah Mithila Express leaving Howrah w.e.f. 25.9.2025 to 31.10.2025 and leaving Raxaul w.e.f. 26.9.2025 to 1.11.2025. The train will run with 22 coaches instead of 21 coaches. One additional sleeper class coach will be augmented with 13105/13106 Sealdah – Ballia – Sealdah Express leaving Sealdah w.e.f. 25.9.2025 to 31.10.2025 and leaving Ballia w.e.f. 26.9.2025 to 1.11.2025. The train will run with 20 coaches instead of 19 coaches. One additional sleeper

class coach will be augmented with 13141/13142 Sealdah – New Alipurdwar – Sealdah Teesta Torsa Express leaving Sealdah w.e.f. 25.9.2025 to 31.10.2025 and leaving New Alipurdwar w.e.f. 26.9.2025 to 1.11.2025. The train will run with 21 coaches instead of 20 coaches. One additional sleeper class coach will be augmented with 13009/13010 Howrah-Yoganagari Rishikesh-Howrah Doon Express leaving Howrah w.e.f. 25.9.2025 to 31.10.2025 and leaving Yoganagari Rishikesh w.e.f. 27.9.2025 to 2.11.2025. The train will run with 22 coaches instead of 21 coaches.

TRAIN RESCHEDULED

MI News Service, Kolkata: Due to water logging at different places following trains have been rescheduled today i) 13125 UP Kolkata-Sairang Express scheduled to leave Kolkata station 12.25 hrs. has been rescheduled at 13.00 hrs. on 23.9.2025.

TIRELESS EFFORTS OF EASTERN RAILWAY RESUMING MORE SUB-URBAN SERVICES

MI News Service, Kolkata: Eastern Railway is continuing its tireless efforts for maintaining suburban service in Sealdah & Howrah divisions. Water pumps have been deployed at several places to pump out logged water due to incessant rain. In Sealdah North & Main line section, suburban trains are being received & despatched from the platforms. In Sealdah South section, except one or two trains all south bound trains are being short terminating/ short originating at Ballygunge as Sealdah South platform are water logged. Continuous effort is going on to resume services from Sealdah south also.

Swachhata Hi Seva Activities Undertaken Over Sealdah Division



MI News Service, Kolkata : Eastern Railway’s Sealdah Division observed Swachhata Hi Seva (SHS) Campaign 2025 on 23rd September with activities promoting sanitation, waste management, and elimination of single-use plastics. A Sale of Recycled Products was organized at Kolkata Terminal and Naihati Junction, showcasing eco-friendly items such as cloth

bags and paper products, with active participation of railway officials, staff, and passengers. Cleanliness awareness campaigns were also held at various stations, emphasizing proper waste disposal and sustainable practices. The initiatives received enthusiastic response, reflecting Sealdah Division’s strong commitment to the success of SHS 2025.

TRAINS RESCHEDULED TODAY

MI News Service, Kolkata: Following trains have been rescheduled today due to water logging at various places in Howrah division as a result of torrential rain:

- i) 22301 UP Howrah – New Jalpaiguri Vande Bharat Express scheduled to leave Howrah station at 5.55 hrs. on 23.9.25 has been rescheduled at 7.45 hrs. on 23.9.2025.
- ii) 22303 Howrah – Gaya Vande Bharat Express scheduled leave Howrah at 6.45 hrs. on 23.9.2025 has been rescheduled at 8.10 hrs. on 23.9.2025.
- iii) 22309 Howrah – Jamalpur Vande Bharat express scheduled to leave Howrah at 7.45 hrs. has been rescheduled at 8.20 hrs. on 23.9.2025.

Protest rally against I Love Muhammad in Hooghly

Nurul Islam Khan: A huge protest procession was taken out on Wednesday at the call of Nawabpur, Kumirmora and Bhagpatipur in Hooghly. The front row of the procession was led by Pirzada Safiri Siddiqui of Furfura Sharif and Pirzada Syed Imad Uddin Hossain as the chief guests. Recently, thousands of ordinary people walked in the procession today to protest against the I Love Muhammad (peace be upon him) signboards in Uttar Pradesh and the filing of an FIR against the Prophet’s lovers. Prominent figures in the society were not far behind. Pirzada Safiri Siddiqui said that the rights of the minority community are being destroyed in this democratic, secular and pluralistic country, which is



against the constitution. History is being distorted. The growing Hindutva power has put the country in danger. Who should I love, should I learn from BJP and RSS? Besides,

what is the crime of saying I love the one for whom this world was created? It is better to say, what is the name of the greatest scientist in the world? If you search the world-famous Google, the name that comes up is the name of the beloved Prophet Hazrat Muhammad (peace be upon him). The only thing is that there is no need for a bulldozer government anymore. Hafez Azhar Uddin, Maha, Saqlain Mullah, Sheikh Nasim, Sheikh Salim, Sheikh Nizamuddin Sheikh Azim and Muhammad Helal and many others were present in the meeting. The meeting was vocal on this issue. They called for a larger movement. Along with this, a demand was also made to withdraw the FIR against the accused.

Former Yorkshire cricketer, reputed international umpire Dickie Bird dies at 92

YORKSHIRE [UK] : The Yorkshire County Cricket Club announced the demise of former cricketer and reputed international umpire Dickie Bird at the age of 92.

A statement issued by Yorkshire Cricket said, "It is with profound sadness that The Yorkshire County Cricket Club announces the passing of Harold Dennis "Dickie" Bird MBE OBE, one of cricket's most beloved figures, who died peacefully at home at the age of 92."

Dickie enjoyed an illustrious career as an international umpire, writing his name into history as one of the most famous and popular officials in the game's history. He is synonymous with Yorkshire Cricket, where he has been one of the most loyal supporters. In 2014, he was named President of The Yorkshire County Cricket Club, a role he held with pride and distinction, with the club winning two County Championship titles



during his tenure.

Born on 19 April 1933 in Barnsley, Yorkshire, Dickie's life was defined by his unwavering dedication to cricket. A former first-class cricketer for Yorkshire and Leicestershire, Bird's playing career was cut short by injury, but his legacy was truly forged in his role as an international umpire. As a player, he featured in 93 first-class matches, scoring 3,314 runs at an average of 20.71 with two centuries and 14 fifties in 170 innings. He also featured in two List-A matches.

Over a distinguished career, he officiated in 66 Test matches and 69 One Day Internationals, including three World Cup finals, including the final of the inaugural Men's Cricket World Cup -- earning the admiration of players and fans alike for his integrity, humour, and unmistakable style.

"Dickie Bird became a national treasure, known not only for his

umpiring excellence but also for his eccentricities and warmth. He was appointed an MBE in 1986 and an OBE in 2012 in recognition of his outstanding contribution to cricket. He leaves behind a legacy of sportsmanship, humility, and joy -- and a legion of admirers across generations," said the statement from the club.

The club said that "the thoughts of everyone at the Yorkshire County Cricket Club' are with Dickie's family and friends at this time.

"He will be truly missed by all at the Club having spent an incredible amount of time in support of everyone here and will be remembered as one of the greatest characters in Yorkshire's history. Further details regarding memorial arrangements will be shared in due course, and the Club will be looking to honour him in a variety of ways in the coming weeks," the statement concluded.

Jharkhand Athletes Dominate Day 2 of 36th East Zone Junior Athletics Meet With 17 Medals



PC JHA

RANCHI : Jharkhand athletes continued their stellar performance on the second day of the 36th East Zone Junior Athletics Championship, bagging a total of 17 medals, including 8 gold, 5 silver, and 4 bronze, at the Birsa Munda Football Stadium, Morabadi, Ranchi.

The three-day championship, being held from September 22 to 24 under the directives of the Athletics Federation of India, New Delhi, is hosted by the Jharkhand Athletics Association. A total of 621 athletes from 10 states-West Bengal, Odisha, Bihar, Assam, Mizoram, Sikkim, Manipur, Nagaland, Meghalaya, and Arunachal Pradesh-are competing in this prestigious event.

The medal-winning athletes were trained under coaches Vinod Kumar Singh, Ashu Bhatia, Yogesh Yadav, Alok Singh, Prabhat Ranjan Tiwari, Neeraj Kumar, Naresh Kujur, and Anubha Khakha.

With this medal haul, Jharkhand athletes have reaffirmed their dominance at the zonal level and are poised to end

the championship on a high note.

Gold medal winners: Savita Murmu (Jamtara) - Girls U-18 Javelin Throw, Vivek Pal (Bokaro) - Boys U-20 1500m, Sanjeev Bharti (Bokaro) - Boys U-20 110m Hurdles, Mohd. Sajid (Bokaro) - Boys U-18 110m Hurdles, Priti Lakra (Hazaribagh) - Girls U-20 Triple Jump, Poonam Kumari (Ranchi) - Girls U-18 400m, Neeraj Yadav (Sahibganj) - Boys U-20 Javelin Throw, Prithvi Oraon (Hazaribagh) - Girls U-16 Long Jump.

Silver medal: Deepak Munda (Ranchi) - Boys U-18 Long Jump, Manish Kumar Yadav (Giridih) - Boys U-20 400m, Dashedi Kandulna (Ranchi) - Girls U-18 100m Hurdles, Ravi Oraon (Gumla) - Boys U-16 600m, Girls 4x100m Relay Team - Priti Lakra (Hazaribagh), Arti Mehta (Bokaro), Radha Kumari (Seraikela), Akanksha (Palamu).

Bronze Medal: Jyoti Kumari (Jamtara) - Girls U-18 3000m Race Walk, Rahul Oraon (Chatra) - Boys U-20 1500m, Ritu Kumari (Ranchi) - Girls U-20 100m Hurdles, Pinky Lakra (Hazaribagh) - Girls U-16 High Jump.

DINESH KARTHIK APPOINTED CAPTAIN OF TEAM INDIA FOR HONG KONG SIXES 2025

HONG KONG : Cricket Hong Kong, China, on Tuesday announced that veteran Indian cricketer Dinesh Karthik will captain Team India in the upcoming prestigious Hong Kong Sixes 2025, scheduled to be held from November 7 to November 2025.

Known for his vast international experience, sharp leadership skills, and explosive batting, Karthik's inclusion as captain is set to inspire fans and elevate the tournament's competitive spirit, as per a release from Hong Kong Sixes 2025, a release said.

Speaking on the occasion, Burji Shroff, Chairperson of Cricket Hong Kong, China, said, "We are thrilled to welcome Dinesh Karthik as the captain of Team India for the Hong Kong Sixes 2025. His leadership and wealth of experience will add immense value to the competition, and we are confident that his presence will attract fans from across the globe to witness this spectacular cricketing festival."

Dinesh Karthik said it is an absolute honour leading Team India at the Hong Kong Sixes, a tournament with such rich history and global recognition.

"I look forward to leading a group of players who have such incredible records to their credit, and together we will aim to bring joy to the fans and play cricket that is both fearless and entertaining."

Rajneesh Chopra, Co-Founder of Arivaa Sports, the exclusive commercial and managing partner of Cricket Hong Kong for the Sixes said Karthik's charisma and ability to thrive under pressure make him the perfect leader for the format.

"Having Dinesh Karthik lead India at the Hong Kong Sixes is a proud moment for us at Arivaa Sports. His charisma and ability to thrive under pressure make him the perfect leader for this format. This is yet another step towards strengthening the legacy of the Hong Kong Sixes as one of the most exciting global cricketing events."

The Hong Kong Sixes 2025 promises to be a thrilling blend of fast-paced cricket, international stars, and unmatched entertainment, reinforcing its reputation as one of the most exciting short-format tournaments in the world, the release said.



Hockey India League mini-auctions to be held on September 24

NEW DELHI [INDIA] : The excitement is building as the countdown begins for the Hero Hockey India League (HIL) 2026 men's and women's mini-auctions, to be held on September 24 in New Delhi. With franchises eager to sharpen their squads and secure the hottest talent in world hockey, the auctions promise all the drama and strategy of sport off the field.

Over 100 men's players and over 100 women's players will be in the spotlight. With a salary cap of Rs four crores for men's teams and Rs two crores for women's teams, every move at the bidding table will count. Each squad will consist of 20 players (2 goalkeepers + 18 outfield players), with a maximum of 7 overseas recruits and a minimum of 3 Indian juniors, ensuring opportunities for the next generation, as per a Hockey India press release.

The auctions will feature three base price slabs -- Rs 2 Lakhs, Rs 5 Lakhs, and Rs 10 Lakhs -- with



Rs 2 Lakhs as the minimum for both Indian and overseas players.

Notably, franchises will only be allowed to bid where they have sufficient budget and open playing positions available. Teams will also be required to maintain a balance between their remaining purse and the players required to

complete the squad.

Speaking on the occasion, Hockey India President, Dr Dillip Tirkey said, "It takes a lot of steadfast resolve and commitment for a federation to ensure the continued success of a league, especially for a legacy sport like hockey. The core purpose of a league is

to build inclusion and opportunity for the sport to grow. The HIL 2026 edition is being planned with this resolve to keep player exposure, welfare and growth at the centre of our focus."

"While we do this through the year across our competitions calendar, the HIL allows a unique opportunity for healthy corporate participation to contribute and get involved in the sport. We are proud of each of our franchise partners for their belief and contribution to ensure the success of the league. The mini auction taking place tomorrow promises to be action-packed as our first milestone for the second edition of the HIL. I wish all the teams and players the best of luck," he added.

With the auctions shaping up as a critical step towards team-building, excitement is already running high as franchises strategise to secure top talent for the upcoming season of the Hockey India League 2026.

Hardik Pandya is three scalps away from 100 T20I wickets



DUBAI [UAE] : Indian all-rounder Hardik Pandya is just three wickets away from 100 T20I wickets for his team and will be the second Indian cricketer to achieve the milestone once he reaches the target.

The star all-rounder can

achieve this feat during his side's Asia Cup clash against Bangladesh in the Super Four stage in Dubai on Wednesday. Currently, Hardik is India's second-highest wicket-taker in T20Is, with 97 scalps in 118 matches at an average of 26.63, with best figures of 4/16 and three four-wicket hauls to his name.

At the top spot is left-arm pacer Arshdeep Singh, who completed his 100th wicket against Oman during the team's final group stage clash. He has 100 scalps at an average of 18.49, with best figures of 4/9 and two four-fers to his name.

During the ongoing Asia Cup, Pandya has taken three wickets in four matches at an average of 33.00, with best figures of 1/26. During his previous clash against arch-rivals Pakistan, he took 1/29 in three overs.

Afghanistan spinner Rashid Khan is the top wicket-taker in T20Is with 173 scalps in 103 matches at an average of 13.93, with best figures of 5/3, with eight four-wicket hauls and two five-wicket hauls.

Vice-captain Mandhana becomes second Indian after Mithali Raj to achieve special feat

NEW DELHI : India vice-captain Smriti Mandhana, who is thriving in a purple patch, became just the second player from the nation to reach 800 rating points in the ICC women's ODI rankings, according to Wisden.

In the latest Women's ODI batting rankings issued by the International Cricket Council (ICC) on Tuesday, Mandhana extended her reign at the top, moving to a career-high rating of 818 after back-to-back centuries during India's 2-1 home series defeat against Australia.

Following the recent update, Mandhana is only the second Indian batter after decorated skipper Mithali Raj (880) to reach 800 rating points in the ICC women's ODI rankings. Overall, she is the 14th to achieve the feat. In the all-time list, she occupies the 11th spot, which former Australian cricketer Karen Rolton leads with a scintillating tally of 901.

The in-form southpaw has maintained a sensational form of late, garnering 928 runs this year in 14 innings at a blistering aver-



age of 66.28. Mandhana is just 43 runs short of becoming the highest run-getter in a calendar year, after becoming the second to cross 900 runs in one year.

During the third ODI against

Australia at the Arun Jaitley Stadium, Mandhana cantered to a century in 50 deliveries to set a new record for the fastest hundred by an Indian in the 50-over format during the final fixture of

the three-match series.

During India's pursuit of the 413-run target, Mandhana engineered a batting masterclass and bettered Mooney's feat after storming to the landmark moment in 50 deliveries. The rollicking display is the fastest by an Indian and, overall, the second-fastest after Australia opener Meg Lanning, who holds the top spot with a 45-ball ton against New Zealand in 2012.

The sizzling performance was Mandhana's fourth ton in the ongoing calendar year, and this is the second time she has orchestrated it after her exploits last year. Mandhana has 13 ODI centuries, the joint second-highest alongside New Zealand's Suzie Bates and two shy of Lanning's tally of 15. In the second ODI, she clobbered 117 in 91 deliveries, which laid the platform for India's imposing 102-run win. It is the second time she has thwacked back-to-back centuries, with the first instance occurring in 2024. She is the first Indian to achieve the feat twice.

SA20 SEASON 3 DRIVES JOBS, ECONOMIC GROWTH AND SOUTH AFRICA'S CRICKETING FUTURE

JOHANNESBURG [SOUTH AFRICA] : Following the success of the SA20 Season four player auction, where USD 6.7 million was invested in South African players, the Season three Economic Impact Assessment (EIA) released on Tuesday claimed that the League has a significant impact on South Africa's economy.

The report highlights that off the field, the SA20 continues to make a substantial impact on the greater South African economy, with an increase in contributions across Gross Domestic Product (GDP), Direct Expenditure, Household Income and Job Creation, as per a SA20 press release.

Following two successful seasons, the past season has further elevated the tournament's significance, yielding an impressive GDP contribution that soared from 247.8 million USD to a remarkable 305 million USD, it said.

This considerable leap underlines the league and its franchises' growing role in the economic fabric of local households and communities, where small businesses benefit from the influx of both local and international visitors to matches, the



release said.

"SA20 is proving to be a game-changer, not only for cricket in South Africa but also for the country's economy," League Commissioner and former South Africa captain, Graeme Smith, said.

"The recent auction highlighted how the franchises are committed to investing in the South African pipeline, while this Economic Impact Assessment (EIA) report showcases how the League's impact is extending beyond the field. It is

incredible to see how, after only 3 seasons, we've been able to drive growth and create opportunities for our cricketers, the sports and hospitality industry and the greater South African economy," he added.

The fans spoke with their feet, with nearly 4,00,000 tickets sold in Season 3 - equating to 76 per cent of capacity across all the matches - while the final has sold out for three consecutive seasons. The league also achieved an exciting milestone when it celebrated the sale of the competition's one millionth ticket last season. This had an impact on direct expenditure, which grew exponentially from USD 86 million in Season 2 to approximately USD 103 million. A critical injection towards South Africa's economy is the increase in jobs, with the annualised employment opportunities increasing by 2 per cent from Season 2 to 8199. Additionally, for the first time, the total contribution to household income reached USD 80 million.

The anticipated Season 4 will start in a new festive season timeslot on December 26 opening up the opportunity to engage the captive holiday season crowds. Defending champions MI Cape Town will get their title defence underway with a blockbuster clash against Durban's Super Giants on Friday, December 26, at the picturesque Newlands in the tournament opener.