

NEWS IN BRIEF

BAY SYSTEM UNLIKELY TO IMPACT CALCUTTA AFTER LOW-PRESSURE ZONE IN SOUTHWEST PART

Diary Times Desk :

A low-pressure zone in the southwest Bay was steadily strengthening on Tuesday while shifting northwest.

The system turned into a well-marked low-pressure area by 8.30am on Tuesday, the Met office said.

"It is likely to move west-northwestwards and intensify into a depression over southwest and adjoining Westcentral Bay of Bengal off north Tamil Nadu and south Andhra Pradesh coasts by Wednesday afternoon," said a Met bulletin.

"It is likely to continue to move west-northwestwards towards north Tamil Nadu, Puducherry and south Andhra Pradesh coasts and intensify further during the subsequent 24 hours," the bulletin said.

TELANGANA SHRC TAKES SUO MOTO COGNISANCE OF ENCOUNTER

Diary Times Desk :

Telangana State Human Rights Commission (SHRC) has taken suo moto cognisance of the killing of an accused in the murder of a policeman in an alleged encounter by the police at a hospital in Nizamabad town and directed the Director General of Police to submit a report.

The Human Rights Commission on Tuesday took note of newspaper reports about Monday's incident in Nizamabad, in which an accused in the murder of a police Constable was shot dead by the police in an alleged encounter.

Sheikh Riyaz, who was recently arrested in connection with the murder of police Constable Pramod Kumar, died in the encounter at the hospital where he was undergoing treatment.

It is reported that the said accused attempted to snatch the service weapon of an Armed Reserve Constable and tried to escape, following which the police opened fire, claiming self-defence, leading to his instantaneous death.

As per the statement of B. Shivadhar Reddy, Director General of Police, Telangana, the incident occurred in self-defence.

"NOTHING FOR WOMEN"



ministership, a situation came where stepping down could not have been avoided, the wife was installed," said Kumar, without mentioning his detractors by name.

Lalu Prasad, who became the Bihar chief minister in 1990, occupied the post till 1997 when his wife, a homemaker who was till then not known to have an aptitude for politics, was appointed to the top post, in a move that had triggered a massive controversy in those days.

Kumar, who, in alliance with the BJP, defeated the RJD in 2005, also recalled his alliances with his arch-rival's party, first in 2015 and then again in 2022, both of which lasted for less than two years.

Prasad's son and heir apparent Tejashwi Yadav, who is currently the leader of the opposition and the NDA's principal challenger, had served as the deputy CM on both occasions.

Kumar said, "Because of circumstances, I had to tie up with those people, but it did not take me long to realise that they were good for nothing. Now I am back (in NDA) for good." Kumar also spoke at length about efforts made by his government to improve infrastructure, education and healthcare in the state, while lauding the Narendra Modi government at the Centre for its cooperation. He also underscored that "an atmosphere of terror" had prevailed in Bihar, because of poor law and order and alleged patronage to criminals by the powers that be, until he took over.

HAD TO TIE UP WITH RJD "BECAUSE OF CIRCUMSTANCES", SAYS NITISH KUMAR

Diary Times Desk : Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar on Tuesday charged his arch-rival Lalu Prasad with doing "nothing for women" in power, and propping up wife Rabri Devi when the charge sheet in the fodder scam caused him to step down.

The JD(U) president, who is seeking a record fifth consecutive term in office, was addressing his maiden election rally in Minapur constituency of Muzaffarpur district, where he also said he was disillusioned with the RJD, headed by Prasad, after two short-lived alliances, and vowed to remain with the NDA.

Speaking about his government's thrust in women's empowerment, as witnessed in the formation of self-help groups on a large scale and the recently launched Mukhyamantri Mahila Rojgar Yojana, as part of which Rs 10,000 each have been transferred into accounts of more than one crore beneficiaries, Kumar drew a contrast with the previous regime.

"Did the ones in power do anything for women? They could not have cared less. Only when, after seven years of chief

INDIA NEARS DEAL TO SLASH US TARIFFS ON IMPORTS TO 15%-16%: REPORT

Diary Times Desk : India and the United States are nearing a long-stalled trade agreement that would reduce US tariffs on Indian imports to 15% to 16% from 50%, Mint reported on Wednesday citing three people aware of the matter.

The deal, which hinges on energy and agriculture, may see India gradually scale back its imports of Russian crude oil, Mint reported.

Ministry of Commerce and Industry and the White House did not immediately respond to Reuters' requests for comment.

US President Donald Trump said he spoke to Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday, largely focusing on trade.

Trump said energy was also part of their discussion, and PM Modi assured him that India would limit its oil purchases from Russia.

PM Modi also said the two leaders had talked, but gave no details about what was discussed. "Thank you, President Trump, for your phone call and warm Diwali greetings," PM Modi said on X, referring to the Hindu festival, which was celebrated on Monday.

"On this festival of lights, may our two great democracies continue to illuminate the world with hope and stand united against terrorism in all its forms," he said.

As part of negotiations with Washington, India may allow increased imports of non-genetically modified US corn and soybean meal, Mint reported citing the sources. A deal may also include a mechanism to periodically review tariffs and market access, the outlet said.



TRUMP REPEATS CLAIM INDIA WILL CUT RUSSIAN OIL IMPORTS



Diary Times Desk :

US President Donald Trump has reiterated that India has agreed to reduce its purchase of Russian crude.

Trump said Indian PM Narendra Modi had assured him during a phone call on Tuesday that Delhi "was not going to buy much oil from Russia" as he too "wants to see the war end with Russia-Ukraine".

Modi acknowledged Trump's call and his "warm greetings" on the festival of Diwali in a social media post but didn't comment on Russian oil.

Trump had made similar remarks last week, but the Indian foreign ministry said at the time said it was "not aware" of any phone call between the leaders. On Wednesday, an official at the ministry told the BBC that it had no new comment on Trump's latest remarks.

"I spoke to Prime Minister Modi today, as I mentioned before. And we just have a very good relationship. And he's not going to buy much oil from Russia," Trump told reporters during the White House Diwali celebrations on Tuesday.

"He wants to see the war end with Russia-Ukraine. And, as you know, they're not going to be buying too much oil. So they've cut it way back and they're continuing to cut it way back."

India became one of the biggest markets for Russian oil as Western nations shunned purchases and imposed sanctions on Moscow after the Ukraine war started in 2022. Delhi increased its imports and bought Russian crude at discounted prices, saying the decision was vital to provide energy security to millions of its people.

CAR SALES MORE THAN DOUBLED TO OVER HALF A MILLION UNITS: FM SITHARAMAN ON GST 2.0



Diary Times Desk : Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Wednesday said that the GST 2.0 reforms, which came into effect from September 22, have given a significant push to the domestic automotive industry, with car sales more than doubling to over half a million units.

Market observers say that the retail total of the entire passenger vehicle industry between the implementation of the new goods and services tax (GST) rates on September 22 and Diwali could be anywhere between 650,000-700,000 units, Sitharaman posted on X.

"The GST 2.0, which came into force a month ago, has given a significant push to the automotive industry, with car sales more than doubling to over half a million units," she wrote, citing a media article. Also, during the period of Diwali shopping, e-commerce and quick-commerce platforms recorded sharp demand increases, "with premium products and instant-delivery services driving growth and festival spend extending beyond major cities", the Finance Minister said.

Amid robust festive demand post reduction of GST on automobiles, Tata Motors said it has delivered over 1 lakh cars within the last 30 days from Navratri to Deepawali. The Tata Group's automobile manufacturer saw a massive 33 per cent Year-on-Year (YoY) surge in sales during this period, with SUVs continuing to dominate the market.

SHOCKING INCIDENT

WOMAN DOCTOR ASSAULTED, THREATENED WITH RAPE AT BENGAL HOSPITAL, 3 ARRESTED



Diary Times Desk : Three people have been arrested in West Bengal's Uluberia for allegedly assaulting a woman doctor at a state-run hospital and threatening her with rape. The shocking incident, which comes a year after a doctor's brutal rape-murder at Kolkata's RG Kar Medical College and Hospital, has sparked a political blame game between the ruling Trinamool Congress and opposition BJP.

The incident occurred on Monday at Sarat Chandra Chattopadhyay Government Medical College and Hospital at Uluberia in Howrah district. The accused, it is learnt, are relatives of a patient admitted to the hospital. On Monday afternoon, they had an altercation with the doctor, during which they allegedly assaulted her. The doctor later filed a complaint with the police, leading to the arrests. Among those arrested is a man working as a Home Guard. The three accused have been identified as Sheikh Samrat, Sheikh Babul -- the Home Guard working as a traffic cop -- and Sheikh Hasibul.

The Joint Forum of Doctors, an organisation representing doctors in Bengal, visited the Uluberia hospital, and raised concerns over the safety of doctors on duty.

The opposition BJP has targeted Trinamool over the incident. State BJP president and Rajya Sabha MP Samik Bhattacharya said the Mamata Banerjee government did not take any lesson from the RG Kar Medical College incident. "Trinamool has created a troubled society where perverted Home Guards and civic volunteers are part of the party. They believe it is their government. They do not care about police or administration. There is no CCTV surveillance. It is an unfortunate incident," he said.

AKASA AIR CREW PIN DOWN DRUNK PASSENGER AS DIWALI FLIGHT TURNS CHAOTIC

Diary Times Desk : It was supposed to be a festive flight out of Bengaluru, passengers strapped in, cabin lights dimmed, ready for take-off to Delhi. But moments before the aircraft could lift off, chaos gripped Akasa Air flight QP 1599. A passenger, allegedly drunk, had to be physically restrained by the crew after he turned unruly.

The incident unfolded on the evening of October 20, as families and travellers headed home for Diwali celebrations. What began as quiet boarding soon spiralled into commotion, passengers rising from their seats, crew rushing down the aisle, and confusion spreading. The take-off halted and delayed flight for 39 minutes.

According to officials, the man began creating a disturbance just before departure, prompting crew intervention. "The situation escalated to a point where restraint became necessary to ensure the safety of everyone on board," an airline official said.

In a statement, Akasa Air confirmed the incident, saying, "An incident of unruly behaviour involving a passenger took place on Akasa Air flight QP 1599 operating from Bengaluru to Delhi on October 20. Our crew followed the required safety protocols in line with our policies to ensure the safety and comfort of our passengers. We stand firm on our zero-tolerance policies against unruly passenger behaviour."

P CHIDAMBARAM SAYS PROBLEM WITH FIXING ROADS IS NOT FUNDS, BUT EXECUTION



Diary Times Desk : Congress MP P Chidambaram has claimed that Biocon chairperson Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw has offered to fund the repair work of roads in Bengaluru. He welcomed the offer but said that lack of funds isn't the problem, but execution of public work is. This comes amid an online face-off between Shaw and Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar over civic infrastructure in the IT hub. The Biocon chief, however, has denied making any such offer.

"I noted with interest Mrs Kiran Mazumdar Shaw's offer to fund the development of some roads in Bengaluru. A great offer! Congratulations! But the problem with our public works is not the lack of public money; the problem is in the execution of the public work," said Chidambaram in an online post.

'WORSHIP OF FALSE GODS': MAGA SPREADS HATE ON DIWALI AS TRUMP LIGHTS DIYAS AT WHITE HOUSE

Diary Times Desk : While certain states like California are exuberantly celebrating the statewide holiday for the 'Hindu Festival of Lights' or Diwali, some members of the far-right political community in the US, aka those from the MAGA camp didn't mince their words while spewing hate comments about the festival.

US President Donald Trump's administration itself boasts the inclusion of certain Indian origin or Hinduism-following officials like FBI Director Kash Patel (of Gujarati Indian descent) and Tulsi Gabbard. While the latter does not share any Indian link, she does follow the Hindu faith. Accordingly, both of them resorted to sharing warm Diwali wishes on the social media platform X, but were ultimately bombarded with a series of problematic and hateful comments.

'FROM ALLEGATIONS OF DRUG OVERDOSE TO FAMILY KILLING HIM': PUNJAB EX-DGP SON'S DEATH CASE TURNS MURKIER; MUSTAFA DENIES ROLE

Diary Times Desk : Former Punjab Police chief Mohammad Mustafa has dismissed as "completely false" all allegations levelled against him and his family in connection with the death of his son.

Addressing the media here on Tuesday, the former director general of police (DGP) said he welcomed the police case registered against him and his wife, former Punjab minister Razia Sultana, as the investigation would "reveal the truth".

Mustafa, a retired 1985-batch IPS officer, and Sultana have been booked in connection with the death of their 35-year-old son, Aqil Akhter, at his residence in Haryana's Panchkula on October 16. Akhter's wife and sister have also been booked.

The family initially claimed that he died due to drug overdose. They later buried his body in their ancestral village, Harda Kheri, here.

ARE LOKPAL MEMBERS ENTITLED TO BMWs?



Diary Times Desk : The Lokpal of India has courted controversy by reportedly floating a tender for the procurement of seven BMW cars for its members. The anti-corruption body is currently headed by former Supreme Court Justice AM Khanwilkar and comprises former Himachal Pradesh High Court Chief Justice L Narayana Swamy, former Allahabad High Court Chief Justice Sanjay Yadav and former Karnataka High Court Chief Justice Ritu Raj Awasthi as judicial members. The other members include former Chief Election Commissioner Sushil Chandra, former Chief Secretary to the Government of Gujarat Pankaj Kumar and former Director/Joint Secretary, Ministry of Defence Ajay Tirkey. As per the October 16 tender, the Lokpal of India seeks to procure seven BMW 330Li M Sport (Long Wheel Base) cars in white colour. The tender is non-transferable and forms part of the Lokpal's official procurement process for the specified vehicles.

PAK TERROR GROUP JAISH-E-MOHAMMED LAUNCHES ONLINE 'JIHADI COURSE' FOR WOMEN. FEE IS 500 PKR

Diary Times Desk : Earlier this month NDTV revealed how the Pakistan-based Jaish-e-Mohammed - designated a terrorist organisation by the United Nations - is creating the Jamat ul-Muminat, a women's unit.

Now, in new documents seen exclusively by NDTV, it appears the group has launched an online training course - called Tufat al-Muminat - to collect funds and carry out recruitment.

As part of this course, women family members of Jaish leaders, including relatives of founder Masood Azhar and his commanders, will teach others about their 'duties' with reference to jihad and Islam. The recruitment drive - to be conducted online - is scheduled to begin November 8.

'Lectures' will last 40 minutes per day and be led by Azhar's two sisters, Sadiya Azhar and Samaira Azhar, whose classes will 'encourage' women to join the Jamat ul-Muminat.

GLOBAL SOUTH SHOULD SPEAK IN ONE VOICE AGAINST TRADE CHALLENGES: PIYUSH GOYAL

Diary Times Desk : India on Wednesday called on developing and least developed nations to collectively work to address global trade challenges such as tariff barriers, unilateral environmental restrictions, and hurdles in the services sector.

Addressing the 16th session of United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) in Geneva, Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal said: "It is time for the Global South to speak with one voice on concerns that impact all of us".

He said the world is currently volatile, marked by numerous uncertainties, challenges, and ambiguities in the global trading system.

"We are living in a world marked by a profound trust deficit, whether in multilateral institutions, different international bodies, amongst nations, and multiple critical challenges confront us almost on a daily basis. These challenges are multifaceted.

"It could be the erosion of confidence in the rules-based trading system, a lot of non-market practices coming into play, tariff and non-tariff barriers to free trade. There is over-concentration of supply chains, both at the source and at times on the demand side," Goyal said.

He added that there is dilution of the special and differential treatment.



INDIGO FLIGHT MAKES
EMERGENCY LANDING IN
VARANASI AFTER FUEL
LEAK: COPS

Diary Times Desk : An Indigo flight from Kolkata to Srinagar made an emergency landing at Lal Bahadur Shastri International Airport in Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh, following a fuel leak.

All 166 passengers and crew were safely evacuated.

Airport authorities are investigating the incident. The situation is under control and normal operations have resumed, the police said.

The flight 6E 6961, operating from Kolkata to Srinagar, made a precautionary landing at the Varanasi Airport due to a suspected technical issue, a spokesperson of Indigo said.

"As a safety measure, the aircraft has been grounded for necessary checks, and an alternate aircraft has been arranged to continue the journey," Indigo said.

NORTHEAST'S BIGGEST
ARMED GROUP'S LEADER, IN
TALKS WITH CENTRE, VISITS
HOME IN MANIPUR AFTER
50 YEARS

Diary Times Desk : Thuingaleng Muivah, the 91-year-old chief of the northeast's largest insurgent group NSCN(IM), returned to his village today in Manipur's Ukhrul district - where he has not set foot for 50 years. Hundreds of people lined up on the streets of Ukhrul to welcome their "Ato Kilonser", or "prime minister" in the NSCN(IM) heirarchy.

Schoolchildren in bright red sweaters waved the distinct light blue flag of their community, and dozens of men and women in traditional Tangkhul Naga attire came to greet Muivah.

Born to a Tangkhul Naga family in Ukhrul's Somdal village, Muivah heads the National Socialist Council of Nagaland (Isak-Muivah), or NSCN(IM), a Naga armed group that has been in talks with the Centre since 1997.

The NSCN(IM) and the Centre announced a major milestone in 2015 in the form of a "Framework Agreement" to find a sustainable and peaceful solution to their demands.

Isak Chishi Swu, the other top leader of the NSCN(IM), died at 87 due to multiorgan failure at a Delhi hospital in June 2016.

350 VS 1,100, CPCB VS IQAIR, WHO HAS
GOT DELHI'S AQI RIGHT



Diary Times Desk : Delhi's sky turned grey and hazy a day after Diwali fireworks lit up the city. The air, toxic, making the national capital the "most polluted major global city". The pollution levels or the Air Quality Index (AQI) soared to severe levels, resulting in difficulty in breathing, itchy eyes and causing discomfort to even healthy people. IQAir, a Swiss air-quality monitoring company, clocked the city's AQI at a staggering 1,121 on Tuesday. However, India's Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) reported a much lower AQI of 351, falling under the "very poor" category. The catch is - both the readings are correct but for different reasons.

The Air Quality Index (AQI) is a public health tool designed to communicate air pollution levels or the quality of air in simple terms. Eight pollutants namely particulate matter (PM) 10, PM2.5, Ozone (O3), Sulphur dioxide (SO2), nitrogen dioxide (NO2), carbon monoxide (CO), lead (Pb) and ammonia (NH3) act as major parameters in deriving the AQI of an area, as per the CPCB.

3 ARRESTED FOR GANG-RAPING
WOMAN IN BENGALURU, THEN
ROBBING HER HOUSE

Diary Times Desk : A woman from West Bengal was allegedly gang-raped and robbed at a house in Bengaluru Rural's Gangondanahalli, the police said. The incident happened between 9.15 pm and midnight on Tuesday.

Five men barged into the house after asking the residents to open the door. There were six people in the house.

The police received a distress call at 12.30 am from the elder son of the survivor, following which senior officers rushed to the spot.

"The accused not only committed sexual assault but also took away two mobile phones and Rs 25,000 from the house," Bengaluru Rural Superintendent of Police CK Baba said.

MEHUL CHOKSI COMPLAINED ABOUT
INDIAN JAILS. SEE WHERE HE WILL BE
IMPRISONED

Diary Times Desk : Fugitive diamond merchant Mehul Choksi has suffered a big setback in his plea against extradition to India. A Belgium court has said there are no legal barriers and the charges against him were serious enough to justify it.

Choksi, 66, fled India on January 2, 2018. He is wanted by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) and the Enforcement Directorate (ED) for allegedly defrauding the Punjab National Bank (PNB) of Rs 13,850 crore.

In 2018, Choksi had opposed the CBI's plea to Interpol seeking a red corner notice against him on the ground that the conditions in jails in India were not good. He also said that the prisons in the country violated human rights conditions.

On Tuesday, detailed architectural drawings and interior images of the Arthur Road Jail were presented before a Belgian court.

INDIA NOW 9TH GLOBALLY IN FOREST AREA; BEHIND ONLY CHINA &
RUSSIA IN ANNUAL GREEN GAIN

Diary Times Desk : India moved up one spot to the ninth position in the world's total forest area rankings and retained its third spot for annual forest gains, according to the United Nations' Global Forest Resource Assessment (GFRA) 2025.

Union environment minister Bhupender Yadav attributed the improvement to the government's conservation policies. "The achievement comes on the back of the Modi government's planning and policies for the protection and enhancement of the forest and massive plantation efforts by state governments," he posted Wednesday on 'X'.

Released by the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), GFRA tracks long-term forest trends and their impact on global biodiversity, climate and sustainable land use targets. This year's assessment analysed 35 years of data from 236 countries across three periods: 1990-2000, 2000-2015, and 2015-2025.





AUSTRALIAN PM DEFENDS
AMBASSADOR TO US AFTER TRUMP
RUN-IN

Diary Times Desk :

Australia's Prime Minister Anthony Albanese has strongly defended his ambassador to the US after Donald Trump said he did not like the diplomat during a meeting at the White House.

On Monday, Trump was asked about Kevin Rudd, a former prime minister turned ambassador to the US, who wrote several now-deleted tweets critical of the US president years before his Washington posting.

Rudd owned up to the tweets, prompting the US leader to say "I don't like you either" and causing the room to erupt in laughter.

The high-stakes meeting with Trump was Albanese's first, and the prime minister later dismissed the comments as "banter" amid calls to sack Rudd.

Australia's opposition leader Sussan Ley said Trump's comments meant Rudd's position was "untenable" and that he should be dismissed as ambassador.

XI'S ANTI-CORRUPTION PURGE OF
THE PLA: THE 9 TOP MILITARY
OFFICERS WHO'VE GOT THE BOOT
SO FAR

Diary Times Desk : Nine senior officials from China's People's Liberation Army (PLA), including He Weidong, the second vice-chairman of the powerful Central Military Commission (CMC), were purged last week as President Xi Jinping expanded the drive to root out corruption within the Chinese military.

He Weidong, who has been missing since March, was the third most powerful member of the PLA and also a member of the all-powerful Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China (CPC). General He has been expelled from the CPC for violating party discipline and "serious crimes" while on duty, including corruption involving "large amounts", according to an editorial in PLA Daily, the official newspaper of the Chinese military.

"Expulsion from the Party and transfer of suspected crimes to the military procuratorate for examination and prosecution according to law are important measures to further promote the construction of Party style and clean government and the fight against corruption.

ISRAEL 'NOT A PROTECTORATE' OF US, NETANYAHU SAYS AHEAD OF
MEETING WITH VANCE

Diary Times Desk : Israel's Prime Minister toughened his stance on Wednesday by declaring that his country is in charge of its own security and isn't an American protectorate as he prepared to discuss progress on Gaza's fragile ceasefire agreement with US Vice President JD Vance.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's remarks ahead of his meeting with Vance appeared aimed easing public concerns that the presence of an envisioned international security force in Gaza could limit Israel's ability to strike in the devastated territory to thwart future threats.

"We are not a protectorate of the United States. Israel is the one that will decide on its security," Netanyahu said in a statement issued by his office as he headed into the meeting.

MARYAM NAWAZ LIED. IMPERIAL
COLLEGE LONDON IS NOT OPENING A
CAMPUS IN LAHORE



Diary Times Desk : Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz is now "the Queen of Fabrication". She is being called out in Pakistan for lying about the Imperial College London opening a new campus in Lahore.

About a week after she made such a claim, the college officially made a statement refuting it and asserting that no such plans are underway. Pakistanis are embarrassed and angry.

"She just can't stop lying. From motorways to make-believe — now we've got Imperial College Lahore, courtesy of the Queen of Fabrication. Maryam Nawaz just launched a new degree: Bachelor in Blatant Lies. Admissions open everywhere," an angry Pakistani X user wrote.

TÜRKIYE STEPS UP PUSH FOR
EUROFIGHTER, F-35 JETS TO REINFORCE
AIR POWER

Diary Times Desk : Türkiye is evaluating various options to bolster its air power and has intensified efforts to rapidly procure advanced fighter jets from European countries and the United States as it seeks to make up ground on regional rivals such as Israel, a report said Wednesday.

NATO-member Türkiye, which has the alliance's second-largest military, aims to leverage its best relations with the West in years to add 40 Eurofighter Typhoons warplanes, for which it inked a preliminary agreement in July, and later also U.S.-made F-35 jets, despite Washington sanctions that currently block any deal. Strikes by Israel, the Middle East's most advanced military with hundreds of U.S.-supplied F-15, F-16 and F-35 fighters, on Türkiye's neighbors Iran and Syria, as well as on Lebanon and Qatar, unnerved Ankara in the last year.

These have prompted its push for rapid air power reinforcement to counter any potential threats, according to officials.

WHAT TO KNOW ABOUT 13
HOSTAGES WHOSE
REMAINS ARE STILL INSIDE
GAZA

Diary Times Desk : Palestinian militants have so far released the remains of 15 hostages that were held in Gaza for the past two years as part of the ceasefire agreement in the Israel-Hamas war.

But the process of returning the bodies of the last 13 remaining hostages, as called for under the truce deal, has progressed slowly as militants release just one or two bodies every few days.

Hamas says it has not been able to reach all of the remains because they are buried under rubble left behind by Israel's two-year offensive in the Gaza Strip.

Israel has accused the militants of dragging their feet and threatened to resume military operations or withhold humanitarian aid if all of the remains are not returned.

UGANDAN POLICE LOWER
DEATH TOLL FROM MAJOR
BUS CRASH TO 46

Diary Times Desk : Ugandan police on Wednesday revised down the death toll from a major bus crash on one of the country's busiest highways, saying it had killed 46 people whereas before they had given a toll of 63.

The crash happened just after midnight on the highway between the capital Kampala and the northern city of Gulu.

Initial investigations suggest it was caused by two buses coming from opposite directions trying to overtake other vehicles, a lorry and a sport utility vehicle (SUV). The two buses collided head-on.

The Uganda Police Force said in a statement that they had mistakenly given a higher death toll earlier in the day because some victims had been found unconscious at the scene, meaning they were erroneously included in the initial toll.

President Yoweri Museveni sent condolences to the victims while campaigning for January's general election not far from the place the accident happened.





ISRAEL IDENTIFIES 2 MORE BODIES OF HOSTAGES AS JD VANCE MEETS
NETANYAHU



Diary Times Desk : Israel has completed the identification of the bodies of two more hostages, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's office said Wednesday, as US Vice President JD Vance held high-level meetings in Israel to nudge forward Gaza's fragile ceasefire.

Authorities identified the dead hostages as Arie Zalmanovich and Tamir Adar. Their bodies were transported in coffins by the Red Cross and handed over to the Israeli military in the Gaza Strip.

The two were killed in Kibbutz Nir Oz during the October 7, 2023, attack by Hamas, which triggered the two-year war.

Since the ceasefire began on October 10, the remains of 15 hostages have been returned to Israel. Another 13 still need to be recovered in Gaza and handed over, a key element to the ceasefire agreement.

"DISARMING HAMAS WILL BE A
TOUGH TASK," SAYS JD VANCE

Diary Times Desk : US Vice President JD Vance warned Wednesday of the tough task ahead in disarming Hamas and building a peaceful future for Gaza, as Washington sought to reassure its ally Israel over the next steps in its ambitious ceasefire deal. Vance met Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on the second day of a trip to Israel, part of a diplomatic blitz in support of the US-brokered plan to end the fighting, recover hostages and, eventually, rebuild the devastated Palestinian territory.

"We have a very, very tough task ahead of us, which is to disarm Hamas but rebuild Gaza, to make life better for the people of Gaza, but also to ensure that Hamas is no longer a threat to our friends in Israel," Vance said.

CAR CRASHES INTO WHITE HOUSE
SECURITY GATE, DRIVER ARRESTED

Diary Times Desk : A motorist was arrested after he "drove his vehicle" into a security gate outside the White House complex, authorities said. The incident took place around 10:37 pm on Tuesday when the man crashed into the security gate at the White House, located near the corner of 17th and E Streets, the US Secret Service said.

The agency said in its statement that the vehicle was deemed safe after checks by its officers and officials from Washington's Metropolitan Police Department. However, the driver was immediately arrested.

Authorities did not immediately provide any additional information about the crash, the driver's identity or any potential motivation.

TRUMP PRESSED ZELENSKY TO CEDE DONBAS IN 'TENSE TALKS': KYIV OFFICIAL

Diary Times Desk : US President Donald Trump pressured Ukrainian counterpart Volodymyr Zelensky to give up the eastern Donbas region in exchange for peace during "tense" talks last Friday in Washington, a senior Ukrainian official told AFP.

The source added that the talks with Trump were "not easy", and that diplomatic efforts to end the Russia-Ukraine war felt like they were being "dragged out" and "going in circles".

Trump has been unable to broker a speedy end to Russia's three-and-a-half-year invasion since returning to the White House in January, despite meeting Russian President Vladimir Putin for peace talks in Alaska in August. Hopes for a quick end to the war have since dimmed.

Putin and Trump last week announced plans for a second meeting in Budapest.



"CHINA HAS BEEN VERY
ROUGH ON US": TRUMP ON
SLAPPING 155% TARIFFS

Diary Times Desk : US President Donald Trump on Tuesday (local time) stated that Washington would continue with their plans to impose a 155 per cent tariff on Chinese goods imported into the US beginning November 1, despite expressing his desire to maintain amicable ties with Beijing.

Responding to a question by ANI if tariffs would be considered on China, as it is still Russia's largest oil importer, the US President said, "Right now, as of November 1st, China will have about 155 per cent tariffs put on it. I don't think it's sustainable for them."

Trump said while he personally wishes to maintain friendly relations with China, years of one-sided economic dealings have left the US with no choice but to take firm action.

"I want to be nice to China. But China has been very rough with us over the years because we had presidents that weren't smart from a business standpoint... They allowed China and every other country to take advantage of us," Trump added.

WHO IS PAYING FOR
TRUMP'S WHITE HOUSE
BALLROOM?

Diary Times Desk : As construction begins on US President Donald Trump's new \$250m (£187m) White House ballroom, mystery continues to swirl around the identities of the wealthy donors and corporations paying for it.

Groundbreaking for the ornate 90,000 sq ft (8,360 sq m) project began on Monday, with excavators and construction workers tearing out portions of the East Wing.

The US president has said that he personally will pay for significant portions of its construction, and suggested that some still anonymous donors would be willing to spend more than \$20m to complete the project.

The funding model has sparked concern among some legal experts, who say it may amount to paying for access to the administration.

"I view this enormous ballroom as an ethics nightmare," Richard Painter, a former chief ethics lawyer in the Bush White House between 2005 and 2007, told the BBC.

"It's using access to the White House to raise money. I don't like it," he added.

"These corporations all want something from the government."

A dinner for potential donors held at the White House on 15 October included senior executives from prominent US companies including Blackstone, OpenAI, Microsoft, Coinbase, Palantir, Lockheed Martin, Microsoft, Amazon and Google.



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DIWALI



INTERNATIONAL

DIARY TIMES

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JAPAN'S NEW PM TO WOO TRUMP WITH PICKUPS AND SOYBEANS

Diary Times Desk : As Japan's new premier Sanae Takaichi got to work on Wednesday, her government began finalising a purchase package, including US pickups, soybeans and gas, to present to President Donald Trump in trade and security talks next week, two sources said. She will not, however, commit to any new defence spending target at the meeting, which comes as Washington presses Japan and other allies to do more, said one of the sources with knowledge of the preparations.

The two leaders will sit down in Tokyo during Trump's early next week, in his first visit to Japan since his re-election following an agreement by her predecessor, Shigeru Ishiba, to invest as much as \$550 billion in the US in return for lower auto tariffs.

"The alliance with the United States is the cornerstone of Japan's foreign and security policy," Takaichi said on Tuesday at her inaugural press conference as prime minister.



'REPLACES DEMOCRACY WITH ASIM LAW': IMRAN KHAN SLAMS MUNIR FOR TURNING PAKISTAN INTO A 'HARD STATE'

Diary Times Desk : Jailed former prime minister Imran Khan on Wednesday slammed Army chief Asim Munir for turning Pakistan into a "hard state" through force.

The 73-year-old former cricketer-turned-politician has been in jail for over two years in multiple cases.

"In its true sense, a hard state means a country where the supremacy of the Constitution, rule of law, justice, and democratic freedoms prevail... However, Asim Munir's version of a 'hard state' means a system where all democratic pillars are crushed and replaced by 'Asim Law,'" Khan said in a post on X.

"Let it be clear... no state can ever become 'hard' or strong without the support and consent of its people. The atrocities being committed under the so-called Asim Law are not strengthening the state; rather, they are weakening its very foundations," he said.

'MORON': WHITE HOUSE TORCHES USHA VANCE RUMOURS AS EX-PRESS SECY SAYS 'JD VANCE WANTS TO BE PRESIDENT'

Diary Times Desk : A top White House official under the Donald Trump administration has outrightly lambasted ex-WH press secretary Jen Psaki for her recent claims about US Vice President JD Vance and his wife Usha.

Taking to his official X profile, Steven Cheung, who is the assistant to the POTUS and the White House Director of Communications, resorted to downright expletive-laden language while calling out the former official who served under both Obama and Biden administrations. "Jen Psaki must be transferring her own personal issues onto others," he tweeted, while misspelling her. "@jrpsaki is a dumba** who has no comprehension of the truth and has to overcompensate for her lack of talent by saying untrue things. Circle back on that, moron."

WHY PLANNED TRUMP-PUTIN TALKS COLLAPSED, AND WHAT IT MEANS FOR UKRAINE

Diary Times Desk : Plans for an in-person meeting between United States President Donald Trump and his Russian counterpart, Vladimir Putin, in the next two weeks in Budapest, Hungary, fell apart on Tuesday, after Trump proposed "freezing" the Russia-Ukraine war with a ceasefire along the current front lines.

Apparently signalling that no meeting would take place anytime soon, Trump told the media at the White House on Tuesday: "I don't want to have a wasted meeting. I don't want to have a waste of time, so I'll see what happens."

The latest derailing of peace talks to bring an end to Russia's 42-month-long war on Ukraine comes just two months after Trump and Putin met at a hastily arranged summit in Alaska in August this year that also did not yield any results.

The largest and deadliest war in Europe since World War II has killed tens of thousands of people on both sides.

So, why have plans for talks collapsed yet again, and what will it take for Russia to end the war?

"What I say is they should stop right now at the battle lines, go home, stop killing people and be done," the US president said.



TRUMP'S CALL TO FREEZE CURRENT FRONTLINES "GOOD COMPROMISE": ZELENSKY

Diary Times Desk : Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky on Wednesday backed US leader Donald Trump's proposal to make the current front line the basis for negotiations with Russia, but doubted his Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin would accept it. Trump "proposed 'Stay where we stay and begin conversation'," Zelensky told reporters during a brief visit to Oslo.

"I think that was a good compromise, but I'm not sure that Putin will support it, and I said it to the president," he said.

Efforts to bring an end to Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine, launched in 2022, appear to have once again hit a standstill.

In recent days, Trump has urged both Moscow and Kyiv to stop the war at their current battle lines.

Trump said Tuesday he had shelved plans for a summit in Budapest with Putin in the coming weeks because he did not want a "wasted" meeting.

ALL ABOUT KAFALA LABOUR SYSTEM SCRAPPED BY SAUDI THAT AFFECTED 2.3 MILLION INDIANS

Diary Times Desk : Saudi Arabia this month confirmed it had abolished the controversial 50-year-old kafala labour sponsorship system reviled as 'modern-day slavery', allowing employers - called kafeel - inhuman levels of control over employees, including confiscating travel documents and deciding if and when they could change jobs, or even leave the country.

In some cases, such as Jacintha Mendonca - a 46-year-old nurse from Karnataka lured by the promise of a lucrative job in Qatar but trafficked to Saudi in 2016 - they might even be held for ransom; her kafeel demanded Rs 4.3 lakh. Her release was negotiated through diplomatic and legal channels.

Mendonca's experience was one of hard-luck horror stories involving young Indians drawn to the Gulf and the opportunity to earn in dinars or riyals, get rich quick, and come back home. Now, however, such horrific incidents will not happen. At least, they have been made illegal - and so should not - in Saudi Arabia, as they already have in Israel and Bahrain. It persists, in different guises, in Gulf countries like Kuwait, Oman, Lebanon, and Qatar.

Across these nations there are nearly 25 million foreign nationals living and toiling under their kafeel's thumb. Unsurprisingly, Indians make up the largest - around 7.5 million - group.



PUTIN DIRECTS DRILLS OF NUCLEAR FORCES AS SUMMIT WITH TRUMP PUT ON HOLD



Diary Times Desk : Russian President Vladimir Putin on Wednesday directed drills of the country's strategic nuclear forces that featured practice missile launches, an exercise that came as his planned summit on Ukraine with US President Donald Trump was put on hold.

The Kremlin said that as part of the manoeuvres involving all parts of Moscow's nuclear triad, a Yars intercontinental ballistic missile was test-fired from the Plesetsk launch facility in northwestern Russia, and a Sineva ICBM was launched by a submarine in the Barents Sea. The drills also involved Tu-95 strategic bombers firing long-range cruise missiles. The exercise tested the skills of military command structures, the Kremlin said in a statement.

The chief of the military's General Staff, Gen. Valery Gerasimov, reported to Putin via video link that the drills were intended to "practice procedures for authorising the use of nuclear weapons."

RUSSIAN DRONE, MISSILE ATTACKS KILL 6 PEOPLE ACROSS UKRAINE

Diary Times Desk : A large-scale Russian drone and missile attack across Ukraine killed at least six people, including a woman and her two young daughters, officials said Wednesday, as US-led efforts to end the war floundered and Ukraine's president sought more foreign military help.

Repeated waves of missiles and drones throughout the night targeted at least eight Ukrainian cities, as well as a village in the Kyiv region where a strike set fire to a house in which the mother and her 6-month and 12-year-old daughters were staying, regional head Mykola Kalashnyk said.

At least 25 people, including five children, were injured in Kyiv alone, authorities said.

Russian drones also hit a kindergarten in Kharkiv, Ukraine's second-largest city, during the day Wednesday when children were in the building, Mayor Ihor Terekhov said. One person was killed and six were injured but no children were physically harmed, he said.

TRUMP NOMINEE WITHDRAWS AFTER OFFENSIVE TEXTS ALLEGEDLY EMERGE

Diary Times Desk : Paul Ingrassia, the nominee of President Donald Trump to lead a key US federal watchdog agency, has dropped out after the emergence of a series of offensive text messages that he allegedly sent.

Ingrassia, 30, said he was withdrawing his name to lead the Office of Special Counsel (OSC) "because unfortunately I do not have enough Republican votes at this time".

Several Republican senators had warned they would vote against Ingrassia after Politico reported earlier this week that he had sent messages to a group chat in which he allegedly described himself as having a "Nazi streak".

A White House official confirmed to BBC News that Ingrassia was no longer Trump's nominee for the role.

UN'S TOP COURT SAYS ISRAEL OBLIGED TO ALLOW UN AID INTO GAZA

Diary Times Desk : The International Court of Justice (ICJ) has said Israel is obliged to facilitate the delivery of humanitarian aid to the Gaza Strip by the United Nations and its entities to ensure the basic needs of the Palestinian civilians are met.

An advisory opinion from the UN's top court also said Israel had not substantiated its allegations that the UN agency for Palestinian refugees (Unrwa) lacked neutrality or that a significant number of its staff were members of Hamas or other armed groups. Unrwa has denied the claims.

Israel rejected the opinion as "political" and insisted it would not co-operate with Unrwa.

The opinion is non-binding, but it carries significant moral and diplomatic weight.

The UN General Assembly asked the ICJ in December for an opinion on Israel's legal obligations towards UN agencies and international organisations operating in the occupied West Bank and Gaza.

It came after the Israeli parliament passed laws banning any activity by Unrwa on Israeli territory and contact with Israeli officials.

The ICJ was asked to also cover in its opinion Israel's duty to allow the unhindered delivery of essential supplies to Palestinian civilians.

US CLARIFIES \$100,000 H-1B VISA FEE RULES: WHO PAYS, WHO'S EXEMPT, AND HOW TO MAKE THE PAYMENT

Diary Times Desk : Working and living in the United States has long been an aspiration for many Indian professionals and graduates. But the recent announcement of a \$100,000 fee linked to the H-1B visa programme sent shockwaves through both employers and foreign workers.

Now, the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) has issued a clarification - released on October 20 - outlining who must pay the fee, who is exempt, and how the payment process will work. The update has provided much-needed clarity and relief, particularly for existing H-1B visa holders already living and working in the U.S. The H-1B visa allows skilled foreign professionals to work in the U.S. in specialised fields that demand specific qualifications - including technology, engineering, finance, healthcare, and research.

JAPAN'S FIRST WOMAN PM SANAЕ TAKAICHI PLAYS HEAVY METAL DRUMS TO RELIEVE STRESS

Diary Times Desk : Former Economic Security Minister Sanae Takaichi was voted in by parliament as Japan's first female prime minister on Tuesday, weeks after she was elected leader of the ruling Liberal Democratic Party (LDP).

Takaichi, 64, is a die-hard heavy metal fan who uses drumming as a stress reliever.

When she's away from discussions and decisions on major issues such as diplomacy, economy, and defence, Takaichi plays heavy-metal drums. She uses her electronic drum kit at home to "let off steam" when the demands of public life get a bit much.

"I play after he goes to sleep," she joked about her husband in a recent interview with a Japanese YouTuber.

From playing drums in a college band to now practising on her electric set, her passion for music has always been a defining trait.

Takaichi, a fan of Margaret Thatcher, the first female prime minister of the United Kingdom, started performing in a band as a student, covering Deep Purple, Metallica and Black Sabbath classics.

There is still a drum kit in her official apartment, used discreetly while wearing headphones to avoid disturbing coworkers, according to CBS News.





**BESSENT CALLS \$20
BILLION LIFELINE TO
ARGENTINA A
'MISSION-CRITICAL'
FUNCTION OF
TREASURY DURING
SHUTDOWN**

Diary Times Desk :

Finalizing a \$20 billion lifeline for Argentina using taxpayers' funds during the government shutdown was an essential action for the agency, Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent said Tuesday.

His remarks came in response to a letter from Sen. Elizabeth Warren, the ranking member of the Senate Banking Committee, who wrote to Bessent a week prior requesting an explanation as to why the Treasury Department was working on the Argentinian lifeline during a shutdown of the federal government that has restrained resources.

"We have been forced to prioritize mission-critical efforts necessary to the discharge of the President's constitutional duties — including national security and global financial stability," Bessent wrote to Warren, in a letter the senator shared exclusively with CNN.

**TESLA IS EXPECTED TO
HAVE HAD A GREAT
QUARTER. TROUBLE IS
ON THE HORIZON**

Diary Times Desk :

Tesla is set to report its best quarterly earnings so far this year. What lies ahead is the problem.

Analysts forecast that the company on Wednesday will report adjusted earnings of about \$1.9 billion, driven by record sales of nearly 500,000 cars during the quarter. But that falls short of the \$2.5 billion Tesla earned a year ago, a sign of the headwinds the company faces.

The company's third quarter sales surged as Americans rushed to buy electric cars before a \$7,500 federal tax credit expired on October 1. But American electric vehicle sales are widely expected to plunge in the fourth quarter because people who would have normally bought later in the year purchased early to lock in the tax break. That credit loss could also affect EV demand among American buyers going forward.

**WELFARE CUTS ARE FUELING THE RISE OF THE FAR RIGHT GLOBALLY,
THE UN FINDS**

Diary Times Desk :

Cuts to social protection for people living in poverty have created "fertile ground" for far-right movements around the world, according to a United Nations report.

Popular support for the far right has grown globally in recent years. In Europe, Giorgia Meloni became Italy's most far-right leader since Benito Mussolini in 2022, while the far-right Alternative for Germany is now Germany's largest opposition party. The Trump administration has endorsed far-right parties in Europe, and in Argentina far-right libertarian Javier Milei won the presidency in 2023.

The UN report, unveiled Wednesday, says changes to welfare systems have made it harder to access benefits by tightening eligibility rules or imposing stricter conditions, contributing to the kind of economic precarity and alienation that drives people to the far right.

"These punitive welfare systems increase economic insecurity, erode trust in public institutions and leave millions feeling humiliated and abandoned by mainstream politics," the report's author.



YOU THOUGHT MONDAY'S INTERNET OUTAGE WAS BAD? JUST WAIT

Diary Times Desk : Monday's Amazon Web Services outage — and the global disruption it caused — underscored just how reliant the internet has become on a small number of core infrastructure providers.

The ramifications of such outages could only get worse if artificial intelligence becomes as central to work and daily life as tech giants suggest it will in the coming years.

Monday's outage briefly blocked some people from scheduling doctor's appointments and accessing banking services. But what if an outage took down the AI tools that doctors were using to help diagnose patients, or that companies used to help facilitate financial transactions?

It may be a hypothetical scenario today, but the tech industry is promising a rapid shift toward AI "agents" doing more work on behalf of humans in the near future.



**MORE AND MORE WORKERS ARE USING WEIGHT LOSS DRUGS. IT'S
COSTING THEIR EMPLOYERS A FORTUNE**

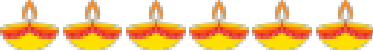
Diary Times Desk : Weight loss drugs are proving to be super popular among many workers with job-based health insurance. But GLP-1 medications are busting their employers' budgets, leading some firms to rethink their coverage.

The share of very large firms covering these drugs for obesity soared to 43% this year, up from 28% last year, according to KFF's latest annual Employer Health Benefits Survey, which was released on Wednesday. These employers, who have more than 5,000 workers, are much more likely than their smaller counterparts to offer such a benefit.

Among firms with between 200 and 999 staffers, only 16% provide coverage of drugs for weight loss this year, the same as last year, according to KFF, a nonpartisan health policy research group.

GLP-1 drugs, which treat diabetes, obesity and certain other conditions, have been in great demand since they came on the market a few years ago because they help patients shed pounds.





THIS BILLIONAIRE
INVESTOR WHO TRIED
TO BUY TIKTOK IS
ANALYZING WHETHER
TRUMP’S DEAL IS LEGAL

Diary Times Desk :
Billionaire investor Frank
McCourt, an early bidder for
TikTok, told CNN last month he is
looking into whether the White
House-brokered agreement for a
majority-American investor
group to buy the app’s US
assets is legal.

While McCourt said “it’s too
early to say” whether he would
seek to join the ownership group
or challenge the deal in court if
he believes it doesn’t comply
with the law, he said he believes
the American public deserves
more information about the
agreement.

“I’ve asked and engaged some
really smart people to analyze
(the deal) the best they can,
with the information available,
because there are still missing
pieces with what this all means,”
McCourt said in an interview
with CNN’s Terms of Service
podcast on September 26, days
after the White House
announced a proposed deal for
the app to be sold to a different
investor group. He said his team
is investigating whether the
proposed deal complies with
the sale-or-ban law passed last
year and whether it addresses
the national security concerns
behind the legislation.

HOW A DUTCH
CHIPMAKER GOT
CAUGHT UP IN THE US-
CHINA TECH WAR

Diary Times Desk :
The Dutch government has
taken control of a Chinese-
owned chip company based in
the Netherlands following
pressure from Washington, in a
move that spotlights how
countries are caught in the
middle of the US-China battle
for tech dominance.

Headquartered in the city of
Nijmegen, Nexperia produces
lower-end chips for consumer
electronics, automobile and
industrial applications, and runs
chipmaking facilities in
Germany and the UK.

The Dutch government said
Sunday it had taken control of
the company. Nexperia said its
CEO and shareholder Zhang
Xuezheng had been suspended
from his post following a court
order.

THE BENEFITS OF KEEPING YOUR INVESTING LIFE SIMPLE



Diary Times Desk : Are you suffering from
decision fatigue? Do you have better things to do
than oversee a complex portfolio and keep up
with the latest on Wall Street? Do you just want to
do as little as possible when it comes to investing
but still have the money you need to meet your
goals?

If so, good news: Your exhaustion and disinterest
might make you a successful investor if you
adopt a portfolio strategy we’ll call KISS (Keep It
Simple and Smart).

Beating the market is not the norm

The key to the KISS strategy is to not waste effort
trying to select the “best” of anything – stock
funds, managers, complicated sector plays.

And, instead, to feel confident you can do well
enough for your individual goals by sticking with
a few low-cost funds over time that track overall
market performance.

ACTIVIST INVESTOR GROUP THAT INCLUDES TRAVIS KELCE AIMS TO
REVIVE STRUGGLING SIX FLAGS



Diary Times Desk : A group that includes activist investor Jana Partners and NFL player Travis Kelce says it
has accumulated one of the largest ownership stakes in Six Flags Entertainment and intends to press the
company’s leadership on ways to improve the struggling amusement park operator’s business.

Jana said Tuesday that the investor group now owns an economic interest of approximately 9% in Six Flags.
The group plans to “engage” with Six Flags’ management and board of directors to discuss ways to enhance
shareholder value and improve visitors’ experience.

Shares in the Charlotte, North Carolina-based Six Flags surged 17.7% on the news. The shares added another
5.1% gain in after-hours trading. Even with Tuesday’s rally, the company’s shares are down about 47% so far
this year.

Six Flags reported a loss of \$319.4 million for the first half of the year. The company said attendance fell 9%
in the three months ended June 29, due partly to bad weather and a “challenged consumer” in most of the
markets it operates in.

The investor group also includes consumer executive Glenn Murphy and technology executive Dave Habiger.

Kelce, tight end for the Kansas City Chiefs, said in a statement that he grew up going to Six Flags amusement
parks.

“The chance to help make Six Flags special for the next generation is one I couldn’t pass up,” he said.



LAST RITES OF NAIK
SUSHIL KUMAR
PERFORMED WITH
MILITARY HONOURS IN
HAMIRPUR

Diary Times Desk : The mortal remains of Naik Sushil Kumar (40), who died of dizziness during official duty in Uttar Pradesh, were consigned to flames at his native village Panyala in Himachal's Hamirpur district on Wednesday.

His son lit the pyre in the presence of military officials and locals. Kumar is survived by his wife, son and daughter. His son and daughter are students of Classes 8 and 6, respectively.

Serving in the 13th Dogra Regiment, Kumar was posted in Uttar Pradesh's Faizabad. He died on duty after he felt dizzy and suffered a head injury at 4 am on Monday. He was rushed to the hospital but he died around 7 pm.

The atmosphere in Kumar's village was sombre on Wednesday. The last rites were performed with full military honours.

UNA AREA WITNESSES
BIGGEST NOISE SPIKE
ON DIWALI NIGHT

Diary Times Desk : The noise levels rose by 15-30 decibels points at several places across the state on Diwali night. As per the data shared by the Pollution Control Board's Member Secretary Pravin Chander Gupta, the highest spike in noise level was recorded in a residential area (Rakkad Colony) in Una.

From 43.7 decibels recorded on October 13, the noise levels jumped to 73.9 units on Diwali night, an increase of over 30 decibel points.

Interestingly, the Ridge in Shimla recorded a minor change in the noise level. As against the decibel level of 64.4 on October 13, it registered a noise level of 64.9 decibel on the Diwali night, indicating a restrained cracker bursting in the area.

The pollution control board recorded noise level in four zones – silence zone, residential zone, commercial zones and industrial zones.

BACK-TO-BACK SCANDALS ROCK PUNJAB POLICE

Diary Times Desk : The Punjab Police are in the eye of a storm, shaken by two back-to-back scandals that have cast a long shadow over its credibility and internal cohesion. Just as the force was grappling with the fallout of a corruption case against a serving Deputy Inspector General (DIG), it was jolted by the sudden and suspicious death of Aqil Akhtar, son of former Director General of Police (DGP) Mohammad Mustafa.

Both developments carry serious political implications, raising questions about accountability, power and policing in Punjab involving the ruling Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) and the Congress.

The first controversy erupted when the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) arrested DIG Harcharan Singh Bhullar for allegedly accepting a bribe of Rs 8 lakh from a scrap dealer on October 16. Subsequent raids unearthed nearly Rs 5 crore in cash, luxury vehicles and gold, deepening public outrage. Bhullar had earlier headed a Special Investigation Team probing cases against senior politician Bikram Singh Majithia.



CENTRAL INDUSTRIAL SECURITY
FORCE TAKES CHARGE OF BHAKRA
DAM PROJECT

Diary Times Desk : The Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) on Wednesday took charge of the Bhakra Dam project's security at Nangal in Punjab, a senior official said.

The Union home ministry had sanctioned a contingent of 296 armed security personnel of the central force for the task in May keeping in mind the potential sabotage and terrorist threats to the facility located along the Punjab-Himachal Pradesh border.

A ceremony to induct the CISF at the project was held in the Nangal Township on Wednesday. Senior officials from the force and the Bhakra Beas Management Board (BBMB) attended the event and they highlighted the strategic importance of this development, a CISF spokesperson said. The dam is built on the Sutlej river. The Punjab assembly in July had unanimously passed a resolution against the deployment of CISF personnel at the Bhakra-Nangal dam project. The dam was being secured by Punjab Police till now.

EXPLOSION DURING CRACKER
MAKING NEAR PUNJAB'S DERA
BABA NANAK; 2 WOMEN AMONG
7 INJURED

Diary Times Desk : Seven people sustained injuries when they were trying to make Diwali crackers using the explosive Gandhak-Potash powder at Dharmadad village, 8 km from Dera Baba Nanak township, on Tuesday night.

Police claim all seven have sustained serious injuries and have been admitted to a private hospital in Amritsar. Earlier, they were taken to the Dera Baba Nanak civil hospital from where the doctors, after seeing the serious condition in which they were brought, referred them to the private hospital.

An officer said two of the injured are women. "They were fiddling with the highly explosive Gandhak-Potash powder while trying to make crackers. The blast was so loud that the window panes of nearby houses were either broken or had developed big cracks. The powder carries a significant risk of accidental explosion when mishandled," he said.

YOUR HOROSCOPE
23-10-2025

Aries

Today, you will meet old friends, which will refresh old memories. Employed people may be fired from the job due to heavy arguments with colleagues in the workplace. People doing business should thank God for getting financial benefits from the advice of their spouse. Due to irritation in the eyes, you should consult an ophthalmologist.

Taurus

Today you will get success as your long pending legal proceedings will come in your favor. There will be an atmosphere of happiness in the family as employed people will get progress in their workplace. People doing business should make a budget and spend the money in order to get financial benefits. Housewives should change their food according to health and season.

Gemini

Today you should include yoga and meditation in your daily routine. For employed people, your responsibilities may increase due to promotion in the workplace. People doing business may suffer financial loss from any unknown person today. There may be difficulty in walking due to nerve pain problems.

Cancer

Today you will get relief from all your problems due to sudden financial gain. Employed people may have to get scolded by their boss due to being hasty in the workplace. People doing business may face increased difficulties in business due to arguments with business partners. As the problem of foot pain increases, you must consult a specialist doctor.

Leo

Today, you should offer water to Lord Shiva to avoid difficulties. A heated argument with HR in the workplace will spoil your whole day. Businessmen have to exercise patience, there are chances of improvement in business. Today, you may face stomach and pancreas problems due to eating too much fried food.

Virgo

Today you should take special control over your speech and behavior. People in employment will get success in the workplace with the help of friends. People doing business will get financial gain due to some special offer, your financial condition will be strengthened. Old diseases of elders in the house may emerge.

Libra

Today is going to be a busy day for you. Employed people will get a chance to work with senior officers due to advancement in their professional field. People doing business should avoid exchanging money with any unknown person today. Pregnant women may have to face problems due to changing weather.

Scorpio

Today you may have to face huge arguments in your family over small matters. Employed people may have to face mental problems due to extra workload in the workplace. People doing business may have to travel abroad in connection with business expansion. Diabetic patients should get themselves checked by a doctor in case of any problem today.

Sagittarius

Today you should take all important decisions of your career thoughtfully. Employed people may have to face some problems due to the start of a new job in the workplace. Due to financial gain for business people, you can invest in a new business. Problems like leg pain and headache may bother you.

Capricorn

Today you can invest especially in land and buildings. Employed people may have to travel long distances due to office work, due to which your health may deteriorate. People doing business may face difficulties in repaying business loans due to loss of money. High BP and cholesterol problems will increase the problems of your spouse.

Aquarius

Today you may have to face huge arguments in your family over small matters. Employees will be suspended due to indiscipline in the workplace. People doing business should solve all the problems of their customers in time. Due to worsening weather, problems related to cold and cough may increase in the family.

Pisces

Today your interest in creative work will especially increase. Employed people may be given an important project by their boss to handle important projects in the workplace. People doing business should control their speech and behavior with their customers. You should walk carefully on the road, problems may arise due to injury.



GURUGRAM NURSE
JUMPS TO DEATH WITH
3-YEAR-OLD SON,
DOWRY HARASSMENT
ALLEGED

Diary Times Desk : A 28-year-old nurse at a private hospital jumped from the seventh floor of a residential society with her 3-year-old son tied to her waist in the Sector 10 police station area of Gurugram. The woman and her child died on the spot. After receiving information, the police reached the scene, took the bodies into custody, and placed them in the mortuary.

An FIR for murder over dowry demands has been registered against the husband and in-laws of the deceased woman at the Sector 10-A police station. According to the police, the deceased woman and her son were identified as Sharmila and Yuvan. Sharmila worked as a nurse in a private hospital, while her husband, Rohit, runs a juice stall near the district court in Gurugram.

Rohit and Sharmila, residents of different villages in Mahendragarh district, had married four years ago and lived in a flat in Siddharth Enclave near Wazirpur village.

ADMISSIONS TO
COLLEGES REOPEN EVEN
AS EXAMS ROUND THE
CORNER

Diary Times Desk : In a significant move ahead of the upcoming semester exams, the Directorate of Higher Education (DHE) has reopened the online admission portal for undergraduate (UG) and postgraduate (PG) courses for the academic session 2025-26. The portal is live from October 21 to October 27, allowing fresh admissions with late fee across government, aided, and self-financed colleges in the state.

According to a communication by the office of the Director General Higher Education on Tuesday, all college principals have been directed to ensure compliance and facilitate the admission. The authorities claim that the decision follows a flood of requests from students and institutions, citing reasons for missing earlier admission deadlines.

DEATH OF PUNJAB EX-DGP'S SON: POLICE SAY VISCERA TO BE SENT FOR
CHEMICAL EXAMINATION

Diary Times Desk : The Special Investigation Team (SIT) of the Panchkula Police probing the death case of former Punjab DGP Mohammad Mustafa's son said on Wednesday that the cause of the fatality is yet to be ascertained and the viscera will now be sent for a chemical examination.

Mustafa and his wife Razia Sultana, a former Punjab minister, have been booked by the Panchkula Police in Haryana in connection with the death of their 35-year-old son.

Aqil Akhter was found dead at his Panchkula residence on October 16. The deceased's wife and sister have also been booked in the case. The FIR was registered on October 20 under sections 103(1) and 61 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) that deal with murder and criminal conspiracy, after a man named Shamshuddin from Punjab's Malerkotla filed a complaint alleging foul play in Akhter's death.



AIR QUALITY 'VERY POOR' IN PARTS
OF HARYANA, 'POOR' IN PUNJAB

Diary Times Desk : Air quality in parts of Haryana was recorded in the 'very poor' category while it was 'poor' in neighbouring Punjab on Wednesday.

The Air Quality Index (AQI) at Dharuhera in Haryana's Rewari district stood at 382 at 9 am, according to Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) data.

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', 401 and 450 'severe' and above 450 'severe plus'.

Narnaul and Jind also recorded 'very poor' air quality with an AQI of 367.

Other places with 'very poor' air quality included Charkhi Dadri (362), Rohtak (358), Yamunanagar (347), Fatehabad (320) and Ballabgarh (318), according to the CPCB's SAMEER app. In Punjab, Amritsar recorded an AQI of 253 at 9 am, Jalandhar 261, Patiala 207 and Ludhiana 234.

POST DIWALI, JIND, DHARUHERA
MOST POLLUTED IN COUNTRY

Diary Times Desk : As many as 22 cities and towns in Haryana reported Air Quality Index (AQI) levels in the 'poor', 'very poor', and 'severe' categories after Diwali night. The air quality also worsened compared to last year. Jind, with an AQI of 421, and Dharuhera (Rewari), with an AQI of 412, were the most polluted in the country, of 271 cities/towns where air quality was measured. These were the only two cities in the 'severe' category in the country.

A day before Diwali, Jind and Dharuhera's air quality was better. The data of 271 cities/towns was based on a 24-hour average from 4 pm on October 20 to 4 pm on October 21. It covered pollution caused by crackers. Of 14 cities in the country with 'very poor' AQI, eight were from Haryana.

According to the bulletin from the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB), 12 cities/towns in Haryana recorded 'poor' AQI, eight locations reported 'very poor' AQI, and two were in the 'severe' category. Only Mandikhera (Nuh) in the state recorded 'satisfactory' AQI (87).

SIT FORMED TO PROBE DECEASED ASI SANDEEP LATHER'S CASE

Diary Times Desk : The district police authorities have constituted a special investigation team (SIT) to look into the case of deceased ASI Sandeep Lather, in-charge of the Cyber Cell of Rohtak police, who had allegedly shot himself dead.

"We have been informed that a SIT has been constituted to investigate the matter," said Sanjay Deshwal, a cousin of the deceased ASI.

As per sources, the SIT is headed by a DSP-level police officer.

However, Rohtak Superintendent of Police Surinder Singh Bhoria could not be contacted for his comments, nor did he respond to messages. Meanwhile, a police team reached Deshwal's office on the outskirts of Rohtak city and questioned him regarding the incident and the circumstances that led to it. The police team also scanned CCTV footage of the cameras installed near Deshwal's office. Notably, ASI Sandeep had gone to Deshwal's office before he allegedly took the extreme step in a room built in a field at Ladhaut village in Rohtak.





A Significant Group Of
Americans Are Falling Behind On
Their Car

A key group of American borrowers is falling significantly behind on their car loans. It's yet another sign that the US economy is forming some serious cracks, leaving the most vulnerable in financial distress.

The percentage of subprime borrowers – those with credit scores below 670 – who are at least 60 days late on their car loans has doubled since 2021 to 6.43%, according to Fitch Ratings. That's worse than during the past three recessions – during the Covid pandemic, the Great Recession or the dot-com bust.

America's current subprime delinquency rate is at the second-highest level since the early 1990s. The only time it was higher: this past January. Cars are being repossessed at the highest rate since the Great Recession of 2008 and 2009.

It's a disturbing trend to economists: Car loans are typically the last payments that Americans are willing to miss.

No room for error



Chris Isidore

Record car prices and high interest rates, combined with other inflationary pressures, have sent average auto payments to record levels and have put

"The (repo) numbers indicate it's probably close to the Great Recession in volume," said George Badeen, who runs Midwest Recovery and Adjustment in Detroit, and is also president of one of his industry's trade groups.

significant stress on car owners.

Although the financial stress on subprime car borrowers has stabilized in 2025 after large increases in late payments and repossessions over the past two years, economists fear what might happen if the labor market grows considerably weaker and layoffs become more common.

For subprime borrowers, the default rate – those whose cars have been or are about to be repossessed – which stood at nearly 10% in September, according to Cox Automotive data. That's down from a year ago but above the long-term average.

Those borrowers often have no choice but to default. They can't sell their cars because they owe so much more than it is worth. They often have already missed payments on other obligations, such as mortgage payments or rent, as well as payments due on credit cards and student loans.



"There's no room for error," said Jonathan Smoke, chief economist at Cox Automotive.

Surging costs
Just over half of new car leases and more than three-quarters of new car loans made in the second quarter had monthly payments of \$500 or more, and 46% of used car loans have payments of \$500 or above, according to Experian. For new car loans, more than 17% have payments of more than \$1,000.

Repair costs have also surged – at a time when many are holding onto their cars for longer to avoid splurging on a new one. Motor vehicle repair costs surged 15% year-over-year in August, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics. That's the most in nearly two years. And repair costs increased 5% between July and August, the biggest monthly increase on record.

Gold's Record-Breaking Rally

GOLD'S FRENZIED RALLY ENDS WITH LARGEST SELL-OFF IN OVER A DECADE

Gold prices gained modestly on Wednesday after the precious metal's spectacular rally came to an abrupt halt on Tuesday, when prices tumbled more than 5%. The drop in the price of gold, which is viewed as a safe-haven asset in times of uncertainty, came as investors took profits from a record-breaking rally and as American and Chinese officials are expected to meet again for another round of trade talks.



John Liu

Another factor behind the dip is the end of the Diwali festival in India – the world's second-largest consumer of gold – which typically sees strong seasonal buying. With the festival now concluded, physical demand has eased, adding further downward pressure to prices.

Gold was last trading at \$4,141.48 per troy ounce at 1:46 am ET on Wednesday, up less than 0.4%.

On Tuesday, spot gold fell as much as 6.3% to \$4,082.03 a troy ounce, after hitting an all-time high of \$4,381.21 on Monday. US gold futures settled down 5.7% at \$4,087.70, marking the steepest percentage decline since April 2013. Silver and platinum also slumped sharply on Tuesday, down 7% and 5% respectively. Analysts said the sell-off followed weeks of heavy buying that had pushed gold to overheated levels.

Gold has seen historic gains in 2025, its more-than-50% surge surpassing previous volatile periods such as after the September 11 attacks, the 2008 financial crisis or even the Covid-19 pandemic.



"I expect we'll probably work out a very fair deal with President Xi of China," Trump said on Monday. "I think we're going to work out something that's good."

In the past two months alone, gold prices have rallied 25%, driven by demand amid rising US government debt, political uncertainty, and speculation about further interest rate cuts by the Federal Reserve.

But optimism over easing trade tensions between Washington and Beijing, as well as a rebound in the US dollar, prompted investors to lock in profits. Despite renewed tensions between the world's two largest economies in recent weeks, their trade representatives are expected to meet late this week ahead of a planned meeting between Chinese leader Xi Jinping and US President Donald Trump next week.

"I expect we'll probably work out a very fair deal with President Xi of China," Trump said on Monday.

"I think we're going to work out something that's good."

Analysts have also pointed to the end of the Diwali festival in India, the world's second-largest gold consumer, reducing physical demand, as another reason for the fall in gold prices.

After weeks of soaring to historic highs, gold's meteoric rise came to an abrupt halt on Tuesday, plunging more than 5% in its steepest one-day drop since 2013. The precious metal, which hit an all-time high of \$4,381 per ounce on Monday, fell as much as 6.3% to \$4,082 before closing at \$4,087.70.

By early Wednesday, gold recovered slightly to trade around \$4,141, up 0.4%. Analysts attributed the fall to profit-taking after an overheated rally that had pushed prices more than 50% higher since the start of 2025 – surpassing even the volatility seen after 9/11, the 2008 financial crisis, or the COVID-19 pandemic.

Silver and platinum mirrored the trend, dropping 7% and 5% respectively.

The sell-off comes amid renewed optimism around potential trade talks between the United States and China. Both nations are expected to resume discussions later this week, with a meeting between President Donald Trump and Chinese leader Xi Jinping scheduled for next week.

INFA

Unusual Stays

25 MUST-VISIT PLACES AND MUST-DO EXPERIENCES NAMED FOR 2026

Not booked your 2026 vacation yet? Get moving, as the must-visit destinations lists for next year are starting to drop.



Maureen O'Hare

The vibrant food scene in Melbourne, Australia, is another of this year's picks. With cuisine inspired by Asian, African and Mediterranean influences, it's "eclectic, energetic and experimental," says Lonely Planet.

The venerable travel guide Lonely Planet published its "Best in Travel 2026" book on October 21, featuring a list of 25 great places and 25 great experiences to try out in the year ahead. It's accompanied by a set of unique itineraries curated on the new Lonely Planet Journeys travel-planning service.

CNN Travel caught up with Nitya Chambers, Lonely Planet's executive editor and senior vice president of content, to find out what made the cut and why.

Best places
One of Chambers' favorite picks on this year's list? Brazil's "Little Japan," otherwise known as the São Paulo neighborhood of Liberdade.

"Brazil has the largest Japanese community outside of Japan; 2 million claim connection to Japanese descent in Brazil," she says. Liberdade was "really full of surprises. The anime-inspired street art, the oriental garden. It's rumored to have the best ramen outside of Tokyo, although I'm sure that's always a heated debate."

Another urban pick is Mexico City. Chambers "cannot say enough great things about it. History, food, culture, art! And it was walkable. It was incredible."

The bougainvillea-strewn neighborhoods of Coyoacán, La Roma and La Condesa all get a shout-out from Lonely Planet this year.

The US selections on the destinations list are Theodore Roosevelt National Park in North Dakota – also featured on National Geographic's Best of the World list for 2026 – and Maine.

"Maine has such a unique culture in the United States," says Chambers. "So coastal, so much hiking in nature. The beauty there is really distinctive and the (four) national parks there are amazing."

A forest hike in the springtime is recommended, and don't miss the heron rookeries; the colonies can support up to 500 birds.

Over on the western edges of Europe, Tipperary is a "truly a hidden gem," she says. It's Ireland's largest inland county and "a lot of folks just pass through on their way to the Wild Atlantic Way (coastal trail). But I think Tipperary really has one of the most beautiful and underrated driving routes."

And in Asia, the island of Phuket is best known for its "tropical honeymoon, romantic vibe," but more people are now discovering it as a work-and-travel spot for digital nomads.

People are reimagining the way their days and weeks and months look relative to what they do for a living," says Chambers, and this Thai destination's beaches, jungles and breezy coastal lifestyle are hitting the spot.

Also on Lonely Planet's list of places to visit in 2026: Botswana; Peru; Jeju-do, South Korea; Ikara-Flinders Ranges and Outback, South Australia; Cádiz, Spain; Sardinia, Italy; Tunisia; Barbados, Caribbean; Solomon Islands; Réunion; Quezaltenango (Xela), Guatemala; Jaffna, Sri Lanka; Utrecht, Netherlands; Cartagena, Colombia; Finland; Quy Nho'n, Vietnam; British Columbia, Canada; Siem Reap, Cambodia.





BARBARA HEPWORTH: THE RADICAL BRITISH SCULPTOR WHO COMBINED RIGOUR WITH SENSUALITY

Diary Times Desk : In 1946, the sculptor Barbara Hepworth wrote to her friend Philip James, director of art at the Arts Council of Great Britain. ‘Many have spoken of the sensuality contained in my sculptures despite the outward classical and disciplined exterior,’ she noted. ‘All want to touch, and that is as it should be.’

For the previous two decades, the international modernist had pursued a singular vision: to create harmony out of the post-First World War rubble. Taking her inspiration from the landscape around her — first in Hampstead in north London, and then in Cornwall in the south-west of England — she carved smooth, undulating forms that echoed the natural world.

Today, her polished sculptures, with their complex interiors, are highly prized for their tension — between light and darkness, solidity and weightlessness — and she is celebrated for having revolutionised the possibilities of carving.

While studying at the Royal College of Art in London, Hepworth was shortlisted for the 1924 Prix de Rome art scholarship, which was won that year by the sculptor John Skeaping. Hepworth won a West Riding Travel Scholarship and went to Florence, where she and Skeaping married the following year before moving to Rome. In Italy, she studied Romanesque and Renaissance art and architecture, learned traditional carving techniques from the master marble-carver Giovanni Ardini, and visited the marble quarries in Carrara. Hepworth and Skeaping returned to London in 1926.

In 1932, three years after the birth of her first child, Hepworth pierced her first carving, thus introducing the ‘hole’ to British sculpture. The negative space — which Hepworth used to explore balance in forms — became a hallmark of her work, and is considered her most important contribution to abstract art.

From 1934 onwards, Hepworth’s figurative sculptures gave way to pure abstraction, as she distilled her work to increasingly simple shapes. To create these abstracts, she employed a technique known as direct carving, in which the final form of the work is determined by the act of carving rather than through the creation of preparatory maquettes and models. Her contemporary Henry Moore was another advocate of the technique; the pair studied together at Leeds College of Art and the Royal College of Art in London, and shared a long, friendly rivalry.



MOROCCAN MODERNISM: A GUIDE TO THE CASABLANCA ART SCHOOL

Diary Times Desk : Shortly after joining the teaching staff of the Casablanca Art School in 1964, Mohamed Melehi insisted that all the Greco-Roman busts be removed from the studios — and all the plaster casts of classical sculptures, too. These were to be replaced by a selection of rugs made by Berber women.

On the face of it, this might seem an unremarkable act. However, it represented the entire ethos of a school that newly promoted the native over the imported — a school nowadays considered a vital example of 20th-century modernism.

The first major exhibition in Europe devoted to the Casablanca Art School opened at Tate St Ives in the UK in 2023, before transferring to Sharjah Art Foundation, UAE, and the Schirn Kunsthalle Frankfurt in Germany in 2024.

The show was described by its curator, Morad Montazami, as a moment of ‘rehabilitation’, in that it communicated how avant-garde art wasn’t produced solely in Europe and North America — despite traditional, Western accounts of art history long suggesting that it was.

The exhibition covered the school’s heyday, from 1962 to 1987, but to understand what made it special, some historical context is called for.

During the course of the 19th century, France exerted an ever-growing colonial influence in Morocco. In 1912, the country became a French protectorate. The Casablanca Art School was founded in Morocco’s biggest city the following decade. It adopted an Ecole des Beaux-Arts model, with classes typically involving easel painting and working from life models or statues.

After the Second World War, a nationalist movement in Morocco grew, culminating in independence from France in 1956. ‘Artistic change took longer to happen, though, than political change,’ says Montazami. ‘Colonialism doesn’t stop affecting a culture the minute a country is independent. It lasts until such time as a local ecosystem incubates and emerges to subvert it.’

In the case of the Casablanca Art School, the incubation began in 1962, with the appointment of Farid Belkahia as its director. He soon asked his compatriots Mohamed Melehi and Mohammed Chabâa to join him, and the teachings of this trio of artist-professors (all in their mid-twenties) ushered in a generation of progressive practice.





ATLETICO MADRID WEIGHING UP JANUARY MOVE FOR
BARCELONA DEFENDER – REPORT



Diary Times Desk : Barcelona's defence still does not have a single clear-cut starting combination, with Hansi Flick regularly changing Pau Cubarsi's partner based on the nature of the opponent. While Eric Garcia and Ronald Araujo have seen relatively regular minutes in that respect, however, Andreas Christensen has not been as lucky and is still struggling for minutes. Given that the player's contract runs out next summer, his future at the club is unclear. Barcelona have not made a decision over his renewal, but it is not ruled out that he is allowed to leave as a free agent.

Interest from within Spain

As relayed by Fichajes in a recent report, Atletico Madrid are keeping a close eye on Christensen and do not rule him out as an emergency target for January, given the defensive crisis they are facing.

Los Rojiblancos have been underperforming at the back in recent games and see the need for a new experienced option to lead the back-line.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE
CANCELLED MIAMI MATCH FOR

BARCELONA – REPORT

Diary Times Desk : La Liga's plan to stage the Villarreal vs Barcelona match overseas has officially been scrapped after the organising vendor decided to pull out of the deal following widespread criticism in Spain.

While the idea faced significant backlash from fans, clubs, and political figures, its cancellation has dealt a financial setback not only to La Liga but also to Villarreal and Barcelona.

For the Catalan club, the overseas fixture was seen as an opportunity to generate much-needed revenue amid their ongoing financial struggles.

Club president Joan Laporta had recently confirmed as much, admitting that the game could have offered a valuable financial boost.

"We don't know how much we'll earn from the Miami game. We don't have all the information from LaLiga.

"But there will be revenue, for sure, and it will make up for what we won't have at the Estadi Johan Cruyff," Laporta said last week.

WHAT HANSI FLICK REALLY EXPECTS
FROM BARCELONA YOUNGSTERS –
REPORT

Diary Times Desk : Ever since Hansi Flick took over at Barcelona, the German coach has made it clear that the club's future lies in trusting its young talents.

Players such as Marc Bernal and Pedro 'Dro' Fernández have stepped into the first-team setup and adapted impressively to his demanding style.

This growing integration of La Masia players reflects Flick's tactical vision, which heavily revolves around intensity and pressing.

To understand their integration, it is imperative to understand what exactly the manager demands from these players.

What does Flick demand?

Mundo Deportivo, in that regard, seems to have an answer. The outlet mentions that one of the core principles Flick stresses to his young players is relentless pressing, which is a key area that deeply concerns him.

While he gives them the freedom to express themselves with the ball, his main demand is to apply constant pressure when out of possession.

BARCELONA YOUNGSTER'S AGENT HOLDS INFORMAL MEETING WITH CLUB
OFFICIALS

Diary Times Desk : Xavi Espart's agent was spotted at Barcelona's facilities this week, meeting with Joan Laporta's advisor Enric Masip, according to a report from SPORT.

Interestingly, the outlet assures that the meeting was said to be informal and not related to any immediate concerns, as the youngster had only renewed his contract last summer until 2028.

The visit comes at a time when the 18-year-old has been training closely with Hansi Flick's first team over the past couple of weeks, signalling growing confidence in his development.

Espart has been included in the matchday squads for Barcelona's recent fixtures, including the Champions League clash against Olympiacos, although he is still waiting for his senior debut. Despite not featuring in either of the last two matches, Espart's involvement reflects the trust Flick and his staff have in his ability.



CSD PRESIDENT QUESTIONS LA
LIGA'S APPROACH AFTER
VILLARREAL-BARCELONA
MIAMI CLASH COLLAPSED –
'NOT THE WAY'

Diary Times Desk : The controversy surrounding La Liga's now-cancelled plan to take the Villarreal vs Barcelona match to Miami continues to stir discussion in Spain.

The latest to weigh in on the issue is Jose Manuel Rodriguez Uribes, president of the Higher Sports Council (CSD), who criticised how the project was handled and highlighted the lack of proper consultation with key stakeholders before such a major decision was made.

The event, initially expected to bring financial benefits to both clubs, especially Barcelona, was abruptly called off after the promoter withdrew from the agreement.

Rodriguez hits out

Interestingly, Rodriguez Uribes made it clear that the issue went far beyond financial concerns.

CTA CHIEF RESPONDS TO
BARCELONA PRESIDENT'S
CRITICISM OF REFEREE –
'EVERY CLUB DEFENDS ITS
INTERESTS'

Diary Times Desk : Hansi Flick's sending-off against Girona came out of the blue and was not one many saw coming, given that the manager did not make any action that warranted such serious punishment.

He was initially sanctioned for mockingly applauding the referee's decision over a controversial call, but was shown a swift second yellow for merely protesting against just four minutes being added after the second half.

Speaking in a recent interaction, Barcelona president Joan Laporta expressed solidarity with the manager and hit out at the referee on the night – Gil Manzano – for provoking a second yellow out of nothing.

"The referee went too far when he showed the yellow card and waited for our coach to react. It will be difficult to get the cards rescinded," he said.

Further criticising Gil Manzano, Laporta added: "I didn't like the referee's attitude. This man has sent off almost all of our star players. You only have to look at his record with us. "Something always happens. It just so happens that it's before a match that will decide the league leadership." "I don't want to get into evaluating Laporta's statements. We respect everything he says, but we will not comment," he began.