

# THE PERFECT VOICE



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India thrash Malaysia 8-1; enter ACT semis ... pg 10

## Eye on Gen Y Centre pushes for eco-friendly measures

**New Delhi:** The Union Cabinet on Wednesday took a couple of decisions pertaining to the ecology that may attract the Gen Y.

The has approved two major schemes with a total outlay of Rs 14,335 crore to promote use of electric vehicles, including buses, ambulances and trucks. The two schemes are: PM Electric Drive Revolution in Innovative Vehicle Enhancement (PM E-DRIVE) Scheme with an outlay of Rs 10,900 crore over a period of two years, and PM eBus Sewa-Payment Security Mechanism (PSM) scheme with a budget of Rs 3,435 crore.

Briefing media about the decisions taken at the Union Cabinet, Information and Broadcasting Minister Ashwini Vaishnav said the PM E-DRIVE Scheme is a major decision towards bringing down pollution.

Under the scheme, subsidies/demand incentives worth Rs 3,679 crore have been provided for e-2Ws (electric two-wheelers), e-3Ws (electric three-wheelers), e-ambulances, e-trucks and other emerging EVs.

The scheme will support 24.79 lakh e-2Ws, 3.16 lakh e-3Ws, and 14,028 e-buses. An official release said

the ministry of heavy industries (MHI) is introducing e-vouchers for EV buyers to avail demand incentives under the scheme. At the time of purchase of the EV, the scheme portal will generate an Aadhaar-authenticated e-Voucher for the buyer.

Further, the PM E-DRIVE allocates Rs 500 crore for the deployment of e-ambulances.

Also, Rs 4,391 crore has been provided for the procurement of 14,028 e-buses by state transport undertakings and public transport agencies.

The scheme also address-

**Nine cities in list**  
The demand aggregation will be done by CESL in nine cities with more than 40 lakh population, namely Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata, Chennai, Ahmedabad, Surat, Bangalore, Pune and Hyderabad. Intercity and interstate e-buses will also be supported in consultation with states.

es range anxiety of EV buyers by promoting in a big way the installation of electric vehicle public charging stations (EVPCS).



Prime Minister Narendra Modi attends 'Ganesh Poojan' at the residence of Chief Justice of India D.Y. Chandrachud in New Delhi on Wednesday.

Pic: PTI

**Road connectivity**  
The Cabinet approved the proposal of the Department of Rural Development for implementation of the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana-IV. The financial assistance is to be provided for the construction of 62,500 km road for providing new connectivity to eligible 25,000 unconnected habitations and construction and upgradation of bridges.

**Hydropower projects**  
The Cabinet approved an outlay of Rs 12,461 crore to support the development of 31,350 MW hydropower projects to be implemented over the next eight years. The scheme will be applicable to all hydro power projects of more than 25 MW capacity, including the private sector projects which have been allotted on a transparent basis.

**Health insurance for elders**  
The Cabinet approved health coverage to all persons aged 70 years and above under the Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana irrespective of their income, benefiting around six crore senior citizens. The Rs 5 lakh free health insurance cover would benefit senior citizens of around 4.5 crore families.

**Mission Mausam**  
The Cabinet approved "Mission Mausam" to enhance India's ability to predict and respond to extreme weather events and the impacts of climate change. The mission has a budget of Rs 2,000 crore for two years. The mission will focus on improving observations and understanding to deliver highly-accurate and timely weather and climate information.

## Over 2,500 Ganesh idols immersed

**Mumbai:** More than 2,500 Ganesh idols were immersed in Mumbai by Wednesday evening, on the fifth day of the festival dedicated to the elephant-headed deity, civic officials said.

Of the 2,574 idols immersed in the sea and artificial ponds in the city till 6 pm, 2,533 were from households and 16 belonged to 'sarvajanic mandals' (community groups), said the officials from the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC).



During the 10-day Ganapati festival, devotees usually bid an emotional farewell to the idols of their beloved deity after one-and-a-half days, five days, and seven days.

Ganesh idols were immersed in these artificial ponds.

"No untoward incident was reported anywhere during the immersion," said the BMC.

Ganeshotsav, which started with Ganesh Chaturthi on September 7, is one of the biggest festivals in Mumbai and other parts of Maharashtra. The festivities will end with Anant Chaturdashi on September 17 this year.

## Army officers attacked; female friend raped

**Mhow (MP):** Miscreants attacked two young Army officers and their two women friends and also raped one of them when they were out on a picnic in Madhya Pradesh's Indore district in the wee hours of Wednesday, police said.

Badgonda police station in-charge Lokendra Singh Hirore said the officers, aged 23 and 24, undergoing Young Officers (YO) course at the Infantry School in Mhow cantonment town, had gone out for a picnic on Tuesday along with two female friends.

At about 2 am on Wednesday, seven unidentified men arrived near the picnic spot on Mhow-Mandleshwar road and started beating up one of the officers sitting in a car and also the women, he said.

The second officer, who was away from the car, managed to inform his sen-

iors about the incident, after which police reached the spot, Hirore said.

Looking at the police, the miscreants fled the spot. All four victims were brought to Mhow Civil Hospital for medical examination at about 6.30 am and as per doctors, there were signs of injuries on the officers' bodies, he informed.

Hirore said in the medical examination, it was found that the miscreants had raped one of the women.

Talking to reporters, Indore Rural SP Hitika Vasal said, "A case under (BNS) sections pertaining to loot, dacoity, rape and under the Arms Act has been registered."

Personnel from four police stations have fanned out and launched a manhunt for the miscreants, Vasal added.

-PTI

## Swimmer set for historic sea crossing

**Solapur:** Kirti Bharadia, an 18-year-old swimmer from Solapur, Maharashtra is poised to make waves with an ambitious attempt to set a new world record.

On September 20, Bharadia will undertake a monumental challenge: swimming non-stop from Talaimannar in Sri Lanka to Dhanushkodi (Rameswaram) in India, a distance estimated between 34 to 40 kilometers.

The gruelling swim is expected to take between 12 to 14 hours. Bharadia is scheduled to leap into the sea at 2 am local time. The extraordinary attempt will take place in the waters where the Arabian and Indian Oceans converge, posing a significant challenge to her endeavour.

Rupali Repale, Bharadia's coach based in Mumbai, confirmed that officials from the world record community will be on-site to oversee and authenticate the attempt.

## Bengal govt dismisses conditions, standoff continues

**Kolkata:** The West Bengal government on Wednesday rejected junior doctors' demands for Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee's presence and a live broadcast as pre-conditions for talks to resolve the month-long 'cease work' and standoff over the alleged rape-murder of a woman medic at RG Kar Medical College and Hospital.

Amid the 33rd day of protests and a sit-in outside Swasthya Bhawan for the second day, Minister of State for Health Chandrima Bhattacharya said the government remains open to discussions but suggested that "political forces" might be influencing the protests.

This led to a quick rebuttal from the medics, who dismissed the claims as baseless. The minister urged the doctors to rejoin work by respecting the Supreme Court's direction to them, but refrained from giving a direct reply on whether the state government would take any punitive action for violating the



Doctors display placards during a protest dharna over the RG Kar Hospital rape and murder incident in Kolkata on Wednesday.

Pic: PTI

apex court's order.

Meanwhile, TMC leaders and MLAs issued veiled threats to the agitating junior doctors by calling them "anti-nationals" and saying the party too might conduct counter-protests against the agitating medics.

The government had invited the doctors to a meet-

ing at state secretariat Nabanna at 6 pm on Wednesday but the invitation did not confirm whether Banerjee would attend it.

Chief Secretary Manoj Pant, in an email sent at 3.49 am on Wednesday, urged the doctors to send a delegation of 12 to 15 mem-

bers and stressed the importance of resuming work, citing a Supreme Court order directing them to return to duty by 5 pm on Tuesday.

Despite the invitation, the junior doctors insisted on several preconditions before agreeing to the meeting.

TMC MLA Humayun Kabir, in a veiled threat, said they too would organise counter-protests as people are suffering due to doctor's agitation. Another TMC leader Chandan Mukhopadhyay criticised the agitating medics for defying the Supreme Court directive to rejoin work and branded them as "anti-nationals".

"We want the discussion to be held in the presence of the CM and be telecast live. We want at least 30 representatives as this movement is spread across various medical colleges and hospitals," a member of the junior doctors' forum said at a press conference. The government, however, stood firm on its stance, refusing to accept any pre-conditions for the meeting.

-PTI

## 402 children rescued after sex abuse allegations at Islamic welfare homes



**Kuala Lumpur:** Malaysian authorities on Wednesday rescued 402 children and arrested 171 suspects after raiding 20 welfare homes linked to an Islamic business group, in which children were exploited and sexually abused, the national police chief said.

Inspector-General of Police Razarudin Husain said the raids were conducted after investigations into allegations of child abandonment, deviant teachings and sexual assault at the homes, run by the Global Ikhwan Services and Business Holdings.

Children were sexually abused not only by the caretakers but were also

forced to do the same to each other at the facilities, Razarudin said in a televised news conference.

"Those who were sick were not allowed to seek medical attention until

**Global Ikhwan's website said it is involved in a wide range of businesses including food and beverage, media, medical, travel and property. It employs more than 5,000 people and has branches in 20 countries including a chain of restaurants in London, Paris, Australia and Dubai among others.**

their condition became critical," he said. Some young children were also burnt with a hot spoon when they made mistakes, and caretakers had touched the children's bodies as if to conduct medical checks, he said.

Police believed that Global Ikhwan exploited the children and used religious sentiments to collect donations, he said.

Investigations showed that the children at the welfare homes belonged to members of the Global Ikhwan group, placed by their parents at the homes since they were infants, he said. The children would undergo medical assessment amid ongoing investigations, he added.

According to its website, Global Ikhwan was founded by Ashaari Mohamad, who headed the Islamic sect Al Arqam which was deemed heretical and banned by the government in 1994. It said the group had undergone a series of rebranding since Ashaari died in 2010.

The group recently also came under the radar of Islamic authorities amid claims that it was still involved with the deviant teachings of the Al-Arqam sect.

Global Ikhwan, in a statement Wednesday, denied allegations that it exploited children and said that it would cooperate with authorities. But it made no mention of alle-

**Total 201 boys and 201 girls, aged between 1 to 17 years, were rescued from 18 homes in central Selangor state and two in southern Negeri Sembilan state. The 171 suspects — 66 men and 105 women — included religious teachers and caretakers.**

gations of sexual abuse against them.

"The company will not compromise with any activity that goes against the law, particularly regarding the exploitation of children as workers," the statement said.

-AP







# Rahul's statement exposed Cong's anti-quota face

**New Delhi:** Union Home Minister Amit Shah said Wednesday Congress leader Rahul Gandhi's quota remark has once again exposed the Congress' "anti-reservation face" and that making "anti-national statements" has become a habit for the opposition leader and his party.

Sending a stern message to Gandhi, Shah also said that as long as the BJP is there, no one can abolish reservation or mess with the nation's security.

The senior BJP leader's comments came after Gandhi told students of Georgetown University in the US that the Congress would think of scrapping reserva-

tions when "India is a fair place", which he said is not the case right now.

In a post on X, Shah said, "Standing with forces that conspire to divide the country and making anti-national statements have become a habit for Rahul Gandhi and the Congress party."

He added that whether it was supporting the National Conference's "anti-national and anti-reservation agenda" in Jammu and Kashmir or making "anti-India statements" on foreign platforms, Rahul Gandhi has "always threatened" the nation's security and hurt sentiments.

"Rahul Gandhi's state-

ment lays bare the Congress's politics of causing rifts on the lines of regionalism, religion, and linguistic differences. By speaking about abolishing reservations in the country, Rahul Gandhi has once again brought the Congress's anti-reservation face to the forefront," Shah wrote.

The Union home minister said the thoughts that were in the Lok Sabha leader of the opposition's mind have now found their way out as words.

"I want to tell Rahul Gandhi that as long as the BJP is there, neither can anyone abolish reservations nor can anyone mess with the nation's security," he said.



**I want to tell Rahul Gandhi that as long as BJP is there, neither can anyone abolish quota nor can anyone mess with nation's security.**

**-Amit Shah  
Minister of Home Affairs of India**

# BJP has problem whenever we talk about Constitution

**New Delhi:** Hitting back at the BJP for accusing Rahul Gandhi of making "anti-national statements", the Congress on Wednesday said the Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha has only talked about upholding the Constitution and asked why the ruling party has a "problem" whenever there is such talk.

The opposition party also dismissed the criticism over Gandhi meeting Democrat Ilhan Omar, known for her controversial positions regarding India, and said the BJP is in government and summon the US ambassador and take action if they believe so.

Responding to Shah's re-



marks, Congress' media and publicity department head Pawan Khara said, "Ask him to take action, then we will expose the PM and the Home Minister both. The PM goes abroad and makes horrible comments against India and

Indians, that is not anti-national?"

"We are talking about upholding the Constitution of India and that is anti-national? Why is it that BJP has a problem whenever we talk about upholding the Constitution? Why are they against the Constitution so much?" he asked.

The BJP also slammed Gandhi over his meeting with US lawmaker Ilhan Omar and others during his visit to the country, alleging that the Congress leader is indulging in "dangerous and mischievous" activities by reaching out to people abroad who are known for their anti-India stand.

# Aparna likens PM to Parashuram, self to Eklavya

**Lucknow:** BJP leader Aparna Yadav, who is step sister-in-law of Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav, on Wednesday took charge as the vice chairperson of the Uttar Pradesh state women commission. She also likened Prime Minister Narendra Modi to warrior-sage Parashuram, the 10th avatar of Lord Vishnu who finds mention in both Ramayana and Mahabharata. Yadav said she initially felt like Eklavya in the BJP family but now she hopes to work like Arjuna. Eklavya, an archer of supreme skills, found mention in the Mahabharata for sacrificing his thumb in Guru Dakshina to Guru Dronacharya, who was also the teacher of Arjuna.

# HC says daughter-in-law not family

**Bengaluru:** The Karnataka High Court has dismissed a petition filed by a woman, who sought a job on compassionate grounds in the state's rural drinking water and sanitation department following her father-in-law's death.

A division bench comprising Justice Krishna S Dixit and Justice Vijaykumar A Patil upheld the decision of the Karnataka State Administrative Tribunal, which had previously rejected Priyanka Halamani's application.

The court ruled that the statutory definition of "family" under the relevant laws does not include a daughter-in-law, and it is not within the court's authority to modify this definition.



Protestors, who had gathered on the call of Hindu groups, clash with security personnel during a protest demanding the demolition of an illegal structure in a mosque at Sanjauli locality in Shimla on Wednesday. Pic: PTI

# Mamata offered Rs 10 lakh, says victim's father

**Kolkata:** With West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee dismissing allegations that she had offered money to the RG Kar doctor's family after the rape-murder incident, the victim's father on Wednesday said he would leave it to the common people to judge whether the CM was speaking the truth.

The father of the woman medic claimed that Banerjee had offered compensation when she visited their house after the incident and later publicly announced that her government was ready to pay Rs 10 lakh to them to build something in their daughter's memory.

Speaking to PTI, he said, "The day the CM came to

our residence after we lost our daughter, she offered us compensation. Later, at a party programme, she publicly announced that her government could pay us Rs 10 lakh to build something in the memory of our daughter. Now, I will leave it to the people to judge whether she is now telling the truth."

Banerjee had on Monday dismissed allegations that she offered money to the parents of the deceased doctor and said that it was a forum of doctors that had demanded that the state government compensate the family.

"I had never offered money to (the) deceased doctor's family, this is nothing but slander. I had told the par-

ents that if they want to do something in their daughter's memory, our government is with them. I know when to say what," Banerjee had said.

On whether they support the junior doctors' 'cease work' for the last 33 days, which had crippled health-care services in the state, the victim's father said, "We can understand the pain and trouble of the patients, but you also have to understand that the doctors are fighting for a bigger cause."

"A doctor's job is to treat patients, operate on them, but they have now taken to the streets and their movement is supported by all irrespective of their social status. We wholeheartedly support them," he added.

# Survey In Gyanvapi Case Hindu side requests court to allow ASI to dig premises

**Varanasi:** The Hindu side in the Gyanvapi temple-mosque case on Wednesday requested a court here to allow the ASI to dig in the premises for a survey, a lawyer said.

The judge fixed the next date of hearing as September 18 on the petition demanding ASI survey of the remaining parts of the Gyanvapi complex, the lawyer said.

The representatives of the Muslim side were present in the court and are expected to put forth their views on the matter during the next hearing.

Civil Judge Senior Division Fast Track Court Jugal Shambhu fixed the fresh date after hearing the Hindu side, said advocate Madan Mohan Yadav, representing the Hindu side in the case.

"The Hindu side completed its argument in the matter. We have also requested to allow the ASI (Archaeological Survey of India) to dig in the premises for the survey," said Yadav.

Yadav said the Hindu side has argued that the original place of Jyotirlinga is in the middle under



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**Yadav explained that geographical water used to flow continuously from an 'Argha' into the Gyanvapi Kund. This water was believed to impart knowledge when consumed, making this site known as 'Gyanoday Tirth'.**

the 'Argha' which used to collect in the Gyanvapi Kund. It was believed that drinking this water gives knowledge. Therefore, this pilgrimage is also considered as 'Gyanoday Tirth', he said.

The lawyers of the Hindu side in the previous hearings have demanded that this water be explored by water engineering, geologists and archeologists.

Also, the 'Shivling' found from Gyanoday Tirth, which the Muslim side is calling a 'wuzukhana', should also be examined to see whether it is a 'Shivling' or a fountain, Yadav added.

-PTI

# Held for cocaine German national dies in hospital

**New Delhi:** A 77-year-old German national of Indian origin, who was arrested in connection with the alleged recovery of illegal contraband from the IGI airport, died during treatment at west Delhi's Deen Dayal Upadhyay Hospital, police sources told PTI on Wednesday.

Ashok Kumar was arrested by the Central Bureau of Investigations (CBI) from the Indira Gandhi International (IGI) Airport, based on an input by the Interpol, on July 26. The CBI officials alleged that Kumar had concealed six kilograms of cocaine in 270 capsules hidden inside two soft toys. According to a police source, after five days of police custody, Kumar was sent to Tihar Jail.

On August 14, he complained of uneasiness and was taken to the DDU Hospital, where he died during treatment on August 27, the source said. Delhi Police said they have approached the German embassy to know about the details of his family members to conduct the autopsy and further legal proceedings. Kumar's advocate Rohit Pratap Singh told PTI that he tried to approach his family members but they were reluctant to come to India.

-PTI



Climate activist Sonam Wangchuk after reaching Himachal border during the tenth day of his 'Delhi Chalo Padyatra'. Pic: PTI

# Sena factions get adjacent rooms

**New Delhi:** The Shiv Sena led by Eknath Sinde and the Shiv Sena (UBT) headed by Uddhav Thackeray will be neighbours in the Samvidhan Sadan as the two parties have been allocated rooms adjacent to each other.

Key BJP ally in ruling NDA, the TDP, has been allocated a room in Parliament House or the new Parliament building, according to an order issued by Lok Sabha secretariat's Estate and Heritage Management Branch on Wednesday.

The UBT faction will now occupy the room which once belonged to the BSP.

The Aam Aadmi Party, which holds the tag of a national party, has also been allocated a room in Samvidhan Sadan, the old Parliament building.

The rooms have been allocated for the tenure of the 18th Lok Sabha which was constituted in June following parliamentary polls.

Another NDA ally Janata Dal (U) has been provided a room in Samvidhan Sadan.

# Seven detained for damaging Ganesh idol

**Bhuj:** Seven persons, including three minors, have been detained for allegedly damaging a Ganesh idol at a pandal and putting their religious flag atop a nearby temple in Gujarat's Kutch district, a police official said on Wednesday.

These incidents took place on Tuesday at Kotda-Jadodar village in Nakhatrana taluka and an FIR was registered at Nakhatrana police station late in the night, said Superintendent of Police (Kutch-West) Sagar Bagmar.

"Local police launched an investigation on Tuesday evening after learning about the damage to the Ganesh idol at a pandal due to stone pelting. Locals also informed police that some persons had put their religious flag atop a nearby temple," said Bagmar.

Following the probe, police have detained three minors who were involved in damaging the Ganesh idol, the SP said.

"Four adults were also detained for installing the flag on the temple. The situation is under control and extra police force has been deployed in the village," the official said.

He urged people to refrain from spreading rumours and warned against sharing video messages that disturb law and order.

A similar incident had taken place on Sunday in Surat city, where a violent clash broke out after some persons pelted stones at a Ganesh pandal. Police subsequently arrested 27 persons and detained six minors.

**Communal clash in Bharuch**

**Bharuch:** Members of two communities indulged in a violent clash over the issue of installation of religious flags in a locality in Gujarat's Bharuch city, leaving two persons injured, police said on Wednesday.

Seventeen persons have been detained in connection with the incident which took place on Tuesday night in Gokul Nagar area, they said.

The police rushed to spot and dispersed the rioters. The situation is currently under control, an official said.

People from the two sides gathered in large numbers and then hurled stones at each other, which left two persons injured and caused damage to some vehicles parked there, said Bharuch Superintendent of Police Mayur Chavda, who rushed to the spot with security personnel after learning about the clash.

-PTI

## QUOTE OF THE DAY



**V.D. Satheesan, Leader of Opposition, Kerala**

**"Pinarayi Vijayan and the CPI(M)'s connection with the RSS is an open secret. It is the Congress that opposes the BJP and the RSS in the country. What kind of anti-fascist struggle is the Kerala CM talking about without the Congress? Vijayan's study class is not needed for the Congress to fight the Sangh Parivar."**

# Catholic Diocese fined for wrongful land possession

**Prayagraj:** The Allahabad High Court has imposed a cost of Rs 10 lakh on the Catholic Diocese of Gorakhpur and Uttar Pradesh government jointly for wrongfully taking over possession of a land belonging to a villager, depriving the land owner and his legal heirs from usage of the land for more than 32 years.

The villager Bhola Singh died during the pendency of case. "The second appeal, accordingly, stands dismissed with cost of Rs 10,00,000 (Rs 10 lakh) to be



jointly borne by the appellant and the State Government and its functionaries in equal share," the court said, dismissing the second appeal filed by the Catholic Diocese of Gorakhpur.

Justice Kshitij Shailendra said, "Once this court has arrived at a conclusion

that the action of the state as well as appellant did not have any sanction of law, rather it amounted to grabbing land of a rustic villager and committing trespass over it, the instant appeal deserves to be dismissed with heavy cost."

Singh and his heirs land in Gorakhpur was wrongly given to the diocese by the state government on a lease. The diocese plea was that the land was handed over by Singh to the state government during the ceiling process and later on the

same land was given to the diocese for construction of a hospital.

The court observed that as per state government record, only the share of another co-owner and not of Singh, was handed over to the state government but documents in this regard were not brought on record to avoid any adverse inference and therefore, the state government had no right to give land of Singh on lease to the diocese. Singh had filed a suit stating that he was in possession of plot

No. 26 situated at Mauza Jangal Salikram in Gorakhpur.

As the Catholic Diocese started raising a boundary wall on the land and the plaintiff objected to it, the defendants threatened him to start construction of a hospital over the land. It was alleged through amendment that a lease deed was said to have been executed by defendant No. 2, (State of UP) in favour of defendant No. 1, though the State had no right to execute a lease.

-PTI



# The debate that set tone for the US elections

Washington: Donald Trump and Kamala Harris faced each other on the debate stage Tuesday night for the first — and possibly the last — time.

The Democratic Vice President opened the faceoff with a power move, marching across the stage to Trump's lectern to shake his hand.

"Kamala Harris," she said, introducing herself as the pair met for the first time ever. "Let's have a good debate."

"Nice to see you. Have fun," the former Republican president responded.

The exchange set the tone for the 90-minute debate to come: Harris controlled the conversation at times, baiting Trump with jabs at his economic policy, his refusal to concede his 2020 election loss and even his performance at his rallies.

Trump, while measured early on, grew more annoyed as the night went on. And one significant moment played out after the two candidates left the stage, when megastar Taylor Swift said she'll vote for Harris. -AP



## Vietnam's storm toll rises to 155

Hanoi: A flash flood swept away an entire hamlet in northern Vietnam, killing 30 people and leaving dozens missing as deaths from a typhoon and its aftermath climbed to 155 on Wednesday.

Vietnamese state broadcaster VTV said the torrent of water gushing down from a mountain in Lao Cai province Tuesday buried Lang Nu hamlet with 35 families in mud and debris.

Only about a dozen are known so far to have survived. Rescuers have recovered 30 bodies and are continuing the search for about 65 others.

The death toll from Typhoon Yagi and its aftermath has climbed to 155. Another 141 people are missing and hundreds were injured, VTV said. The toll is likely to go up, officials feared while giving details.

Floods and landslides have caused most of the deaths, many of which have come in the northwestern Lao Cai province, bordering China, where Lang Nu is located.

Lao Cai province is also home to the popular trekking destination of Sapa.

Many roads in the province were blocked by landslides and unrelenting rainfall, said Sapa tour guide Van A Po. The weather has forced them to limit travel with all trekking suspended. -AP

## SOME TAKEAWAYS ON A HISTORIC DEBATE

### Harris' way to fight with Trump

In her first answer, the former prosecutor said Trump's tariffs would effectively create a sales tax on the middle class. She soon accused Trump of presiding over the worst attack on American democracy since the Civil War — the Capitol riot on Jan. 6, 2021. She charged him with telling women what they could do with their bodies. And she mocked Trump's praise of dictators "who would eat you for lunch."

Harris effectively controlled much of the conversation with such attacks and baited Trump into responses that were at times vents, and at others, reminders of his wild rhetoric and fixation on the past.

"You did in fact lose that election," Harris said of the 2020 race that Trump lost to Democrat Joe Biden but still insists he won. "Donald Trump was fired by 81 million people," she said, referring to Biden's win-

ning vote total.

But Harris may have got under her opponent's skin the most when she went after his performance at his rallies, noting that people often leave early.

Growing visibly irritated, Trump insisted that his rallies were larger than hers.

A smiling Harris frequently shifted her message from Trump back to the American people.

"You will not hear him talk about your needs, your dreams and your needs and your desires," Harris said. "And I'll tell you, I believe you deserve a president who actually puts you first."

### Trump had a label for Harris: She is Biden

Trump was often on defense, but he did drive the core message of his campaign: inflation and immigration are hammering Americans.

Immigrants, Trump said, have "destroyed the

fabric of our country."

He repeatedly tied Harris to Biden.

"She is Biden," he said. "The worst inflation we've ever had," Trump added. "A horrible economy because inflation has made it so bad. And she can't get away with that."

Harris responded: "Clearly, I am not Joe Biden and I am certainly not Donald Trump. And what I do offer is a new generation of leadership for our country."

Trump also went after Harris for moving away from some of the progressive positions she took in the 2020 Democratic presidential primary, urging voters not to believe the more moderate tone she's striking in this campaign.

"She's going to my philosophy now. In fact, I was going to send her a MAGA hat," he said, referring to the red "Make America Great Again" baseball caps that many of his supporters wear. "But if she ever got elected, she'd change it."

### Trump on race and Harris on the attack

ABC moderator David Muir asked Trump point blank about his allegation last month that Harris had belatedly "turned Black." Harris is Black and South Asian and a graduate of Howard University a historically Black school in Washington.

Trump tried to play down the matter. "I don't care what she is, you make a big deal out of something, I couldn't care less," Trump said.

Harris, however, had her opening and she rattled off a long list of Trump's racial controversies: his legal settlement for discrimination against prospective Black tenants at his New York apartment buildings in the 1970s; his ad calling for the execution of Black and Latino teenagers — who were wrongly arrested — in the Central Park jogger case in the 1980s; and his false claims that former President Barack Obama was

not born in the United States.

"I think the American people want something better than that, want better than this," Harris said.

Trump accused Harris of trying to "divide" people and dismissed her claims as dated and irrelevant.

"This is a person that has to stretch back 40, 50 years ago because there's nothing now," he said.

### Dug in on abortion positions

Harris came out swinging in defense of abortion rights, perhaps the strongest issue for Democrats since Trump's nominees created a Supreme Court majority to overturn the constitutional right to an abortion. Her sharp arguments provided a vivid contrast to President Joe Biden's rambling comments on the issue during his June debate with Trump.

"The government, and Donald Trump, certainly

should not be telling a woman what to do with her body," Harris said. She painted a vivid picture of women facing medical complications, gut-wrenching decisions and having travel out of state for an abortion.

Trump was just as fierce in defense, saying he returned the issue to the states, an outcome he said many Americans wanted. He struggled with accuracy, however, repeating the false claim that Democrats support abortion even after babies are born. He was corrected by moderator Lynsey Davis.

"I did a great service in doing that. It took courage to do it," Trump said of the overturning of Roe v. Wade and its constitutional protections for abortion. "And the Supreme Court had great courage in doing it. And I give tremendous credit to those six justices."

Polls has shown signifi-

cant opposition to overturning Roe and voters have punished Republicans in recent elections for it.

### Gender an afterthought

Harris would be the nation's first female president. But her gender was an afterthought during the debate.

She made no references to the historic nature of her candidacy. Neither did Trump.

And there were no performative moments in which gender was an issue. Who could forget Trump's decision to stand behind his last female opponent, Hillary Clinton, during a 2016 debate? He also called Clinton a "nasty woman."

Afterward, Clinton said she was creeped out. But on Tuesday night, both candidates stayed behind their podiums as instructed and there were no explicit jabs regarding gender.



Blindfolded and bounded protesters take part in a protest against Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's government and call for the release of hostages held in the Gaza Strip in Tel Aviv on Tuesday. Pic: AP/PTI

## Ground workers protest against Adani

Nairobi: Hundreds of workers at Kenya's main international airport demonstrated on Wednesday against a planned deal between the government and India's Adani Group.

Planes have remained grounded, with hundreds of passengers stranded at the airport.

The government has said that the build-and-operate agreement with Adani Group would see the Jomo Kenyatta International Airport renovated, and an ad-

ditional runway and terminal constructed, in exchange for the group running the airport for 30 years.

Kenya Airport Workers Union, in announcing the strike, said that the deal would lead to job losses and "inferior terms and conditions of service" for those who will remain.

Kenya Airways on Wednesday announced there would be flight delays and possible cancellations because of the ongoing

strike at the airport, which serves Nairobi.

Last week, airport workers had threatened to go on strike, but the plans were called off pending discussions with the government.

The spotting of unknown people moving around with airport officials taking notes and photographs raised concerns that the Indian firm officials were readying for the deal, local media outlets reported last week. -AP

# I am the only person to get a prison sentence for defamation, says Rahul

By Lalit K Jha

Washington: Leader of Opposition Rahul Gandhi has indicated that the Congress party is in alignment with the ruling BJP led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on major foreign policy issues like the relationship with the US, no talks with Pakistan unless the flow of terrorism is stopped, concerns over extremist elements in Bangladesh and Israel.

However, Gandhi, 54, was not in sync with Modi's policies on China, as he alleged that Chinese troops had taken control over Indian territory in Ladakh the size of Delhi.

At a press conference held on Tuesday at the prestigious National Press



Club here, Gandhi supported Modi's policies on Pakistan. Gandhi was on an unofficial four-day trip to the US that concluded Tuesday. Responding to a question on the India-US relationship, Gandhi noted that it has bipartisan support in both countries. "I don't see a big diversion. I don't see Modi is diverting very much from our approach with the US. I don't see ourselves changing direction very much from what he's doing. So, I see continuity there," he said. "Look, I think what happened on the 7th of October was absolutely wrong. But, I also think what Israel did and is doing, bombing innocent civilians, and killing women and children, is absolutely wrong and should not be allowed to continue. I am against violence of any kind. And certainly, the

I have got 20-plus cases in me. I'm the only person in Indian history to get a prison sentence for defamation. We have a Chief Minister who's in jail right now. So, mean, one way of saying it is, yes, the Indian voter is very resilient, and he stands like a rock. Absolutely, he does. But the Indian voter requires an architecture to work on, which is not there.

And then the beautiful thing was the first thing he did when he walked into the Lok Sabha, he was sworn in. He took the Constitution of India, and he placed it on his head. So, it was an interesting paradox. On one hand, he's destroying the Constitution. He's attacking the democratic structure. And then the Indian people have forced him to put it on his head.

Pakistan's instigation of terrorism in our country is holding the two countries back. We are not going to accept Pakistan carrying out terror acts in our country. We're just not going to accept it. And until they keep doing that, there's going to be problems between us.

scale of violence, I actually think, is harming Israel. It's harming Israel more than it's helping them," Gandhi said.

The Leader of the Opposition was critical of Modi's handling of China. "Do you think under Modi that India has managed the US-China competition well?" he was asked.

"Well, if you call having Chinese troops in 4,000 square kilometres of our territory handling something well, then maybe. We've got Chinese troops occupying land the size of Delhi in Ladakh. I think that's a disaster. Media doesn't like to write about it," he said.

"How would America react if a neighbour occupied 4,000 square kilometres of your territory? Would any president be able to get away with saying that he's handled that well? So, I don't think Modi's handled China well. I think there's no reason Chinese troops should be sitting in our territory," Gandhi said. -PTI

I have seen the government of Maharashtra just being taken away from us. I've seen it with my own eyes. I've watched it, as our legislators have been bought in and hooked off and suddenly became BJP legislators. So Indian democracy has been under attack, has been very badly weakened, and now it's fighting back. And I'm confident that it'll fight back.

### QUOTE OF THE DAY



Jonathan Reynolds, Secretary, Business and Trade, UK

"We know that a cleaner, greener future for UK steelmaking is vital to the industry's long-term economic stability. The road ahead is not without its challenges, but our steel strategy will set forth a positive vision for the future of the industry, backed by our manifesto commitment to GBP 3 billion of government investment."







**KALEIDOSCOPE**

- 1 A group of migrant labourers leave a forward village after Pakistani troops resorted to unprovoked firing on Indian posts at Akhnoor sector in Jammu on Wednesday.
- 2 President Droupadi Murmu confers the National Florence Nightingale Award 2024 to a nursing professional at Rashtrapati Bhavan in New Delhi on Wednesday.
- 3 Indian Navy's P8I aircraft led by Commanding Officer Captain Ajay Kanwar reaches Darwin, Australia to participate in the 16th edition of the multinational exercise.
- 4 Employees of special schools shout slogans during a protest over state government's alleged negligence of their institutes, in Thiruvananthapuram on Wednesday.
- 5 NASA astronaut Don Pettit, Roscosmos cosmonauts Alexey Ovchinin, centre, and Ivan Vagner, crew members to the International Space Station, ISS on Tuesday.

All Pictures PTI, AP



**GUEST VOICE**

# Violence Against Healthcare Professionals: Deepening Crisis



By  
**Pravin Dixit**

selling without incurring extra costs.

### Digital Post-Mortems

To address demands from relatives to avoid post-mortems, digital or virtual post-mortems—like those used by AIIMS, New Delhi—can provide accurate findings and prevent fraud complaints.

### Private hospitals

In private hospitals, relatives of deceased patients may pressure healthcare workers with threats or demands, sometimes involving local politicians. This has led some doctors to seek weapon licenses for protection.

Addressing violence requires more than legal measures or armed protection. It involves regular training for all staff, improved infrastructure, and strict security measures, including access control and CCTV. Limiting visitors, documenting incidents, and reporting to law enforcement are also crucial. Testimonies can be given via video conferencing to ease court-related burdens.

Dr. Sancheti, a prominent Pune orthopaedist, attributes violence against healthcare workers to mistrust between patients and doctors. He has avoided violence by thoroughly explaining procedures to patients and their families. Dr. Sanjay Gupte emphasises that recovery should be a collaborative effort between patient and doctor. Dr. Shrikant Kelkar has pioneered training modules for health workers, implementing them across various hospitals. Psychiatrist Dr. Mohan Agashe adds that lack of understanding fuels legal issues and stresses that healthcare workers need intelligence and empathy.

The US Department of Labor's Organizational Safety and Healthcare Facilities' Roadmap provides guidelines for preventing violence in healthcare, available online. These guidelines cover management commitment, employee participation, worksite analysis, hazard identification, prevention and control, safety and health training, record keeping and program evaluation. The Indian

Medical Association (IMA) should implement standard operating procedures (SOPs) for public and private healthcare facilities and conduct semiannual reviews and rehearsals to address issues and implement international best practices.

Currently, the IMA recommends forming crisis management committees at the taluka or district level, including doctors, social workers, legal professionals, politicians, and press reporters. These committees would work with police to ensure thorough investigations and prevent premature prosecution of healthcare workers. They would also advise press reporters against sensationalising such incidents.

The Supreme Court's "Martin D'Souza vs. Mohammed Isfaq" ruling warns police against harassing doctors unless Jacob Mathew's case parameters are met. The Ministry of Transport has mandated that health workers prioritise treating Good Samaritans who report injuries, and police must not suspect informants but prioritise saving lives.

Strict adherence to these directives and guidelines by all concerned, as well as introspection by healthcare workers and improvement of their practices and monitoring of these periodically alone, can create a visible impact against such violence.

To address violence, the Core India Institute of Legal Medicine (CIILM) in Maharashtra, with retired police officers, has formed quick response teams. These teams, skilled in crowd control and mob psychology, train healthcare workers and defuse critical situations. Private hospitals should participate to ensure safety and peace of mind.

In conclusion, enacting laws alone won't eliminate violence. Healthcare institutes must involve all stakeholders, be prepared for emergencies, establish clear policies and standard operation procedures (SOPs), and coordinate with law enforcement regularly.

(The writer is a former DGP, Maharashtra. Views personal)

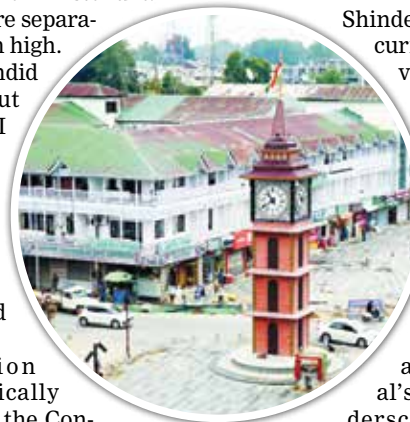
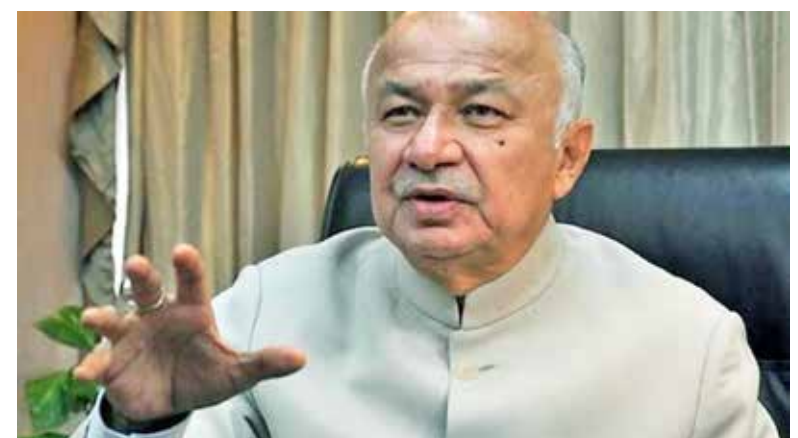
**EXPLAINER**

# What is importance of Shinde's Lal Chowk 'Confession'?

In an eyebrow-raising revelation at the launch of his memoir "Five Decades of Politics," senior Congress leader Sushilkumar Shinde admitted that his visits to Lal Chowk in Srinagar during his tenure as Home Minister were fraught with fear. Shinde, a seasoned politician and former Union Home Minister under the UPA government, recounted how educationist Vijay Dhar had advised him to venture into the heart of Srinagar, mingle with the local populace, and visit Dal Lake. Shinde acknowledged that this public presence was seen as a bold move by a Home Minister unafraid to tread where separatist sentiments ran high.

However, his candid 'confession' — "but who do I tell that I was so scared?" — has opened a Pandora's box for the Congress just ahead of the Assembly election in Jammu and Kashmir.

The admission comes at a politically sensitive time for the Congress. The BJP, quick to seize on Shinde's remarks, has painted the Congress-led UPA as weak and indecisive in handling Kashmir's security challenges. Union Minister Piyush Goyal, for instance, contrasted



Shinde's fear with the current security environment under Prime Minister Narendra Modi's leadership, suggesting that "even opposition leaders play with snow in Kashmir, without any fear." Goyal's comments underscore a broader

BJP narrative that while the Congress hesitated to act decisively in Kashmir, the Modi government has bolstered national security, creating a sense of safety even for political opponents like Rahul Gandhi who could complete the Bharat Jodo Yatra in the region.

The timing of Shinde's remarks could not be more inconvenient for the Congress. The party faces accusations of having dealt with the Islamist threat in Jammu and Kashmir from a position of fear and weakness, raising questions about whether it lacked the resolve to take tough decisions such as the abrogation of Article 370. Shinde's tenure as Home Minister included significant national security events such as the trials and executions of Ajmal Kasab and Afzal Guru, as well as the fallout from the 2012 Delhi gangrape case. However, his admission of fear in Lal Chowk plays into the BJP's narrative that under the UPA, even

top officials were uneasy about engaging with the region's complexities.

The portrayal of Shinde's Lal Chowk visits as hesitant and fearful contrasts sharply with the current government's narrative of strength and control over the region, where Lal Chowk - a site once associated with separatist dominance and Pakistani flags - has become a venue for open displays of nationalist sentiments, including the waving of the Indian flag.

The Clock Tower at Lal Chowk, a prominent symbol in the region's troubled history, stands as a stark reminder of the shifting dynamics in Srinagar. Built in 1978 at the behest of former Chief Minister Sheikh Abdullah, it has witnessed moments of both defiance and reconciliation. During the protests of 2008 and 2010, it became a flashpoint for separatist expression. Yet, under the Modi administration, it has symbolized a reclaiming of public space by pro-India voices - a transformation the BJP attributes to its hardline approach to security and governance in Kashmir.

For the Congress, Shinde's comments pose a risk of reinforcing the perception that the UPA era was marked by a lack of confidence in India's security apparatus. Critics argue that this perceived indecision prevented the UPA from taking more assertive actions in Kashmir as a demonstration of its commitment to fully integrating the region with the rest of India.

**The veteran Congressman and former Union Home Minister's candid revelation could become a potential political pitfall for his party ahead of the Assembly crucial election in Jammu and Kashmir.**

