

"Had An Incredible Meeting With PM Modi": US Envoy Sergio Gor

New Delhi: US Ambassador-designate Sergio Gor today said he held a "great series of meetings" with Prime Minister Narendra Modi, and is optimistic about the days ahead, amid continuing strains in India-US ties over US President Donald Trump's imposition of 50 per cent tariffs on Indian exports. "I had an incredible meeting with Prime Minister Narendra Modi. We discussed trade, critical minerals and defence," the US envoy said in his first comment after the senate confirmed his appointment as the next ambassador to India.

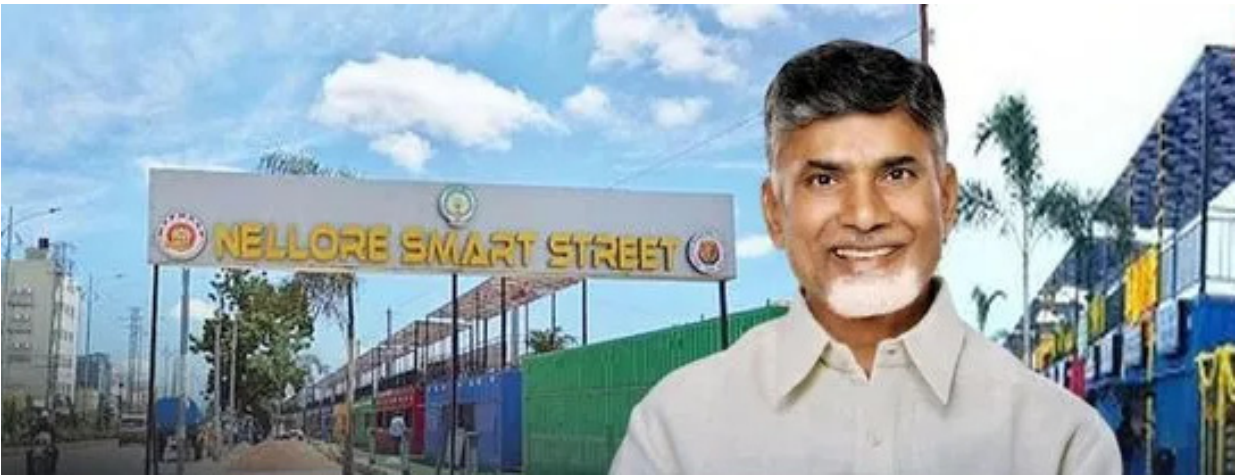
Gor, accompanied by US Deputy Secretary for Management and Resources Michael J Rigas, is on a six-day visit to Delhi. In a post on X, PM Modi welcomed the new US envoy to India. Both held a large framed photo in which PM Modi and Trump were seen in a joint address. "Glad to receive Mr Sergio Gor, Ambassador-designate of the US to India."



Smart street bazaars in all municipalities: CM Chandrababu

From Our Staff Reporter
Amaravati, October, 11 : Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Nara Chandrababu Naidu said that a smart street bazaar has been set up with modern containers. He explained that these have been set up for the first time in Nellore with an innovative idea. Seeing this.. Are we in Nellore? Or are we abroad? The Chief Minister said that the thought comes to mind. On Saturday, CM Chandrababu inaugurated the Smart Street Vending Market at Nellore's Maipadu Gate in a virtual manner from Amaravati. Later, he said that these smart street bazaars will soon be set up in all municipalities across the state. On this occasion, CM Chandrababu said that the coalition government is a people's government. He criticized the YSRCP for committing anarchy in the previous government. He was angry that they had made mistakes after mistakes by blocking alcohol. He reminded that they had recently caught fake alcohol.. and even if there were people from their party in this case.. they were also suspended. But CM Chandrababu expressed his anger at the YSRCP leaders, saying that they were politicizing this too.

He told the people that from now on there will be a hologram on liquor bottles.. If you scan it on your phone, you will get all the details. He attacked the YSRCP leaders for doing corpse politics in the state. He warned them that they would be punished if they spread false propaganda. He gave a clear warning that they will not tolerate it



if it comes to the girls. CM Chandrababu assured the people that they will be good.. and will work for your living standards.

He also criticized unnecessary allegations against medical colleges. He expressed hope that if these colleges come into existence, 180 additional seats will be added, thereby providing better medical treatment to the poor. He said that what has been done in the last 16 months of taking power is just the beginning, there is a lot to be done. However, he said that overcoming the destruction is not easy. He made it clear that AI is necessary for the future of children. He announced that investments of Rs. 90 thousand crores are going to come to Visakhapatnam. He also announced that a steel factory worth Rs. 1 lakh crores will come to Visakhapatnam.

On this occasion, Chandrababu promised to link rivers in the state. He said that there is currently plenty of water in the rivers. This water is being used for irrigation of two crops. CM Chandrababu said that a plan is being drawn up to make one lakh people entre-

preneurs through MEPMA and DWACRA. However, the Chief Minister recalled on this occasion that he had sought the blessings of the coalition parties before the elections. He said that people had turned up in large numbers for the election meeting held in Nellore, which he had never seen before. CM Chandrababu said that he is also working with the same sincerity and dedication. They said that they are moving forward

with the slogan of an entrepreneur in every family. Once upon a time, they thought that there should be an IT employee in every home.. but now, they expressed happiness that no matter what country you look at, there are only our IT employees. On this occasion, CM Chandrababu joked that Diwali has come early in Nellore. On this occasion, CM Chandrababu spoke directly to the women traders. The women who

had acquired shops and started new businesses shared their happiness with CM Chandrababu. Nellore MP Vemireddy said that he was surprised to see this Smart Street Bazaar. He said that Minister Narayana has taken great initiative to develop this Smart Street Bazaar. He said that he was happy that women are the owners of the shops. This smart street bazaar has provided the opportunity for customers to get whatever they want.

‘Stall in Mall’ exhibition inaugurated

Vijayawada: National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) Deputy General Manager (DGM) MM Behra said that ‘Stall in Mall’ initiative aims to provide better marketing opportunities for products made by Self-Help Group (SHG) women and rural artisans, while also enhancing their employment prospects. The exhibition, organised at PVP Mall by Nestham, a voluntary organisation with NABARD's financial assistance, will continue till January 9. The exhibition features a wide range of handloom fabrics, Kalamkari prints, Kondapalli Toys, jute bags, pearl gar-



lands, and other handicrafts. Inaugurating the exhibition, MM Behra said that artisans from Andhra Pradesh, as well as neighbouring States such as Odisha, Telangana, and Chhattisgarh, are showcasing their handmade prod-

ucts. He urged the public to support the self-help groups and rural craftsmen by purchasing their products, thereby contributing to women's economic empowerment and rural development.

Homeless take out rally

Rajamahendravaram: The government is committed to ensuring the welfare of urban homeless individuals and providing them with livelihood and employment opportunities, said P Ramalingeswar, Additional Commissioner of Rajamahendravaram Municipal Corporation. He urged the homeless to make use of these opportunities to improve their lives. Speaking at the World Homeless Day celebrations held at Urban Homeless Shelter, located in Kambalacheruvu Municipal Shopping Complex, and organised by Swamandhra voluntary organisation, the Additional Commissioner stated that every individual should take up some form of work to earn a living. He encouraged the homeless to stay at the shelter during nights and gradually reunite with their families. Appreciating Swamandhra for its efforts, he said the organisation has been extending valuable services to the homeless by providing food, clothing, blankets, counselling, and facilitating their reunion with families.

'FOR TALIBAN, WOMEN NOT HUMAN'

Taslima Nasreen On Row Over Journalist 'Ban'

New Delhi: Bangladesh's exiled writer Taslima Nasreen has slammed Afghan Foreign Minister Amir Khan Muttaqi for not allowing women journalists to attend a press conference in Delhi. Nasreen, who escaped from Bangladesh in 1994, said the Taliban "refuse to grant women human rights because they do not consider

women to be human." She also criticised male journalists who attended the Afghan leader's press conference in Delhi, saying they would have walked out if they had any conscience. "The Afghan Foreign Minister, Amir Khan Muttaqi, has come to India and held a press conference. However, he did not allow any female journalists to attend.



Why Nobel Peace Prize Winner Maria Corina Machado Is Facing Criticism

New Delhi: A controversy has surfaced after Venezuelan democracy activist Maria Corina Machado was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize 2025. Critics pointed out that she supported Israel and its bombing of Gaza and that she had also called for foreign intervention to overthrow the government in her country. Machado is a key figure in Venezuela's pro-democracy movement who has emerged as a powerful symbol of civilian courage in recent years. The Nobel Prize Committee announced her as the Peace Laureate yesterday for her work in promoting

democracy and fighting dictatorship in Venezuela. Within hours, the announcement drew criticism from the White House for "placing politics over peace" after a failed campaign to portray President Donald Trump as a global peacemaker who stopped half a dozen conflicts around the world. Machado later dedicated her Nobel to Trump, and the US President said he was happy for her.

The Nobel Prize Committee hailed Machado as a "champion of peace" who has kept the flame of democracy burning in Venezuela amid growing darkness.



Pollution control measures should be expedited: Pawan Kalyan

From Our Staff Reporter
Amaravati, October, 11 : Andhra Pradesh Deputy Chief Minister Pawan Kalyan held a review meeting with the officials of the Pollution Control Board here on Saturday. The Kakinada district administration participated in this review through video conference. Pawan Kalyan gave directions on pollution control issues in the Uppada coastal area. They discussed the pollution problems arising due to industrial pollution and mining in Kakinada district. Pawan Kalyan took details from the PCB regarding the issues raised by the fishermen in the meeting and their doubts. They discussed the procedures to be followed for the pollution audit. Pawan Kalyan inquired about the pollution conditions and environmental protection in Kakinada and Godavari districts.



Varla Ramaiah questions Jagan on spurious liquor deaths and scams

From Our Staff Reporter
Amaravati, October, 11 : TDP Leader Varla Ramaiah made comments that Jagane is the cause, karma and action for the adulteration of adulterated liquor in the state for the last 6 years. Speaking to the media on Saturday, he said that Virat is also the source of adulterated liquor, encouraging the adulterated liquor conspirators. He questioned whether it is true that Jagan's cousins ??YS Sunil Reddy and YS Anil Reddy are doing liquor business in South Africa. Are YS Sunil Reddy and YS Anil Reddy... Jagan's business benami or not? He questioned. He said that it is true that the South African police have registered a case and are investigating the adulteration of the cousins' liquor business. He asked another question whether it is true that YCP covert Jayachandra Reddy... YS Sunil Reddy and YS Anil Reddy are hiding in the camp. "If 27 people died after consuming adulterated li-



quor in Jangareddygudem while you were the Chief Minister, wasn't it you who misled the case? If 6 people died after consuming adulterated liquor in your party leader Malladi Vishnu's bar, why wasn't he suspended? Isn't it true that your leaders Kakani Govardhan and Ramireddy Pratap Kumar Reddy were involved in adulterated liquor in the past in Sarvepalli and Kavali constituencies? Isn't it true that there are cases against them? Why hasn't your party taken disciplinary action against them? The gov-

ernment has issued lookout notices against your party covert Jayachandra Reddy and suspended him from the party. Don't you know where Jayachandra Reddy is hiding now, Jagan? Isn't it true that labs in Chennai and Bangalore confirmed that the liquor you supplied contained toxic substances while you were the Chief Minister? Why hasn't action been taken against those responsible immediately?" Yesterday, when a person died after drinking alcohol in Eluru, it was advertised as adulterated alcohol.

EDITORIAL

Why didn't Indiramma Rajyam come?

After the formation of Telangana state, all sectors became more weak and fell into ruins under the rule of KCR, who had repeatedly promised to unveil a golden Telangana. Under the family dictatorship, official and unofficial exploitation and corruption increased manifold. People who could not digest the corrupt rule, voted for the Congress. Revanth Reddy, as the president of the PCC in the presence of Rahul Gandhi, released the Congress manifesto and assured the people that Indiramma's kingdom would be brought back. During Indiramma's rule (1967–77), many schemes were implemented for the development and welfare of the poor. Kakatiya University was started in Telangana in 1975 under the leadership of Indira Gandhi. Many degree junior colleges were started. Hundreds of high schools were established in remote villages. Primary health centers were expanded. Many good things were done, such as nationalizing private banks, abolishing crores of rupees of royal gifts given to the rulers, and enacting the Land Limit Act. Many development and welfare programs were started through the Twenty Principles Scheme. For the first time, 25 percent reservation was provided to BCs in education and jobs. Public sector projects and industries were started through the Planning Commission formed with the advice of expert intellectuals. That is why the poor still remember Indiramma's Rajya with fondness. It has been two years since the Congress government, which promised such an Indiramma Rajya, was formed in Telangana state. People, activists, and intellectuals are still waiting for a qualitative change in governance. Government educational institutions in Telangana, which were destroyed during the previous regime, are still mired in crisis. Government medical and health institutions are failing to gain the trust of the people due to various weaknesses. Corruption is rampant in the revenue, police, registration, irrigation and municipality departments in the state. Industrial development remains nominal in the Telangana economy, which is dependent only on the agriculture and service sectors. Employment opportunities for the growing youth are not improving. There is no sign of profitable agriculture and allied industries. Field research shows that people are losing a large part of their income to purchase private education and medical services, and to corrupt payments to officials. The affected people are complaining that there has been no qualitative change in administration despite the change of governments and rulers. The government is not getting by unless it takes on debt. News stories are constantly coming out that a large part of the government's income is not enough to pay salaries, pensions, interest payments, and arrears and dues paid by the previous government. As if the development of the state means only the development of Hyderabad and its surrounding areas, the development and expansion of corporate companies continues there. In the backward districts of Adilabad, Nizamabad, Karimnagar, Warangal and Khammam, unemployed youth from those areas are migrating to the state capital due to lack of government investment and inability to attract private investment. There is no such thing as annual plans, five-year plans and long-term plans as in Indiramma's Rajya. The current government has only three years left to implement the Indiramma Rajya promised by Revanth Reddy. Even now, qualitative changes in administration should be implemented as desired by the poor people. The state should be rebuilt with a new trend in the spirit of Indiramma's rule.

The 'Real' Message To Trump And Pak In Taliban Minister's India Visit

In what is being billed as a landmark visit, Taliban acting Foreign Minister Amir Khan Muttaqi began a week-long trip to India yesterday. This is the first ministerial-level engagement between India and the Taliban since the group's return to power in August 2021 and follows a temporary travel exemption granted by the UN Security Council's Taliban Sanctions Committee on September 30, lifting Muttaqi's long-standing travel ban. Upon arrival, Muttaqi was welcomed by India's Ministry of External Affairs spokesperson, Randhir Jaiswal, who said New Delhi looked forward to "engaging discussions on bilateral and regional matters". Muttaqi has been holding meetings with External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar and National Security Advisor Ajit Doval, and will also visit the Taj Mahal, Darul Uloom Deoband, and Afghan community representatives during his stay.

A Massive Shift In India's Approach

India had been amongst the last countries in the region to open channels of communication with the Taliban, when it was imminent that the US would withdraw from the country. But before that, it had been amongst the most consistent supporters of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, committing \$3 billion to the war-torn country's reconstruction and capacity-building of the Afghan people. India has not yet formally recognised the Taliban regime, and even ministerial interactions have been minimal. Till now, the first and only interaction has been when Minister of External Affairs S. Jaishankar held a telephone call with Muttaqi in the wake of Operation Sindoor. This visit, thus, heralds a massive, even if cautious diplomatic shift in India's approach to the regime.

The Message From Moscow

Muttaqi's Delhi sojourn follows a visit to Moscow, where he led a delegation for the first time and participated in the Moscow Format of talks on Afghanistan. The Indian Ambassador to Russia, Vinay Kumar, participated in the consultation along with representatives of Iran, Kazakhstan, China, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, Russia, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, and, of course, Afghanistan. A joint statement was released at the end of the talks, where parties reaffirmed their unwavering support for the establishment of Afghanistan as an independent, united and peaceful state, and for strengthening counter-terrorism cooperation at both bilateral and multilateral levels "so that Afghan soil is not used as a threat to the security of the neighboring countries and beyond". The statement made two key points. One was the aim to develop "regional economic projects with Afghan participation and... the active integration of Afghanistan into the system of regional connectivity." The other was calling "unacceptable" the "attempts by countries to deploy their military infrastructure in Afghanistan and neighboring states, since this does not serve the interests of regional peace and stability".

The first points to the intent and determination of the participants of the talks - all in Afghanistan's neighborhood - to continue building ties with and integrate Taliban-ruled Afghanistan in the regional economic, connectivity, and security framework. The second, on the other hand, was a thinly veiled reference to US President Donald Trump's demand to have the Taliban hand over the strategic Bagram air base to America. The Taliban leadership had refused to do so, and the joint statement from the Moscow Format talks reflects the opposition of all of Taliban's neighbours and regional coun-



tries to American or any other extra-regional presence in Afghanistan.

The Thorny Bagram Question

The Bagram issue may be far more complicated. Sources say that continuing with US military bases in Afghanistan is linked to the secret annexures of the 2020 Doha Accords that the first Trump administration signed with the Taliban, which, in turn, facilitated their return to Afghanistan. Muttaqi was a key interlocutor in these talks. However, now, the Taliban leadership is hamstrung by the opposition of their other members and loyalists to a renewed US presence in the country, as well as that of its regional partners, on whom it is now dependent for trade, humanitarian aid, and, most importantly, the legitimisation of their regime. Internal fissures in the Taliban also play a role, with divisions between the Quetta Shura and the Kandahar Shura, the pro-Pakistan and anti-Pakistan leaders within the Kandahar Shura, and so forth, starkly visible. Last night's bombing of Kabul by the Pakistan air force demonstrates just this.

A Break From The Past

What is important, nevertheless, is that India also joined in

this statement, expressing its intent to deal with the Taliban, and, more importantly, conveying its opposition to renewed US presence in Afghanistan. This heralds India's alignment with the regional process and approach to the Taliban. It also indicates a shift in its Afghan policy from the days of the Islamic Republic, when New Delhi had aligned its interests with those of the US and NATO. Of course, this alignment had been imperative back then - think of the Taliban's close links at the time with the Pakistani Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI), the brutal hijacking of Indian aircraft IC 814, or the indiscriminate targeting of Indian personnel and workers in Afghanistan, or the Taliban's sheltering of Osama bin Laden and his Al Qaeda. Now, however, in a startling demonstration that change is the only constant in this fickle world of ours, Muttaqi in his speech in Moscow has warned that terrorist organisations, such as Daesh, were setting up training and operational bases in neighbouring countries, which posed a growing regional threat.

Everything Has Changed

In fact, the singular risk of the emergence of Islamic State-Khorasan Province (ISIS-KP), which has wreaked death and devastation not just in Afghanistan but also in Iran and Russia - not to mention the dangers it poses to China and other Central Asian countries on the region - has been a major reason why countries from Russia to China, Iran to Uzbekistan have come around to recognising the Taliban as the de-facto rulers of Afghanistan. That's not all: the Taliban itself has been battling the very forces it had once aligned itself with. In Moscow, Muttaqi announced that Afghanistan faced threats from Daesh. In the four years it has been in power in Kabul, it has managed to take over much of the country, including the Panjshir Valley, which had been the stronghold of the opposition National Resistance. But no neighbouring country has been faced with any terror emanating from Afghanistan.

Pakistan Being Pakistan

The only country that has been at odds with it is Pakistan, but this is a result of the latter's own feckless policy of creating and nurturing terror groups, as well as its own indiscriminate bombing of Afghanistan's bordering provinces last December. This also proves that while the Taliban may have been created by Pakistan, it is no longer under the latter's control and is independent in its policies and activities, something that India welcomes. Almost all regional countries and powers have extended the Taliban recognition. Russia became the first country this year to recognise them as the legitimate government of Afghanistan. Taliban envoys are also present in many other countries like China and Kazakhstan, with whom this author had the opportunity to meet and interact. Other countries like Iran, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Kyrgyzstan, the UAE, Turkey, and, of course, Qatar and Pakistan, have been engaging with the Taliban for

even longer. Three main pillars undergird this recognition: regional security, as discussed above, trade and connectivity, and geopolitics.

A 'New' Taliban?

This Taliban is also not the Taliban of the past. Since taking over Afghanistan, they have made numerous overtures to the international community, including India, promising good neighbourly relations as well as security. The Taliban has on many occasions pledged against permitting Afghan territory to be used as launchpads for attacks on other states, something that has held true. It is also seeking investors and trade partners to develop its economy, without which its rule would be unstable. The freeze by the UN on some \$9 billion Afghan foreign reserves has added to its woes. Next, Afghanistan is a resource-rich country, whose geostrategic location at the heart of Asia makes it a natural roundabout connecting South and Central Asia. The trade routes through the Af-Pak region are the shortest ones for countries of both South and Central Asia for accessing each other's goods and markets, while Afghanistan reaps major transit dividends. In the same vein, India's Chabahar Port was intended for accessing not just Afghanistan but also, through it, the markets and resources of Central Asia.

India Is Playing It Safe

Finally, from a geopolitical point of view, neutralising any threats from Afghanistan is important for India as it faces renewed hostility from Pakistan and trade hostility from the US, which is now realigning itself with Islamabad. Moreover, there are fresh intelligence reports that the ISIS-KP is aligning itself with Pakistan-based terror groups, such as the Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT). For Russia, China and Iran, locked in conflict with the West, it is important to align geopolitically with Afghanistan to preempt it from again becoming a base for Western powers. India is now following a regional approach. It is protecting its strategic interests in the region while hedging against any threats. For, in spite of extending recognition to the Taliban and the latter walking the talk on preventing terror threats emanating from its territory, grey areas persist. One of them pertains to the internal rifts and rivalries that plague the organisation, and which can spill across its borders. Next are the Taliban's domestic policies towards sections of its own population - in particular women, girls, and minorities, which have brought it much global infamy. India has always followed a non-prescriptive policy regarding every country. Still, practising democracy and the rule of law at home while turning a blind eye to a medieval regime goes against India's own values. By building bridges with the Taliban and continuing its humanitarian aid and capacity-building for the Afghan people, India can, as it has always done, encourage the regime to rethink many of its domestic policies.

The Northeasterner: Indian, Until Someone Needs A Punchline

The worrying thing is that nobody is surprised by the racism any longer. A 27-year-old flight attendant recently posted about being subjected to racial slurs twice in one hour in New Delhi. The flight attendant is from the North East, from the Garo Hills. So, you can easily imagine the kinds of slurs she was subjected to by groups of unruly men. She is only the latest victim of sick and racist attitudes that bedevil the lives of people from her region. We all know that. And so, we are not as shocked as we should be. Ask anybody from the North East who has moved to the Indian mainland - especially North India - from their home states and you will hear similar stories. The women have it much worse. Because they are perceived as being weaker and less capable of fighting back, they bear the brunt of the abuse. Moreover, there is frequently a sexual component to the harassment. When they protest, they are subjected to the caricatures that North Indian men enjoy tossing around: women from Eastern India are 'fast' or have loose morals. After the flight attendant posted, Union Minister Kiren Rijiju came forward to say that this kind of harassment is unacceptable. Of course, he is right. But equally, we all know that his words will make no difference. The harassment of people from the North East will continue.

Emerging From History, Finally

This is particularly sad because of the background: the history of the North East's

emotional integration with the Union of India. Because so many people in the North East look different from people in other parts of India and have a distinct culture, it took them time to accept that they were as Indian as the rest of us. In both Nagaland and Mizoram, violent secessionist movements created instability, which was followed by their unnecessarily brutal suppression by the Central government. Mizoram remains perhaps the only state where the Indian Air Force was used against our own people. After the accords of the 1980s, peace began returning to the region. In this century, young people from the North East who have no personal experience of the conflicts their parents lived through have begun flowing into the rest of India in search of employment. They have no doubts about their Indian identities and no time for the secessionist sentiment of old. Their presence in India's big cities has helped normalise the relationship between mainstream India and its North Eastern states. But let's not kid ourselves: few of them have it easy. They are always reminded that they look different. And racist attitudes are everywhere. We should be relieved that they are so proudly Indian. Instead, we waste no opportunity to tell them that they are not like us.

The Thing About Prejudice...

I doubt if the men who harassed the flight attendant have any knowledge of the history of the region, just as I doubt if any of them would be able to find Meghalaya on a

map of India. That's the thing about prejudice. It always emerges out of ignorance. The danger with today's India is that the prejudices of the ignorant are spreading faster than we might have expected even a decade ago. There is no real difference between the people who harass North Easterners and those who believe that all Muslims are Pakistanis - or those who dismiss Christians as "rice-bag converts". All of these views emerge from the same source: a place of profound ignorance, where anybody who is even a little different from the majority must be treated as an object of contempt and derision.

Look Within, Perhaps?

It is not so different from the racism that Indians face in the West: just look at social media posts from the American right wing about Indians to see how contemptuous they are of Indians in the US. When we hear about this kind of racism we condemn it unequivocally and say that it reflects badly on America as a nation. Do we, I wonder, ever look inwards and see how racist we can be ourselves towards other Indians who look different; how contemptuously we treat those who follow different faiths? Perhaps it is time to do some introspection. There is nothing brave, nationalistic or even funny about harassing young girls from the North East who ventured out of their states believing that as Indians, they would be treated with respect and dignity by other Indians.

No Role': Centre Amid Row Over No Women Journalists At Taliban Press Meet In Delhi



New Delhi: India asserted that it had "no role to play" in the press conference addressed by Afghanistan's Foreign Minister Amir Khan Muttaqi in New Delhi - which sparked outrage as no women were 'allowed' in it. According to the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), the invites for the press meet went to select journalists from Afghanistan's Consul General in Mumbai who were stationed in Delhi for the Afghan minister's visit. The Afghan Embassy territory does not come under the jurisdiction of the Indian government, it pointed out. Women were missing at the press conference held on Friday at the Afghanistan Embassy. Some female journalists were also allegedly stopped from entering the meet. Shortly after the press meet, many journalists expressed their anger on social media and also pointed out that all women reporters had respected the dress code. The Taliban government in Afghanistan is known for the restrictions it imposes on women, especially barring them from working. Recently, it even banned books authored by women in Afghan universi-

ties and dropped 18 courses, including Gender and Development, Women's Sociology, Human Rights, Afghan Constitutional Law, and Globalisation and Development. Opposition leaders have also questioned the Centre over the alleged 'ban' on women at the event. Congress leader Rahul Gandhi hit out at Prime Minister Narendra Modi, saying, "When you allow the exclusion of women journalists from a public forum, you are telling every woman in India that you are too weak to stand up for them." "In our country, women have the right to equal participation in every space. Your silence in the face of such discrimination exposes the emptiness of your slogans on Nari Shakti," he added. Congress leader Priyanka Gandhi Vadra asked PM Modi to "clarify" his position on the incident. She asked how the "insult to some of India's most competent women was allowed in our country, a country whose women are its backbone and its pride". Former Union Minister P Chidambaram said the male journalists should have

walked out of the press meet when they found out women were not allowed at the event. "I am shocked that women journalists were excluded from the press conference addressed by Amir Khan Muttaqi of Afghanistan. In my personal view, the men journalists should have walked out when they found that their women colleagues were excluded (or not invited)," he

said. Muttaqi arrived in India on Thursday and held talks with External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar a day later. The meeting was seen as a big reset of ties, with India announcing that the technical mission in Kabul would be upgraded to an embassy - which was welcomed by the Afghanistan foreign minister. Jaishankar, during the announcement, said, "India is fully committed to the sovereignty, territorial integrity, and independence of Afghanistan. I am pleased to announce the upgrading of India's Technical Mission to the status of Embassy". He also spoke about a "deep interest" in Afghanistan's development and progress, pointing to many existing India-backed projects in that country, and committed to six more.

After Haryana Cop's Suicide, A Letter From Sonia Gandhi To His Wife

New Delhi: The alleged suicide by a senior Haryana Police official, Y Pura Kumar, continued to remain in political focus on Saturday, with Congress leader Sonia Gandhi offering condolences to the family and criticising the "prejudiced and biased attitude of those in power". In a letter addressed to the police official's wife, the chairperson of the Congress Parliamentary Party (CPP) said, "The news of the tragic death of your husband and senior IPS officer, Y Pura Kumar, in a tragic accident is both shocking and deeply saddening. My heartfelt condolences to you and your entire family in this time

of immense difficulty. The IPS officer's wife, Amneet P Kumar, a senior IAS officer in Haryana, has accused top officials of orchestrating a sustained campaign of caste-based harassment and mental torture against her husband. In her letter in Hindi, Sonia Gandhi said, "The passing of Y Pura Kumar will remind us that even today, the prejudiced and biased attitude of those in power deprives even the most senior officials of social justice. I and millions of our countrymen stand with you on this path to justice." "I pray to God to grant you patience, courage, and strength in this dif-

"I Didn't Say 'Give It To Me'" : Trump Says Nobel Peace Prize Winner Called Him



Washington: US President Donald Trump reacted to not winning the Nobel Peace Prize this year, claiming that he had extended assistance to the awardee, Venezuelan opposition leader Maria Corina Machado, on multiple occasions. He said the Venezuelan opposition leader called him and accepted the prize "in honour" of him. "The person who got the Nobel Prize called me today and said, 'I am accepting this in honour of you because you really deserved it'... I didn't say, 'Give it to me', though. I think she might have... I've been helping her along the way. They needed a lot of help in Venezuela during the disaster. I am happy because I saved millions of lives..." Trump said while speaking to reporters at the White House.

Machado was awarded the 2025 Nobel Peace Prize for promoting democratic rights for the people of Venezuela and for her struggle to achieve a just and peaceful transition from dictatorship to democracy. Trump, who had expected to receive the prize for his efforts to "end seven wars," also linked the

conflict in Ukraine to his broader peacemaking claims. "I said, 'Well, what about the seven others? I should get a Nobel Prize for each one'. So they said, 'but if you stop Russia and Ukraine, sir, you should be able to get the Nobel'. I said I stopped seven wars. That's one war, and that's a big one," he told the gathering, listing conflicts he said were halted under his leadership, including "Armenia, Azerbaijan, Kosovo and Serbia, Israel and Iran, Egypt and Ethiopia, Rwanda and the Congo." Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on Thursday also said that Trump deserves the Nobel Peace Prize. In a post on X, he wrote, "Give @realDonaldTrump the Nobel Peace Prize - he deserves it!" The Norwegian Nobel Committee described Maria Corina Machado as a "brave and committed champion of peace" and stated that the Prize has been awarded to a "woman who keeps the flame of democracy burning amid a growing darkness." "Democracy is a precondition for lasting peace. However, we live in a world where

democracy is in retreat, where more and more authoritarian regimes are challenging norms and resorting to violence. Machado has spent years working for the freedom of the Venezuelan people," the Committee said. "The Venezuelan regime's rigid hold on power and its repression of the population are not unique in the world. We see the same trends globally: rule of law abused by those in control, free media silenced, critics imprisoned, and societies pushed towards authoritarian rule and militarisation. In 2024, more elections were held than ever before, but fewer and fewer are free and fair," the Nobel Committee said. "Peace laureate Maria Corina Machado has shown that the tools of democracy are also the tools of peace. She embodies the hope of a different future, one where the fundamental rights of citizens are protected, and their voices are heard," it said. Machado meets all three criteria stated in Alfred Nobel's will for the selection of a Peace Prize laureate, the selection committee said.

Centre Releases Commemorative Coins, Stamps To Mark 100 Years Of RSS



New Delhi: Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said that the Government of India has released the special commemorative coins and stamps to mark the 100th anniversary of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS). She said that the commemoratives honour a century of the RSS's service, unity, and dedication. In a post on X, the Finance Minister's office stated, "To commemorate 100 years of the foundation of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh, the Government of India has released special

commemorative coins and stamps, honouring a century of service, unity and dedication." It added, "The special commemorative coins can be ordered online via Kolkata Mint at <https://indiagovtmint.in/hi/product-category/kolkata-mint>, while the commemorative stamps are available at Philately Bureaus across India." Prime Minister Narendra Modi released a specially designed commemorative postage stamp and coin on October 1, highlighting the RSS's contributions to the nation on the occasion of

the organisation's centenary celebrations. During the centenary celebrations, the Prime Minister praised the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) for its long-standing commitment to nation-building. He said the RSS has helped nurture and strengthen countless lives over the years. PM Modi said, "Just as human civilisations flourish along the banks of mighty rivers, similarly, hundreds of lives have blossomed and thrived along the banks and in the flow of the RSS. Since its formation, the Rashtriya

Swayamsevak Sangh has pursued a grand objective. That objective has been nation-building." PM Modi said the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), founded 100 years ago on Vijayadashami, was no coincidence, highlighting the festival's symbolism of the victory of good over evil, truth over falsehood, and light over darkness. "... Tomorrow is Vijayadashmi, a festival which symbolises the victory of good over evil, victory of justice over injustice, victory of truth over falsehoods, and victory of light over darkness... The establishment of RSS as an organisation on this great day 100 years ago was no coincidence," PM had said. Founded in 1925 in Nagpur, Maharashtra, by Dr. Keshav Baliram Hedgewar, the RSS was established as a volunteer-based organisation with the goal of fostering cultural awareness, discipline, service, and social responsibility among citizens.

Spurned By INDIA Bloc, AIMIM To Contest 100 Seats In Bihar Polls: A Owaisi

Patna: The AIMIM, which has been spurned by the INDIA bloc in Bihar, said it was planning to contest around 100 seats in the upcoming state assembly polls, five times the number it had fought in the last elections. The party, headed by Hyderabad MP Asaduddin Owaisi, claimed that it was aiming to build a "third alternative" in Bihar, where politics has, for years, been all about the BJP-led NDA and the Congress-RJD combine. Talking to PTI-Bhasha, the AIMIM's state president Akhtarul Iman said, "Our plan is to contest 100 seats. Both the NDA and the 'Mahagathbandhan' (the name by which the INDIA bloc is known in Bihar) will be forced to realise our presence." He also claimed that the 'Mahagathbandhan', which had in 2020 accused the AIMIM of splitting secular votes, can no longer do so. "It is now common knowledge that I wrote to (RJD president) Lalu Prasad

and Tejashwi Yadav, expressing willingness for a tie-up. But no response came. "Now, we must do all that we can to expand our footprints. Yes, we are also in talks with like-minded parties to explore the possibility of a third front. It will all be clear in a few days", said the AIMIM leader. The elections to the 243-member Bihar assembly will be held on November 6 and 11, and the counting of votes will take place on November 14. The AIMIM had contested the 2020 assembly polls in alliance with former Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Mayawati's BSP and the now-abolished Rashtriya Lok Samata Party, headed by ex-Union minister Upendra Kushwaha, who has since floated a new outfit, Rashtriya Lok Morcha, and joined the NDA. In the last assembly polls, the AIMIM had won five seats and was understood to have damaged the RJD, Congress, and the Left



combine in a number of other assembly segments. In 2022, however, four MLAs of the AIMIM joined the RJD. Iman, who had himself previously been in the RJD as well as the JD(U) headed by Chief Minister Nitish Kumar, is now the lone legislator of the AIMIM. According to political observers, the AIMIM sees a catchment area in Bihar, where Muslims are more than 17 per cent of the total population but have never got a proportionate representation in

the state legislature. Last month, Owaisi flew down to the Seemanchal region and toured, over a course of four days, districts like Kishanganj, Araria, Katihar and Purnea, which have a substantial population of the minority community. Although Owaisi has been charging the RJD, JD(U) and the Congress with apathy towards Muslims, the barrister-politician is, in turn, accused of being "a B team of the BJP", which cuts into "secular votes" to help the saffron party.

"We Had No Role": IT Minister On Akhilesh Yadav's Facebook Account Suspension



Lucknow: A day after Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav's Facebook account was suspended, the Centre clarified that it had "no role" in it. Union IT Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw said that the sus-

pension was the Mark Zuckerberg-owned company's action. "There was some post on his account due to which Facebook took action according to their policy. We had no role in it," Vaishnaw

said. Akhilesh Yadav's account on the social media site could not be accessed for hours on Friday evening. This prompted the Samajwadi Party to allege that it had been suspended at the behest of the BJP and accused the ruling party of "trying the suppress" the opposition voices. "The suspension of the Facebook account of the national president of the country's third-largest party, Akhilesh Yadav, is an attack on democracy. The BJP government has imposed an unde-

clared emergency in the country, where it wants to suppress every voice raised in opposition. However, the Samajwadi Party will continue to oppose the anti-people policies of the BJP," SP spokesperson Fakhru Hasan Chaand wrote in a post on X. Chaand, speaking, said the "BJP does not believe in democracy and is trying to weaken it". "We are looking at taking the legal route. We will not be deterred and will keep raising people's issues," he said.

"Can Do Politics Without You" : DK Shivakumar Loses Cool Over Media Report

Bengaluru: Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar has asserted he's "not in a hurry" for a promotion amid a renewed buzz of leadership change in Karnataka. Accusing the media of twisting his statement, he denied saying that the time has come for him to become the Chief Minister. "Some media houses are twisting my statement and are trying to create a controversy. I have never said that it is time for me to become the Chief Minister. I'll file a defamation case if anyone twists my statement and

broadcasts it," he told reporters. The controversy traces its roots to an initiative to engage with senior citizens and morning walkers that aimed at hearing out public grievances and taking feedback on Bengaluru's development. Shivakumar was in Lalbagh this morning to be a part of the initiative when an elderly man praised the hard work that he has put in over the years and expressed his desire to see him as the Chief Minister of the state. A video showed the man telling Shivakumar, "Sir, you



have worked hard for 40 years for the party's growth. It's only justified that you become the Chief Minister." He asked him if the "time was nearing". Reporting on the interac-

tion, some outlets quoted Shivakumar as saying that the time was near for him to become the Chief Minister. This angered the Congress leader, and he hit out at the media for misreporting.

PRABHAS PLANS ONE FOR SANKRANTHI, ONE FOR DASARA

Prabhas continues to be the busiest star in Indian cinema. He is the only top actor juggling multiple films on sets while also lining up new ones. For years, he has been hoping to release two films in the same year, but delays have constantly thwarted his plans. Now, that dream is finally set to become reality in 2026.

"The Raja Saab," which was originally meant to release this year, has been officially pushed to Sankranti 2026. The horror-comedy directed by Maruthi is nearing completion and is locked for January 9, 2026 as a festive treat. The latest buzz is that Mythri Movie Makers is eyeing a Dasara release for "Fauji," the massive historical action drama directed by Hanu Raghavapudi. If things go as planned, the film will hit theaters during the 2026 Dasara holiday season. That means Prabhas will finally achieve his long-pending goal of two big releases in a single year.



Sreeleela says Ravi Teja is her most comfortable co-star

Sreeleela has acted alongside several top Telugu stars including Mahesh Babu, Allu Arjun, Ravi Teja, Nithiin, Ram Pothineni, Nandamuri Balakrishna, and Vaishnav Tej. But when it comes to on-screen chemistry, she says no one matches Ravi Teja. Despite the huge age gap between them, their pairing worked wonders in the blockbuster "Dhamaka." The duo is now reuniting for "Mass Jathara," set to release on October 31. Speaking about Ravi Teja, she said, "I feel very comfortable working with Ravi Teja sir. He has great energy and keeps co-actors at ease." In Mass Jathara, Ravi Teja plays a railway police officer while Sreeleela appears as a teacher. Sreeleela will next be seen in a Hindi film alongside Kartik Aaryan, and in a Tamil film titled Parasakti.



Alia Bhatt emerges as front-runner for 'Kalki 2'



Deepika Padukone's 8-hour working day controversy has been in the spotlight recently. She opened up about the issue, saying filmmakers created a fuss over her request while happily accommodating male superstars. Deepika is no longer part of "Kalki 2," the sequel to the blockbuster "Kalki 2898 AD," directed by Nag Ashwin. In the first film, she played Sumati, a pregnant woman, a crucial role in the story. Despite this, Vyjayanthi Movies parted ways with her, citing unprofessional demands. The latest buzz in Bollywood now points to Alia Bhatt as the leading contender to replace Deepika in "Kalki 2." Alia had previously been in talks with Nag Ashwin for another project, but it seems the director has decided to bring her on board for the sequel. An official announcement is still awaited.

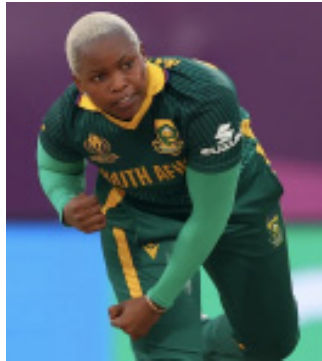
Two crucial months ahead for Allu Arjun



Allu Arjun has returned from his foreign trip and is ready to resume work on his upcoming film, currently called "AA22xA6." He recently travelled to Europe with his wife Sneha to celebrate her birthday. Now back in India, he is gearing up for an extended shooting schedule for Atlee's directorial. The team is currently filming in a specially erected set in Mumbai. Technicians from Hollywood and other international industries have joined the crew, and several foreign actors are also part of the ongoing shoot. This important schedule will continue for the next two months. Only after completing this stretch will the team have clarity on the release plans. Although Allu Arjun is reportedly aiming for a December 2026 release, it may get pushed to 2027. The actual timeline will be determined once this schedule is wrapped. The film is being produced by Sun Pictures. Deepika Padukone plays one of the female leads, while Mrunal Thakur and Janhvi Kapoor are being considered for the other roles. Music is by Sai Abhyankar.

South Africa Star Reprimanded For Breaching ICC Code Of Conduct During Women's World Cup Match vs India

South Africa spinner Nonkululeko Mlaba was reprimanded and handed one demerit point by the ICC for breaching its Level 1 Code of Conduct during the women's World Cup match against India in Visakhapatnam. South Africa defeated India by three wickets to hand Harmanpreet Kaur and Co. their first loss of the tournament on Thursday. "Mlaba was found to have breached Article 2.5 of the ICC Code of Conduct for Players and Player Support Personnel, which relates to 'using language, actions or gestures which disparage or which could provoke an aggressive reaction



from a batter upon his/her dismissal during an International Match", an ICC media release stated.

The incident occurred in the 17th over of India's innings, when Mlaba, after dismissing

Harleen Deol, waved goodbye to the batter, which could have provoked an aggressive response from the batter. "In addition to this, one demerit point has been added to Mlaba's disciplinary record, for whom it was the first offence in a 24-month period," the ICC said. Mlaba admitted the offence and accepted the sanction proposed by Trudy Anderson of the ICC International Panel of Match Referees, so there was no need for a formal hearing. The charges were levelled by on-field umpires Jacqueline Williams and Kim Cotton, third umpire Candace le Borde and fourth umpire Sue Redfern.

Unseeded Arthur Rinderknech Ousts Felix Auger-Aliassime To Reach Shanghai Masters Semifinals



France's Arthur Rinderknech joined his cousin in the semifinals of the Shanghai Masters as he claimed the scalp of an-

other seed in Canada's Felix Auger-Aliassime, 6-3, 6-4. Rinderknech, ranked 54th at the beginning of the tournament,

has had a dream run in Shanghai, including beating world number three Alexander Zverev. The 30-year-old's success has been matched by his cousin, Monaco's Valentin Vacherot, who booked his place in the last four on Thursday by eliminating Denmark's Holger Rune.

Rinderknech will face the winner of Friday's later match between Daniil Medvedev and Alex de Minaur in the semifinals. "Sometimes you like to win ugly, and today I thought it was a pretty good-looking win," he joked. "It was good conditions today."

Lionel Messi-Less Argentina Defeat Venezuela 1-0 In International Friendly In Miami

Miami: Argentina shrugged off the absence of Lionel Messi to ease to 1-0 victory over Venezuela in a friendly international in Miami. A well-worked 31st-minute goal from Giovanni Lo Celso secured the win for the reigning world champions in a match played before just 15,000 fans at the 65,000 capacity Hard Rock Stadium. Inter Miami star Messi looked on from the stands as the Albiceleste eased to victory without ever being seriously tested by Venezuela. Argentina forwards Julian Alvarez and Lautaro Martinez looked threatening throughout, while full-back Nahuel Molina also impressed. Alvarez and Martinez were involved in Argentina's



winner, combining deftly to set up Lo Celso, who who beat Venezuela goalkeeper Jose Contreras with a crisp left-footed shot. The match is the first of two friendlies Argentina are playing in Florida during the international break.

The world champions will play Puerto Rico in Fort Lauderdale next Tuesday in a game that was moved from Chicago's Soldier Field earlier this week amid an ongoing US government crackdown on immigrants.

Archery Premier League celebrates successful debut season, showcases global and Indian talent



Hyderabad: The Archery Premier League (APL), the world's first-ever professional archery league, celebrated the immense success of its debut season with a press conference and gathering at the Yamuna Sports Complex, Delhi. The event brought together league stakeholders, star archers, and dignitaries to acknowledge its unprecedented impact in elevating Indian archery's global profile. The event witnessed the participation of international and Indian archery greats including 2024 Olympic recurve world participant Katherine Bauer, Brady Ellison (Olympian and one of America's most decorated recurve archers), Ella Gibson (World No. 1, Britain), Mathias Fullerton (World No. 2, Denmark), India's decorated archers Deepika Kumari, Dhiraj Bommadevara (Olympic 2024 recurve participant), compound world champion Jyothi

Vennam, Asian Games medalist Abhishek Verma, and rising Indian star Chikitha Taniparthi together presenting a powerful blend of global and home-grown talent. The evening was also graced by notable personalities including actor and APL flagbearer Ram Charan, Dr Joris Treasurer Archery Association of India, Mr. Arjun Munda, President of the Archery Association of India (AAI), Mr. Anil Kamineni, Chairman of Archery Premier League and Mr. Virender Sachdeva, Secretary General Archery Association of India alongside top Indian and international archers. Global Star and APL brand ambassador Ram Charan shared, "APL is a vision turning into reality. We're all going to miss this energy once it's over tomorrow. It's truly special to see this incredible collaboration that unites Olympians and world-class archers on one platform."

The way APL has brought the sport to the forefront reminds me of how RRR was embraced by world cinema with heart, pride, and passion. I want to thank everyone on stage and the Archery Association of India for this vision. Hopefully, what we're witnessing here isn't just a dream, but the beginning of a new era for Indian archery. Mr. Arjun Munda, President, Archery Association of India, stated: "We've long believed that archery deserves a professional platform in India, and the APL has truly delivered on that vision. The format, fan engagement, and athlete participation have set a new benchmark for world archery. The archers who've now been introduced to global audiences will continue to rise, inspiring and connecting even more deeply with aspiring talent across the country. Mr. Anil Kamineni, Chairman, Archery Premier League, added: "We're thrilled with the response. The league has united legends and rising stars through world-class production and storytelling, creating strong momentum for the sport. No other league has achieved this — and our platform has also opened new doors for world archery. Watching our archers perform alongside some of the finest talents from around the globe was truly incredible."