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THE ISRAEL-HAMAS WAR  
IN PERSPECTIVE

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# THEATRE OF WAR EXPANDS IN WEST ASIA

## Humanitarian aid stalled as Israeli siege strains hospitals, water supply

AP ■ RAFAH (GAZA STRIP) / WASHINGTON

Palestinians in besieged Gaza crowded into hospitals and schools on Monday, seeking shelter and running low on food and water. More than a million people have fled their homes ahead of an expected Israeli ground invasion aimed at destroying Hamas after its fighters rampaged through southern Israel. As the enclave's food, water and medicine supplies dwindled, all eyes were on the Rafah crossing between Gaza and Egypt, where trucks carrying badly needed aid have been waiting for days as mediators press for a cease-fire that would allow them to enter Gaza and allow foreigners to leave. Rafah, Gaza's only connection to Egypt, was shut down nearly a week ago because of Israeli airstrikes. Egypt's Foreign Minister Sameh Shoukry said Israel "has not taken a position to open the crossing from the Gaza side". The Israeli government did not respond to a request for comment. With a ground invasion of Gaza expected, Israel was preparing for the potential of a new front opening on its northern border with Lebanon, where it has exchanged fire repeatedly with the Iranian-backed Hezbollah group. The

military ordered residents from 28 Israeli communities to evacuate. Speaking to the Israeli Knesset on Monday, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu warned Iran and Hezbollah, "Don't test us in the north. Don't make the mistake of the past. Today, the price you will pay will be far heavier," referring to Israel's 2006 war with Hezbollah. Meanwhile in Hamas' horrific killings, Israeli trauma over the Holocaust has resurfaced. Women, children and older adults hiding in safe rooms gunned down mercilessly. Homes set ablaze with terrified residents still inside them. Children, some bound, forced into a room and slaughtered. Jews, helpless. For many Israelis and Jews around the world, the horrors committed by Hamas militants during their stunning onslaught on southern Israeli communities is triggering painful memories of a calamity of a far greater scale: the Holocaust. "I have been strict about not using the word Shoah' in any context other than the Holocaust," political commentator Ben Caspit wrote in the daily Maariv, referring to the Holocaust by its Hebrew name. "When Jewish children hide in a protected room and their anguished parents pray that



Israeli armored personnel carriers head toward the border with the Gaza Strip in southern Israel

AP/PTI

they won't cry, so that the marauders won't come in and set the house on fire, it's a Shoah." At present, hundreds of thousands of Palestinians sheltering in UN facilities are on less than 1 litre (1 quart) of water per day. Hospitals warn they are on the verge of collapse, with

emergency generators that power machines like ventilators and incubators down to about one day of fuel and supplies of medicine almost exhausted. Israeli airstrikes have pulverized entire neighbourhoods as Palestinian militants continue to fire rockets into Israel. Israel is widely expected to

launch a ground offensive in order to kill Hamas leaders, recover captives and destroy the group's military infrastructure, much of which is in residential areas. Street-by-street fighting would likely cause mounting casualties on both sides. Israel has ordered more than 1

million Palestinians — almost half the territory's population — to leave Gaza City and the surrounding area for the enclave's south. The military says it is trying to clear away civilians ahead of a major campaign against Hamas in the north, where it says the militants have extensive net-

works of tunnels and rocket launchers. Hamas has urged people to stay in their homes, and the Israeli military on Sunday released photos it said showed a Hamas roadblock preventing traffic from moving south. For a third day, Israel's military announced a safe corridor for people to move from north to south between the hours of 8 am and noon. It said more than 600,000 people have already evacuated the Gaza City area. Hospitals in Gaza are expected to run out of generator fuel in the next 24 hours, endangering the lives of thousands of patients, according to the UN. Gaza's sole power plant shut down for lack of fuel after Israel completely sealed off the 40-km (25-mile) long territory following the Hamas attack. The World Health Organisation said hospitals are "overflowing" as people seek safety. "We are concerned about disease outbreaks due to mass displacement and poor water and sanitation," it said. Four hospitals in northern Gaza are no longer functioning and 21 have received Israeli orders to evacuate. Doctors have refused, saying it would mean death for critically ill patients and newborns on ventilators. The WHO said water shortages caused by Israel's decision to cut off water supplies, com-

bined with a lack of fuel for pumps and desalination stations, put thousands of hospital patients at risk. "Water is needed to ensure sanitary conditions on inpatient wards, in operation rooms, and emergency departments. It is essential for the prevention of hospital associated infections and for the prevention of outbreaks in hospitals," the WHO said. The UN health agency said life-saving assistance for 300,000 patients is currently awaiting entry through Rafah. On the Gaza side, crowds of Palestinians with dual citizenship waited anxiously, sitting on suitcases or crouched on the floor, some comforting crying infants. Meanwhile, US President Joe Biden is considering a trip to Israel in the coming days but no travel has been finalised, a senior administration official said on Sunday. It would be a powerful symbol of sympathy and support following the brutal attack by Hamas. Biden also made his strongest public statements yet to restrain Israel. "I think it'd be a big mistake," Biden said. "Look, what happened in Gaza, in my view, is Hamas, and the extreme elements of Hamas don't represent all the Palestinian people. And I think that it would be a mistake for Israel to occupy Gaza again."

## India's first RRTS to debut on Friday

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

India's inaugural Regional Rapid Transit System is set to debut in the National Capital Region on Friday, with Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurating the 17.5 km segment linking Sahibabad in Ghaziabad to the Duhai Depot of the 82.15 km Delhi-Ghaziabad-Meerut section. In a symbolic tribute to the spirit of "Shakti" (women), the first train will be operated by a woman pilot, a fitting gesture that coincides with the auspicious occasion of Navratri. The initial phase of the Delhi-Ghaziabad-Meerut RRTS corridor will commence operations, encompassing five key stations: Sahibabad, Ghaziabad, Guldhar, Duhai, and Duhai Depot. This milestone will revolutionise travel between the National Capital and Meerut, as the RRTS corridor will traverse 17 km in just 12 minutes, a journey that typically takes

over 35 minutes by road. Upon full implementation, the project will boast two multi-modal transport transit systems. Preparations for this historic event are in full swing, with Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath personally inspecting the Ghaziabad site to oversee the project's progress. The Delhi-Meerut Regional Rapid Transit System initiative is spearheaded by the National Capital Region Transport Corporation (NCRTC), with the complete 82.15 km Delhi-Ghaziabad-Meerut RRTS slated for full operational status by June 2025. The RRTS trains are equipped with a range of commuter-centric amenities including overhead luggage racks, WiFi, and charging facilities for mobiles and laptops at every seat. Additionally, each train will feature a premium class car, offering wider seats, increased

legroom, and coat hangers, along with vending machines for added convenience. Officials have indicated that ten trains will ply this route, accommodating up to 1,700 passengers. The subsequent phase, extending from Sahibabad to Meerut South, will span 42 km and introduce four new operational stations. RapidX, boasting a maximum speed of 180 km an hour, is poised to be India's fastest train, whisking commuters from Delhi to Meerut in just 55 minutes. The service frequency will be every 5-10 minutes, providing a modern, sustainable, swift, secure, and comfortable mode of travel. Upon the corridor's full completion, the RRTS is expected to slash travel time between Delhi and Meerut by a substantial 40 per cent. For convenience, a dedicated 'Lost and Found' centre has been established at the Ghaziabad RRTS station to

expedite the retrieval of misplaced belongings. If passengers inadvertently leave their items on RAPIDX trains or within station premises, they can promptly seek assistance from station staff. Further inquiries and support regarding lost items can be directed to the RAPIDX Customer Service Centre at 08069651515. Passengers will have a 24-hour window to claim their lost belongings from the station where they were misplaced or left. Following this period, any unclaimed items will be transferred to the designated "lost and found" centre at the Ghaziabad station, operational from 8 am to 8 pm daily. The RRTS trains have been designed with an aerodynamic profile, featuring long noses and plug-in doors to minimize air resistance at higher speeds. Passengers will relish panoramic views through expansive window panes, enhancing their travel experience.



Australia's batter Marnus Labuschagne plays a shot during the ICC Men's Cricket World Cup 2023 match between Sri Lanka and Australia at Bharat Ratna Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee Ekana Cricket Stadium in Lucknow on Monday. Australia beat Sri Lanka by five wickets in their ICC World Cup match here on Monday. Sent in to bowl, Australia dismissed Sri Lanka for 209 in 43.3 overs and then returned to overhaul the target in 35.2 overs, scoring 215 for five in a match that was briefly interrupted by rain. This was Australia's first win of the ongoing tournament. PTI

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# Sansad Khel Pratiyogita Kashi-2023 begins

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

After successful conducting of Kashi Sansad Sanskritik Mahotsav (KSSM) in which the Prime Minister Narendra Modi himself attended the closing function to award the winners, Sansad Khel Pratiyogita Kashi-2023 was inaugurated at UP College grounds here on Monday. The sports competition was inaugurated jointly by UP ministers Ravindra Jaiswal and Dayashankar Mishra 'Dayalu' by lighting the lamp and hoisting of flag.

The function was also attended by Mayor Ashok Tiwari, city chief of Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) Vidya Sagar Rai, District Magistrate S Rajalingam, Chief Development Officer Himanshu Nagpal, ADM (City) Alok Verma, RSO, BSA, Additional Municipal Commissioner and many other senior officials and BJP leaders. The inaugural function began with the presentation of Saraswati Vandana, welcome song and cultural programmes by the schoolchildren.

In the first event of the sports competition, the 100 metres race for girls and boys was started by both the ministers of state (Independent Charge) by flagging off the same. After this, the students' volleyball competition was also inaugurated by them, along with, Mayor and DM by play-



UP Ministers Ravindra Jaiswal and Dayashankar Mishra 'Dayalu' inaugurating Sansad Khel Pratiyogita Kashi-2023 in Varanasi on Monday.

ing volleyball.

According to the district administration, it is expected that 1,64,250 male and 1,13,227 female players will participate in the competitions at different levels in the district. The competition will run till November 8. There is no age limit in this competition. Competitions of 27 sports and 35 events are being organised from village to city. Transgender and disabled people will also showcase their talents in this sports event.

According to Chief Development Officer (CDO) Himanshu Nagpal, a good

women's participation in the event is expected as there is enthusiasm among the girls and the attraction of the event will be the participation of 103-year-old Kalavati who will take part in a race event. He said that 2,77, 642 people have registered for the event and the number of male participants in the competition is 1, 64, 250 while of female participants 1,13,227. Besides, 165 transgender have also registered. The CDO informed that there will be 27 competitions in this sports competition.

The PM during his last visit in the city had launched the

Sansad Khel Pratiyogita Kashi-2023 portal while laying the foundation stone of the International Cricket Stadium on September 23 from his parliamentary constituency. The aim was to connect sports with people, so that youth can also take sports as a career. To showcase the talent of players from village to city, sports competitions are being organised at gram panchayat, nyay panchayat, university and school/ college, development block, zone and district levels. The competition will be organised at the district level from November 6 to 8.

# 2 brothers feared drowned in Ganga

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ PRAYAGRAJ

Two brothers were feared drowned in the Ganga in the rural area of Puramufi. Their friends raised an alarm and the local boatmen jumped into the river to trace them, but all their efforts went in vain.

Himanshu (20) of Akbarpur Sallahpur under Puramufi is the driver of the chief medical superintendent of Colvin Hospital. On Sunday he went to Fatehpur Ghat on a bike with his younger brother Mahendra Raj. They were accompanied by some neighbours. Suddenly Himanshu slipped into the area where water was deep. On seeing him drowning the younger brother came forward to save Himanshu, but both of them were swept away. Their friends raised an alarm. Some local boatmen responded but they could not save the brothers.

Efforts were made later to trace them but in vain.

**NABBED:** Samajwadi Party block pramukh from Kaudihar Mohammad Muzaffar tried to dodge the police by wearing a burqa but was nabbed and sent to jail. Muzaffar was wanted in a case of cow slaughter. On May 11, 2022, SO Soraon had intercepted a truck near HP petrol pump in Kurgaon. The truck was from Haryana and had 16 cows out of which eight were found dead. A case had been lodged against unidentified persons in this connection but investigation revealed that Muzaffar was the kingpin of the cow slaughter gang. Aslam has already been sent to jail in this connection. Muzaffar went missing since his name figured in the cow slaughter case. The police raided his hideouts several times, but he managed to escape every time. On a tip off

the police raided a place in the trans-Ganga segment of the district and caught Muzaffar while trying to escape wearing a 'burqa'. After being produced before the magistrate, he was sent to jail.

**TIGHT SECURITY:** Taking a lesson from the murder of mafia don Atiq Ahmed and his brother Khalid Azeem alias Ashraf by sharpshooters in a hospital when they were taken there for a medical examination, the police did not allow mediapersons to interact with yet another kingpin of the crime world, Babloo Srivastava. He had been brought here from Bareilly jail under tight security to be produced in the court in connection with kidnapping and ransom demand of Rs 10 crore.

Babloo was fearing his murder while being transferred from Bareilly jail to Prayagraj court, and requested to record

his statement through video conferencing, but the court had turned down the request of the mafia don, who is quite close the 'D' gang.

Babloo was brought here on Sunday and kept in Kaushambi jail for security reasons. When he was produced in the court on Monday a good number of mediapersons and lawyers had gathered there to interact with him but no one was allowed to meet him.

Babloo was produced in a special Gangster Court here in connection with the kidnapping of a trader Pankaj Mahendra and asking for a ransom of Rs 10 crore. Statements of other criminals involved in this kidnapping — Vineet Parihar, Shachchidanand Yadav, Chandra Prakash and Sandeep Chaudhary have already been recorded by the court.

# Bid to ensure foolproof fire security arrangements

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ PRAYAGRAJ

In a bid to ensure foolproof fire security arrangements, the officials of the Fire department have asked all puja pandals to follow a set of directives. Moreover, all puja pandal committees must have NOC from the Fire department for setting up pandal.

Apart from security arrangements for visitors, the Fire department has asked committees concerned not to use synthetic material or ropes to construct puja pandals. Besides, every puja pandal has to leave around 4.5 metre space around it so that people could evacuate puja pandal in case of crisis.

Pandals must have more than three metres height and no pandal should be set up under the electric wire cable. The exit gate must have at least five metres width and distance of pandal from main road must be within 45 metres.

Chief Fire Officer (Prayagraj) RK Pandey told

mediapersons, "We have asked puja pandal committees to hire licensed contractors for lighting of pandals. There should be at least two exit points and both the gates should be opposite from each other". Besides, we have also asked all puja pandal committees to ensure emergency lighting services and there should be no fire crackers show in and around the pandal. Every pandal must have at least two advanced fire-fighting extinguishers and water storage of 200 litres near the pandal, he said.

The CFO said as many as eight teams are being constituted to check puja pandal at frequent intervals in Civil Lines, Naini, Bara, Meja Koraon, Handia, Phulpur and Soraon. Apart from security plan, police have also decided to use separate plan for crowd control or any other emergency, especially during evening hours. Senior cops have advised puja committee to depute additional volunteers to control the crowd thronging the pandals,

especially during peak hours (7 pm to 2 am).

These volunteers are being deployed in shifts to avoid any laxity. All the major puja pandals would be under police scanner and skilled volunteers would be assisting cops to handle emergency-like situation in case of stampede or fire break out.

There will be separate arrangement for water to ensure adequate supply to tackle any accidental fire. There are plans to utilise drone cameras for assessing crowd strength in pandals and also to keep an eye on security measures. Each policeman and private volunteer will be aware about their role and responsibility.

Besides, a reserve water storage facility will also set up to control any fire outbreak. "We are more focused on security arrangements and are coordinating with the local puja pandal committees," said a senior cop.

Majority of visitors throng pandals during evening hours

to enjoy the lighting arrangements and the grandeur of the Goddess while offering puja. There will be shift wise duties of policemen at static locations so that they remain alert to tackle any crowd problem.

On their part, the men-in-khaki have already drafted an elaborate security arrangement plan for Durga Puja pandals to prevent any untoward incident during the festival and the police station concerned will be coordinating with committee members regarding security arrangements. Installation of CCTVs will be mandatory to keep an eye on the visitors and additional security forces have been deployed to maintain law and order.

Puja committees have also been instructed to ensure proper lighting inside and outside the pandals during Durga Puja and Navaratri celebrations. A senior cop said, "There will be around 100 small and big puja pandals in the city and security will be reviewed on a routine basis."

# BJP to launch voter awareness drive

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

Regional (Kashi) Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) president Dilip Singh Patel said that the party will launch a voter awareness campaign from October 29 under the Mission 2024. According to him, in this direction, the state unit of BJP has made a blueprint in which the party's first focus will be on the voter list. "For this, a mega campaign to be known as Voter Chetna Maha Abhiyan will be started simultaneously in the entire state from October 29 in which the party will knock every house," he said, adding that to make the campaign a success, a training camp for party workers has been started at the district level from Monday.

On his return after attending a state level meeting addressed by state chief Bhupendra Singh Chaudhary and general secretary (Organisation) Dharampal Singh, the regional president said that despite the alliance of the parties in the last Lok Sabha elections, BJP had got more than 50 per cent votes. "BJP achieved historic victory in urban body, panchayat and cooperative elections and in



Regional BJP chief DS Patel addressing party workers in Varanasi.

such a situation, the strong organisational structure of BJP is capable of accepting any challenge and giving positive results," he said.

Patel further said that during the campaign, the party workers will approach the concerned employees to add names of the youths in the voter list who have completed 18 years of age, change the residence addresses of married women voters and add new

voters and delete the names of deceased voters. He said that complete information about the proposed campaign would be given to the workers by the senior party office-bearers in the divisional workshops to be held in the coming days so that the work of voter verification can be done successfully and every eligible person can become a voter.

He said that participation of every party office-bearer,

worker and public representative will be ensured in the campaign.

Giving information about the two days training programme being organised at the district level from Monday, he said that training for voter divisional workshops on October 18 and 19. He said that the draft voter list will be published by the Election Commission on October 27.

"After listening to the next episode of 'Mann Ki Baat' programme on October 29, all the party office-bearers, workers, MPs, MLAs and other public representatives will contact every house and get involved in voter verification work. Work has to be done to connect every worker with the campaign," he said, adding that the party would contact each voter by running a special door-to-door contact campaign from October 30 to November 5 and from November 25 to December 3.

He said that by contacting the new voters and connecting them with the party, victory in the 2024 Lok Sabha elections will be easy and BJP would achieve the target of winning 80 seats in the state.

# Devotees throng Brahmacharini Temple

VARANASI (PNS): Hundreds of devotees thronged Brahmacharini Devi Temple located near Brahma Ghat in Kotwali area on the second day of Shardiya Navratra here on Monday. Right from the morning hours, there was a long line of devotees in the nearby narrow lanes and only a few devotees were allowed to enter the temple premises at a time to avoid any awkward situation. The devotees waited for a long time to reach the temple and offer prayers.

Heavy rush of devotees was also seen throughout the day at the famous Durga Mandir (Durga Kund) as usual. Rush was also seen at some other temples of goddesses. This holy city is a rare place where there are separate temples of all the nine Gauris and

Devis where the devotees reach to offer prayers on different days during Basantik (Chaitya) and Shardiya Navratra respectively.

Besides, hundreds of devotees rushed to Vindhayachal in Mirzapur district by Roadway buses or other vehicles to offer prayer on this auspicious occasion. Rush was also seen at Old Durga Mandir at Ramnagar, Sheelta Mata Mandir at Adalpura (near Chunar, Mirzapur) and others. Due to the high level of water in river Ganga, though it was recorded steady during the day, the devotees faced it tough to reach Sheelta Mata Mandir at Old Dashashwamedh Ghat. At both Durga Kund and Brahmacharini Devi temples, elaborate security arrangements were made.

# Two commit suicide

PRAYAGRAJ (PNS): Two persons committed suicide in two separate incidents in the past 24 hours in the city. In the first case, a 27 year-old youth identified as Yashwant, a resident of Pratapgarh committed suicide by hanging himself from the ceiling at his rented accommodation near Bagh road under the Khuldbad police station. The police said Yashwant was preparing for the competitive exams and had not picked up phone for the past two days. The incident came to the fore when his uncle went to meet him but found door locked from inside. On being alerted, a team of Khuldbad police rushed to the spot and found the youth hanging from the ceiling. The police said foul smell was also coming from the room suspecting that youth might have hanged himself two days back. The body has been sent for the post

mortem. In second case, a 37-year-old man identified as Abhishek of Lukerganj committed suicide by hanging himself at his residence under the same police station. Initial police investigation revealed that he committed suicide due to domestic issues.

**PRAYAGRAJ JN BEING REDEVELOPED:** Prayagraj Junction is being redeveloped in view of the Mahakumbh to be held in 2025 here. Now work has started on platform numbers 9 and 10 from Sunday. No trains will operate on this route for 77 days. As many as 10 trains have been completely cancelled while around 30 trains were shifted to other platforms. Both these platforms are important because trains go to cities like Mumbai, Delhi and Surat from here. This change may also cause some inconvenience to the passengers.

# IIT (BHU) organises campus dialogue

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

An engaging 'Campus Dialogue with Students' was organised by the Research Cell of IIT (BHU) on Monday with Padma Bhushan & Padma Shri Prof Padmanabhan Balaram, former Director of IISc Bangalore. The talk was titled 'Reflections on Science in the aftermath of the coronavirus pandemic'.

He spoke about the history of science and how we advanced from primal beings to using microscopes and telescopes to understand different worlds. He reiterated and explained Dr Richard Feynmann's atomic hypothesis that in the event of a cataclysm where all knowledge were to be destroyed, humans should start their research with the fact that 'all things are made of matter'. The evolution of the pandemic was also talked about where he stressed on the importance of biotechnology in today's world. He considered the research on cells as the greatest feat of biological engineering and also that biology unifies all sectors of science. During his talk, Prof Balaram also discussed the interdisciplinary nature of science and the contributions of various scientists like Erwin Schrödinger, Richard Feynman, Lynn Sagan and many more.

The session was organised in the Annie Besant Lecture Theatre, with a capacity of



Padma Bhushan Prof P Balaram at 'campus dialogue with students' programme at IIT (BHU) in Varanasi on Monday.

300, brimming with students, research scholars, PhD applicants and professors. The audience was so pumped up that many students and the faculty stayed back even after the session ended and kept discussing the realms of science with Prof Balaram who kept answering their questions with utmost energy and excitement.

The programme began with a warm welcome of Prof P Balaram by the Dean (Research & Development), IIT (BHU), Prof Vikash Kumar Dubey and the Head of the Biomedical Engineering Department, IIT (BHU) Prof Sanjeev Kumar Mahto, with bouquet and shawl. The event proceeded with Prof Balaram's excellent and informative talk

on advancing science and research post-pandemic. Afterwards, the curious audience and the speaker had an engaging question and answer session. The questions were interesting, and the answers were vividly descriptive and inspiring.

Post the question-answer session, the eminent scholar was given a memento as a token of respect and appreciation. Assistant professor Aditya Kumar Padhi from the School of Biochemical Engineering concluded the talk with a heartfelt vote of thanks to the guest. The session was hosted by Muskan Gupta, Sophomitra head of the Research Cell, IIT (BHU) and third-year undergraduate student of the

Chemical Engineering department. Deans, senior faculty members, and a staggering strength of over 300 students brimming with curiosity and passion attended the talk.

A renowned scientist and a prolific author, Professor Balaram boasts an impressive career with nearly 1,000 publications and 25,000 citations spanning over five decades. After completing his postdoctoral training at Harvard under the Nobel Laureate Robert Burns Woodward at just 24, he later served as the Director of IISc, Bangalore, for over 10 years. Prof Balaram's legacy shines brightly, symbolising unparalleled dedication and scholarly brilliance in the scientific community.

# Millet need of the hour: Minister

CORRESPONDENT ■ MIRZAPUR

Union Minister of State for Commerce and Industry Anupriya Patel before flagging off a rally to make people aware to promote the use and farming of 'Shree Anna' at Vikas Bhawan on Sunday said millet is the need of the hour hence it should be adopted not only in the larger interest of health but also of nature.

She said that the UNO has declared the year 2023 as the International Year of Millets. Regarding the district she said farming of millet is the way to cope with the declining groundwater situation. Addressing the gathering District Magistrate Priyanka Niranjana said millet needs less water for irrigation hence is very suitable for area like Mirzapur. On the occasion other experts also expressed their views and the vote of thanks was proposed by Chief Development Officer (CDO) Sriilaxmi VS.

Flagging off the awareness rally taken out by the Agriculture department the minister appealed to farmers to



Union Minister of State for Commerce and Industry Anupriya Patel flagging off the millet awareness rally at Vikas Bhawan on Sunday

not only make others aware but also adopt themselves first. The awareness rally which started from Vikas Bhawan passed through different localities and villages and concluded at the agriculture farm house in Bisundapur.

**INAUGURATED:** Union Minister of State for Commerce and Industry Anupriya Patel has inaugurated the Vindhya Darshan Mela app at Vikas Bhawan on Sunday. She praised the initiative of the district

administration which prepared the app for the convenience of the devotees. She said the app had many information, including medical facilities, police assistance, hotels as well as dhabas, rain baseras, toilet facility, CNG/petrol pump, contact number of district administration, medical camp etc. She said the entire information related to the 'darshan' route will be available to the devotee through one click. DM Priyanka Niranjana and CDO

Sriilaxmi VS were also present on the occasion.

**COUPLES REUNITE:** Under Project Milan programme eight 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 case were brought to the police. The police had referred them to the FCC. After separate sittings eight couples agreed to live together. The staff extended their best good wishes to them for a successful life and bright future. Constable Sapna and colleague Sunita were present.

**ARRESTED:** The Madhian police arrested an accused of raping a minor girl on Sunday. A woman had lodged a case on September 22 in this connection. The police started the investigation. On being tipped off by an informer the police nabbed an accused of Belwan village under Padari police station from the Madhian area on Sunday and sent him to jail.



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PAPER WITH PASSION

## Underdogs no more!

Buzkashi-playing Afghanistan has braved high odds to make a mark on world cricket, and how!

Ignoring long years of wars, conflicts and turmoil, Afghanistan's cricket team threw up the biggest upset in the ICC Cricket World Cup 2023, vanquishing defending champions England by a convincing margin of 69 runs. This victory marked only their second win in World Cup history. But it changes everything: Afghanistan's battle-hardened cricket team is now firmly established among the sport's elite. Of course, some credit is due to India, which has helped the Afghan team reach this position of strength. The journey of Afghan cricketers was shaped by their early training in Pakistan, with some even starting their crickering careers in refugee camps across the border. As they played in dusty and makeshift grounds, they harboured dreams of representing their country on the international stage. The team from this war-torn country made its T20 and ODI debuts against Pakistan. However, the turning point came when the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) stepped in to play a pivotal role in the swift ascension of the sport within the strife-ridden nation. In 2015, the Shaheed Vijay Singh Pathik Sports Complex in Greater Noida served as a temporary "home ground" for the Afghans. In the world of cricket, few stories are as captivating and inspirational as the meteoric rise of the Afghan team. Over the past two decades, its journey has been a testament to the indomitable spirit of the Afghans and their unrelenting pursuit of excellence. From its humble beginnings to becoming a formidable force, Afghanistan has not only earned the confidence and respect of major cricketing nations but also made a mark in history.

Its remarkable progress in cricket came through their participation in domestic and international tournaments, such as the World Cricket League. Under the guidance of coaches and mentors, Afghan players honed their skills and developed a unique brand of cricket. Their bowlers, known for their pace and spin prowess, have become a force to reckon with, while their batters have shown glimpses of brilliance. One of the defining moments for Afghanistan was gaining Full Member status from the International Cricket Council (ICC) in 2017. It meant they were granted the same status as giants like India, England and Australia. The emergence of the Afghanistan cricket team is a story of resilience and dedication. It has captured the hearts of cricket enthusiasts and earned the confidence and respect of their peers. The fear factor now associated with Afghanistan's spinners and batters is a testament to their remarkable journey. As Afghanistan continues to take impressive strides in international cricket, it is crucial to celebrate its success as a reminder of the power of sports to bring people together, regardless of their background or circumstances. Afghanistan's cricketering journey is a story of hope and inspiration, one that demonstrates how determination can lead to triumph in the most challenging circumstances. To rephrase Shah Rukh Khan's famous dialogue from a Hindi movie: "Don't underestimate the grit of a war-torn nation!"

### PICTALK



Artists perform during the annual presentation 'Shri Ram', a dance drama on Sampoorna Ramayana, in New Delhi PTI

## Is it worth going to study in a foreign university?

Most students fall for the smart marketing tactics and the lure of getting good employment overseas, realising little that the jobs are scarce there

For the past few years, the craze for people from India to go abroad to gain admission to foreign colleges and settle there has been on the increase. According to the government, between 2016 and 2021, 26.44 lakh Indian students went abroad to study. The Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry of India (ASSOCHAM) estimates show that in the year 2020, 4.5 lakh Indian students went abroad for education and they spent \$ 13.5 billion in this process. In the year 2022, this expenditure was 24 billion dollars that is, about 2 lakh crore rupees. According to the report of Redseer Strategy Consultant, by 2024 this expenditure may reach US\$ 80 billion, that is, 7 lakh crore rupees, when an estimated 20 lakh Indian students will go abroad to study. If we make a state-wise analysis, till the year 2021, among the students going to study abroad, 12 per cent were from Punjab and Andhra Pradesh each; and 8 per cent were from Gujarat. If seen in proportion to the total number of youth, then 7 out of



every thousand youth from Punjab, 4 out of every thousand youth from Andhra Pradesh and at least 2 out of every thousand youth from Gujarat are going to study abroad every year. If we take the cumulative numbers from 2016 to 2022, the situation looks quite alarming. This number is 50 per thousand in Punjab, 30 per thousand in Andhra Pradesh and 14 per thousand in Gujarat. The exponential increase in the number of students going abroad to study is a matter of concern for many reasons. The biggest concern is that these youth are migrating to foreign countries in search of education and employment and this migration is causing a shortage of labour for the economic activities in the country. There has been huge progress in the field of education in the country. If we

look at the admission of students in higher education, then in 1990-91, only 49.2 lakh students took admission in higher educational institutions; but this number reached 41.4 lakh in the year 2020-21. Broadly speaking, the number of students taking admission to higher education has increased more than 10 times in the last 30 years. If we talk about higher education institutions, we see that in the year 2021, there were 1113 universities and equivalent institutions, 43796 colleges and 11296 standalone educational institutions in the country. As far as the fee for admission into educational institutions is concerned, in most of the Indian educational institutions it's much lower than the fees in foreign institutions and most of the foreign institutions in which Indian youth are taking admission are of very low standard. So, the question arises why do Indian youth spend huge amounts of money and get admission to foreign educational institutions? The simple answer is that most of the students who go abroad to pursue higher education, actually don't go to

get a higher degree. The real intent of Indian students going to other countries including Australia, Canada, and European countries including the United Kingdom, is not too keen to get an education. Their real objective is to get employment there. But Indian youth fail to realise that there is a huge shortage of employment in these countries also. In many countries, incidents of violence by local people, against Indians and youth coming from other countries, generally from South Asia, are also being witnessed. Most of the young students leaving the country fail to get employment there and have to return home, due to which they are also facing frustration. The students are not able to realise that today in Canada, Australia and European countries, where they are taking admission to educational institutions, those educational institutions are giving easy admission to Indian students in their institutions, for profit. (The writer is a professor, at PGDAV college, University of Delhi, views are personal)



ASHWANI MAHAJAN

# The Israel-Hamas war in perspective



PRAFULL GORADIA

Religiosity woven into war has the automatic effect of rendering the ensuing bloodshed all the more bitter. The results are devastating

The world is used to the spectacle of scholars, academics and social and political activists propagating and conferring for global peace, but it is increasingly difficult to dismiss the notion that peace is little more than an uneasy halt between wars. While civilians somehow cling to some unreal hope, those in charge of the political destinies talk of peace, but actually build and sharpen the weaponry for the next bout.

In the land of origin of the three Abrahamic faiths, Judaism, Christianity and Islam, peace is currently the biggest casualty. Virtually everyone is concerned about the Israel-Hamas war. One, however, does almost immediately ponder as to how Tel Aviv was caught by utter surprise. Needless to add, the Israeli intelligence agency Mossad has been reputed to be one of the most efficient in the world, possibly the best spy agency. On balance, it appears that Hamas was conscious that there are groups within Israel that desire the Jewish homeland and country to further expand into a Greater Israel, as large and great as possible. Undoubtedly, the Hamas leaders themselves yearn to wipe the Jewish nation out of existence. Curiously, like in love, so in hate; such desires are mutual. With the help of friends and allies, it is likely that Hamas has been, for a long time planning to strike a 'grand slam' at their Jewish neighbour.

Just as the Israeli leaders would like to get rid of Hamas from the country's neighbourhood. All of this lays the grounds for a conflict before the end of which the other side would supposedly be wiped out. A wounded enemy is more dangerous than one who hasn't been wounded. A grand slam, so to say, might have been thought to be necessary. The question is whether Israel too sees the Hamas invasion and barbarity as a great opportunity for "setting things right" in the Middle East.

An organized state in Tel Aviv would certainly be functioning round the clock and would not give its adversaries any chance to destroy it. As luck would have it,



Hamas perceived that its Jewish neighbour was divided over the political divide over the issue of judicial powers enjoyed by the country's Supreme Court. They needed to be reduced or restrained so that the democratically elected Knesset or Parliament could assert its will more effectively. While the members of the Knesset could not readily reach a settlement, the people of the country took over and protested through public meetings and processions. Such scenes had not been seen ever before and were being played out again and again, on the streets of Tel Aviv and Jerusalem. When the adversary is divided, it is human nature for the other side to smell an opportunity. As we have discussed, the desire of Hamas has been intense. The images of an Israel divided in the streets of its cities would certainly have held out the temptation, to believe that this was the opportunity. A terrorist organization like Hamas is unlikely to be foresighted. In fact, terrorism per se seldom win. For the simple reason that its adventures, however violent and apparently successful, do not



HAMAS HAS GIFTED ISRAEL WITH A JUSTIFICATION TO BLAME ANY COUNTRY OR ORGANISATION IT CHOOSES AS A PARTNER-IN-CRIME THAT EXPRESSES EVEN MINIMAL SYMPATHY FOR HAMAS

capture territory. And without territory, there is no lasting victory. And yet, terrorist after terrorist gives up his life, merely to temporarily devastate places and people. Evidently, such men or women cannot be far-sighted. To expect the Hamas to be, therefore, to have vision is to expect a bat to have eyesight. Regardless, the attacks launched by Hamas on October 7 Bloody Saturday were thoughtless, to say the least. The consequences from Sunday onwards were foreseeable and yet, were not seen by the terrorist fighters of Hamas. It is not impossible that their escape route may, in an eventuality, be the Mediterranean Sea.

On the other hand, Hamas has gifted Israel with a justification to blame any country or organisation it chooses as a partner-in-crime that expresses even minimal sympathy for Hamas. Israel would also, and not without reason, feel justified to heap destruction on not any the Hamas but also the palaces of Qatar (which reportedly funds Hamas to some extent) and Iran's nuclear toys, as well as bomb places in Syria, most of which are in ruins anyway because of the latter's civil war. Fortunately for

Israel, ammunition has begun flying in from the USA; if necessary, even weapons would flow in. When Israel's Prime Minister says that his country will change the Middle East, he isn't bluffing. Unfortunately, Israel—and India too—has been battling enemies who look upon war as a religious duty. Religiosity woven into war has the automatic effect of rendering the ensuing bloodshed all the more bitter. Such religious beliefs hold the promise of an eternal heaven with unending gratification of one's natural lust, in the pursuit of which the adherents of those dogmas have little hesitation in unleashing hell on earth.

For India, tightening our security, internal and external, in the wake of the war in Gaza will be imperative, for Hamas' initial boldness could well embolden elements in Pakistan to try something similar. This time, the Arab states have not supported Hamas, as several of them are seeking better relations with Israel and a different future. (The writer is a well-known columnist, an author, and a former member of the Rajya Sabha. The views expressed are personal)

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### INDIA'S DEPLORABLE HUNGER INDEX

Sir—It's shocking news that the Global Hunger Index for 2023 ranks India 111th out of 125 countries, categorizing the level of hunger as "serious." While the Union government has rejected this index as erroneous, it can't be completely dismissed, considering that India ranked 102nd out of 119 countries in 2022. Despite maintaining buffer stocks, people dying of starvation is a disgrace, especially for the world's fifth-largest economy, ranking lower than nations like Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal, and Sub-Saharan African countries. Hoarding food grains while thousands starve is extreme callousness. Hollow government slogans claiming that nobody will die of starvation are contradicted. Furthermore, this alarming ranking on the Global Hunger Index points to a harsh reality: millions of our fellow citizens are struggling to access their daily bread, with their basic human rights being compromised. The fact that India, often celebrated for its rapid economic growth and technological advancements, ranks below countries in South Asia and sub-Saharan Africa in terms of hunger is a stark contradiction. It highlights the persistent disparities that exist within the nation and the urgent need for comprehensive policy reform. The government's rejection of this index as erroneous should not serve as a shield to deflect from the pressing issues at hand. It's imperative for the authorities to take this wake-up call seriously and delve into the root causes of this hunger crisis.

They must work towards a more equitable distribution of resources, food security, and social safety nets to protect the most vulnerable among us.

SK Khosla | Chandigarh

### INDIA TO HOST 2036 OLYMPIC GAMES

Sir—Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the 141st session of the World Olympic Committee in Mumbai, announcing India's readiness to host the 2036 Olympic Games. If the World

### India beats Pakistan, again



An 8-0 verdict against Pakistan in World Cup matches has proven that the team from our neighborhood is not up to the challenge at this level. Even the Pakistan hockey team went

down tamely without a semblance of a fight in the Asian Games. The toss proved vital in the ODI games, and after losing it, the team was progressing at a slow pace. As the team across the border failed to accelerate the scoring, danger lurked. Once Babar, the star batsman, was out, the wickets started tumbling, and the end was in sight. Instead of boosting their scoring with pinch hitters to upset Indian spin bowling, the lower-order batsmen fell into the trap and perished. The Indian batting did not retreat against Afridi but instead wielded the willow with great effect, hitting fours and sixes, bringing the target within reach. Captain Rohit Sharma's batting and his ability to handle both bowlers and field placements received appreciation. In the end, Pakistan was soundly defeated. However, Pakistan has had a great tradition of cricket and this is not the end of it as they can and will bounce back to the height they once were.

Ck Ramani | Trichy

Olympic Organization accepts this demand, it will be a significant honor for India. India is rapidly emerging as a global superpower, rising from the tenth to the fifth largest economy in a few years. It is expected to be ranked third soon. Hosting the Olympics will introduce India's tourism to the world and be a source of pride for athletes. India's successful organization of the Asian Games and the inclusion of cricket in the World Olympic Games are positive developments. However, India's permanent membership in the UN Security Committee is still pending, which is crucial for maintaining world peace. The Olympics in India will be a momentous occasion with numerous benefits.

Shantaram Wagh | Pune

### GAZA'S WORSENING CONDITION

Sir—Gaza and the West Bank are becoming a new battleground as we saw in Bucha, Kyiv, and Donetsk region of

Ukraine at the start of 2023 when Russia invaded Ukraine. The condition of Gaza is dire after the Israeli Air Force occupation. The Iron Sword operation by Israel's defense ministry and the suffering of Palestinians paint a grim picture.

The world is marred by struggles for superiority and ethnic and religious tensions. Gaza has seen no peace for years, only shelling, tears, plight, fear, and anger. Wars persist without solutions, causing destruction and suffering. We must shift our mindset from war to peace, as India opposes the erasure of the Palestinian community. The world needs de-escalation, not war. We must focus on peace in conflict zones, or the world will continue fighting for unnecessary supremacy.

Kirti Wadhawan | Kanpur

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com



## FIRST COLUMN

## MENTAL HEALTH NEEDS YOUR ATTENTION

Forbearance and endurance are paramount keys to achieving success



RAVI VALLURI

Anand was a mere mentee at a celebrated flautist's music school. The youngster was bewitched by a damsel who too was learning to play the flute under the expertise of the legendary musician.

Anand and Bhairavi were ensnared by craving; they were in a tearing hurry to achieve stardom through soulful renditions of the fabled Ananda Bhairavi raga. Their respected Master was however certainly not impressed at the proffer of his novitiates and admonished them.

"One needs enormous tapas to arrive at the world stage," he added.

**A Zen Story:** Years ago, a greenhorn was learning various nuances of breathing techniques and meditation at a temple of knowledge. After acquiring some basic skills, he approached his monk as to how soon he could graduate from the monastery and begin to spread the knowledge of Zen Buddhism. The impassioned monk was to say impassively, "It will take you ten more years."

"Master, I will practice twice the number of hours, then how long will it take me to become a suzerain of Buddhism?"

"Thirty years," was the bland reply.

**Learning to Learn:** Forbearance and endurance are paramount keys to achieving success. Tearing hurry and sheer desperation to climb the ladder to achieve fame in any field leads only to severe psychological problems.



**Psychotherapy:** The intent of a therapeutic approach is to upend the pyramid. It is to ensure the betterment of the victim's life. The therapy reinforces the client's resolve for mitigating distress leading to an improved lifestyle. By adopting a holistic line of treatment, the mind is blessed with positivity, becomes robust and develops the ability to eschew unwelcome habits.

There is astonishing progress in the victim who undergoes a mental transformation; the thinking pattern changes dramatically and becomes empowered to make mindful decisions on the voyage of rehabilitation. Gifted and trained psychotherapists combine their clinical insights and their mental GPS to zero in on suitable psychodynamic therapies.

**Dynamics of Rehabilitation and Recuperation:** Fundamentally, psychodynamic therapy cogitates that it is an intra-psychic conflict that is primarily responsible for the psychological malady. The fountainhead of the problem lies within the psyche of the individual. Research in the field opines that querulous desires of childhood and unmitigated childhood fears are essentially responsible for intra-psychic disorders. Keeping in mind the above two factors, psychotherapists deploy the technique of free association and eliciting information through visualisation, dreams, thoughts, and feelings to create a database. The cutting edge of the therapy is provided as the therapist glides and floats from the intellectual frame to an emotional plane. Psychodynamic therapy enfranchised the therapist to understand the mind of the patient and provide emotional succour.

Last but not least, the duration of treatment is of tremendous significance. The magnitude of the problem is obviously a key determinant of the span of treatment. However, around 15 to 20 vigorous sessions put the patient well on the road to renaissance.

**Alternative therapies**

Unbridled ambition could also trigger alcoholism, bulimia, heavy smoking, and substance abuse among others. In such cases, alternative therapies such as practising the unique rhythmic breathing technique of Sudarshan Kriya, Vipassana, sessions of yoga and pranayama, and meditation techniques of Yoga Nidra, help in the relaxation of the mind and body immensely.

*(The writer is the CEO of Chhattisgarh East Railway Ltd. and Chhattisgarh East West Railway Ltd and is a faculty at the Art of Living. Views are personal)*

## Igniting the passion of traditional entrepreneurs



DINESH SOOD

'PM Vishwakarma' is an attempt to empower the self-employed traditional entrepreneurs who contribute to their communities and create employment



Many people strive to secure their dream job and are unwilling to risk becoming an entrepreneur. However, it is notable that professions such as blacksmiths, goldsmiths, potters, carpenters, sculptors, barbers, cobblers, and others are a significant part of India's workforce. These traditional tiny entrepreneurs work with their hands and tools and are usually self-employed individuals whose skills are passed down from generation to generation. This proves that entrepreneurs are born, not made. The culture in which these individuals are raised plays a significant role in shaping their entrepreneurial mindset. They witness the ups and downs of entrepreneurship and choose to live their lives similarly. Recently Prime Minister Narendra Modi has launched the 'PM Vishwakarma' scheme worth Rs 13,000 crore to promote such traditional tiny entrepreneurs to create more employers than employees. The aim is to integrate traditional tiny entrepreneurs into the domestic and global value chains by providing skill upgradation and modernisation. This will help to enhance their already existing traditional skill sets and make them more relevant, thereby improving their socio-economic status and quality of life.

Successful entrepreneurs are not limited to those who inherit family businesses. An individual's mindset towards entrepreneurship is crucial and develops with age and experience. As people mature, they become aware of the advantages of entrepreneurship and often choose it as a career path. However, how can we motivate those who do not come from entrepreneurial backgrounds to become future employers and contribute to our sustainable econo-



SUCCESSFUL ENTREPRENEURS ARE NOT LIMITED TO THOSE WHO INHERIT FAMILY BUSINESSES. AN INDIVIDUAL'S MINDSET TOWARDS ENTREPRENEURSHIP IS CRUCIAL AND DEVELOPS WITH AGE AND EXPERIENCE

*(The writer is a Co-Founder and MD of Orane International and a network member of India International Skill Centres. Views are personal)*

my? It is our responsibility to take the necessary steps to make this happen. Can't we start at least with these initial steps?

**Home;** the parents should start from the early school days of their young ones, read to them the stories of successful entrepreneurs, ones their young buds could relate to and get them acquainted with their day-to-day life attributes and the attributes and benefits they pass on to the society. Well, it is better to tell your bud to aim at making a hospital or hotel than just being a doctor or a chef, in the process, the young mind will keep his trajectory not confined to just being a doctor or a chef but keep his horizons much open and farther even after turning a successful super specialist doctor or a celebrity chef.

**Schools;** To fuel the entrepreneurship spirit among job seekers, multi-faceted efforts are needed to accelerate the creation of more job providers in the bustling industrial, services and tertiary sectors. Unfortunately, our education system did not focus on the development of essential entrepreneurial skills in school students, while entrepreneurial skill is the main pillar of job providers, intend to march forward.

Thus, to support the entrepreneurial spirit must give a nod to the Business Blaster Young Entrepreneur Programme in schools to encourage school children from class 11 to become entrepreneurs. Successful entrepre-

neurs and unicorns who bring with them years of entrepreneurial experience can play a vital role as mentors and can contribute the angel funding to build entrepreneurial orientation and mindset among the youths, especially school dropouts can be skilled and would equip their budding entrepreneurship to take charge as a job provider.

**Colleges;** there should be a structured curriculum with frequent seminars and workshops on entrepreneurship, emphasizing hands-on experience rather than just classroom learning. Encouraging idea sponsorships and mentorship from entrepreneurs would be beneficial. Additionally, students should be encouraged to visit actual facilities to better understand the entrepreneurial culture.

**Business schools;** should place equal emphasis on teaching entrepreneurship as they do on teaching business. Mock drills should be implemented, where students spend an equal amount of time shadowing an entrepreneur as they do during internships with organizations. Evaluations should hold equal weight in determining the student's level of business acumen and entrepreneurial spirit.

**Skill Development Centres;** we have some of the brightest minds who are driving change in skill development. These leaders should focus on imparting entrepreneurship skills with the same energy and dedication as employability skills. Entrepreneurship

Development Institutes; how many successful entrepreneurs have we connected with to mentor our future entrepreneurs? We don't need teachers to teach how to be an entrepreneur; if they knew, they would already be one. We need proven entrepreneurs to guide and support our future entrepreneurs and set them on the path to success. Providing resources is only part of the equation, providing expert guidance is equally important.

Lastly; successful entrepreneurs must step forward and make time in their busy schedules to mentor future entrepreneurs regularly. This can be done for a specific period until the mentee establishes their trajectory, after which the mentor can move on to the next aspiring entrepreneur. This would be a more effective and impactful form of corporate social responsibility.

Entrepreneurship is driven by aspirations that exceed available resources. Entrepreneurs do not start businesses because everything falls into place perfectly. Even the self-employed, or "Vishwakarma" in traditional terms, continue to hone their skills for personal fulfilment and to contribute to their communities. Society as a whole should come together to support these individuals and in doing so, benefit itself. The goal should be to create more employers than employees, and it is hoped that "PM Vishwakarma" will help make this a reality.

## Developing argumentative skills with Moot Courts

In a bid to improve the argumentative skills of budding lawyers, law colleges and schools across India are choosing 'Moot Court' competitions

The syllabus of the law universities features 'Moot Court' as a compulsory topic, the marks scored in it playing a crucial role in determining the grade with which the students pass out of the LLB degree examination. Persons outside the legal fraternity or law colleges may stare back when they are asked about Moot Court. "Though Moot Courts are as important and interesting as Mathematics Olympiad, they are yet to get the public recognition. For those interested in legal affairs, this is an event equal in status to the Mathematics Olympiad," said Prof V R Jayadevan, principal, of Government Law College, Thrissur, who successfully conducted an all-India Moot Court event in his college in



KUMAR CHELLAPPAN

*(The writer is a special correspondent at The Pioneer; views expressed are personal)*

the last week of September. Though planned as a low-profile event the Thrissur Moot Court Competition drew 36 teams from all over India. The winners walked away with the Justice T Ramachandran Memorial Trophy. The event saw intense competition as participating undergraduates switched over from one section of the law to another section with elan and poise. If you ask a person without a legal background what moot court is about, chances are that you will get a grumpy look. No one can blame him/her because persons without knowledge of legal education are not at all familiar with the term. Moot Courts are simulated lessons held in law schools to make budding lawyers ready to face

real-life battles in courtrooms. It is an intellectual bout conceived to test the prowess of law students in their academic pursuits. The organisers take out subjects of national and international events, put them as a legal issue and ask the students to argue for and against the topic. Classrooms in law schools are converted into real-life courtrooms with all resplendent ambience. These bouts turn out future Jethmalanis, Servais, Narimans and Sorabjees! Those familiar with the nuances of law and legal codes are sure to take a liking to the event. "I always feel that Moot Courts resemble Kathakali, a pantomime of Kerala, which could be enjoyed only by the connoisseurs of art. For those

who are uninitiated about Kathakali, watching it is a futile exercise. There is a saying in Malayalam that watching the art form without knowing the story is a waste of time," said Parvathi Sreejith Valliathan, Assistant Professor, SRM Law School, Chennai. The Thrissur event was the 12th edition of the annual Moot Court competition held by the College. "This year we selected a topic right out of a real-life event. Dharmanchal, a State in the Union of India, enacted Dharmanchal Infrastructure Investment Fund Act 2001. The preamble of the Act states that it was expedient to constitute a fund for investment in infrastructure projects in the State. The Act was similar to the provisions of the

Kerala Infrastructure Investment Fund Act 1999," explained Prof Sonia K Das, the livewire of the event. The Comptroller and Auditor General of India took strong objections to the way the KIIFB was functioning and the availing of loans beyond the repaying capacity of the State. The Articles concerning the federal structure and the freedom of the States were used as weapons by the participants in simulated courtrooms which were presided over by judges who needed the counsels appearing for the petitioners and respondents with questions that went deep into the subject. The expressions on the faces of the audience spoke a lot. They too were taken to the hitherto undebated issues in the Indian

Constitution. "Our intention is to tone up the skills of advocacy," said Prof Jayadevan. The competition witnessed high-pitch arguments and counter-arguments. "Besides arguments, Moot Courts are the path for law students to have practical knowledge in drafting, pleading and conveyancing. The Moot Courts will intellectually stimulate students to develop skills that will be of great importance in future. The participants (addressed as Mooters) should possess sharp analytical skills to dissect complex legal issues, identify key arguments and develop logical frameworks," said Parvathi Kumar, who has more than a dozen Moot Court events to her credit. Moot Court also have a

number of participants performing various tasks like researching and drafting which are put to the Court for approval/consideration. The participants are hopeful that one day they will be able to compete in the Philip C Jessup International Law Moot Court hosted in Washington DC. Considering the fact that there is no empowered body to ask the global community of nations to follow the diktat of the International Court of Justice, it is for the Gen Next to come up with ideas and solutions that make the States obey the orders issued by it. The progress made in science and technology has brought together warring nations of Europe is a hopeful signature. Let the Moot Courts flourish in India.

Nadda visits Rajasthan to shore up BJP prospects in poll

PNB ■ NEW DELHI
Ahead of Assembly polls in Rajasthan, BJP president JP Nadda held a meeting with party office bearers of Udaipur division on Monday as former Chief Minister Vasudhara Raje is reportedly not happy with absence of his loyalists name from the first list of candidates released by the party on October 9.

senior party workers, present and former MPs and MLAs, office bearers of different morchas and cells of the party in Jodhpur division.
In the first list released by the party for Rajasthan, the BJP included royal scion and Rajsamand MP Diya Kumari and Jaipur Rural MP and former Union Minister Rajyavardhan Singh Rathore which has already created flutter among those denied tickets by the party with some announcing contesting polls as independent candidates.

not have Raje's followers which has apparently miffed the former Chief Minister.
BJP's decision to field Rajsamand MP Diya Kumari from Jaipur's Vidhayaadhar Nagar seat, denying tickets to its five-term MLA and Raje Loyalist Narpat Sijngah Rajvi, son-in-law of Bhairon Singh Shekhawat, has unnerved the Raje camp followers, according to sources.
The two-time former CM on Sunday suddenly reached Udaipur and met with Assam governor Gulabchand Kataria at his residence. Kataria has



held Udaipur seat four-times.
Kataria, before being appointed as Governor, was leader of opposition in the Rajasthan assembly and has influence over 25 Assembly seats in south Rajasthan.
He is also a former State Home Minister. Raje had a 40-minute discussion with Kataria before leaving for Tripura Sundari. The meeting was confidential and no one in the city had any prior information about her visit.
Confirming his meeting with Raje, Kataria said both belonged to one family and

keep meeting each other.
" Nowadays I don't discuss politics as I have changed my line," he said. The meeting, though, has triggered speculations that both the leaders may not be in "sync with the top leadership". Raje proceeded to Udaipur after her meeting.
Elections to 200 Assembly seats is to be held on October 25 and the BJP is set to release its second list for Rajasthan by this week. Some more BJP MPs and Central Ministers are expected to contest Assembly polls, according to sources.
Nadda's visit to Jodhpur

holds significance in the run up to the Assembly elections in the State where it seeks to unseat the Congress Government headed by Ashok Gehlot.
"Party is already faced with unrelenting protests against party candidate Devji Patel from Sanchores constituency, the only name the party has announced so far, from 33 constituencies of Jodhpur division", said a party leader.
Six mandal presidents of Jalore have resigned to protest the party's decision to rope in Patel from Sanchores Assembly constituency.

PM to unveil Amrit Kaal Vision 2047 at maritime summit

PNB ■ NEW DELHI
Prime Minister Narendra Modi will inaugurate the third edition of the three-day Global Maritime India Summit (GMIS), aiming to outline strategic future initiatives, at Mumbai on Tuesday via video-conferencing and unveil "Amrit Kaal Vision 2047".



In line with this futuristic plan, the prime minister will inaugurate, dedicate to nation and lay the foundation stone of projects worth more than ₹ 23,000 crore, that are aligned with this vision for the Indian maritime blue economy, a statement from his office said.
Modi will lay the founda-

It is likely to emerge as an international trade hub and will handle next-gen vessels exceeding 18,000 twenty-foot equivalent units (TEUs), and will act as a gateway for Indian trade via the proposed India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor (IMEEC), it said.
Several Indian states will

also be represented, it said.
The three-day summit will discuss and deliberate key issues of the maritime sector including ports of the future, decarbonisation, coastal shipping and inland water transportation, shipbuilding, repair and recycling, finance, insurance and arbitration, maritime clusters, innovation and technology, maritime safety and security, and maritime tourism among others.
The summit will also provide an excellent platform for attracting investment in the maritime sector of the country, it said.
The first edition of the summit was held in 2016 at Mumbai while the second was held virtually in 2021.

Mulling making AAP accused in excise policy scam cases: CBI, ED tell SC

PNB NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The CBI and ED told the Supreme Court on Monday they are contemplating making the city's Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) an accused in the Delhi excise policy cases.
Additional Solicitor General SV Raju, representing the two probe agencies, told a bench of Justices Sanjiv Khanna and SVN Bhatti he has instructions to State that the agencies are considering making AAP an accused, invoking legal provisions on "vicarious liability" and section 70 of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA).
However, the bench asked Raju to clarify his stand on Tuesday on whether there will be separate charge against the AAP in cases being probed by the Central Bureau of Investigation and the Enforcement Directorate.
Raju made the statement while the bench was



hearing the bail pleas of AAP leader and former Delhi deputy chief minister Manish Sisodia, who was arrested in the excise policy cases being probed by the CBI and ED.
The investigative agencies have often suggested that AAP was a beneficiary of the kickbacks received from stakeholders who got liquor licences as part of a quid pro quo.
They have alleged the AAP used the money for campaigning in the Goa Assembly elections.

SC rejects plea for abortion of 26 weeks old foetus

PNB NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Monday declined to permit a married woman, a mother of two, to terminate her over 26-week pregnancy as the foetus was healthy and the AIIMS medical board found no abnormality with it.
A bench headed by Chief Justice DY Chandrachud said the length of pregnancy has crossed 24 weeks, the upper limit for allowing Medical Termination of Pregnancy (MTP), and therefore it cannot be permitted.
The apex court said the foetus is 26 weeks and 5 days old and there is no immediate threat to the mother. There was also no foetal abnormality, it said.
"The length of the pregnancy has crossed 24 weeks and it is approximately 26 weeks and 5 days old. The

medical termination of the pregnancy cannot be permitted," the bench, also comprising Justices JB Pardiwala and Manoj Misa said.
The top court had said earlier in the day that the challenge to pregnancy termination law will be dealt with in separate proceedings, and the present case would be limited to the issue between the petitioner and the State.
The apex court had earlier sought a report from the AIIMS medical board on whether the foetus was suffering from any abnormality. The bench was hearing arguments on the Centre's application seeking recall of the apex court's October 9 order permitting the 27-year-old woman, a mother of two, to undergo termination of pregnancy at AIIMS as she was suffering from post-partum psychosis after the birth of her second child.

1st State education achievement survey to cover 11 million students

PNB NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The first State Education Achievement Survey will be conducted on November 3 by the national assessment regulator Parakh and will cover 11 million students across the country. According to the Ministry of Education, the survey is aimed at identifying areas requiring improvement in learning will be held across states, targeting school students up to the block level. It will be a precursor to the Education Ministry's annual National Achievement Survey (NAS), which is conducted at the district level.
MoE said that it will be the first survey conducted by the Performance Assessment, Review and Analysis of Knowledge for Holistic Development (PARAKH), an organisation under the NCERT. It is tasked with bringing the school boards across the states and the Union territories on a common platform.
Scheduled for November 3, SEAS (State Education Achievement Survey) 2023 has been designed to enhance the learning standards for students in Classes 3, 6 and 9. Operating at the block level, this survey encompasses a comprehensive range of competencies, spanning the foundational, prepara-



tory, and middle stages of education.
According to the officials, SEAS will represent a distinctive and baseline assessment, marking a gradual shift from rote learning to competency-based education. The adoption of competency-based learning holds the potential to foster the holistic development of students, they said, adding that these efforts are dedicated to nurturing the well-rounded growth of future generations. This survey will prove invaluable in realising this aspiration, the officials said.
"At the heart of this endeavour is the belief that every child deserves a well-rounded education. Our competency-based assessment system aims to assess not just what students know but also how well they can apply that knowledge in real-world scenarios," head and CEO of PARAKH Indrani

Bhaduri said.
Bhaduri also heads the NAS cell at the NCERT which conducts the crucial national level large-scale assessment to obtain information about the learning achievement of students of Classes 3, 5, 8 and 10 studying in state government schools, government-aided schools, private unaided and central government schools.
The ETS, which conducts key tests such as TOEFL and GRE, was chosen by the National Council for Education Research (NCERT) for setting up the regulatory platform.
Sachin Jain, country manager of ETS India and South Asia, said, "By joining forces with the NCERT, we are committed to fortifying the assessment process, ensuring its robustness, and elevating the quality of large-scale surveys in the educational sector."

India, UK hold first '2+2' foreign, defence dialogue

PNB NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

India and UK on Monday reviewed the entire spectrum of their defence and strategic ties here in the inaugural India-UK '2+2' foreign and defence dialogue at the senior official level. The two sides focused on ways to boost cooperation in a range of key areas such as trade and investment, defence, critical technologies, civil aviation, health and energy.
The two sides also discussed international developments including in the Indo-Pacific region and considered the possibility of enhancing anti-terror collaboration, according to the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA). The 2+2 dialogue at senior official level is a mechanism to discuss and review all aspects of India-UK comprehensive strategic partnership.
The dialogue took place as the two sides are exploring the possibility of a visit to India by British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak later this month.
The MEA said the two sides discussed "possibilities for further collaboration particularly in areas of trade and investment, defence, critical and emerging technologies, civil



aviation, health, energy, culture and strengthening peoples connect."
"The officials had an opportunity to exchange assessments about recent international developments including in the Indo-Pacific region, given their shared vision for peace, stability and prosperity and for a free, open and inclusive Indo-Pacific region," the ministry said in a statement.
"They also considered possibility of enhancing collaboration in areas of counterterrorism, HADR (Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief) and maritime security," it added.
The India-UK relationship was elevated to a Comprehensive Strategic Partnership during the India-UK virtual summit held between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his then

British counterpart Boris Johnson in May 2021.
At the summit, the two sides adopted a 10-year roadmap to expand ties in the key areas of trade and economy, defence and security, climate change and people-to-people connections, among others.
The Indian delegation at the dialogue was co-chaired by Piyush Srivastava, Joint Secretary (Europe West) at the MEA and Vishwesh Negi, Joint Secretary (International Cooperation) at the defence ministry.
The UK delegation was co-chaired by Ben Mellor, India Director at the Indian Ocean Directorate in the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) and Lt General Rob Magowan, Deputy Chief of Defence Staff, Finance and Military Capability at the British Ministry of

Stipend issue: SC raps NMC

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court came down heavily on the National Medical Commission (NMC) on Monday after taking note of submissions that around 70 per cent medical colleges in the country are not paying the mandatory stipend to MBBS interns.
" What is the National Medical Commission doing? These young doctors are putting 16-20 hours a day... This is like bonded labour," a bench of Chief Justice D Y Chandrachud and Justices J B Pardiwala and Manoj Misra said.
The bench said private medical colleges, which take heavy donations or capitation fees while admitting students, are not paying the mandatory stipend to the MBBS interns and asked as to what the NMC is doing as the regulator.
The observations came when a lawyer reiterated the allegation that 70 per cent of the medical colleges in the country are not paying the mandatory stipend to the MBBS interns.
The counsel for the NMC sought some time to collate the information and get back to the bench, which granted the same.
The top court, meanwhile, issued a notice to the Delhi government after taking note of the submissions of the city's Army College of Medical Sciences (ACMS) that a fee regulatory authority has not been

set up in the national capital to deal with such issues.
On September 15, the bench had asked the NMC, the apex governing body for medical education in the country, to look into the allegation that 70 per cent medical colleges are not paying the mandatory stipend to the MBBS interns.
The court had also directed the ACMS to pay a monthly stipend of Rs 25,000 to its MBBS interns from October 1.
Advocate Vaibhav Gaggar, appearing for students seeking a stipend had said that according to a recent NMC report, 70 per cent of the medical colleges in the country are not paying stipends to their interns.
The bench had directed the NMC's counsel, Gaurav Sharma, to respond to the claim and file an affidavit giving a tabulated chart of the colleges that are paying the stipend to the interns and the ones that are not.
It had said the NMC's mandate cannot be breached and that interns, who come from different backgrounds, are required to be paid a stipend for the period of their internship.
The top court was hearing a plea of five MBBS students studying at the ACMS, established by the Army Welfare Education Society (AWES) and affiliated to the Guru Govind Singh Indraprastha University, seeking a stipend for the period of their internship.

Deoria killings: Alld HC stays demolition order

PTI ■ PRAYAGRAJ

The Allahabad High Court on Monday stayed the order of a revenue official of Deoria district for the demolition of a house belonging Prem Chand Yadav, who was among six killed over a land dispute recently.
Deoria tehsildar on October 11 issued a demolition order of the house which belongs to former district panchayat member Prem Chand. His father Ram Bhawan Yadav had approached the HC against order.
On October 2, 50-year-old Prem Chand was attacked with sharp-edged weapons and killed by his rival Satyaprakash Dubey and his family when he went to his house.
In retaliation soon after, Prem Chand's supporters attacked Dubey's house and brutally killed Dubey and five of his family members, including children. Justice Chandra Kumar Rai passed the order in an appeal filed by Ram Bhawan Yadav against the order.
Counsel for the petitioner submitted that authorities are adamant about demolishing the house as Ram Bhawan has filed an instant petition without availing remedy of appeal under Section 67 (5) of UP Revenue Code, 2006.

He further submitted that even on merit, the impugned order cannot be maintained, but without affording a proper opportunity of hearing as well as without making proper survey and demarcation, the order for ejection and damages has been passed against the petitioner.
Chief Standing Counsel for the State JN Maurya submitted that land in dispute is recorded as 'khalihan', as such no interference is required in the matter. The court observed, "It is directed that in view of ratio of law laid down in Ali Sher (Supra), the order dated October 11 passed by tehsildar for demolition and damages shall not be given affect till the disposal of petitioner's appeal under Section 67 (5) of UP Revenue Code, 2006."
" In view of the remedy of appeal against the order impugned passed by the Tehsildar, the writ petition is disposed of finally directing the petitioner to file an appeal before Collector against the order impugned dated 11.10.2023 within a period of two weeks from today. If the appeal is filed within the aforesaid period, the same shall be registered and disposed of in accordance with law," the court said.

SC agrees to examine AAP leader Raghav plea

PNB NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Monday agreed to examine the plea of AAP leader Raghav Chadha challenging his indefinite suspension from the Rajya Sabha and sought the assistance of the attorney general in adjudicating the issue.
A bench comprising Chief Justice D Y Chandrachud and Justices J B Pardiwala and Manoj Misra took note of the submissions of senior advocate Rakesh Dwivedi and lawyer Shadan Farasat, representing Chadha, that the suspension cannot extend beyond the particular session during which the decision to suspend the member was made.
The top court issued the notice to the Rajya Sabha Secretariat only on the plea which will be heard on October 30. Besides the Rajya Sabha Secretariat, Chadha had made the chairperson of the House and the privileges committee the parties to his petition. Dwivedi said he is not seeking any interim relief in the petition at the moment.

Army top brass deliberates national security during Commanders' Conference

PNB NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The Army top brass on Monday here began deliberations on national security challenges including the situation at border in Ladakh and the Line of Control (LOC) facing Pakistan and ways to boost the overall combat capability of the force while kick-starting a five-day conference.
Being chaired by Army Chief General Manoj Pande, the commanders are delving into a range of issues, including the ongoing reform process in the 1.3 million strong force, matters relating to jointness among the three services and key geopolitical developments. Defence Minister Rajnath Singh is scheduled to address the conference on October 18.
Chief of Defence Staff Gen Anil Chauhan and Air Chief Marshal VR Chaudhari are among those addressing the Army commanders.
Ajay Kumar Sood, the Principal Scientific Adviser to the Government of India, will also deliver a talk on "Leveraging Technology for National Security".



"The apex leadership will brainstorm current or emerging security scenarios besides reviewing the operational preparedness of the Indian Army," the Army said on Saturday.
"They will also delve into pivotal subjects including review of the ongoing transformation process, training matters, human resource management aspects and issues impacting serving personnel and veterans," it said.
The regional security situation and geopolitical developments, including the Hamas-Israel conflict and the Russia-Ukraine war, may also figure at the conference.
The overall situation along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) with China as well as along the frontier with Pakistan will be discussed, it was learnt.

Defence Ministry signs contract for upgrade of INS Beas

PNB NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The Ministry of Defence on Monday here signed a contract for Mid Life Upgrade and Re-Powering of "INS Beas" with Kochi-based M/S Cochin Shipyards Limited (CSL) at an overall cost of ₹313.42 crores.
INS Beas is the first of Brahmaputra class frigate to be re-powered from steam to diesel propulsion. After completion of mid life upgrade and re-powering in 2026, INS Beas will join the active fleet of the Indian Navy with a modernised weapon suite and upgraded combat capability, defence ministry officials said here.
The transformative maiden re-powering project marks a significant stride in the maintenance philosophy of the Indian Navy and repair capabilities of M/s CSL. The project would involve more than 50 MSMEs and would lead to generation of employment for more than 3,500 personnel.
The project will be a proud flag bearer of Atmanirbhar Bharat in consonance with the Make-in-India initiative of the Government of India, they said.





# Rishi Sunak visits UK's Jewish school to reassure community

PTI ■ LONDON

Prime Minister Rishi Sunak on Monday visited a Jewish school here and reiterated his government's commitment to protect Britain's Jews from anti-semitic attacks amid the ongoing Israel-Gaza conflict.

The British Indian leader also stressed that Israel's operations must centre on the terrorist group Hamas to avoid an escalation of conflict in the region. He pointed to the spy planes deployed by the UK to the eastern Mediterranean region to monitor and prevent arms shipments from landing in terrorist hands.

"I'm determined to ensure that our Jewish community is able to feel safe on our streets, that there is no place in our society for antisemitism, and we will do everything we can to stamp it out and where it happens," said Sunak during his visit to the Jewish school in north London.

He attended an assembly at the secondary school before answering a few questions from those present.

"I stand with all of you, the Jewish community, not just today, tomorrow but always, and I really mean it. Like many of you, I am different; I come from a different background, and our society is strongest when that diversity is respected. There are people who are trying to stir up hatred and division, and I will always strive very hard to protect that diversity," he said. "We've already sent surveillance aircraft to the eastern Mediterranean last week. They will be able to, as I said, make sure that no arms shipments, for example, have been sent to other terrorist organisations in the region. That's a practical step that we can take to help ensure that this remains contained to dealing with Hamas and does not spread more broadly in the region," he added.

"Today I met students and staff at a Jewish school in London to show my solidarity with the community. I am doing everything in my power to keep Jewish people in the UK safe, including through extra @CST\_UK funding," Sunak said in a post on social media platform X. "Antisemitism will not stand," he added.



Britain's Prime Minister Rishi Sunak signing messages and prayers for Israel during a visit to a school in north London, England Monday. AP/PTI

## Biden postpones trip to Colorado

Washington (AP): President Joe Biden postponed a trip to Colorado on Monday to stay in Washington and focus on the growing conflict in the Middle East. Biden had been heading to the Colorado district of Rep. Lauren Boebert, where he was to visit CS Wind, the world's largest facility for wind tower manufacturing. The White House said just a few hours before Biden was set to take off for the trip that it would be rescheduled.

Instead, Biden is expected to hold a series of high-level meetings with aides on Israel and the growing humanitarian concerns in Gaza. The Democratic president is weighing a decision to visit the region in a powerful symbol of support for Israel following the October 7 attack by Hamas that killed more than 1,400 people including at least 30 US citizens. The decision reflects the competing pressures for the president, heading into an election year in which he is trying to showcase his domestic agenda as conflicts abroad in Ukraine and now Israel grow. Boebert, had

described Biden's Inflation Reduction Act, his signature domestic legislation and the source of hundreds of billions of dollars for clean energy incentives, as "a massive failure" that "needs to be repealed."

But Biden was planning to demonstrate otherwise when he visits CS Wind in the town of Pueblo. The company is undergoing a USD 200 million expansion that is expected to create 850 jobs by 2026 with help from the tax incentives in the law. Pueblo is one of the anchors of Colorado's sprawling 3rd Congressional District, which covers more ground than Pennsylvania. Boebert won her seat in 2020 and barely held on to it during the 2022 midterms. There's maximum chaos in Congress right now for House Republicans, who ousted Rep. Kevin McCarthy of California as their speaker but have been unable to settle on a replacement. Rep. Jim Jordan of Ohio, a prominent ally of Donald Trump, is the current leading candidate to replace McCarthy, but victory for him is uncertain.

## EU leaders to hold an emergency summit

Brussels (AP): European Union leaders will hold an emergency summit on Tuesday as concerns grow that the war between Israel and Hamas could fuel inter-communal tensions in Europe and bring more refugees in search of sanctuary.

"This conflict has many consequences, including for us in the European Union," EU Council President Charles Michel said in a video statement announcing that he had convened the virtual meeting. "The conflict could have major security consequences for our societies."

Since the Palestinian militant group Hamas attacked southern on October 7, triggering the latest Gaza war, France has ordered a ban on pro-Palestinian demonstrations and the number of antisemitic acts has risen. Low-level rallies have been held in other EU countries. Both the 27-nation bloc and the United States consider Hamas as a terrorist organisation.

# Noboa wins presidency in Ecuador

AP ■ QUITO (ECUADOR)

Daniel Noboa has managed to do what his father failed at five times: Getting elected as Ecuador's president. And he did it Sunday on his first attempt, winning a runoff election against a leftist lawyer on the resume of a 35-year-old who belongs to the South American country's elite, which means some schooling in the US, some entrepreneurial work, some dabbling in politics.

Now, he must answer the universal demand to make Ecuador safe again, which voters urged on all the candidates who originally jumped into the race amid a surge in unprecedented violence tied to drug trafficking.

Noboa's proposals to tackle the crucial issue have run the gamut. At one point in the campaign, he proposed turning ships into floating jails for the most violent criminals. At



another, he simply promised more gear for police.

Voters are increasingly frightened by the escalation of drug violence over the past three years. Killings, kidnappings, robberies and other criminal activities have become part of everyday life, leaving Ecuadorians wondering when, not if, they will be victims.

And as he is getting a truncated term, Noboa faces a daunting task.

"I think there would be a very slim chance that even the best equipped president could reverse Ecuador's security crisis within 18 months — it's such a short period of time — and neither of these candidates was the best equipped."

Noboa certainly not," said Will Freeman, a fellow on Latin American studies at the Council on Foreign Relations. "His proposals on security were erratic, and they gave the

sense that he was improvising." The incoming president's term will run only through May 2025, which is what remains of the tenure of President Guillermo Lasso.

He cut his term short when he dissolved the National Assembly in May as lawmakers pursued impeachment proceedings against him over alleged improprieties in a government contract.

With nearly all votes counted, electoral officials said Noboa had just over 52%, compared to nearly 48 per cent for Luisa González, an ally of exiled former President Rafael Correa. González conceded defeat during a speech before supporters in which she also urged Noboa to fulfill his campaign promises.

After results showed him victorious, Noboa thanked Ecuadorians for believing in "a new political project, a young political project, an improbable political project."

## UNRWA sends advance team to Egypt

United Nations (PTI): The UN agency for Palestinian refugees on Monday said it has sent an advance team to Egypt to prepare for a possible opening of a corridor to bring humanitarian aid supplies into the Gaza Strip amidst Israeli bombardment that has displaced over one million people in the Hamas-ruled region.

The UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) said that heavy Israeli Forces' bombardments of the Gaza Strip have continued, from the air, sea and land, and civilians continue to flee to the southern areas following Israel's warning on Friday to evacuate northern areas.

With Gaza running out of water, food, fuel and essential medicines, UNRWA said it has sent an advance team to Egypt to prepare for the possible opening of a humanitarian corridor to bring humanitarian aid supplies into the Strip. Advocacy continues at the highest levels for humanitarian access for pre-positioned critical supplies to cross into Gaza through Rafah, including food, water, medical supplies, fuel and non-food items.

In a situation report by UNRWA on the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, the agency said people across Gaza have severely limited access to clean drinking water. As a last resort, people are consuming brackish water from agricultural wells, "triggering serious concerns over the spread of waterborne diseases." UNRWA in Gaza found some water in local shops, but rations are still down to one litre of water per person per day for the UNRWA teams in the Rafah logistics base to cover drinking and all other needs. UNRWA said while it continues to run its operations in the West Bank, including schools and health centres, and waste collection in refugee camps, its staff continues to face severe access and movement restrictions, due to closures, checkpoints and road blockages by the Israeli Forces. UNRWA staff are unable to travel to their place of work unless it is in the immediate vicinity.

For the fifth consecutive day, Gaza had no electricity, pushing vital services, including health, water and sanitation to the brink of collapse, and worsening food insecurity, UNRWA said.

The lawyer representing 184 former Facebook content moderators based in Kenya who sued the site's parent company, Meta, over working conditions and pay told the judge Monday that Meta has not been sincere in trying to reach an out-of-court settlement as agreed in the last court session.

Lawyer Mercy Mutemi said the talks had collapsed and the former moderators want to proceed with a contempt of court case against Meta. "The petitioners gave it their best effort. They attended every mediation. The respondents asked for information which we gave them. They kept saying they would get back to us by a certain date but only got back to us at the end of last week with a very small amount that cannot even take

# Muslim boy killed, woman hurt in Illinois hate crime

AP ■ CHICAGO

A 71-year-old Illinois man accused of fatally stabbing a 6-year-old boy and seriously wounding a 32-year-old woman was charged with a hate crime Sunday. Police allege he singled out the victims because of their Islamic faith and as a response to the war between Israel and Hamas.

In recent days, police in U.S. cities and federal authorities have been on high alert for violence driven by antisemitic or Islamophobic sentiments. FBI officials, along with Jewish and Muslim groups, have reported an increase of hateful and threatening rhetoric.

In the Chicago-area case, officers found the woman and boy late Saturday morning at a home in an unincorporated area of Plainfield Township, about 40 miles (65 kilometers) southwest of Chicago, the Will County Sheriff's Office said in a statement on social media.

The boy was pronounced dead at a hospital. The woman had multiple stab wounds and was expected to survive, accord-

ing to the statement. An autopsy on the child showed he had been stabbed dozens of times.

"Detectives were able to determine that both victims in this brutal attack were targeted by the suspect due to them being Muslim and the on-going Middle Eastern conflict involving Hamas and the Israelis," the sheriff's statement said. According to the Will County sheriff's office, the woman had called 911 to report that her landlord had attacked her with a knife, adding she then ran into a bathroom and continued to fight him off.

The man suspected in the attack was found Saturday outside the home and "sitting upright outside on the ground near the driveway of the residence" with a cut on his forehead, authorities said.

Joseph M. Czuba of Plainfield was charged with first-degree murder, attempted first-degree murder, two counts of hate crimes and aggravated battery with a deadly weapon, according to the sheriff's office. He was in custody Sunday and awaiting a court appearance.

Attempts to reach Czuba or a family member were unsuccessful Sunday. His home phone number was unlisted. Messages left for possible relatives in online records and on social media were not immediately returned. The sheriff's office and county public defender's office did not immediately return messages about Czuba's legal representation.

Authorities did not release the names of the two victims.

But the boy's paternal uncle, Yousef Hannon, spoke at a news conference Sunday hosted by the Chicago chapter Council on American-Islamic Relations. There the boy was identified as Wade Al-Fayoume, a Palestinian American boy who recently had turned 6. The organization identified the other victim as the boy's mother.

"We are not animals, we are humans. We want people to see us as humans, to feel us as humans, to deal with us as humans, because this is what we are," said Hannon, a Palestinian American who emigrated to the US in 1999 to work, including as a public school teacher.

## Migrant boat sinking off Greek island leaves 3 dead

Athens (AP): Two men reported missing after a migrant dinghy sank off the coast of an eastern Greek island Monday were found alive, Greece's coast guard said, bringing the total number of survivors to 10.

The bodies of a woman and two men had been recovered earlier from the sea after the dinghy sank overnight off the coast of the small island of Symi, which lies near Turkey. Survivors told authorities the boat had been carrying a total of 13 people. Although no further people were reported to be missing, the coast guard said it would continue a search and rescue operation in the area for several hours as a precaution until all survivors had completed their testimonies. The nationalities of those on board were not immediately known.

# Leaders from emerging economies arriving for 'Belt and Road' forum

AP ■ BEIJING

Leaders of emerging market countries are arriving in Beijing for a meeting organised by the Chinese government that will mark the 10th anniversary of its Belt and Road Initiative.

More than a dozen leaders from Africa, Asia and the Mideast were flying into Beijing on Monday, following the arrivals of Chilean President Gabriel Boric and Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán on Sunday. Others are coming on Tuesday.

Under the Belt and Road Initiative, a signature policy of President Xi Jinping, Chinese companies have built ports, roads, railways, power plants and other infrastructure around the world in a bid to boost trade and economic growth.

But the massive Chinese

development loans that funded the projects have also burdened some poorer countries with heavy debts.

A flurry of diplomacy is expected on the sidelines of the third Belt and Road Forum, whose main events are on Wednesday. Orbán met with Xi and Premier Li Qiang, Hungary's state news agency MTI said.

The forums also were held in 2017 and 2019.

Kenyan President William Ruto will be seeking additional loans for stalled road projects despite the country's already high public debt, and an easing of the repayment of a Chinese loan for a railway project that has not proven commercially viable.

Russian President Vladimir Putin is expected to attend the forum, as are representatives of the Taliban government in Afghanistan. Putin downplayed the idea

that China, through its Belt and Road projects in Central Asia, is competing for influence in a region that Russia has long considered its backyard.

"Our own ideas on the development of the Eurasian Economic Union, for example, on the construction of a Greater Eurasia, fully coincide with the Chinese ideas proposed within the framework of the Belt and Road Initiative," he told Chinese state broadcaster CCTV, according to a transcript posted on the Kremlin website.

The leaders who arrived on Monday included Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed, Sri Lankan President Ranil Wickremesinghe, Republic of Congo President Denis Sassou Nguesso, Papua New Guinean Prime Minister James Marape and Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Manet.

# Ex-Finnish president dies at 86

AP ■ HELSINKI

Martti Ahtisaari, the former president of Finland and global peace broker who was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2008 for his work to resolve international conflicts, died Monday. He was 86. The foundation he created for preventing and resolving violent conflicts said in a statement it was "deeply saddened by the loss of its founder and (former) chair of the board."

In 2021, it was announced that Ahtisaari had advanced Alzheimer's disease. It is with great sadness that we have received the news of the death of President Martti Ahtisaari," Finnish President Sauli Niinistö said in a statement. "He was president in times of change, who piloted Finland into a global EU era."

Niinistö described Ahtisaari in a televised speech as "a citizen of the world, a great Finn. A teacher, diplomat and head of



state. A peace negotiator and a Nobel Peace Prize laureate." Regular programming on Finnish public broadcaster YLE was interrupted for Niinistö's speech.

Ahtisaari helped reach peace accords related to Serbia's withdrawal from Kosovo in the late 1990s, Namibia's bid for independence in the 1980s, and autonomy for Aceh province in Indonesia in 2005. He was also involved with the Northern

Ireland peace process in the late 1990s, being tasked with monitoring the IRA's disarmament process.

"President Ahtisaari committed all his life to peace, diplomacy, the goodness of humanity, and had an extraordinary influence on our present and the future," said Kosovar President Vjosa Osmani. "He engraved the frame of our country, and his name will remain forever in the pages of the Republic of Kosovo's history." When the Norwegian Nobel Peace Committee picked Ahtisaari in October 2008, it cited him "for his important efforts, on several continents and over more than three decades, to resolve international conflicts."

Ahtisaari was the Nordic country's president for one six-year term — from 1994 until 2000 — and later founded the Helsinki-based Crisis Management Initiative, aimed at preventing and resolving violent conflicts through informal dia-

logue and mediation. Born June 23, 1937, in the eastern town of Viipuri, which is now in Russia, Ahtisaari was a primary school teacher before joining Finland's Foreign Ministry in 1965. He spent about 20 years abroad, first as ambassador to Tanzania, Zambia and Somalia and then to the United Nations in New York. After that he joined the UN, working at its New York headquarters, before heading the UN operation that brought independence to Namibia in 1990. Ahtisaari had become deeply involved in activities aimed at preparing Namibians for independence during his diplomatic tenure in Africa in the 1970s. He was appointed as the special representative of Namibia by then-UN Secretary-General Kurt Waldheim in 1978, and is widely credited with leading the African nation to independence under his mandate as head of UN peacekeeping forces there in the late 1980s.

# Kenyan Facebook moderators accuse Meta of not negotiating sincerely

AP ■ NAIROBI

The lawyer representing 184 former Facebook content moderators based in Kenya who sued the site's parent company, Meta, over working conditions and pay told the judge Monday that Meta has not been sincere in trying to reach an out-of-court settlement as agreed in the last court session.

Lawyer Mercy Mutemi said the talks had collapsed and the former moderators want to proceed with a contempt of court case against Meta. "The petitioners gave it their best effort. They attended every mediation. The respondents asked for information which we gave them. They kept saying they would get back to us by a certain date but only got back to us at the end of last week with a very small amount that cannot even take

care of the petitioners' mental health," she told the court. She described Meta as "not genuine". The moderators were employed via Sama, a San Francisco subcontractor that describes itself as an ethical AI company, to work in its hub in the capital, Nairobi. Their job entailed screening user content in 12 African languages and removing any uploads deemed to breach Facebook's community standards and terms of service. Some of the petitioners have told The Associated Press that their job required them to watch horrific content for eight hours a day that overwhelmed many of them while being paid 60,000 Kenyan shillings, or \$414 a month. They accused Sama of doing little to ensure post-traumatic professional counselling was offered. They are seeking \$1.6 billion in compensation. Meta and Sama

lawyers told the court they thought the mediation was making good progress, with long hours involved, until the moderators' lawyer wrote to them in protest.

Justice Nduma Nderi said the failed talk were a "missed opportunity" to find a balance between the parties involved as opposed to the court issuing an order. The parties will now appear at a hearing on Oct 31 on the moderators' application to find Meta and Sama in contempt of court. The lawsuit is the first known court challenge of its kind against Facebook outside the United States. In 2020, Facebook agreed to pay \$52 million to US content moderators who filed a class action lawsuit after they were repeatedly exposed to beheadings, child and sexual abuse, animal cruelty, terrorism and other disturbing content.

## Macron holds security meeting amid alert after school stabbing

Arras (France): French President Emmanuel Macron was holding Monday a special security meeting amid heightened alert against feared terror threats, as a high school where a teacher was fatally stabbed in an attack last week has been evacuated over a bomb alert.

Several hundreds of students and teachers could be seen going back into the high school in the northern town of Arras after what appeared to be a false.

It comes after a teacher was killed and three other people wounded Friday in an attack by a former student suspected of Islamic radicalisation.

The prefecture of the northern region where the high school is located said that "all precautionary and safety measures" have been taken after the bomb threat was made via a police website. A demining team was on site.

The Louvre Museum in Paris and Versailles Palace evacuated visitors and staff Saturday after receiving bomb threats.

Macron cut short travel plans abroad to hold a security meeting at midday with the prime minister and other key government members as well as top military and counterterrorism officials. Macron was initially planned to attend a summit on the Western Balkans in Tirana, Albania.

Education Minister Gabriel Attal said 168 bomb threats in French schools have been reported since the beginning of September. "This is inadmissible and unacceptable," he said. The French government heightened the national threat alert and ordered up to 7,000 soldiers to be deployed by Monday night and until further notice to bolster security and vigilance around France.

Schoolchildren and educators were to hold a moment of silence in all French schools on Monday afternoon in homage to the teacher who was fatally stabbed in Friday's attack. AP

# LIONEL MESSI REMAINS A DOUBTFUL STARTER

AP ■ SAO PAULO

Lionel Messi's involvement in a 1-0 win over Paraguay last week doesn't necessarily mean he'll be fit for Argentina's next game in World Cup qualifying against Peru.

Messi played most of the second half against Paraguay last Thursday despite struggling with muscular pains in the weeks leading up to the game.

But there's no certainty he'll play against Peru on Tuesday despite practicing with the squad.

Meanwhile in Brazil, Neymar is under fire for his lackluster performance in a 1-1 draw against Venezuela last week that ended with some fans throwing popcorn at the Arena Pantanal in Cuiabá. He will have a tough challenge at Uruguay to show he is back in form.

The next World Cup in the United States, Mexico and Canada is expanding to a 48-team format, meaning direct entry to the top six teams in South America. The seventh-place team will contest an intercontinental playoff for a berth.

World Cup winner Argentina leads continental qualifying with 9 points, followed by Brazil (7), Colombia (5), Uruguay, Chile and Venezuela (4), Ecuador (3), Paraguay and Peru (1), and Bolivia (0).

The fourth match day in South American qualifying also features Ecuador against Colombia, Paraguay against Bolivia and Venezuela taking on Chile.

## PERU vs. ARGENTINA

Argentina's practice on Sunday didn't show whether the 36-year-old Messi will play against Peru. He took part of the morning session at his national team's training ground, but has



recently felt muscular pains in his right leg that have sidelined him for several MLS matches for his club, Inter Miami.

If Messi plays at Peru, coach Lionel Scaloni might have to remove either Julián Alvarez or Lautaro Martinez from the lineup that beat Paraguay. Keeping the captain in the starting lineup will likely mean Argentina playing Nico Gonzalez again in Lima.

Messi substituted Julián Alvarez in the 52nd minute

against Paraguay, when Argentina was already in the lead. He hit the post twice, but had a low key performance overall at the Monumental de Nuñez Stadium in Buenos Aires.

Peru has lost its latest two qualifying matches in South American qualifying. The squad arrived in silence shortly before dawn so no fans could be at the airport protesting after its 2-0 loss at Chile. Players and coach Juan Reynoso know they will face a much tougher challenge

against the World Cup champion.

"May this defeat today suit us for what is coming," Reynoso said in a news conference after the match in Santiago. "You don't qualify by playing beautiful soccer, you do it by playing well. For us to do that, we need to be a chameleonic team that adapts to various circumstances."

## URUGUAY vs. BRAZIL

Brazil fans were frustrated with the draw against Venezuela,

a team that has never qualified to a World Cup. The 31-year-old Neymar was the team's most criticized player after that encounter because of several missed passes and floppy finishes.

The Al-Hilal striker was filmed leaving the pitch in anger as some fans threw popcorn at him. Brazil's soccer tradition calls "pipoqueiro" (popcorn man) the players who fail to deliver in big matches. He is likely to face Uruguay at the Centenario Stadium in Montevideo on Tuesday.

Neymar is Brazil's all-time top goal scorer with 79 goals in official matches.

Brazil's new coach Fernando Diniz, who was also criticized after the draw with Venezuela, is likely to make three changes for the next round of qualifying.

Right-back Danilo is injured, and is set to be replaced by Yan Couto. Left-back Guilherme Arana is expected to be replaced with the 24-year-old Carlos Augusto, who will make his national team debut. And striker Richarlison, on a six-match goal drought for the national team, could lose his position to Gabriel Jesus.

Uruguay has not beaten Brazil in World Cup qualifying since 2001. Captain Federico Valverde is optimistic about the match after a 2-2 draw at Colombia. He said he and Real Madrid teammates Vinicius Junior and Rodrygo of Brazil have spent weeks talking about the encounter.

"We could have gotten a better result, but at least we returned with one point, which always suits us," Valverde said of the draw. Uruguay has been coached by Argentine Marcelo Bielsa since the start of South American qualifying.



# Gavi goal against Norway, secures 1-0 win

AP ■ LONDON

Gavi's winning goal for Spain against Norway in a European Championship qualifier on Sunday will likely have been cheered as wildly in Glasgow as it was in Madrid.

The Barcelona midfielder's strike at Ullevaal Stadium in Oslo secured a 1-0 win that means both Spain and Scotland have qualified for Euro 2024.

Gavi's goal came in the 49th minute and ensured the three-time European champions will be at next year's tournament in Germany when they will be among the favorites to lift the trophy for the first time since 2012.

Scotland might not harbor realistic ambitions of winning Euro 2024, but it has arguably exceeded expectations by qualifying from Group A. Indeed, until losing to Spain on Thursday, the Scots had made a 100% start to qualifying.

Scotland has now qualified for back-to-back Euros, having

failed to reach the finals from 2000-2016. In Germany it will be aiming to advance from the group stages for the first time in its history.

Turkey also qualified with a 4-0 win against Latvia at the Konya Metropolitan Municipality Stadium, while Croatia made it back-to-back losses in Group D after a surprise 2-1 defeat to Wales.

## CROATIA STRUGGLES

Less than a year after a third-place finish at the World Cup in Qatar, Croatia is making hard work of qualification for the European Championship.

The Croatians went into this latest batch of qualifiers atop Group D, with the chance to put daylight between them and Turkey. But a 1-0 loss to Turkey on Thursday has now been followed by defeat to Wales.

Even with stars like Luka Modric, Josko Gvardiol and Marcelo Brozovic in the team, Croatia is trailing 2-0 to goals from Harry Wilson in each

half. Mario Pasalic halved the deficit, but it wasn't enough to spark a comeback. Wales moved up to second in the group ahead of Croatia in third, with both teams on 10 points.

Yunus Akgun set Turkey on course for victory against Latvia, with substitute Cenk Tosun scoring two and Kerem Akturkoglu also grabbing a goal.

## ALBANIA WAITS

Four teams are separated by four points in Group E as results on Sunday meant Albania was left waiting to seal qualification.

Czech Republic's 1-0 win against Faroe Islands leaves it two points behind leader Albania in second place.

Poland drew 1-1 with Moldova to leave those teams three points and four points off the top respectively.

Romania is top of Group I after a 4-0 win against Andorra - ahead of second-place Switzerland, which needed goals in the 89th and 90th minutes to draw 3-3 with Belarus.



# Spain coach De la Fuente able to silence doubters

AP ■ MADRID

Spain coach Luis de la Fuente has found a way to turn the doubters into supporters.

Nearly a year after he was appointed amid a wave of skepticism, De la Fuente now has widespread backing at the helm of La Roja, having turned Spain into a contender again and comfortably securing the team a spot in the 2024 European Championship.

Spain qualified for next year's tournament in Germany on Sunday with a 1-0 win at Norway — the team's sixth straight triumph since a loss at Scotland in March had left De la Fuente under pressure just two games into his stint.

"We are always learning," De la Fuente said. "At that moment the analysis was different than it is now. We've just reached an important objective and we have to keep working and learning. We recognize what was done well, but we know there are still things to improve."

The 62-year-old De la Fuente replaced Luis Enrique after the team's loss to Morocco in the round of 16 of the World Cup in Qatar. He was then relatively unknown in Spain after spending years coaching the nation's youth squads.

His first match in charge was a home win in a qualifier against Norway in which Spain struggled from the start, and the subsequent loss to Scotland put

De la Fuente on the hot seat early on. Many didn't think he had the experience to take charge of the national team at the time.

But after the slow start, De la Fuente also helped Spain win the Nations League with victories over Italy in the semifinals and Croatia in a penalty shootout in the final. Spain then routed Georgia 7-1 and Cyprus 6-0 in qualifiers, and defeated Scotland 2-0 at home last week before securing its spot at Euro 2024 against Erling Haaland's Norway on Sunday.

"I'm happy with the work that we've done," De la Fuente said. "When you achieve something like this, things must have been done right. But in soccer one day you are up and the other you are down again, so we have to stay balanced. I'm happy now, but I also stayed composed in the tougher moments."

De la Fuente put Spain back on track in part by betting on the talent of some younger players. He kept players like Gavi, Ansu Fati and Pedri - who played at the World Cup - and brought in others such as 16-year-old Lamine Yamal, the Barcelona sensation.

His experience with the nation's youth squads proved important, and he now has his job secured for a while.

"We have a team for the future, it's what I'm most excited about," he said. "We worked hard to be where we are and we deserve it."

# Tom Kim wins PGA Tour, 2nd time in the same season



AP ■ LAS VEGAS

Tom Kim now has something in common with Byron Nelson as the only players to have won the same PGA Tour event twice in the same season.

Kim successfully defended his title Sunday in the Shriners Children's Open when he closed with a 5-under 66 to emerge from a pack of a dozen players who had a chance in the final hour. Kim won by one shot over Adam Hadwin, who birdied the final hole for a 67.

Kim now has three PGA Tour titles in the last 15 months, at 21 the youngest player since Tiger Woods in 1997 to have three tour wins.

"I really felt confident in myself," Kim said. "I knew that if I did me I was going to be able to do it. I'm stoked to get this one."

He won in Las Vegas a year ago, beating Patrick Cantlay in a play-

off at the TPC Summerlin, when the Shriners Children's Open was early in the season. Now, the Las Vegas event is still part of the same season because the PGA Tour goes to a calendar season starting in 2024.

Nelson won the San Francisco Open in January 1944, and the same tournament in December of 1944, both times at Harding Park. This one was up for grabs until Kim seized control on the par-5 16th.

With an hour left in the tournament, there was a six-way tie for the lead and 12 players were separated by a single shot. The key stretch at the TPC Summerlin was holes No. 13 through No. 16, which ranked as four of the five easiest holes in the final round.

Taylor Pendrith was tied for the lead with a birdie on the 13th, but had to settle for pars the rest of that stretch. K.H. Lee made all pars.

Then, it became a two-man

race between Kim and Hadwin, playing in the final group with Kim holding a one-shot advantage.

Both birdied the 13th, Hadwin with a 35-foot birdie putt that rimmed all the way around the cup before dropping. Both birdied the reachable par-4 15th, Kim with a tough up-and-down and birdie putt from 12 feet, Hadwin narrowly missing a 25-foot eagle attempt.

It turned on the par-5 16th. Kim hit to the fat of the green in two, 50 feet away for eagle. Hadwin knew he missed his shot right after contact and it came up well short and into the water. Hadwin missed a 6-foot par putt after his penalty drop, and Kim three-putted - he had to make a 5-footer on his third one - for par.

"I completely whiffed it, up and out of it, and unfortunately one of my worst swings of the day at the least opportune time," Hadwin said.

"I feel like you dump it in the water there on 16, and I certainly by no means gave the tournament, but I would have liked to have hit a more quality golf shot and put a little bit more pressure on Tom coming down the stretch."

That gave Kim a two-shot lead with two to play, and he closed with solid pars. Kim finished at 20-under 264.

Eric Cole boosted his bid to be PGA Tour rookie of the year by closing with a 62 to finish two behind, along with Alex Noren (65), J.T. Poston (66) and Pendrith (67). Pendrith came into Las Vegas at No. 123 in the FedEx Cup and was projected to move to No. 90, all but assuring a full card for 2024.

Ludvig Aberg, who made his Ryder Cup debut two weeks ago, also shot 62 and tied for 13th.

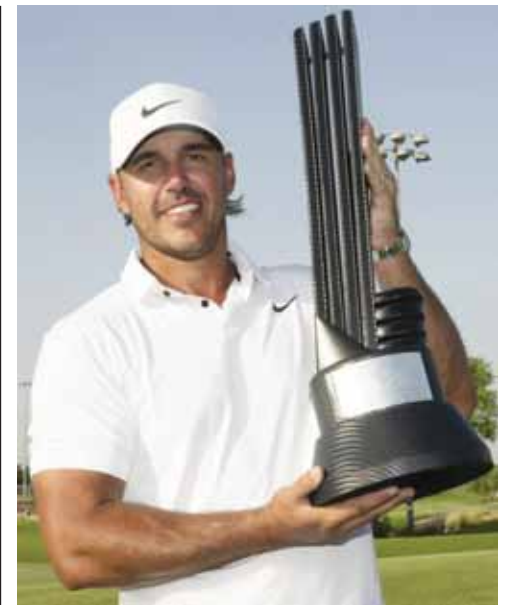
Kim, born in South Korea and raised primarily in Australia, won for the first time in 2023. He had a hot run last summer that included victories in the Wyndham Championship and in Las Vegas, followed by a dynamic debut in the Presidents Cup.

But he said he felt the pressure to live up to the expectations, and it turned this year into a grind. He was a distant runner-up in the British Open, though he injured his ankle during the week that kept him from defending his title in the Wyndham Championship.

"It's been a grind trying to figure it out," Kim said. "My first full season, trying to live up to expectations of a great year. It's been humbling sometimes."

The victory moves Kim to No. 11 in the world ranking.

Isaiah Salinda, who got into Las Vegas as a Monday qualifier, had a 63-67 weekend and tied for seventh, which gets him into the next full PGA Tour event Nov.



# Brooks Koepka defends LIV Golf title

AP ■ KING ABDULLAH ECONOMIC CITY (SAUDI ARABIA)

Brooks Koepka held it together at the end for a 2-under 68 and defended his title at LIV Golf-Jeddah with a birdie on the second playoff hole to beat Talor Gooch on a day when both had reason to celebrate.

Koepka had to birdie two of his last three holes to finish at 14-under 196 and tie with Gooch, who closed with a 62. With his playoff loss, Gooch moved past Cameron Smith and won the season points title and the \$18 million bonus.

Koepka not only won \$4 million from the tournament, his victory bumped Bryson DeChambeau out of the top three in the season standings. Koepka picked up an additional \$4 million for finishing third in the points race.

DeChambeau fell back Sunday with a 70. Smith had a 66 and tied for 24th.

The LIV Golf League wraps up its second season next week at Doral in South Florida with the team championship.

Koepka ends his year with two LIV Golf titles, along with his fifth major at the PGA Championship.

# Rod Pamplung ends a marathon day at SAS

AP ■ CARY (NORTH CAROLINA)

Rod Pamplung of Australia had to play 33 holes Sunday in the rain-delayed SAS Championship and it was worth every step when he finished off a 68 and then closed with a 5-under 67 for his second career PGA Tour Champions title.

The SAS Championship was the final tournament before the Charles Schwab Cup playoffs begin for the top 72 players. Pamplung's victory moved him up 13 spots to No. 17.

David Duval shot 71 and tied for

11th, just enough for him to move up seven spots and finish at No. 71 in the Schwab Cup to qualify for the post-season.

Pamplung finished with a bogey for a two-shot victory over Steven Alker, who moved up to No. 2 in the standings behind Steve Stricker.

The Australian finished off 15 holes of the second round in the morning with back-to-back birdies, and then he played bogey-free in the final round until the end, when it only affected his margin of victory.

"I just walked as slow as I could,"



Pamplung said. "It was a long day. We knew what we were going to be in for. Just eat the food, take your time. Thankfully, it wasn't too quick out there."

Pamplung had a one-shot lead over Alker, Paul Broadhurst and Vijay Singh when the second round was finished. Singh and Broadhurst fell back early in the final round, and Pamplung had three birdies in a four-hole stretch around the turn to seize control.

"We've been working hard," Pamplung said. "We got rid of our bad

stuff about a month-and-a-half ago. Been closer and closer and this week it was just a great ball-striking week, putting well, everything. It's a great feeling to win again."

Ernie Els had a 68 and tied for third with Mario Tiziani, who closed with a 65.

Tiziani, the brother-in-law of Stricker, split time this year playing on the PGA Tour Champions, managing his wife's brother and occasionally caddying for Stricker. He made it to the postseason for the second straight year.

