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KANISHKA TO CANADA

EAM Jaishankar eases ties with US amid row

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

The India US relationship is at an all-time high and the two nations have moved to a position where they see each other as very desirable, optimal and comfortable partners, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar has said, stressing that like the Chandrayaan, bilateral ties will go to the moon and maybe even beyond. Jaishankar made the remarks while addressing several hundred Indian-Americans who had gathered at the India House from various parts of the US to attend the 'Celebrating Colours of Friendship' event organised by the Embassy of India here on Saturday.

"There is one clear message today that our relationship is at an all-time high. But as they say in America, you ain't seen anything yet. So, we are going to take this relationship to a different level, to a different place," he said at the largest-ever gathering of Indian-Americans at the India House.

"In this changing world, I would say today that India and the US have moved to a position where we see each other as very desirable, optimal and comfortable partners with whom it's a natural instinct today to pick up the phone or if you meet someone and have a natural conversation," he said.

Jaishankar said the success of the G20 could not have happened without the support of the US.

"As the host, when things go well, the host always gets the credit. It's reasonable. But, the G20 could not have come together if all the members of the G20 did not work for its success," he said.

"The contribution, the support and the understanding that we got from the US to make a successful G20, I think that is something I would certainly like to recognise in public in Washington DC," Jaishankar said amid applause from Indian-Americans.

"So, it may have been our success in a literal way, but I think it was the G20 (nations) success. To me, it was also a success of the India US partnership...please keep giving this partnership the support it needs, the support it deserves and the support it expects. And I can promise you that this relationship, like the Chandrayaan, will go to the moon, maybe even beyond," he said. Jaishankar said the human bond between the two countries makes the bilateral relationship unique.

"Countries do business with each other. Countries do politics with each other. They have military ties, they do exercises, and they have cultural exchanges. But when two countries have that deep human bonding,



that's a completely different ballgame. That is today the defining characteristic of our relationship," he said.

He said the people remember Rajiv Gandhi's visit to the US in 1985, Manmohan Singh's visit in 2005 and Prime Minister Narendra Modi's several visits.

"But I have to say that this one (PM Modi's recent state visit) was different, it was different in optics, and

if you ask me what has changed, I would say India and the US earlier used to deal with each other and now they work with each other," he said.

He recalled the recent collaborative endeavours between the two countries, all starting with the letter 'I'. These initiatives include the India-Middle East Economic Corridor, I2U2 (India, Israel, the US, the UAE), Indo-Pacific cooperation, and

the initiative on Critical and Emerging Technologies (iCET).

"Alphabet 'I' is very good for the US, certainly," Jaishankar added.

He said the contribution of the diaspora in building the bilateral relationship is something fantastic.

"There are no words that can capture it. It is on that foundation that today we are looking ahead for...A new hope on the horizon...So, I think

when we look at the horizon, we see fantastic possibilities out there, and it's the community which is going to deliver on that," Jaishankar said.

He recalled that when PM Pandit Jawar Lal Nehru came to the US in 1949, there were 3,000 Indian Americans, when PM Indira Gandhi came in 1966, there were 30,000 Indian Americans, when PM Rajiv Gandhi came in 1985 there were 3,00,000 Indian Americans, when PM Modi came there were more than 3 million Indian Americans and it's grown to almost 5 million.

"If there is something unique about our relationship it is the human bond that we have. The role, responsibilities and commitment of the diaspora to the India US relationship is commendable," he added.

The Minister said the India of today is different from what it was earlier. "I want to share with you that this is truly a different India for which I speak. It is an India, which as you heard from others, is capable of the Chandrayaan-3 mission," he said. "It is an India which was able to pull off the most spectacular G20 and prove those who said that we will not be able to get 20, I don't want to say quarrelling nations but 20 countries with different positions, to come to the table together," he said.

This is an India, which showed during the Covid pandemic that it

could not only look after its people but could extend its hand to more than a hundred countries across the world, he said.

"I want to say in many ways, if there is a spring in our step, a confidence in our voice, a sort of squaring of our shoulders, there are very good reasons for it," he said.

"Because it is built today on 10 years of hard work...There are domains where our capacities have doubled or tripled," he said.

"The new India is an India of Chandrayaan, it's an India of CoWIN, it's an India of 5G. This is really what we are capable of, and it is this India today that the United States also sees. It is this India with which the United States actually has an appetite for working, much more closely," said Jaishankar.

Remembering Mahatma Gandhi ahead of his birth anniversary, he said calling him an extraordinary man would be the understatement of this century.

"He said so many things so tellingly. But at the end of the day, if we ask ourselves what was the message, the message at the end of the day was about doing the right thing, about doing the decent thing, and about leaving no one behind," he said. "Gandhi's message is very complicated, but its essence is very, very simple," Jaishankar said.

Azad wants to serve people

MOHIT KANDHARI ■ JAMMU

Putting all speculations to rest, the chairman of the Democratic Progressive Azad Party (DPAP) Ghulam Nabi Azad on Sunday urged the party workers not to pay heed to the latest political grapevine, doing the rounds of corridors of power, that he is going to occupy the chair of Lieutenant Governor of Jammu & Kashmir in the near future.

Addressing a gathering of party workers on the occasion of the first foundation day of the party in Jawahar Nagar Municipal Park, Srinagar, Azad made it clear he is not interested in becoming the Lieutenant Governor of Jammu & Kashmir.

Azad said he is not looking for employment but wanted to serve the people of J&K.

"I will request people not to trust the rumour mills which are working in overdrive.... There is a fresh rumour here that Ghulam Nabi Azad is going to be the next LG. I have not come (to J&K) looking for a job, I want to serve the people," he added. Azad observed some people were trying to give the impression that he is looking for rehabilitation.



"When I came here in 2005 (as Chief Minister), I left two prized (Union) Ministries — Housing and Urban Development and Parliamentary Affairs — to serve the people. It was not as if I was without work," he said, referring to criticism by some quarters that he returned to J&K politics at the behest of the BJP. Azad, who remained vocal

on the issue of the Abrogation of Article 370 and Article 35-A, once again observed in front of the mass gathering that it was a "great mistake".

"There were some political mistakes over many years which have pushed the State backwards, instead of going forward. In the last nine years, another great mistake was made — Article 370 and Article 35A were removed.

"Article 35A, subsequently Article 35B, was not promulgated after Independence. It

was brought by the Maharaja (Hari Singh) in 1952. I said this in Parliament that had the BJP known that they would not have touched Article 370 and Article 35A. This mistake pushed us further back. There was an uncertainty whether the land will stay with us or not," he added.

The foundation day function in Srinagar was largely attended by the Kashmir-based leaders barring a few close aides of Azad from the Jammu & Kashmir region. After launching his political outfit in Jammu & Kashmir, Azad is concentrating on both the regions of Jammu & Kashmir to consolidate his support base ahead of the maiden Assembly polls.

Several former Congress leaders joined his bandwagon after quitting the Congress party.

Acknowledging the hard work done by his party workers in the last year of its existence, Azad on Sunday patted their back claiming his party has emerged as a 'political alternative' in a span of 12 months.

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Avinash Mukund Sable celebrates after winning the men's 3000-meter steeplechase final event at the 19th Asian Games in Hangzhou, China, on Sunday PTI

Defiant Didi marches to Delhi

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

The Trinamool Congress which has dispatched to Delhi about 3,000 of its foot soldiers — allegedly in the garb of unpaid MNREGA workers — to participate in an anti-Centre rally seemed to concede roundly that corruption had indeed taken place in the implementation of the 100-days' work scheme.

While reminding Prime Minister Narendra Modi that his Government in the Centre "cannot browbeat the brave Trinamool Congress cadre into submission", TMC general secretary Abhishek Banerjee on Sunday said complaints of corruption should not be made the ground for withholding Central funds meant for the uplift of the poor.

"There may be a few corrupt people who should be punished... but why do the whole lot of people be punished for that... Why is Prime Minister Narendra Modi punishing 2.5 crore people of Bengal for the offence committed by 20 people," Banerjee asked,

reminding how the Centre had released the funds to the Assam Government despite reports of corruption there.

"Have they not released funds to Assam Government where too corruption has taken place... if they can release funds for one State then why this discrimination against Bengal," Banerjee who is also the nephew of Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee said, reminding how the "poor workers of our State have been made to starve for about two years now" just because they voted against the BJP in 2021 Assembly elections.

"They can release ₹20,000 crore for the Prime Minister's house but they cannot release funds for the poor unpaid workers when the Central Act makes the payment mandatory within 15 days of the work getting done," Banerjee said reminding how the "Centre takes away the GST from the people of Bengal and refuses to return the money back to them."

While the TMC claims that the Centre has withheld about ₹15,000 crore of MNREGA funds which is



a small part of the total Central deprivation amounting to more than ₹1 lakh crore the Opposition BJP has hit back saying the "Mamata Banerjee Government is transferring the blame on the BJP whereas even after repeated reminders they have failed to account for the previous funds released to them."

BJP State president Sukanta Majumdar said his party would "soon expose the TMC through a statistic showing the amount of

money that has been misappropriated by their workers... About 15 lakh fake job cards have been cancelled... you can figure out the amount that has been lifted through those 15 lakh fake job cards.... This is public money after all and cannot be released at will... and now they are trying to transfer the blame at our doors."

The TMC general secretary who had earlier promised to ferry two lakh people to Delhi on

Saturday and Sunday flagged off about 50 buses-loads of party men to take part in dharna in Delhi.

The buses were arranged in a hurry after the train to Delhi, the party had booked, was cancelled by the Eastern Railways on account of unavailability of rakes amid allegations of BJP's manipulations in providing trains to ferry their workers to the national Capital.

While the party grassroots, along with the unpaid job card holders, were left by buses the lesser leaders including panchayat, pradhans, district board members et al flew to Delhi. The top leadership including Banerjee, his fellow MPs and the Ministers in the Mamata Cabinet and MLAs too went by air.

Banerjee, who is also the MP from Diamond Harbour, was likely to meet his party leaders on Sunday at the Lodhi Estate bungalow of former Union Minister and MP Saugato Roy, sources said. "Final strategies will be taken there in consultation with Mamata," a senior leader said.

In a related development, much

in the lines of the King of Righteousness Hammurabi's recommendations: "eye-for-an-eye" and "tooth-for-a-tooth", the top Trinamool Congress leadership has offered to use "baton-for-a-baton," back in Bengal should their workers are baton-charged by the "BJP-run" Delhi Police during their show of protest in the national Capital on Monday and Wednesday.

A day after TMC general secretary Abhishek Banerjee warned that "if even a single deprived worker going with us is touched in Delhi then there will be consequences in Bengal," an apparently charged up State Irrigation Minister Partha Bhowmick too let out a war cry warning, "If the batons are used there, the batons will be used here too." He would not however use the word BJP.

Banerjee had on Saturday reminded that "like in Delhi, the Bengal Government too has its own police and they too know how to act with purpose."

The TMC leaders' words of caution came after Bengal BJP pres-

ident Sukanta Majumdar said the "thieves" going to Delhi "should be arrested," while another saffron leader said that the Delhi Police was not as lacklustre as their Bengal counterparts. "They know how to keep the unruly crowds under control," he said.

The CPI(M) which has recently tasted a good jump in its vote bank — 21 per cent as against the BJP's 22 per cent — in the rural polls immediately said the two sides — the TMC and the BJP — were rattling sabers in public in order to create a binary.

"But the people of Bengal fell in that trap in 2019 and 2021... but they will not do so for the third time... they will do what they should do this time," CPI(M) Central committee member Sujan Chakrabarty said. The TMC and the BJP are playing a pre-scripted game, he said. "The poor people from Bengal have been taken there... they will be beaten up and jailed and then the TMC will encash sentiments in the elections by making it a BJP-versus-TMC affair," he said.

CM Yogi gifts Sitapur projects worth ₹550 crore

PNS ■ SITAPUR

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath gifted development projects worth over Rs 550 crore for Sitapur on Sunday. He inaugurated 29 projects worth Rs 91 crore and laid the foundation stones for 45 projects worth Rs 460 crore.

Addressing the cleanliness awareness programme and public meeting organised at Naimisharanya near Maharishi Ved Vyas Dham in Sitapur, the chief minister appealed to people to make Sitapur clean and beautiful.

"The government will guarantee minimum wages to all the sanitation workers. A committee has been formed and its report will be implemented by the government," he said.

The chief minister said that it was a matter of good fortune for him to visit the pilgrimage site whose glory had been sung by Saint Tulsidas in Ramcharit Manas.

He acknowledged the historical significance of the land, where Maharishi Dadhichi made a selfless sacrifice against demonic forces and where Suti narrated ancient tales to 88,000 sages like Shaunak, preserving India's knowledge tradition as a cherished legacy for future generations. However, after independence, this sacred land, including the Ashram of Maharishi Ved Vyas and other holy pilgrimage sites in the area, was neglected.

The chief minister said that today the entire Naimish Teerth was shining. "We have to keep our pilgrimage sites clean and beautiful not only during festivals but always. The Swachh Bharat Abhiyan dedicated to Mahatma Gandhi under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi has



Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath performing puja at Naimisharanya Dham in Sitapur on Sunday. Pioneer

encouraged the spirit of cleanliness and transformed it into a mass movement," he said.

"Earlier, several diseases used to occur in this season. There were outbreaks of malaria, cholera, diarrhoea, chikungunya and encephalitis. However, due to widespread cleanliness malaria, filariasis, dengue or chikungunya and other diseases are on the verge of extinction," he added.

The chief minister made special mention of the beneficiaries of public welfare schemes of the government without any discrimination in Sitapur and emphasised that no one can now claim to be left out of these initiatives. The double-engine government is ready for cooperation at every level.

He noted that over 2,34,800 families have received housing under the PM Awas Yojana. Furthermore over 7,16,500

families have been provided with toilets, 2,17,000 families have received tap connections in their homes, while over 5,78,900 free cooking gas connections have been distributed through the Ujjwala Yojana and 55,000 daughters have benefited from the Kanya Sumangala Yojana.

The chief minister also discussed the broad range of beneficiaries under various welfare schemes, including free electricity connection, Kisan Samman Nidhi, Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Yojana, SVANidhi Yojana, Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana and Soil Health Card, reaffirming that these schemes are being implemented without any discrimination.

The chief minister said that it was the time of 'Pitra Paksha', during which it was essential to express gratitude to

our ancestors through cleanliness.

"We should express our gratitude to our ancestors by keeping rivers, pilgrimage sites, monasteries, temples, roads, schools, hospitals, parks etc clean and in good shape," he further urged.

The chief minister also conducted a review of the ongoing projects and developmental works under Naimisharanya Dham Teerth Vikas Parishad.

During the review, he assessed the progress of projects related to the renovation, reconstruction, and beautification of Naimisharanya Dham and the adjacent tourist attractions.

CM Yogi set a time limit for every project and gave instructions to complete it in a timely manner, ensuring quality. He collected information

'Ample funds for Naimish Dham development'

PNS ■ SITAPUR

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Sunday said that development of Naimisharanya on the lines of Ayodhya was the priority of his government.

During his one-day visit to Chakratirtha in Naimisharanya Dham, the chief minister also emphasised that there was no dearth of funds for the development of Naimish Tirtha.

Yogi also offered prayers and performed havan as per the rituals during his visit. The chief minister visited the ancient Bhuteswarnath temple and Maa Lalita Devi temple.

Besides, the chief minister performed shramdaan at Chakratirtha along with the saints, mahants and priests of various monasteries and temples of Naimish Teertha.

Earlier, during the conversation with the saints and saints, the chief minister urged them to maintain cleanliness and ensure that monasteries and temples are completely plastic-free.

This was Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath's fifth visit to Naimish Tirtha, the holy abode of 88,000 illustrious sages including Maharaj Manu, Ved Vyas and Maharishi Dadhichi, after taking charge of the state of Uttar Pradesh.

The saints praised the unprecedented development in Naimish Tirtha during their meeting with the chief minister. They expressed special gratitude to Yogi and said that Naimish Teerth held an invaluable place among the Sanatani devotees of the entire country and its beauty had been enriched by the development works carried out in this government. They also invited the chief minister to visit their respective temples and monasteries.

from the officials about the arrangements at major places like Chakratirtha, Maa Lalita Devi Temple, Vyas Gaddi, Soot Gaddi etc. and gave necessary guidelines. The Chief Minister



Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath taking part in the cleanliness drive in Naimisharanya Dham on Sunday. Pioneer

Addressing the saints and priests, the chief minister said that Prime Minister Narendra Modi had given a call to pay homage to Mahatma Gandhi. "It is our responsibility to make cleanliness a mass movement instead of making it a one-day programme. Cleanliness is the first necessity of life. Especially in places of pilgrimage, monasteries, temples and every place that people visit, we have to be sensitive towards cleanliness," he remarked.

Yogi said that the government was committed to restore the Vedic and mythological glory of this region. He pointed out that earlier the place was neglected and denied development despite being located near the capital Lucknow.

"Today, work is going on at a fast pace to provide electric bus service and helicopter service as well as to widen the roads here. However, the development that has happened here so far is only a small glimpse of the larger picture. A lot of work still remains to be done here," he further added. "The whole country wants to come to Naimisharanya today. After the construction of Ram temple in Ayodhya, the number of devotees will increase further. Therefore, we have to create a conducive environment, which can be achieved only with cleanliness. Along with this, we have to ensure that the visitors and tourists coming here are treated well," the chief minister stated.

rapidly. Sitapur district would be prominently marked on the tourism map.

On this occasion, state government ministers Mayankeshwar Sharan Singh,

Suresh Rahi, MP Rajesh Verma, BJP regional president Kamlesh Mishra, MLAs, Legislative Council members, former MLAs and BJP officials were present.

Conduct weekly review of every police station: CM

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has directed officials to hold review meetings from district to zonal levels in order to improve the law and order situation in the state.

These meetings will encompass discussions on criminal occurrences as well as pending cases and action should be taken against those who are negligent, the chief minister said during a law and order review meeting on Sunday.

He emphasised that each incident serves as a lesson, urging field officers to be vigilant in order to prevent the recurrence of such incidents in the state, enabling timely intervention.

Directives were also issued to run the Anti-Romeo campaign again in the state to prevent crimes against women. Simultaneously, Yogi also gave instructions to form a cyber crime police station at the district level and a cyber cell at the police station level across the state.

Furthermore, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath issued instructions to the SSP/SP of each district to conduct a weekly review of every police station, aiming to reduce criminal incidents across Uttar Pradesh, achieve 100 per cent resolution of complaint letters, expedite the processing of charge sheets, and address pending cases.

Additionally, he directed the scheduling of fortnightly reviews with ADG IG Range and monthly reviews with DGP ADG Zone.

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath said that regular meetings of the District Monitoring Committee (comprising DM, SP/SSP, Commissioner and District Judge) were encouraged to ensure timely filing of chargesheets. Special attention should be devoted to cases involving POCSO violations and crimes against women, the chief minister said. He stressed the importance of taking stringent action in cases related to Love Jihad under the new law.

Yogi said that most police stations in the state now have CCTV cameras and instructed officers to finish installing the remaining ones within a week.

Currently, cybercrime police stations have been established at the range level, and the process to establish them at the district level should be started, he further added.

Similarly, the operation of cyber cells

British MP becomes admirer of Yogi

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

In an achievement for the Yogi Adityanath government, British Member of Parliament Virendra Sharma sent a postcard congratulating the chief minister for the changed perception of Uttar Pradesh.

It is noteworthy that the members of the Parliament in Britain are appreciating the peace that has come in Uttar Pradesh due to the strong law and order system under Yogi government.

In the postcard, the British MP wrote, "Honorable Yogi Adityanath, I would like to congratulate you for achieving great successes in UP and bringing peace to the state."

Besides, Shantanu Gupta, the biographer of the life of Yogi Adityanath, was invited to the International Conclave organised at the House of Commons of the British Parliament and was honoured with the Global Gandhi Award 2023.

On this occasion, Shantanu presented his best-selling graphic novel, 'Ajay to Yogi Adityanath', as a gift to British MP Virendra Sharma.

Speaking at the House of Commons, author Shantanu Gupta discussed the developmental journey of Uttar Pradesh. He said that Prime Minister Narendra Modi had created 'Brand India' across the world, because of which Indians were given more importance across the world today. 'Brand UP' had become a strong brand across India.

at the district level should be extended to the police station level and appropriate training for police personnel should be provided. Furthermore, he emphasised that even after the operation of the cyber cell at the police station level, the operation of the cyber help desk does not stop.

The chief minister also directed the officials to keep a close watch on negative news on social media to maintain peace in the state. With the festive season approaching, there tends to be increased activity by some anti-social elements on social media, the CM said, asking officers to make a list and take action against such individuals.

The chief minister also instructed offi-

Shantanu further said that the same Uttar Pradesh, which was once known for anarchy, corruption and inefficient governance, is now a top investment destination under the Yogi government. In the ranking of 'Ease of Doing Business', UP had jumped from 14th place before 2017 to second position.

"Uttar Pradesh is currently ranked number 1 in the implementation of more than 40 schemes of the Central government. Today, Uttar Pradesh is known for its achievements such as the Uttar Pradesh Expressway, new airports, 24-hour electricity, and a strong law and order situation," he said.

Shantanu also shared some fascinating conversations between himself and Yogi Adityanath's father, Anand Singh Bisht. The author told the participants in the British Parliament that during his research for the book, Anand Ji revealed that a small blue one-and-a-half-room house in Panchur village was his only possession in life. This was all he could earn in his lifetime from the humble job of a forest guard. Shantanu mentioned that Anand paused for a while, grabbed his hand, and with great pride, said that his most valuable asset in life was his 'honest Chief Minister son'.

"Although Anand Ji is no longer with us, the sentiment of 'Honest Chief Minister's son' still resonates in my mind, and it's safe to say that this feeling echoes throughout all 75 districts of Uttar Pradesh today," he added.

cially to closely monitor negative social media content to maintain peace in the state.

"With the upcoming festive season, some anti-social elements tend to become more active on social media. The police should compile a list and take action against such individuals," the chief minister said.

Furthermore, recognising the favourable investment climate in the state, the chief minister stressed the importance of ensuring a hassle-free experience for investors. To achieve this, he proposed deploying 'Nivesh Mitras' in every police station to promptly address any concerns or issues raised by investors.

CM: Police Telecommunication plays key role in accurate information



Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath during Police Telecommunication Foundation Day programme at the Police Radio Headquarters in Lucknow on Sunday. Pioneer

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Sunday stated that history bears witness to the fact that any force equipped with proper training, tools, and weapons has always emerged victorious.

He made this remark while speaking at the Police Telecommunication Foundation Day programme held at the Police Radio Headquarters. The chief minister emphasised that the Police Telecommunication department not only facilitates the exchange of information but also plays a significant role in obtaining and delivering accurate information to all locations. "The police force responsible for internal security and law enforcement understands the importance of technology," he said.

At the outset of the event, the chief minister was given the Guard of Honor, and then he inaugurated and reviewed the JC Bose Technology exhibition. CM Yogi extended his best wishes for the events scheduled to take place from October 1 to October 3 to mark the Foundation Day.

The chief minister said that the state government had got the opportunity to organise the country's biggest cultural event of Kumbh Mela Prayagraj in 2019. He said that it was the first time such a massive event was organised in Uttar Pradesh.

"It was a matter of curiosity to observe the way the police conducted their work, their behavior, and the technology they employed. The results were witnessed not only by the entire nation but also by the world," he said. CM Yogi said that the UP Police first used wireless sets in

1938. This was during the Kumbh Mela in Haridwar, which was where the journey began. During that Kumbh Mela, the Police Radio department was established, and it was a significant challenge to figure out which communication tools to use in such a massive gathering to provide information and prevent panic or rumours. Yogi further said that earlier the police relied on three teams of elephants to facilitate communication, and through their efforts, the UP Police continued to provide communication services as the Kumbh Mela progressed. The establishment of the Radio Headquarters in 2019 marked the transition from using elephants to handsets.

"Now, we can provide information through mobile phones, which signifies progress. We cannot afford to lose to technology. We need to

integrate technology into our systems along with proper training. This technology, created by us, continues to advance our department and is essential in today's world," the chief minister said.

Yogi mentioned that back in 2017 when the new government was formed, there were only two police stations in Lucknow and Noida that were dealing with cybercrime. Today, approval has been given for the establishment of cyber police stations in all 75 districts.

On this occasion, Chief Secretary Durga Shankar Mishra, Principal Secretary (Home) Sanjay Prasad, Director General of Police Vijay Kumar, DG Special Law and Order Prashant Kumar, Director General (Police Telecommunications) Sanjay Tarde and Director (Police Telecommunications) Sunil Kumar Singh were present.

BJP to woo Dalit voters through 'Panchteerth'

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

To expand its Dalit outreach ahead of the 2024 Lok Sabha elections, the Bharatiya Janata Party is mulling a proposal to take members of the Scheduled Caste communities in Uttar Pradesh on a 'Panchteerth' tour.

'Panchteerth' is a religious tour of the five important places associated with the life of BR Ambedkar. BJP has planned to organise Anusuchit Jati Sammelan in five Prants (regions) of the state - Avadh, Kashi, Brij, Paschim, Gorakhpur and Kanpur.

"We are working out modalities in this regard and are awaiting the nod from the party leadership. This will be our gift to Dalits," said a senior BJP leader.

The five 'Panchteerth' destinations include Ambedkar's birthplace at Mhow in Madhya Pradesh, the three-storeyed house in London where he stayed while studying at the London School of Economics, Deeksha-bhoomi in Nagpur, where Ambedkar embraced Buddhism, 26 Alipur Road in New Delhi, where he died, and the site in Mumbai where Ambedkar was cremated.

Barring London, the BJP plans to include as many as destinations possible in the itinerary.

The BJP leadership is said to have tasked its SC Morcha to draw a blueprint for the execution of the ambitious idea that could potentially help the saffron outfit bolster its outreach among Dalits, who account for around 21 per cent of the total electorate in the country.

"The Dalit community certainly considers Ambedkar its icon, its God. And there is little doubt that Prime Minister Narendra Modi is fulfilling the aspirations of Dalits in all possible ways. As far as the

Panchteerth are concerned, they undoubtedly symbolise Dalit emancipation in the most profound manner," said Uttar Pradesh BJP SC Morcha chief Ram Chandra Kannaujia.

The idea, if implemented, could have a far-reaching impact, especially in Uttar Pradesh, where Dalits play the most crucial role in deciding the electoral fortunes of political parties. The BJP has especially been looking for all possible ways to consolidate the Jatav sub-castes among Dalits, the core vote-bank of Bahujan Samaj Party. In fact, two Jatav leaders, former IPS officer

Aseem Arun and former Uttarakhnd Governor Baby Rani Maurya, are playing a key role in winning over Dalit votes. The proposal has already given a jolt to BSP and a senior BSP leader termed the BJP's plans as 'mere eye wash to divert people's attention from the atrocities committed against Dalits.' "The incident involving a BJP member urinating on a mentally challenged tribal in Madhya Pradesh is indicative of the ruling party's mentality. People are witnessing and comprehending such actions by BJP members," said a BSP leader.

BSP to maintain distance from NDA, INDIA bloc

Lucknow (PNS): Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) chief Mayawati on Sunday reiterated her stand to maintain complete distance from the ruling NDA and the opposition INDIA bloc for the next year's Lok Sabha elections and said that the party has to move forward by working on its own strengths.

In a statement issued here on Sunday, the UP unit of the BSP said, "BSP chief and former UP chief minister Mayawati held a discussion with senior and responsible people of the party regarding preparedness of the party for the upcoming Lok Sabha polls.

Discussions were also held for preparedness in Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhnd."

"During the discussion, she once again made it clear that the BSP has to work by strengthening itself, while maintaining complete distance from the ruling NDA and the opposition INDIA bloc," the statement said.

Mayawati urged party members to be alert to fake news, and said that anti-BSP elements are still engaged in propaganda and political conspiracy.

"So, precaution has to be taken at every level, so that our election preparedness is not

affected," she said.

In the meeting, Mayawati took note of BJP government's new election strategy, but said that people are still facing issues such as inflation, extreme poverty, unemployment, decrease in income, bad condition of roads, law and order, and poor health and educational facilities. However, it is unclear if these problems will become serious election issues, she said.

"This is because when it comes to issues of public interest and public welfare, the attitude of the BJP and Congress is almost the same, and it is anti-people," Mayawati said.

GIL, OPF officials conduct special cleanliness drive

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

The senior officials of Gliders India Ltd (GIL) and Ordnance Parachute Factory (OPF) carried out a special cleanliness drive titled 'Kachramukt Bharat' on Sunday. The drive was a part of the special campaign launched by the Government of India and each official performed an hour long 'shramdaan' to clean the GT Road near the GIL office. The OITC and Director (HR& Operations) Sunil Date said the success of this drive is in its continuity. He said the GIL has always been in the forefront of such activities which placed India on a higher pedestal before the entire world. He said the initiative of Prime Minister Narendra Modi was focused on developing an integrated waste management system. Director (Finance) Surendra Dhaporkar, addressing the gathering, said it was highly essential that every person needs to become more serious



The officials of Gliders India Ltd and Ordnance Parachute Factory on Sunday cleaning the GT Road as part of the 'Kachramukt Bharat'

on the cleanliness of the nation. He said not only the houses need to be kept clean but the residents should also keep the surroundings and vicinity equally clean. He said the principle was neither to litter nor allow others to litter. He said every Indian has to take pride in this drive and take pride in claiming a clean and green India. Addressing the gathering General Manager MC Balasubramaniam said one of

the most effective interventions to prevent littering was to clean dirty space. He said clean environments will motivate people not to litter. He said littering also had indirect economic costs when it came to real estate, loss of tourism and loss of new industry and businesses not to mention the damage to the image of the local community and even Ganga. He said even though it was a global problem, littering can be

controlled and one can help make a difference. Earlier the entire staff and officials gathered on the GT Road with brooms and cleared the garbage in the surrounding areas. The officials carried out the road sweeping drive. The drive was likely to continue for the whole week. Others present were S Banerjee, Vivek Gupta, KK Toppo, Amardeep Kumar, JK Pandey and KD Mishra.

GIRL MISSING: A teenage girl was found missing under mysterious circumstances from a village in the Narval police station area. On failing to trace her, her kin lodged a complaint with the police which started probing the issue. The 16-year old daughter of the farmer had suddenly gone missing on Saturday. In his complaint kin said a youth Govind of Khaga (Fatehpur) had enticed his daughter away. Narval inspector Jitendra Kumar said after lodging a first information report (FIR) efforts are on to trace the missing girl.

Programme offers 'swachhanjali' to Gandhi

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

The Kanpur Development Authority (KDA) organised a 'shramdaan karein' programme on the eve of Gandhi Jayanti on Sunday. Secretary Shatrohan Vaishya inaugurated the programme by cleaning the KDA campus. He was accompanied by Additional Secretary Dr Gudakesh Sharma, Chief Engineer Ashutosh Srivastava, Law Officer SB Rai and other employees who also contributed to the cause. The programme aimed at offering 'swachhanjali' to Mahatma Gandhi on the eve of his birth



KDA secretary S Vaishya taking part in the cleanliness drive with other officials

anniversary. Secretary Shatrohan Vaishya encouraged all the officers/employees to inculcate the 'Swachhata Hi Seva' sense in them and emulate the ideals of Mahatma Gandhi. Meanwhile, teaching and non-

teaching staff of Harsabai PG College, P Road, also took part in the cleanliness drive organised in college campus under the 'swachhata campaign' on Sunday. Prominent persons present were Dr Sushil Kumar Srivastava, Vivek Nigam, Amit

Singh, Shyam Bahadur, Manoj Kumar and Dr Pradip Mishra.

PLAY: The week-long classic play 'Janata Raja' that captures the life and times of warrior king Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj, started at the CSA ground here on Sunday. President of the Janata Raja Mahanatyami Samiti Dr Umesh Paliwal said over 300 professional and amateur actors, including around 150 local artistes, were performing on the stage. He said the Samiti had organised this play in 2018 for the first time in UP. This historical play was again organised here to publicise the character and life of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj.

Communicable disease control drive from tomorrow

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

A special Communicable Disease Control Month campaign will be started in the district from Tuesday. This campaign will run till October 31. Meanwhile, Dastak Abhiyan will run from October 16 to 31. In this regard, an inter-departmental coordination meeting regarding preparations for the campaign was

organised under the direction of CMO Dr Sandeep Chaudhary at his office here on Saturday. Deputy CMO Dr HC Maurya, presiding over the meeting, said this campaign will be conducted throughout the month of October for the prevention of communicable diseases like dengue, malaria, TB, filariasis etc with mutual coordination between various departments including health.

"Micro plans have been received from all the departments to make the campaign 100 per cent successful. This campaign can be made 100 per cent successful only with the coordination of all departments," he said, adding the district administration and all allied departments including the Health department will have to take concrete steps to prevent dengue. "Maximum

publicity work should be done for prevention and control of infectious diseases. Cleanliness campaigns should be run especially in slum areas in urban areas. Mosquito source reduction work should be done through cleanliness, spraying of pesticide chemicals, fogging, drainage of water logging, destruction of breeding places of mosquitoes, preventing breeding," he said.

BOI officers, employees take part in cleanliness drive with enthusiasm

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

The zonal office of Bank of India (BOI) carried out the cleanliness drive under the Swachh Bharat Mission and Swachhata Hi Seva campaigns at the Nanarao Ghat, Cantonment, on Sunday. All the bank officers and employees took part in the drive with enthusiasm.

Besides, the drive was also carried out at some other prominent places, including Ganesh Udyan, Mall Road



Kanpur, Panki Dham Mandir, UPSIDA building Dahi Chowki, Rashtra Kavi and Dr Maithili Sharan Gupt Park Chirgaon. Prominent persons present in the drive were Zonal Manager Neeraj Tewari, Deputy Zonal Manager Jugal Kishore, Assistant General Manager Amitabh Shukla, Chief Manager Pankaj Singh and Senior Manager Sarvesh Singh.

Officials of Bank of India, Zonal Office, taking part in cleanliness drive on Sunday.

BOB committed to a clean, green future

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

Under the 'Swachhata Hi Seva Abhiyan' campaign, Bank of Baroda (BOB) organised 'Ek Tarikh, Ek Ghanta, Ek Saath' programme simultaneously at its 345 centres nationwide on Sunday.

In this context the bank organised the programme at five public places in Kanpur - Ghatampur CHC, Bithoor Ghat, Pani Tanki Park-Darshanpurwa, Panki Mandir and Trilokpur Gaushala in Chaubepur Development Block - under the leadership of its zonal chief Sachin Verma and district manager Dipendra Shukla. Bank



The employees of Bank of Baroda taking part in the cleanliness drive on Sunday.

employees took part in the programme in large number and offered 'shramdaan'. Hundreds of local people also ensured their presence in the cleanliness drive.

In his message sent to all the centres, Managing Director (MD) and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Devdutt Chand said the bank was committed to a clean and green future being a responsible organisation of corporate sector. He said the bank had recently launched 'banking for a greener planet' programme which was an important step in protection, conservation and safety of the environment.

Blood donation camp held

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

On Voluntary Blood Donation Day, the Red Cross Society organised a blood donation camp at Cawnpore Club, Cantonment, on Sunday. It was inaugurated by officer-in-charge, UHM Hospital Bhook Bank Dr Richa Bajpai, President Dr Umesh Paliwal, treasurer Dr Angad Singh and Secretary RK Saffar by lighting the ceremonial lamp. DM Vishakh G Iyer, while distributing the certificates to donors, said blood donated by them can save lives. As many as 43 persons, includ-



ing Lakhna Shukla, master trainer Red Cross Vishal Bhartiya, Radha and Sanjay Agarwal, donated blood. Dr Umesh Paliwal, while expressing gratitude to the donors, said people who donate blood always remain energetic and free from ailments. Dr Richa Bajpai said fresh blood was gen-

erated in one's body after he/she donates it. She said the blood donated once can save the life of four persons. Therefore, 'raktadaan' was called the 'mahadaan', she added. RK Saffar and master trainer Lakhna Shukla highlighted the importance of blood donation. AN Dwivedi and RP Mishra were also present.

Two held for making fake pan masala

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

The Chakeri police on Saturday arrested two persons involved in the manufacture of fake pan masala. On a tip off the police and Food department teams raided the spot and busted the unit. The Food department officials collected the samples of pan masala and thereafter police took two persons into custody. During quizzing, they informed that the unit was being run by the landlord Ashish. The unit was situated in a house in Rampuram, Shyam Nagar, Chakeri. The police recovered huge packing material and the raw material used in manufacturing the fake pan masala from the spot. Station House Officer Neeraj Babu said on a tip off, police raided the spot and arrested Dharmendra and Raghvendra. Raids were on to arrest Ashish, he said. The recovered goods include 185 packets of SNK pan masala, eight packets of Madhu pan masala, 23.1 kg wrapper of Madhu pan masala, 29.3 kg wrapper of SNK pan masala, 12.700 kg katechu powder, 34.300 kg of loose processed pan masala, 13.300 kg of Maikal powder, one electronic balance of Konika Co, sacks stitching machine, one packing machine, one electric bettlenut cutting machine, one Android mobile phone and Rs 820 cash.

ANNIVERSARY: Aatmoday Club, a vibrant cultural hub, celebrated its first anniversary with a grand event encapsulating the spirit of cultural unity and artistic expression at the CSJM University on Saturday. This event marked a significant milestone in the club's journey of promoting cultural awareness and exchange. The captivating affair unfolded in the premises of Virangna Rani Laxmi Bai auditorium. The occasion featured an array of captivating activities and competition that engaged the participants. The event saw the cake cutting ceremony in presence of the distinguished personalities. Dr Vandhana Pathak was the chief guest along with Vice-Chancellor Prof Vinay Kumar Pathak and Pro Vice-Chancellor Prof Sudhir Kumar Awasthi.

56 bone marrow transplants in 18 months

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

The Homi Bhabha Cancer Hospital (HBCH), situated in Lahartara, has successfully completed 56 bone marrow transplants (BMT) in a span of 18 months. The procedure has proven to be a successful treatment modality for individuals with serious blood and bone marrow related conditions, such as multiple myeloma, lymphoma leukemias and certain pediatric cancers such as neuroblastoma. This facility, equipped with advanced technology and a proficient team, offers one of the most cost-effective BMT treatments of this region.

The initiative to start the BMT programme at HBCH began in 2019, paused temporarily in 2020 due to the Covid pandemic but has been running seamlessly from December 2021. Out of the completed transplants, 52 were autologous and four were allogeneic. Majority of recipients were aged between 18 and 50 years. This is a collaborative effort of a multidisciplinary team, encompassing experts from various fields such as adult and pediatric medical oncology, haematopathology, microbiology, transfusion medicine, and critical care team.

"All team members played a crucial role in managing the complex process effectively.



HBCH team which successfully conducted 56 bone marrow transplants in last 18 months in Varanasi.

Notably, a significant majority of the patients, 53 in total, have demonstrated excellent recovery post-transplant, with no fatalities reported in the critical 100-day period following the procedure," said Dr Anant Gokarn and Dr Sumeet Mirgh, hematologists in the BMT unit. Concerning the financial aspects of BMT, the team noted that the treatment, while generally expensive, is offered at approximately one-third of the cost compared to other hospitals of the region. Collaborations with NGOs and government relief funds have been instrumental in aiding economically disadvantaged patients in managing the expenses, they added.

Commenting on the achievement Dr RA Badwe, Director, Tata Memorial Centre, Mumbai said, "Bone

Marrow Transplant is a high-intensity niche treatment for cancer. There are not many hospitals that offer this treatment for cancer and for exclusively cancer Tata Memorial Centre is the only institute that offers this treatment. In Varanasi, the HBCH, which is a sister institution of Tata Memorial Centre has completed 56 bone marrow transplants, 90 per cent of them at a hugely subsidised rate or free bone marrow transplants. These are life-saving procedures that require a team effort as well as an infrastructure that cannot be mimicked at 100 places. It is a matter of pride that we are able to create such a team in Varanasi to offer the best care for lymphoma, leukemia, and myeloma."

Dr Satyajit Pradhan, Director of Mahamana Pandit

Madan Mohan Malaviya Cancer Centre (MPMMCC) and HBCH, stated that the institution is steadfast in its commitment to offering superior healthcare facilities and treatments to all patients, including specialised care for pediatric cancer and blood cancer cases. He praised the team effort saying that it was possible due to relentless efforts of many specialities of BMT team (Dr Anant Gokarn, Dr Lingaraj Nayak, Dr Sumeet Mirgh, Dr Malini Garg, Dr Sujeet Kumar, Dr Anil Singh), hematopathology (Dr Neha Singh, Dr Avinash Gupta), microbiology (Dr Rahul Sarode, Dr Sujit Bharti, Dr Ankita Chaurasia), transfusion medicine (Dr Akshay Batra), biochemistry (Dr Pratibha Gavel, Dr Priyanka Asia), cytogenetics (Anil Yadav), paediatric oncology (Dr Vikramjit Kanwar, Dr Ragwesh Ranjan), paediatric surgery (Dr Soumitra Saha) and anaesthesia (Dr Jyotirmay Kirtaniya), under the guidance of Dr Navin Khattry (Deputy Director, ACTREC, Tata Memorial Centre, Mumbai), Dr Pankaj Chaturvedi (Deputy Director, CCE, Tata Memorial Centre, Mumbai), Dr BK Mishra (Deputy Director, HBCH Varanasi) and Dr Satyajit Pradhan (Director MPMMCC & HBCH, Varanasi).

NHM mission director inspects HWCs

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

Mission Director, National Health Mission (NHM), Uttar Pradesh, Dr Pinky Jewel inspected the Ayushman Bharat Health and Wellness Centres (HWCs) Koruta and Thathra in the district here on Saturday. Under the Ayushman Bhava campaign being run from September 17 to October 2, Ayushman Melas are being organised every Saturday at the HWCs. This time the theme of the fair was reproductive, maternal, newborn, child and adolescent health along with nutrition (RMNCHA Plus N).

Dr Jewel first inspected the Ayushman Mela organised at Koruta HWC under Kashi Vidyapeeth block. During this, she took information from CHO Priya Mall and the beneficiaries about the medical and

health services being provided in the health fair. She directed the CHO to provide primary medical and health facilities to all the people of the area keeping in mind the community based activities. Also, provide consultation to specialist doctors to serious patients through telemedicine service. In case of any problem, inform the superintendent of the nearest CHC so that the latter can provide treatment and referral facilities to the patient at his level, she said, asking the CHO to make the people aware about all the health schemes. By interacting with the gram pradhan and other members of the Panchayat, the Mission Director of NHM said better health facilities should be made available to as many people as possible. Apart from this, she took information from a 60-year-old woman beneficiary who came to the Koruta

HWC about the medicine prescribed for her knee pain. She also talked with another beneficiary, a 55 year old woman, about the necessary medicines prescribed by the CHO for her joint pain, back pain and weakness. Thereafter, the Mission Director inspected the Ayushman Mela organised at Thathra HWC under Sewapuri block. She took information from CHO Priya Singh and ANM Dharna Devi. She also met women and patients of self-help groups. During the inspection, Additional Director (Health) Dr Manjula Singh, ACOMO Dr SS Kanojia, Senior Medical Officer Dr Yatish Bhuvan Pathak, DPM Santosh Kumar Singh, DCPM Ramesh Prasad Verma, Superintendent Dr RB Singh, MOIC Dr Manoj Verma, BPM Meena Chaurasia, BPM Anup Mishra etc were present.

Importance of elderly highlighted

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

What children need most are the essentials that grandparents provide in abundance. They give unconditional love, kindness, patience, humour, comfort and lessons in life. A child needs grandparents to grow a little more securely



into an unfamiliar world. With its strong belief in the overall and holistic development of the child and to honour loving grandparents, Seth Anandram Jaipuria School, Pre-primary section celebrated Grandparents Day Yatra here on Saturday. The event commenced by welcoming the

grandparents with a welcome song sung by the tiny tots. Appropriate music and enthusiastic grandparents - grandchild combination made this event a runaway hit. The chief guest Prof Samsher (Vice-Chancellor of HBTU) highlighted the importance of having elderly people around us. Principal Shikha Banerjee, Vice-Principal (senior) Ganesh Tiwari, Vice-Principal (junior) Madhushree Bhaumik, Headmaster Mahesh Kumar Mishra and General Manager Shaileendra Agnihotri were present. The principal's emotional address left everyone speechless. It was a successful event and culminated with the vote of thanks by Vice-Principal Madhushree Bhaumik followed by the national anthem.

Research introduces novel approach to postoperative nutrition after GI surgery

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

Groundbreaking research has introduced a novel approach to postoperative nutrition following gastrointestinal (GI) surgery, aimed at accelerating recovery and shortening hospital stays. This innovative concept, known as Patient-Controlled Nutrition (PCN), challenges conventional postoperative dietary practices, potentially transforming the standard of care for GI surgery patients. Dr Pradeep Joshi, Regency Hospital, a prominent expert in gastrointestinal surgery, highlighted the significance of this breakthrough. He said this paradigm shift empowers patients in their recovery journey. The ability to customise their diet

based on comfort levels has demonstrated remarkable outcomes, notably expediting the return to a regular diet. This holds tremendous promise for significantly reducing hospital stays and enhancing overall patient well-being. Moreover, it opens new avenues for tailoring nutritional strategies to specific surgical interventions, potentially optimising outcomes in a variety of gastrointestinal procedures. The potential for improved patient satisfaction and reduced healthcare costs cannot be overstated, marking a pivotal advancement in the field of perioperative nutrition, he added.

A recently conducted prospective randomised study demonstrated that patients in the PCN group were able to tol-

erate a regular diet an average of 5.5 ± 3.9 hours after surgery, in stark contrast to the traditional group, which took 18.3 ± 3.8 hours. This substantial difference challenges the long-standing belief that delayed advancement of the diet is necessary. Previous studies have shown that the conventional postoperative diet, often consisting of clear liquids and soft foods, may not offer significant benefits in terms of bowel function or patient comfort. This has prompted a reevaluation of established surgical practices, much like the reconsideration of routine nasogastric tube use after abdominal surgery in the past. The study also underscores the potential benefits of implementing Patient-Controlled Nutrition

as part of the Enhanced Recovery after Surgery (ERAS) programme, a comprehensive approach to postoperative care that includes various elements designed to expedite recovery. This pilot study, conducted on patients undergoing laparoscopic appendectomy for simple appendicitis, provides a promising foundation for further research. Future studies will explore the application of PCN in various other GI-related surgeries, potentially revolutionising postoperative nutrition practices across a broader spectrum of patients. The implications of this research are far-reaching, offering hope for improved outcomes and enhanced patient experience following gastrointestinal surgery, he said.

Hour-long cleanliness drive launched in BLW, BHU

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

Under the nationwide cleanliness campaign, named 'One Date, One Hour, One Time for Cleanliness' the drive was launched ahead of the 154th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi at various places in the city including Banaras Locomotive Works (BLW) and Banaras Hindu University (BHU) here on Sunday. In BLW, under the leadership of General Manager (GM) Basudev Panda, the officers, employees and their families joined for a cleanliness mega campaign. The BLW set an example by doing mega shramdaan at 320 identified places in the entire BLW campus on the theme of 'Cleanliness is Service' on the call of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.



GM Basudev Panda and other officers offering shramdaan at BLW in Varanasi on Sunday.

Under 'Cleanliness Fortnight' as per the guidelines of the Ministry of Railways, the campaign began at 10 am under the leadership of GM. Senior officers including Principal Chief Electrical Engineer SK Srivastava, Principal Chief Materials Manager Rajneesh Gupta, Principal Chief Medical Officer Dr Devesh Kumar, Chief Vigilance Officer Pramod Kumar Chaudhary, Chief Engineer VK Shukla, Financial Advisor and Chief Accounts Officer (TOT) Ajay Srivastava, Chief Mechanical Engineer (Service) Neeraj Jain, Chief

Quality Assurance Manager Praveen Kumar, Chief Material Manager Tilok Kothari, Deputy Chief Personnel Officer, (Headquarters) Shyam Babu, Public Relations Officer Rajesh Kumar, members of Staff Council and others also offered their shramdaan in Surya Sarovar premises during hour-long drive. The campaigns were also launched at Tagore Park and in the workshop areas. The students of BLW Inter College, Civil Defence, St John's Ambulance Brigade, members

of Bharat Scout Guide, members of different unions and others also participated in the cleanliness drive. The entire programme was conducted by Chief Safety Officer SB Patel. In BHU, the campaign was launched at various places. At Sir Sunderlal Hospital (SSH), under the leadership of Medical Superintendent (MS) Prof KK Gupta, the doctors, officers, students and employees conducted a cleanliness campaign in the hospital premises. During this, Deputy Medical Superintendent Prof Ankur

Singh, Prof Amit Anand, Nursing Superintendent Prakash Sharma and others were present. At Mahila Mahavidyalaya (MMV), one the eve of birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi and Lal Bahadur Shastri, week-long 'Clean and Healthy India' campaign was launched. BHU Registrar Prof Arun Kumar Singh, Dean of Students Dr Anupam Kumar Nema, Joint Registrar (General Administration) Dr Nandlal and Principal Prof Rita Singh and many others were present.

BJP leader praises PM for fulfilling dreams of Gandhi

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

Regional Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) president Dilip Singh Patel praised the Prime Minister Narendra Modi for fulfilling the dreams of Mahatma Gandhi by launching a nationwide cleanliness drive. He said that in 2014, when Modi became the PM, he himself started this cleanliness campaign from Kashi by sweeping the lane and ghat. "Today, this campaign has taken the form of a people's movement," he said, adding that recently, in the 105th episode of 'Mann Ki Baat', the PM had called for cleanliness and shramdaan in public places under 'One Date, One Hour Together' on Sunday. Cleanliness and shramdaan was done at Amrit Sarovar in view to pay a true tribute to Babu. "Cleanliness is the basic mantra of a healthy and peaceful life," he said.



Regional BJP chief DS Patel and others at statue of Sardar Patel in Varanasi on Sunday.

In the morning itself, while addressing the people Patel said that the people were seen to be conscious about cleanliness in every nook and corner of the country. "Today, brooms were seen in the hands of

common people including dignitaries who offered shramdaan by cleaning public places in their respective areas. The campaign was launched at Aditya Sarovar in Aditya Nagar Nevada under Ravidas Mandal. In this cleanliness campaign and Shramdaan programme which started at 10 am, Patel and other BJP leaders swept the floor, picked up the garbage,

cleaned the silt on the stairs near the lake, made people aware about cleanliness and garlanded the statue of Sardar Patel. In the cleanliness campaign, Surendra Patel, Suresh Singh, regional co-media in-charge Santosh Solapurkar, Madhukar Pandey, Abhishek Mishra, Mandal President Shatrughan Patel, corporator

Garima Singh, former corporator Vineet Singh, Anil Srivastava, Dinesh Kalra, Shailensh Pandey, Rakesh Mohan Dixit, Amarnath Singh Patel, Anil Singh, Arun Singh, Sita Gupta, Jitendra Patel, Vijay Verma, Ratneshwar Modanwal, Shashank Prajapati, Sheshmani Devi, Salgu Patel, Shyam Bhushan Sharma and others participated in the campaign.

Massive drive held at Assi Ghat

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

On the call of the Prime Minister, under the joint aegis of 95 battalion Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF), Srijan Samajik Vikas Nyas, Nagar Nigam, Ganga Task Force and National Disaster Response Force (NDRF), a tribute was paid to the 'Father of the Nation' Mahatma Gandhi on the eve of his birth anniversary at Assi Ghat here on Sunday.



UP Minister Ravindra Jaiswal, others offering shramdaan at Assi Ghat in Varanasi on Sunday.

In the presence of UP Minister of State (Independent Charge) Ravindra Jaiswal, the participants pledged to fulfill the dream of clean India and keep the country clean with their actions. Mayor Ashok Tiwari, MLC Hansraj Vishwakarma, Padma Shri Dr Saroj Chooramani and many other dignitaries were also present to offer their shramdaan.

The programme was presided over by Transport Commissioner (UP Govt) Chandar Bhushan Singh. Chief of Srijan Nyas Anil Kumar Singh, brand ambassador of Ganga Haritima Abhiyan, played an important role in making the programme

successful. Commissioner of Police (CP) Mukta Ashok Jain, Chief Development Officer Himanshu Nagpal, Municipal Commissioner Shipu Giri, Nagar Swasthya Adhikar Dr NP Singh, Deputy Commandant Navneet Kumar, Assistant Commandant Vinod

Kumar Singh, Praveen Singh and personnel of 95 CRPF Battalion, members of Ganga Task force, NDRF officers and personnel, BJP leaders including Saurabh Singh Patel, volunteers of Srijan, students of Brahma Vidyalaya and others were also present.

CORE GM, others take part in 'shramdaan'

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ PRAYAGRAJ

On the call of Prime Minister, officers and employees under the leadership of General Manager of Central Organisation for Railway Electrification (CORE) Pramod Kumar took part in a 'shramdaan' related to cleanliness in the office premises and railway colonies. The cleanliness fortnight is being observed in the CORE from September 16 till October 2. To spread awareness about cleanliness among the employees of CORE, a large number of activities related to cleanliness have been carried out during Swachhha Pakhwada.



GM to the officers and employees of the CORE. Under the clean office campaign, extensive cleaning was done in all departments and premises of the office on September 18 and 19. From September 20 to 22,

The swachhha pakhwada started on September 16 with the administration of cleanliness oath by GM to the officers

and employees of the CORE. Under the clean office campaign, extensive cleaning was

done in all departments and premises of the office on September 18 and 19. From September 20 to 22,

cleanliness campaign was conducted in all residential colonies under Swachh Residential Complex. Under the Swachh Neer Abhiyan, all water treatment and filtration plants, overhead tanks, water bodies and drinking water systems of the CORE complex were inspected from September 25 to 26.

Posters, standees and banners were put up at all major places of CORE to create awareness for overall cleanliness, ban on single-use plastic and encourage use of cloth bags and messages were also displayed through social media. The CORE has always been striving towards cleanliness and is making an important contribution in making the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan successful.

MLA for maintaining environment

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

MLA from Varanasi Cantonment Saurabh Srivastava and Divisional Railway Manager (DRM) of Varanasi Division of North Eastern Railway (NER) Vineet Kumar Srivastava called upon the people, especially railway employees and passengers to maintain the environment. They were addressing a function organised at the second entry of Banaras railway station under the campaign 'One Date One Hour at 10' to pay homage to Mahatma Gandhi on the eve of his birth anniversary. Extensive cleaning was done through collective shramdaan offered from 10 am to 11 am.



MLA Saurabh Srivastava addressing a function at Banaras station in Varanasi on Sunday.

On the occasion, extensive tree plantation was done in the park of Banaras station complex by the MLA, DRM and other officers for the purity of the environment. The Drug Free India and Swachhata Hi Seva Abhiyan rally organised under the aegis of Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, Government of India and it was flagged off by the MLA. On the occasion, the DRM and officers participated in the cleanliness drive organised at Banaras station. To stop single-use plastic, jute and cotton bags were distributed to the passengers by the DRM and the MLA. Other officers distributed pamphlets containing information to the passengers about adopting environment-friendly behavior and abandoning artificial resources.

was organised in the entire country on the eve of Gandhi Jayanti in which the PM has underlined the importance of cleanliness. The basic objectives of cleanliness cannot be achieved without the participation of every section of the society. That is why for the success of the cleanliness campaign, Varanasi Division of North Eastern Railway along with the entire country participated in this countrywide campaign and contributed towards building a clean India.

Senior Divisional Mechanical Engineer (EnHM) Apoorva Swarnkar, Chief Medical Superintendent Dr RJ Chaudhuri, Senior Divisional Mechanical Engineer (C&W) Anubhav Pathak, Senior Divisional Signal and Telecommunication Engineer Rajat Priya, Senior Divisional Electrical Engineer (Traction) RN Singh, Senior Divisional Safety Officer Balendra Paul, Divisional Personnel Officer Vivek Sharma, Assistant Commercial Manager AK

Suman and other officers, station employees, voluntary organisations, children and teachers of Glenhill School, scouts and guides etc participated. AWARENESS RALLY TAKEN OUT: On the eve of Mahatma Gandhi Jayanti, a joint meeting of Central Communication Bureau and Press Information Office (PIO), Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India, Varanasi and Yuvak Mangal Dal, Dhanpalpur and Hariyali Foundation was held on Sunday at Panchayat Bhawan located in Dhanpalpur of Arazilines development block area. The programme of shramdaan was held apart from gosthi, cleanliness rally, quiz competition, and street drama during 'One Date, One Hour' campaign. During the programme, the cleanliness public awareness rally was flagged off by chief guest Prashant Kakkar, media communication officer PIB along with career guru Ravindra Sahay

Mahakumbh 2025 to be grand in many ways

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ PRAYAGRAJ

From expanding its size to enhancing facilities, the Mahakumbh 2025 would be grand in more than one aspect.

tourists there will be 30 pontoon bridges over Ganga and Yamuna. Kumbh 2019 had 22 pontoon bridges and was visited by around 25 crore people.

capacity to hold 10,000 people at one go will be set up.

here throughout the year so that filth does not spread and the mela area is kept clean", said Anand. The state government of Prayagraj has approved a budget of Rs 23.48 crore for the widening and construction of new roads leading to the Maha Kumbh-2025. The funds will be used for road widening and the construction of a link road and a new road to decongest the gathering of devotees. Additionally, funds have been allocated for the construction of three ghats. With the approval of funds, the work will be expedited.

The size of the mega religious event will be expanded by around 800 hectares from 3,200 hectares of Kumbh 2019. It will have five more sectors (25) as compared to 20 in 2019 and spread towards Phaphamau side (Rasulabad) of Ganga and downstream of Sangam (Chhatnag). Moreover, to ease the movement of around 40 crore expected devotees and

All these issues were discussed during the 15th board meeting of the Prayagraj Mela Authority, chaired by divisional commissioner Vijay Vishwas Pant, Kumbh Mela Adhikari Vijay Kiran Anand. "This time, 30 pontoon bridges will be built for easy movement of devotees and the mega religious event will be held in 25 sectors," said Anand. Also, a huge pandal with a

Around 1.45 lakh toilets will be set up in the vast mela area and 10,000 sanitation workers deployed. There will be 25,000 dustbins, 800 cleaning gangs and an ICT based monitoring system would be put in place. All these proposals have been approved in principle by the Board and will be sent to the Apex Committee for approval. "Efforts to give the message of clean Mahakumbh will start from Magh Mela 2023-24 itself. After the mela, 100 FRP toilets will remain

Stress on adopting cleanliness

CORRESPONDENT ■ MIRZAPUR

A cleanliness drive was organised throughout the district on Sunday. At Deewan Ghat of Vindhachal MLA Ratnakar Mishra, Principal Secretary, Social Welfare and nodal officer, Dr Hari Om and DM Priyanka Niranjan led the drive in which the locals participated on a large

by police personnel. Union Minister of State for Commerce and Industry Anupriya Patel and MLC Shyam Narain Singh 'Vineet Singh' conducted cleanliness drive near Patel Chauraha located at Bharuhna.

proper action should be taken by the departments and in case any application was rejected, proper reason should be told to the applicant. The LDM submitted the report regarding the target under different schemes, its achievements and the reason behind the pendency as well as rejection. The DM concluded the meeting with the direction to the officials that the problems of the entrepreneurs were to be taken seriously.

arate sittings the couple agreed to live together. The counsellors and staff wished them a successful life and a bright future. On the day incharge of the centre sub-inspector Shashi Tiwari, head constable Savitri Devi, constables Pinki Jaiswal and Sapna, counsellors Nirmala Rai and Dr Krishna Singh along with others were present during the counselling.



DIG RP Singh cleaning his office premises by doing 'shramdaan' (voluntary labour) along with police personnel

scale. In the premises of DIG office DIG RP Singh himself took the command himself along with PAC and police personnel. On the occasion he said it is the need of the hour that we adopt cleanliness in daily routine. At Police Lines Superintendent of Police (SP) Abhinandan cleaned the premises. He was accompanied

MEETING: District Magistrate Priyanka Niranjan while presiding over the meeting of Udyog Bandhu at the Collectorate on Saturday

DRIVE: Under the direction of DM Priyanka Niranjan the team led by additional district magistrate (ADM/Finance & Revenue) Shiv Pratap Shukla challan of 51 vehicles has been done during the period from September 12 to 30. Giving details of the drive against tax evasion and overloading senior mines officer Shailendra Singh said revenue of Rs 43.50 lakh will be realised. He said under the drive 27 vehicles had been handed over to the police across the district and 24 vehicles challaned online.

MAN DIES: One person found in an unconscious state near the treasury office died in a hospital on Saturday. The guard of the treasury informed the PRV 112 that about the person lying on the ground near the treasury office under the City Kotwali area. He was brought to the divisional hospital.

11 COUPLES REUNITE: Under 'Project Milan' programme 11 couples reunited through the Family Counselling Centre (FCC) located at Police Lines on Sunday. The couples were living separately due to misunderstanding over trivial issues and the cases were brought to the police. The police had referred them to the FCC and after sep-

The police had recovered a used syringe near the place where the person was lying and a toxic substance from his pocket. According to the police it seemed that the man became unconsciousness due to the overdose of the drug which led to his death in the hospital. On information Station House Officer (SHO) City Kotwali Bal Mukund Mishra reached the spot. On the basis of the photograph of the deceased was identified as Deepak Giri (29) of Vijaijapura under Dehat Kotwali police station. The SHO said the cause of death can be said clearly only after the post-mortem.



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PAPER WITH PASSION

Resilient

Taking on challenges from the West, India walks with confidence to strengthen ties with the US

Amid the diplomatic brouhaha following the killing of India-branded terrorist Hardeep Singh Nijjar in Canada, India has embarked on a determined and nuanced offensive to present its side of the story on the global fora. During an interaction with Indian journalists in Washington DC, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar criticised Canada for "normalising" violence, threats and intimidation against our diplomats and missions. Tensions between India and Canada have escalated following Justin Trudeau's allegations of Indian involvement in the killing of Nijjar, a Khalistani extremist. Jaishankar highlighted ongoing issues with Canada's "permissiveness" toward terrorism and extremism, as well as the lack of response to extradition requests. He emphasised the need to address the larger issue, rejecting the idea that threats and intimidation should be justified as freedom of speech. The Minister, at an Indian community event in Washington DC, also highlighted the resilience and growth of the India-US relationship, emphasising the need for continued collaboration between the countries.



He underscored the unprecedented trajectory of the India-US partnership, describing it as "desirable, optimal and comfortable". Jaishankar expressed optimism regarding the future of bilateral ties, drawing a parallel to India's historic Chandrayaan mission. He praised the US for its "invaluable support" in ensuring the success of the G20 Summit. The Minister said he believed that the partnership would continue to soar, "possibly even beyond the moon".

Amid diplomatic discussions, he dismissed Trudeau's allegations of the Indian Government's involvement in Nijjar's murder as "inconsistent with India's policy".

Jaishankar's stance sought to vindicate India's position on the matter. In a separate meeting with US Defence Secretary Lloyd Austin, the two explored avenues for strengthening bilateral defence ties, including the co-production of defence items. Meanwhile, across the Atlantic, a meeting of the Indian High Commissioner with the Indian community was disrupted by a few persons with anti-national credentials, bolstering Jaishankar's claim that hardline anti-India elements have taken roots in the West and they get all the leverage to carry out activities against India's interests in the name of freedom of speech. The West must realise that such elements are not fighting for anybody's rights or freedom, they have amassed ill-gotten wealth and wield significant power by claiming to fight for a "just cause" against India. But the fact is that their ideology is based on exclusion, intimidation and violence and that they have no support base in India. An ordinary Punjabi does not identify with them or subscribe to their views. The West must be wary of their presence and activities as these go against its own democratic principles. The Indian External Affairs Minister is doing the proper thing in taking up the cudgels to unmask these elements and show the world that they are just a bunch of desperadoes masquerading as freedom fighters.

PICTALK



A sand sculpture created by sand artist Sudarsan Pattnaik on the 'Swachhata Pakhwada at Puri beach

Gandhian approach to world peace

Mahatma's ideas of nonviolence act as lighthouse in the modern day world where storms of hatred and factionalism rage



RAJUDEEP PATHAK

In a world marked by conflict and division, the pursuit of global peace remains an enduring aspiration of humanity. It is a quest that has been championed by leaders, thinkers, and activists throughout history. One of the most prominent figures in this quest was Mahatma Gandhi, whose philosophy of nonviolence continues to inspire people around the globe. The concept of nonviolence stands as a beacon of hope and a path toward sustainable peace.

As the world commemorates the International Day of Nonviolence and celebrates Mahatma Gandhi's birthday on October 2, it is crucial to move beyond the celebration and understand it as a solemn commitment that global leaders must undertake (read acknowledgement) for the betterment of humanity, which in future can offer a transformative vision that should guide us through the turbulent waters of our times.

Mahatma Gandhi's philosophy, of Satyagraha (truth-force), emphasized the power of truth and love to transform societies and resolve conflicts. Gandhi's influence extended far beyond the borders of India, leaving an indelible mark on the global struggle for peace. Historian Eknath Easwaran captured Gandhi's significance when he wrote that "Gandhi's teachings on nonviolence and his fearless commitment to justice resonate not as relics of the past but as timeless lessons for a world still grappling with violence and injustice."

The universality of Nonviolence stems from the fundamental recognition of human dignity and the shared aspiration for peace. Drawing inspiration from diverse religious and philosophical traditions, Gandhi synthesised the principles of 'Ahimsa' (non-harm) and 'Satyagraha' (truth force) into a powerful tool for social and political change, demonstrating the efficacy of nonviolent resistance.

Gandhi's influence resonated globally, inspiring figures like Martin Luther King Jr., who championed Civil Rights in the United States. King's commitment to nonviolent resistance was deeply rooted in his Christian



faith and the teachings of Gandhi. In his famous "Letter from Birmingham Jail," King wrote, "Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere," underscoring the interconnectedness of humanity and the necessity of nonviolent action in the face of injustice. He went on to state that "Nonviolence is a powerful and just weapon which cuts without wounding and ennobles the man who wields it".

Similarly, Nelson Mandela had unquestionable faith in the power of nonviolence. To him, "Gandhi's philosophy of non-violence and the truth is the only lasting legacy we have. All other political systems have failed. Ours is the only approach that can guarantee world peace because it is the only approach that can guarantee that mankind will be relieved of the curse of war."

Further, Desmond Tutu's struggle against apartheid in South Africa showcased the transformative power of non-violence. Tutu emphasized that nonviolence was not just a tactic but a way of life. To him, "Forgiveness and reconciliation are not just ethereal, spiritual things. They have concrete, pragmatic applications." The International Day of Nonviolence observed on the birthday of Mahatma Gandhi, serves as a reminder



THE UNIVERSALITY OF NONVIOLENCE STEMS FROM THE FUNDAMENTAL RECOGNITION OF HUMAN DIGNITY AND THE SHARED ASPIRATION FOR PEACE

of the global significance of this philosophy. The United Nations, recognising the importance of nonviolence in resolving conflicts and promoting peace, has actively championed this day. The UN has recognised the intrinsic connection between peace and sustainable development in its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). In a world grappling with complex geopolitical tensions, the efficacy of nonviolence as a strategy for conflict resolution cannot be overstated. Peace activist and granddaughter of Mahatma Gandhi, Ela Bhatt underscored this connection. She believes that "Without peace, development is impossible, and without development, peace is not achievable."

In recent years, nonviolent movements have emerged as powerful forces for change in various parts of the world. From Rosa Parks, who refused to give up her bus seat, to Malala Yousafzai, who stood up for girls' education in the face of violence, to 'The Arab Spring' in the Middle East, to 'The Umbrella Movement' in Hong Kong, and the global climate strikes led by Greta Thunberg are examples of how nonviolent resistance remains relevant in contemporary global struggles. The protests, fuelled by a desire for

democracy, social justice and environmental concerns for leaders to awake from their slumber, demonstrated that the collective power of non-violent action could challenge established norms and demand change.

The birthday of Mahatma Gandhi and the International Day of Nonviolence is a clarion call for action. In a world grappling with diverse challenges, the principles of non-violence offer not just a historical legacy but a roadmap for the future. As Mahatma Gandhi himself had declared, "Nonviolence is the greatest force at the disposal of mankind."

Without exaggeration, it can be said that education stands as a formidable tool for nurturing the values of nonviolence from an early age. Nelson Mandela's insight, from his "Long Walk to Freedom" that people must learn to hate but can also be taught to love, underscores the transformative potential of education. Curricula that incorporate teachings on conflict resolution, empathy, and understanding lay the foundation for a more peaceful and tolerant world.

(The writer is a programme executive, Gandhi Smriti and Darshan Samiti; views are personal)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

TROUBLE OVER POETRY

Sir — Rashtriya Janata Dal MP, Manoj Jha, is under attack for the mere recitation of the poem, "Thakur ka Kuan," during the recently concluded special session of Parliament. Poet Om Prakash Valmiki laments, "Oven is made of mud, mud is from the pond, the pond belongs to the Thakur." Munshi Premchand's story by the same title was the inspiration for poet Valmiki. The main character in the story, Gangi, a lower caste, makes a vain attempt under the cover of darkness to fetch some 'clean' water from a Thakur's well for his ailing wife, Jokhu. Manoj Jha read the poem to capture the upper caste dominance over all aspects of life in a village. We read Thakur is a title used by feudal landlords in the past.

It is a fact that cruelty towards people belonging to lower castes is on the rise in new India. Social ostracism and discrimination based on caste refuse to disappear. It was reported recently that in Kantasan village in Patan district of Gujarat, a ration shop owned by a Dalit faced a boycott from the Thakur community. In an inaugural function in a temple in Kannur district of Kerala, a priest refused to pass on the small lighted lamp to Kerala Minister for Temple Affairs, K Radhakrishnan, who belongs to the Scheduled Caste community, to light a bigger traditional lamp. RJD MP Professor Manoj Jha's recital of the poem in Parliament and the DMK Minister Udhayanidhi Stalin's caustic comment on the prevailing social injustice and inequality in Sanatana Dharma emerged from a multitude of such incidents in the country. Mahatma Gandhi wanted to dismantle the caste system "root and branch".

Haridasan Rajan | Kozhikode

RBI EXTENDS DEADLINE FOR 2K NOTES

Sir — The recent decision by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) to extend the deadline for the deposit and exchange of Rs 2,000 denomination banknotes until October 7, 2023, is a welcome move. This decision comes after the initial deadline of

'Annadata' Dr Swami Nathan is no more



The progress in agriculture should be measured not on the basis of agricultural income or growth, but on the basis of the increase in the income of the farmers. Dr Swami Nathan Commission maintained this opinion. In 1966, Nathan created a high-yielding wheat variety by hybridizing wheat seeds from Mexico with local wheat from Punjab. Similarly, the cultivation of improved varieties of rice, the staple food of India, was always striving for the economic upliftment

of poor farmers. Poverty disturbed by the failure of farmers' agriculture due to inadequate credit and the vagaries of nature, the commission headed by Dr. Swami Nathan, concerned with the suicide of farmers in debt, said that the progress in agriculture should be measured on the basis of farmers' income and not on the basis of agricultural income or growth. Dr. Swami Nathan aimed to achieve the objectives of food security, easy supply to agriculture, development of dryland farming, increase in profit by increasing agricultural productivity, reduction of imports, adjustment of prices of agricultural products to the global market, and preservation of the environment and ecosystem, among other things. His efforts were valuable. Dr. Swami Nathan was truly the "Annadata" of Indians.

Dattaprasad Shirodkar, | Mumbai

September 30 had passed, providing much-needed relief to citizens who may still possess these notes.

The RBI's decision to review the situation and extend the deadline demonstrates a considerate approach to the circumstances of the people. It recognizes that some individuals may still hold these notes, and it ensures that they have a fair opportunity to exchange or deposit them.

Furthermore, the clarification that banks will cease accepting Rs 2,000 banknotes for credit to accounts or exchange into other denomination banknotes from October 8 is essential information for the public.

The provision allowing people to approach the 19 RBI Issue offices to exchange the Rs 2,000 banknotes, up to a limit of Rs 20,000 at a time, is a practical solution for those who may have a significant amount of these notes. The option to send the banknotes through India Post for crediting respective bank accounts, subject to relevant regulations and due diligence, adds a convenient avenue for compliance.

The article's background on the introduction of the Rs 2,000 denomination cur-

rency note in 2016 and the cessation of its printing in 2018-19 provides valuable context for readers. It highlights the RBI's goal to ensure an adequate supply of currency in other denominations.

Maimul Safui | Howrah

HC STOPPED FROM HOLDING MEETING

Sir — High Commissioner, Vikram Doraiswami, was reported to have been stopped from entering a Gurdwara by Khalistani extremists in Glasgow. It is shocking and outrageous. It is an insult to us. Of late, the rising of anti-India forces on foreign soil is a matter of concern. Reports of desecration of temples in Canada, Australia, the USA, and the UK are on the rise. The breeding of terror on foreign soil is unacceptable. It needs to be condemned. Respective governments should not allow such unlawful activities on their soil. India should take up the matter at the highest political level.

Sravana Ramachandran | Chennai

Tourism as a green investment for the future



BIJU DHARMAPALAN

Green investments in the tourism sector are needed for sustainable economy that strikes a balance between growth and environmental protection

Tourism is intricately connected with aesthetics. Aesthetics in the context of tourism refers to the appreciation and experience of beauty, whether it's in natural landscapes, architectural marvels, cultural expressions, or artistic creations. It is the only sector where the public wants nature to be preserved, unlike other sectors where people support the destruction in the name of development.



times tourists act as a destructive force in polluting the environment. We can see plastic bottles and bags floating in the Dal Lake.

To promote global awareness of the importance of tourism and its social, cultural, political, and economic value World Tourism Day is celebrated on September 27th under the auspices of the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO).

Each year, World Tourism Day is celebrated on a specific theme, chosen by the UNWTO, to highlight different aspects of the tourism industry. These themes often revolve around current global issues, trends, and challenges facing the tourism sector. The designated theme for the year 2023 is "Tourism and Green Investments". This emphasises

the necessity for increased and more precise allocations of resources towards the Sustainable Development Goals of the UN.

When we mention green investment in tourism, we're talking about building and taking care of places that are friendly to the environment. This involves things like eco-friendly hotels and lodges, and using less polluting vehicles like electric or hybrid cars. Tourism and green investment are interconnected in several important ways. Green investment in the context of tourism refers to allocating financial resources towards sustainable and environmentally friendly practices within the tourism industry.

This can involve initiatives that aim to minimize negative environmental impacts, conserve natural resources, and promote sustainable development.

Tourism and biodiversity conservation are closely linked, and when managed responsibly, tourism can play a significant role in the protection and preservation of natural ecosystems and biodiversity. For this, we have to

take the local community into confidence. Usually, people in rural places want their place to develop like a metros. They forget that changing the geography will badly affect their economic prosperity. Engaging local communities in tourism activities can lead to a sense of ownership and stewardship over natural resources. When communities see direct benefits from conservation efforts, they are more likely to be supportive.

Ultimately, green investments in the tourism sector are necessary for the creation of a sustainable and resilient economy that strikes a balance between economic growth, environmental protection, and the well-being of local communities. It incentivises a change towards more environmentally conscious and socially responsible tourism practices that are beneficial to both the natural world and the sustainable growth of the tourism industry.

(The writer is an adjunct faculty at the National Institute of Advanced Studies, Bangalore; views are personal)

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FIRST COLUMN

MAGIC OF MUDRA PRANAYAMA

The science of 'mudras' is intrinsically related to the esoteric knowledge of Yoga



RAVI VALLURI

The Yoga Sutras of Patanjali is a collection of sutras on the theory and practice of yoga as elucidated in his treatise. The sutras are known for their reference to Ashtanga or the eight elements of practice culminating in samadhi. The eight limbs are yama, niyama, asana, pranayama, pratyahara, dharana, dhyana and samadhi. Pranayama is the fourth principle of Ashtanga Yoga as delineated by Maharishi Patanjali. Pranayama should be coupled with mindful eating and breathing.

The yogic science of mudras

Lord Krishna in the Bhagavad Gita says, "There is nothing as sacred as knowledge." Knowledge can be acquired by the human mind through the 5Ds- dedication, determination, dynamism, devotion, and discipline and one H- Humility. The human mind can harness this potential only if it is in the present moment. By practising proper breathing techniques, like Sudarshan Kriya and Nadi Shodhan pranayama and through regular meditation the mind becomes alert to delve deep into knowledge. It is indeed efficacious to learn about mudras. The practice of mudras is not just in the domain of dancers, painters, and artists, even stock individuals who have nothing to do with the art world ought to learn about mudras.

The science of mudras, is intrinsically related to the esoteric knowledge of yoga and which can be further segregated into the five elements, the five life forces (or subtle forces of energy called the pranas) and the three doshas. The five elements are namely - Akash (ether or space), Vayu (air), Agni (fire), Jal (water) and Prithvi (earth), and the five life forces or pranas are prana, udana, samana, apana and vyana and the three doshas are vata, kapha and pitta. Humans unconsciously practice mudras. For instance, a young child begins learning to walk with his thumbs raised



which is called the Meru Dand mudra. An infant in a deep slumber, his index finger would involuntarily touch the thumb and the other three fingers are on the base of the palm (Chinmaya mudra). The universe in its auto-mode conjures these processes to take place. We are oblivious to the occurrence. Some other mudras which need to be practised are:

(a) Jnana mudra

This is performed to increase brain power, improve memory and for the removal of negative thoughts. Thereby one attains peace and bliss.

(b) Prithvi mudra

This helps in balancing the five sense organs, improves blood circulation and enhances our energy levels. Practising this mudra assists in increasing our alertness.

(c) Apana mudra

This facilitates an improved elimination process, revitalizing the digestive system, improving the gums and strengthening immunity.

(d) Prana mudra

This mudra addresses the problem of fatigue; it provides essential vitamins to the body besides increasing stamina and vigour. It also helps in maintaining the health of our eyes.

(e) Dhyan mudra

Essentially, this mudra helps in making us mindful and wakeful. Over a period, we attain peace of mind.

(f) Shunya Vayu mudra

The practice of this mudra helps in combating problems of flatulence and gastric ailments. The gut houses our solar plexus, which is also referred to as the second brain. We need to take adequate care of our abdomen as most human ailments arise from this part of the body. Thus, there is enormous merit and wisdom in the adage, that your health is in your hands.

(Ravi Valluri is the CEO of Chhattisgarh East Railway Ltd and Chhattisgarh East West Railway Ltd. and is a faculty of the Art of Living; views expressed are personal)

India's space Odyssey: To Moon and beyond



UTTAM CHAKRABORTY

India has taken a formidable lead in Moon exploration, though it would be a while before Moon's resources would be available for development purposes

India is riding high on the success of India's Chandrayaan-3, which scripted a glorious history worldwide. It is not only a matter of national pride but has larger implications on varied dimensions. It has opened up further deliberations on technological capability, resource exploration, international collaboration, scientific contributions, space exploration and diplomacy, geopolitical landscape, global leadership and cooperation.

The success of Chandrayaan-3 has redefined the relationship between national prestige and technological capability. Successfully launching and operating a lunar mission showcases a country's technological prowess and capabilities. It can boost national pride and reputation on a global stage, potentially influencing how other countries perceive and engage with that nation. International collaboration is now buzzing around. Lunar missions often involve collaboration with other countries and space agencies. The use of space missions, including lunar explorations, as a means of advancing diplomatic ties is referred to as space diplomacy. The development of international partnerships for space exploration can open up chances for discussions, disagreements, and alliances with other nations, potentially having more significant geopolitical repercussions. These partnerships can foster diplomatic ties and strengthen international relationships, leading to potential geopolitical advantages.

SCIENTIFIC CONTRIBUTIONS

Without scientific contributions, India's mission could not have been possible. Lunar missions contribute to scientific advancements by conducting experiments and collecting data about the Moon's geology, atmosphere, and other characteristics. Sharing such data and findings can position a country as a leader in scientific research and innovation. Resource Exploration is another area that can be discounted in India's journey in space. If future lunar missions, including Chandrayaan missions, discover valuable resources on the Moon, such as rare minerals or water ice, they could have significant economic implications.

SPACE VOYAGE & GEOPOLITICS

Control or access to these resources could influence a country's geopolitical standing. The ability to conduct space missions, including lunar missions, can be used as a tool for diplomacy. It can open channels for negotiations, discussions, and partnerships with other nations interested in space exploration, which can have broader geopolitical implications. Furthermore, a long-running space race may pick up speed in response to the successful lunar mission, which follows Russia's failure. India became the first nation to land a spacecraft on the south pole of the moon. As the Chandrayaan-3 spacecraft successfully touched down on the lunar south pole last week, India became just the fourth nation to perform a soft landing on the moon. That area of the moon has not yet been visited by any other country. The trajectory of the Chandrayaan-3, which blasted off from southern India more than a month ago, has captured the attention of the Indian public and dominated headlines for days.

Soft Power Projection is something that India is going to capitalize on. Successfully



conducting ambitious space missions can enhance a country's soft power - its ability to influence others through cultural, technological, and scientific achievements. The successful completion of ambitious space missions has the potential to increase a country's soft power, which is defined as its ability to sway others through achievements in the arts, sciences, and technology. This phenomenon can help to shape how people view the country and have an effect on how well-known it is abroad. This can create a positive image of the country and influence how it is perceived by the international community.



THE UNITED STATES, RUSSIA, CHINA, JAPAN, AND FRANCE ARE JUST A FEW OF THE NATIONS THAT HAVE CONGRATULATED INDIA ON CHANDRAYAAN-3'S SUCCESSFUL LANDING

(The writer is HoD-Digital Marketing and Associate Professor at the School of Management, Presidency University Bangalore, views are personal)

Launching lunar missions requires the development of advanced technology, infrastructure, and skilled workforce. These developments can have a positive impact on the country's overall technological capabilities and economic growth, indirectly affecting its geopolitical position. Precisely, this achievement will enhance the infrastructure and capability building. Now, global leadership and cooperation have come to the fore for further discussions. If a country like India successfully conducts lunar missions, it could position itself as a leader in space exploration, especially within the developing world. This leadership role can lead to collaborations and alliances, shaping geopolitical dynamics. A nation like India has the potential to become a leader in space exploration if its lunar missions are carried out successfully, especially among developing nations. This particular leadership position has the potential to promote alliances and partnerships.

A long-running space race may be accelerated by the Chandrayaan-3 mission, ushering in a new stage of great power competition. Russia and India, who are allies on Earth, have been vying to be the first nation to set foot on the lunar south pole; a Russian attempt was a failed one. The presence of water raises the

possibility that other nations could use the region of the lunar south pole as a base for further space exploration in the future. The United States established the Artemis Accords in 2020, which seek to foster space cooperation through shared rules and principles, possibly in anticipation of such competition. Several allies and partners, including India, joined. Russia and China have not. The way people on Earth view the moon—and beyond—could change as geopolitical competition in space is set to heat up.

MOON ECONOMY

Limiting climate change's harmful effects and ensuring a transition to sustainable energy sources have become the two biggest problems the world community has been facing recently. The lack of critical minerals, which are crucial elements of the transition to renewable energy, as studies suggest, makes the transition less seamless than anticipated. Considering the moon economy's importance and potential sources for these essential minerals is necessary in this context. Along with this, a country typically gains a tactical advantage from a space mission when operationalizing satellite communication, in addition to a variety of other benefits. This includes enabling and supplying consistent satellite data, which aids in forecasting many things, including the monsoon and can greatly aid defence forces in maintaining surveillance on other nations.

The moon is a rich source of raw materials, so it should be noted that this will be a geopolitical region where future conflict and cooperation may occur. It is necessary to take a comprehensive look at the essential minerals that have grown in significance recently. According to an ISRO study, the Moon, especially the South Pole, is currently home to enormous amounts of water. A significant amount of hydro-energy could be

produced if this were to be investigated.

Similar to this, a report by Popular Science Magazine titled "The elements we might mine on the moon" suggests the presence of other critical minerals, including plutonium and helium 3, which can be used for the fusion of nuclear energy, as well as cobalt, lithium, titanium, and other critical minerals. In a similar vein, the Energy Information Administration, in its numerous reports, has made predictions of these vital minerals that can be sourced for the RE sector.

The countries that establish bases on the moon first will have the first-mover advantage to benefit from a variety of space projects and businesses on and around the Moon. The geopolitics of lunar colonialism are still unknown, but we do know that they will have an impact on world politics. In a few decades, India may be one of the few nations in charge of the largest portion of the moon economy. A PwC report states that the lunar economy encompasses all of the activities involved in the production, use, and exchange of lunar resources on the Moon's surface, in lunar orbit, and on Earth.

The United States, Russia, China, Japan, and France are just a few of the nations that have congratulated India on Chandrayaan-3's successful landing. These nations are all interested in space exploration and are probably closely observing India's development.

These responses demonstrate the widespread acclaim and admiration that India has received for its performance on Chandrayaan-3. It is a significant accomplishment for India and evidence of its expanding space exploration capabilities.

Other nations may be inspired to pursue their space exploration programs as a result. Now, the moon is India's ventured place. Let's wait and watch on the world's relations with India to shape up the journey in the space.

Growing need for awareness about mental health

Approximately every fifth person across the globe experiences mental health issues at some point during his lifespan

In 1992 the World Federation of Mental Health recognised the need to be more vocal about mental health issues as people with mental illness often suffer silently, fearing social stigma, lack of understanding and discrimination.

Approximately every fifth person across the globe experiences mental health issues at some point during their entire lifespan. While Depression and Anxiety disorders are the most common mental health conditions, suicide is one of the leading causes of premature and untimely deaths. It is a serious concern for mental health professionals for timely intervention. The spate of student suicides in Kota (Rajasthan) speaks volumes of the gravity of the situation and



RC JILOHA

the urgent need to address the issue.

Mental health refers to overall mental well-being, a holistic concept that is also about physical and social well-being. Promotion of mental health through understanding, support, and access to mental health resources is crucial to de-stigmatizing mental illness and breaking down the negative attitudes and beliefs surrounding it.

Unfortunately, public health developments during recent years have adversely impacted the mental health of elderly and the children alike. It becomes important to make children understand that sound mental health is vital to their emotional development. It is evident from the studies that since the COVID-19 pandemic began, more children are reporting higher levels of anxiety and depression than ever before. That makes now the perfect time to break down the stigma connected with mental illness by openly discussing the issue.

The recent United Nations Human Rights Report highlights that people with mental health conditions and those with psychosocial disabilities experience disproportionately higher rates of poor physical health and reduced life expectancy. Discrimination, harmful stereotypes and stigma in the community, family, schools and the workplace prevent meaningful relationships, quality social interactions and the inclusive environments needed for the well-being of individuals with mental illness. These issues hurt a person's ability to cope with life situations.

There is a need to educate the public to create a society where everyone feels comfortable seeking help and support without prejudice and discrimination. It is the responsibility and obligation of the State and the global organizations to ensure access to mental health services, which can no longer be ignored. Access to better living conditions, security, food, shelter and housing are all human rights issues necessary for people's mental health. Mental health is a universal right of all citizens of the world and consistent with the 1948 founding principles of the World Federation of Mental Health (WFMH).

Mental Health Day reaffirms every year the commitments made and the action taken. While last year's World Mental Health Day theme was 'Make mental health and well-being for all a global priority', 2023's theme is to celebrate the power of community kindness.

Mental Health Day 2023 is an opportunity for people and communities to renew their commitment to the theme 'Mental health is a universal human right' to improve knowledge, raise awareness and drive actions that promote and protect everyone's mental health as a universal human right. Mental health must be placed in a human rights framework to re-cast the aspiration for sound mental health as a fundamental human right. By doing so a better, more

accepting and supportive society can be created where the mentally ill stay included in the larger society with comfort and confidence. Active participation in the events that support World Mental Health Day such as walks, runs, workshops, or panel discussions helps create awareness and clarify misconceptions that often prevent people from seeking available help. Donations to the organization or charity that provides resources and support to those struggling with mental health issues must be made. Devoting and investing time and working voluntarily with the welfare organizations that support mental health can go a long way in creating awareness within a community. Money is needed to carry out these

activities for which funds can be raised by organizing one's event or participating in a fund-raising challenge. One also needs to self-educate about mental health and the various issues surrounding it through reading books, attending workshops, or simply having conversations with others or following some of the social media accounts that provide genuine information. This year's theme highlights a range of issues to involve a variety of stakeholders and global citizens to work together to ensure that a clear message is delivered and an effective campaign to support World Mental Health Day 2023 is carried out on 10th October, particularly when we celebrate WFMH's 75th Anniversary year.

Modi leads nation in hour-long 'shramdaan'

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■
NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday pitched for blending fitness and well-being with cleanliness as he led a nationwide cleanliness drive in which thousands of people participated in an hour-long "shramdaan" across the country.

Besides Modi, several other BJP leaders, including Union Ministers, took up cleanliness programmes in different parts of the country. Home Minister Amit Shah participated in Ahmedabad while BJP chief JP Nadda did so in Delhi. According to the Union Housing and Urban Affairs Ministry, more than 9.20 lakh sites across the country were adopted for the mega drive, named as "Swachhjanali" to Mahatma Gandhi on the eve

of his birth anniversary. People from all walks of life, from politicians to students, wielded brooms and took part in the 'Swachhata hi Seva' campaign, in response to the Prime Minister's appeal the cleanliness drive. Wielding a broom, Union Home Minister Amit Shah participated in a cleanliness drive in Ahmedabad. BJP chief JP Nadda also took part in the drive in Delhi's Jhandewalan area.

Uttar Pradesh Yogi Adityanath participated in cleanliness drive 'Swachhata Pakhwada' in Sitapur. Taking part in the "shramdaan (voluntary labour)", Union Power Minister RK Singh told reporters, "We (Centre) have taken a resolve to make the country clean. It is a big challenge but we will do it." Union Ministers and BJP



leaders across the country grabbed brooms and took part in the 'Swachhata hi Seva' campaign.

Gujarat Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel participated in a cleanliness drive in Ahmedabad. BJP MP Dinesh Sharma, who also took part in a clean drive, said "swachhata (cleanliness) has become the face of the country. Union Housing and Urban Affairs Minister Hardeep Singh Puri, urging people to join the drive, said in a post on X, "Come, let's create a new history! At 10 am today, let's volunteer for an hour, paying homage to Mahatma Gandhi through cleanliness." "Scan or visit local cleanliness programmes to join. Dream of a #GarbageFreeIndia Together, we'll make it happen", he said.

Indian Air Force chief Air

Chief Marshal VR Chaudhari took volunteered for a cleanliness activity in New Delhi. The Municipal Corporation of Delhi said it held cleanliness drives at 500 locations across the national capital.

Cricketers such as Virat Kohli and Rohit Sharma also appealed to the people to come together for "Ek Tareekh, Ek Ghanta, Ek Saath" and join the largest citizen-led movement to strengthen the resolve towards cleanliness.

Among the States, Uttar Pradesh adopted more than a lakh sites for cleanliness drives while Maharashtra will conduct the programme in over 62,000 locations, including the beaches, religious places, schools, colleges and water bodies. In Telangana, temples of historical significance were cleaned during the drive.

Canada-based Lakhbir stepping up terror activities in Punjab: Intelligence

RAKESH K SINGH ■
NEW DELHI

Amid the renewed focus on the Khalistani terrorists and their expanding arc of terror syndicate following the Indo-Canada diplomatic row, intelligence reports have flagged the increasing footprint of Canada-based gangster-turned-terrorist Lakhbir Singh alias Landa who has been jacking up terror activities in Punjab via an additional operational base in Portugal.

Backed by the notorious Pakistani spy agency Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI), Landa has been engaged in gunrunning from Pakistan to Punjab.

Besides Canada, Portugal has emerged as a key operational base of Landa where a number of his cohorts are based and directing the terror operations against India.

Landa is the mastermind behind the RPG attack at the Intelligence Headquarters of Punjab police in Mohali on May 9, 2022 and at police station Sarhali Kalan in Tarn Taran on December 10, 2022.

"Lakhbir Singh alias Landa has been deploying his foreign based associates for retrieving and disposing off consignments consisting of firearms, explosives and improvised explosive devices (IEDs) smuggled from Pakistan in collaboration with Pak ISI, into Punjab and carrying terror activities through their local contacts," reads a recent intelligence report.

The report further said, "It has been discerned that Portugal has emerged as an important operational base of Landa's criminal network as some of his key associates have established themselves in Portugal from where they exercise control over the criminal syndicate."



One of Landa's foreign based associates, Parminder Singh alias Pattu has emerged as a key member of Landa's criminal network, who is residing illegally on tourist visa in Portugal. Parminder Singh,

son of Tarlochan Singh, is a resident of Baghelewala village in Ferozepur district of Punjab. "It came to notice that recently he (Parminder Singh alias Pattu) arranged one AK-47 assault rifle, one MP-5 sub-machine gun, hand grenades, pistols along with live car-

tridges for the use of criminal syndicate in Punjab through his contacts in Pakistan," the report highlighted.

On Wednesday, the National Investigation Agency (NIA) conducted multi-State searches following a similar intelligence input against another gangster and Landa's associate Lawrence Bishnoi, a criminal mastermind with a notorious track record. Bishnoi has been linked to several high-profile crimes, including the murder of renowned Punjabi singer Sidhu Moosewala and for issuing threats against Bollywood actor Salman Khan.

Recent intelligence inputs warned of an alarming trend in Bishnoi's illicit activities who has established a direct line of communication with Nasir Khan, an ISI operative.

"The connection suggests that Bishnoi and his gang might

be diversifying their criminal portfolio by procuring weapons with the help of Pakistan Intelligence Operatives (PIOs) and making use of these weapons for furthering gangster activities in the region," reads the Intelligence report.

Bishnoi's gang is notorious for involvement in extortion and killings but the recent revelation of links with Pakistan-based entities suggests a "strategic shift in the gang's operational focus."

"The gang's involvement in arms smuggling represents a significant escalation in their criminal activities and poses a considerable risk to the nation's security. The potential backing by Pak ISI operatives also indicates a concerning overlap between organized crimes and geopolitical adversaries, enhancing the threat profile of Bishnoi's operations," warned the report.

Rajnath takes part in cleanliness drive



PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■
NEW DELHI

As part of 'Swachhata Hi Sewa' campaign, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Sunday took part in a special cleanliness programme 'Ek Taarikh, Ek Ghanta, Ek Saath,' organised by Controller General of Defence Accounts (CGDA) at its premises in Delhi Cantonment.

Rajnath led the shramdaan activities, which included a cleanliness drive, beautification of common area and a plantation drive.

The defence minister also interacted with the Safai Karmacharis and lauded their efforts in ensuring cleanliness in the premises. He motivated them to continue working with zeal and dedication and carry forward the mass social movement launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi-led Government to realise the dream of Father of the Nation Mahatma Gandhi of a 'Clean India'.

Chief of Defence Staff General Anil Chauhan, Financial Adviser (Defence Service) Rasika Chaube and CGDA S G Dastidar also participated in various cleanliness activities on the occasion.

Rajnath also interacted with the Principal Controllers and Controllers of Defence Accounts heading the offices of PCDA (Army) Jammu,

PCDA (Air Force) Dehradun, PCDA (Army) Jaipur, PCDA (Pensions) Prayagraj, CDA (Army) Meerut, CDA Guwahati, CDA Jabalpur, CDA (Regional Training Centre) Bengaluru and CDA Chennai and reviewed the implementation of the 'Swachhata Hi Sewa' campaign in their respective jurisdictions.

The 'Swachhata Hi Sewa' campaign, which began on September 15, 2023, will culminate on the birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi on October 02. As part of the campaign, shramdaan activities are being undertaken through community participation as a prelude to the Swachh Bharat Diwas on Gandhi Jayanti.

Over 20,000 officers and staff of Defence Accounts Department across more than 1,100 offices and residential colonies across the country have been undertaking cleanliness activities including removal of garbage, weeding out of files and awareness campaigns on the importance of proper sanitation and hygiene.

Similar cleanliness drives have been launched at various other establishments of Ministry of Defence, Services and related organisations all over the country as part of the 'Swachhata Hi Sewa' campaign.

India needs stronger Armed forces, says Minister

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■
NEW DELHI

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Sunday called for effective utilisation of financial resources as India needs stronger Armed forces with modern equipment to become a developed nation by 2047.

"If we wish to create a developed nation, we will need stronger armed forces with modern arms and equipment. Therefore, it is necessary to effectively utilise the financial resources available to us," he said after launching several digital initiatives of the Defence Accounts Department (DAD) during its 276th annual day celebrations here. "There should be a fine balance between the demands of services and the allocation of available resources," the minister added.

Describing the DAD as the "guardian of defence finance", he emphasised the need to bolster the internal vigilance mechanism so that any suspicious activity can be detected and reviewed immediately.



This, he said, will not only help in dealing with the problem quickly but also increase the trust of the people in the department.

Rajnath also suggested to the DAD for the creation of an in-house standing committee that can research and study market forces and provide high-quality market intelligence to the field officers.

He appreciated the organisation for its efforts towards enhancing the country's defence capabilities through a transparent and efficient financial

system. Terming accounting as extremely important for an individual, organisation and the nation as a whole, he said, "Our wants are unlimited, but the available resources are limited."

He commended the DAD for ensuring judicious use of resources while extracting optimum output.

The digital initiatives launched included an integrated defence finance dashboard for the Ministry of Defence -- SARANSH (Summary of Accounts, Budget and Expenditure

for Raksha Mantralaya) and BISWAS (Bill Information and Work Analysis System and e-Raksha Awaas).

While Rajnath lauded the DAD for coming out with numerous digital initiatives, he exhorted it to develop its professional capabilities to deal with the complexities arising out of the constantly-evolving times.

He urged it to collaborate with reputable institutions such as Indian Institutes of Management (IIMs) and the Institute of Chartered Accountants of India (ICAI) to develop and adopt customised training modules, as per requirements.

The minister urged DAD officials to keep in mind two broad aspects while extending financial advice -- realistic assessment of the demand of the user agency and understanding of the product's market.

He stressed the need to pay attention to the fact whether there is a need to buy a product or not and if a similar product of equal or greater effectiveness is available somewhere else in the market at a lower cost, according to the defence ministry.

This understanding will further increase the quality of financial advice, he said. To develop such an understanding, Rajnath suggested the creation of an in-house mechanism, a standing committee of experienced people who can research and study market forces and provide high-quality market intelligence to the field officers.

"Big banks and financial institutions develop in-house economic intelligence and research teams. On similar lines, the DAD needs to develop an in-house team for market research and intelligence," he said.

The defence minister also recommended collaboration with industry associations and business schools for extensive study of market conditions. Chief of Defence Staff General Anil Chauhan, Chief of Air Staff Air Chief Marshal VR Chaudhari, Chief of Naval Staff Admiral R Hari Kumar, Financial Advisor (Defence Services) Rasika Chaube, Controller General of Defence Accounts S G Dastidar and other senior officials of Ministry of Defence were present during the event.

Modi to visit Rajasthan, MP to launch development projects

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■
NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will launch multiple development projects in Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh during his visit to the two poll-bound States on Monday.

The Prime Minister's Office (PMO) said he will launch and lay the foundation stone for development projects worth about Rs 7,000 crore in Rajasthan and around Rs 19,260 crore in Madhya Pradesh. During his visit to Chittorgarh in Rajasthan, he will inaugurate the Mehana-Bathinda-Gurdaspur gas pipeline, built at a cost of Rs 4,500 crore in yet another step to promote a gas-based economy, it said.

Modi will also inaugurate Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited's (HPCL) LPG plant in Abu Road. This plant will bottle and distribute 86 lakh cylinders per annum, resulting in net reduction in running trucks carrying the cylinders by around 0.75 million kilometres annually. This will help to cut down about 0.5 million tons of CO2 emission per annum, it said.



Among the other projects, he will throw open a four-lane road on NH-12 (new NH-52) on the Darah-Jhalawar-Teendhar section, which has been constructed at a cost of more than Rs 1,480 crore.

This will help ease the transportation of the produce of mines from Kota and Jhalawar districts, the statement said. Foundation stones for constructing and widening the railway overbridge from two lanes to four in Sawai Madhopur will also be laid. Modi will inaugurate several railway projects, tourism facilities and a permanent campus of the Indian Institute of Information Technology, Kota.

During his visit to Gwalior in Madhya Pradesh, he will inaugurate the Delhi-Vadodara Expressway, which has been

developed at a cost of about Rs 11,895 crore. He will also lay the foundation stone for five different road projects worth over Rs 1,880 crore, the statement said. In line with his vision to ensure a pucca house for every family, the prime minister will initiate the 'grih pravesh' ceremony of over 2.2 lakh homes built under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana - Gramin, it said.

Modi will also inaugurate the houses constructed under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana - Urban at a cost of about Rs 140 crore. As part of the Government's focus on providing safe and adequate drinking water, Modi will lay the foundation stone of Jal Jeevan Mission projects worth over Rs 1,530 crore in Gwalior and Sheopur districts. These projects will together benefit more than 720 villages in the region.

He will also lay the foundation stone of nine health centres under the Ayushman Bharat Health Infrastructure Mission and inaugurate and launch several other projects. Assembly polls in both Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan are expected to be held in November-December.

Awareness programme on 'menstrual health' held



PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■
NEW DELHI

Joining the Government's initiative on menstrual hygiene to promote women's health, 'Menstrual Health- One more step towards women's health', the Army Hospital (R&R) Delhi Cantonment here organised a menstrual health awareness programme 'Mahawari mein Swachhata' on Sunday.

A lecture cum demonstration was organised at Army Hospital (R&R) and senior officers and women from all walks of life, including adolescent girls participated in the event, army officials said. The social taboos and myths associated with men-

struation, medical implications of good menstrual hygiene, and simple but effective ways to deal with menstrual issues were highlighted during the event.

The lack of proper menstrual hygiene can be the source of genital tract infections which can later lead to infertility.

It was also discussed how the ignorance about simple facts about menstrual hygiene can stall the overall growth of young girls, and become a hindrance to them getting a good education, and society as a whole needs to change its attitude about menstruation which is essentially a physiological process.

Afghan Embassy in Delhi announces shut down of operations

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■
NEW DELHI

The Afghanistan Embassy in New Delhi has announced that it is ceasing operations from October 1 citing a lack of support from the host government, failure to meet expectations in serving Afghanistan's interests and reduction in personnel and resources.

Making this announcement late Sunday night, the Afghanistan embassy in a statement said it regrets announcing the decision to cease its operations, effective October 1, 2023.

"It is with profound sadness, regret, and disappointment that the Embassy of Afghanistan in New Delhi announces this decision to cease its operations," the statement said.

The embassy said this decision, while deeply regrettable, was made after careful consideration, taking into account the historic ties and long-standing partnership between Afghanistan and India.

The embassy statement also listed key factors affecting its ability to continue the mis-



sion effectively and said that they were the primary reasons for the "unfortunate closure".

The embassy cited a "lack of support from the host government", alleging that it has experienced a notable absence of crucial support from the host government, which it said hindered its ability to carry out duties effectively.

The mission also cited "failure to meet expectations in serving Afghanistan's interests" as one of the reasons. "We acknowledge our shortcomings in meeting the expectations and requirements necessary to serve the best interests of Afghanistan and its citizens due to the lack of diplomatic support in India and the absence of a legitimate functioning government in Kabul," the mission said. It also said due to unfore-

seen and unfortunate circumstances, there has been a significant reduction in both personnel and resources available to it, making it increasingly challenging to continue operations.

"The lack of timely and sufficient support from visa renewal for diplomats to other critical areas of cooperation led to an understandable frustration among our team and impeded our ability to carry out routine duties effectively," the statement said.

Given these circumstances, "it is with deep regret that we have taken the difficult decision to close all operations of the mission with the exception of emergency consular services to Afghan citizens till the transfer of the custodial authority of the mission to the host country," it said.

Alcaraz, Sabalenka sail through at China Open

AFP ■ BEIJING

Top seeds Carlos Alcaraz and Aryna Sabalenka both breezed into the next round of the China Open with routine victories on Sunday.

Alcaraz sealed a place in the men's quarter-finals with a smooth 6-2, 6-2 victory over Italy's Lorenzo Musetti in Beijing.

The world number two overpowered his opponent and seized the first set when Musetti whacked a baseline backhand into the net.

The Spaniard then broke serve twice in the second set and saw out a comfortable match with an unreturned serve.

He will next face Casper Ruud after the world number nine came back to beat Argentina's Tomas Etcheverry 1-6, 7-5, 7-6 (9-7).

"I feel great, honestly. It was a good performance against a really tough opponent," Alcaraz said at a post-match press briefing.

"(My level) didn't (go) up and down. I stayed at a high level, high quality, during the whole match," the 20-year-old said.

A sticking point in the tournament's early rounds has been the match balls, which Alcaraz's main challenger Daniil

Medvedev described on Saturday as "like a grapefruit".

Alcaraz said Sunday he had also felt the distinct quality of the balls -- allegedly quick to fluff up -- "since day one".

"It's something tough, but tennis players have to get used to the balls in every tournament," he said in response to a question from AFP.

"Here, in just one or two games, the balls become really different from (when they're) new. It's a kind of different (style of) play," he said.

Also on Sunday, world number seven Jannik Sinner obliterated Japan's Yoshihito Nishioka 6-2, 6-0.

The Italian will play a quarter-final against either fourth-ranked Holger Rune or Bulgaria's Grigor Dimitrov, who play each other on Sunday evening.

SUPER SABALENKA

Earlier, world number one Aryna Sabalenka sailed into the second round of the women's draw with an imperious 6-1, 6-2 defeat of American Sofia Kenin.

The Belarusian pummelled Kenin with a succession of mighty serves and groundstrokes and wrapped up the opening set with an ace after just 23 minutes.



The 25-year-old broke serve twice more in the second set as Kenin -- playing with heavy strapping on her left thigh -- failed to muster a response.

Sabalenka sealed the match with yet another unreturned serve to set up a tie against either Magdalena Frech or Katie Boulter in the next round.

"Honestly, I didn't expect to play that good on my serve -- in practice, it didn't work very well," Sabalenka said at a post-match briefing.

"But I was super hyped that I was able to bring that level on my serve today. I think it helped a lot," she said.

"I think that was the key of today's match."

The China Open is taking place for the first time since 2019 after Beijing ended its isolationist zero-Covid policies.

All of the eight top-ranked men are taking part except tennis legend Novak Djokovic, while all of the women's top eight are in action.

The women's tournament is also the first since its global governing body ended a boycott of China this year.

The embargo had been declared after Chinese player Peng Shuai made sexual assault accusations against a top government official.

Electronic Media thrash DD/AIR



Navneet Sehgal being introduced to the players

Lucknow (PNS): Electronic Media XI thrashed DD/AIR XI by nine wickets in the inaugural match of Ekana T20 Media Cup-2023 at the KD Singh 'Babu' Stadium on Sunday. Batting first, DD/AIR were bundled out for mere 71 runs in 16.5 overs with only Ram Balak (15) and Jitendra Kumar (12) managed to score in double figures.

Faheem took 3 wickets while Tarun Singh, Deepak Taneja and Mayur Shukla got two wickets each.

In reply, Electronic Media

XI achieved the target for the loss of a wicket. Mayur Shukla scored unbeaten 17 runs while Abhishek Mishra blasted unbeaten 45 runs in 27 balls with the help of six fours and a six.

Earlier, Retd IAS Navneet Sehgal and Managing Director of Ekana Sports City Uday Sinha inaugurated the tournament.

Today's fixture: Combined Media vs DDAIR (8:00 am) Hindustan Times vs Accredited Journalist (11:30 am).

Jerome Boateng trains with Bayern Munich

Munich: Germany defender Jerome Boateng trained with Bayern Munich on Sunday, amid reports the centre-back may be set to make a return to the Bundesliga champions.

The club wrote on its website that Boateng was "among those involved" in Sunday's session, adding the defender "will continue to train over the coming days". Free since the expiry of his contract with Lyon in June, Boateng, 35, could serve as a backup solution for Bayern coach Thomas Tuchel. Bayern currently have only three recognised central defenders -- Dayot Upamecano, Kim Min-jae and Matthijs de Ligt -- with the latter having missed his side's 2-2 draw with RB Leipzig on Saturday due to injury. Tuchel was also forced to play midfielder Leon Goretzka and wing-back Noussair Mazraoui in central defence in Bayern's Cup tie against Muenster on Tuesday, which the German champions won 4-0. Boateng played for Bayern from 2011 to 2021, winning the 2013 and 2020 Champions League titles, as well as the 2014 World Cup with Germany. Boateng is also currently undergoing a continuing court procedure in Bavaria for domestic violence. A German court last month threw out the assault conviction against Boateng for attacking his ex-girlfriend in 2018 and ordered a new trial.

PSG players apologise for anti-Marseille chants

AFP ■ PARIS

Four Paris Saint-Germain players on Sunday apologised for offensive chants aimed at rivals Marseille after a Ligue 1 game, saying they "sincerely regretted" their words.

French internationals Ousmane Dembele, Randal Kolo Muani, and Layvin Kurzawa and Moroccan Achraf Hakimi were filmed singing an insulting song towards Marseille fans



after a 4-0 victory at the Parc des Princes on September 24.

"We let ourselves get carried away by the euphoria and we sincerely regret the words we should not have said and would like to apologise," the four said in identical posts on social media.

"We are well aware of the impact of our actions and our words on the public, notably the youngest who dream watching a football match,"

they continued, adding "in the future, we will do everything to further respect our duty to set an example".

Homophobic chants were also sung during this match by Parisian supporters for several minutes.

The club and its four players will appear before the French football league's disciplinary committee next Thursday, the day after PSG's Champions League trip to Newcastle.

Kudermetova beats Pegula to win Pan Pacific Open



AFP ■ TOKYO

Russia's Veronika Kudermetova won the Pan Pacific Open in Tokyo on Sunday, upsetting tennis' world number four Jessica Pegula in straight sets.

The 19th-ranked Kudermetova overwhelmed the American 7-5, 6-1 in an hour and 24 minutes.

"I knew it would be a tough final... I need to fight for every ball and today it worked really well," she said.

"I'm really happy that I managed to win my second title," said the 26-year-old, who won her first WTA singles title

in Charleston in 2021.

She beat Pegula in three sets on the clay in Madrid this year.

"I played better today than in Madrid," Kudermetova said, adding that Pegula "always fights and plays solidly every match".

"Today I followed my game and my plan" to play aggressively, she said.

Kudermetova had a tough semi-final, needing three hours and 25 minutes to defeat Anastasia Pavlyuchenkova.

She stunned four-time Grand Slam champion Iga Swiatek in the quarters. Pegula was aiming for her

second title of the season following victory last month in Montreal.

Kudermetova "put a lot of pressure on me at the beginning so it made it very tough", the American said.

"Luckily I was able to get back to the first set but I just don't think I was serving well enough... She was a better player today."

The 29-year-old went into the US Open dreaming of a first ever Grand Slam title, but her campaign came to an abrupt halt as compatriot and close friend Madison Keys recorded a dominant win in just 61 minutes.



VAR officials stood down after Liverpool goal error

AFP ■ LONDON

The match officials at fault for a botched VAR call that cost Liverpool a goal in their 2-1 defeat at Tottenham on Saturday have been removed from duty for the rest of the Premier League weekend.

Referees' body the PGMOL admitted a "significant human error" had meant Luis Diaz's strike, when the game was level at 0-0, was not awarded by a VAR review after being flagged offside.

VAR official Darren

England was due to be fourth official at Sunday's Premier League match between Nottingham Forest and Brentford.

And his assistant VAR Dan Cook was to be assistant referee for Monday's west London derby between Fulham and Chelsea.

Spurs struck in the 96th minute through Joel Matip's own goal to edge a highly controversial encounter.

Liverpool were reduced to nine men as Curtis Jones and Diogo Jota were sent-off either

side of half-time.

"I never saw a game like this with the most unfair circumstances, crazy decisions," said Liverpool boss Jurgen Klopp.

PGMOL chief Howard Webb apologised to the Reds after the match for the error that ruled out Diaz's strike.

"This was a clear and obvious factual error and should have resulted in the goal being awarded through VAR intervention, however, the VAR failed to intervene," the PGMOL said in a statement.

Martin 3 points off Bagnaia with wet Japan MotoGP win

AFP ■ MOTEGI (JAPAN)

Jorge Martin narrowed the gap on championship leader Francesco Bagnaia to just three points with six races left on Sunday after winning a Japan MotoGP cut short by rain.

Starting from pole, the Spaniard had already cut the difference to Italy's Bagnaia to only eight points on Saturday with his third straight sprint victory and fifth of the season.

Ducati's Bagnaia came second in the race, giving the defending world champion 319 points compared to 316 for Martin from Ducati satellite team Pramac. Marc Marquez took third.

The 24-lap race began under overcast skies and light rain quickly intensified once the race started in mountainous Motegi.

This made for treacherous conditions with slippery turns and

a sea of spray, and most riders came into the pits early on to change tyres.

Martin and Bagnaia worked their way back to the top of the field before organisers suspended the race with 12 laps to go.

They attempted a restart but the red flags quickly came out again and the riders were awarded full points according to their positions at the stoppage.

"I was committed to do a great result today," Martin said afterwards.

"I felt really good with the rear grip and I was able to overtake all of them (after the pit stop) and make this gap to win today," he added.

"I'm so so happy. Luckily everybody's away but it was too dangerous to keep going," he added.

Bagnaia said he was happy with the result but said he thought



he could have overtaken Martin.

"I was hoping to do more laps to catch Jorge because I was trying to gain (on him) lap by lap without pushing too much," he said.

"Unluckily, we didn't have time to finish the race... I think, with the time management, I was quite competitive in the last part of the race," he said.

Looking ahead, Bagnaia said competition was turning more "difficult" and "intense" as he duelled with Martin for the championship.

"I think it will be interesting. Could be a great fight. For sure, it's more intense right now. It's more difficult," he said.

Six-time world champion Marquez on Honda made his first podium finish of the year at the home circuit of the Japanese brand.

He started from the third row, but as rain caused other riders to go wide or even into gravel, the

Spaniard saw an opening to race to the podium.

"I enjoyed (it). In the beginning of the race I was very calm, just tried to understand the tyres," Marquez said.

"When I saw that there was water on the track, I started to attack and I was increasing the speed step by step," he said.

South African Brad Binder on KTM crashed out early in the race. He set a lap record on Friday, before Martin renewed it on Saturday.

Johann Zarco also crashed and was not allowed to return to the race after he took a shortcut to get back into the pit lane.

Last weekend, Martin had already narrowed the difference to 13 points in India in Greater Noida.

1 seconds later by Bagnaia, and 0.353 seconds by 2022 Japanese GP winner Jack Miller on KTM.

