



# THE MILEAGE



'Gill and Jaiswal will be future pillars of India': Ashwin P6

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Tripura BSF detains illegal immigrants from Dhaka P2

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## Maharashtra, Jharkhand election in November



**New Delhi:** The Election Commission of India Tuesday announced the Maharashtra assembly polls will take place on November 20, while Jharkhand polls will be held in two phases – November 13 and 20. Both the results will be announced on November 23. While the BJP hopes to make a return to power in Maharashtra, where it has an alliance with the Eknath Shinde-led Shiv Sena, the saffron party will look to make a dent in Jharkhand, too.

Following a successful return to power in Haryana, the BJP will be eyeing a similar run in Maharashtra, too, where the Opposition MVA has looked upbeat since winning 30 of the 48 Lok Sabha seats four

months ago. Sources have said that the BJP will contest in 105 seats, the Shiv Sena in 40, and the Nationalist Congress Party in 41. This leaves 102 of the 288 total seats still undecided. The term of the 288-seat Maharashtra Assembly will end on November 26, which means the poll process has to be completed before that.

Currently, in the Jharkhand Assembly's 81 seats, the INDIA bloc has 44 seats and the BJP has 30, while seven seats remain vacant. The term of the Jharkhand Assembly, with 81 seats, will end on January 5, 2025. With around 50 by-polls due, the EC could also announce the election dates for those.

## 2 IndiGo flights from Mumbai get bomb threats

**Mumbai:** Two IndiGo flights departing from Mumbai received bomb threats on Monday, prompting swift responses from authorities. According to an IndiGo spokesperson, flight 6E 1275, en route to Muscat, and flight 6E 56, headed for Jeddah, both received bomb threats.

Following established safety protocols, both aircraft were immediately moved to isolated bays. "As per protocol, the aircraft were taken to isolated bays, and following the standard operating procedure, mandatory security checks were promptly initiated," said the IndiGo spokesperson. Earlier this morning, an Air India flight from Mumbai to New York was diverted to Delhi Airport following a bomb threat. The flight took off from Mumbai's Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International Airport at around 2 am on Monday, and a bomb threat was received through a tweet immediately after.

## Modi Gov pushes for nuclear sub deterrence against China

**New Delhi:** With the Narendra Modi government giving approval for construction of two nuclear powered attack submarines this month, India is signaling sub-surface deterrence in favor of a third aircraft carrier as the latter is more vulnerable to Chinese long range missiles. The priority given to sub-surface deterrence is understandable with at least 10 Chinese warships, ballistic missile trackers, surveillance ships present in the Indian Ocean Region per month since 2023. Even now Chinese surveillance ship Xiang Yang Hong 3 is off the coast of Chennai in South Bay of Bengal with a ballistic missile tracker Yuan Wang 7 off the coast of Mauritius. An average of seven to eight PLA Navy warships and around three to four quasi military ships are seen present in the Indian Ocean Region and the number is slated to increase with PLA planning long range patrols for its carrier based task forces.

With increased Chinese presence in the IOR, the



national security planners chose nuclear submarines to deter and monitor PLA activity particularly in the south Indian Ocean. While India already has two nuclear ballistic missile submarines patrolling the Indo-Pacific, the third one INS Aridhaman will be commissioned next year. Barring first in the class, INS Arihant, which has only 750 kilometer range K-15 nuclear ballistic missiles, all the successors carry a mix of K-15 and 3500 km range K-4 nuclear ballistic missiles.

On the nuclear powered attack submarine front, the Indian Navy is slated to get a second Akula class nuclear attack submarine on lease from Russia latest by 2028. The Akula lease proj-

ect has been delayed due to the Russian war in Ukraine but the Indian Navy is putting pressure on Moscow to make the SSN available by late 2027.

The approval of two SSNs for the Indian Navy also shows a shift of Indian strategic priorities as Pakistan no longer is the principal adversary and the main military threat on land and sea comes from Communist China. The Chinese aggression in east Ladakh in May 2020 has forced Indian security planners to prepare for the sea deterrence options as majority of trade to East and North Asia goes off the coast of Lakshadweep and off the coast of Andaman and Nicobar Islands.

## BRIEF NEWS



### Delhi CM Atishi meets PM Modi

Delhi Chief Minister Atishi met Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday, in what was her first meeting with him since she took the oath of office. (PTI)

### Canada expels 6 Indian diplomats

Ottawa: Canada on Monday said it has expelled six Indian diplomats "in relation to a targeted campaign against Canadian citizens by agents linked to the Government of India". (PTI)

### India expels 6 Canadian diplomats in Tit-For-Tat

## PM Modi pitches for framing global dos, don'ts for ethical use of technology

**New Delhi:** Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday made a fervent pitch for framing of a global digital framework, with clear-cut dos and don'ts for ethical use of technology.

Speaking at the inauguration of the International Telecommunication Union - WTSA and India Mobile Congress here, he said just like the aviation sector, where the global community has framed a comprehensive framework, the digital world too needs rules and regulations.

Global institutions, he said, should come together to work out dos and don'ts. He went on to emphasise on ethical use of AI with security, dignity, equity being at the centre.

Talking of India's experience, he said after the



expeditious roll out, 5G telecom services are now available in most places across the country and work on 6G has already begun. Giving out statistics, the Prime Minister said India has in the last decade become an exporter of mobile phones from being an importer, and has laid an optic fibre network that is eight-time more than the distance between earth and the moon. India's digital

vision that was unveiled in 2014 rests on four pillars -- making devices cheaper, connectivity reaching all concerns, affordable data and digital-first, he said. "We have made digital connectivity an effective tool for last-mile delivery," he said. Modi said India is willing to share its experience of successful building of digital public infrastructure with the rest of the world.

(PTI)

## NCP leader Baba Siddique shot dead in Mumbai

**Mumbai:** NCP leader Baba Siddique shot at in Mumbai. Two people have been arrested in connection with the killing.

Siddique, a former local minister, was a senior figure in the politics of Maharashtra state, which is expected to hold legislative polls next month. In February he defected from Congress, India's main opposition party and joined the unrelated regional Nationalist Congress Party (NCP), which is part of the governing coalition of the BJP.

Maharashtra's deputy chief minister Ajit Pawar, from the same party as Siddique, said he was shocked by the "cowardl attack". Siddique was known for lavish parties and for close ties to Bollywood superstars. The



shooting happened with high security in place due to a major Hindu festival in the city. Opposition parties have criticised the government, saying there was a major lapse in security. The state government has promised a thorough inquiry. Though two suspects have been taken into custody, the motive is not clear. Police are searching for a third suspect. Some Indian media report the suspects have said they were from a gang run by notorious criminal Lawrence Bishnoi.



## Assam Police's STF seize drugs worth Rs 4.5 crore



**Guwahati:** The Special Task Force (STF) of Assam Police early Monday morning apprehended an individual and seized a consignment of narcotic drugs worth nearly Rs 4.5 crore from his possession.

Based on a tip-off regarding transportation of narcotics from Nagaland to Guwahati in a truck, a team of STF intercepted the ve-

hicle, bearing registration number AS01-RC-2336, at Jorabat in Kamrup Metropolitan district of Assam. During a search of the truck, the sleuths of STF recovered 45 plastic soap cases containing 537.2 grams of heroin. The STF soon apprehended the driver of the truck, who allegedly is a notorious drugs supplier.

## Hundreds protest against proposed 12,500 MW hydropower project in Arunachal Pradesh

**Pasighat:** The Siang Indigenous Farmers Forum (SIFF) recently staged a massive protest against the proposed 12,500 mega-watt Siang Upper Multipurpose Project in Arunachal Pradesh.

Hundreds of residents in Arunachal Pradesh's Upper Siang district took part in the demonstration against the proposed 12,500-megawatt hydro-power project.

The protest was organized by the Siang Indigenous Farmers Forum (SIFF) in Geku village.

Demonstrators in the Upper Siang district vehemently opposed the preliminary assessment conducted in the area for the proposed Siang Upper Multipurpose Project



(SUMP). The villagers, who gathered at the spot, raised slogans against the National Hydro Electric Power Corporation (NHPC) and Chief Minister Pema Khandu. The NHPC has proposed three sites in the Upper Siang and Siang districts for the construction of the dam. One site is between Parong and Deg-

ing villages, one at Ugen near Riga village and another between Dite-Dime and Geku, officials said. Notably, the NHPC has been conducting surveys at the proposed sites to prepare a feasibility report for the project. SIFF general secretary Donggo Libang said the Adi community were opposing the

project as it would be a threat to their land, environment and way of life.

In September, the Upper Siang district administration served notices to several government employees and 'gaon burahs' or village heads for joining the protests.

Several anti-dam groups also organized a protest rally at Dite Dime in Siang district on August 31.

Locals are opposing the project, claiming that the dam would displace the indigenous people and cause damage to the environment. The government, on the other hand, has touted the proposed hydro-power project as a crucial initiative to bolster the region's infrastructure and economic development.

## Army sets up computer lab & Upskilling centre in Manipur's Senapati district

**Imphal:** The Indian Army has established a modern computer lab and a Skill Development Centre in Manipur's Senapati district.

The computer lab was set up at PK Shedu Revival Foundation Children's Home (Orphanage) in Kathiku Karong village and the Skill Development Centre was established at Taphou Pudunamiei village.

The projects, which aim at community empowerment, have been facilitated under "Operation Sadbhavana".

The computer lab at Kathiku Karong was established to aid in the educational development of children from orphanages.

The inauguration ceremony was attended by Army



officers and village chiefs from Karong and nearby areas, who praised the Army's ongoing efforts to improve the lives of local communities. The facility is equipped with seven computers, a printer, a projector, and other necessary accessories. In a bid to empower local women, including widows and Veer Naris, the fully furnished Skill Development

Centre was set up by the Army in Taphou Pudunamiei. The centre is equipped with 15 sewing machines, three embroidery machines, 25 chairs, two tables, two almirahs, and whiteboards. The Skill Development Centre will offer courses in teaching, stitching, and embroidery, empowering women to become self-sufficient and earn a living.

## Nagaland's Sümi Hoho organization urges immediate implementation of RIIN

**Kohima:** The Sümi Hoho (SH), an influential tribal organization in Nagaland, has called upon the state government to expedite the implementation of the Register of Indigenous Inhabitants of Nagaland (RIIN).

In a statement issued on Saturday, SH president Dr Vihuto Asumi emphasized the importance of RIIN in safeguarding the identity,



rights, and privileges of indigenous Nagas. Asumi highlighted the crucial role of RIIN in preserving the unique cultural heritage of Nagaland, especially in the

face of increasing external influences and migration.

He warned that without a clear and comprehensive register, the indigenous identity of Nagas could be diluted, leading to potential conflicts and social unrest. The SH president stressed the need for a uniform cut-off date of December 1, 1963, across all regions of Nagaland, including Dimapur.

## Tripura BSF detains illegal immigrants from Dhaka

Mileage Bureau

**Agartala:** The Border Security Force (BSF) in Tripura has detained nine Bangladeshi nationals from different areas of the state during a series of operations aimed at curbing illegal border crossings.

On Saturday, a BSF official revealed that four Bangladeshi nationals, including three men and one woman, were apprehended near the Border Out Post (BOP) Shyampara in Sabroom, South Tripura, while attempting to cross the border fence. All four are residents of Chattogram District, Bangladesh.

In a separate operation near BOP Anandpur, Sonamura, Sepahijala District, another Bangladeshi national from Dhaka was caught with 3,600 Taka and Rs. 3,000 in Indian currency. Additionally, two illegal immigrants from Dhaka and Cumilla were detained in Dharmanagar and Sabroom with Rs. 5,540 in Indian currency.

## Chief Minister Manik Saha allocates land for hospital



Mileage Bureau

**Agartala:** Tripura Chief Minister Manik Saha announced on Monday that the state government has allocated land for the establishment of a private super speciality hospital in Khayerpur, West Tripura. The hospital will be set up by the Shija Hospitals and Research Institute (SHRI), an Imphal-based healthcare entity. Speaking at a government programme, Saha said, "We have arranged land for SHRI to set up a super speciality hospital. They have assured an investment of 700 crore to enhance healthcare services in the state."

In September, SHRI expressed interest in expanding its healthcare ser-

vices to Tripura. The state government views this as a key step in improving modern medical facilities for its citizens.

During the launch of the STAR-NCD project at Karl Landsteiner Auditorium in Agartala, Saha reiterated the government's focus on healthcare. "We are committed to providing better and modern health services to the people.

The state health department is working on various projects to expand and develop these services," he said.

The STAR-NCD initiative, part of ICMR's National Health Research, focuses on improving diagnosis and treatment for non-communicable diseases by strengthening ambulatory care services.



## Vi Business partners with Infinity Labs to launch indigenous SD-WAN Solution

**Guwahati/Shillong:** Vi Business, the enterprise division of telecom leader Vi, has announced a strategic partnership with Infinity Labs Ltd to launch a Make-in-India Software-Defined Wide Area Network (SD-WAN) solution. This initiative is part of Vi's Hybrid SD-WAN portfolio, which integrates advanced AI-based security features, aiming to bolster the cybersecurity defenses of Indian enterprises amid rising cyber threats.

The new SD-WAN solution is designed to enhance digital resilience through features such as Hybrid Network, Integrated Security, Intelligent Routing, Monitoring, and Analytics. Rochak Kapur, EVP of Vi Business, emphasized the importance of this collaboration, stating, "This partnership will empower Indian businesses with secure connectivity, essential for thriving in a digital-first environment."

With its growing IT sector,

stands to benefit significantly from this development. As local enterprises increasingly adopt digital technologies, the introduction of an indigenously developed SD-WAN solution will enhance their operational efficiency and security posture. Rakesh Goyal, CEO & MD of Infinity Labs, expressed enthusiasm for the partnership, highlighting its potential to meet the evolving needs of Indian enterprises with locally developed solutions.

## India expels Canadian diplomats in retaliation for Nijjar accusations

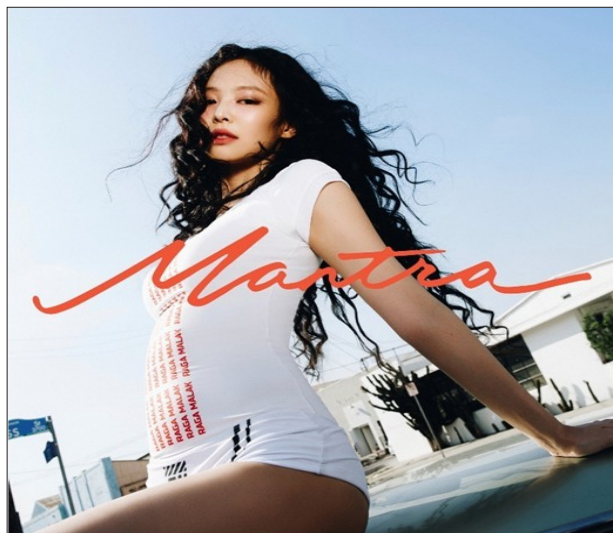
**Guwahati:** India has expelled six Canadian diplomats, including Acting High Commissioner Stewart Ross Wheeler, in response to Canada's allegations linking Indian diplomats to the June 2023 assassination of Khalistan supporter Hardeep Singh Nijjar. The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) has set a deadline for their departure by 11:59 p.m. on October 19.

India's decision comes after a series of unfounded accusations from the Canadian government, which the Indian government has strongly rejected. The MEA stated that the Trudeau administration's actions compromise the safety of Indian diplomats amid rising extremism and violence. "We no longer trust the current Canadian government's commitment to ensuring their safety," the ministry emphasized.

This incident has intensified scrutiny on Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's government, as analysts suggest that the accusations may serve as a strategy to rally support from the politically influential Sikh community ahead of the federal elections. The recent downturn in Trudeau's popularity, highlighted by a mere 26% approval rating in an Ipsos poll, reflects a broader discontent with rising crime and healthcare issues in Canada.

In Guwahati, market analysts note that the diplomatic row could impact trade relations between India and Canada, particularly affecting sectors reliant on bilateral exchanges. As local businesses prepare for potential shifts in trade policies, stakeholders remain vigilant about the ramifications on economic ties.

## JENNIE launches empowering ew single "Mantra" amidst global excitement



**Aizawl:** Global superstar JENNIE has officially launched her highly anticipated new single and music video, "Mantra," through Columbia Records/ODD-ATELIER. The release has generated significant buzz, marking a bold new chapter

for the multi-talented artist. Directed by Tanu Muino, known for her work with Dua Lipa and Harry Styles, the music video showcases JENNIE's vision of female empowerment and self-expression.

In her own words, JENNIE

describes "Mantra" as the ideal anthem to kick off her new era. "The song was inspired by my time recording in Los Angeles and hopefully fans feel that energy," she stated. "It's energetic and empowering, encouraging women to love themselves for who they are." The track features a hard-hitting bass line and a catchy refrain that emphasizes joy and self-acceptance, resonating with her fans.

In Aizawl, "Mantra" is expected to make waves as it reaches local music enthusiasts who are increasingly embracing global pop trends. JENNIE's powerful message of confidence and positivity aligns perfectly with the aspirations of the youth in Aizawl, making this single not just a musical release but a cultural phenomenon.

## MSDE collaborates with Meta to enhance Skill India Mission through AI and VR initiatives

**Guwahati:** The Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship (MSDE) has announced a strategic partnership with Meta, unveiling two groundbreaking initiatives aimed at revolutionizing India's skill development landscape. The collaboration will see the launch of an AI Assistant for the Skill India Mission and the establishment of five Centers of Excellence (CoEs) in Virtual Reality (VR) and Mixed Reality (MR).

Under this initiative, an AI-powered chatbot, leveraging Meta's open-source Llama model, will enhance user experiences on the Skill India Digital (SID) Portal. This innovative tool aims to streamline information access, boost learning outcomes, and provide 24/7 support for students. Additionally, the five CoEs, located at National Skill Training Institutes in Hyderabad, Bengaluru, Jodhpur,



Chennai, and Kanpur, will equip learners with cutting-edge VR technology, fostering immersive and engaging learning environments.

Commenting on the partnership, Shri Jayant Chaudhary, Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Skill Development & Entrepreneurship, stated, "Integrating AI and VR into our ecosystem is pivotal for democratizing access to advanced technologies, enabling personalized learning pathways for the youth." This part-

nership presents significant opportunities for local educators and entrepreneurs. The introduction of advanced training methods and resources can enhance employability among the region's youth, potentially attracting investments and fostering a skilled workforce ready to meet the demands of the digital economy. With the Skill India Digital Portal already a cornerstone of skilling efforts, these initiatives promise to transform the educational landscape across the country.

## SBI General Insurance strengthens rural healthcare in Meghalaya with comprehensive eye care initiative



**Guwahati/Shillong:** SBI General Insurance, a leading player in the general insurance sector, has launched a pivotal initiative to enhance eye care accessibility in rural Meghalaya. The program includes the donation of a Patient Transport Bus and the organization of 28 community eye check-up camps, benefiting approximately 2,000 patients. This initiative addresses significant healthcare barriers, particularly for women in remote areas who often

avoid seeking medical assistance due to transportation challenges.

Collaborating with Mission for Vision and the Society for Promotion of Eye Care and Sight (SPECS), SBI General Insurance aims to facilitate patient access to SPECS' eye hospital in Shillong. Mr. Rathin Lahiri, Head of Brand Marketing & CSR at SBI General Insurance, emphasized the importance of equitable healthcare access, stating, "Access to healthcare is

a fundamental right, not a privilege."

This initiative is poised to stimulate local economic activity. Increased patient footfall in the city is expected to benefit local healthcare providers, pharmacies, and businesses, contributing to the overall growth of the region's economy. By bridging the gap in healthcare access, SBI General Insurance is not only improving health outcomes but also fostering economic resilience in Meghalaya.



## The Government of Nagaland partners with Tata AIA to provide life insurance to its people

- The 'Chief Minister's Universal Life Insurance Scheme' will cover residents of Nagaland in the age group of 18 – 60 years.
- Tata AIA will provide life insurance coverage of INR 2 lakh to the earning residents of Nagaland.
- The scheme will benefit breadwinners, including those employed in unorganized sectors and/ or part of low-income groups.

**Mumbai :** Tata AIA Life Insurance (Tata AIA), one of India's leading life insurers, has been selected by the Government of Nagaland to implement the Chief Minister's Universal Life Insurance Scheme (CMULIS). Under this scheme, the primary earning member of the family will be provided with a life insurance cover of INR 2 lakh.

This scheme aims to give families the financial support they need in the unfortunate event of the demise of the breadwinner. It is specifically aimed at helping the vulnerable sections of society, such as those working in unorganized sectors or are

part of low-income groups.

As part of the scheme, any one family member in the age group 18–60 years can be designated as the primary earning member or breadwinner. Government employees in the same age group will automatically be considered as the primary breadwinner for their family. The State Government will cover the cost of the insurance premium. Commenting on this landmark occasion, Shri Neiphiu Rio, Hon'ble Chief Minister, Nagaland said, "I am extremely happy to partner with Tata AIA Life Insurance and launch this scheme for the working



population of Nagaland. Through this program, we are making Life Insurance accessible to Naga people. We hope to enroll all earning population in Nagaland under this scheme, thereby ensuring the financial security of several families." Mr. Jeelani Basha, President & Chief Distribution Officer, Tata AIA Life Insurance, said, "We are honored to be part of the Chief Minister's Universal Life Insurance Scheme- Nagaland. This landmark initiative by the Government will ensure that the people of Nagaland especially those

in vulnerable segments or employed in unorganized sectors, benefit from the safety net of life insurance. This inclusive scheme will ensure financial security and peace of mind for the families of Nagaland". Mr. Jeelani Basha, President & Chief Distribution Officer, Tata AIA Life Insurance, said, "Our partnership with the Government of Nagaland will enable us to provide life insurance coverage to nearly 3.5 lakh people in the State. We are committed to working together with the Government in this initiative."

## Toyota launches Limited Edition Urban Cruiser Taisor to celebrate festive season

**Bangalore:** Toyota Kirloskar Motor (TKM) has unveiled the Limited Edition Urban Cruiser Taisor, a special offering crafted to enhance the festive spirit. Designed with a focus on premium aesthetics and functionality, this exclusive edition comes with a complimentary Toyota Genuine Accessories (TGA) package valued at ₹20,160, available until 31st October 2024 across all Toyota dealerships. This Limited Edition boasts a range of striking features, including front and rear under spoilers in granite grey



and red, premium door sill guards, chrome garnishes for headlamps and front grille, body side molding, door visors, all-weather 3D mats, and a welcome

door lamp. Each accessory will be installed by certified Toyota technicians to ensure top-notch quality. Mr. Sabari Manohar, Vice President of Sales-Ser-

vice-Used Car Business, emphasized the brand's commitment to celebrating customer milestones. The Limited Edition Taisor is likely to attract attention from local consumers who value both style and performance in their vehicles. With its impressive fuel efficiency of 21.5 km/l and robust design, the Taisor is well-positioned to resonate with buyers seeking reliability and elegance during the festive season. Customers can easily book the vehicle online or at their nearest dealership to enjoy the added accessories package.

## Samsung India workers end month-long strike

**Chennai:** Samsung Electronics workers in southern India have ended a month-long strike over pay and working conditions after "welfare measures" were agreed, the state industry minister said Tuesday.

Samsung "announced several welfare measures in the interest of the workers", Tamil Nadu state min-

ister T.R.B Rajaa said in a statement. "The strike at the Samsung factory has come to an end, and all the workers are resuming work." A spokesperson for Samsung India welcomed the decision to end the work stoppage, saying: "We will not take action against workers who merely participated in the illegal

strike." "We are committed to work closely with our workers to make the Chennai factory a great place to work." "India is the world's most populous country and its growing middle class is an important growth market for Samsung, a company whose output accounts for nearly a quarter of South Korea's GDP. The consum-

er tech giant had promised the industrial action, which began on September 9, would not impact consumers. Hundreds of Samsung employees took part in the strike at a plant outside the southern city of Chennai that employs around 1,800 workers to build televisions, refrigerators and other consumer goods.

## Nifty below 25,000, Sensex down 319 pts

**Mumbai:** The benchmark indices ended lower for the second consecutive session on October 16, with the Nifty below 25,000 amid selling across sectors barring realty.

At close, the Sensex was down 318.76 points or 0.39 percent at 81,501.36, and the Nifty was down 86 points or 0.34 percent at 24,971.30.

Amid weak global markets, the Indian indices opened in the red with Nifty below 25,000, while recovery in the initial hours erased all the losses. However, selling in auto and Information Technology names dragged the Nifty near to 24,900, intraday.

Trent, M&M, Hero Moto-Corp, Infosys and Adani Ports were among the top losers on the Nifty, while

gainers included HDFC Life, Dr Reddy's Labs, Grasim Industries, Bharti Airtel and HDFC Bank. Among sectors, oil & gas, realty, telecom indices ended in the green, while auto, IT, pharma and media down 0.5-1 percent. The BSE midcap ended flat and smallcap index rose 0.3 percent. Nearly 260 stocks touched their 52-high on the BSE, including, Aditya Birla Sun Life AMC, Aditya Birla Real Estate, Amber Enterprises, Apar Industries, CAMS, Dixon Technologies, Five-Star Business, HCL Technologies, HDFC AMC, Indigo Paints, MCX India, Motilal Oswal, Nippon Life India Asset Management, Oberoi Realty, Page Industries, Siemens, UTI AMC, Whirlpool among others.

## Rupee trades in narrow range against US dollar



**Mumbai:** The rupee witnessed range-bound trade and depreciated 3 paise to 84.07 against the U.S. dollar in initial deals on Wednesday (October 16, 2024), weighed down by significant foreign fund outflows and the strength of the American currency in the overseas market.

Forex traders said the rupee is likely to trade in a narrow range during the day as strong dollar and a muted tone in the domestic equities weighed on the local unit, while weak crude oil prices and any intervention by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) may also support the local currency at lower levels.

At the interbank foreign exchange, the rupee opened at 84.03 against the greenback. In the initial trade, it touched 84.07, registering a fall of 3 paise over its previous close.

On Tuesday (October 15, 2024), the rupee witnessed a range-bound trade and appreciated 1 paise to 84.04 against the U.S. dollar.

Meanwhile, the dollar index, which gauges the greenback's strength against a basket of six currencies, was trading 0.06% lower at 103.19.

According to traders, the rupee remains under intense pressure, mainly due to Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) offloading approximately \$8 billion in October.

"The sell-off stems from profit-booking by FIIs, as Indian equities, after months of inflows totalling \$25 billion, are now seen as overvalued. Adding to the pressure is the strengthening dollar index, which has surged to a two-month high of 103.25," CR Forex Advisors MD Amit Pabari said.



## How India's nationwide drug campaign can lower rates of parasitic disease

India has made significant progress in its fight against lymphatic filariasis (LF), a neglected tropical disease caused by parasitic worms that can lead to severe conditions like elephantiasis.

Recently, the National Centre for Vector Borne Diseases Control (NCVB-DC) conducted a Mass Drug Administration (MDA) campaign targeting 63 districts across six states to tackle this debilitating disease.

The aim of the campaign was to exceed the 82.5% coverage rate achieved in 2023.

Lymphatic filariasis (LF) is caused by parasitic worms spread through mosquito bites, leading to disabling conditions like elephantiasis and hydrocele, which trap people in cycles of poverty and social stigma.

With 740 million individuals at risk in India, eliminating LF through comprehensive strategies like Mass Drug Administration



is crucial for protecting public health.

During the campaign, drugs were administered door-to-door, free of cost, with both double-drug and triple-drug regimens. However, children under two, pregnant women, and seriously ill individuals were excluded from the treatment.

According to Dr Amresh Kumar, Dy. Director, NTDs & Malaria, PATH, India's MDA campaign targeted millions of people at risk of LF, delivering drugs to prevent the spread of the disease.

A combination of drugs, including Ivermectin, Di-

ethylcarbamazine, and Albendazole, was used to combat the parasitic worms causing the disease.

Ensuring full coverage during the MDA campaign is challenging, especially when people are absent or hesitant to take the medication. Misconceptions and logistical hurdles like absenteeism can limit drug compliance, posing a risk to disease control efforts.

India's frontline health workers play a crucial role in ensuring that people take their medications, as per Dr Kumar.

Through follow-up vis-

its and Directly Observed Therapy (DOT), they work to overcome resistance and educate communities on the importance of drug adherence and mosquito control. "Surveillance after MDA is essential to monitor infection levels and prevent the disease's resurgence. Data collection through the Transmission Assessment Survey (TAS) helps determine if infection rates are low enough to discontinue MDA in affected regions," said Dr Kumar.

Digital tools like the "SukRtya" app in Bihar and the CS Pro app in Uttar Pradesh have enhanced real-time monitoring and improved decision-making during MDA campaigns, allowing for timely interventions. These efforts mark a major step toward eliminating LF in India, but the fight is far from over. Continued surveillance and community engagement remain vital in eradicating the disease for good.

## 30 minutes of exercise daily boosts wellness



PRIYANKA BHOWMICK

Establishing healthy habits is crucial for a long and fulfilling life. Experts have shared some easy health tips that can be easily incorporated into our daily routines.

**■ Eat Nutritious Foods:** Plan a balanced diet that includes vegetables, fruits, and adequate protein. Incorporate foods of various colors, as each color provides different nutrients.

**■ Exercise Regularly:** Aim for at least 30 minutes of exercise daily. This helps boost your metabolism, reduce stress, and lower the risk of heart disease.

**■ Stay Hydrated:** Try to drink at least 8 glasses of water each day. Staying

hydrated is essential for overall health.

**■ Get Enough Sleep:** Ensure you get 7-9 hours of sleep each night. Quality sleep is vital for your brain and body recovery.

**■ Reduce Stress with Technology:** Practice meditation or yoga, which can help maintain mental peace. **Avoid Smoking and Alcohol:** These are harmful to your health, so try to minimize or eliminate them.

**■ Schedule Regular Health Check-ups:** Stay informed about your health status through regular check-ups and seek medical advice when necessary. Experts emphasize, "Living healthily is a long-term process. It's important to develop the right habits."

## The Cutting-Edge Hearing Aids That You May Already Own

In your pocket or purse, you may be toting around small devices that, with the help of new software authorized by the Food and Drug Administration, could soon become inexpensive hearing aids. Millions of people already own them.

They're Apple's AirPods Pro 2, those white plastic knobs protruding from so many ears in malls and workplaces, on buses and sidewalks. The users may not be among the 30 million American adults reporting some degree of hearing loss; they're probably just listening to music or podcasts, or talking on their phones.

Within weeks, however, consumers will be able to use those AirPods Pro 2 earbuds to bolster their hearing. Last month, Apple software called Hearing Aid and Hearing Test received a green light from the F.D.A., a first for the regulatory agency.

With the upcoming soft-



ware and a compatible iPhone or iPad, users will be able to test their hearing. For those with mild-to-moderate hearing loss, the AirPods Pro 2 will adjust sounds in their environments and on their devices.

Users will be able to customize their AirPods for volume, tone and balance. All that should allow them to hear better — at least for the devices' roughly five to six hours of battery life.

Apple plans to release the free software later this fall for iPhones running iOS 18 or later and iPads running iPadOS 18 or later, a spokesperson said. A set of AirPods Pro 2 costs \$249 from Apple, and less at big box stores or through online retailers.

This is what reformers had in mind when Congress directed the F.D.A. in 2017 to develop regulations for quality over-the-counter hearing aids. The idea was to change the existing gatekeeper model, in which people could acquire pre-

scription aids only through licensed professionals for several thousand dollars a pair. Instead, over-the-counter hearing aids that could benefit a majority of the people with hearing loss would be available for a few hundred dollars at any CVS or Walmart, no audiologist or prescription required.

The F.D.A. had three years to develop those regulations; it took five. Finally, two years ago, the hearing health world braced for a transformation — one that still hasn't quite happened.

"We have no evidence that O.T.C. hearing aids have dramatically changed the hearing market," said Nicholas Reed, an audiologist and epidemiologist at NYU Langone Health.

"Two years in, I would have thought we'd see a nice bump by now" in the number of people owning hearing aids, he added.

But the most recent National Health and Aging Trends study shows that al-

though about two-thirds of Americans in their 70s and older have some degree of hearing loss, fewer than 30 percent have hearing aids, a fairly consistent finding. Among Black, Hispanic and low-income seniors, ownership rates are even lower.

"Hearing loss is so gradual, a lot of people don't realize they have it," said Andy Sabin, a hearing scientist and scientific consultant to HearAdvisor, which tests and evaluates hearing aids.

In fact, a regular survey by the Hearing Industries Association shows that it takes years for people who recognize they have hearing difficulties to buy a hearing aid, if they do at all. But perhaps because of recent educational campaigns, that delay in seeking treatment has shrunk, from six years in the 2019 survey to four years in 2022. And now the entrance of Apple, a high-profile consumer company, into the O.T.C. market might hasten such changes. (NYT)



## 'Gill and Jaiswal will be future post for India': Ashwin

**New Delhi:** India's ace spinner Ravichandran Ashwin believes that Shubman Gill and Yashasvi Jaiswal will emerge as the future pillars in the overseas tours next month.

After taking a 1-0 lead, India fended off rain and a wet outfield to sweep the Test series against Bangladesh in Kanpur despite losing more than two days of play. Throughout the series, it was youngsters who were willing to fight side by side with the mainstays who laid the foundation of India's series victory. Shubman Gill and Yashasvi Jaiswal continue to mark themselves as players to fill the shoes when stalwarts Virat Kohli and Rohit Sharma have their last dance in India colours. Ashwin acknowledged the budding talents that have risen through the ranks to build a name for themselves. He feels that the duo will be the pillars for India in the highly anticipated BGT series that could arguably decide the fate of the World Test Championship final.

## France and Germany beat fierce rivals in Nations League



**Brussels:** France and Germany had stand-in forwards to thank for wins over fierce rivals in the Nations League on Monday.

With Kylian Mbappé again absent, Randal Kolo Muani started up front for France and scored in each half in a 2-1 victory away to neighbour Belgium.

The Belgians must be sick of the sight of Kolo Muani, who also netted in a 2-0 win in the reverse fixture in Lyon last month. It was also the Paris Saint-Germain striker's shot that deflected into the net when France beat Belgium 1-0 in the last 16 at the European Championship during the summer.

On his debut for Germany, Jamie Leweling had a

second-minute strike ruled out after a video review but had more luck with a rasping drive in the 64th to seal a 1-0 triumph over the Netherlands in Munich. Leweling, a forward for Stuttgart, was one of four players making their first starts for Germany on a night fans paid tribute to four players — Toni Kroos, Manuel Neuer, Thomas Muller and Ilkay Gundogan — who recently retired from national-team duty. Neuer, Muller and Gundogan were at Allianz Arena to receive the acclaim of Germany fans.

There were also victories for Italy, which beat Israel 4-1, and Hungary, a 2-0 winner in Bosnia, in the top-tier League A.

## India eliminated from Women's T20 World Cup after NZ beat Pakistan

**Dubai:** India were eliminated from the Women's T20 World Cup after New Zealand scripted a commanding 54-run victory over Pakistan in Dubai on Monday to reach the semi-finals for the first time since the 2016 edition. India's only chance to make the semifinals was depended on a Pakistan win with an inferior Net Run-rate compared to theirs. Pakistan were very much in the game after restricting New Zealand to a meagre 110 for six in 20 overs.

However, Pakistan's batting crumbled badly as they were shot out for 56 in just 11.4 overs as White Ferns entered the semifinals with three wins from four games in Group A.

Australia topped the group with eight points while New Zealand came second with six points. The loss to New Zealand in their tournament opener effectively cost India a



place in the last four.

Spinner Amelia Kerr took three wickets but it was seamers Lea Tahuu (1/8) and Eden Carson (2/7) who opened the floodgates. Pakistan were supposed to reach the target in less than 12 overs to qualify but they ended up being all out before that. Earlier, Pakistan bowlers gave a good account of themselves restricting New Zealand to a modest total. While openers Suzie Bates (28) and Georgia Plimmer (17) added 41 runs for the open-

ing stand and just when it seemed that the duo has created a solid foundation, the Pakistani spinners suddenly applied the choke on the opposition. Listen to the latest songs, only on JioSaavn.com

The two spinners -- off-break bowler Omaira Sohail (1/14 in 4 overs) and left-arm orthodox Nashra Sandhu (3/18 in 4 overs) -- were brilliant through the middle overs with 21 dot balls and four wickets between them for only 29 runs.

## New Zealand pacer Ben Sears ruled out of India tour due to knee injury

**Bengaluru:** New Zealand pacer Ben Sears has been ruled out of the Test series against India due to a knee injury, a statement from the Blackcaps revealed on October 15, Tuesday. Sears has been replaced by Jacob Duffy in the squad for the 3-match series, which will begin on October 16 in Bengaluru.

Sears had complained about pain in his left knee while training during the Sri Lanka series and had undergone Tests in New Zealand last week. His trip to India was delayed as the scans revealed a tear in the meniscus. While New Zealand cricket sought out medical advice and was hoping the pacer could make the cut for the squad, the doctors advised New Zealand cricket to rule him out of the series.

Duffy, who has been called in as Sears' replacement, will be leaving for India on Tuesday. The 30-year-old is



yet to play a Test match for New Zealand, having represented them in 6 ODIs and 14 T20Is so far. Duffy has 299 first-class wickets to his name.

New Zealand coach Gary Stead said that they were disappointed to see Sears miss out but feel excited with the prospect of having Duffy as an option. Stead admitted that Duffy has the chance to make his Test debut during the course of the series.

"We're obviously disap-

pointed for Ben who made a strong start to his Test career during the home summer and offers a genuine pace option," said Stead.

"It remains to be seen how long we'll be without him for, but we're hopeful his road to a full recovery will be a short one." "It's an exciting opportunity for Jacob who has been around Test the squad before. With three Tests ahead of us, he has every chance of making his Test debut." the star batter is recovering from an injury.

## Rohit Sharma gives a Huge update on Shami

**Mumbai:** Indian captain Rohit Sharma gave a massive update about injured pacer Mohammed Shami's availability for the Border-Gavaskar Trophy. India desperately wants Shami to be fit for the series, however, the captain is unsure if the pacer would get fit in time for the Test series. Rohit said Shami had swelling in his knees that pegged him back a little. Rohit said the team does not want an unfit Shami for the Test series. For the unversed, Shami has been out of action since the ODI World Cup 2023 where he suffered an ankle injury. He underwent surgery and was on track for an India comeback but suffered another injury. He is currently in rehabilitation at the NCA. "To be honest, it is difficult to make a call on him for the Australia series. He had a setback and had swelling in his knees. That put him back a little bit and had to start again. He's at the NCA with doctors and physios. Said Sharma

## BCCI scraps Impact Player rule for domestic T20 after retaining it for IPL



**New Delhi:** The BCCI has decided to scrap the contentious Impact Player rule for the upcoming Syed Mushtaq Ali T20 Trophy.

The Impact Player concept was introduced in SMAT couple of years ago and was later extended to the Indian Premier League.

Kindly note that the BCCI has decided to do away with the provision of the 'Impact Player' for the ongoing season, the BCCI informed the state associations on Monday.

The BCCI's decision to do away with the Impact Player comes shortly after it decided to retain the rule in the IPL till 2027. With

record 250 plus total seen in the IPL this year, the Impact Player experiment was questioned by many including India skipper Rohit Sharma. However, most of the IPL franchises were in favour of the rule. Rohit had felt that it was holding back the development of all-rounders. "I generally feel that it is going to hold back (development of all-rounders) because eventually cricket is played by 11 players, not 12 players. I'm not a big fan of impact player. You are taking out so much from the game just to make it little entertainment for the people around," Rohit said on the Club Prairie Podcast.