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Naga Members of Legislative Assembly Exert Pressure on Manipur Administration Regarding Deputy Chief Minister Kipgen

AGENCY
Imphal, Oct 14

In a move that underscores the deepening political fractures within Manipur, Naga legislators have formally demanded the removal of Deputy Chief Minister Nemcha Kipgen. This high-stakes political standoff introduces a volatile new dimension to an already fragile security situation, further complicating efforts to stabilize the state amidst ongoing ethnic tensions and social unrest. As

the political landscape grows increasingly complex, the actions of the Naga leaders reflect an escalating sense of urgency to reshape state governance and enforce accountability. The insistence on Kipgen's removal highlights the growing rift among regional political blocs and creates a critical dilemma for state leadership as they attempt to balance delicate political alliances while restoring peace to the region. Determined to address the escalating crisis on multiple fronts, Naga Mem-

bers of the Legislative Assembly (MLAs) convened high-level strategic sessions to draft a comprehensive plan aimed at restoring law and order across affected districts.

Beyond internal deliberations, the lawmakers initiated direct, high-level discussions with key figures in the state's security apparatus and executive leadership. The delegation held crucial talks with Chief Minister Yumnam Khemchand Singh, the Director General of Police (DGP), and the state

Security Advisor. These discussions focused on reviewing current security protocols, identifying operational gaps, and evaluating urgent steps needed to prevent further outbreaks of violence in vulnerable areas.

Confirming the intense schedule of consultations, Deputy Chief Minister Losii Dikho emphasized the group's active commitment to finding a sustainable resolution to the conflict. Speaking on the ongoing efforts, Dikho stated, "We are

trying our best. Even today, we had a meeting among our Naga MLAs on how to bring about an immaculate situation. We have had discussions with all the concerned, including the Chief Minister, the DGP and the Security Advisor, to apprise them of the situation and discuss how to bring it under control." His remarks highlight the legislators' deliberate strategy to coordinate directly with top administrative and law enforcement heads to steer the state back toward stability and public order.

Naga MLAs Pressure Manipur Government Over Deputy CM Kipgen

AGENCY
Imphal, Oct 14

Naga legislators are demanding the removal of Deputy Chief Minister Nemcha Kipgen. The political standoff complicates an already tense security situation in Manipur. Naga MLAs met to draft a plan to restore order. They also held talks with Chief Minister Yumnam Khemchand Singh, the Director General of Police, and the state Security Advisor. Deputy Chief Minister Losii Dikho confirmed the meetings. He stated, "We are trying our best. Even today, we had a

meeting among our Naga MLAs on how to bring about an immaculate situation. We have had discussions with all the concerned, including the Chief Minister, the DGP and the Security Advisor, to apprise them of the situation and discuss how to bring it under control."

The group seeks to manage the ongoing crisis. Officials have not yet disclosed the government response to the removal demand.

The status of the talks remains fluid. Observers wait for the next move from the state government."

Manipuri Students Federation Marks 28th Year With Language Rights Push

AGENCY
Imphal, Oct 14

The Manipuri Students Federation marked its 28th Foundation Day at its headquarters in KwaKeithel Thounajam Leikai. Members gathered to honor the group's history and pay tribute to deceased contributors. They also ran a voluntary blood donation camp for the community.

Key figures attended the event including So-raism Mercha Leima of Pairei Leimarol Meira Paibi Apunba Manipur and AMUCO president Sorukhaibam Sanjay. Other notable guests included Dr. Lamabam Mahen-



dra from the Thounaojam Leikai Development Association, Council of Higher Secondary Education secretary Khundrakpam Ashikumar, Manipur Millennium Foundation administrator Moirangthem

Binod Meitei, and R.B. Academy chairman Kh. Ratankumar. MSF president Hijam Roshan presided over the ceremony.

Roshan criticized the state for failing to protect the local language. He spe-

cifically pointed to recruitment gaps for language teachers in schools and colleges. He argued that the Manipur Official Language Act, 1979, lacks real enforcement. "The failure to implement the law properly undermined efforts to strengthen the language and ensure its continued use among younger generations," Roshan said.

The federation demanded better institutional commitment to Manipuri language and cultural identity. They want the government to move past formal recognition and act. The group claims current official indifference threatens the future of the state's culture.

Villagers Launch Boycott Against MLA Paonam Brojen

AGENCY
Imphal, Oct 14

In a fiery display of public anger, residents of Tentha and Mairenkhu took to the streets during a torch rally to demand the immediate resignation of Wangjing Tentha MLA Paonam Brojen. Hundreds of local citizens, carrying glowing torches and bold placards, marched through the night to make their voices heard. The rally ignited at Tentha Thongkhong Bazaar and wound its way through key residential areas, including Tentha Khunou and Mairenkhu. Demonstrators held signs calling for an absolute political boycott of the representative, chanting slogans insisting that he step



down from his position immediately due to recent controversial statements that deeply offended the community. The catalyst for this widespread outrage stems from public comments that Brojen reportedly made

on September 30 during a local ceremony honoring the 130th birth anniversary of the iconic leader Lamyamba Hijam Irabot. Protesters expressed deep disappointment over the tone and substance of the MLA's

address. Highlighting the source of their frustration, rally participant Naorem Kabilal stated, "The public decision to oppose the MLA was taken in response to his alleged remarks during the 130th birth anniversary observance of Lamyamba Hijam Irabot on September 30." The community felt that the solemn occasion was misused to deliver boastful and insensitive political claims, sparking immediate backlash across the constituency.

Reaching beyond their immediate borders, the protesters are now urging the rest of Manipur to join their boycott, calling on citizens across the state to hold political figures accountable for their statements and actions during times of regional crisis.

Air India Flight Makes Emergency Landing Following Bomb Threat

AGENCY
New Delhi, Oct 14

An Air India flight travelling from Frankfurt to Delhi made an emergency landing at Jaipur International Airport on Wednesday morning following a reported bomb threat and an alert triggered by an indication associated with a possible hijacking. All 250 passengers on board were reported safe. Security agencies have launched inspections of the aircraft and passengers' baggage. The Boeing 787-9 Dreamliner took off from Frankfurt at around 9:45 p.m. on October 13 and was scheduled to arrive in Delhi at 10:40 a.m. on Wednesday. During the flight, information emerged about a bomb

threat as the aircraft approached Indian airspace. Meanwhile, at around 9 a.m., Ahmedabad Air Traffic Control (ATC) reportedly received a signal indicating the squawk code 7500 for a few seconds. In aviation, this code is used to indicate an unlawful interference situation, including a hijacking. However, the precise reason for the signal has not yet been officially confirmed. The security alert was subsequently shared with Jaipur ATC. At around 9:10 a.m., the aircraft was diverted to Jaipur. It landed safely at Jaipur International Airport at approximately 9:45 a.m.

Under the supervision of security agencies, passengers were deplaned and escorted to the terminal.

Inspections of the aircraft and passengers' baggage are under way. Authorities have not yet officially confirmed whether any suspicious objects were found or announced the final outcome of the security checks. According to sources, the Union Home Ministry has taken the incident seriously and directed a National Security Guard (NSG) commando team in Delhi to remain on standby. The team may also be deployed to Jaipur, sources indicated. The investigation into the reported bomb threat and the signal associated with a possible hijacking is continuing. Further details are awaited as security agencies examine the circumstances surrounding the incident.

Chhattisgarh-Cadre IAS Officer S. Jayavardhan Appointed Deputy Secretary in Union Home Ministry



AGENCY
New Delhi, Oct 14

S. Jayavardhan, a 2014-batch Indian Administrative Service (IAS) officer of the Chhattisgarh cadre, has been appointed Deputy Secretary in the Union Ministry of Home Affairs under the Central Staffing Scheme. His tenure will be four years from the date he assumes charge or until further orders, whichever is earlier.

In an email sent to the Chief Secretary of Chhattisgarh, the Government of India directed that IAS officer S. Jayavardhan be relieved of his current duties immediately to enable him to assume his new assignment at the Ministry of

Home Affairs in New Delhi. An order regarding the appointment was also issued on Wednesday.

According to the instructions, the officer must take charge within three weeks of the issuance of the appointment order by the Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT). Failure to do so may result in the initiation of proceedings to debar him from the Central Staffing Scheme.

The Central Staffing Scheme is an important administrative mechanism through which officers of the Indian Administrative Service and other All India and Central Services are appointed on deputation to ministries

and departments of the Union Government.

The tenure of officers serving in central government positions generally ranges from three to five years, depending on the post. For the position of Deputy Secretary, the prescribed tenure is typically four years. Upon completion of their central deputation, officers are generally required to return to their respective state cadres.

The Department of Personnel and Training oversees appointments under the scheme, while the Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC), chaired by the Prime Minister, grants final approval for such appointments.

Delhi High Court Seeks Report from Jail Authorities Over Yasin Malik's Non-Appearance Terror Funding Case

AGENCY
New Delhi, Oct 14

The Delhi High Court has sought a report from prison authorities after separatist leader Yasin Malik failed to appear before the court in a terror funding case. A bench headed by Justice Navin Chawla observed that Malik was supposed to appear through video conferencing but did not do so. The bench directed the concerned prison superintendent to submit a report explaining the circumstances.

During an earlier hearing on April 22, the National Investigation Agency (NIA) told the court that Malik had been in contact with senior Pakistani leaders, including the country's Prime Minister and President. The agency alleged that he had used these contacts to promote separatist activities in Jammu and Kashmir. In its response affidavit, the NIA further alleged that Malik had close links with banned terrorist organisations and had facilitated terrorist activities in Jammu and Kashmir through illegal means, including hawala transactions.

On May 25, 2022, a special court at Patiala House in New Delhi sentenced Malik to life imprisonment in the case. The court imposed a life sentence and a fine of Rs 10 lakh under Section 17 of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA). It also awarded him 10 years' imprisonment and a fine of Rs 10,000 under Section 18, 10 years' imprisonment and a fine of Rs 10,000 under Section 20, and five years' imprisonment and a fine of Rs 5,000 under Sections 38 and 39 of the Act. The court also sentenced Malik to 10 years' imprisonment and imposed a fine of Rs 10,000 under Section 120B of the Indian Penal Code (IPC), which deals with criminal conspiracy. Under Section 121A of the IPC, he was awarded another 10-year prison term and a fine of Rs 10,000. The court directed that all the sentences would run concurrent-

ly. Consequently, the life sentence remained the principal punishment, along with the applicable fine of Rs 10 lakh.

Malik pleaded guilty before the Patiala House Court on May 10, 2022. Earlier, on March 16, 2022, the court had ordered the framing of charges against several accused in the case, including Hafiz Saeed, Syed Salahuddin, Yasin Malik, Shabir Shah, Masarat Alam, Rashid Engineer, Zahoor Ahmad Watali, Bitta Karate, Aftab Ahmad Shah, Avtar Ahmad Shah, Nayeem Khan and Bashir Ahmad Bhat, also known as Peer Saifullah, among others. According to the NIA, terrorist organisations, including Lashkar-e-Taiba, Hizbul Mujahideen, the Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF) and Jaish-e-Mohammed, allegedly carried out attacks and acts of violence against civilians and security personnel in Jammu and Kashmir with the support of Pakistan's intelligence agency, the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI).

The agency has also stated that the All Parties Hurriyat Conference was formed in 1993 to pursue separatist activities in the region.

According to the NIA, Hafiz Saeed, in collaboration with Hurriyat Conference leaders, allegedly facilitated the transfer of funds through hawala transactions and other channels to support terrorist activities. The agency alleged that the money was used to foment unrest in the Kashmir Valley, attack security personnel, burn schools and damage public property. Following the receipt of information by the Union Ministry of Home Affairs, the NIA registered a case under Sections 120B, 121 and 121A of the IPC and Sections 13, 16, 17, 18, 20, 38, 39 and 40 of the UAPA. The High Court's latest direction seeks clarification from the prison authorities regarding Malik's failure to appear through video conferencing as scheduled.

Asaduddin Owaisi Challenges Voter List Revision Process

AGENCY
New Delhi, Oct 14

Asaduddin Owaisi, Hyderabad MP and president of the All India Majlis-e-Ittehadul Muslimeen (AIMIM), has filed a petition in the Supreme Court challenging the procedure adopted for the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls. The Supreme Court has agreed to hear his petition along with other pending petitions concerning the same issue on October 15. Asaduddin Owaisi's counsel, Nizamuddin Pasha, mentioned the matter before a bench headed by Chief Justice of India Surya Kant, requesting that the petition be listed alongside other cases scheduled for hear-



ing on October 15. During the mentioning, Pasha submitted that the petition concerns the manner in which the SIR process is being conducted. He also informed the court that the memorandum submitted with the request for listing identified the related cases with which Asaduddin Owaisi's petition should be heard. Asaduddin Owaisi's petition comes amid ongoing

legal challenges to the SIR process and allegations that the revision exercise could result in the deletion of voters' names from electoral rolls. Congress leader Rahul Gandhi and 10 other prominent Opposition leaders have also approached the Supreme Court, challenging the SIR process and raising concerns over alleged irregularities associated with it.

Zelenskyy claims that allies failed to alert Kyiv of Russian ballistic missile strikes

Kyiv

Ukraine received no early warning from its partners about a second night of Russian ballistic missile strikes on civilian infrastructure in Kyiv, including a critical power plant struck after dark, Volodymyr Zelenskyy said on Tuesday. The Ukrainian president had earlier described an attack involving five missiles on Monday as “particularly vile”. He emphasised that receiving intelligence from Ukraine’s western allies “helps save lives, and this is one of the most critical issues”. “This is precisely what helps prevent people from being killed – when there is an early warning about ballistic missiles,” he wrote on social media. He did not apportion blame for the lack of warning, calling it unfortunate.

More ballistic missiles were then launched at Kyiv on Tuesday night, striking a key power plant in the capital despite a purported energy ceasefire claimed by Donald Trump. One person also died in a strike on a high-rise apartment building, according to the mayor, Vitali Klitschko, who said apartments were on fire and being evacuated. A further 13 injuries were reported. “Once again, no advance warning from our partners. The main target was energy infrastructure, specifically thermal plant No 4,” Zelenskyy wrote on the social media app Telegram, again without explaining why he thought there had been no warning. US officials made explicit threats over the weekend to their Ukrainian counterparts that the Trump administration was on the brink of halting



intelligence sharing with Kyiv. On Tuesday, however, Trump denied intelligence sharing had stopped. He told reporters: “We are helping them, and we are sharing intel. We want the war to end, so we’re working with them and Russia on getting the war to end.” Trump has demanded that Ukraine stop attacking Russian oil refineries and has blamed Zelenskyy for the rise in fuel prices in the US. On Friday the US president announced a deal with Vladimir Putin to import diesel from Russia, dropping previous US sanctions. Asked on Tuesday whether Russia could use proceeds from the sale to purchase more bombs, Trump sidestepped the question. “That’s a diesel deal, not for us. That’s being released into the world. That’s not being released to us,” he said. Earlier the president claimed Moscow and Kyiv had agreed an “energy ceasefire”, something Zelenskyy described as “news to me”. Ukraine’s leader said his military had not struck Russian oil refineries or energy facilities in the two days following Trump’s Sunday announcement.

The Kremlin, however, had ignored the “ceasefire” and continued to bomb Ukraine’s

energy infrastructure as before, with multiple attacks, he said. “Russia did not heed the president ... the Russians sent absolutely clear signals that they have no intention of refraining from strikes,” he noted on Tuesday. Ukrainian commanders say American intelligence is not needed to identify targets for deep strikes on Russia, with oil refineries marked on Google Maps. But they say it plays a crucial role in warning of Russian ballistic missile launches, and the takeoff of long-range bomber aircraft. “It is deeply unfair that they are destroying our energy infrastructure while Ukraine receives no warnings about ballistic missile launches,” Zelenskyy said in a statement after the Tuesday strikes. “It is vital that the world does not remain silent about this. And it is crucial that America clearly sees what is happening and who is responsible for the continuation of the war.” The blasts could be heard in central Kyiv as Ukraine’s air defences failed to stop the high-speed Russian missile targeting the capital. The missile strikes on Ukraine’s left bank targeted a thermal power plant, Zelenskyy said, and also struck an apartment building leaving both dead and injured in the latest strike on the capital. Zelenskyy warned on Tuesday evening that Russia was planning further strikes with ballistic missiles, telling Ukrainians: “Please take care of yourselves tonight and tomorrow.” In recent months Russia has dramatically stepped up its bombardment of Ukrainian towns and cities. It has particularly stepped up its attacks on Ukraine’s energy infrastructure ahead of the winter, cutting

power and water in large parts of Ukraine’s capital as emergency workers race to restore basic utilities. Ukraine, meanwhile, has struggled to shoot down incoming missiles and jet-powered drones and has appealed to partners to boost its dwindling supplies of US-made Patriot missiles. According to the Financial Times, the Trump administration has also threatened to suspend the procurement scheme under which Ukraine’s European allies buy advanced US systems, which are then sent to Kyiv, including badly needed Patriots. The Kremlin’s systematic campaign against Ukraine’s power grid has led to widespread blackouts in Kyiv and other cities. Putin’s apparent goal is to shut off heating and electricity for millions of civilians this winter, and to trigger a new wave of refugees into neighbouring EU states. Speaking in Warsaw, Ukraine’s foreign minister, Andrii Sybiha, indicated that cooperation with the US was continuing and said the lack of warning about the Kyiv attack was due to a “special type” of Russian weaponry. On Monday, Russia also bombarded the city of Kharkiv, destroying a residential building. Sharing footage from the scene, Zelenskyy said four people had been killed and 41 injured. Rescuers spent the entire night searching for people trapped under the rubble, he added. Meanwhile, 11 sailors were missing after their ship was sunk by a drone attack off the coast of Bulgaria. The incident prompted Bulgaria to summon Russia’s ambassador. Two cargo ships were hit by drones overnight and one was sunk, Bulgarian officials said.

California seaside homes and boardwalks are battered by powerful waves and floods

Sacramento

Southern California coastal communities are picking up the pieces after a weekend of extreme weather brought flooding that overtook city streets and intense waves battered beachside homes. The remnants of Tropical Storm Rachel hit Mexico’s Baja California over the weekend as well as southern California and Las Vegas. While meteorologists noted that Rachel weakened into a post-tropical cyclone as it approached California, it still left a trail of destruction. Footage showed massive waves crashing into Long Beach homes, destroying a boardwalk and forcing residents to flee. The damage to homes was significant, leaving some at risk of collapse. At least nine have been deemed unsafe to enter, the Long Beach Post reported, meaning displaced residents cannot return to retrieve personal items. The storm has cost the city more than \$1m from its emergency reserves, according to the outlet. Farther south, the city of Newport Beach declared a local emergency and briefly closed piers to “protect public safe-

ty”, citing “higher-than-normal surf” that inundated streets. By Monday, cleanup work was under way and Newport Beach had reopened the piers, but officials advised residents to exercise caution near the water. In Las Vegas, a raging torrent of water rushed over a street near the strip, and the city tied an all-time daily rainfall record for October with 1.08in (2.74cm) of rain into Sunday morning, according to the US National Weather Service. The impacts are just a taste of what’s to come across southern California as a historic El Niño unfolds in the Pacific, threatening to unleash severe storms across the region this winter. Already, the last five hurricanes in the Pacific all reached major status and saw with winds of at least 111mph (178.6 km/h), and one set a record for time spent at category 5. “This year, just everything that forms is just lasting a long time and getting really powerful,” Phil Klotzbach, a Colorado State University researcher who forecasts and studies storm activity, told the Associated Press, adding that the last month has been “berserk”. The El Niño climate phenomenon, characterized by



warmer than average equatorial sea surface temperatures, has the potential to supercharge extreme weather around the world. While it’s expected to strengthen through the end of this year and into next, the excess warmth already measured is climbing off the charts. Forecasters have warned its effects could become exceptionally destructive. In California – especially in the southern part of the state – El Niños typically carry higher risks of severe storms, and with them elevated threats from landslides, debris flows and flash floods. These dangers become more pronounced around recent burn scars, adding hazards to several areas, including in the neighborhoods still recovering from the

2025 Los Angeles firestorm and swaths of Big Sur above Highway 1. “This year’s tilt in the odds toward wet and stormy conditions in California will be profoundly unsubtle,” climate scientist Daniel Swain said in a recent analysis, adding that its unlike anything he’s observed before.

Throughout the winter months, El Niño could also add an additional foot of sea level rise in California on top of the 8in to 12in caused by the climate crisis over the last century, according to Michael Anderson, a state climatologist. Already, El Niño has elevated sea levels up and down the California coast, from the Mexico border up to the San Francisco Bay Area.

Warm waters expanding from an extreme marine heatwave combined with a coastally trapped Kelvin wave – a large underwater band of warm water – have already inundated parts of the North American shoreline. More Kelvin waves are likely and California is already bracing for unusually high king tides to hit during holiday weekends this year, arriving near Thanksgiving and Christmas.

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EDITORIAL

Set Deadlines for Tamil Nadu Demands

Prime Minister Narendra Modi had warm words for Tamil Nadu during his visit on Sunday. Governments had changed, he said, but his commitment to the state's development and the people's welfare had remained firm. That assurance deserves a welcome, as do projects worth over 13,000 crore inaugurated during the visit, including the Poonamallee-Vadapalani stretch of Chennai Metro's second phase. Several demands of Tamil Nadu have survived the transition in government. That continuity should encourage the Centre to recognise the substantive state interests behind them. Chief Minister C Joseph Vijay's requests for education funds and better transport

links will sound familiar to anyone who followed his predecessor's dealings with Delhi. On education alone, around 5,110 crore remains pending under the Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan. The Centre has tied its release to participation in PM SHRI, which involves adopting the National Education Policy. Tamil Nadu has opposed its language provisions; Vijay has requested unconditional release of the funds. During the visit, Modi urged students to dream big. His government should give schools the funds to help them. On transport, Vijay has sought revival of the Coimbatore and Madurai metro proposals and approval for the Hosur-Bommasandra link.

Palantir's Growing UK Influence Needs Urgent Limits

What a world we live in. Imagine: gangs dragging civil servants off commuter trains and beating them up because they handed government data jobs to the wrong contractor – and the government is changing its procurement decisions as a result. Well, OK, it might not have happened yet, but it's only a matter of time. As the former Labour deputy leader Tom Watson asks: "Do you want to let the rule of law lead procurement practice, or do you want mob rule to lead procurement practices?" No, I absolutely don't want the latter, and it's always good to get ahead of trouble. But then I remember there are two common meanings of mob rule. One is intimidation by crowds of thugs. The other is a pejorative term for democracy. And while I've yet to see government procurement practices in the UK determined by pitchforks and flaming torches, democratic transparency could be a genuine threat to certain contractors. One might have hoped that Watson, who once took on the Murdoch empire, would have recognised the distinction. But then again, one might

have hoped that Watson would not have taken a job as a senior vice-president at Palantir. Over the past few years, this US company has been worming its way into the British state. It has landed contracts worth hundreds of millions with the Ministry of Defence, several police forces, the Financial Conduct Authority, the atomic weapons establishment and the NHS. Its superpower, according to a deep investigation by Peter Geoghegan and Lucas Amin in the London Review of Books, is that it is "willing to spend more on securing political access than almost all of its British and continental competitors".

It made abundant use of Peter Mandelson's company Global Counsel, which seems, in turn, to have made abundant use of the UK's remarkably flimsy lobbying laws. Watson is one of more than 30 former UK ministers and officials Palantir now employs. Palantir's contracts might have been awarded lawfully, but some of us might question the ways in which doors were opened for it. These include an unrecorded meeting between Boris

Johnson, Dominic Cummings and the co-founder of Palantir, Peter Thiel, in Downing Street in 2019. It was invited back to Downing Street when the Covid-19 pandemic began a few months later, and was working in the NHS within days, on a contract for which it charged only £1. The mayor of London, Sadiq Khan, has criticised such loss-leaders, which can quickly lead to reliance on a company, at which point it can name its price. Another controversial meeting was brokered by Mandelson in 2025, when he was UK ambassador to the US. Keir Starmer visited Palantir's showroom in Washington, where he met the company's global and UK chief executives, Alex Karp and Louis Mosley. They talked about defence spending. No 10, Geoghegan and Amin tell us, "refused to say whether Starmer knew that Palantir was a client of Global Counsel, in which Mandelson still held a stake of around a fifth at the time. The meeting was never declared on transparency registers." A few months later, Palantir secured a £241m contract with the

Ministry of Defence, without an open tender. Now we learn that Martha Dalton, a key player in Andy Burnham's campaign to win the Makerfield byelection, enabling him to become prime minister, was on unpaid leave from the lobbying company she co-founded, Lodestone. Lodestone had done extensive work for Palantir. And the Financial Times reports that Samantha Jones, then the lead non-executive director on the board of the health department, was an adviser to one of Palantir's partners when the company was bidding for its huge and controversial NHS contract. Now she is permanent secretary in the same department. There have been repeated allegations that some of Palantir's products are rubbish. But, as the House of Commons science, innovation and technology committee warns, government agencies can quickly succumb to "vendor lock-in": once you start using them, it can be very hard to stop. Thiel, has claimed that "the NHS makes people sick", and that we should "just rip the whole thing from the ground and start over".

Fostering Human-Elephant Coexistence Across India's Tea Estates

The tea landscapes of Assam and North Bengal are among the most productive and ecologically significant plantation regions in the world. These plantations also share their boundaries with some of India's richest elephant habitats. In recent years, however, the relationship between humans and elephants has become increasingly strained. Fatal attacks on tea garden workers by wild elephant herds have become alarmingly frequent, particularly in estates adjoining reserve forests. The growing fear among workers has disrupted normal field operations and has emerged as a serious humanitarian, economic, and conservation challenge. The increasing encounters are often attributed to expanding human settlements, fragmentation of elephant corridors, degradation of forest habitats, climate-induced changes in vegetation, and a noticeable increase in elephant populations in certain landscapes. Addressing this issue requires a balanced approach that safeguards both human lives and one of India's most iconic wildlife spe-

cies. Elephants have traditionally followed well-established migratory routes across forests and grasslands. Over time, many of these natural corridors have been obstructed by agricultural expansion, infrastructure development, and settlements. Tea plantations, often located along these ancient pathways, have inadvertently become part of the elephants' movement routes. Climate change has further aggravated the situation by altering rainfall patterns, reducing natural food availability, and drying seasonal water sources inside forests. Consequently, elephant herds increasingly venture into tea estates in search of food and water, bringing them into direct contact with workers. Climate change has further aggravated the situation by altering rainfall patterns, reducing natural food availability, and drying seasonal water sources inside forests. Consequently, elephant herds increasingly venture into tea estates in search of food and water, bringing them into direct contact with workers. Tea gardens located near forest boundaries should

establish integrated elephant early warning systems comprising thermal cameras, motion sensors, watchtowers, drone surveillance, and mobile communication networks. Real-time alerts through SMS or dedicated mobile applications can provide valuable time for workers and supervisors to vacate vulnerable areas before elephant herds arrive. The safety of tea workers must remain the highest priority. During seasons of frequent elephant movement, work schedules should be modified by delaying field operations in vulnerable sections during early morning and late evening hours. Plucking gangs should work in larger groups under close supervision, and isolated field operations should be avoided wherever possible. Long-term mitigation depends upon improving the quality of elephant habitats within reserve forests. Large-scale planting of bamboo, cane, wild banana, jackfruit, indigenous grasses, and other preferred elephant food species can substantially reduce the need for elephants to enter tea estates. Simultaneously, restoration of

natural water bodies within forests would help retain elephant populations inside their natural habitats. Instead of abrupt boundaries between forests and plantations, ecological buffer zones should be developed using native vegetation, bamboo belts, wetlands, and mixed tree plantations. These transition zones can reduce sudden encounters between workers and elephant herds while simultaneously enhancing biodiversity. Each vulnerable tea estate should establish trained elephant response teams consisting of estate management, experienced workers, Forest Department personnel, and local volunteers. These teams should receive professional training in crowd management, elephant behaviour, emergency evacuation procedures, and the safe use of non-lethal deterrents. The use of humane and scientifically proven deterrent technologies should be encouraged. Solar-powered fencing at strategic locations, beehive fencing, tripwire alarm systems, thermal surveillance, searchlights, and coordinated warning sirens

have shown encouraging results in several elephant landscapes across Asia and Africa. These measures should always be implemented under expert guidance to prevent unnecessary stress or injury to elephants. Regular awareness programmes should be conducted for tea workers and nearby villagers. Workers should be educated about elephant behaviour, warning signals, safe escape procedures, and emergency communication systems. A well-informed workforce can significantly reduce casualties arising from panic or inappropriate responses during elephant encounters. The families of workers who lose their lives or suffer injuries due to elephant attacks deserve immediate financial and social support. Governments, tea companies, and insurance providers should collaborate to ensure prompt compensation, comprehensive life insurance coverage, medical assistance, rehabilitation support, and educational assistance for dependent children. Human-elephant conflict extends beyond the boundaries of individual tea estates.

Ampere strengthens Imphal presence with new experience centre

Imphal

Greaves Electric Mobility's electric two-wheeler brand Ampere has inaugurated a new Experience Centre, KD24 Enterprises, at Keishampat Wahengbam Leikei in Imphal, expanding its retail and service network in Manipur. The dealership will showcase Ampere's electric scooter portfolio, including the Nexus EX+, Magnus GMax, Magnus Neo and recently launched Reo Vyb, catering to diverse customer segments. The Nexus EX+ features a 5 kW motor, while the Nexus EX+ and Magnus GMax offer variants with more than 30 intelligent features powered by Intellipack. The portfolio also features next-generation LFP battery technology and a standard battery warranty of up to



five years or 75,000 km. Ampere highlighted its products' performance across varied terrain. The Magnus GMax with Intellipack recently completed a nearly 4,000-km endurance ride in 15 days, from Dong Valley in Arunachal Pradesh to Guhar Moti in Kutch. The Nexus platform has also navigated Kolli Hills' 70 hairpin bends and reached Shipki La Pass at 13,200 feet. In Imphal, the dealership could improve access to

electric two-wheelers, servicing and customer support. Growing adoption will depend on affordability, charging infrastructure and reliable after-sales services, particularly as consumers assess alternatives to conventional petrol-powered scooters. The new centre is part of Greaves Electric Mobility's strategy to expand Ampere's retail footprint and bring electric mobility products and ownership support closer to customers.

By 2032, Hyundai Motor Group plans to invest \$15.5 billion in India



Mumbai

Hyundai Motor Group, a major South Korean automaker, announced on Tuesday that it would invest \$15.5 billion in India between 2026 and 2032 in order to increase manufacturing capacity, develop local R&D capabilities, and bolster India's standing as a hub for automotive technology and global exports. Along with supplier development and new mobility companies, the seven-year investment plan will involve Hyundai Motor India and Kia India. The announcement follows a meeting between Hyundai Motor Group Executive Chair Euisun Chung and Prime Minister Narendra Modi in New Delhi on Tuesday. "India remains one of Hyundai Motor Group's most important and stra-

tegic markets globally," Chung said, adding that the investment reaffirmed the group's commitment to the country for the next 30 years and beyond. The group, which employs more than 24,000 people in India, expects the investment to generate employment across manufacturing, engineering, R&D and the supplier network. In order to find local partners, manage capital deployment throughout its automotive ecosystem, and enable strategic partnerships with suppliers, the group will set up a special investment organization in India. A major aspect of the strategy will be the growth of manufacturing at Hyundai Motor India and Kia India, where the group hopes to boost components localization and support bigger volumes. India's position as a produc-

tion base for international markets is anticipated to be strengthened by the investment. Infrastructure for R&D, including a car testing track, is allocated about \$700 million.

In order to expedite next-generation automotive technologies, the business intends to build a more comprehensive research system, cultivate local technical expertise, and expand its R&D center in India. Future mobility enterprises, such as end-of-life vehicle recycling, electric vehicle charging infrastructure, and specialized automobile financing, will also benefit from the investment. Alongside its primary car business, Hyundai Motor Group plans to assist high-potential startups and create new mobility services. With 824,000 vehicles produced at Hyundai's Chennai facilities, 170,000 at its Pune factory, and 431,000 at Kia's Anantapur facility, Hyundai Motor Group presently has an annual manufacturing capacity of more than 1.4 million vehicles in India. Phased expansion of Pune's capacity is planned.

Tata Power creates a pipeline of 18 players for a 2.8 GW data center potential

Mumbai

As India's demand for digital services, cloud computing, and artificial intelligence (AI) increases, Tata Power is constructing a data center opportunity pipeline of more than 2.8 GW across 18 top domestic and international data center operators. According to the company's regulatory filing, it has 29 ongoing projects that include integrated infrastructure solutions for the data center industry, transmission and distribution (T&D), and renewable energy. Tata Power aims to expand its role beyond supplying electricity by offering solutions such as renewable energy, grid connectivity, energy storage, cooling systems and utility infrastructure. It is also exploring opportunities related to powered land for large data centre facilities.

About 430 MW of future power demand under its distribution network, 1,236 MW of transmission-linked prospects, and 1,150 MW of green energy capacity under active engagement are all included in the company's pipeline. Tata Power is able



to provide data center operators with integrated solutions because of its presence in power generation, transmission, and distribution. To operate cloud services, AI applications, and other digital processes, these facilities need dependable and continuous electricity. As India solidifies its position as a worldwide center for AI and technology, the company hopes to take part in the construction of massive data centers and next-generation digital infrastructure.

In order to accommodate the growing demand for electricity from huge data centers, Tata Power is also modernizing its transmission network in the Mumbai Metropolitan Region (MMR). The business is expanding its transformation and transmission ca-

pacities while modernizing its 110 kV and 220 kV networks. In order to guaranty a dependable power supply for energy-intensive digital infrastructure, network redundancy is also being strengthened.

Tata Power is also expanding a 400 kV transmission ring network and building new receiving stations. The goal of these improvements is to build a more robust grid that can accommodate the expanding capacity of data centers in the area. Tata Power's Rs 15,000 crore Mumbai Grid Upgrade and Expansion Plan includes the infrastructure expansion. Electricity demand is predicted to rise significantly as a result of India's expanding AI and digital infrastructure ecosystem.

Hero Motors doubles its Q1 earnings and increases 8%

Mumbai

Following its Dalal Street debut in September, Hero Motors, a manufacturer of auto components, released its first quarter results on Wednesday, causing its shares to rise as much as 8% in trading. On the National Stock Exchange (NSE), the shares began the day 4.4% higher at ₹161 and continued to rise, reaching an intraday high of ₹167.39. On September 23, Hero Motors listed at a discount of more than 2% to its issue price of ₹84, making a poor stock market debut. But after listing, there was a lot of purchasing interest, and the stock has now more than doubled from its issue price. On October 5, it reached a record high of ₹178.84. Hero Motors' shares were up



5.5% at ₹163.55 as of 10 a.m., bringing the company's market capitalization to ₹7,427.79 crore. The benchmark Nifty 50, on the other hand, was down 12 points, or 0.06 percent, and traded essentially flat at 11,711. In terms of volume and value, Hero Motors stock was also one of the most traded stocks on the NSE. Exchange data shows that during the first 45 minutes of trading, about 21 million shares were traded, with a total transaction value of ₹371.8 crore. Hero Motors recorded a consolidated profit of

₹10.20 crore for the April-June quarter, rising 116% year over year. In the first quarter of the previous fiscal year, the company made a net profit of ₹4.73 crore. In Q1 of FY27, its total sales increased by 25% year over year to ₹319 crore. In the same period last year, the amount was ₹256 crore.

Sequentially, the company's revenue decreased slightly from ₹322.522 crore, but its net profit fell by over 33% from ₹14.80. Additionally, the business revealed that it has acquired an additional 39% of its subsidiary, Hewland Engineering Limited. The current shareholders of Hewland Engineering, William and Siobhan Hewland, will sell their shares to the company for a total of GBP 0.60 million.

Manipur Deputy CM Nemcha Distributes Aid In Kangpokpi



Imphal, Oct 14

Manipur Deputy Chief Minister Nemcha Kipgen on Tuesday distributed livelihood assistance to internally displaced persons (IDPs) and various welfare benefits to other beneficiaries in Kangpokpi district under the Seva Sankalp Abhiyan, while urging village chiefs and civil society organisations (CSOs) to help ensure the last-mile delivery of government schemes to every deserving household, including those in remote hill areas. Addressing the obser-

vance of the Seva Sankalp Abhiyan, 2026, and Viksit Bharat Sankalp Yatra at the conference hall of the Sadar Hills Autonomous District Council (SHADC) in Kangpokpi, Kipgen emphasised the need for stronger coordination between the administration and grassroots institutions to ensure that no eligible beneficiary is left out of government welfare programmes. Highlighting the vision of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, she said the initiative aimed to take government services and welfare benefits

to the last mile, particularly in remote and far-flung areas where geographical constraints often pose challenges to access. The Deputy Chief Minister appealed to village chiefs and CSOs to actively assist the government in identifying deserving beneficiaries and facilitating their access to various schemes. She stressed that the effective implementation of welfare programmes depended not only on government initiatives but also on the active participation of local leaders and community organisations, who are often best placed to identify households in need of assistance. Kipgen called for collective efforts to ensure that the benefits of government schemes reach every eligible person, irrespective of the remoteness of their village, and that no deserving family is excluded due to a lack of awareness or access to administrative channels.

Assam Rifles Seize Smuggled Contraband Worth Over ₹6 Crore In Major Mizoram Raids

Aizawl, Oct 14

Assam Rifles, in two separate operations in Mizoram, seized foreign-origin cigarettes worth approximately Rs 5.4 crore and methamphetamine tablets valued at around Rs 76 lakh. Five individuals, including a Myanmar national, were apprehended during the operations. In the first operation, Assam Rifles recovered 226 cases of illegal foreign-origin cigarettes at Khawlaing in Serchhip district on October 13. The seized consignment comprised 111 cases of Patron cigarettes and 115 cases of Oris cigarettes, with an estimated market value of Rs 5.4 crore. Three individuals were apprehended in connection with the seizure. The seized cigarettes and the apprehended individuals were subsequently handed over to the Legal Metrology Department in Serchhip for further legal proceedings. In a separate joint operation with Bawngkawn Police Station on October 12, Assam Rifles apprehended two women, including a Myanmar national, at Ramhlun South in Aizawl. The operation led to the seizure of 950 grams of methamphetamine, comprising approximately 9,200 tablets, valued at around Rs 76 lakh. The apprehended individuals and the seized narcotics were formally handed over to Bawngkawn Police Station for further legal proceedings under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Sub-

stances (NDPS) Act, 1985. In a series of intelligence-driven operations across Mizoram, the Assam Rifles successfully apprehended five individuals—including a Myanmar national—and seized a massive consignment of contraband comprising illegal foreign-origin cigarettes and narcotics valued at over Rs 6.16 crore.

The first operation took place in the Serchhip district, where personnel intercepted and recovered 226 cases of illegal foreign-origin cigarettes at Khawlaing. The haul, featuring brands like Patron and Oris, was valued at an estimated Rs 5.4 crore. Three individuals were taken into custody during this operation and subsequently transferred along with the seized goods to the Legal Metrology Department in Serchhip for further legal action. In a separate joint operation conducted alongside the Bawngkawn Police Station, security forces targeted Ramhlun South in Aizawl. Authorities intercepted and apprehended two women, including one foreign national from Myanmar, recovering roughly 950 grams of methamphetamine amounting to approximately 9,200 tablets worth Rs 76 lakh. The accused and the narcotics were handed over to local police to proceed under the NDPS Act. Security agencies remain on high alert as cross-border smuggling networks continue to exploit the region's porous borders.

Meghalaya Cabinet Approves The Official Winding Up Of Cherra Cement Limited



Shillong, Oct 14

The Meghalaya Cabinet has approved the closure and winding up of Meghalaya Cherra Cement Limited (MCCL), along with the write-off of its outstanding liabilities to facilitate the process. Chief Minister Conrad K. Sangma said this while addressing the media after chairing the Cabinet

meeting. To complete the winding-up process, the Cabinet approved the write-off of pending liabilities, including approximately Rs 8.9 crore in sales tax dues and Rs 15.53 crore in royalty dues. Sangma said that as MCCL was a government-owned company, settling the outstanding liabilities would otherwise involve financial transfers between the company and

various state government departments. The Meghalaya Cabinet, chaired by Chief Minister Conrad K. Sangma, has approved the formal closure and winding up of Mawmluh Cherra Cements Limited (MCCL). This decision marks the end of the state's oldest public sector undertaking, located in Sohra, which ceased production in 2020 due to severe operational challenges and financial unviability. To facilitate a smooth winding-up process, the Cabinet approved writing off pending liabilities worth approximately ₹24.43 crore. This includes ₹8.9 crore in unpaid sales tax and ₹15.53 crore in royalty dues. Chief Minister Sangma clarified that because MCCL is a government-owned enterprise, writing off these inter-departmental dues prevents unnecessary financial transfers between state government bodies and simplifies administrative procedures.

Arunachal CM Pema Khandu Agrees In Principle To Withdraw Siang River FIRs

Itanagar, Oct 14

Arunachal Pradesh Chief Minister Pema Khandu has agreed in principle to reduce security deployment in the Siang Valley and withdraw FIRs against people in connection with protests over the proposed Siang Upper Multipurpose Project (SUMP), as the state government seeks to ease tensions and facilitate dialogue. Khandu announced the decision after meeting representatives of the Adi Baane Kebang Youth Wing (ABKYW) and the Adi Students' Union (AdiSU). He said the government remained committed to dialogue, consent and finding a constructive way forward.

The two organisations had sought his intervention to reduce security deployment in the valley and withdraw FIRs. Khandu described the proposals as confidence-building measures and expressed hope that the organisations would help create an atmosphere of trust. The development comes amid opposition from sections



of the Adi community to the pre-feasibility report for the proposed hydropower project. The deployment of security personnel to facilitate preparatory work has further heightened tensions between the government and local residents. The proposed SUMP, envisaged to have a capacity of around 11,200 MW, is being promoted by the government for hydropower generation, water storage and flood moderation. The state government

has also cited its strategic importance in view of China's hydropower development upstream on the Yarlung Tsangpo river, which enters India as the Siang. The government has maintained that the ongoing pre-feasibility exercise is intended to assess the project's viability and does not constitute final approval for construction. It has said public consultations and assessments would be required before a final decision is taken.

Chunky, Clunky, Cool: The Trendy Sneakers Bringing Retro Style Back



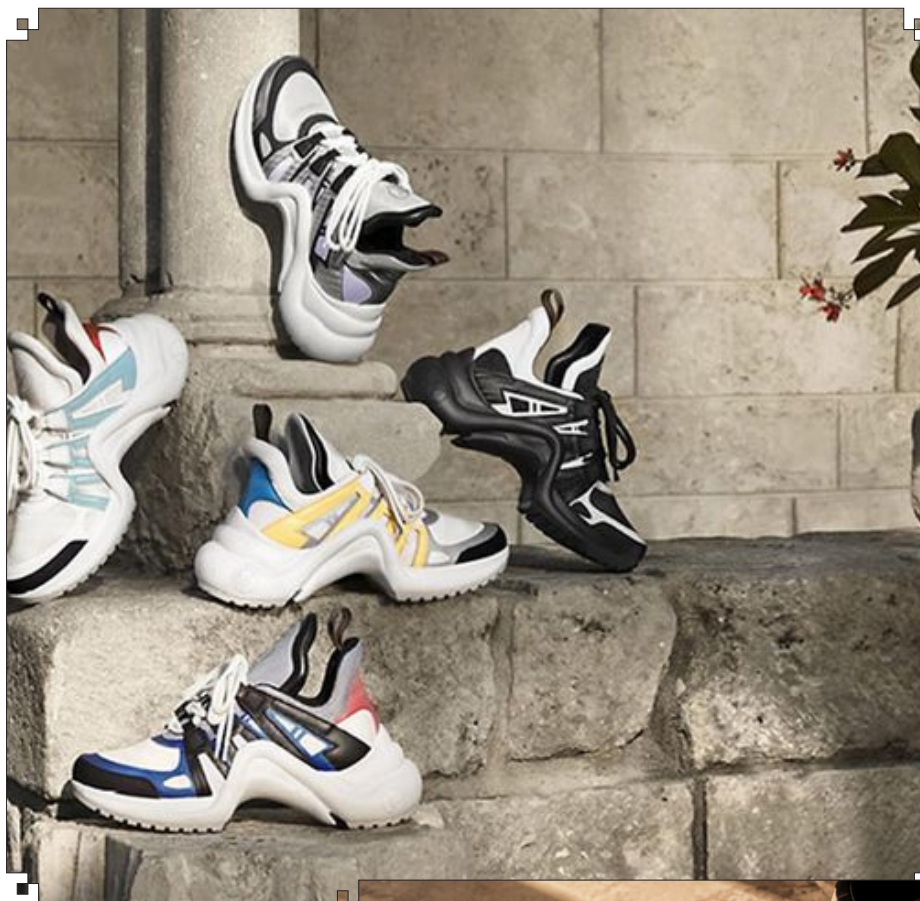
The best streetwear looks often begin from the ground up. Think oversized denim pooling over a sculptural sole, relaxed trousers paired with vintage-inspired runners, or a crisp white tee finished with sneakers that look as though they have a story to tell. Chunky and retro silhouettes have become wardrobe staples for precisely this reason: they bring personality to everyday dressing without requiring an entirely new wardrobe. This season, the mood is all about proportion and nostalgia. Think padded collars, layered panels, contrasting textures and soles with a little extra attitude. The trick is finding a pair that looks considered rather than cumbersome and feels comfortable enough to take you from coffee runs to long days out. The good news? You don't have to spend designer-sneaker money to get the look. From sporty, '90s-inspired runners to substantial court-style trainers, several established labels offer options under ₹6,000. We've kept the edit focused on recognisable footwear brands, versatile designs and price points that make sense for everyday streetwear. Prices checked against available online listings on 12 October 2026. Prices and sizes can change; some options may

be discounted. A sculptural silhouette, layered detailing and contrasting colour accents give this pair the kind of presence that makes even a simple jeans-and-tee combination feel styled. Wear it with loose denim, cargo trousers or track pants for a distinctly '90s-inspired finish. With its archive-inspired running shape and streamlined profile, the SL 72 RS is ideal if you prefer retro sportswear over an exaggerated platform. Style it with straight-leg jeans, relaxed chinos or sporty shorts. Borrowing from classic basketball footwear, the BB480 brings a substantial shape without going full maximalist. Look for white, grey or muted-colour versions to keep the styling versatile. A recent listing surfaced at ₹3,029, though the exact colourway and size should be checked before ordering. A heritage-inspired leather look gives this pair a slightly more polished feel than a technical runner. It works with denim, relaxed tailoring and casual office outfits—especially in a pared-back colourway. A listing was found at ₹2,610; verify the current size availability. A substantial sole and clean, contrasting colour palette give these sneakers an easy streetwear appeal. Pair them with baggy denim, relaxed cargos or straight-leg trousers for

lies in its ability to make everyday dressing feel a little more deliberate. A chunky runner brings attitude; a vintage-inspired silhouette adds nostalgia; and a clean court shoe lends even the most relaxed outfit a sharper finish. Choose a pair that complements the proportions of your wardrobe, prioritise comfort for daily wear, and remember that the most versatile sneaker is the one you will reach for again and again. Footwear is rarely just about utility. From the primitive sandals woven from papyrus and leather to the precision-engineered

carbon-plated running shoes of the twenty-first century, what we put on our feet has always served as a visible extension of cultural identity, technological ambition, and generational ethos. Yet, few footwear trends have captured the collective cultural imagination quite like the resurgence of the chunky, clunky, retro sneaker. Often affectionately (and sometimes derisively) labeled “dad shoes,” “orthopedic chic,” or “ugly sneakers,” these oversized, heavily cushioned, arch-supported behemoths have completed an improbable journey.

They have transitioned from the discount bins of suburban strip malls and the sensible footwear choices of tourists navigating theme parks to the runways of Paris, Milan, and New York, commanding four-figure price tags and spawning a global resale market worth billions. To understand why a silhouette defined by excessive volume, clunky proportions, and unironic comfort has become the ultimate symbol of modern cool, we must explore a complex convergence of nostalgia, shifting gender norms in fashion, the fatigue of minimalist uniformity, and the genius of contemporary footwear design. To appreciate the retro sneaker boom, one must first understand what these shoes are referencing. The aesthetic finds its roots in the late 1980s and 1990s—a golden era of sports marketing, technological arms races among athletic brands, and an absolute obsession with cushioning and stability. Before the minimalist running movement of the early 2010s taught runners to embrace thin soles and natural foot strike mechanics, the prevailing philosophy in athletic footwear was simple: more is more. Brands like Nike, New Balance, Reebok, ASICS, and FILA were locked in a fierce battle to engineer the ultimate shock-absorbing, joint-protecting, performance-enhancing shoe.



a contemporary everyday look. Pair chunky runners with relaxed denim, a plain tee and an oversized shirt. Choose retro runners with track pants, a windbreaker and crew socks. Stick to cream, white, grey or navy sneakers with straight-leg trousers and a structured overshirt. Let the shoes do the talking. Keep the rest of the outfit relatively simple when the sneaker has multiple panels or bold colour blocking. The appeal of a great retro sneaker



Maintaining Reign: Smriti Mandhana Retains Top Spot in Latest ICC Women's ODI Batting Rankings

NEW DELHI, OCT. 14

Star Indian opener Smriti Mandhana has successfully retained her prestigious position at the summit of the latest International Cricket Council (ICC) Women's ODI batting rankings, released on Tuesday. Mandhana, who recently assumed the mantle of India's white-ball captain from Harmanpreet Kaur, continues to headline the batting charts with a commanding 790 rating points. Her stellar form at the top of the order remains a cornerstone of India's 50-over strategy. Her predecessor, Harmanpreet Kaur, is the only other Indian batter to feature inside the elite top 10, holding firmly onto



the ninth spot. Meanwhile, there was positive movement for Australian veteran and Royal Challengers Bengaluru (RCB) star Ellyse Perry, whose consistent performances have earned her a triumphant return to the top 10 ODI batting rankings. Changes in Bowlers' and T20I Standings

In the bowling department, India's premier all-rounder Deepti Sharma slipped one place to ninth in the ODI rankings following recent adjustments in the table. The top tier of the bowling charts saw movement from Australia's camp, with Annabel Sutherland and Megan Schutt climbing

upward to break into the top five. The T20I rankings also feature a strong Indian contingent across categories: Batting T20I: Explosive opener Shafali Verma holds the fourth spot with 759 points, closely followed by Smriti Mandhana in fifth place with 754 points. All-Rounders & Middle Order: Former captain Harmanpreet Kaur maintains her presence in the T20I rankings, sitting at the 10th position with 656 points. With international bilateral fixtures and upcoming global tournaments on the horizon, Mandhana's continued dominance at the top underscores her status as one of the premier anchors in modern women's cricket.

Lakshya Sen Exits Denmark Open While Srikanth and Tanvi March On

NEW DELHI, OCT. 14

Indian shuttler Lakshya Sen's difficult run on the BWF World Tour continued as he bowed out of the Denmark Open 2026 following a hard-fought first-round defeat to Chinese Taipei's Chou Tien-chen. Sen went down 18-21, 21-13, 15-21 in a grueling 63-minute encounter. This early exit adds to a frustrating season for the young Indian star, who previously suffered a second-round loss at the Asian Games 2026 against Singapore's Loh Kean Yew, as well as a shock setback against American qualifier Garret Tan at the BWF World Championships in August. Mixed Fortunes for the Indian Camp While Sen exited early, former

world No. 1 Kidambi Srikanth provided a positive spark for the contingent. World No. 31 Srikanth advanced to the round of 16 after overcoming a stiff challenge from France's Arnaud Merkle, winning 22-20, 21-19. He is set to face the winner between seventh seed Alex Lanier and Hu Zhe An. In the women's singles category, young shuttler Tanvi Sharma pulled off a brilliant victory, defeating Japan's Natsuki Nidaira 21-17, 16-21, 21-19 in a tense three-game thriller to secure her place in the next round. However, fellow Indian star P.V. Sindhu suffered a shocking first-round exit after falling to Germany's Yvonne Li in a close encounter.

ICC Records Over 15 Million Applications for 2027 Cricket World Cup Across 142 Countries



NEW DELHI, OCT. 14

The upcoming ICC Men's Cricket World Cup 2027 has witnessed an unprecedented wave of global interest, crossing a staggering 15 million ticket applications within just 12 days of the ballot opening. Massive Global Response According to data released by the International Cricket Council (ICC), a total of 15,083,752 ticket applications have been lodged, driven by 4,423,417 individual ballot registrations spanning across 142 countries. This monumental figure marks a massive escalation from the one million applications logged during the opening week of the registration window, highlighting a roaring appetite for the marquee 50-over tournament. Fans from the United Kingdom, South Africa, India, the United States, and Australia have emerged at the forefront of the ballot applications, reflecting the universal appeal of the sport. Returning to Africa with a New Format The 14th edition of the Men's Cricket World Cup carries immense historical significance, returning to the African continent for the first time in 24 years. Co-hosted jointly by

South Africa, Zimbabwe, and Namibia, the tournament will feature an expanded format with 14 teams competing across 12 venues in 57 matches. Gupta also emphasized the board's forward-looking strategy: "With a year to go, the ICC has planned an exciting runway of 360-degree activations, multi-platform campaigns and content line-ups, which will elevate the fandom associated with the ICC Cricket World Cup 2027." Ballot Timeline and Next Steps The ticketing process has been structured to ensure fair accessibility. Entering the ballot is free, and applications are not processed on a first-come, first-served basis, allowing all valid requests submitted within the timeframe equal consideration. Registration for the ticket ballot remains open and will close at 23:59 Central Africa Time (CAT) on November 21, 2026. This deadline coincides exactly with the one-year countdown to the tournament's grand finale, which is scheduled to take place at the iconic Wanderers Stadium in Johannesburg. Successful applicants will subsequently be notified via email with instructions on how to complete their ticket purchases.

England Unveil White-Ball Squads for Australia Series

LONDON, OCT. 14

England has announced its white-ball squads for the upcoming limited-overs series against Australia, featuring a nearly full-strength side for the three-day One-Day International (ODI) leg before a heavily rotated lineup for the five-match T20I series. Strategic workload management has taken center stage as the team looks ahead to the upcoming Test tour of South Africa and the 2027 ODI World Cup. Strong ODI Squad Aimed at World Cup Prep For the ODI fixtures beginning in November, fast bowler Jofra Archer and young all-rounder Jacob Bethell make notable returns. Bethell successfully recovers from a knee injury sustained during July's home series against India. However, to preserve player fitness for the grueling red-ball commitments in South Africa, key fast bowlers Jofra Archer, Gus Atkinson, Sonny Baker, and Josh Tongue will be withdrawn from the squad following the conclusion of



the ODI series. Youth and Fringe Players Get Nod for T20Is The T20I squad assumes a much fresher look under captain Harry Brook, accommodating four uncapped players. Wicket-keeper-batter Thomas Rew and right-arm fast bowler Eddie Jack have earned maiden senior call-ups, bolstered by prior experience with the England Lions in Australia. James Coles and Henry Crocombe are also positioned for potential T20I debuts. Meanwhile, Phil Salt returns to the T20 setup following a quad injury layout, replacing the sidelined Jos

Buttler, and Sam Curran returns from a groin issue. England's ODI Squad: Harry Brook (capt), Jofra Archer, Gus Atkinson, Sonny Baker, Tom Banton, Jacob Bethell, Jordan Cox, Henry Crocombe, Sam Curran, Liam Dawson, Ben Duckett, Will Jacks, Jamie Overton, Adil Rashid, Joe Root, Josh Tongue. England's T20I Squad: Harry Brook (capt), Tom Banton, Jacob Bethell, James Coles, Jordan Cox, Henry Crocombe, Sam Curran, Liam Dawson, Aneurin Donald, Eddie Jack, Will Jacks, Jamie Overton, Adil Rashid, Thomas Rew, Phil Salt, Luke Wood.