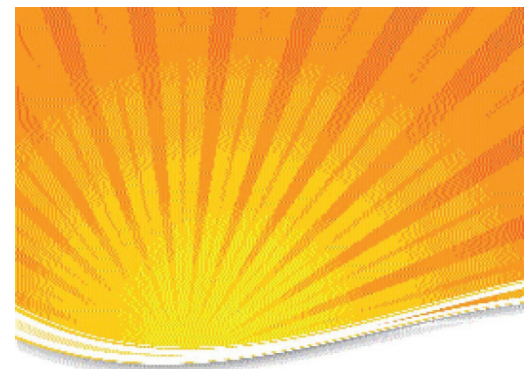


UniVerse: Your true legacy as a doer

How will posterity see my legacy? This question has recently been raised by no less a person than the retired Chief Justice of India. This reminded me of a story recorded by the Hindi scholar Hazari Prasad Dwivedi in an essay titled 'Bhishma Ko Maaf Nahin Kiya Gaya' (Bhishma Was Not Forgiven). Once, during their regular evening walk on the premises of Kala Bhavan, Rabindranath Tagore had posed an interesting question to him: "Why was Bhishma Pitamah, the grand old warrior, patriarch of the eminent royal clan of Kurus, not anointed as an avatara after his death, but two Yadava brothers, Krishna and Balrama, from a much humbler rural background, were?" The poet said he thought it was so because such questions are decided historically by how posterity views your true legacy as a doer. Hazari Prasadji mulled over it and agreed. After the Mahabharata war, he writes, Balrama, the great farmer warrior, earned the right to be revered as an avatara because he refused to take sides in what he foresaw as a terrible fratricidal war and chose instead to go into the forest for his remaining days.

When the Pandavas and Balrama's younger brother Krishna, the great statesman, asked him to take up arms, he had the guts to stand up and tell the warring royals that whatever the dharma, he shall not participate in a war for throne that will ruin mankind and make the land sterile.

Krishna participated in the war only because of his loyalty to Arjuna, his friend, as his unarmed charioteer and refused to shed blood. When Gandhari cursed him for the death of her sons later, he told her bluntly: "You can curse me all you want, but O Kshatriya queen, it was your own upbringing that led to this." In India, people have always preferred an outspoken karma yogi to an orator. One who throws caution to the winds, swings into action to protect the greater common good and restore sanity of the nation. So what if it meant losing public face and risking ridicule? A later karma yogi, Mahatma Gandhi, whose grand



legacy makes even his political critics bow to him, showed the same presence of mind and daring after the Chauri Chaura violence and stopped the Satyagraha in its tracks. A peaceful movement, he felt, could not be allowed to degenerate into violence. There was criticism from hot heads, but he did not relent. It is not hard to make out the public perception of a man to whom the nation has turned again and again to sort out its moral dilemmas. Bhishma was one such figure of authority — celibate, morally irreproachable and a great warrior. But he let clansmen like the Kauravas misbehave with his granddaughter-in-law, Draupadi, in public. Even when the three abducted princesses — Amba, Ambika and Ambalika — appealed to him that he marry them instead of his impotent brother, he kept quoting his great vow of celibacy and examples and precedents from scriptures and history, but did nothing. When divisions in Bhishma's psyche surfaced again and again at crucial points, resulting in the denial of justice to men, women and clans, his claim to join the pantheon of great avatars shrank in public perception.

Bhishma's case proves that history remembers great heroes less by their recorded speeches and more by prompt, though risky, acts that cause personal loss of reputation, but go on to ensure justice and relief to millions of sufferers.

Hidden migration of tiny songbirds from Siberian Tundra

Chandigarh is uniquely positioned to welcome migratory birds with its mix of diverse habitats

The mention of bird migration immediately conjures up images of ducks and geese forming the V-shaped skeins across the autumn sky, along with a host of other waterfowls and waders. These large, conspicuous birds are eagerly awaited, heralding the changing season. However, a parallel migration goes largely unnoticed. At the same time as these large waterfowls traverse the sky, tiny non-descript songbirds make an equally arduous journey of more than 6,000 km from their breeding grounds in the Siberian Tundra to the northern plains of India. Both groups use the same Central Asian Flyway, yet their experiences are starkly different. While ducks and geese fly at high altitudes to avoid predators and other vagaries of nature, small songbirds fly at low altitudes, usually under 2,000 m above the sea level. Their route winds through countries like China, Kazakhstan, Mongolia, Kyrgyzstan and the Himalayan foothills, using the valleys and forests to enter India, and spread out throughout the northern plains. Most migrating birds lose their vibrant breeding plumage before embarking on this annual journey. They arrive in their wintering grounds bearing a dull visage. While helping them to blend into their surroundings, their earthy plumage also renders them easy to overlook. The perseverance of these little heroes often goes unheralded. Chandigarh is uniquely positioned to welcome these birds with its mix of diverse habitats — forests, riverine tracts, grasslands, wetlands, agricultural fields, gardens and parks. The Taiga Flycatcher, the Bluethroat and the Rubythroat are striking examples of these inconspicuous yet fascinating migrants. They are 'robin-like' in appearance — small in size, with cocked-up tails and wings drooping down the sides. The Taiga Flycatcher prefers dense vegetation. It adjusts its migratory route to stay close to forested areas and natural cover flying up to 300 km daily. This small bird finds refuge in the lush gardens and parks of Chandigarh. Its predominantly brown plumage is punctuated by the bright orange patch on its throat, almost like a human thumbprint. With bright inquisitive eyes, this bird spends much of its time perched on the lower branches of a tree, surveying its surroundings. Its stationary, almost meditative, appearance can galvanise into sudden action at the sight of a moth or some innocent bug fluttering nearby. It dives to the ground to grab its prey, revealing the white edges to its tail before returning to its perch. Unlike the Taiga Flycatcher, the Bluethroat is a bird of the marshes and wetlands, skulking in reeds and bushes encircling water bodies. During its breeding season in the Tundra,



this bird builds its nest on the ground in shrubby areas. The Bluethroat is a shy bird, which is often out of sight while it forages in the thick reeds. In birding parlance, it is deemed a skulker! The Bluethroat is well known for its skill in mimicry. In Norway, this talent has earned it the sobriquet of 'Nightingale of the North'. It is capable of mimicking more than 50 different species of birds! At first glance, the Bluethroat appears as another 'little brown bird', but a closer look reveals a spectacular blue patch at its throat, adorned with a rust-coloured spot in the centre. During courtship display, it puffs out the throat feathers, revealing the beautifully hypnotic circle. This vibrant patch, coupled with the bird's special ability at mimicry, is enough to attract mates. The Bluethroat also communicates through frequent tail flicks, revealing orange tail patches that serve as alarm signals. Common names of birds are usually descriptive and the Siberian Rubythroat is no exception. The ruby-red teardrop at its throat glows against its otherwise greyish-brown plumage. This small secretive bird is often hard to spot, preferring to hide in dense shrubs and vegetation, its presence

revealed only when it flashes the red patch. During the breeding season, the melodious song and fluttering dance display of the Rubythroat is spectacular. Its ability to mimic other birds shows a degree of vocal versatility. However, in its wintering habitat around Chandigarh, it is silent and its occasional appearance in the thickets adds a touch of mystery. While these God's little creatures brighten up our winter landscape, we are oblivious to the incredible dangers and hardships the migratory birds face. Crossing vast landscapes and navigating diverse ecosystems pose significant challenges. En route, the migrating birds rely on stopover habitats to rest and recuperate. These sites are critical in providing food and shelter to enable the birds to continue their journeys. Climate change, habitat loss and violent human conflict along the Central Asian Flyway can disrupt migration patterns. Conservation of stopover habitats, thus, becomes a global responsibility to ensure the survival of these delicate, yet tenacious, travellers. — The writer is president of the Chandigarh Bird Club.

World chess champ

Gukesh Dommaraju, take a bow

IT'S been Gukesh Dommaraju's year. In September, he led the Indian team to a historic gold medal at the biennial Chess Olympiad. Now, the 18-year-old prodigy from Chennai has fulfilled a childhood dream by becoming the youngest world champion in chess history. He is the first Indian to hold the title after Vishwanathan Anand. Twists and turns marked the 14 games in Singapore. Gukesh and China's Ding Liren, the reigning champ, were tied with two wins each before the final game. Just when a draw seemed imminent, setting the stage for high-speed games to break the tie, Ding committed a dramatic blunder. He was gracious in defeat, marking the end of the three-week match that kept fans riveted across the globe. Former world champions Magnus Carlsen and Vladimir Kramnik may have criticised the quality of play, but in the larger scheme of things, it's the



game of chess that won. Gukesh's victory signals a generational shift in the chess ecosystem.

world. Yet, the new champion does not harbour any illusions. He remains outside the world's top three by rating, and is not even the highest-rated Indian. That spot goes to 21-year-old Arjun Erigaisi. In his post-match press conference, Gukesh acknowledged that 'becoming the world champion doesn't mean that I'm the best player in the world, there's obviously Magnus.' The 34-year-old Norwegian, who is regarded as possibly the greatest chess player of all time, said Gukesh has shown the potential to establish himself as the 'number two player in the world, who knows, maybe the number one'.

The surging popularity of chess as a spectator sport could ignite a new wave of enthusiasm. Gukesh's achievement also cements India's growing influence in the chess world. What's needed is more government and private support to nurture a robust

10 yrs of a unique classical library

Murty Classical Library is unique initiative with a 100-year plan to publish the English translations of some of the greatest literary works of India from the past two millennia

Entrepreneur and computer scientist Rohan Narayana Murty's ambitious plans for the Murty Classical Library are more or less on course. The Library 'opened' in 2010 and started publishing, after five years, the English translations of some of the greatest literary works of India from the past two millennia. It's probably the only publishing house with a 100-year plan to publish 500 manuscripts of authors ranging from Kalidasa to Mir Taqi Mir. To mark the first 10 years, the Library recently released 'Ten Indian Classics', an anthology featuring ghazals and devotional poems, journeys of nirvana by women Buddhist followers, words of Sikh Gurus and poets, and epic Ramayana's hero Rama's battle for justice and honour. This English edition captures almost 2,500 years of literary tradition, translated by experts and richly introduced by poet and art critic Ranjit Hoskote.

The Murty Library books are available worldwide in bookstores and on conventional e-commerce platforms.

Rohan founded the Library by making a generous contribution (around \$5.2 million, according to some media reports) to Harvard University, the institution from where he earned his PhD. With close to a century's experience in publishing bilingual editions (both for Greek and Latin classics), Harvard appeared the perfect choice. For the firm believers in India's glorious past, the Murty Library may appear as another visionary idea from a family (father NR Narayana Murthy and mother Sudha Murthy) with a remarkable success record. For many modernists though, the Library is a brave attempt to reboot India's humanities education programme, long hijacked by the IIT brigade.

Subjects like philosophy, literature and history are often viewed in India as "future-less", compared to the STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) fields. Humanities degrees are less pursued though they are more likely to stir students towards critical thinking and ethical reasoning. Rohan's dream is simple. He imagines students in schools and colleges to read

classical Indian poets like Kalidas and Tulsidas, besides consuming Shakespeare or Homer. "I dream of a day when students across India will voluntarily read these texts," he says. The Library, he believes, has done a commendable job, having already published close to 50 volumes translated from more than 10 classical languages like Hindi, Kannada, Marathi, Pali, Persian, Sanskrit, Urdu and Sindhi. The author list includes Guru Nanak, Bulle Shah, Kalidas, Surdas and Nandi Timmana. For the first time, it is pointed out, a wide international audience is reading these texts in English. "Several universities around the world have started incorporating these texts into their classrooms," he says. For Murty Library, the Harvard University Press, with a team of distinguished scholars, editors and translators, has published English translations of great Indian classics that include 'The Sea of Separation: A Translation from the Ramayana of Tulsidas' by 16th century poet Tulsidas; 'Theft of a Tree, A Tale by the Court Poet of the Vijaynagara Empire' by Telugu poet Timmana; 'The Kannada Mahabharata V.1' by 15th century Kannada poet Kumaravyasa, and 'God at Play V.1', the oldest extant Marathi work by 13th century biographer Mhaibhat.

Rohan finds it difficult to pick his favourites from the impressive selection, but says he often revisits Raghavanka's 'The Life of Harishchandra' (Kannada) and Shah Abdul Latif's 'Risalo' (Sindhi).

Sharmila Sen, Editorial Director and Director of Special Initiatives, Harvard University Press, says, "To publish original books that instruct and delight in equal measure is never easy." Book trade in North America, Europe and Asia varies, and only complicates the task for them. She claims that compared to Greek and Latin translations, their publications are far more complex, varied, richer and more alive to literary tradition.

Indeed, the task has been demanding as Murty Library does not reproduce previously published translations



and every work is originally commissioned. It produces the original Indic text in the relevant script on the verso (the left-hand side of the books). It has also faced some criticism in the past, mostly from the Indian scientist community and strong believers of India's glorious past,

regarding the choice of certain editors (like distinguished Sanskrit scholar Sheldon Pollock) of the Library. Rohan has treated the attacks merely as "noise". According to a media report, he likened the attacks to people throwing empty shells in a "peanut gallery". Defending Pollock, he declared that nationality, gender, race, creed or colour will not decide who the editors shall be. Rohan says he has envisioned a "living library" that continuously interacts with its readers and is not shackled by the ivory towers of an academic project. He claims he does not micro-manage the project and "it relies little, if at all, on any single individual".

He has planned for the centenary of Murty Library. Those who will celebrate it may not have been born yet, but both Rohan and Team Murty believe they are doing their bit in "elevating Indian classics as first-class members of world literature".

The extraordinary Champa

We store memory in multiple layers. Some may become a burden, some are uplifting, and some are just there — parked in a corner to be pried out when the moment comes. Many are connected with the people one has known and who have impacted one's life. Recently, writing about Nek Chand, Amitabh Pande, a former civil servant, mentioned another extraordinary person of Chandigarh of that era, Champa Mangat Rai. This triggered yet another memory and the close friendship that my parents, especially my father, had with the Mangat Rais. Some distance came after they separated and when Mangat Rai married the writer Nayantara Sahgal. The close ties with Champa Mangat Rai remained till her death on March 7, 1999, at the age of 79. When we heard of her passing, my

father and I drove down from Shimla to Chandigarh and were just in time for the burial. All the way down and on most of the way up, he hardly spoke. When he did, all he said was: "The world has lost a very fine person." While this is something unclear, the connection with Champa Mangat Rai, if any — and certainly tenuous — may have gone back to Lahore where my grandfather was teaching both at the university and at Kinnaird College. Her father, Satya Prakash Singha, an Indian Christian, was the university's Registrar and went on to become the Speaker of the British-Indian Punjab Assembly; he stayed on in Pakistan after Partition. Champa's future husband, Edward Nirmal Mangat Rai, 'Bunchi' to his friends.

Vishal Mega Mart IPO allotment: Online guide to check status. See latest GMP

NEW DELHI The allotment of shares for the Vishal Mega Mart IPO is expected to be finalised on Monday, December 16. Investors who applied for the Rs 8,000 corer IPO will receive alerts, messages, or emails regarding the allotment, or any revocations of their IPO mandate, by Tuesday, December 17. Vishal Mega Mart IPO was open for bidding from December 11 to December 13, and saw a strong response from investors. The company offered shares in the price band of Rs 74-78 per share, with a minimum lot size of 190 shares. The IPO received an overwhelming response, with the issue being subscribed 27.28 times overall. Qualified Institutional Buyers (QIBs) portion was subscribed 80.75 times. The Non-Institutional Investors (NIIs) category was subscribed 14.24 times. Retail Investors quota was booked 2.31 times during the three-day bidding period.

In total, investors applied for 20,64,25,17,700 equity shares against the 75,67,56,757 equity shares on offer, fetching bids worth Rs 1.60 lakh crore. Out of this, Rs 1.36 lakh crore came from the QIB category alone.

ALLOTMENT STATUS: HOW TO CHECK
Investors who applied for the Vishal Mega Mart IPO can check their allotment status on the following platforms:

Sensex, Nifty open lower as IT stocks drag; bearish trends continue

NEW DELHI Benchmark stock market indices opened lower on Monday, dragged by a decline in IT stocks after having witnessed a very volatile session on Friday when it recovered after having lost nearly 1,200 points. The S&P BSE Sensex was down 279.70 points to 81,853.42, while the NSE Nifty50 lost 74 points to 24,694.30 as of 9:35 AM.

Dr. V K Vijayakumar, Chief Investment Strategist, Geojit Financial Services said that the excessive volatility witnessed on Friday is a reflection of the sharp differences in perceptions about the near-term market trend. "The huge positions in F&O segments are causing such heightened volatility in the market. The 500 point move in the nifty from the day's trough to the peak indicates massive short covering," he added.

While FIIs turning buyers in December, so far, after the relentless selling in the previous two months is positive, investors should not assume that the FIIs will continue to buy. Strong dollar and high bond yields in the US are headwinds for capital flows. Slowdown in GDP growth and stagnant earnings growth are hurdles in the path of the bull. A rally will sustain only if the data regarding growth and earnings show recovery. This will take some time.

Wadia illegally sold 8.69% Tata Sons stake'

MUMBAI A public interest litigation has alleged that Bombay Dyeing group chairman Nusli Wadia has misappropriated 8.69% stake that FE Dinshaw Ltd owned in Tata Sons since the 1920s, and transferred the shares to the Shapoorji Pallonji group in the 1970s soon after he was made the administrator of the Indian trust, which owned the stake in FE Dinshaw Ltd.

Though the petition could not calculate the actual value of the share transaction, given that the Tata group is worth over \$150 billion today, the value involved could be around \$14 billion or R1.2 lakh crore. Dinshaw Trust, which was established by Edulji Dinshaw, the son of the senior Dinshaw, willed all its assets to two New York-based American charities.

The Indian assets of the trust included the 8.69% holding it had in Tata Sons, and over 1,000 acres of land around Malad in the northwestern suburb of the megapolis. Wadia claimed ownership over all these assets following an agreement on 1 August 2003. The petition also alleges that the agreement is



fraudulent since Bachoobai Woronzow, one of the three children of FE Dinshaw, a leading Parsi industrialist of the times, was fatally ill in a New York hospital on that day. She died on 12 August 2003. The trust was registered in New York because after the senior Dinshaw passed away in 1940, the two of his three surviving children—the son Edulji, and the daughter Bahoo—settled down in New York in the mid-1940s. Dinshaw Trust was founded by Edulji, and held a majority stake in FE Dinshaw Ltd, the company founded by his father.

The 8.69% shares of Tata Sons were held by FE Dinshaw Ltd, the company which acquired equity in Tata Sons following non-repayment of a R2 crore loan to the Tatas in the 1920s. The petition further contends that it is for the Serious Fraud Investigation Office (SFIO) to ascertain how the stake of Dinshaw Trust in FE Dinshaw was passed on to the Mistrys by Wadia and for what consideration. FE Dinshaw Ltd was renamed as Cyrus Investment in 2008, and is now the main investment arm of the Shapoorji Pallonji group, which began as a construction contractor with most of the orders coming in from FE Dinshaw.

The petition further alleges that Wadia has forged three key documents to transfer the assets of the Dinshaw Trust to himself. The Economic Offenses Wing of the Mumbai Police, which is investigating the matter under the supervision of the Bombay High Court, has found prima facie evidence of forgery.

Why your money needs your help in 2025

Do not forget that your investments must generate a return that beats inflation and leaves some money on the table over the years. You will miss out on a stock market rally if your money is largely locked in properties that you do not use.

NEW DELHI The idea that you can earn more than you can spend and create an investible surplus every month is riveting. Not many people can achieve that. People generally live beyond their means, spending more than investing. But it is not just about spending alone. You realise that you are struggling to meet commitments made to your future. In most situations, you make commitments to some

investments that may be overdone. These are situations when you are overinvested or overinsured. There is a strong affinity towards physical assets in India. Two-thirds of the Indian household wealth is invested in property and gold. Many of you think of these as investments. There is a sense of comfort that physical assets give to you. Many invest in multiple properties to generate a rental income. Considering an average rental yield of less than 1-2%, it is not an investment but just a saving. Do not forget that your investments must generate a return that beats inflation and leaves some money on the table over the years. You will miss out on a stock market rally if your money is largely locked in properties that you do not use. The same applies to the thought about over investment in gold that happens primarily through jewellery. While gold as an asset class has done well, it cannot be a dominant part of your assets. You must allocate your money in such a way that you have covered adequate bases in the market. The other problem is with individuals not keeping track of their monthly systematic investment plans. Over diversification is unnecessary if the average returns on the Nifty 50 are 13% over 30 years. Assuming the inflation rate stays at 6% over the



long-term, a return of 13% can take care of your future needs. You must engage a financial advisor in 2025 if you have not done it yet. Your asset allocation is likely to help you manage your finances better. There is a lot of zeal in the way insurance companies sell life and general insurance to you. Since a lot of your data is floating across credit bureaus and banks, you would be inundated with calls from tele-marketers to secure your family's future or income. You cannot blame companies for reaching out to you. They are merely looking to grow their business. The onus is on you to make the right choices. A lot of you take up multiple life insurance policies, unit-linked

insurance plans or health insurance policies to protect against eventualities. You must evaluate your options carefully. Insurance is a protection against life situations. However, it is not an investment. The primary objective of an insurance company is to keep money to pay you when you or your family need it the most. You pay a premium for that promise and not really to meet your financial goals or beat inflation. Choose a good life insurance plan and a health insurance plan that takes care of most illnesses or emergency care for you and your family. For investments, plans offered by insurance companies are not the only solution. You can invest in index funds or exchange-traded funds, diversified equity funds or own quality company shares. Your financial advisor can help you make sense of all options. The New Year calls on you to make a resolution. You must invest in knowledge for your own financial security. It is not easy to understand all the investment and insurance products if you are not familiar with finance. You need to try to focus on things that are relevant to you. 'Over investment' and 'over insurance' are not exactly classical personal finance terms. They are behavioural issues.

Why Narayana Murthy believes Indians should work 70 hours a week

NEW DELHI Infosys co-founder Narayana Murthy defended his stance on the 70-hour workweek, highlighting that young people must recognise the importance of hard work to help India achieve the top global position.

At the Indian Chamber of Commerce's centenary celebration in Kolkata, Narayana Murthy urged the youth to work hard to elevate India's global standing. He said, "At Infosys, I said we will go to the best and compare ourselves with the best global companies. Once we compare ourselves with the best global companies, I can tell you we Indians have a lot to do. We have to set our aspirations high because 800 million Indians get free ration. That means 800 million Indians are in poverty. If we are not in a position to work hard, then who will work hard?" Earlier, the Infosys co-founder had shared his opinion about the much debated work-life balance argument and said he does not agree with the idea of "work-life balance." He also expressed disappointment over India's move from a six-day workweek to a five-day one in 1986, a change he says he never agreed with while talking at the CNBC Global



Leadership Summit in November, last month. He mentioned that comparing India with the best global companies reveals a long journey ahead. He believes hard work is essential to addressing the country's challenges and making it a global leader.

According to Narayana Murthy, combating poverty requires generating employment that results in disposable income. He said, "I realised the only way a country can fight poverty is by creating jobs that lead to disposable incomes."

Moreover, he underscored the critical role of entrepreneurs in creating jobs and wealth, which ultimately combat poverty. "The government has absolutely no role in entrepreneurship. I also realised entrepreneurs build a nation as they create jobs, they create wealth for

Narayana Murthy has stood by his stance on work-life balance and his recent comments come amid continued debate over his previous suggestion that young Indians should commit to a 70-hour work week.

their investors and they pay taxes," he added. He criticised complacency, urging individuals to dedicate themselves to realising their potential. Additionally, Narayana Murthy believes fighting poverty requires generating disposable incomes through employment, which only entrepreneurship can provide. He called on Indians to avoid mediocrity and embrace hard work to create a prosperous and globally respected nation. His comments come amid continued debate over his previous suggestion that millennials in India should aim for a 70-hour workweek. This suggestion had sparked mixed reactions, with some agreeing on the need for a stronger work ethic while others criticised the idea as excessive.

We see an explosion of MSME credit this decade: UGRO MD

NEW DELHI Shachindra Nath, Vice Chairman and MD, UGRO Capital, a tech-enabled small business loan platform, in an interaction with Dipak Mondal, says that the decade will see an explosion of MSME credit.

Why do you think South India is such a big market for NBFCs – be it SME finance companies, microfinance or gold loan companies?

Small businesses are an outcome of three things -- one, prospering business, and second is stable governments, which are progressive. The third is the lending culture, the repayment behaviour. So, the repayment behaviour of, say, in Tamil Nadu or Telangana or Karnataka is much better than say a Punjab, UP or MP. Tamil Nadu is a bipolar political state, so it shifts between two parties. But the underlying economy actually continues to grow at a fast pace, irrespective of political dispensation. As for repayment behaviour, people take their loan fairly seriously in the South.

I keep saying that India is not one country purely from a lending perspective – South is a different market from the north. But that is now changing.

There is this perception that the government at the Centre is more focused on creating large corporations instead of focusing on small businesses? MSMEs are the largest employer of the country, after agriculture. And for India to continue growing, or even for the governments to stay in power, they have to provide employment. And that's why MSMEs are important for governments. If you look from 2014 to 2024, every year there have been some or other changes in policy to support MSME. During COVID, the government came up with schemes like an emergency credit line and partial credit guarantee -- all the schemes would support MSME. It was largely small businesses which received support from the government during Covid. There is a massive focus on MSMEs.

What are the factors helping expansion of credit to MSMEs? Credit to MSME is possible because of formalization. Before demonetisation, MSMEs generated large cash income without any proper formal record of the revenue. With the demonetisation, there has been a psychological shift. People now fear that having too much of income in cash is risky. Then when GST got implemented, it started forcing people to get their turnover side of the data into the formal system. The third factor (helping MSME credit) is democratisation of Indian banking with digital payments. On one side, small businesses are getting formalized, on the other side, lenders have the ability to look at this kind of data, and do credit. And that's why we keep saying that you will see an explosion of credit to MSME in this decade.

How much should you be investing

NEW DELHI When it comes to saving and investing, people are obsessed with the returns they're going to get on their money! Two factors that determine how much money we end up with are - the amount we put into our savings and investments in the first place and the amount of time we have it there.

For instance, let's suppose that you need to cobble together R10 crore over 40 years and you reckon on getting an investment return of 12% per year. If you pop the numbers into excel, you'll see that you have to save a paltry looking Rs 7,960 per month.

If you start 10 years later, at the same 12% per year investment return, you'll now have to save a difficult R28,000

per month. What if we did fancy to get higher investment return, which would surely get us to our R10 crore over 20 years? Well at R88,000 this is not easy. What about getting to R10 crore in 20 years with a smaller amount and a higher rate of return?

Well, of course anything is possible, but to make up for the missed time, you'd have to almost double your investment returns. In fact, you'd need to get a return of 21% per year to turn R28,000 into R10 crore in 20 years!

Have a play on excel calculators with your own numbers. With so little to play with, it's no accident that Equities are considered better long-term investments than other asset classes.

So, plug everything in.....and repeat the

process regularly.

Let's go back to the original example where we were expecting a return of 12% per annum and aiming to cobble together R10 crore over 40 years.

To do that we set about saving R7,960 p.m. Now let's fast-forward to five years from the start and look at two possible scenarios - one good and one not so good. Scenario 1 - Things go fine! In the first scenario, we've got a great return of 22% per year. That gives us a pot of investments worth R900,000. Plugging the numbers in, we find we need to save R7,000 per month to get us there! That's a fall of R960 per month! Scenario 2 - Things go, not so well! Here, we've got a return of 10% per year.

Withdrawal of EPF from ATM may take time

Labour ministry sources have said that this is just an idea floated by the labour minister, and it needs a lot of deliberations between the labour ministry, EPFO and the banking regulator before it could be implemented.

NEW DELHI The plan for allowing withdrawal of employee provident fund (EPF) claims through ATM has a long way to go. Labour ministry sources have said that this is just an idea floated by the labour minister, and it needs a lot of deliberations between the labour ministry, EPFO and the banking regulator before it could be implemented.

The idea is to have a hassle-free claim settlement process as high rejection rates are becoming a headache for individuals, who keep their life savings with EPFO (Employee Provident Fund

Organisations) for use after retirements or during emergency fund requirements.

However, the idea of allowing EPFO members to withdraw from ATM is not happening in the immediate future. The ministry has a vision to ease the claims process, and the idea is at a very early stage, says a labour ministry source. "Without the approval of the RBI, the banking regulator, the idea cannot be implemented. Besides, there are other several issues like frequency and limit of withdrawal that the EPFO needs to figure out before going ahead with the project," the labour ministry source told TNIE.

The ministry is also exploring the possibility of introducing a digital wallet, where the claimed amount could be kept and withdrawn from. "These ideas, including issuing ATM cards, cannot be implemented without a strong backing from the banking regulator and banks," the ministry source said, adding that anything like this is not possible in the immediate future.

Improving digital infra
The EPFO has been trying to improve its digital infrastructure and ease the claims



process. Early this year, the EPFO implemented the first of the six modules of Central IT System (CITS) 2.01. This facility will reduce the time and effort while providing facilities such as online submission of application, validation of applications and transfer of past accumulations of the member. CITS 2.01 will replace the earlier system of physical submission with voluminous documents and allow the establishment to track its application with a tracking ID. More modules of CITS 2.01 are likely to be implemented from 1 January 2025.

The EPFO has reduced the rejection of claims to 25% till November 2024. In 2022-23, the combined rejection and return ratio was 34%, while in the year before, the claim rejections had touched 35%. Claims are rejected when the claimant is not eligible for the type of advance or withdrawal. Claims are returned if there is any deficiency. Returned claims can be resubmitted after corrections.

The labour ministry has claimed that the implementation of CITS 2.01 has increased the number of claims settled in the current financial year. During 2023-24, EPFO settled 4.45 crore claims for an amount of R1.82 lakh crore. In the current financial year, 3.83 crore claims have already been settled for more than R1.57 lakh crore, the CBT was informed.

In FY25, 1.15 crore claims have been settled in auto mode, whereby requests for withdrawals for education, marriage and medical purposes are settled automatically. The limit for auto claims settlement facility has also been extended to R1 lakh from R50,000 which has also been extended to advances for housing, marriage and education.

MK Stalin slams BJP's 'One Nation, One Election', calls it threat to democracy

Delhi freezes as temperature dips to 4.5°C, cold wave grips North India

Tamil Nadu Chief Minister MK Stalin denounces BJP's 'One Nation, One Election,' calling it anti-federal and a threat to democracy, and the constitutional framework. He urges united resistance.

Chennai. Tamil Nadu Chief Minister MK Stalin has strongly criticised the BJP-led Union government's push for a "One Nation, One Election" policy, calling it an anti-federal move that threatens India's democracy and diversity.

In a post on X, Stalin accused the BJP of attempting to impose a unitary form of governance under the guise of electoral reform. "INDIA will resist the anti-federal & impractical 'One Nation, One Election' as it will push the country into the perils of a unitary form of governance, killing its diversity and democracy in the process," Stalin stated. The Chief Minister further alleged that the BJP's ultimate aim is to usher in a Presidential form of governance, which he said contradicts the spirit of the Indian Constitution. Stalin argued that the proposal, if passed, would eliminate the system of periodic state elections, thereby undermining regional sentiments and destroying India's diversity. He emphasised that periodic elections serve as crucial checks and balances in the democratic process, as envisioned by



the Constitution's framers. "The proposed bill, if passed and implemented, will remove the legal checks and balances put in place... to prevent the country from slipping into anarchy and totalitarianism," he warned.

Stalin accused the BJP of advancing the proposal despite lacking the parliamentary majority required to pass such critical legislation. He characterised the move as an attempt to settle political scores and divert attention from the government's failures in addressing key issues hindering India's progress. Calling for a united front against the

proposal, Stalin urged democratic forces to oppose the policy and safeguard India's Constitution. "All the democratic forces must unite & fight tooth and nail against this abomination imposed in the garb of electoral reform, to save India, its diversity and the Constitution," he stated. The Chief Minister's remarks add to the growing criticism of the "One Nation, One Election" proposal, which has faced backlash from opposition parties who argue that it undermines federalism and diminishes the importance of state elections.

Stalin was amongst the first to criticise the move, calling the bill "draconian". "This impractical and anti-democratic move will erase regional voices, erode federalism, and disrupt governance. Rise up #INDIA! Let us resist this attack on Indian Democracy with all our strength!" Stalin said.

What is 'One Nation, One Election' policy? The policy proposes a unified electoral process where all elections, including those for the Lok Sabha and State Assemblies, are held simultaneously.

Delhi Weather: People of Delhi-NCR woke up to a chilly morning on Monday with the minimum temperature slipping below 5 degrees Celsius for the second time in a row. The Air Quality Index (AQI) also deteriorated to the 'very poor' category.



New Delhi. Delhi-NCR residents on Monday woke up to another cold morning as the average minimum temperature dropped below 5 degrees Celsius for the second consecutive day. According to the India Meteorological Department (IMD), the national capital registered a minimum temperature of 4.5 degrees Celsius at 5.30 am. The temperature in certain areas of Delhi went even below 4.5 degrees Celsius. The minimum temperature in Pusa was recorded at 3.5 degrees Celsius, while in Ayanagar, the minimum temperature was recorded at 4 degrees Celsius.

At Najafgarh, the minimum temperature was slightly higher, at 6.2 degrees Celsius. Earlier on December 15, Delhi-NCR also witnessed a minimum temperature of 4.9 degrees Celsius. In the coming days, Delhi may witness a further increase in the cold wave with shallow fog in various parts due to calm winds and high humidity, as the IMD. The weather department has also issued a cold wave warning for certain states of northern India, including Jammu and Kashmir, Punjab, Haryana, and western Uttar Pradesh, among other states.

A cold wave is officially declared in the plains when the minimum temperature falls to 4 degrees Celsius or below, or when it registers a drop of 4.5 to 6.4 degrees from normal. With temperatures hovering around these thresholds, the capital has seen biting cold mornings, forcing residents to bundle up against the chill.

Amidst the intense cold conditions, the air quality in Delhi and surrounding areas also deteriorated to the 'very poor' category on Monday due to unfavourable weather conditions and low wind speeds. According to the Central Pollution Control Board, the overall Air Quality Index (AQI) for the national capital was recorded at 334 at 4 am on Monday. The air quality slipped to the 'very poor' category on Sunday evening, with the AQI climbing to 307, up from 294 just hours earlier, which was at the higher end of the 'poor' category.

An AQI between zero and 50 is considered 'good', 51 and 100 'satisfactory', 101 and 200 'moderate', 201 and 300 'poor', 301 and 400 'very poor', and 401 and 500 'severe'.

Hollow gimmick: Jagan Reddy slams Chandrababu Naidu's 'Vision 2047'

Andhra Pradesh. YSR Congress Party (YSRCP) chief YS Jagan Mohan Reddy launched a scathing attack on Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu's 'Swarna Andhra 2047' vision, terming it a "publicity stunt" devoid of realistic goals.

In a social media post on Sunday, Jagan accused Naidu of using Vision 2047 as a ploy to mislead people. "There is no place for the state's needs, people's needs, and above all reality in Chandrababu's document," the former Chief Minister alleged.

Criticising Naidu's past plans like Vision 2020 and Vision 2029, Jagan described them as "failures" that brought no tangible benefits to the state. He claimed Vision 2020 led to "farmer suicides, mass migrations, and rising unemployment, while Vision 2029 'did not deliver a single impactful project'.



"Did he build a single medical college, hospital, or school? Did he create ports or improve agriculture? Did he generate jobs or invest in Andhra Pradesh's future? The answer is no," Jagan asserted.

The YSRCP supremo also dismissed Naidu's projection of achieving a USD 2.4 trillion GSDP by 2047 as baseless. He accused Naidu of causing consistent revenue deficits during his tenure and selling public assets under the guise of privatisation. Jagan contrasted his government's focus on welfare schemes and poverty eradication with what he called Naidu's attempts to "dismantle welfare schemes" and deepen societal inequalities.

Delhi Assembly elections: BJP to take a leaf out of Maharashtra book on 30 SC seats



NEW DELHI. Encouraged by the success of its strategy in Haryana and Maharashtra elections, the BJP central leadership has solidified its plans for the upcoming crucial Delhi Assembly elections scheduled for February 2025.

As part of a carefully crafted strategy for Delhi, the party has developed a targeted approach to attract Scheduled Caste voters, who played a decisive role in shaping the results in over two dozen assembly constituencies. At the same time, the BJP's central electoral think tank is working to mobilize voters from the Poorvanchal region (Eastern Uttar Pradesh and Bihar), who have settled in across many assembly segments and are obtaining voting rights.

On Sunday, a senior party leader said, "Around 29-30 assembly segments have a significant presence of SC voters. They have been direct beneficiaries of free rations and other benefits from the Narendra Modi government. We are reaching out to them about how the BJP has supported their progress and will continue to do so if we replace the AAP in Delhi."

Another party leader said, "In the 70-member Assembly, 12 seats are reserved for SCs. The turnout of Dalit voters significantly influences the results in 17-18 other assembly seats. So our party will certainly need to extend its outreach to them."

Sources said the BJP has appointed representatives from the SC community to win support. "A nameplate campaign, covering 60,000 houses, is now on," said a senior party leader. A source said the BJP recognises that 30 out of the 70 assembly seats have Dalit voters, comprising between 17% and 44% of the electorate. Outreach to these voters could alter the narrative against the ruling AAP in this election.

1984 anti-Sikh riots case: Verdict against ex-Congress MP Sajjan Kumar on January 8

On November 1, 2023, Kumar recorded his statement in the case, denying all charges against him. The upcoming judgment is expected to be a significant milestone in the decades-long pursuit of justice for the victims of the riots.

New Delhi. A Delhi court is likely to deliver its verdict on January 8, 2025, in a 1984 anti-Sikh riots case involving former Congress MP Sajjan Kumar. The case pertains to the murder of Jaswant Singh and his son Tarundeep Singh in Delhi's Saraswati Vihar on November 1, 1984, following the assassination of then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi.

Special Judge Kaveri Baweja, who was scheduled to pronounce the judgment on Monday (December 16), deferred the decision. "The next date for the verdict is January 8," the judge said. Kumar, currently lodged in Tihar Jail, attended the hearing via video conference. The court had earlier framed charges

under multiple sections of the Indian Penal Code (IPC), including 302



(murder), 147 (rioting), 395 (dacoity), and 436 (arson), after concluding that there was sufficient evidence to establish a prima facie case against the accused. According to the prosecution,

Kumar allegedly led a mob that attacked the victims' home, looted their belongings, set the house on fire, and killed Jaswant Singh and his son. Other family members were also injured during the incident.

Initially investigated by Punjabi Bagh police, the case was later transferred to a Special Investigation Team (SIT) set up to probe the 1984 anti-Sikh riots cases.

On November 1, 2023, Kumar recorded his statement in the case, denying all charges against him. The upcoming judgment is expected to be a significant milestone in the decades-long pursuit of justice for the victims of the riots.

AIADMK slams Centre for naming laws in Hindi, calls it indirect language

AIADMK accuses the Centre of Hindi imposition through law names, and urges naming all laws in English. Opposition party criticises DMK on governance issues and vows to bring Palaniswami back as chief minister in 2026.

Chennai. Tamil Nadu's main Opposition party, the AIADMK, on Sunday accused the central government of indirectly imposing Hindi by naming laws in Hindi and Sanskrit. In its executive committee and general council meeting held in Chennai, the party passed a resolution condemning the Centre's practice of renaming laws, urging that they be named in English instead.

The resolution pointed out that Hindi is only one among the 22 languages listed in the eighth schedule of the Constitution. In Tamil Nadu, the state continues to follow the two-language formula of Tamil and English.

"Under the circumstances, the central government naming laws in Hindi and Sanskrit can be considered only as an indirect imposition of Hindi. It is very condemnable that the Centre changed the



names of the three criminal laws that were already in English," the resolution read. The party further demanded that all laws enacted by the Union government should have English names.

The AIADMK also passed 16 other resolutions during the meeting. One of the key resolutions called for the subject of education to be brought back under the state list of the Constitution. The party also urged

the central government to ensure financial allocations to Tamil Nadu without any bias.

The Opposition party took aim at the DMK government, accusing it of failing to fulfill promises made during the 2021 Assembly elections. AIADMK leader Edappadi K Palaniswami, in his address, slammed the DMK for holding Assembly sessions for only 113 days since coming to power, despite its promise of conducting proceedings for 100 days each year.

"The DMK government should have conducted sessions for 400 days by now. This failure shows their fear of the AIADMK," Palaniswami said. He also questioned why the state government had not implemented its assurance of live broadcasting Assembly proceedings and accused it of "blacking out" speeches by AIADMK legislators.

PM expresses condolence on Zakir Hussain's death: Will be remembered as true genius

Prime Minister Narendra Modi expressed condolence on the death of tabla maestro Zakir Hussain, saying he will be remembered as a true genius who revolutionised the world of Indian classical music.

New Delhi. Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday paid his tributes to iconic tabla player Zakir Hussain, saying he will be remembered as a true genius who

revolutionised the world of Indian classical music. Expressing grief at Hussain's death, PM Modi said he brought tabla to the global stage, captivating millions with his unparalleled rhythm. Through this, he seamlessly blended Indian classical traditions with global music, thus becoming an icon of cultural unity, PM Modi added.

"Deeply saddened by the passing of the legendary tabla maestro, Ustad Zakir Hussain Ji. He will be remembered as a true genius who revolutionised the world of Indian classical music. He also brought the tabla to the global stage, captivating millions with his unparalleled rhythm," the PM said.

"Through this, he seamlessly blended Indian classical traditions with global music, thus becoming an icon of cultural unity. His iconic performances and



soulful compositions will contribute to inspire generations of musicians and music lovers alike. My heartfelt condolences to his family, friends and the global music community," the PM added. Hussain died in a hospital in San Francisco, US, his family said on Monday. He was 73.

Hussain died from complications arising out of idiopathic pulmonary fibrosis, the family said in a statement. He had been

in hospital for the past two weeks and was shifted to the intensive care unit (ICU) after his condition deteriorated.

Earlier this year, PM Modi congratulated Hussain and other members of the fusion band Shakti for winning the Grammy Award for Global Music Album.

Congratulations to @ZakirHtabla, @Rakeshflute, @ShankarLive,

@kanjeeraselva, and @violinanesh on your phenomenal success at the #GRAMMYS! Your exceptional talent and dedication to music have won hearts worldwide. India is proud! These achievements are a testament to the hard work you keep putting in. It will also inspire the new generation of artists to dream big and excel in music," PM Modi said in a post on February 5 this year.

NEWS BOX

Ukraine Slams FIFA For Map Omitting Crimea From Its Territory: "Are you OK

World. Ukraine has lashed out at FIFA after the governing body of world football showed a map that seemingly omitted Crimea as part of the country. The incident took place last week when FIFA held a European qualifier draw for the 2026 World Cup that is being jointly hosted by the US, Mexico and Canada. The map was intended to show countries that cannot be drawn to play against each other for geopolitical reasons, such as Ukraine vs Belarus, Armenia vs Azerbaijan, Spain vs Gibraltar, Kosovo vs Serbia, and Kosovo vs Bosnia and Herzegovina.

In the middle of the presentation, FIFA excluded Crimea from the Ukrainian region, instantly leading to backlash from Kyiv. Notably, Crimea has been under Russian occupation since 2014 with only a handful of countries recognising the peninsula as Russian territory.

Ukraine Foreign Ministry spokesman Heorhiy Tykhy took to X (formerly Twitter) and tagged FIFA while questioning it for "redrawing" the international map.

"Are you OK, @FIFACOM? By redrawing international borders in yesterday's broadcast, you not only acted against international law, but also supported Russian propaganda, war crimes, and the crime of aggression against Ukraine," said Mr Tykhy.

"We fixed the map for you and expect a public apology," Mr Tykhyi added while sharing the correct map.

Ukraine FA writes letter

The Ukrainian Football Association also wrote a letter to FIFA expressing its concerns. "We write to express our deep concern regarding the infographics map of Europe displayed during the television broadcast of the European Qualifiers draw for the FIFA World Cup 2026 on December 13, 2024," read the letter.

Taking into account a number of official decisions and resolutions adopted by the Fifa Council and the UEFA executive committee since 2014...we emphasize that today's version of the cartographic image of Ukraine is completely unacceptable and looks like an inconsistent position of Fifa and UEFA," it added.

In response to the outrage expressed by the Ukrainian Football Association, FIFA also issued a statement acknowledging the issue. "FIFA is aware of an issue that affected one of the graphics shown during the draw and has addressed the situation with the Federation. The segment has been removed."

Clothing Brand Founder Releases 'Most Wanted CEOs' Playing Cards

World. James Harr, founder of Comrade Workwear, a self-described "socialist apparel" brand, has courted controversy with his latest project -- a deck of cards featuring "most wanted CEOs" complete with names, faces, and illustrations of gun range targets.

Harr, known for his anti-capitalist rhetoric and controversial social media posts, introduced the project days after the killing of UnitedHealthcare CEO Brian Thompson in New York. On his Instagram and TikTok accounts, which collectively have over 109,000 followers, Harr shared his plans for the deck, adding the idea was inspired by the Iraq war-era card decks. He claimed the deck would help people identify the CEOs he believes are responsible for harming the public. The deck will be divided into suits representing various industries, according to Harr's posts. Clubs will feature pharmaceutical and chemical company CEOs, Hearts will represent retail and real estate, Diamonds will cover tech, finance, and media, and Spades mean oil and war company executives.

The cards' reverse sides will display the phrase "most-wanted CEOs" alongside a red human silhouette gun range target, and the front will show black-and-white close-ups of each CEO's face, name, affiliation, and QR codes labelled "why they're evil," leading to web pages outlining their alleged wrongdoings. Harr asked his followers to suggest more CEOs to feature in the deck, and many pledged to buy the deck as soon as it was available. One commentator even asked if the deck would include addresses. In response to criticism, Harr insisted the deck was not a call to violence. "I'm not suggesting anyone should cause any physical harm to anyone," he told The NY Post. "But I do want people to know who is making their life harder, who is stealing from them, who is deciding that a couple more percentage points of profit is worth more than the life of your loved ones."

Taiwan receives 38 US-made Abrams tanks amid China threat

World. Taiwan's defense ministry announced Monday the arrival of 38 M1A2 Abrams tanks from the United States, a move aimed at strengthening the island's defenses against a potential attack from China. These tanks represent the first of 108 ordered in 2019.

The tanks arrived Sunday according to AFP and were transported to an army training base in Hsinchu, as confirmed by the defence ministry. Currently, Taiwan's tank arsenal comprises approximately 1,000 units, including locally manufactured CM 11 Brave Tiger and American M60A3 tanks, which are considered dated. The remaining tanks are scheduled for delivery in 2025 and 2026.

The US is Taiwan's main ally and arms supplier. China claims Taiwan as its territory and opposes such arms sales. Taiwan's government budgeted over \$1.2 billion for the Abrams tanks.

China has not ruled out using force to take control of Taiwan. While Taiwan develops its own defense systems, it relies heavily on US arms sales for security. Delays in arms deliveries to Taiwan have occurred due to supply chain issues and US weapon shipments to Ukraine and Israel. Taiwan's 2024 defense budget is a record \$19 billion, and next year's is expected to be even higher, reflecting the island's focus on bolstering its defenses. China has intensified military activities around Taiwan, including recent large-scale maritime drills.

'Definitely several hundred' killed as Cyclone Chido devastates French territory of Mayotte

SAINT-DENIS DE LA REUNION. Local authorities said Sunday that the likely death toll from cyclone Chido's passage across Mayotte was "definitely several hundred" though the disruption means reaching an exact count will be difficult.

Rescue workers and supplies are being rushed in by air and sea, but their efforts are likely to be hindered by damage to airports and electricity distribution in a territory where even clean drinking water was already subject to chronic shortages.

A previous toll shared with AFP by a security source had confirmed only 14 deaths.

"I think there will definitely be several hundred, perhaps we will come close to a thousand or even several thousand" deaths, prefect Francois-Xavier Bieuvre said on broadcaster Mayotte la Premiere.

He added that it would be "very difficult to reach a final count" given that most residents are Muslim, traditionally burying their dead within 24 hours. The mayor of Mayotte's capital Mamoudzou, Abdilwahedou Soumaila, had earlier told AFP that nine people were gravely wounded and fighting for their lives in

hospital, while 246 more were seriously injured. "The hospital is hit, the schools are hit. Houses are totally devastated," he said, adding that the hurricane "spared nothing". Mayotte's 320,000 residents had been ordered into lockdown Saturday as cyclone Chido bore down on the islands around 500 kilometres (310 miles) east of Mozambique with gusts of at least 226 kilometres per hour. Electricity poles were hurled to the ground, trees uprooted and sheet-metal roofs and walls torn off improvised structures inhabited by at least one-third of the population. Information from the locked-down population, in shock and largely cut off from water and electricity supplies, is slow to filter out, a source familiar with the recovery effort told AFP. One local resident, Ibrahim, told AFP of "apocalyptic scenes" as he made his way through the main island, having to clear blocked roads for himself.

Scramble for supplies

Interior Minister Retailleau will travel to Mayotte on Monday, his office said, alongside 160 soldiers and firefighters to reinforce the 110 already deployed to the



islands. Medical personnel and equipment were being delivered from Sunday by air and sea, said the prefecture in La Reunion, another French Indian Ocean territory some 1,400 kilometres away on the other side of Madagascar. A first aid plane landed in Mayotte at around 3:30 pm local time (12:30 GMT) with three tonnes of medical supplies, blood for transfusions and 17 medical staff, authorities in La Reunion said, with two military aircraft expected to follow. A navy patrol ship was also to depart La Reunion with personnel and equipment including for electricity supplier EDF.

Pope Francis, visiting French Mediterranean

island Corsica on Sunday, urged people to pray for Mayotte's residents. Storm hits Mozambique just northwest of Mayotte, the Comoros islands, some of which had been on red alert since Friday, were also hit, but suffered only minor damage. Cyclone Chido later slammed into Mozambique, bringing gale-force winds and heavy rain when it made landfall early Sunday around 40 kilometres (25 miles) south of the northern city of Pemba, weather services said. Buildings were damaged and power knocked out in some areas of Mozambique's northern coastal provinces of Nampula and Cabo Delgado early Saturday, authorities said. But by the afternoon Chido was travelling over the inland province of Niassa and had weakened, said the president of the National Institute for Risk and Disaster Management, Luisa Meque. UNICEF said it was on the ground to help the people impacted by the storm, which had already caused some damage. "Many homes, schools and health facilities have been partially or completely destroyed and

Bangladesh to hold elections in late 2025 or early 2026: Yunus

DHAKA. Bangladesh's interim leader Muhammad Yunus, who heads the caretaker government installed after an August revolution, said Monday that general elections would be held late next year or in early 2026.

Pressure has been growing on Nobel Peace Prize winner Yunus -- appointed the country's "chief adviser" after the student-led uprising that toppled ex-premier Sheikh Hasina in August -- to set a date. The 84-year-old microfinance pioneer is leading a temporary administration to tackle what he has called the "extremely tough" challenge of restoring democratic institutions in the South Asian nation of some 170 million people. "Election dates could be fixed by the end of 2025 or the first half of 2026," he said in a broadcast on state television. Hasina, 77, fled by



helicopter to neighbouring India as thousands of protesters stormed the prime minister's palace in Dhaka. Her government was also accused of politicising courts and the civil service, as well as staging lopsided elections, to

dismantle democratic checks on its power.

Hasina's 15-year rule saw widespread human rights abuses, including the mass detention and extrajudicial killings of her political opponents.

Yunus has launched commissions to oversee a raft of reforms he says are needed, and setting an election date depends on what political parties agree.

"Throughout, I have emphasised that reforms should take place first before the arrangements for an election," he said. "If the political parties agree to hold the election on an earlier date with minimum reforms, such as having a flawless voter list, the election could be held by the end of November," he added. But including the full list of electoral reforms would delay polls by a few months, he said.

New York Pet Stores Rush To Sell Pets At Discounted Rates Before Sales Ban

World. Pet shops across New York City can no longer sell dogs, cats, or rabbits. The Puppy Mill Pipeline Act, signed two years ago by Governor Kathy Hochul, came into effect on Sunday.

It aims to stop the flow of animals bred in inhumane puppy mills and promote adoption from overcrowded shelters.

The act to curb abusive breeding practices has turned New York into a buyer's market for prospective pet owners. Pet stores scrambled to clear their inventory, offering steep discounts on animals in a last-ditch attempt to sell before the ban. Many took advantage of price reductions over the weekend. Ingrid Rodriguez, 25, bought a 10-week-old Pomeranian for \$1,300 (Rs 110,084) down from \$1,450 (Rs 122,482) -- at Astoria Pets in Queens. "I was just walking by with my mom when we saw the sign. We went in, and you know, holding the dog up to her chest," she told The NY Post. Despite her mixed feelings about the law, Ms Rodriguez supports reducing illegal breeding. "I never thought I'd buy a dog,

but if they didn't get sold, they were going to the shelter," said Krisjan Polonia, 31, who purchased a black-and-white shih tzu-bichon mix for \$650 (Rs 55,082) -- down from \$2,800 (Rs



237,104). "Kids make you do crazy things," he added, explaining the dog was a gift for his son. On the other side of the debate, pet shop owners like Don D'Alessio of 'Astoria Pets' are frustrated with the law. A veteran of the industry for 42 years, Mr D'Alessio has always adhered to the city's regulations, ensuring that he only bought from licenced breeders. "We've never had a violation here, look at the paperwork. Fifteen years of paperwork, not one violation," he said. Despite following

the rules, he is now forced to close his doors. "I can't last selling supplies that are cheaper online... We're not going to survive. We're done," he said, pointing out that over 120 businesses like his are expected to shut down across the state, affecting around 2,500 employees.

Mr D'Alessio, 73, had no choice but to sell the 21 dogs in his store over the weekend, fearing that any unsold animals would be sent to shelters. He explained that many customers couldn't afford the dogs even at their discounted prices, which led him to give some of the animals to loyal clients.

Despite the challenges faced by pet shop owners, animal rights groups are celebrating the law as a victory for animal welfare. Rise Weinstock, president of the New York Animal Care Centers, praised the bill for ending a cruel supply chain. "For too long, pet stores have been the final stop in a system that treats living beings as commodities," she said. Activists argue that pet shops often source their animals from puppy mills, where dogs are bred under inhumane conditions.



the very top of a tree that many, many people would like to be on," the letter said, as per the outlet.

The BBC said that H6 formed an "unusual degree of trust" with the duke and has since been banned from the UK. The alleged spy even appealed against his ban in 2023, but the decision was upheld by the UK's national security court. Buckingham Palace declined to comment, saying they do not act for Prince Andrew, who is not a working royal.

What we know about H6?

As per The Independent, the alleged Chinese spy called the UK his "second home" and had previously been granted indefinite leave to remain in Britain. He is said to have used his high profile connection to secure invitations to Buckingham Palace and other royal residences, with fresh reports now alleging he also met two former prime ministers, including David Cameron and Theresa May. 6 was finally expelled from Britain in 2023 when then-home secretary Suella Braverman's office said he reportedly engaged in "covert and deceptive activity" on behalf of the United Front Work Department (UFD), which is an arm of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) state apparatus. Prince Andrew's controversial past The disgraced prince has been facing scrutiny since 2019 over his friendship with US financier and sex offender Jeffrey Epstein.

"Fascist Yunus": Sheikh Hasina's Fresh Attack On Bangladesh's Interim Leader On Bijoy Dibosh

Dhaka. On the eve of Bangladesh's Bijoy Dibosh, deposed premier Sheikh Hasina on Sunday launched a fierce attack on the interim administration, dubbing it Chief Adviser Muhammad Yunus a "fascist". She claimed Nobel laureate Yunus was leading an "undemocratic group" that was "secretly supporting anti-liberation extremist-communal forces" and the main aim of his dispensation was to suppress the spirit of the Liberation War and the pro-liberation forces. Ms Hasina's remarks were part of her statement to commemorate the defeat of Pakistani forces in Bangladesh's Liberation War of 1971. Bangladesh celebrates December 16 as 'Bijoy Dibosh' or Victory Day. On December 16, 1971, then Chief of Pakistani forces General Amir Abdullah Khan Niazi, along with 93,000 troops, surrendered to the joint forces of the Indian Army and 'Mukti Bahini' after the 13-day war following which East Pakistan became Bangladesh. In a statement posted on her party's official X account, Ms Hasina highlighted the role of her father, Sheikh

Mujibur Rahman, and the Awami League in the struggle that culminated in the emergence of Bangladesh. She also noted the developmental work done by the Awami League government and its vision for Bangladesh under her leadership. Talking about the events leading to her ouster, Ms Hasina said, "Anti-national groups illegally and unconstitutionally seized state power through domestic and foreign conspiracies." "This undemocratic group, led by fascist Yunus, has no responsibility towards the people. They are obstructing all public welfare-oriented work by seizing power. About 50 million people in the country were under the social security system. They were given various allowances. It has been alleged that most of the allowances have been stopped. The family cards of 4.3 million families under the TCB have been cancelled. The people of the country are suffering from the



hardships of rising commodity prices. Hungry people are picking food from dustbins," she said. Ms Hasina, who fled to India after resigning as the prime minister in August in the face of massive anti-government protests, claimed that since Mr Yunus-led interim government was not democratically elected, it has no responsibility towards the people. "Their main goal is to create resentment against

the spirit of the Liberation War and the forces supporting the Liberation War and to silence them. On the contrary, they are secretly supporting the anti-liberation extremist-communal forces. The lack of sensitivity of the officials of this government, including the fascist Yunus, towards the Liberation War and its history is proven by their every step," she stated.

Ms Hasina alleged that the Mr Yunus-led dispensation was following the "rituals of the responsible group" Pakistan in an attempt to erase "progressive ideals," the history and spirit of the Liberation War. "If they could, they would have presented a different narrative and erased the traces of the great Liberation War from every aspect of national life. They would have turned this great glorious event of the collective achievements of the Bengalis into a disgrace," she added.

NEWS BOX

Sanjay Manjrekar questions role of batting coach after Brisbane collapse

Former India cricketer Sanjay Manjrekar has questioned the role of a batting coach in the Indian team after another collapse on Day 3 of the third Test against Australia at the Gabba, Brisbane. Notably, India were reduced to 48/4 by Australia as Yashasvi Jaiswal, Shubman Gill, Virat Kohli and Rishabh Pant departed cheaply.

Following India's debacle, Manjrekar has questioned BCCI (Board of Control for Cricket in India) about the role of the batting coach in the Indian staff. The former batter mentioned that major technical issues have remained unresolved in the Indian batting for too long and hence the management needs to be accountable. "I guess the time has come to scrutinise the role of a batting coach in the Indian team. Why major technical issues have remained unresolved for so long with certain Indian batters. @BCCI," wrote Manjrekar on his X account.

Indian batting has looked in shambles on the ongoing tour as, apart from the second innings in Perth they haven't been able to cross the 200-run mark. In the four innings, India have registered scores of 150, 487/6, 180 and 175 so far bringing their technical



deficiencies out in the open.

Mitchell Starc gets Yashasvi Jaiswal again. Coming back to play on Day 3, Mitchell Starc once again got Australia off to a terrific start as he made Yashasvi Jaiswal hit straight to Mitchell Marsh at mid-wicket on just the second ball of the innings. Shubman Gill also departed cheaply as he chased a wide delivery from Starc which found his thick outside edge. The ball went flying towards the slips and Mitchell Marsh took a breathtaking catch diving to his left.

Zorder Gavaskar Trophy 2024-25: Full Coverage

Australia had another big breakthrough in the first session as Josh Hazlewood got the big scalp of Virat Kohli exposing his weakness outside off stump all over again. Pat Cummins further got rid of Rishabh Pant for the third time in the series as he found his outside edge. Earlier, Alex Carey's 70 guided Australia to 455 in their first innings while Jasprit Bumrah finished with figures of 6/76 in 28 overs.

NZ vs ENG: Ben Stokes faces fresh injury concern after limping off the field

New Delhi England Test skipper Ben Stokes faced a fresh injury scare after he limped off the field clutching his left hamstring on Day 3 of the third Test against New Zealand. The injury is particularly concerning as it involves the same hamstring he had torn earlier this year, which sidelined him from cricket for two months. England confirmed that the all-rounder had sustained a hamstring injury and his availability for the rest of the Test is still uncertain.

Stokes, bowling the 56th over of New Zealand's second innings, pulled up in visible pain after delivering just two balls, with the second delivery being hit for a boundary by Rachin Ravindra. After bowling the ball, Stokes immediately went



down clutching his left hamstring. The England skipper left the field limping, sparking immediate concern in the England camp. The painful expression on his face as medical staff treated him heightened fears about the severity of the injury. This incident marks another setback for Stokes, who only returned to international action in October during England's Test series against Pakistan. He had previously torn the same hamstring on August 11, 2024, while playing for Northern Superchargers in The Hundred. At the time, his injury had prompted widespread discussions about limiting his bowling workload to prevent further strain, especially given his importance as an all-rounder. England's situation in the third Test has compounded the concern surrounding Stokes' injury. Despite leading the series 2-0, the visitors found themselves under immense pressure in Hamilton. New Zealand scored a commanding 347 runs in their first innings, while England's batting collapsed for just 143. The Black Caps, led by Tom Latham, extended their lead to a massive 474 runs before Stokes left the field. Key contributions from Will Young and a century by Kane Williamson ensured that New Zealand dominated the proceedings, leaving England with a monumental task ahead. Stokes' absence will not only affect England's already struggling bowling attack but could also impact their chances of pulling off a miraculous comeback.

AUS vs IND: Sunil Gavaskar suggests Sachin Tendulkar lesson to struggling Virat Kohli

New Delhi. Legendary Sunil Gavaskar advised Virat Kohli to revisit Sachin Tendulkar's iconic knock in Sydney in 2004 to overcome his issues with the line outside the off-stump in the ongoing Border-Gavaskar Trophy. Gavaskar suggested that Kohli should resist the urge to drive at deliveries outside the off-stump to break the pattern of dismissals that have plagued his form and reputation in the five-Test series in Australia. On Monday, 16 December, Kohli was dismissed for just 3 runs in the first innings of the third Test at the Gabba in Brisbane. Kohli appeared intent on being disciplined at the start of his innings on an overcast morning. However, he was lured into playing at a wide delivery from Josh Hazlewood, resulting in a thick edge safely pouched by wicketkeeper Alex Carey. Australia have consistently trapped Kohli with the line outside the off-stump during the series, exploiting his tendency to push and poke at deliveries away from the body.

Speaking to the broadcasters, Gavaskar recommended that Kohli study how Tendulkar decided to eliminate the cover drive from his game during the Sydney Test in 2004, which helped him tackle a similar problem.

"Yes, I think practice is different, but what happens in the middle is different. The mindset is completely different. What happens in practice is, you know, if you play a bad shot, you can get away with it. But in the match, if you are out, you are out," Gavaskar said. "What I think Kohli can do is maybe have a look at what Sachin Tendulkar did way back in 2004. In the first three Test matches, he got out playing for the line outside the off-stump. He got caught at slips, short gully. When he came to Sydney, he decided he was not going to play anything in the cover region. He played only between the bowler's follow-through and to the right of the mid-off fielder, and everything else on the other side. That's the resolve. He hardly played a cover drive; I think only after getting to 200-220 did he play one. That is the kind of mind control you should be having," Gavaskar added.

HOW TENDULKAR DELETED THE COVER DRIVE

In the Sydney Test of the 2003-04 Border-Gavaskar Trophy, Tendulkar displayed exceptional adaptability and mental discipline. Under pressure from a rare slump in form, Tendulkar had been repeatedly dismissed while attempting the cover drive, one of his most elegant strokes but, in this



instance, a liability. Australian bowlers, particularly Brett Lee, Andy Bichel, and Jason Gillespie, devised a plan to exploit his off-side game, luring him into errors. Recognising this, Tendulkar made the unconventional decision to avoid playing the cover drive entirely throughout his innings. This required extraordinary mental strength, as it meant sidelining one of his signature shots. Tendulkar adjusted his technique and mindset, focusing on playing straight down the ground, working the ball off his pads, and prioritising leg-side scoring. By consciously eschewing the risky drive, he nullified Australia's primary tactic to dismiss him.

The results were spectacular. Tendulkar scored an unbeaten 241, one of the finest innings of

his illustrious career. His knock was a testament to patience, technical precision, and determination, showcasing another dimension of his batting genius. Over the course of 436 deliveries, Tendulkar did not offer a single chance, systematically dismantling the Australian attack and anchoring India's mammoth first-innings total of 705/7 declared.

GAVASKAR BACKS KOHLI TO BOUNCE BACK

Virat Kohli began the current series in Australia with a century in Perth, ending a year-long drought without a three-figure score in Test cricket. However, he has failed to pass 15 in any of his other four innings so far. Gavaskar expressed confidence that Kohli still has time in the series to bounce back and prove his mental strength. "Kohli has also shown it. You can't score 9000 runs in Test cricket and hit 32 hundreds without having mind control. Over here, there is a second innings, and there are two more Tests to go. So there's plenty of opportunity to show your resolve." They are plotting my dismissals; they've got two slips and two gullies. Apart from the resolve that Tendulkar showed, Kohli should watch videos of himself scoring big runs," he added.

KL Rahul, Mitchell Starc distraught after 5th rain interruption in Gabba

New Delhi India batter KL Rahul and Australia pacer Mitchell Starc displayed visible frustration as the Brisbane Test faced its fifth rain interruption on Day 3, December 16. The frequent disruptions hindered the game's flow, especially after Day 1 had already been called off following just 13 overs of play.

Australia capitalised on uninterrupted play during Day 2 and the morning session of Day 3 to post a formidable total of 445. Travis Head's brilliant 152 and Steve Smith's composed 101 formed the backbone of Australia's innings. However, Day 3's recurring rain delays disrupted the game's pace, leaving players and fans alike disappointed. Amongst those visibly upset were KL Rahul, whose team faced immense pressure, and Starc, who had started strongly with the ball for Australia. India's batting woes compounded the frustration. Mitchell Starc struck early, dismissing opener Yashasvi Jaiswal on just the second ball of the innings. Starc soon sent Shubman Gill packing with help from a stunning catch by



Mitchell Marsh, leaving India's top order in tatters. Adding to their troubles, Virat Kohli fell for a mere 3 runs, continuing his troubling pattern of nicking deliveries outside off-stump—a trend increasingly exploited by Australian bowlers.

The setbacks didn't stop there for India. Rishabh Pant, the hero of previous Gabba heroics, managed just 9 runs before falling to Pat Cummins. This marked the third time out of five that Cummins had dismissed Pant in the ongoing Border-Gavaskar Trophy, further amplifying India's struggles. The rain interruption following Pant's dismissal provided India with a brief respite to reassess their approach, though their position remained precarious. The repeated disruptions, however, broke the momentum for both sides, adding to the irritation visible on players' faces. The score heavily tilted in Australia's favor and conditions testing everyone's patience, the weather added an unwelcome challenge to an already intense Test match.

Pep Guardiola accepts blame after City's collapse in derby: I'm not good enough

- City lost to United 2-1 in the Manchester derby
- The City boss decided not to lean on excuses after the loss
- Guardiola admitted that he was still in the job because of his previous achievements at City



last 11 matches across all competitions—a crisis that has left fans, players, and pundits alike searching for answers. "I don't have a defence. I'm the boss, I'm the manager and I'm not good enough," Guardiola said, as quoted by Reuters. "I have to find a solution and I don't find a solution. It is as simple as that. I am not doing well, that is the truth."

Guardiola, who had previously cited the relentless fixture schedule as a factor behind his team's mounting injury list, chose not to lean on excuses in an emotional and introspective post-match press conference. Instead, he acknowledged the need for

solutions to address the ongoing issues.

"(We were leading) 3-0 against Feyenoord at 75 minutes and we draw that (Champions League) game. Is that the schedule, the injuries? No. We have to win that game," said Guardiola. "Today we have to win that game because apart from Bruno Fernandes (with a late chance that the United captain put wide) nothing happened. So, we give it away again." "If always it's the same problem, it can be fixed. You say 'Ah, it's that player.' It can be fixed: he doesn't play. But it's not that." Adding to City's woes, they failed to register a single shot on target in the second half of the match. The defeat also marked an unwanted milestone: it is the latest point in a Premier League game that a reigning champion has squandered a lead and lost. "I'm sitting here because of what I have done in the past," Guardiola admitted that he was still in the job because of his previous achievements at City and would have got the sack if he was at any other club. "I'm incredibly well paid to handle these situations, to handle the press conference.

AUS vs IND: Jasprit Bumrah completes double milestone with 6 for 76 at Gabba

- Jasprit Bumrah completed a double milestone as he got figures of 6 for 76 against Australia on Day 3 of the ongoing Gabba Test on Monday, December 16. Bumrah continued his fine form in the Border-Gavaskar Trophy with his performance in Brisbane.



New Delhi Jasprit Bumrah achieved a double milestone on Day 3 of the Gabba Test as he finished with figures of 6 for 76 against Australia on Monday, December 16. Bumrah has been India's best player in the ongoing Border-Gavaskar Trophy series as he has led from the front with the ball and guided them to a thrilling win at Perth as skipper of the side. Bumrah waged a lone battle on Day 2 as the rest of the Indian bowlers were ineffective as Travis Head and Steve Smith scored hundreds. The Indian

pacer would pick up his 2nd 5-wicket haul of the series to give India some respite after a tiring day's play. On Day 3, Bumrah would add another wicket to his tally early on.

The Indian pacer was able to make Mitchell Starc edge a ball to Rishabh Pant to complete a 6-wicket haul. Bumrah's ended with figures of 6 for 76 in 28 overs. This was incidentally the best figures by an Indian bowler at the iconic Gabba ground. Bumrah

surpassed the record previously held by Erapalli Prasanna as he had taken 6 wickets for 104 runs during the second innings of the 3rd Test between India and Australia at the ground in January 1968. AUS vs IND 3rd Test Day 3 Live Updates

Bumrah would also get to 50 wickets against Australia in Tests with his scalp of Starc on Day 3. The Indian pacer is steadily climbing up the rankings and now has Umesh Yadav in sights, who has 53 wickets to his name in 17 matches. Bumrah reached the landmark of 50 wickets against Australia in just 10 matches, with all of them happening down under. The Indian pacer has a stunning average of 17.62 and already has a chance to break Kapil Dev's record in Australia. Kapil Dev had 51 wickets in Australia during his career and Bumrah is just 2 away.

Bumrah's Border-Gavaskar Trophy 2024-25 so far Bumrah has a total of 18 wickets in the ongoing Border-Gavaskar Trophy and is leading the list so far. The Indian pacer has an average of 11.72 and has conceded just 211 runs in 82 overs across 5 innings.

WI vs BAN: Mahedi, Mahmud star as Powell's heroics go in vain in 1st T20I

- Rovman Powell's heroic innings went in vain as Mahedi and Mahmud bowled Bangladesh to a 7-run win in St. Vincent on Sunday, December 9. Mahedi picked up 4 wickets and scored a vital 26 runs to help secure the win for his side.

New Delhi. Bangladesh edged out West Indies in a thrilling finish, holding on for a 7-run victory in the first T20I at the Arnos Vale Ground. Hasan Mahmud emerged as the hero, defending nine runs in the final over to secure the win in West Indies' first international match in St Vincent in a decade. Chasing 147, West Indies found themselves in trouble early on, reduced to 38 for 5 after a brilliant four-wicket spell from Mahedi

Hasan. Rovman Powell, however, kept the hosts in contention with a blistering 35-ball 60 that included four sixes and five fours, but his efforts fell just short. In the tense final over, West Indies needed 10 runs to win. Mahmud delivered under pressure, dismissing Powell and Alzarri Joseph to seal the game. Powell was caught behind off the first ball, handing Bangladesh captain Litton Das his fifth dismissal of the match. With eight runs required off the last two deliveries, Mahmud bowled Joseph to clinch Bangladesh's first T20I win against West Indies in six years, a victory that coincided with the celebration of Bangladesh's Victory Day back home. The game seemed to be slipping from Bangladesh's grasp midway through the chase. Powell, joined by Romario Shepherd at 61 for 7 in the 12th over, orchestrated a dramatic fightback. The duo hammered 15 runs off Rishad Hossain in



the 14th over before Powell exploded in the next over, taking Taskin Ahmed for three sixes in a 23-run assault. Powell's sixes showcased his range, with one over extra cover, another over point, and a third straight down the ground. With the asking rate reduced to eight runs per over, Tanzim Hasan conceded 12 runs in the 16th over, during which Powell reached his half-century off just 28 balls. Shepherd joined the act, hitting

a six off Rishad, but his dismissal in the 17th over, caught at deep midwicket off Taskin, put the pressure back on West Indies. Shepherd scored a quick 22 off 17 balls, but his departure left Powell with too much to do.

Bangladesh had earlier seized control of the match with a superb start. Taskin Ahmed struck with his first delivery, dismissing Brandon King for a duck. Mahedi Hasan then removed Nicholas Pooran, who was stumped for 1, before accounting for Johnson Charles, who had hit two sixes in a costly over from Tanzim Hasan. Mahedi's impact continued in his final over as he removed Andre Fletcher, caught behind, and Roston Chase, who inside-edged a reverse sweep. He finished with exceptional figures of 4 for 13, leaving West Indies reeling and setting the stage for a dramatic finish.

Alia Bhatt

Looks Stressed, Kareena Kapoor Attempts To Calm Her Down In

Alia Bhatt and Kareena Kapoor appeared to be engaging in an intense chat during the opening night of the Raj Kapoor Film Festival in Mumbai. Alia and Kareena joined their fellow Kapoor family members — Neetu Kapoor, Riddhima Kapoor Sahni, Karisma Kapoor, Saif Ali Khan, Ranbir Kapoor and others — to celebrate Raj Kapoor's 100th birth anniversary. The family hosted a special red carpet event and posed for the cameras. Amid the photo ops, a video has now revealed that Alia appeared to be stressed while Kareena seemingly tried to help ease her tension. However, it seems like her worries were soon sorted as she posed with Ranbir, Karisma, Kareena, Saif, Randhir Kapoor and Babita. Check out the video below:

The RK Film Festival, organised by PVR INOX Limited and the Film Heritage Foundation, pays homage to Raj Kapoor's timeless cinematic legacy. The three-day event kicked off with a grand opening night, featuring screenings of Kapoor's iconic films, such as Awaara, Shree 420, and Mera Naam Joker, in select theatres across 40 cities. Several stars, including Mahesh Bhatt, Rekha, Kartik Aaryan, Sharvari, Sanjay Leela Bhansali, Farhan Akhtar, Rekha, Padmini

Kolhapure, Vicky Kaushal, Boney Kapoor, Soni Razdan, Shaheen Bhatt, and Vicky Kaushal, among others were present at the event. The Raj Kapoor Film Festival is playing 10 of his biggest films. The festival will feature Raj Kapoor's most celebrated works, spanning almost four decades including including – Aag (1948), Barsaat (1949), Awaara (1951), Shree 420 (1955), Jagte Raho (1956), Jis Desh Mein Ganga Behti Hai (1960), Sangam (1964), Mera Naam Joker (1970), Bobby (1973) and Ram Teri Ganga Maili (1985). Meanwhile, on the work front, Alia has two movies in the making. She is currently filming for Alpha, with Sharvari. The film is a part of YRF's spy universe. She also has Love & War, which is helmed by Sanjay Leela Bhansali. The film also stars Ranbir Kapoor and Vicky Kaushal.



Taapsee Pannu

Shocks Fans About Her Marriage; Reveals She Married Mathias Boe In 2023 Not 2024

Taapsee Pannu left everyone shocked when she got married to her boyfriend Mathias Boe in March 2024. However, to add more, the actress recently surprised by revealing that she tied the knot with her long-time beau in December 2023 and not in March 2024. Yes, you are reading right. Taapsee made this claim during an interaction with Agenda Aaj Tak. Speaking at her session about her intimate wedding held in Udaipur, Taapsee said, "People were unaware of my wedding this year as we didn't make a formal announcement. In fact, we got married last year in December. Our wedding anniversary is coming soon. We simply signed the papers then. If I hadn't mentioned it today, no one would have known."

She added, "We wanted to maintain a clear distinction between our personal and professional lives. I've observed that excessive exposure of personal life in professional life can negatively impact both spheres. The

successes and failures of one's career often spill over into personal life, causing unnecessary stress. I've always strived to maintain a balance between the two." The actor and the former Olympic medallist tied the knot on March 23. Their families and closest friends attended the ceremony. A source revealed, "The wedding took place in Udaipur and was an extremely intimate affair. The pre-wedding festivities kick-started on March 20. The couple was very sure that they didn't want any media attention on their big day. Both of them are known to be very private and reserved people and they wouldn't have had it any other way."



Taapsee Pannu and Danish badminton coach Mathias Boe met at the inaugural Indian Badminton League in 2013. Love blossomed between the two and soon the families met. While Taapsee largely managed to keep details about her love life under wraps, she once stated in an interview that they began chatting on X (formerly Twitter) and then proceeded to meet one another. A report recently stated that they are all set to get married in March after dating each other for over a decade. On the work front, Taapsee was last seen in Phir Aayi Haseen Dillruba, Woh Ladki Hai Kahaan, and Khel Khel Mein.

Jackie Shroff Turns Protective For Shah Rukh Khan's Daughter Suhana, Asks Paps 'Light Mat Marana'



Jackie Shroff and Suhana Khan were recently spotted at an event in the city. But what grabbed our attention was Jackie showing his fatherly instincts when he came to the rescue of Shah Rukh Khan's daughter. A video of the incident has been making rounds on social media, earning Jackie praise for his sweet gesture. In the video, shared by Snehzalal, we can see Suhana Khan leaving the event and Jackie is making sure she is safely rescued to her car. The actor even asked Paps not to focus light more. "Zyada light mat marna," the actor was heard saying. Suhana was also smiling and later thanked him for the sweet gesture. One of the fans wrote, "Wowow so beautiful."

Suhana Khan will be seen with her father Shah Rukh Khan in King. As reported by Mid Day, Anirudh Ravichander has been roped in to compose the music for King. Reports reveal that the music composer has started working on the tunes for the film. The report also mentioned that the movie will kickstart the shoot in January. The makers have zeroed in on Budapest which will provide the perfect atmosphere which is needed for the film due to its cold weather. The pre-production will start from October onwards. The dialogues have been crafted by Abbas Tyrewala who recently worked on War 2. The report stated that the first draft of the dialogues had been prepared. Additionally, Shah Rukh, Suhana, Abhishek Bachchan, and Abhay Verma will start the shoot in January.

King will explore the story of a complex don who turns to be a mentor to a girl. Shah Rukh will play the role of a don while Suhana will be seen as his mentee. The report mentioned that Bachchan will be seen in a negative role. On the work front, Jackie Shroff will be next seen in Baby John co starring Varun Dhawa, Keerthy Suresh. The film is releasing on Christmas this year. Jointly written by Atlee, Kalees and Sumit Arora, Baby John is the adaptation of Atlee's 2016 release Tamil film Theri. While Varun Dhawan stars in the lead role, Keerthy Suresh is making her Bollywood debut with this Kalees directorial. The film is produced under Jio Studios, Cine1 Studios and A for Apple Productions. The film will release on December 25, 2024.

Madhu Chopra Reveals How Nick Jonas Asked For Priyanka Chopra's Hand In



Priyanka Chopra and Nick Jonas are among the most loved couples globally. They have often impressed fans with their chemistry. Well, recently a video of Madhu Chopra sharing how Nick Jonas asked for Priyanka Chopra's hand has gone viral. She praised him while revealing the information.

Reddit has shared the video on its thread. Madhu Chopra was quoted saying, "Ek din Nick mujhe bola tha aapko lunch pe leke jana hai. Leke gaya lunch pe. Aur puchne lage kaisa ladka aap chahte hai Priyanka ke liye. Maine bataya Falana Falana boxes hone chahiye tick. Mera hath pakkad ke kaha hai 'Can I be that person'. Main aapko promise karta hu ek bhi aapka box untick nai hoga. I was so like amazed and unprepared. But I was very happy because he's such a great guy. He's like kaise batau describe karna bahot difficult hai as I barely knew him that time. Toh ek impression aata hai ki solid hai. This person is solid and so yeah I was happy very happy."

On December 1, Priyanka Chopra and Nick Jonas celebrated another year of love, marking their anniversary. They got married in 2018 at a grand wedding at Umaid Bhawan Palace in Jodhpur. To commemorate this special milestone, Priyanka's mother, Madhu Chopra, shared a throwback video collage on Instagram, showcasing some of the couple's magical wedding moments. The touching footage showcased unforgettable moments from their wedding, capturing everything from the joyful haldi ceremony to the sacred pheras. Priyanka radiated elegance in a deep rose lehenga by the renowned designer Sabyasachi, while Nick looked equally dashing in a cream sherwani. As the video played, an overlay text appeared which read, "A love story rooted in tradition and filled with magic."

Priyanka and Nick celebrated their wedding anniversary with a cosy dinner date in New York City, looking effortlessly stylish as they stepped out together. The couple turned heads as they coordinated in sleek black ensembles. Priyanka dazzled in a chic black mini dress paired with a black leather jacket and knee-high boots. On the other hand, Nick sported a sharp black shacket layered over a polo shirt, finished off with straight-leg pants for a polished look. As they walked hand in hand through midtown Manhattan, Priyanka playfully flashed a victory sign to the paparazzi before heading to their car.