Secular
Hindustan
English Daily

Editor In Chief : Mir Amjad Ali Khan

RNI:APENG/2002/09014

Vol : 2 Issue No:299 MONDAY,23,NOVEMER,2026 Hyderabad Pages :8 Rs 2/-

'You saved hard-earned capital of lakhs of families': Trade body thanks PM Modi for appeal to curb gold buys



The Chamber of Trade and Industry (CTI) has thanked Prime Minister Narendra Modi for his earlier appeal to citizens to curb gold purchases, saying the advice helped lakhs of jewellers, traders and investors avoid substantial financial losses.

In a letter dated November 22, CTI said the Prime Minister's advice, which had faced criticism when it was made, had helped traders avoid substantial financial losses following a decline in gold prices.Titled 'Your foresight saved lakhs of jewellers and investors from falling into debt', the letter stated that gold was priced at Rs 1.90 crore per kilogram when PM Modi advised citizens against purchasing gold, while its price has now fallen to Rs 1.25 crore per kilogram, marking a decline of Rs 65 lakh per kilogram."If traders had ignored your advice and purchased gold at that time, they would have incurred a loss of Rs 65 lakh per kilogram today. Lakhs of jewellers would have fallen into debt and faced bankruptcy," the letter stated.Highlighting the impact of the price decline on the jewellery sector, CTI said lakhs of jewellery traders across the country maintain stocks worth several months and could have suffered losses worth crores had they purchased inventory at the earlier prices."Lakhs of jewellery traders across the country maintain stock worth several months. Had they purchased their stock when gold was priced at Rs 1.90 crore per kilogram, they would have suffered losses worth crores today," it said.The organisation also said small traders dealing in gold through online and offline platforms, along with stock market investors, had been protected from potential losses."Messages are continuously pouring into CTI's groups saying, 'Modi Ji has saved us'," the letter stated.

CTI further claimed that even traders and jewellers who had earlier opposed the Prime Minister's advice were now acknowledging that his suggestion had been beneficial."The very jewellers and traders who had opposed the advice at the time are now acknowledging that the Prime Minister was right," it said.Pointing to the ongoing wedding season, the organisation said the decline in gold prices had also provided relief to ordinary consumers, with families able to purchase gold at lower rates during a season witnessing 52 lakh weddings.The trade body also urged the Prime Minister to continue providing timely guidance on sensitive markets such as gold and silver to protect traders from speculation and hoarding.Prime Minister Ji, you have not just given advice; you have saved the hard-earned capital of lakhs of families. On behalf of CTI and the entire trading community, we extend our heartfelt thanks and gratitude to you," the letter said.The letter was signed by CTI Chairman Brijesh Goyal, General Secretaries Ramesh Ahuja and Gurmeet Arora, Senior Vice President Deepak Garg, Patron Suresh Aggarwal, Convener Priyanka Saxena and other office-bearers of the organisation.The development comes a day after Prime Minister Modi, while addressing an event in Lucknow, recalled his appeal to citizens to avoid unnecessary gold purchases for a year and said people had responded positively to his advice."A year ago, I urged the countrymen: for one year, if it is not necessary, please do not buy gold," Modi said.Drawing a comparison with former Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri's appeal to citizens to skip one meal, PM Modi said the country had demonstrated a similar spirit by responding to his request.And I am happy, just as Lal Bahadur Shastri ji had asked the countrymen to skip one meal, and this country obeyed his call; my country still holds that same character. An ordinary person like me asked to buy less gold; the countrymen bought less gold, and gold prices fell. Today, people are telling me, 'Modi ji, you spoke, we listened to your advice, and our money was saved,' he said.Earlier, on May 10, 2026, during an event in Secunderabad, the Prime Minister had made seven appeals to citizens to conserve foreign exchange and reduce dependence on imports amid the West Asia conflict and rising crude oil prices.Among his suggestions were reducing gold purchases, limiting foreign travel for a year, prioritising work from home wherever possible, conserving fuel, adopting Swadeshi products, reducing cooking oil consumption and promoting natural farming.Following the appeals, several Union Ministers, Chief Ministers and BJP leaders announced measures such as reducing official convoys and increasing the use of public transport and electric vehicles.Meanwhile, several opposition leaders, including Arvind Kejriwal, Pawan Khera and Karti Chidambaram, had questioned the appeals, arguing that the government was shifting economic burdens onto ordinary citizens.

'Congress ignored Arunachal development, provided inadequate funds': HM Amit Shah



Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Sunday accused the Congress of neglecting Arunachal Pradesh's development and failing to provide adequate financial assistance during its tenure.He said the Centre, under Prime Minister Narendra Modi, had significantly increased financial support to accelerate the development of the northeastern state.Shah said the Centre provided Rs 33,530 crore to the state during the UPA rule between 2004 and 2014, while the financial assistance rose to over Rs 1.64 lakh crore during the 2014-2024 period under the NDA government.Shah said tax devolution to the state had gone up four times, while grants had increased 18 times. He said the figures reflected the Narendra Modi government's commitment to the development of Arunachal Pradesh and the Northeast."The growth of Arunachal Pradesh's budget from Rs 12,000 crore to Rs 36,000 crore suggests how development has expanded in the last 12 years," he said.Highlighting the Vibrant Villages Programme, Shah said the PM has changed the perception of border villages by describing them as the "country's first villages rather than the last".He said development must begin at the borders and residents there should enjoy all basic facilities and livelihood opportunities.The programme has helped reverse migration in Arunachal Pradesh, with people returning to nearly 40 villages, increasing their populations, he said."The government has been addressing concerns relating to electricity, schools, basic amenities and employment in these areas," Shah said.He added that the Northeast had witnessed a major transformation in connectivity and development over the past 12 years under the leadership of PM Modi, asserting that the gap between the region and the national capital had narrowed considerably.The home minister said no state capital in the Northeast remained without the improved connectivity through road, rail or air services, adding that the region had witnessed unprecedented expansion in infrastructure.He described improved connectivity as one of the major achievements of the NDA government.Shah said the Centre placed the Northeast at the forefront of its development agenda, with special emphasis on education, economic growth, employment opportunities for youth and industrial development.He also credited Modi with promoting the region's tourism potential and showcasing its natural beauty to the rest of the country.He said the development of the Northeast was not limited to infrastructure and economic growth but also involved improving people's quality of life, preserving cultural traditions and creating opportunities for local communities.The region's natural resources and tourism potential, if properly harnessed, could play a significant role in building a developed India, he added.

Nepal PM Balendra Shah arrives in India; energy, economy, connectivity on agenda

Nepal's Prime Minister Balendra Shah arrived in India on Sunday for a two-day visit, with energy and economic cooperation, cross-border connectivity, and infrastructure development expected to be the focus of his meetings with the country's top leadership.The 36-year-old leader, popularly known as 'Balen', is visiting India at the invitation of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.The Nepal PM travelled to India on a regular commercial flight operated by Nepal Airlines. This is his first official bilateral foreign visit since he took office in March. He had travelled to the US in September to attend the United Nations General Assembly.Shah is leading a 34-member delegation that includes his Chief Advisor Kumar Byanjankar, Finance Minister Swarnim Wagle and Minister for Foreign Affairs Shisir Khanal.A separate business delegation is also visiting India along with the prime minister's delegation.During the visit, Shah will call on President Droupadi Murmu and hold delegation-level talks with Modi.External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar will also pay a courtesy call on the Nepalese prime minister, Foreign Secretary Amrit Bahadur Rai had said ahead of the visit.The discussions are expected to cover the entire gamut of bilateral relations, with particular emphasis on expansion of connectivity between the two countries, expanding economic cooperation in trade, transit, energy and investment, besides developing infrastructure.According to Nepal's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the two sides will also discuss the inauguration of various energy cooperation projects and the laying of foundation stones for new projects.Several memoranda of understanding (MoUs) covering education, health, agriculture, space, disaster management and human resource development are also expected to be exchanged during the visit, the ministry said.Shah is also scheduled to address a Nepal-India Business Forum and interact with Indian business leaders as part of efforts to attract greater investment to the Himalayan nation.Energy cooperation and cross-border connectivity have emerged as key pillars of India-Nepal relations.The two neighbours have been expanding electricity trade, with Nepal exporting surplus hydropower to India and exploring greater access to the Indian power market.Cooperation in transmission infrastructure and cross-border energy projects has also gained momentum in recent years.The two countries share an open border and deep-rooted historical, cultural and economic ties.India remains Nepal's major trading partner and a key transit route for its international trade, making connectivity, trade facilitation and infrastructure development important components of their bilateral engagement.Shah had received an invitation from Modi to visit India when the government led by the Rastriya Swatantra Party (RSP) leader was formed in March, around six months after the youth-led Gen Z protest toppled the K P Sharma Oli government in September last year.It has been a longstanding diplomatic practice for newly elected Nepali prime ministers to choose India for their first official bilateral foreign visit, reflecting the importance of ties with the southern neighbour.However, the convention is not binding.Oli had departed from the tradition in 2024 by choosing China for his first foreign visit.Ahead of Shah's visit, Nepal's main opposition, the Nepali Congress, urged the government to place national interests at the centre of its engagement with India.In a statement on Saturday, the party's senior vice-president Bishwa Prakash Sharma said the visit should serve Nepal's best interests while further strengthening relations between the two countries.The visit should focus on implementing commitments made in the past, resolving outstanding issues and laying the groundwork for long-term cooperation based on mutual benefit, he said.Shah is scheduled to return to Nepal on Monday.

PM Modi, Nepal PM Balendra Shah to hold talks on Nov 23; energy, connectivity on agenda

Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his Nepalese counterpart Balendra Shah will hold talks on November 23, with a focus on strengthening bilateral cooperation in energy, hydropower, railways, connectivity and infrastructure.Shah began his two-day visit to New Delhi on Sunday afternoon. It is his first visit to India since taking office in March.The meeting is expected to provide political direction to a significant expansion of bilateral ties in the coming years, people familiar with the matter said.Following their talks, the two prime ministers would virtually inaugurate several projects in Nepal, the people cited above said, adding that a number of "forward-looking" bilateral documents in diverse areas are expected to be concluded and exchanged between the two sides.This visit comes at an opportune time, as there is considerable synergy between the national priorities of both countries regarding economic growth, social development, infrastructure expansion, technology adoption and addressing issues like natural disasters and climate change, one of the people said.Major outcomes to expand cooperation are likely to be announced in sectors like energy, hydropower, railways, connectivity and infrastructure, the people said.It is learnt that the two sides are also set to explore ways to enhance bilateral economic engagement.India is Nepal's largest trade, transit and investment partner and the Himalayan nation enjoys duty-free access to the Indian market.India is also Nepal's biggest export destination, receiving about 80 per cent of Nepal's goods exports.India is also the largest source of foreign investment in Nepal, accounting for almost one-third of the total foreign direct investment received by the country.In 2025-26, Nepal's revenue from net electricity exports to India was approximately 1800 crore Nepalese Rupees.

Is this the Pakistani sunset?

It's not Pakistan, but the North Koreans who are garnering all the global attention, these days. The testing of a whole family of missiles, topped up by a Hydrogen bomb has grabbed all the eye balls. But, nearer home for south and south Asian countries, another scene of an old play continues to be enacted. Pakistan continues to calibrate terrorism in Afghanistan and India. A state has been reached where most of the world has begun to hyphenate 'Pakistan & North Korea' together as rogue states.

In the case of North Korea, at least their internal situation is very much under control, be it by means fair or foul. However, in Pakistan's case the internal situation is in turmoil. For too long have they harboured too many terrorist organisations. Now, these establishments have found firm anchorage and challenge the authorities. Their leadership roams at will, often makes statements to the press and seem to be unaffected by the law enforcement agencies or the honourable legal institutions that can otherwise get a Pakistani prime minister to resign.

Parallel with the tanzeems finding firm anchorage in Pakistan, has gone on this business of exporting terror to neighbours. The Afghans are fed up. India has been informing the whole world. The Americans have off late stated it loud and clear. Even its all-weather friend China joined the chorus in the BRICS summit on September 4 to name the terrorist organisations that operate from its soil. The American President's speech on the new Afghan policy chastised Pakistan unequivocally. His stark statement conveyed that at least 20 organisations, in the American list of terrorist groups, operate from Pakistan.

Trump also promised to cut off aid that has so long been used to target American service personnel in Afghanistan. Pakistan, a nation living on doles even after seven decades of independence, has been justifiably shaken. Pakistan has reacted to Trump's threat with varying tones, tenors and pitches. While the foreign minister talked about distancing themselves from terrorists, the defence minister reiterated the old parody; these organisations are the strategic partners of Pakistani Army. The new prime minister has kept his own counsel.

Perhaps an equally harsh blow was delivered in the BRICS meet in Beijing, when the joint statement of the participating countries named terrorist outfits operating out of Pakistan by name. The role of honour included Lashkar-e-Tayiba and Jaish-e-Mohammed. The fact of even China, Pakistan's sole all-weather friend, teaming up with the rest, surely causes enough consternation at Islamabad. In the recent past, the Russians have seemingly gone soft on Pakistan. The Indians leaning the American way may have been one of the primers. It surely is also driven by the desire to make Afghanistan more costly for the Americans.

However, it's doubtful whether the correct payback time is now for all that the Americans did to them when they ran Afghanistan in the 1980s. The reasons are simple. The USSR broke up in part due to its overreach, with Afghanistan being the biggest bleeding wound. No one knows why not to get into Afghanistan, better than the Russians. While relating with Pakistan, Russians will surely understand the losses it will incur in terms of its most lucrative arms market and a long history of a robust relationship. Pakistan has been a frontline state in the US lead Global War Against Terror. For the frontline state to lose its pole position and being identified as being part of the problem, is a huge shift.

An equally big issue is the tap being closed for funds to flow. Pakistan received US $3.5 bn in 2011 as compared to less than US $1 bn in 2016. Other than West Asians donors, there is only China left to fund. There are sound reasons for the Pakistani GDP growth rate to tumble. If the new American approach gathers momentum in the days ahead, Pakistan could be headed for sanctions that might just hasten the process. If they do try and stage another major attack in India, the sanctions may not be too far away.

In the interim, with American funding on the wane, Pakistan has opted for the Chinese Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) bandwagon. The China-Pakistan-Economic-Corridor (CPEC) is the crown jewel of BRI. It passes through Gilgit-Baltistan, a territory that's disputed between India and Pakistan, and then traverses across the length of Pakistan to terminate at the Chinese funded Gwadar Port on the Arabian Sea that's been leased to a state run Chinese company for 40 years. The Pakistani government has not been able to sell the CPEC concept to its people. Pakistanis are not inclined to believe that CPEC will prove to be a high octane growth driver for their economy.

On the contrary, they are worried about landing in a debt trap, losing their strategic autonomy, detrimental impact on social cohesion and aggravation of insurgent/violent movements in Baluchistan and other regions that the CPEC arteries will pass through. Of all CPEC's impacts, the affect on an already fragile social cohesion is the most worrisome. As CPEC progresses, attacks on the assets being created will only increase, thus prompting the Pakistani state to respond in a heavy handed manner. It will, sooner or later, initiate a vicious cycle of violence between government forces and Islamist tanzeems.

The Americans have apparently distanced themselves from Pakistan, for good. The Chinese are feeling the heat with the gradual rise in the number of nations viewing Pakistan as the nursery of global terror.

Disability rights over time



In 1992, the United Nations announced that December 3 would be observed every year as International Day of Persons with Disabilities. While disabled persons continue to struggle to secure employment and navigate their way around with poor infrastruture, and are still treated as "others", it is worth recalling the advances in legislation on disability over the years.

The disability rights movement gained momentum in the 1970s when disability was started to be seen as a human rights issue. This is when the UN General Assembly proclaimed in 1976 that 1981 would be the International Year of Disabled Persons. Later, 1983-1992 was marked as the United Nations Decade of Disabled Persons. The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD), 2006 was a big step towards viewing persons as "subjects with rights" and not "objects of charity". (India is a signatory to the UNCRPD and ratified it in 2007.) Further, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development pledges to "leave no one behind". It states that persons with disabilities must be both "beneficiaries and agents of change". However, attitudinal, institutional, and infrastructural barriers remain, with the World Bank stating that 15% of the world's population experience some form of disability and that they "on average, as a group, are more likely to experience adverse socioeconomic outcomes than persons without disabilities".

In 2011, the World Health Organisation came up with a world report on disability for the first time. Its introduction showed how disabled persons aren't "other people", but that all of us at some point will be "temporarily or permanently impaired" and those "who survive to old age will experience increasing difficulties in functioning." In India, according to the 2011 Census, 2.21% of the population has one or multiple types of disabilities, making the country home to one of the largest disabled populations in the world. World Bank data suggest that the numbers are nearly four-five times higher. Legislation moved forward last year in India when the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act was passed, replacing the Persons with Disabilities Act, 1995. The 2016 Act recognises 21 kinds of disabilities compared to the previous seven, including dwarfism, speech and language disability, and three blood disorders.

The new Act also increased the quota for disability reservation in higher educational institutions from 3% to 5% and in government jobs from 3% to 4%, for a more inclusive society. However, legislation alone is not enough; implementation remains abysmal. For instance, data from the National Centre for Promotion of Employment for Disabled People show that 84% of seats for persons with disabilities lie vacant in top universities. While we have a long way to go in implementing these laws, we must also keep in mind that a one-size-fits-all approach is unhelpful for disabled persons. Levels and types of disabilities differ and so do needs.

Financial inclusion in rising India



"I dream of a digital India where mobile & e-banking ensures Financial Inclusion" "Financial Inclusion" is the way the Governments strive to take the common man along by bringing them into the formal channel of economy thereby ensuring that even the person standing in the last is not left out from the benefits of the economic growth and is added in the mainstream economy thereby encouraging the poor person to save, safely invest in various financial products and to borrow from the formal channel when he need to borrow. Lack of financial inclusion is costly to society and the individual.

As far as the individual is concerned, lack of financial inclusion forces the unbanked into informal banking sectors where interest rates are higher and the amount of available funds much smaller. Because the informal banking structure is outside any legislative framework, any dispute between lenders and borrowers cannot be settled legally. As far as the social benefits are concerned, financial inclusion increases the amount of available savings, increases efficiency of financial intermediation, and allows for tapping new business opportunities. State sponsored universal banking has therefore contributed to greater economic diversification in rural areas than is the case in more competitive banking environments.

With structural adjustment programs being introduced in the 1980s and 1990s, financial market reforms swept over many developing countries. At the beginning of 20th century, India had insurance companies (both life and general) and a functional stock exchange Scope of the financial inclusion is not limited to only banking services but it extends to other financial services as well like insurance, equity products & pension products etc. Thus, financial inclusion is not just about opening a simple bank account with a branch in an unbanked area. Adding the common man into the mainstream economy has other advantages as well as on the one hand it helps inculcate the vulnerable section of the society to save money for its future and the rainy days, take benefits of the economic activities of the country by participating in various financial products like, banking services, insurance & pension products etc., on the other hand, it helps the country to increase the rate of 'capital formation' which in turn, give a push to the economic activities in the economy by channelizing the money from every nook & corner of the country.

In the absence of people of a country financially included in the mainstream, they often tend to park their savings/ invest in the non-productive assets like land, buildings & bullion etc. While, financially included people can easily avail the credit facilities, whether they are sitting in the organised or unorganised sector, urban or rural sector. Micro Finance Institutions (MFIs) are the classic examples for providing easy & affordable credit to poor people and have got written innumerable success stories. This phenomenon of financial inclusion also helps government plug gaps & leakages in public subsidies & welfare programmes as government can directly transfer the subsidy amount into the account of the beneficiary rather than to subsidise the product.

In fact, the Government has even saved by around more than Rs. 57,000 crores in its subsidy bill and has ensured that the benefit of the subsidy reaches to the real beneficiary directly to him/ her. The NDA government led by Prime Minister Sh.Narendra Modi made itself committed, since beginning of its term, to give special emphasis on the financial inclusion of every person of the country. One of the most crucial of the several steps taken by this government is JAM- Jan Dhan, Aadhar & Mobile. Jan Dhan Yojna - with a view to increase the penetration of banking services and to ensure that all households have at least one bank account, a National Mission on Financial Inclusion named as Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojna was announced by Prime Minister Sh. Narendra Modi in his independence speech on 15th August, 2014 & the scheme was formally launched on 28th August, 2014. Within a fortnight of its launch, the scheme entered into the Guinness Book of records for opening a record number of bank accounts.

Large scale achievement was made by opening 29.48 crores accounts by Mid-August, 2017 out of which 17.61 crores accounts were in rural/semi-urban areas and the rest 11.87 crores in urban areas. The additional benefits on opening an account under Jan Dhan Scheme is the customer is issued a RuPay Debit Card having inbuilt insurance cover of Rs 1 Lakh. Besides, an overdraft (OD) facility of Rs 5,000/- is granted to the customer for satisfactory operation of account for 6 months. A life cover of Rs 30,000/- has also been granted to customers for opening the accounts up to a certain time period.

The scheme has been a great success and the 99.99% households out of the 21.22 crores households surveyed have been covered under this scheme by December, 2016. More than 44 lakh accounts have been sanctioned OD facility of which more than 23 lakh account holders have availed the facility involving an amount around 300 crores. Insurance & Pension schemes – In order to provide social security system for all citizens and especially to the poor and under-privileged people, the present government launched Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojna and Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojna.

The former scheme i.e., Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojna (PMSBY) covers the persons within the age slab of 18 to 70 years and a risk coverage of Rs 2 lakhs is provided at an affordable premium of Rs 12 per annum only. As per the date 12th April, 2017, around 10 crore people were enrolled under Pradhan Mantri Suraksha BimaYojana (PMSBY). The later scheme, i.e., Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojna covers the persons within an age slab of 18 to 50 years having a bank account. The life cover of Rs 2 lakhs is provided to the insured payable in case of death of the insured due to any reason. As on 12th April 2017 3.10 cr person were enrolled under PMJJBY.

Atal Pension Yojna – A scheme launched in 2015 is open to all bank account holders in the age group of 18 to 40 years and they can choose different contributions based on the pension amount. Under this scheme monthly pension is guaranteed to the subscriber and after him to his spouse and after their death, pension corpus as accumulated till the age of 60 years is returned to the nominee of subscriber. Central Government also contributes 50% of the contribution subject to a maximum of Rs 1000 per annum. As on 31st March 2017 a total of 46.80 lakh subscribers have been enrolled from Atal Pension yojana with a total pension worth of Rs1713.214cr. Varishita Pension Bima Yojana: All those who subscribe to the VPBY from 15th August 2014 to 14th August 2015 will receive an assured guaranteed return of 9% under the Policy. Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojna – Scheme launched in April, 2015 to provide formal access of financial facilities to Non Corporate Small Business Sector.

Swachhta Hi Seva Campaign

The President administered the Swachhta Hi Seva Pledge whereby the Nation resolved to create a clean healthy and new India. Addressing the gathering the President said "India is fighting a decisive battle for cleanliness and hygiene. Cleanliness is not the responsibility of only sanitation personnel and government departments; it is a multi-stakeholder national movement." Mahatma Gandhi had once famously said "sanitation is more important than political freedom.

" This statement underscored the criticality of sanitation in society. Inspired by these words, on August 15, 2014, the Prime Minister gave a clarion call to the Nation from the ramparts of Red Fort to fight filth and open defacation, change old habits and achieve a Swachh Bharat by 2019, to mark the 150th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi. He further said that "women's pride is an important issue in our villages today. The practice of open defacation must be stopped. Toilets must be built and used." The aim of the Swachh Bharat Mission is to achieve a clean and open defacation free India by October 2, 2019.

The objectives are generating demand for toilets leading to their construction and sustained use by all household members, promoting better hygiene behavior amongst the population and improving cleanliness by initiating solid and liquid waste management projects. The financial allocations under the Swachh Bharat Mission increased from Rs.2850 crores in 2014-15 to Rs.6525 crores in 2015-16, to Rs.10,500 crores in 2016-17, to Rs. 14000 crores in 2017-18. In the last 3 years, under the Swachh Bharat Mission, 48,264,304 toilets were constructed. Open Defacation Free Villages reached 2,38,966. Individual toilet coverage increased from 42 percent in 2014 to 64 percent in 2017. 5 States have declared themselves open defacation free.

The Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation has said that the progress achieved is encouraging to reach the goal of an Open Defacation Free India by October 2, 2019. The Swachh Bharat Mission sought to reform the sanitation sector with the primary focus being on behavioral changes as the fundamental tool for achievement of Open Defacation Free outcomes. Inclusiveness under the Swachh Bharat Mission was achieved by designing public and community toilets keeping in mind the special needs of menstruating women, the elderly, the specially abled and small children. Further the Mission sought to promote gender sensitive information, education and communication/ behavioral changes. The Mission issued Gender guidelines in 2017 and Menstrual management guidelines in 2015. An innovative monitoring and evaluation system was put in place. The Swachh Sarvekshan was conducted for rural India and revealed that Mandi (Himachal Pradesh) and Sidhudurg (Maharashtra) were the cleanest districts in India. The Swachh Sarvekshan assessed 22 Hill districts and 53 Plain areas. National level monitors were hired to carry out sample-based checks of sanitation coverage and open defacation free status across the country.

A massive survey covering 92000 households in 4626 villages across the country is being conducted. An additional 200 villages located on the banks of Ganga are being surveyed. Eminent personalities like Amitabh Bacchan was nominated as the Brand Ambassador for Swachh Bharat Mission and celebrities like Sachin Tendulkar and Akshay Kumar attended champion collector conclaves for motivational purposes. The Swachh Bharat Mission maintained a significant social media engagement for enhancing awareness levels and a newsletter Swachhta Samachar Patrika was published on a regular basis. A recent Bollywood film titled "Toilet – Ek Prem Katha" based on the Swachh Bharat Mission witnessed considerable box office success.

From owning a home to feeling at home



S. Indira Gandhi owns a brand-new house now. She is one of the first few from Sri Lanka's hill country Tamil community – that has a two century-history in the island – who can call this home, and the piece of land beneath it, her own. A full-time worker in a tea estate, the 33-year-old, along with her husband, is busy giving finishing touches to her cement-walled home in Dayagama, in Nuwara Eliya district in the Central Province. They have recently cut a path leading to the entrance of their home, where saplings bearing sprightly pink flowers pop up from either side. For the young couple, the home is much more than a secure place of residence, or a permanent dwelling.

From the time the British brought down hundreds of thousands of Tamils from south India in the 19th century to Sri Lanka, successive generations have been toiling in the country's plantations. Even today, most of them live in colonial-era line rooms — closely packed match-box like dwellings on the hills and many still work in the estates in difficult working conditions and with poor wages. Their story is better known as the global rise of the famed Ceylon Tea, a product that fetches precious foreign revenue, about $1.2 billion in 2016.

Following the transition from being stateless to becoming citizens in 2003, the ongoing change from being landless to owning a modest house on a small plot marks another significant shift for the community. Neither was an outcome of state benevolence. In fact, both followed persistent struggles by the nearly million-strong community and larger political dynamics. Houses such as Indira Gandhi's have been built by the Indian government as part of an initiative to construct 14,000 dwellings for Hill Country Tamils, to supplement the Sri Lankan government's own efforts towards providing housing in the region. In an earlier project, India built 46,000 homes in the island's Tamil-majority North and East for the war-displaced.

Malayaha (Hill Country) Tamils are quick to appreciate India's attention to their community. As Tamils of most recent Indian origin here, they have been invisible not just to the Sri Lankan state, but also to New Delhi and Tamil Nadu for most part. Without doubt, they feel some affinity towards Tamil Nadu and India, through ancestral and cultural links. "My father gave me that name because I was born the day Indira Gandhi died," says her namesake, smiling brightly.

All the same, many in her generation feel that the oft-used "Indian-origin" tag is both dated and distant. "Even my national ID defines me as a 'Sri Lankan estate worker'," says her husband, K. Vijayakumar. "We are people of this country." That is how they would like to frame their demands to the state – in the unmistakable voice of a rightful citizens, without tags that bear the baggage of uneasy histories.

In an apparent recognition of that emphatic voice, the Maithripala Sirisena-Ranil Wickremesinghe government put out an ambitious National Plan of Action for the social development of the plantation community, spanning five years beginning 2016. Among other initiatives, the plan envisions building 1,60,000 homes, financed partly with a government grant and the remaining with a 7.5% interest-loan. About 30,000 homes have been constructed so far.

For pensioner E. Sellappan, his new home in Hauteville Puram, built by the Minister of Upcountry New Villages, Estate Infrastructure and Community Development, is the only asset for his children. "This sonda veedu (own home) is the first recognition of my labour for my 36 years' work at the estate," he says. The government points to its share of challenges. Despite a widespread campaign from workers for 20 perches land each, the government could manage only seven (about 2,000 square ft). "Finding land is our main challenge. The plantation companies are rather reluctant to part with productive land, or end up giving land that has no easy access to the main road," says M. Vamadevan, an adviser to the Minister.

The gap between required resources and the actual allocations is also glaring. While the national action plan points to an estimated 15 billion Sri Lankan rupees investment in 2018 needed for the project – it will cost 70 billion rupees over five years – the annual allocation in the recent budget is only 2 billion rupees. Housing is only one of the many long-ignored demands of the workers, who face historic neglect and exploitation. From education, to health to fair wages, many of their concerns remain unaddressed.

"Even if wasps attack us, we have to put in our own money and get treated. Our struggle for a minimum wage of 1,000 (Sri Lankan) rupees earlier this year also failed after our political leaders signed a collective agreement with the companies. We are now stuck with 630 rupees a day," says estate worker R. Pushparani, squinting her eyes against the glaring sun, while she rapidly plucks tea leaves with both hands. In pointing out their current reality, she highlights the difference between a few workers owning homes, and all of them feeling at home.

Singing carols can make you happy, boost mental health

Love to be part of the choir singing Christmas carols? Singing in groups could not only make you happier, but also help improve mental health conditions like anxiety and depression, according to new research. The finding showed that people who took part in a community singing group maintained or improved their mental health. Community singing had positive effects on people's mental health, while for some it was a key to their recovery or maintenance of health, for others it induced fun and happiness.

Moreover, the combination of singing and socialising was an essential part of recovery because it promoted an ongoing feeling of belonging and well-being that often lasted a day or more as well as improved social skills and confidence. "We found that singing as part of a group contributes to people's recovery from mental health problems," said lead researcher Tom Shakespeare, Professor at the University of East Anglia (UEA).

For the study, published in the BMJ journal Medical Humanities, the team analysed participants who took part in the Sing Your Heart Out (SYHO) project -- an initiative which runs weekly singing workshops, aimed at people with mental health conditions as well as the general public. The research project followed the group for six months and undertook interviews and focus groups with participants, organisers, and workshop leaders.

Taking part on a weekly basis provided structure, support and contact that helped people improve their mood, feel good, and function better in day-to-day life. "We heard the participants calling the initiative a 'life saver' and that it 'saved their sanity'. Others said they simply wouldn't be here without it, they wouldn't have managed - so we quickly began to see the massive impact it was having," Shakespeare said.

This treatment can extend life of people with Parkinson's disease

According to a study, a treatment called deep brain stimulation (DBS) is linked to longer survival for Parkinson's patients. Researchers at the Edward Hines, Jr. VA Hospital in Illinois found that patients who received stimulation via an implanted device had a modest survival advantage compared with those treated with medication only. Parkinson's disease is a neurodegenerative disorder. It affects neurons in the brain that produce dopamine. Its cause is currently unknown, and so far there is no cure. Parkinson's itself is not fatal, but complications related to the disease often lead to death.

Common symptoms of Parkinson's disease include tremor, slowness of movement, limb rigidity, and walking and balance problems. People with Parkinson's disease have a shorter life expectancy than those without the disease. Previous studies have shown that DBS can improve motor function in people with Parkinson's disease. The treatment involves electrodes surgically inserted into specific areas of the brain. An impulse generator battery--similar to what is used in pacemakers--is also implanted, under the collarbone or in the abdomen. The battery creates electrical impulses that the electrodes deliver to the brain tissue.

Dr. Frances Weaver, lead author on the study, explained the benefit of DBS: "Overall, DBS surgery has been viewed quite positively by both patients and providers. There is an immediate effect on patients who have DBS on their motor function--the dyskinesia [involuntary muscle movements] is either gone or greatly reduced. The patient can move around and do things they hadn't been able to." While deep brain stimulation may improve function compared with those who do not receive it, little evidence exists on whether the treatment has any benefits to life expectancy.

To answer that question, the researchers looked at data for 611 Veterans with Parkinson's disease who had a deep brain stimulation device implanted. They compared this with data on 611 Veterans with Parkinson's but without the device. The data came from VA and Medicare administrative files from between 2007 and 2013. The researchers found that patients treated with deep brain stimulation survived an average of 6.3 years after the surgery, versus 5.7 years for the non-DBS patients after the date they might have gotten surgery based on their match to a surgery patient--a difference of eight months.

The researchers had paired each DBS patient with a clinically and demographically similar non-DBS patient--for example, in terms of age and symptom severity--and tracked survival from the date when surgery either took place, for the DBS group; or might have theoretically taken place, for the non-DBS group. The average age of veterans in the study was 69, reflecting the higher prevalence of Parkinson's among older people. The older age of the study group could have led to more deaths from age-related conditions, but the researchers point out that a majority of the causes of death for those who died during the study period were related to Parkinson's disease.

'The government is perceived with fear'

It is the people, the party and the state I represent. There is no turnaround story on the politics of development that belongs to me as I am from a progressive party and one of the most developed states in the country. Our story is that of a developed state working towards being a hyper developed state. My government believes in keeping politics off of development and focusing on the betterment of people in every sphere. A government that delays development stands in the way of the people's right to a better tomorrow.

We live in a time when the government is perceived with fear. No government should be viewed as authoritarian, rather as a collective institution of people. No state can achieve fast paced development without its government being the best service provider. I'm sure textbooks, news articles or social media platforms have told you at some point about our high standards of living, HDI, male female ratio, life expectancy rates, literacy rates, low infant and maternal mortality rates and other such indices along with our exemplary palliative care far ahead of most developed countries. We are extremely proud of achieving them, but are not hung up on them. There is no point in repeating them here, instead I would like to tell you where we are headed.

This is not something to bring up only in election manifestos or while seeking votes. At the end of every day, we have to have served the people of our state and country. A way that we have brought accountability to our work is by issuing the first annual progress reports to show that our promises weren't empty. This also helps keep people in the loop. Our Navakerala action plan which was started a year ago has been our answer to the bottom-up approach. Its ideology is simple, your birth should not determine your future. For development to take place we must ensure that people are able to contribute. We are focusing on providing opportunities to those most dependent on the government. Those who access public healthcare, education and housing.

While shifting the lens onto these spheres along with waste management we want to build people up so that they can reach their potential without having to worry about their basic necessities. The housing scheme provides every individual with a right to a house and includes those currently living in poor housing conditions. Education standards shouldn't be reduced to be accessible.

Instead we are bettering public education to be at par with international standards. As far as healthcare goes, government hospitals are the last resort for many people and private hospitals are becoming more expensive every day. It is surprising that a sector that produced many like Florence Nightingale in the past is producing millionaires and billionaires today.

We are changing that by providing more beds, better facilities and cheaper life-saving medication. Our lifestyle disease screening which will be available to every individual of the state prevents health problems such as cholesterol, diabetes and blood pressure, from taking away the future of many families. Waste management is essential for every citizen. Without which soil, air and water quality will deplete drastically. This is why we believe in handling waste management to create a safer environment for the people of Kerala. One area that we have not performed up to the mark in the past is water conservation. Water has become a scarce commodity.

It is scary that inter-state disputes are taking place over water.

We can compete amongst our sister states, but not fight. We are serious about water conservation and are going to adopt more preservation mechanisms in the coming years. We have started to conserve our rivers and water bodies but more investment is required in this area. Even though it is a part of the Navakerala action plan, I would like to specifically speak about this just to emphasise its importance. Speaking of basic necessities, I'm sure nobody here will disagree that an accident victims chances of survival should not be dependent on their bank balance. Yet it has always been this way.

To fight this inequality we introduced the special trauma care scheme. The 48 hours after an accident is called the critical period. The treatment one receives during that time determines their survival rate. Our policy is that the victim should not be taken to the hospital based on their ability to pay the bill, but the one closest to the accident site. The government will use insurance to pay the hospital directly. This is in line with our belief that a human life's value is not something expressed in monetary terms. There have been many debates on whether corruption should be attacked from the bottom or the top. We believe in attacking it from both sides and crushing it.

At all levels there should be zero tolerance towards corruption. This is only possible if the government, judiciary and the media work with a much higher vigilance. It is not just about checking corruption that has already taken place, but preventing it from happening at all. You may think that it's easy for us to talk about corruption when we are one of the least corrupt states in the country. For us this is not a matter of pride. The word 'least' implies that we still have corruption and our goal of being corruption-free hasn't been achieved yet. Corruption is something that reduces efficiency, productivity and takes away from development. Without which resource mobilisation would increase tremendously.

People often let corruption and bribery demand go unreported out of fear that the corrupt flock together and protect each other. We will put an end to this. We are going to apply modern technology, algorithms, etc. to achieve this. Under this government, the only people who should fear are the corrupt themselves. We have seen the numbers and percentage points of those living in poverty reduce over the years. This may help a lot of people sleep at night in peace, but not us. Human beings aren't statistic points. Even one person left to suffer is a failure at every level. The idea of putting growth and development into percentage over actual changes in the standard of living is an outdated idea.

We have not achieved any success until the last hungry person is fed, the last sick person treated, the last child educated and the last homeless person has shelter. We want to make Kerala one of the most liveable place on earth. Safety of women and children, awareness, speedy correction of all types of crimes need to be included. Police modernisation is an integral part of that as criminals are getting more technology savvy. Governments need to out pace them. Credibility of the police force also needs to be improved drastically. We are modernising the police force not only in terms of equipment. We believe in bringing the best technology, awareness and most importantly humanity to the field.

Making Chennai a water-wise

The public discourse on Chennai's ongoing water crisis has been along predictable lines. Source augmentation, deepening of waterbodies and giving rainwater harvesting a renewed emphasis are among the suggestions being made, apart from demand-side management. But these ideas, however well-meaning they may be, have their limitations. There is a compelling need for a paradigm shift in the way the water crisis is being viewed. When it comes to source augmentation, in the last 40 years, a couple of major projects were taken up for Chennai to tap both fresh water and sea water.

The Krishna Water Supply Scheme or Telugu Ganga Project (1996) and the New Veeranam Project (2004) were implemented using two important inter-State rivers — the Krishna and the Cauvery, both of which depend on the southwest monsoon (June-September). Though the Krishna Water Supply Scheme, if realised fully, can take care of at least half of the Chennai Metropolitan Area (CMA)'s projected water demand of 1,721 million litres a day (MLD) for 2020, Tamil Nadu has not received the assured quantum from Andhra Pradesh even once in the last 20+ years. As regards the Cauvery project, the 'upper-riparian attitude' of Karnataka determines the flow to Tamil Nadu. In effect, realisation of water by Chennai hinges on nature and inter-State ties, both of which are, more often than not, unpredictable.

Another source since 2017 for the city has been the abandoned stone quarries located on the outskirts, from where water is drawn for public water supply after treatment. Further, two desalination plants of 100 MLD each were commissioned in 2010 and 2013. Work has begun on another desalination plant of 150 MLD while steps are on to set up another 400 MLD unit. However, given the costs and environmental concerns, it is unlikely that Chennai can afford to stretch this option beyond a point.

Deepening of tanks and lakes, a popular option, is easier said than done. Issues such as the costs involved in removing and transporting the silt and inadequate disposal arrangements have bothered the authorities to such an extent that nothing much has been done. As regards rainwater harvesting (RWH), it cannot be a panacea and site-specific requirements will have to be kept in mind while putting up RWH structures. The model of storing rainwater and reusing it may demonstrate the efficacy of RWH.

Many of the options being suggested to overcome the distress situation faced by Chennai have been tried out in the past. Yet, just one bad monsoon has pushed the city to yet another water crisis. This scenario may get repeated in the future too. Even if there are bountiful monsoon years, the prospects of Chennai becoming a water-surplus city are remote. An official document prepared a few years ago estimated that the CMA, which covers not only Chennai Corporation but also nearby municipalities, town panchayats and village panchayats, will have a shortfall of 1,089 MLD in 2020. Even assuming that the southern peninsula experiences good southwest and northeast monsoons this year, the gap can come down only by a maximum of 400 MLD.

A note available on the website of The Energy and Resources Institute states, quoting the Central Public Health and Environmental Engineering Organisation, that the average water supply in urban local bodies of the country is 69.25 litres per capita per day (LPCD) against the service level benchmark of 135 LPCD. For a metropolitan city like Chennai, the benchmark goes up to 150 LPCD. If one were to go by the admission of Chennai Metrowater, the service level achieved in March 2018 was 112 LPCD. This is why the need for a paradigm shift becomes all the more important.

Just as in many other Indian cities, the concept of waste-water recycling and re-use has not yet caught the imagination of either the authorities or the public in a big way. The demand-supply gap will be a permanent feature of urban India unless society realises the critical importance of recycling and re-use of water. It needs to be noted here that on an average, 85 litres of water goes waste for every 100 litres utilised.

There is also another reason why the concept ought to be popularised. According to information furnished by the Centre, while urban areas of the country generate 61,948 MLD of sewage on a daily basis, the installed capacity of sewage treatment plants (STPs) is just 23,277 MLD. This means that only 37.5% of sewage generated can be treated. As per a conservative estimate, Chennai generates about 930 MLD of sewage, whereas its STPs can handle 727 MLD. With rapid urbanisation, the space for new plants is hardly available in peri-urban areas of Chennai, a scenario applicable to any other city in India. As a result, the city's rivers and canals have been reduced to carriers of raw sewage. Over and above these reasons, one of the targets set under the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, adopted by UN member-countries in 2015, is to halve the proportion of untreated waste water.

India fined 35 per cent of match fee for slow over-rate in final ODI against New Zealand



New Delhi, Nov : India have been docked 35 per cent of their match fee for maintaining a slow over-rate in the fifth and final ODI against New Zealand at Mount Maunganui on November 15, the International Cricket Council (ICC) said in a statement. Match referee Ranjan Madugalle, a member of the Emirates ICC Elite Panel of Match Referees, handed down the penalty after the Shreyas Iyer-led side was found to be seven overs short of its target once time allowances had been factored in. The fine is in line with Article 2.22 of the ICC Code of Conduct for Players and Player Support Personnel, which covers minimum over-rate offences. Under the rule, players lose five per cent of their match fee for each over if their team fails to complete within the allotted time, with the total penalty capped at 50 per cent. Seven overs short translated into a 35 per cent deduction for every member of the side. Iyer, who led India in the final two ODIs at the Bay Oval in the absence of the regular ODI captain Shubman Gill, admitted the offence and agreed to the sanction proposed by Madugalle. "Iyer pleaded guilty to the offence and accepted the proposed sanction, so there was no need for a formal hearing," further said the ICC. The charge was brought by on-field umpires Paul Reiffel and Wayne Knights, along with third umpire Kumar Dharmasena and fourth umpire Chris Brown. The fine took a little shine off what had otherwise been a satisfying end to the ODI leg of the multi-format tour for India, who wrapped up the series 3-1 with a hard-fought 22-run win in the last match. Put in a tricky position early in their innings, India relied on vice-captain Ishan Kishan and left-arm spin bowling all-round-

'I always believed you would do something special': Sachin Tendulkar pays tribute to Dhoni



New Delhi, Nov : Legendary Indian batter Sachin Tendulkar recalled spotting something special in Mahendra Singh Dhoni's power-hitting during his early days in international cricket, saying he always believed the former India captain was destined for greatness, following his retirement from the Indian Premier League (IPL). Dhoni has brought to an end his playing career in the IPL after nearly two decades, with Tendulkar joining several former teammates, cricketers and franchises in celebrating the Chennai Super Kings (CSK) legend's contribution to the game. Taking to X, Tendulkar recalled watching Dhoni bat in Bangladesh and telling former India captain Sourav Ganguly that the wicketkeeper-batter possessed a rare ability to strike the ball with power. He also expressed happiness at having shared the dressing room with Dhoni during some of Indian cricket's memorable moments. "I still remember watching MS bat in Bangladesh and telling Sourav that there was something special about his power hitting. You could see he had a rare gift, and what a journey he went on to have. "It was a real joy sharing the dressing room with you and being part of some of our most memorable moments in Indian cricket. I always believed you would do something special, and you went on to achieve so much more. "You've given Indian cricket your very best, and it's been wonderful to have shared this journey with you. Well played, MS!" Tendulkar wrote. Dhoni's career has been marked by extraordinary achievements across formats, with his leadership playing a significant role in India's success. He guided the country to the 2007 ICC T20 World Cup, 2011 ODI World Cup and the 2013 Champions Trophy, becoming the first captain to win all three major ICC white-ball tournaments. In the IPL, Dhoni finished his playing career with 278 appearances and 5,439 runs at an average of 38.30 and a strike rate of 137.45. He scored 24 half-centuries and led CSK to five championships in 2010, 2011, 2018, 2021 and 2023. Dhoni will continue his association with CSK in a different capacity, taking up the role of team mentor from the 2027 season.

MS Dhoni's legacy is unmatched, beating it will be very difficult, says Irfan Pathan



New Delhi, Nov : Former India left-arm pacer Irfan Pathan believes no Chennai Super Kings (CSK) player will come close to what MS Dhoni achieved for the franchise, adding that the legendary wicketkeeper-batter's legacy is unmatched. On Tuesday, CSK announced that Dhoni had stopped playing in the IPL and would continue with the team as mentor. "MS Dhoni's legacy is unmatched; there is no doubt about that. The kind of things he did on the cricket field, the performances he gave in the yellow jersey, taking the game to the end and finishing it, he did that for years. "I don't think Chennai Super Kings will ever find a player like him again. You will see that in his mentorship. He will be there; he will stay connected to the team on the field and keep contributing. But this legacy that he's built as a player is unmatched and beating it or matching it will be very difficult," Pathan said on JioStar. Dhoni, 45, played 272 matches for Chennai, and became the most capped player in the franchise's history. He scored 5,314 runs, making him the second-highest run-getter for the side, apart from captaining CSK to five IPL titles. His calmness in close finishes earned him the nickname 'Captain Cool,' and his knack for taking chases to the last over became his trademark. Pathan shared a dressing room with Dhoni while at CSK and said that even as captain, Dhoni was already a mentor, especially to younger players. "I have spent a lot of time with him in the dressing room and when he was captain, he was always mentoring the players. He always handled the young players carefully. Many times, you could go into the dressing room and just trust Mahendra Singh Dhoni and his ability, and then you bowl. "He will set the field, he will guide you, and he will get you the result you want. That is what Mahendra Singh Dhoni has done on the field. I hope that when he mentors, he shows the same kind of magic when he sits in the dugout, when he is in the dressing room. This is a legacy that will be remembered for many, many decades." Dhoni's standing in Indian cricket was built well beyond the IPL. As captain, he led India to the T20 World Cup win in 2007 and the 50-over World Cup triumph in 2011. He played his last match for India in 2019 and retired from international cricket in 2020 , but carried on with CSK.

If CSK have lasted so many years, it is because of Mahi bhai, says Suresh Raina



New Delhi, Nov : Chennai Super Kings (CSK) owe their glorious run in the Indian Premier League (IPL) to recently retired MS Dhoni, said his former team-mate Suresh Raina. His comments come a day after the franchise announced that Dhoni had retired as a player for CSK and would remain with the team as their mentor. Dhoni will begin his new role by advising CSK on their strategy for the 2027 IPL auction, to be held in Goa on December 16. "He has done so much for CSK and for the IPL. The amount of love he has got from the fans, from business tycoons and CEOs, and the kids from 2008 has been amazing. "If CSK have lasted so many years, it is because of Mahi bhai and the support he got from the Whistle Podu Army, and he has done really well with Stephen Fleming. So, I think it is not just a team. It is a lot of emotion, a lot of character he showed on the field and off the field, and he carried it so brilliantly over the years," Raina said to JioStar. Dhoni, 45, captained CSK to five IPL titles. He made 272 appearances for the franchise and his 5,314 runs place him second on its list of the franchise's leading run-scorers. His calm under pressure earned him the name 'Captain Cool', apart from being known to ace chases. Raina, who shared the CSK dressing room with Dhoni for many seasons and won four titles alongside him, said the way Dhoni conducted himself would be remembered longer than his IPL numbers. "He has played in the IPL for so many years and become such a big player, but I think what we have learnt from him as a human being matters even more. He played lots of matches for CSK, including knockout matches, finals and semi-finals. "The amount of love he got from the city of Chennai, I think he achieved so much as a person and so much as a leader. But what stood out for me was the love he got from each and every CSK fan. That is the sort of person he is. "I was very fortunate to have played with him for CSK, and we won a lot of trophies too. I think he is one of the biggest pillars of CSK, and he achieved so much after coming to Chennai.

INDIA SET UP TITLE CLASH WITH PAKISTAN IN ASIA CUP CRICKET FOR THE BLIND 2026



Dhaka, Nov India stormed into the final of the Asia Cup Cricket for the Blind 2026 after registering a convincing eight-wicket victory over hosts Bangladesh in Dhaka on Wednesday, setting up a title clash against archrivals Pakistan on November 20. India will have an opportunity to avenge their narrow one-wicket defeat against Pakistan in the league stage when the two sides meet in the championship match. After winning the toss and opting to field, India restricted Bangladesh to 123/7 in their allotted 20 overs with a disciplined bowling and fielding effort. Indian captain T. Durga Rao led the attack with figures of 1/10 in three overs, while Lokesha, Debaraj Behera and Sunil Ramesh claimed a wicket each. The Indian fielders also contributed by effecting three run-outs to keep the hosts from posting a challenging total. Muhammad Tahafiz was Bangladesh's highest scorer with an unbeaten 36 off 30 deliveries. In reply, India made light work of the 124-run target, reaching 124/2 in just 13.2 overs to seal an eight-wicket victory with 40 balls to spare. Sunil Ramesh was the star performer with the bat, smashing an unbeaten 63 off 41 deliveries, including seven boundaries. He maintained a strike rate of 153.66 to guide India comfortably towards the target. Sanjay Kumar Shah provided valuable support with 32 off 25 balls, while Sukhram remained unbeaten on 20 off 15 deliveries as India completed a dominant chase. Speaking ahead of the final, Indian captain Durga Rao said the team is confident of putting up a strong performance against Pakistan after learning from its previous defeat. "We played well against Bangladesh, and this win gives us confidence going into the final. We lost to Pakistan by just one wicket in the league match, so we know how close the competition is between the two teams.

We have learned from that match and will focus on playing our best on November 20th," he said. Dr Mahantesh G K, chairman of the Cricket Association for the Blind in India (CABI), congratulated the players on reaching the final and expressed confidence in their ability to win the championship. "Congratulations to the Indian Men's Cricket Team for the Blind on reaching the Asia Cup final. The team has played excellently throughout the tournament, and today's victory against Bangladesh reflects their preparation and commitment," he said.

Rohit Sharma admits wife is a better dancer than him, says 'main apni biwi se achha dance nahi



Mumbai, Nov : Ace cricketer Rohit Sharma admitted wife is a better dancer than him as he said 'main apni biwi se achha dance nahi karta'. Sharing a candid family anecdote about his wife and young son on Sony Entertainment Television's Family Full House with Rohit Sharma, the cricketer revealed his dancing skills. Rohit recalled how the song 'Dholida' is particularly special to his family as it is his two-year-old son's favourite. The cricketer revealed that the song was performed by his wife and son during his son's annual day function at school. "Ye gaana mere chhote se 2 saal ke bachche ka favourite gaana hai, kyunki last year annual day hua tha uske school mein, toh is gaane pe mere chhote bachche ko aur meri biwi ko is gaane pe naachna pada tha. (This song is my little two-year-old child's favourite song because there was an annual day at his school last year, and my little child and my wife had to dance to this song) Rohit said watching the two perform on stage also made him want to join them. However, he jokingly admitted that he cannot match his wife when it comes to dancing. "Unn dono ko stage pe aise dance karte hue dekh kar

Published By : Mir Amjad Ali Khan 16-9-407/A, , Old Malakpet, Hyderabad -36 Contact No : + 9885106759. R.N.I.APENG/2002/09014,
Email:Editorial@hindustandailynewspaper.com www.hindustandailynewspaper.com