



Shrimant Shahu Chhatrapati Maharaj of Kolhapur to meet

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## Maratha Reservation:



# Internet services



# suspended in Jalna

Internet services have been suspended in Maharashtra's Jalna district in view of violent incidents in the Marathwada region during the ongoing agitation seeking reservation for Marathas in government jobs and education, police said on Tuesday. The district in central Maharashtra, around

400km from Mumbai, is also the site of an indefinite fast launched by Maratha quota activist Manoj Jarange last week in support of the reservation demand. Internet services in Jalna district were suspended by an order of the local administration as a precautionary measure to stop spread of rumours related to violence and arson during the agitation, an official said.

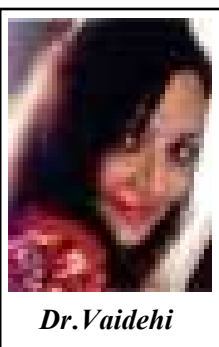
On Monday, Beed district, which is also part of Marathwada, saw large-scale violence and arson by quota protesters who torched homes of two Nationalist Congress Party (NCL) MLAs and a municipal council building during the agitation. Beed and another district in the region, Dharashiv, are under curfew since Monday. Activist Jarange is sitting on a hunger strike since October 25 at Antarwali Sarati village in Jalna district as part of the second phase of agitation for Maratha quota. PTI

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## Maratha agitation for reservation is poor exercise in bad direction

Editoritis



Dr. Vaidehi

After hours of peaceful agitation to demand reservation for the Maratha community, the agitators turned violent and they set fire to political party offices and politician's houses. The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) office in Hingoli in the Marathwada region was set on fire. Earlier the houses of NCP MLAs Prakash Solunke and Sandeep Kshirsagar were set on fire. Solunke is with the Ajit Pawar-led NCP and Kshirsagar belongs to the party led by Sharad Pawar. Protesters indulged in arson and vandalism as they targeted a municipal council building. They also vandalised the office of a BJP MLA in Chhatrapati Sambhajnagar district, and pelted stones at state-run buses as they blocked highways in other parts of the Marathwada region. After the violence, authorities imposed a curfew in the Beed district, and prohibitory orders were

clamped in Dharashi district as well. They also stepped security at the houses of MLAs, MPs, and ministers as well as offices of political parties across Maharashtra.

Maratha reservation has become a political ploy. We can understand reservations being given to backward classes up to an extent because for centuries with a system of hereditary wise nature of occupation most backward classes were denied opportunities on the basis of their caste. But Marathas are the most privileged and forward community. The Maratha community was never out of the mainstream of national life. Moreover, giving

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# Editoritis

# Maratha agitation for reservation is poor exercise in bad direction

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*The 16 per cent quota to the Maratha community will take the total reservation in the state to 68 per cent. The Cabinet sub-committee, which has been constituted, will implement the quota if the demand can fit into the legal frame.*

*Most of the people from Maratha community make their livings by farming and most of the rural population are Maratha. Farming used to be their strong source of living, most of the farmers were wealthy.*

*So, the next option is to somehow increase the OBC quota or create a new category (say OBC 2.0) with Maratha and few other castes from the OBC quota. But this will break the Supreme Court mandated limit of 50%.*

16% reservations, thus taking the total reservations to 68%, is NOT "some relaxation in this strict rule" of a maximum limit of 50% reservations. Grant of 16% reservations to the Maratha community is absolutely unconstitutional and cannot be sustained under law. Despite knowing all this, the BJP-led Maharashtra Government has resorted to this unconstitutional act. Is it not an act of cheating the Maratha community - giving them something that they are not likely to get ultimately? Is it not an act of making fools of Marathas?

At present, the total reservation in Maharashtra accounts for 52 per cent – 13 per cent for Scheduled Caste, seven per cent for Scheduled Tribe, 19 per cent for Other Backward Class, two per cent for Special Backward Class, two per cent for Vimukta Jati, 2.5 per cent for the Nomadic tribe, 3.5 per cent for the Nomadic tribe-C (Dhangar) and two per cent for the Nomadic tribe-D (Vanjari). The 16 per cent quota to the Maratha community will take the total reservation in the state to 68 per cent. The Cabinet sub-committee, which has been constituted, will implement the quota if the demand can fit into the legal frame.

Most of the people from Maratha community make their livings by farming and most of the rural population are Maratha. Farming used to be their strong source of living, most of the farmers were wealthy. But over the generations, the land farmers got divided, and now the same families ended up with very less land to do the farming. There is a point in talking about the pitiful life of the farmers in Maharashtra. If the government puts sincere efforts toward making favourable policies for farmers like (even more) subsidizing fertilizers, seeds, agricultural equipment etc, teaching farmers advanced technologies, preventing factory owners and agents from looting farmers, then I don't think the farmers would need help in other forms like reservation. However, it is India, where helpful solutions are not important, but the ones which can grab some votes for politicians matter and are applied.

In the present scenario, It is difficult to establish that Marathas are socially and educationally backward. In 2003-04, the National Commission for Backward Classes rejected the demand for including the Maratha community in the Other

Backward Class (OBC) category. The Maharashtra State Backward Class Commission had held in 2008 that "Marathas are both economically and politically a forward caste. They never faced social stigma to invite backward class status." So, weighing these reports, no reservation can be given to Marathas in educational institutions (art 15) and similarly, Marathas are adequately represented in the services under the State hence, no reservation can follow either in matters of public employment (art 16). Amendment of the constitution or circumvention of constitutional provision though an act validated by courts is the way out. Interestingly, reservation in India is capped at 50% as a general rule, where ST (7.5%), SC (15%) and OBC (27%). Now, these are categories, in which there are many tribes and castes, which compete among themselves before claiming any seat. Maratha is a standalone caste. The constitution does not provide for reservation to any particular caste, caste has to be part of a category. Standalone reservation to Maratha caste is ruled out. So, the next possibility is to put Marathas in some category. Marathas cannot go in ST because they are not tribals. Marathas cannot go either in SC because they never faced untouchability and oppression like other castes in SC category. Marathas in 27% of OBC quota will be unsustainable because there is already crowding in of too many castes in OBC, plus, OBC castes may not allow it.

So, the next option is to somehow increase the OBC quota or create a new category (say OBC 2.0) with Maratha and few other castes from the OBC quota. But this will break the Supreme Court mandated limit of 50%. (such provision will also have to stand in Supreme court if challenged). India can overhaul its reservation system through constitutional amendment by replacing 'socially and educationally backward' with 'economically backward'. This would be unprecedented but will be of no use. Since reservation policy is implemented for members of groups that are known to have previously suffered from discrimination.



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## All Saints and Souls Days



- Jubel D'Cruz

The Catholic Church all over the world remembers the departed ones to commemorate the faithful departed better known as All Souls Day, on November 2. Preceding it, is All Saints Day on November 1. It is observed to honour and remember all those who have lived a pious life on earth and may have not taken cognisance by the church to honour them to be revered as saints. It is presumed that they are in their heavenly abode. These could be anyone from our families -- from grandparents' generation to present times -- they are remembered with special liturgical services on All Saints Day.

Somehow, parishioners give more emphasis to their departed ones in keeping with the old church tradition and are seen flocking at the local cemeteries to clean the graves of their loved ones, decorate them with flowers and garlands in preparation for the Eucharist services held at the cemetery chapels. This is an annual religious exercise attended to remember and respect the memories of their

missing loved ones. But the good news is resurrection for those who accept and follow Jesus.

In the homily of the liturgy, the parish priest stresses upon this aspect of the faith alerting the faithful to keep away from sinful life. Compassion and understanding are the essence of human dignity, forgiveness is pleasing to God and caring for the sick and the aged is upholding humanity. Let us therefore, as we observe the day of the departed, reach out to the needy in times of distress, loneliness and suffering and bring relief and succour to them.

There is scriptural basis for this belief. The primary reference is in 2 Maccabees, 12:26 and 12:32. "Turning to supplication, they prayed that the sinful deed might be fully blotted out. Thus made atonement for the dead that they might be free from sin."

## Letters to the Editor

### When can we restore the situation in Gaza?

Nearly three dozen trucks entered Gaza on Sunday in the largest aid convoy since the war between Israel and Hamas began. However, it was not enough for the citizens of Gaza because everything that is needed for human life is disconnected. That's why humanitarian workers said the assistance still fell desperately short of needs. After thousands of people broke into warehouses to take flour and basic hygiene products, they urged people to take this step.

The Gaza Health Ministry said the death toll among Palestinians has passed 8,000, mostly women and minors, as Israeli tanks and infantry pursued what Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu called a 'second stage' in the war ignited by Hamas' brutal October 7 incursion. The toll is unprecedented in decades of Israeli-Palestinian violence. Over 1,400 people have died on the Israeli side, mainly civilians killed during the initial attack, also an unprecedented figure.

Communications were restored to most of Gaza's 2.3 million people on Sunday after an Israeli bombardment, described by residents as the most intense of the war, knocked out phone and internet services late Friday."

Md Mofidul Islam

### The Usefulness of the United Nations

The first task of any global organization that comes into existence on the basis of consensus is to stop any ongoing violence against innocents. It is not necessary to see what happened before the violence and what the justification for the current violence is. Any violence, wherever it occurs, is wrong if it involves innocent children. In such a situation, if the UN Secretary-General asked Israel to stop the violence, it was not wrong at all. But in response, the Israeli representative demanded the resignation of the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

The United Nations exists at the economic mercy of America, and America stands with Israel, and therefore the Secretary-General will not receive assistance from many countries in the world. But all democratic and peace-loving countries, including America, must now consider how effective the United Nations is in dealing

with issues such as war. Gradually, over the past several decades, major powers have hollowed out this global organization for their own interests. To question the United Nations is to question the peace-loving nature of the entire world, and Israel will have to stop this dogmatism. The international community should take this matter seriously.

N Mateeni

### Hike in Onion

Some time ago, tomatoes were being sold at Rs 200 per kg in the country. Now, tomato prices have come down, but there is a big jump in onion prices. Its price has crossed Rs 50 in many states. It is surprising that the government adopts a lenient attitude towards this matter. The high prices of onions and the miserable situation of farmers in an agricultural country is truly shameful and condemnable. Even before this, onion prices were increasing and there has been politics on this issue. It is not a new thing that expensive onions have brought tears to the eyes of the common man, but even before, whether it was a Congress government or a BJP government, onion prices have skyrocketed. Agricultural experts should develop such technology so that onion production increases in every state of the country. The wrong

policies of the government which are responsible for the rising onion prices can definitely be improved.

N Ashraf

### Hawkers are a part & parcel of our lives!

Hawkers are a part & parcel of our lives but a distinction needs to be made between 'legit & others' when it comes to offering them certain rights for their livelihood. They need representation in the civic body but them seems to be some discrepancy as a mere 32K are eligible to vote in town vending committee meeting while 1 lakh so called 'legit' hawkers have PM loans which seems to be some sort of a financial scam or a disorder.

Civic Chief IS Chahal should look into the discrepancy & see to it that genuine legitimate hawkers are given their due as well as representation in the civic body as general people not just benefit from their existence but a lot many hawkers earn their livelihood from it!

S.N.Kabra

Readers are requested to mail Letters to the Editor only at

[afternoonvoicedesk@gmail.com](mailto:afternoonvoicedesk@gmail.com)

No postal letters will be entertained

(The views expressed are authors' own)

## Jarange Patil demands special assembly session to declare reservations for Marathas



During a press conference, Manoj Jarange Patil, a key figure in the Maratha reservation protest,

urged for a special assembly session to declare reservations for the Maratha community.

Chief Minister Eknath Shinde

contacted Jarange Patil on Tuesday morning and engaged in a discussion that extended for more than twenty minutes.

"We don't want a half-hearted reservation. Our demand is that all the needy Marathas should get a Kunbi caste certificate," Patil said after speaking to Shinde.

Patil said that his hunger strike will continue till the reservation is granted to all the Marathas.

## Shrimant Shahu Chhatrapati Maharaj of Kolhapur to meet Maratha activist Manoj Jarasange Patil



Shrimant Shahu Chhatrapati Maharaj of Kolhapur is scheduled to meet with Maratha activist Manoj Jarasange Patil. As the 12th descendant of the revered warrior king Shivaji Maharaj, Shahu

Chhatrapati aims to potentially persuade Jarasange Patil to end his hunger strike.

Concerns are mounting as Patil's health has deteriorated significantly, marking the seventh day of his protest without food.

## We want a blanket reservation for Marathas': Manoj Jarange Patil

Manoj Jarange Patil, a key figure in the Maratha reservation protest, during a press conference, urged for a special assembly session to declare reservations for the Maratha community.

Meanwhile, Chief Minister

Eknath Shinde contacted Jarange Patil on Tuesday morning and engaged in a discussion that extended for more than twenty minutes.

"We (Shinde and Jarange) spoke over the phone. I clearly told him that we will not accept the reservation which would be

based on Kunbi records found. The half-hearted reservation is not acceptable. We want a blanket reservation for Marathas. Marathas and Kunbis are the same and hence based on that the reservation can be given to all the Marathas-," Patil said.

## Prohibition on politicians entering villages to continue, says Manoj Jarange Patil

Maratha leader Manoj Jarange Patil has urged people to "not get aggressive." However, he asked them to "continue the chain hunger strike as much as possible."

He also stated that the prohibition on politicians entering villages will persist. Expressing appreciation for the resignations of MLAs and MPs in support of the cause of Maratha reservation, Jarange Patil as-

sured that the community will remember and value the steps taken by these officials. Jarange Patil also alleged that the arson is being carried out by individuals affiliated with the ruling parties.

## Former Maha CM Ashok Chavan raises suspicions of conspiracy underlying recent violence in state



Ashok Chavan, a member of the Congress Working Committee and former Chief Minister of Maharashtra, has voiced suspicions of a conspiracy underlying the recent violence in the state. He emphasised

the importance of investigating whether certain entities are intentionally tarnishing the Maratha agitation's image through violent tactics. Chavan called upon the state government to conduct a probe into these matters.

## NCP split: Welcome SC order, our case different from Sena rebellion, says Tatkare



Lok Sabha MP Sunil Tatkare welcomed the Supreme Court's directive to the Maharashtra Assembly Speaker Rahul Narwekar to decide by January 31, 2024 the National Congress Party's petition seeking disqualification of nine MLAs of the Ajit Pawar faction.

Tatkare, who is part of the deputy chief minister's fac-

tion, said his party has always believed its case was different from the rebellion in the Shiv Sena, which took place in June last year. The top court, during the day, also asked Narwekar to decide the cross-petitions filed by the rival factions of the Shiv Sena seeking disqualification of each other's MLAs by December 31.

## Maratha quota stir: 13 MSRTC buses damaged since Sunday, 30 depots shut

At least 13 MSRTC buses have been damaged in the last 48 hours, including four, in the Maratha quota stir underway in Maharashtra, leading to the state-run transport corporation taking a decision to shut operations in 30 of its 250 depots, an official said. Nine buses were damaged on Sunday, he said, adding the 30 depots where operations have been stopped are in Chhatrapati Sambhajnagar division of Maharashtra State Road Transport Corporation (MSRTC). "All MSRTC depots in Chhatrapati



Sambhajnagar division, except 17 depots in Beed, Dharrashiv (formerly Osmanabad)

and Chhatrapati Sambhajnagar zones in the division, have been shut," he said.

## Nation

# Cong's top 4 faces in Rajasthan: The King, the Challenger, the Critic and the 'Professor'

In the 2023 Assembly elections, the Congress is hoping to change a three-decades-old trend of Rajasthan voters alternating between the BJP and the Congress. To ensure this, Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot has been trying to do whatever he can – short of replacing sitting MLAs – to ensure victory. He is betting big on welfare schemes and his personal popularity, and hoping that his political acumen sees the party through. Ashok Gehlot, 72

An Economics post-graduate with a law degree, Gehlot first entered politics via the National Students' Union of India (NSUI) in college, and was its state president 1974-79. In 1979, he became the Jodhpur district president of the Congress and was the state chief by 1985.

Between 1980 and 1999, Gehlot was elected as the Lok Sabha MP from Jodhpur five

times. The only time he lost was in 1989, to the BJP's Jaswant Singh. As MP, he was also a minister in the governments of Indira Gandhi, Rajiv Gandhi and P V Narasimha Rao. While Gehlot has indicated he won't be going into the sunset anytime soon, Pilot is practising the virtue of patience, reportedly counselled to wait his turn by the high command. In the coming elections, the party will look to him to shore up its votes in eastern Rajasthan, especially of Gujjars.

Govind Singh Dotasra, 59: Dotasra, a trained lawyer, too entered politics via the NSUI, moving on to the Indian Youth Congress (IYC) and eventually the Congress.

But he won his first election only in 2005 at the age of 41, when he was elected pradhan of the Laxmangarh Panchayat Samiti in Sikar. That marked an

upswing in his fortunes. In the 2008 next Assembly elections, he won the Laxmangarh seat.

In 2013, he was among the handful of Congress candidates who didn't just win but also retained their seat. His performance in the state Assembly sealed his place in the party. As party whip, Dotasra was a fierce critic of the then ruling BJP, and won the 'Best MLA' award in 2016. By the end of his second tenure, he had emerged as a top Jat face in the state, helping the Congress balance its caste equations.

As Minister of Primary and Secondary Education, Tourism and other departments since 2018, Dotasra has clashed with the BJP over changes in school curricula. Following Pilot's rebellion, Dotasra was made the state president in July 2020. In November 2021, he resigned as



minister following the party's 'one person one post' rule.

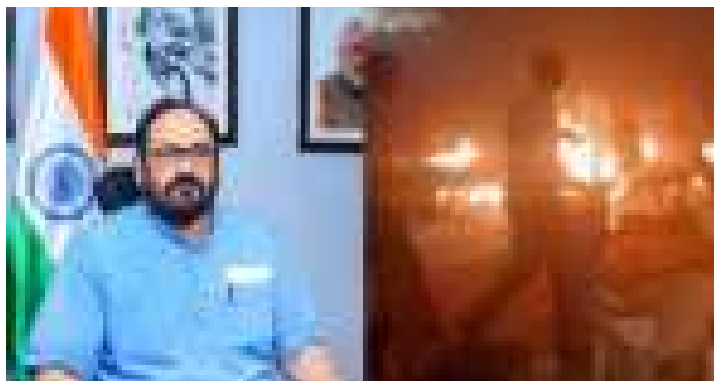
Dotasra was in the news recently for Enforcement Directorate (ED) raids in connection with the 2021 Rajasthan Eligibility Examination for Teachers (REET).

C P Joshi, 73 Known as 'Professor' in party circles, Joshi holds two Masters degrees – MSc in Physics and MA in Psychology, as well as a PhD in Psychol-

ogy and an LLB. He worked as a lecturer for a while at an Udaipur college and later was a professor of psychology.

Joshi's first brush with politics came in 1973, when he was elected president of the Udaipur University Students' Union. He was elected MLA from Nathdwara in 1980, 1985, 1998, 2003 and 2018. He first became a minister in the state government in 1998, with Gehlot as CM.

## Kerala blast: A case gets registered against Union Minister Rajeev Chandrasekhar for promoting enmity



A case has been registered against Union Minister of State Rajeev Chandrasekhar for allegedly making statements that promote enmity between different groups, police said on Tuesday. The Kerala police registered the FIR on its own in connection with the minister's recent statements on social media regarding the Kochi blasts and a Hamas leader's virtual address at an event organised by an Islamist group in Malappuram district of the state recently. A senior officer of Kochi city police said that an FIR under sections 153A (promoting enmity between different groups on grounds of religion, race, place of birth, residence) of the IPC and section 120 (o) (causing nuisance and violation of public order) of

the Kerala Police Act has been registered against the minister.

After reports of the bomb blasts at a religious gathering of Jehovah's Witnesses in Kalamassery near here came out on Sunday, Minister of State for Electronics and Information Technology Chandrasekhar put up posts on social media platform X criticising Kerala CM Pinarayi Vijayan. "Dirty shameless appeasement politics by a discredited CM (and HM) @ pinarayivijayan besieged by corruption charges. Sitting in Delhi and protesting against Israel, when in Kerala open calls by Terrorist Hamas for Jihad is causing attacks and bomb blasts on innocent Christians," he had said.

Following this, a verbal duel

took place on Monday between the CM and Chandrasekhar with the BJP leader calling Vijayan a "liar" and he in turn lashing out and terming the MoS "extremely venomous". The CM also said that if anyone makes statements which are in violation of the law, irrespective of whether they are central or state ministers, cases would be registered against them.

The blasts were set off at a convention centre in Kalamassery near Kochi where a prayer meeting of the Jehovah's Witnesses -- a Christian religious group that originated in the US in the 19th century -- was held on Sunday. A few hours after that, Martin, who claimed to be an estranged member of Jehovah's Witnesses, surrendered before police in Thrissur district of the state, saying that he carried out the multiple blasts. Initially, one woman had died and 60 were injured, six of them critically, in the blasts.

Subsequently, one of the six critically wounded -- a 53-year-old woman -- succumbed to her injuries. By Monday morning, the death toll rose to three with the death of a 12-year-old girl who had suffered 95 per cent burns in the incident. **PTI**

## The top 5 BJP faces in Rajasthan, some not in fray

A state with a history of voting out the ruling party, Rajasthan is witnessing a fierce, two-way contest as CM Ashok Gehlot of the Congress hopes to turn the tide and cement his legacy, while the BJP sees it as a launchpad for its 2024 Lok Sabha bid. While BJP is pursuing its recent policy of not announcing a

CM face and fielding sitting MPs, it is a state where its unit is riven with internal bickering, which have required several interventions from the party's central leadership.

Here are the BJP bigwigs to watch out for, from among the 124 candidates announced so far in two lists for the 200 Assembly seats in the fray

## Sachin Pilot files nomination from Rajasthan's Tonk



Rajasthan Congress leader Sachin Pilot today filed his nomination from Tonk Assembly seat in Rajasthan. On his way to file his papers, Pilot said all the MLAs and Congress leadership will decide who will lead. "At present, the focus should be on winning the election," he said.

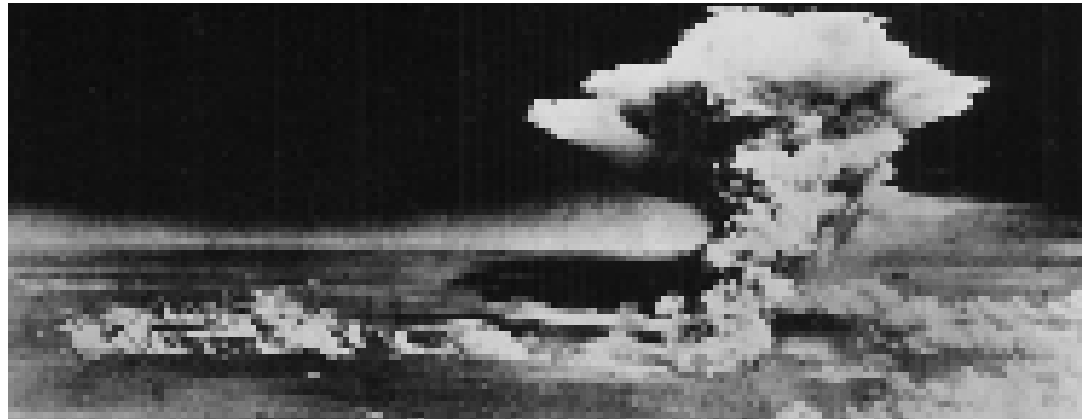
With last date for filing nominations for the November 17 Assembly elections in Madhya Pradesh over on Monday, scrutiny will take place on Tuesday. Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan filed his nomination papers from his traditional Budhni seat on the last day. The deadline for the withdrawal of candidature is November 2.

World

# US: Nuclear bomb is said to be 24 times more powerful than one of the bombs dropped on Japan, media reports

The United States Department of Defence has announced that it will pursue a modern variant of the B61 nuclear gravity bomb, designated the B61-13, pending Congressional authorization and appropriation. According to a Fox News report, the nuclear bomb is said to be 24 times more powerful than one of the bombs dropped on Japan during World War II.

"Today, the Department of Defense (DoD) announced that the United States will pursue a modern variant of the B61 nuclear gravity bomb, designated the B61-13, pending Congressional authorization and appropriation. The Department of Energy's National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) would produce the B61-13," the Department of



Defence release said. "The decision to pursue this capability, which was undertaken in close collaboration with the NNSA, responds to the demands of a rapidly evolving security environment as described in the 2022 Nuclear Posture Review," the statement read. The B61-13 will yield simi-

larly to the B61-7, which has a maximum output of 360 kilotons, according to Fox News citing the Pentagon statement, which had a fact sheet that was included with the release.

The bomb dropped on Hiroshima, Japan, during World War II, which was around a 15 kilo-

ton bomb, is 24 times smaller than the load. Additionally, the B61-13 would be almost 14 times bigger than the 25-kiloton bomb that was dropped on Nagasaki. "...announcement is reflective of a changing security environment and growing threats from potential adversar-

ies," said Assistant Secretary of Defence for Space Policy John Plumb.

"The United States has a responsibility to continue to assess and field the capabilities we need to credibly deter and, if necessary, respond to strategic attacks, and assure our allies." "The B61-13 represents a reasonable step to manage the challenges of a highly dynamic security environment," Plumb added. "While it provides us with additional flexibility, production of the B61-13 will not increase the overall number of weapons in our nuclear stockpile," he noted. According to the fact sheet, the powerful new bomb will also "include the modern safety, security, and accuracy features of the B61-12," Fox News reported. ANI

## Pakistan govt is threatening, abusing detaining to Afghan nationals, says activist

The Pakistani government is using threats, abuse, and detention to coerce Afghan asylum seekers without legal status to return to Afghanistan or face deportation by November 1, 2023, Human Rights Watch said today. Many Afghans at risk of being deported are awaiting resettlement to the United States, United Kingdom, Germany, and Canada. Pakistan's Interior Ministry announced on October 3 that all migrants living without legal status in Pakistan had 28 days to leave voluntarily or face deportation. Broad calls by Pakistani officials for mass deportation have instigated increased police abuse against Afghans, including harassment, assault, and arbitrary detention. While not explicitly stated, Afghans slated for deportation are unlikely to be given the opportunity to challenge the action.

"Pakistan's announced deadline for Afghans to return has led to detentions, beatings, and extortion, leaving thousands of Af-

ghans in fear over their future," said Fereshta Abbasi, Afghanistan researcher at Human Rights Watch. "The situation in Afghanistan remains dangerous for many who fled, and deportation will expose them to significant security risks, including threats to their lives and well-being." Khaliq Atifi, an Afghan refugee in Islamabad who had worked as a sports journalist in Kabul and fled in December 2021, told Human Rights Watch that since the announcement, even Afghans registered with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) are not immune to detention or deportation. "There are police checkpoints everywhere," he said. "Even if you have a valid visa, you will still be transferred to the police station, and in most cases, you need to pay a bribe to get released." He said that in most cases, Afghan refugees had to pay between 10,000 and 40,000 Pakistani rupees (US\$36 to \$144) in bribes to Pakistani police. ANI

## Bangladesh: BNP clashes leaves killed, several injured

At least one person was killed and over 50 including 15 police personnel, were injured in a clash between law enforcement and Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) leaders and activists in Kuliarchar upazila of Kishoreganj, as reported by the Dhaka Tribune on Tuesday. Shariful Azam, joint organising secretary of the BNP's central committee, who was present at the scene, reported that two persons lost their lives due to police firing, while the police confirmed the death of only one person.

The victims were identified as

local Chhatra Dal leader Refayet Ullah, 20, and Krishak Dal leader Billal Mian, 30, according to Shariful, Dhaka Tribune reported.

He explained that leaders and activists of the BNP and Jamaat had assembled on a local road around 9 am to enforce a blockade. However, the police obstructed their path. Subsequently, when they initiated a procession on the road, a confrontation erupted as the police engaged their members. In response, Superintendent of Police Md Russell Sheikh said, "When the protesters established blockades on the road, the police

attempted to disperse them. This led to an altercation in which the protesters attacked police personnel. To restore order, the police resorted to firing rubber bullets. During this incident, 15 police officers, including the local police station OC, sustained injuries." Furthermore, Billal Mian, who served as the president of the local union unit of Sramik Dal, lost his life, as confirmed by the police officer. Additional forces were subsequently deployed in the area to maintain control over the situation, Dhaka Tribune reported. ANI

## UN calls for meeting mentions, an immediate humanitarian ceasefire

The head of the UN agency for Palestinian refugees told a UN emergency meeting Monday an immediate humanitarian ceasefire has become a matter of life and death for millions, accusing Israel of collective punishment of Palestinians and the forced displacement of civilians.

Philippe Lazzarini warned that a further breakdown of civil order following the looting of the agency's warehouses by Palestinians searching for food and other aid will make it extremely difficult, if not impossible, for the largest UN agency in Gaza to

continue operating. Briefings to the Security Council by Lazzarini, the head of the UN children's agency UNICEF and a senior UN humanitarian official painted a dire picture of the catastrophic humanitarian situation in Gaza 23 days after Hamas' surprise Oct. 7 attacks in Israel, and its ongoing retaliatory military action aimed at obliterating the militant group, which controls Gaza.

According to the latest figures from Gaza's Ministry of Health, more than 8,300 people have been killed 66 per cent of them women and children and tens of thousands injured, the UN

humanitarian office said.

UNICEF Executive Director Catherine Russell that toll includes over 3,400 children killed and more than 6,300 injured. This means that more than 420 children are being killed or injured in Gaza each day a number which should shake each of us to our core, she said. Also read: 'United Nations could step in': Aaron David Miller, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace Lazzarini said: This surpasses the number of children killed annually across the world's conflict zones since 2019. And he stressed: This cannot be 'collateral damage.' PTI

# Expression

## Digital Currency and E-Payments Unveiled



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Columnist

In today's era, the use of online payment procedures has evolved increasingly prevalent and simplified, revolutionizing the method people make transactions. There are several ways people are utilizing online payment methods:

**1. E-commerce Platforms:** Online shopping has gained tremendous popularity, enabling consumers to make purchases online and pay conveniently using various digital payment methods. E-commerce platforms provide secure payment gateways that accept credit/debit cards, digital wallets, and bank transfers, allowing users to complete transactions with ease.

**2. Digital Wallets:** Digital wallets have emerged as a convenient way to make online payments. Users can link their bank accounts or credit cards to digital wallet applications, allowing them to store money electronically. These wallets offer various features such as sending/receiving money, instant payment transfers, and even contactless payments using mobile devices.

**3. Mobile Payment Applications:** Mobile payment apps have gained significant traction, simplifying financial transactions through smartphones. These apps connect to users' bank accounts or credit cards, offering a secure and convenient way to make payments. Users can pay for goods and services by scanning QR codes or tapping their phones on contactless payment terminals.

**4. Peer-to-Peer Payment Services:** Peer-to-peer (P2P) payment services enable individuals to send money directly to each other using mobile apps. These services eliminate the need for physical cash or checks. Users can split bills, pay their friends, or transfer funds to family members seamlessly.

**5. Online Banking:** Traditional banking institutions have adapted to the digital revolution by providing online banking services. Customers can manage their accounts, pay bills, and transfer funds electronically through secure online banking platforms. This allows for efficient and convenient money management without the need to physically visit a bank branch.

**6. Cryptocurrency:** Another growing trend in online payments is the use of cryptocurrencies like Bitcoin, Ether-



ium, and others. Cryptocurrencies provide an alternative form of online payment, leveraging blockchain technology for secure and decentralized transactions across borders. Many online merchants now accept cryptocurrencies as a form of payment.

Overall, today's era has witnessed a significant shift towards online payment methods, driven by convenience, security, and technological advancements. The ease of conducting transactions from the comfort of one's home or on the go has made online payments an integral part of our daily lives.

The Unified Payments Interface (UPI) is a real-time payment system developed by the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI). It enables users to link multiple bank accounts to a single mobile application and facilitates seamless fund transfers between different bank accounts. UPI serves as a robust platform for various types of transactions, including peer-to-peer transfers, merchant payments, bill payments, and more.

UPI operates on a unique identifier called Virtual Payment Address (VPA), which eliminates the need for traditional banking details such as bank account numbers and IFSC codes. With UPI, users can instantly transfer funds to any person or entity by simply entering their VPA or scanning a QR code.

One of the key advantages of UPI is its ease of use and convenience. It provides a user-friendly interface that allows individuals to initiate transactions around the clock from anywhere with an internet connection. Additionally, UPI supports multiple languages, making it accessible to a diverse user base.

Furthermore, UPI facilitates seamless integration with various mobile banking and payment applications, allowing users to access additional services like bill splitting, in-app purchases, and ticket bookings. It also promotes financial inclusion by empowering individuals without traditional banking facilities to participate in digital transactions.

UPI incorporates robust security measures to ensure the safety of transactions. It employs two-factor authentication, including a mobile device's registered SIM card and MPIN (Mobile Personal Identification Number). It also utilizes secure networks, encryption, and other mechanisms to safeguard sensitive information during transactions.

In addition to person-to-person payments, UPI has revolutionized merchant payments by introducing features like UPI-based payment gateways and Quick Response (QR) codes. Businesses of all sizes can leverage UPI to accept payments from customers conveniently, eliminating the need for physical cash or card transactions.

Overall, the adoption of UPI has significantly transformed the digital payment landscape in India, fostering a cashless economy and promoting financial inclusivity. Its seamless interface, real-time transactions, enhanced security, and interoperability with various banking and payment applications make it a preferred choice for millions of users and businesses alike.

### Advantages of online payment:

- 1. Convenience:** Online payment methods allow users to make transactions and payments from the comfort of their own homes or any location with internet access. It eliminates the need for physical presence, saving time and effort.
- 2. Accessibility:** Online payment options provide easy access to a wide range of consumers. People can make payments at any time, 24/7, avoiding the constraints of traditional banking hours.
- 3. Speed:** Online payments are processed quickly, enabling immediate transfer of funds. This is especially beneficial for time-sensitive transactions or emergencies.
- 4. Security:** Reputable online payment platforms employ robust security measures, such as encryption, tokenization, and two-factor authentication, to secure sensitive financial data and protect users from fraud.

**5. Tracking and records:** Online payment systems generate detailed transaction records, which makes it easier for individuals and businesses to track and manage their financial activities. It simplifies record-keeping and enables better financial planning.

### Disadvantages of online payment:

- 1. Security risks:** While security measures are in place, online payment systems can still be vulnerable to hacking, phishing attacks, or identity theft. Users must ensure their devices are secure, use strong passwords, and be cautious while sharing sensitive information.
- 2. Technical issues:** Online payment methods depend on a stable internet connection and reliable platforms. Any technical issues, network interruptions or downtime can disrupt the payment process, causing inconvenience and delays.
- 3. Limited acceptance:** Not all merchants or businesses accept all forms of online payment. Users may find that their preferred payment method is not available or widely accepted, limiting their options and requiring them to use alternative methods.
- 4. Additional charges:** Some online payment providers may impose transaction fees or charges, especially for international transactions or certain payment methods. Users need to be aware of these charges and factor them into their financial decisions.
- 5. Lack of personal interaction:** Online payments lack the personal touch of face-to-face interactions. This can be a disadvantage for users who prefer assistance, have specific inquiries, or seek immediate clarification regarding their payments.

Users need to weigh the advantages and disadvantages, choose reliable payment platforms, and adopt safe practices to mitigate any risks associated with online payments.

# Entertainment



## Kangana Ranaut talks about special screening of 'Tejas', says "CM Yogi got emotional"

Actor Kangana Ranaut hosted a special screening of her upcoming action thriller film 'Tejas' for Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath at the Lok Bhawan Auditorium in Lucknow on Tuesday. Post the screening of the film, Kangana revealed that CM Yogi got emotional while watching the film. Actor Kangana Ranaut hosted a special screening of her upcoming action thriller film 'Tejas' for Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath at the Lok Bhawan Auditorium in Lucknow on Tuesday. Post the screening of the film, Kangana revealed that CM Yogi got emotional while watching the film.

Talking to ANI, she said, "CM Yogi Adityanath got emotional while watching the movie. He has assured us that he will support us and will motivate the nationalists to connect with the film...It is not a film on women empowerment, it is a film about women power..." Taking to Instagram, Kangana also shared a string of pictures from the special screening which she captioned, "Today hosted a screening of #tejas a film based on a soldier / Martyr's life for honourable Chief Minister @myogi\_adityanath ji. As you can see in the first picture Maharaj ji couldn't hold back his tears in the last monologue of Tejas." Ek soldier kya chahta hai". Maharaj ji hamare sainikon ka sahas, shaurya aur balidan dekh kar itne bhaavuk ho gye ki unki aankhein chalak aayi. Dhanyawaad maharaj ji apki prashansa aur aashirwaad se hum dhanya ho gye." ANI

American actor Milo Ventimiglia secretly tied the knot with model Jarah Mariano, People reported. The couple married in a discreet ceremony attended by family and close friends earlier this year.

Ventimiglia's romance with Mariano was made public in 2022 when the Instagram account Deuxmoi disclosed that they were dating. The couple were holding bottles of champagne as they looked into each other's eyes in the shot, which was initially shared by @johannacyn. Deuxmoi recently highlighted their courtship again in June 2023, with one fan inquiring whether they were married after Mariano was spotted sporting a big ole diamond ring and band. Ventimiglia has been notoriously quiet about his romances, telling People in 2017 that he prefers to keep his personal life private because he values his profession.

"I try to minimize myself so people can see the character and can really dive into the work," he explained. "I try and remain as anonymous and invisible as I can so it doesn't take away from the experience of the men that I play. I don't know how interesting my life is any more than anyone else's." In another interview with People, Ventimiglia said, "I feel like there's a currency to your personal life and your performance, your acting, your work. If that personal life starts to outweigh what the work is, then your work suffers." "Your actual performance suffers because the audience won't see the character, they'll see you. And then you're just playing yourself, but you're playing a version of yourself that's not yourself," he continued. "I have a life, but nobody needs to know about it. Because I'm just the same as anyone else." ANI



## American actor Milo Ventimiglia ties a secret knot with model Jarah Mariano



American actor Will Smith still remembers the precise moment he decided he wanted to pursue a career in acting. The 55-year-old musician Will Smith has delved into hip-hop history in his new podcast 'Class of '88', covering everything from his own days performing as part of a hip-hop duo with DJ Jazzy Jeff before going into acting.

The Oscar winner talks candidly about realising early in his music career that he had a gift for front of the camera in the podcast's first episode, which was published on Friday, according to People.

Smith explained that he got the acting bug on the set of the music video for "Parents Just Don't Understand," the second single off their 1988 sophomore studio album 'He's the DJ, I'm the Rapper'. Smith "desperately wanted to be respected as a rapper," therefore he was first anxious about the cheerful song's release as a single. However, the experience of making the campy visual, in which he plays a melancholic adolescent and theatrically raps the lyrics, proved to be a formative one. "To help promote the song, Jive [Records] decided to make a video," the 'King Richard' star said on the podcast. "[Producer] Ann Carli brought in a director, Scott Kalvert, who had a cool visual style, and that ultimately became the Jazzy Jeff and Fresh Prince signature style -- bright and colourful with the stylized set covered with graffiti. I rapped straight into the camera while an actress playing my mom chased me around with a rolling pin." He continued, "I think it was during the making of that video that I realized that I loved being on camera." ANI

## American actor Will Smith recalls his career journey, wanted to pursue a career in acting