



OPINION 6 A NEW STANDARD FOR GLOBAL POPULISM

WORLD 9 ISRAEL RESCUE HOSTAGE FROM GAZA STRIP

MONEY 10 MARKETS SETTLE ALMOST FLAT

LUCKNOW, WEDNESDAY AUGUST 28, 2024; PAGES 12 ₹3

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IVA JOVIC BEATS MAGDA IN FIRST ROUND 11 SPORTS

Protests singe City of Joy

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

Many people, including policemen, were injured in pitched battles intermittently fought at various locations of Kolkata and Howrah between the men in uniform and students protesting against the rape and murder of the lady doctor at a medical college in Kolkata. Several protesters were taken into custody. The students under the banner of a relatively obscure Paschim Banga Chhatra Samaj — with apparent blessings of the Opposition BJP — marched towards the State Secretariat Nabanna to demand the resignation of Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee when clashes took place.

Initial jostling turned into skirmishes with the police repeatedly bursting tear gas, charging water jets and resorting to lathicharge as the charged up agitators that included many women refused to relent and turned aggressive. The pitched battles continued for more than five hours giving the police a harrowing time, sources in the administration said, adding additional combat forces and RAF had to be called in from the neighbouring districts. At various places people profusely bleeding from head were seen being carried away by their co-agitators to the hospitals. Similarly the policemen who often got isolated were also attacked. At Babu Ghat a crowd of agitators badly beat up two policemen with lathis, rods, bricks and even shoes. Some even spit on them while



Tear gas shells being used by security personnel to disperse students during their protest march towards West Bengal Secretariat over the alleged sexual assault and murder of a trainee doctor, in Kolkata, on Tuesday

journalists covering the incident tried to intervene by appealing the people not to take law into their own hands.

Intensity of the protest was such that the agitators who were quickly joined by swarms of political activists, moved dangerously close to the seat of State power, Nabanna with the police armed with riot gear having a trying time to push them back. The scene was almost same on both sides of the Hooghly River as the agitators broke through firmly erected barricades one after the other at Mahatma Gandhi Road, College Square, Princep Ghat, Esplanade, Hastings, Santragachi, Vidya Sagar Setu leading to Nabanna, Howrah Maidan, Sarat

Safety of healthcare workers: Portal floated, public view sought

ARCHANA JYOTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court-appointed National Task Force (NTF) to formulate a protocol for the safety and security of healthcare professionals held its inaugural meeting under the chairmanship of the Cabinet Secretary on Tuesday. It decided to conduct broader consultations with key stakeholders to identify critical issues and develop a comprehensive framework for

protecting those in the healthcare field. Soon after the NTF panel also favoured setting up an online portal seeking suggestions from public, the Union Health Ministry shared a link in this regard, posting on the X social platform, "Suggestions to NTF" — <http://serviceonline.gov.in/directApply.do?serviceId=2987> for seeking suggestions from individuals and different stakeholders across the country. **Continued on Page 8**

Chatterjee Road and elsewhere shouting the hitherto familiar slogan "we want justice." At Princep Ghat and Mahatma Gandhi Road the police chased away the agitators who were trying to break the cordons. At Kona Express Way too, the police fought intermittently with the agitators who were trying to enter Nabanna area from Howrah side. In the melee more than 50 people, including policemen were hurt, sources said, adding that the count could go up as "more information from other zones are still awaited." The police had detained more than 350 people, the BJP sources said.

While the police accused the agitators of resorting to violence first by throwing bricks the opposite side said the students got agitated as news spread that four of their leaders who had been organising the movement for the past several days had "mysteriously gone missing" as they had allegedly been picked up around midnight on Monday. Incidentally most of the agitating doctors at various medical colleges and the members of the civil society remained indifferent to the Tuesday's march but continued their cease work at their workplaces, sources said. The Tuesday's clashes were the culmination of fortnight long protests by the people from all walks of life against the brutal rape and murder of a lady doctor at the RG Kar Medical College Hospital and allege effort by the Kolkata Police and the powers that be to shield the real guilty. **Continued on Page 8**

PM Modi shares perspectives on Russia-Ukraine conflict with Putin

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday spoke to Russian President Vladimir Putin and shared "insights" from his recent visit to Ukraine. During the telephone talks, Modi reiterated India's firm commitment to supporting an early, abiding and peaceful resolution of the Russia-Ukraine conflict.

A day earlier on Monday, Modi had briefed US President Joe Biden on his visit to Ukraine and conveyed India's full support for the early return of peace to the region through dialogue and diplomacy. As regards talks with President Putin, Modi said in a social media post, "Exchanged perspectives on the Russia-Ukraine conflict and my insights from the recent visit to Ukraine. Reiterated India's firm support to an early, abiding and peaceful resolution of the conflict." The Prime Minister also said he and President Putin also discussed measures to further strengthen Special and Privileged Strategic Partnership between the two countries. A statement by the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) here said Modi had on Tuesday a telephone conversation with the President of the Russian Federation Vladimir Putin.

The Prime Minister recalled his successful visit to Russia last month to participate in the 22nd India-Russia Bilateral Summit. The two leaders reviewed progress on a number of bilateral issues and discussed measures to further



FILE PHOTO

strengthen the Special and Privileged Strategic Partnership between India and Russia. They also exchanged views on a range of regional and global issues of mutual interest. The two leaders exchanged views on the ongoing Russia-Ukraine conflict as Modi shared with Putin insights from his recent visit to Ukraine. He underlined the importance of dialogue and diplomacy as well as sincere and practical engagement between all stakeholders to achieve an abiding and peaceful resolution of the conflict. The two leaders agreed to remain in touch. Modi's talks with Putin took place days after he met Ukraine President Volodymyr Zelenskyy in Kyiv. During his meeting with the Ukrainian President, Prime Minister Modi had said India is "not neutral as it is always on the side of peace". **Continued on Page 8**



NDA touches majority mark in Rajya Sabha, 11 elected unopposed

RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

In a major boost to the ruling National Democratic Alliance (NDA), nine candidates from the BJP and two from allies have been elected unopposed in the bypolls for the Rajya Sabha. This is the first time that the NDA has reached a majority mark in the Upper House. Currently, it has the support of six nominated and one Independent member.

As nine of the BJP members were elected unopposed, taking its tally to 96 and taking NDA to 112 in the Rajya Sabha. Among the three others to get elected unopposed were one each from NDA allies NCP faction of Ajit Pawar faction and Rashtriya Lok Manch. One member of the Congress also got elected, taking the Opposition numbers in the Upper House to 85. Rajya Sabha has 245 seats, though currently there are eight vacancies — four from Jammu and Kashmir and four nominated. With the House's current strength of 237, the majority mark is 119. The BJP candidates elected unopposed include Mission Ranjan Dass and Rameshwar Teli from Assam, Manan Kumar Mishra from Bihar, Kiran Chhadrya from Haryana, George Kurien from Madhya Pradesh, Dhriya Sheel Patil from Maharashtra, Mamata Mohanta from Odisha, Ravneet Singh Bittu from Rajasthan and Rajeev Bhattacharjee from Tripura. Congress's Abhishek Manu Singhvi was elected unopposed from Telangana. NCP Ajit Pawar faction's NCP got elected from Maharashtra and RLM's Upendra Kushwaha made it to the upper house from Bihar. **Continued on Page 8**

BRS leader Kavitha gets bail in Liquorgate

RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

In a major setback to the Enforcement Directorate (ED) and the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) and a big relief to Bharat Rashtira Samithi (BRS) leader Kalvakuntla Kavitha, the Supreme Court on Tuesday granted her bail in the now-scrapped Delhi excise policy 2021-22. A Bench of Justices BR Gavai and KV Viswanathan passed the order after noting that the investigation is over and trial will take a long time to conclude.

The bench also questioned the fairness of the prosecution agency (CBI/ED) and criticised their selective approach in treating some accused as approvers. It also



Bharat Rashtira Samithi (BRS) leader Kalvakuntla Kavitha

asked the ED and the CBI about the "material" they had to show that Kavitha was involved in the alleged scam. The bench noted that the investigation is complete and

chargesheet/prosecution complaint has been filed in both the CBI and ED cases. Hence, the custodial interrogation of the petitioner, who has been behind the bars

for over five months, is no longer necessary. Also, the trials in both cases are unlikely to be completed soon since there are about 493 witnesses to be examined and the documentary evidence runs into nearly 50,000 pages. "The appellant (Kavitha) is directed to be released forthwith on bail... on furnishing bail bonds in the sum of ₹10 lakh in each of the cases," the bench said, while allowing her appeals against the July 1 verdict of the Delhi High Court which had denied her bail in the two cases. "The appellant (Kavitha) shall not make any attempt to tamper with the evidence or influence the witnesses. The appellant shall deposit her passport with the learned Trial Judge. The appellant shall

regularly attend the Trial Court and cooperate with the expeditious disposal of the trial," reads the order. Later in the day, a city court issued release warrants for Kavitha, paving the way for her release from jail. The Supreme Court's decision has given hope to AAP convener and Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal whose bail petition is pending in the apex court. Kejriwal's legal team is expected to argue the case on the basis of bail granted to Kavitha and Manish Sisodia in the same case. Special Judge Kaveri Baweja issued the release order for Kavitha after being informed that the politician was granted bail earlier in the day by the SC in both the cases. **Continued on Page 8**

UP cabinet nod to stamp duty relief for family transfers

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

The Uttar Pradesh cabinet, led by Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, on Tuesday approved 13 significant proposals aimed at providing relief and facilities for the state's residents. Among the key decisions, a major change involves the exemption of stamp duty on property registrations between family relatives. Under this new policy, only a nominal fee of Rs 5,000 will be required for such registrations, a move intended to ease property disputes and foster family harmony. Additionally, the cabinet endorsed the Settlement Deed proposal and approved the Uttar Pradesh Data Centre (First Amendment) Policy-2021.

This amendment will offer investors the benefit of power supply through dual grid lines, enhancing infrastructure for data centers in the state. The cabinet also approved the Operation and Maintenance Policy-2024 for piped drinking water supply in rural areas, which aims to ensure a consistent and high-quality water

supply. To improve tourism facilities, guest houses managed by the State Tourism Corporation will now be available on contract, enhancing accommodation options for both domestic and international tourists. Further decisions include the state government's commitment to cover the entire Viability Gap Funding (VGF) for the Ganga Expressway project, a move that will significantly bolster the state's infrastructure. In the realm of housing and urban planning, amendments were approved regarding the distribution of an additional 2 percent stamp duty on property transfers to various development authorities and local bodies. Moreover, the cabinet approved the demolition of a 25-year-old building in District Hospital, Deoria, to facilitate the construction of an upgraded Tax Autonomous State Medical College under the Centrally Aided Scheme. Other approved measures include the improved utilisation of staff at state airstrips and

Continued on Page 8

Mollywood's MeToo movement topples South Indian superstar

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ KOCHI

The controversy over casting couch in the Malayalam film industry took an interesting turn on Tuesday as Mohan Lal, popularly known as the superstar and South Indian Amitabh Bachchan, quit as president of Association of Malayalam Movie Artists (AMMA), the apex body of film stars. All office bearers, including the executive committee members of AMMA, too, submitted their resignation along with Lal as the industry

is plagued by allegations of sexual misconduct. A number of stars and directors, including Ranjith, (chairman), Chalachitra Academy, Siddique (general secretary, Amma), Mukesh MLA, Jayasoorya, Manian Pillai Raju, KP Prakash, Babu Raj (joint secretary, Amma) Babu (former general secretary, AMMA) have been



named by female artists as people seeking sexual favours in lieu of work or inappropriate behaviour or even attempt to rape. Those who raised the issue include Bengali actress Sreelekha Mitra, Revathy Sampath, Minu Muneer, Geetha Vijayan and a number of junior and senior artists giving the Malayalam film

industry a bad name. Lal's decision to quit was preceded by a WhatsApp chat with other office bearers and members of the executive committee. "We can expect more such allegations in coming days and it is better to quit rather than face the charges. Let a new team of office-bearers take over after the general body meeting," Lal reportedly told his colleagues. Though other office-bearers persuaded Lal to continue, the super star remained adamant and resigned. **Continued on Page 8**

Rise of daughters in Jammu and Kashmir

MOHIT KANDHARI ■ JAMMU

In the absence of any 'son's rise', it is time for the 'Laadli betis' to make their presence felt in the upcoming Jammu and Kashmir Assembly elections. On Tuesday, two daughters with strong claim to political legacy from the Jammu and Kashmir divisions filed their nomination papers for the first round of polling on September 18. From Kishtwar, 29-year-old Shagun Parihar filed her nomination as the BJP candidate in the presence of J&K BJP chief Ravinder Raina. She is the niece of late BJP leader Anil Parihar. Anil Parihar was killed by

terrorists along with his brother Ajeet Parihar while they were returning home on November 1, 2018. Anil Parihar had considerable influence in the area and was an active member of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh. "It is the love of the people of Kishtwar that has motivated me to file my nomination. I am confident of my victory. I am also certain that the brothers, sisters, and elders of Kishtwar will support my candidature and ensure my victory by a large number of votes," the BJP nominee told reporters after filing her nomination at the office of the returning officer in Kishtwar. She emphasised that this mandate is not just



for her family, but for the families of all martyrs in the region. Shagun Parihar, pursuing a doctorate in electronics, expressed gratitude to the BJP for honouring the families of martyrs who laid down their lives for the nation and the party. She stressed that peace, security, employment, and

women's empowerment would be the core areas of her work for the uplift of the mountainous district. In the Valley, 37-year-old Iltija Mufti, daughter of Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) chief Mehbooba Mufti, made her electoral debut by filing the nomination papers from the Srignufwara-



Bijbehara constituency of south Kashmir. Bijbehara is a traditional bastion of the PDP. It has been represented from 1999 to 2018 by senior party leader Abdul Rehman Veeri. "The party has reposed faith in me by fielding me from the Bijbehara Assembly constituency," Iltija told

media persons in Anantnag on Tuesday. She said that her grandfather, Mufti Mohammad Sayeed, and mother Mehbooba Mufti had also started their political career from Bijbehara. "Today, it is a very emotional moment for me and I am truly honoured," she said. Mehbooba Mufti has vowed not to contest Assembly elections until Statehood is restored. In Kishtwar, BJP candidates Sunil Sharma and Tariq Keen also filed their nomination papers from Paddar Nagseni and Inderwal seats, respectively. Meanwhile, the BJP on Tuesday named 29 more candidates for the Jammu and Kashmir Assembly polls, taking to 45 the number of

seats for which it has announced its nominees. The BJP has made one change from the now-revised list, which was put out on Monday, as it has named Baldev Raj Sharma from Shri Mata Vaishno Devi seat in place of Rohit Dubey. All other names are the same for the same set of constituencies, announced on Monday before being withdrawn. In Srinagar, the Jammu and Kashmir National Conference released a list of 32 candidates which included Omar Abdullah for the Ganderbal Assembly seat, a constituency that he represented from 2009 to 2014 when he was the Chief Minister of the NC-Congress coalition Government. **Continued on Page 8**

CM Yogi lauds police for law and order in UP

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Monday underscored the commitment of the Uttar Pradesh Police to duty over profit, highlighting their pivotal role in the state's development. Speaking at Shri Krishna Janmashtami celebrations held at the Reserve Police Lines in Lucknow, Yogi praised the state's progress in law and order, stating, "The police and the state, once seen as failures, are now setting benchmarks. Uttar Pradesh is emerging as a growth engine for the nation, embodying a model of peace and order. Today, happiness, peace, and goodwill prevail throughout the state."



The chief minister inaugurated the event by lighting a lamp, garlanding the statue of Lord Krishna, and enjoying cultural performances. He reflected on the significance of duty, quoting the Shrimad Bhagavad Gita: "Karmanye Vadhikaraste, Ma Phaleshu Kada Chana" (Focus on your duty without worrying about the results). CM Yogi emphasized that true virtue lies in performing one's duty without concern for personal gain or loss. "If you do good, good will come to you; if you do bad, no one can absolve you of your sin. When you work for the welfare of the people, no force can deny you its virtue," he explained. CM Yogi noted that Lord Krishna is revered as an incarnation of Shri Hari Vishnu and highlighted that this year marks the 5,251st birth anniversary of Lord Krishna. He recounted Krishna's life and teachings as a source of enduring inspiration. "The divine acts of Lord

Krishna began from his birth and continued through his earthly life. We draw lessons from his acts, using them as guiding examples through various programs," he added. The Chief Minister praised the Shrimad Bhagavad Gita for its unique status as the only sacred text where Lord Krishna imparted eternal wisdom to Arjun on the battlefield. "The Gita is held in high regard by the Indian judiciary and is revered as a guide to salvation," he said. He further explained the concept of "puruṣarthas" — Dharma (righteousness), Artha (wealth), Kama (desires), and Moksha (liberation). CM Yogi described Dharma as the foundation of life, leading to the acquisition of wealth and the fulfillment of desires, ultimately paving the way for liberation. He noted that while these principles are widely accepted, the Gita continues to provide fresh inspiration. Referencing the Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav, CM Yogi emphasized Prime Minister Modi's vision for a developed

Woman alleges molestation by bike-borne youths

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

A woman was allegedly molested by some bike-borne youths in Sushant Golf City police station area. When the girl offered resistance, they snatched her mobile and threw it away. The woman suffered injuries to her leg in the incident. The police later arrested one of the accused while the search for the other is on. According to the information, the woman, who is a resident of Vrindavan Yojana, runs a food stall at Defence Square (Sector-12). Around 10:30 pm on Saturday, she was returning home on a scooter after closing the stall. When she reached near an apartment, two youths started following and teasing her. As the woman tried to speed away, the accused overtook her scooter and stopped their bike in front of it. As she fell down, the accused teased her. She took out her phone to inform the police, but the youths snatched it and threw it away. By stroke of luck, a police team on patrol reached there and the girl narrated her ordeal to them. The police detained one of the accused, Chhotu, son of Ram Ratan, while his companion fled the spot. Meanwhile, in a new scam, a girl orchestrated a confrontation with a young man returning from work by deliberately touching him and then falsely accusing him of molestation, resulting in the theft of his bike in the Sushant Golf City police station area. The incident occurred around 11:30 pm on Saturday when Jai Prakash Chaudhary, a resident

of Somant Nagar Kalyanpur who works in Krishnanagar, stopped to urinate near the underpass 50 metres before Medanta Hospital. As per reports, in the meantime, a girl, aged around 25 years, approached him, touched him intentionally, and then began accusing him of molestation. When Jai Prakash resisted, she started shouting and making further allegations. During the argument, two men, estimated to be around 30 years, joined in, further accusing Jai Prakash of molestation. While the confrontation continued, the two men seized Jai Prakash's bike and drove away. Seeing his bike being stolen, Jai Prakash immediately called the police. The perpetrators, including the girl, fled the scene on the stolen bike. The police have registered a case and are making further investigations. Meanwhile, upset over his wife's prolonged stay at her paternal home, a 28-year-old man allegedly committed suicide by hanging himself at his residence in Ballia district, police said on Tuesday. The man was identified as Alok Rajak, a resident of Sarwar Kakargatti in Maniyar town, he said. "The man hanged himself as he was upset about his wife not returning from her parents' home," said Ratnesh Dubey, Maniyar police station incharge. "After receiving information about the incident, police reached the spot immediately. We have taken the body into our custody and initiated further legal proceedings. An investigation into the matter is underway," he said.

Cleanliness fortnight from Sept 1

Lucknow (PNS): Under its ongoing mission to establish Uttar Pradesh as a clean state, the Yogi government will observe 'Swachhhta Pakhwada' (sanitation fortnight) across the state from September 1 to 15. The 15-day event will feature an array of events and activities and see active participation from community members alongside students and teachers in council schools. Preparations are underway at the departmental level to ensure its success. On the first day, students, teachers, staff, and other citizens will take a 'Swachhhta Shapath' (cleanliness oath). A series of programmes and activities will commence in the schools. These activities will be rescheduled and carried out the following day during a holiday. The Basic Education department has completed all preparations for 'Swachhhta Pakhwada' and issued instructions to the state's basic education officers in this context. They have been provided with a comprehensive list of programmes and activities for the celebration.

Over 60 hospitalised after food poisoning on Janmashtami

Mathura (PTI): Over 60 people, including women and children, were hospitalised due to food poisoning after consuming items made from buckwheat flour, officials said on Tuesday. A team from the District Food and Drug Administration raided and sealed the shops of two vendors supplying the contaminated buckwheat flour. A case has been registered against them, they said. The affected individuals — who were fasting on the occasion of Janmashtami — experienced symptoms such as vomiting, dizziness and shivering after eating 'puris' and 'pakodas' made from the flour. "We had fritters made from buckwheat flour last night. After that, I started vomiting and felt a burning sensation in my stomach," Priyanka, a teenager admitted to the government hospital, told PTI Videos. Pritam Singh, a resident of Parkham village accompanying a patient, said that after consuming the fritters, people complained of dizziness, vomiting, and shivering. "The buckwheat flour was purchased from a local shop in the village," he added. Mahesh, another resident, told PTI Videos, "My wife is unable to stand, she has become very weak, almost unconscious." Dr Bhudev Prasad, in-charge of the Rapid Response Team of the Health Department, said that complaints of food poisoning were received from several villages in the Farah police station area during the night. "Teams from the Health Department, Farah Community Health Centre (CHC), and District Hospital responded swiftly. Initially, patients were treated at the CHC, but as numbers increased, they were moved to the District Hospital, the 100-bed Joint Hospital in Vrindavan, and SN Medical College in Agra," he said. Chief Medical Officer (CMO) Dr Ajay Kumar Verma confirmed that over 60 people have been admitted to various hospitals. "Patients showing improvement today will be discharged," he added.

Prisoner escapes from police custody

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

A prisoner escaped from police custody on the court premises in Wazirganj around on Tuesday afternoon. According to reports, constables Vipin Pandey and Devesh Kumar had transported the prisoner from the district jail to the civil court for an appearance. Upon arriving at the court, the prisoner managed to evade the constables and flee the scene. The escape raised serious concerns about the security arrangements at the court. Advocates questioned the adequacy of the current security measures and called for a thorough investigation and improved arrangements. They noted that recently, some jail inmates brought to court for hearings were observed moving about freely. An association of advocates had previously complained to the court administration about this issue, prompting a temporary increase in security. However, the situation has reportedly reverted to previous levels of laxity. Inmates were allegedly able to communicate with their advocates or family members by bribing the policemen escorting them, leading to overcrowded conditions in the court's holding area and allowing some inmates to escape. In response to the incident, police said that action would be taken against the constables if they were found negligent. "We are actively searching for the escaped prisoner, Raj Kumar, who is from Madiapur village. Raids are being conducted in the surrounding areas, and a special team has been formed to track him down. CCTV footage is being reviewed, and we are confident he will be

apprehended soon," a police spokesman said. Raj Kumar, who was facing a fraud case registered at the Jankipuram police station, was being held in district jail prior to his escape.

YOUTH'S BODY FOUND HANGING FROM TREE

A youth's body was found hanging from a tree in the Para police station area on Tuesday. The condition of the body suggested foul play, as it was found with its knees touching the ground, and there were visible signs of a struggle at the scene. The police are currently investigating the case but have yet to uncover any clear evidence indicating the nature of the incident. A police team reached the scene and began an investigation. As of now, the identity of the deceased remains unknown. Authorities have circulated photographs of the body to nearby police stations and are also appealing for assistance on social media to help identify the victim. The body, believed to be that of a 20-year-old male, was found in a mango orchard in Muzaffar Kheda village, Para. Villagers, who informed the police, noted injury marks on the body and signs of a struggle, leading them to suspect that the man was killed elsewhere and then hanged from the tree. "Circumstantial evidence suggests a strong possibility of murder," the villagers claimed. They believe that the victim was moved to the scene and hanged after being killed by the perpetrators. The Para police have noted that there are no visible injury marks on the body, and efforts are ongoing to identify the victim by questioning people in the area.

4-yr-old girl raped in Ayodhya, accused held in police encounter

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

A 4-year-old Dalit girl was allegedly raped by a 35-year-old man in a village in the Maharajganj area here, police said on Tuesday. Within a few hours of the incident, the police arrested the accused in an encounter during which he suffered a bullet injury in his leg while trying to flee, they said. The rape victim, who is in a critical condition, has been rushed to the hospital for treatment, they added. The incident took place on Monday evening when one Salman, a resident of the same village, allegedly took the girl near his house and raped her before fleeing the area, the police said. The girl went missing on Monday evening, and when did not return home even after 4-5 hours, her family members began frantically looking for her, they said. Subsequently, she was discovered in the vicinity of Salman's residence, prompting the family to alert the police, they added. Keeping in view the tension prevailing in the village, elaborate police arrangements have been made to maintain law and order, officials said. Ayodhya Deputy SP Sandeep Singh said the accused Salman was attempting to flee after opening fire at a police team near Tarapur village on Aimee Alapur Road in Maharajganj. The police retaliated and shot at him, leaving the accused injured, after which he was nabbed, Singh said. Salman has been admitted to the hospital in police custody, he said, adding that a detailed probe is on in the matter.

CLASSIFIEDS

NOTICE

I am Rajesh Kumar Gupta S/o Shri Ganga Sagar Gupta R/o 26/61A, Birhana Road BTC Kanpur. My name is mentioned as Rajesh Omar in the documents of my son Ayush Omar whereas my name is mentioned as Rajesh Kumar Gupta in all my documents hence both these names are mine.

NOTICE

I am Rita Gupta, W/o Shri Rajesh Kumar Gupta, R/o 26/61A, Birhana Road BTC Kanpur. My name is mentioned as Rita Omar in the documents of my son Ayush Omar, whereas my name is mentioned as Rita Gupta in all my documents, hence both these names are mine.

NOTICE

I have changed my name from Sahajad to Mohammad Shazad Alam for future purpose. Mohammad Shazad Alam S/o Shahid Alam R/o 308/289, Jannati Masjid Bajpai Nagar, Jajmau Kanpur

NOTICE

I have changed my name from SAMEEM ABBASH to SHAMIM ABBAS S/O SARKAR HUSAIN for future purpose. Add: VILLAGE SARAIN SAYED ALI GUVARA TAIYABPUR KAUSHAMBI.

सूचना

मैं आर्मी नं. 4200791L हवलदार रामवीर यादव पुत्र श्री हरपाल सिंह, नि.ग्र. कमलपुर, पो. रूपपुर, थाना मूसझाग, तह. व जिला बदायूं। मेरे आर्मी रिकॉर्ड में पत्नी का नाम सर्वेश देवी गलत अंकित है जबकि सही नाम सर्वेश कुमारी (SARVESH KUMARI) है, जोकि मेरे आर्मी रिकॉर्ड में दर्ज किया जाये।

NOTICE

In my service record, my son's name is MD SHALIM and date of birth is 31.12.1992 which is wrong. The correct name is MD SALEEM and date of birth is 10.11.1997. Which should be recorded in my service record. NAIB SUB Service Number - JC728166k, Mohd Sarfuddin, son - Mohd Gulfaam, Village - Dildarnagar Nai Basti, Post - Dildarnagar, Ghazipur (Uttar Pradesh) 232326

WANTED

WALK IN INTERVIEW
Under the Science of Happiness, P.P.N. (PG) College invites applications for the faculty of Psycho. Qualification M.A. in Psychology preferable NET / Ph.D. Orientation of Research will be preferred. Number of Post - 01 Date of Interview: 03/09/24 Time : 11:00am at College Campus. Principal : PPN College

NOTICE

I hereby declare that in my official documents my mother's name is wrongly registered as SHANTI DEVI which is incorrect while her correct name is SHANTI. Hence, in my all official documents my mother's correct name SHANTI will be known and written. Manesh Kumar S/O Ram Sagar R/O Village-Harinaragar, Post-Rasyora, Tehseel and District-Sitapur

NOTICE

PUBLIC NOTICE
This is to inform that my client INDUSIND BANK LIMITED intends to provide a loan to its customers M/s. Hanuman Prasad & Sons against its property being House with Shop constructed on a plot of land measuring 471.50 sq.ft. Le. 43.757 sq.mtr. bearing Municipal No. 0-411 being portion of Gata No. 2867/2372 situated at Chhatraji Puri Gali/Kanun Goyan, Pargana & Tehsil-Nawabganj & District- Barabanki and in the chain of title deeds, the original sale-deed dated 01.04.1972 favouring Sri Hanuman Prasad son of Sri Hinga Lal vide document No. 429 duly registered at the office of sub-registrar Nawabganj, Barabanki is allegedly lost somewhere. If any person or institution has any interest, concern or title over said property, he/it may contact me within 7 days with concerned evidence. If no objection/claim is lodged with me within said period, my client shall provide loan to its said customer against mortgage of said property and it shall have its first charge over said property. Tarun Prakash Srivastava, Advocate, Chamber: Room No. 110-111, Citi Hotel, B.N. Road, Lalbagh, Lucknow - 226001, Mob.: 8535914262

NOTICE

Be it known to all that by mistake in my some documents my name is wrongly written as Nizamuddin but my actual name is Nizamuddin. In future I shall be known as Nizamuddin S/O Mohd. Tahir R/o Mohammadpur majra, Rashulpur Sadat, Lucknow.

UPS anti-Dalit, anti-OBC, says AAP leader Sanjay Singh

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Aam Aadmi Party's state in-charge and Rajya Sabha MP Sanjay Singh on Tuesday criticised the Central government's Unified Pension Scheme (UPS), describing it as "anti-Dalit" and "anti-OBC". He alleged that the UPS is a "big fraud with the employees" and called for the reinstatement of the old pension scheme (OPS). Singh asserted that the UPS is a ploy by the Modi government to attract voters ahead of the assembly elections in four states, claiming it will "deprive Dalits, backward classes, tribals, and paramilitary forces personnel of pension". Singh explained that under the UPS, employees from Scheduled Castes (SC) and Scheduled Tribes (ST) can receive service relaxation up to 40 years, while Other Backward Classes (OBCs) can receive relaxation up to 38 years. "When they do not complete 25 years of service, how will they get the benefit of pension? That is why UPS is anti-Dalit and anti-backward. UPS is a betrayal with the employees of the country," Singh said. He emphasised that while MPs receive pensions after just 40

days of service, regular employees who work for 40 years are left without pensions. Addressing the Waqf Board Bill, Singh accused the BJP of spreading misinformation, calling the bill a "divide and rule" measure. Singh refuted claims that tribunal decisions would be unchallengeable, stating, "Legal battles can be fought in the High Court and Supreme Court despite tribunal decisions." Singh also responded to allegations about the Waqf Board Bill, criticising the BJP's propaganda and asserting, "Two-three false claims are being made about the Waqf Board, which have no basis." He further contended that the bill is against constitutional provisions and "people of all castes and religions oppose it." On the topic of teachers' recruitment, Singh condemned the violation of reservation rules, calling for the government to "find a solution and implement reservation according to its original spirit and form without any changes." He emphasised the urgency of filling the numerous vacant teacher posts. Singh also hit out at BJP MP Kangana Ranaut's controversial remarks about farmers, calling

them "objectionable" and a reflection of the "disgusting mentality" of the BJP. He demanded an apology from BJP leaders, stating, "Kangana's statement reflects the disgusting mentality of the BJP. The BJP sometimes calls the farmers Khalistanis, sometimes Pakistanis, sometimes terrorists and now rapists. This is a shameful statement." During the press conference, Singh announced that the Aam Aadmi Party would hold a regional conference on October 13 in Lucknow, where party workers from across the state would strategise for the upcoming year. He also mentioned plans for training camps in eight regions and expanding the Tiranga branch. Singh met All-India Muslim Personal Law Board member Maulana Khalid Rashid Farangi Mahali to express concerns about the Waqf Board Amendment Bill. He argued that the bill violates the religious freedoms guaranteed by Article 26 of the Constitution and speculated that the next move might be to "capture the lands of Gurudwara, Church, and Temple and give it to his friend Adani."

CITY BRIEFS

PSKS TO REMAIN CLOSED ON AUGUST 30
Regional Passport Officer Shubham Singh said here on Tuesday that due to technical maintenance of Passport Seva Portal, all Passport Seva Kendras (PSKs) and Post Office Passport Seva Kendras (POPSKs) under the jurisdiction of Regional Passport Office, Lucknow, will remain closed on August 30. During this period, public inquiry services will not be available at the Regional Passport Office. All appointments scheduled for August 30 will be adjusted in the next 10 days. A message to cancel the application and then reschedule the appointment will be sent to the mobile numbers of all the applicants.

Conference, organised by the Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad (ABVP) under the Medivision banner, which began at the Atal Convention Centre Auditorium of KGMU on Tuesday. The event also paid tribute to a late postgraduate student from Kolkata's RG Kar Medical College. "Medical students need to excel globally as medical science equips us to combat and overcome future diseases," Pathak said. ABVP national president Raj Sharan Shahi highlighted the need for India's education system to align with its cultural ethos. He celebrated India's diversity, drawing an analogy between a garden with various flowers that still represents a single entity and the unity of Indians despite differences in religion, culture, and language. The conference aims to inspire future medical professionals to uphold values of unity and service in their careers.

Prasad Gupta and conducted by provincial general secretary Ravi Gupta, focused on advocating the inclusion of Kamalapur Vaishyas in the backward class category. A significant decision made during the meeting was the expulsion of several individuals from the Kamalapur society. Ramkumar Gupta, Prem Kamalapur, Barhni, and Dushyant Kumar Gyan, who were found involved in anti-community activities, were expelled from the society for a period of five years.

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PROTEST
Vice-chairman of SR Group of Institutions Piyush Singh Chauhan and BJP leader Aparna Yadav condemned the Kolkata rape and murder inci-



PUNJAB STATE POWER CORPORATION LTD.
(Regd. Office: PSEB Head Office, The Mall Patiala-147001)
Corporate Identity Number: U40109PB2010SGC033813 Website: www.pspcl.in
Contact No. 96461-20640

Tender Enquiry No. 1704/C&I/O&M/PC-2583 Dated: 23-08-2024
Chief Engineer/ O&M (P&P Cell-I), GHPT, Lehra Mohabbat, invites E-tender for the Procurement of RTDs and thermocouple for Stage-I & II Units, GHPT, Lehra Mohabbat, Quantity as per NIT. For detailed NIT & tender specification please refer to <https://eproc.punjab.gov.in> from 23-08-2024 at 17:00 Hrs. onwards.
Note:- Corrigendum and addendum, if any will be published online at <https://eproc.punjab.gov.in>
GHPT-73/24

76155/12/3350/2023/37011 Dated CHD :- 8/27/2024

M.P. MADHYA KSHETRA VIDYUT VITARAN COMPANY LIMITED
(Govt. of M.P. Undertaking)
Nishtha Parisar, Bijalee Nagar, Govindpura, Bhopal-23
Phone No. : 0755-2602033-36, Fax: 2599821, 2586636
Ref. : MD/MK/04/NIT/1410 Date : 27.08.2024

TENDER NOTICE
MPMKVCL, Bhopal, invites following bids from manufacturers through e-tendering :-

Tender Specification Number	Particulars	Approx. Value (Rs. Lakh)	Tender Fee including GST (in Rs.)	Date of Pre-Bid Conference	Date of Opening of Tender
MD/MK/04/1082	Rate Contract for 140 Kg 8 Mtr. Long PCC Pole	2808.30	23600	05.09.24 at 3:00 PM	17.09.2024 at 3:00 PM

Other details and full Tender documents would be available on Company website <https://portal.mpcz.in> & Govt. Website <https://mptenders.gov.in> shortly.
M.P. Madhyam/116105/2024 **CHIEF GENERAL MANAGER (PROC.)**

Mayawati re-elected BSP chief, plays down electoral reverses

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

The Bahujan Samaj Party is "not disappointed" after the recent electoral reverses and will continue to work for the oppressed, Mayawati said here Tuesday after her re-election as the party president.

She was elected again to the top post unanimously at a special meeting of the BSP Central Executive Committee (CEC) and office bearers from all over the country, a statement said. The party had failed to win a single seat in Uttar Pradesh in the Lok Sabha elections. "Despite electoral reverses, the BSP is not disappointed. It is stoutly pursuing the goal and welfare principle of 'Bahujan Hitay and Bahujan Sukhaye' (progress and prosperity of bahujans) on the strength of the bahujan samaj," she said. She also hit out at the Congress and the BJP, claiming the two national parties are not "true well-wishers of minorities and backward communities in the country. Like anti-Congressism in the past, the politics of the country has now become entangled in anti-BJPism whereas both these parties and their alliances are neither true well-wishers of bahujans, Dalits, adivasis, OBCs, Muslims and other religious minorities nor can they ever be so because their thinking about bahujans... is narrow, casteist, and communal," she alleged. "This is the main reason why



BSP supremo Mayawati addressing a meeting in Lucknow on Tuesday. Pioneer

during the rule of both these parties and their alliances, which have been in power for most of the time in the country, there has not yet been the required improvement in the condition of bahujans," she added. Mayawati said that because of the Lok Sabha election results "not being one-sided" in favour of any particular party, it creates new possibilities and in such a situation, the BSP has to continue its efforts to secure better result in the future by expanding its mass base on the basis of cadre. About the BJP-led NDA government, Mayawati said their attitude "does not yet appear" to be "rational and liberal" as demanded by the time because of which it "cannot be called a stable and strong government".

But she added it is difficult to say this government would be forced to work for real constitutional interest and welfare of the poor instead of "continuing to work for big capitalists and the super-rich." "Their model of development and governance has mostly proved to be opposed to the poor, workers, farmers and bahujans. Expecting any particular good from the Congress would continue to be a mirage in a desert," she added. Referring to the upcoming Assembly polls in Haryana, Maharashtra, Jharkhand, Jammu and Kashmir and Delhi, she said the party will contest the elections in these states with full strength and determination. She called upon the party

workers and followers to put their heart and soul in their respective states in the interest of the BSP movement. "Dalits or bahujans will have to learn to trust their own power, the BSP, otherwise they would continue to get deceived and forced to live a life of helplessness and slavery," she claimed. She assured the party followers that she is ready to make any sacrifice to advance the humanitarian mission of "great people", particularly those born in Dalit, Adivasi and OBC communities, through the BSP movement, the statement said. Addressing the party workers here, Mayawati said the movement of Dr Bhimrao Ambedkar for self-respect and dignity of bahujans is now advancing and has become so strong that it cannot be misled from its goal whatsoever. Mayawati (68) is a four-time former chief minister of Uttar Pradesh. BSP founder Kanshi Ram had declared her as his political successor more than two decades ago. She was elected the party president for the first time in 2003, a post that has remained with her ever since. Two days ago, Mayawati had taken to social media to announce that her retirement from active politics was "out of question". On May 27, 2018, Mayawati had famously told party workers in Lucknow that she would continue as the party president for the next 20 years until she is too old for the responsibility.

SP MLA demands action against cops who raided woman's house in Bijnor

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Samajwadi Party's Nagina Samila Manoj Kumar Paras led a delegation of local leaders and Muslim clerics to the party office, demanding more punitive action against the policemen who raided the house of a woman in Bijnor. The 55-year-old woman allegedly died of a panic attack after a police team raided her house on a tip-off that beef was stored in her premises in the Bijnor district on Monday afternoon. The deceased was

identified as Razia, who was a resident of the Khatai village. Bijnor Superintendent of Police Abhishek Jha sent to the police lines the four constables who raided the premises where the police team did not find any objectionable material as was objected off. The raid was conducted on suspicion of violation of the anti-cowslaughter law in Uttar Pradesh, which prohibits cow slaughter, and the sale or transport of beef. "An inquiry has been ordered, and the role of the police informer will also be probed.

Necessary legal action will be taken against the informer for providing biased information to the police, and against the police officers if our probe finds them guilty," said Jha. Nasim, the son of the deceased, alleged that four police constables had stormed his house and misbehaved with the women present there. "They ransacked the household articles while we pleaded that we had not stored anything the government banned. My mother had a panic attack due to the police's behaviour. We rushed her to

the local clinic, where the doctor pronounced her dead," said Nasim. "As the representative of my constituency, it is my responsibility to ensure that the police or anti-social elements harass none of any caste or community," Paras said. Meanwhile, Station House Officer (SHO) of Kiratpur, Bijnor, Jai Bhagwan Singh said the woman's death had nothing to do with the police raid. "Razia was an asthma patient and had been getting treatment for the same for the last few years," he claimed.

Yogi govt to invest ₹800 crore to transform Bulandshahr

PNS ■ LUCKNOW/ BULANDSHAHR

As part of its ongoing efforts to stimulate business growth and improve connectivity and urban amenities across Uttar Pradesh, the Yogi Adityanath government has plans to invest Rs 800 crore in the transformation of Bulandshahr. Bulandshahr, renowned for its metal casting industry, is set for significant expansion under a comprehensive masterplan, which will attract an additional Rs 554 crore in investment and create 1,500 new jobs. To date, Bulandshahr has received investment proposals totalling Rs 154 crore. The blueprint, prepared under Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath's direction, envisions developing Bulandshahr to accommodate an estimated population of 4,00,000 by 2031, up from its current pop-

ulation of 2,22,519. In a recent meeting, Yogi highlighted Bulandshahr's rich history, which dates back to 120 BC and includes significant mythological elements. He noted that over the past 6-7 years, the city's growing business activities, improved connectivity, and urban amenities have increased the number of permanent residents. Given this growth, the expansion of Bulandshahr is crucial. The chief minister discussed plans for its development under Masterplan-2031, emphasising the need to enhance industries such as sugar mills, dairy, metal casting, hand pumps, and electronic parts. He proposed creating a dedicated industrial area and prioritising transport and mobility improvements. Additionally, he instructed the development of a logistics and warehousing hub and mandat-

ed the preparation of an action plan for a new public housing project, which has already commenced. Under the masterplan, land on both sides of the Secunderabad-Meerut Road Bypass will be utilised up to 500 metres. Bulandshahr will be divided into eight distinct zones for development. Zone 1 will focus on revitalising the old city. To preserve the Kali river, no construction will occur within 200 metres of the water body, which runs through zones 2 & 5. Zone 3 will be developed with central planning, featuring gardens and parks for public use. Zone 4, the city's old industrial area, will be upgraded to meet current needs. Zones 6, 7, and 8 will be newly developed, including construction of a bypass, residential schemes, highway facilities, and a new industrial area. Bulandshahr will expand on

these 6 parameters: development of the outer area, establishment of main business centers, establishment of industrial areas, promotion of the wood industry of the city, balanced development and investment in the city. Bulandshahr is a key manufacturing hub for hand pumps and metal pipes distributed to states such as Jharkhand, Bihar, Bengal, Gujarat, Tamil Nadu, and Madhya Pradesh. The city is renowned for its major industries, including sugar mills, dairy production, and animal feed. Bulandshahr is known for producing electronic components such as high-voltage switches, fuse sets, electrical transformers, switch gears, isolators, distribution boxes, pole boxes, meter boxes, and PTFE insulation wires. These products serve national needs, including supply to electricity boards, aerospace industries, and the UP Electricity Board.

Exim Bank to help set up 3D design studio for Khurja pottery

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

The Export-Import Bank of India (Exim Bank) announced its support for increasing exports from Uttar Pradesh by assisting the Khurja Pottery Manufacturers' Association in establishing a 3D design studio. This support comes from the initiative of Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath and under the bank's 'Grassroots Enterprise Development' programme, which is specifically designed for small enterprises. Earlier this year, Exim Bank, in collaboration with the National Institute of Design, Ahmedabad, organised a design development workshop

in Khurja for 25 master craftsmen, aiming to enhance their design skills and technologies to make their products globally competitive. Khurja, known for its tableware, crockery and technical ceramics industry, houses over 300 manufacturing units providing employment to more than 30,000 skilled and new workers. Design development has long been a significant challenge for Khurja pottery. The lack of skills in design development has hindered even experienced artisans from innovating and adapting their products to market demands. The new 3D design studio aims to address these challenges by providing

advanced design tools and expertise, enabling artisans to create new products and improving the industry's export potential. The studio will benefit over 250 local pottery units (members of KPMA), providing them with access to cutting-edge technology and expert guidance. The studio will facilitate experimentation with new designs, reduce production costs, and enhance the overall quality of their products. Training provided at the studio will equip potters with the skills necessary to create more appealing and commercially viable designs. With modern designs in high demand in international markets, Khurja

artisans are expected to secure orders from global brands, supported by Exim Bank's assistance in prestigious art festivals like Kala Ghoda. Inaugurating the 3D design studio on Tuesday, Exim Bank's Managing Director Harsha Bangari reaffirmed their commitment to continuously supporting micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) in Uttar Pradesh. She highlighted the role of the 3D design studio in modernising the ceramics industry and aiding grassroots enterprises in reaching global markets. In light of the export potential of these industries, Exim Bank recently opened a regional office in Lucknow.

CM: Enhance services for devotees, tourists in Mathura-Vrindavan

PNS ■ MATHURA/AGRA

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Monday instructed officials to enhance services for devotees and tourists in Mathura-Vrindavan. He said that everyone's safety, whether they are local residents, tourists or devotees, is the responsibility of the government and must be prioritised. The chief minister, who was in Mathura on the occasion of Shri Krishna Janmashtami, discussed the safety of devotees and other tourists in a review meeting with local public representative and administrative officials on Monday, and said that the development of the entire municipal corporation area as a 'Safe City' should be expedited. The CM added: "Ensure everyone's faith is respected. Security should be increased on the 'parikrama' route and highways with increased patrolling of bikes and PRVs."

Yogi performs 'gau seva'



Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath participates in Janmashtami celebrations at Gorakhnath temple in Gorakhpur on Tuesday. PTI

The chief minister also called for enhancing the Integrated Traffic Management System with the installation of additional CCTV cameras and ensuring continuous police presence in sensitive and crowded areas. Stressing the need to enhance civic amenities in the Braj region, the chief minister directed the officials to ensure that the roads were unbroken and free of potholes. He called for special attention to this issue, ensuring that the damaged roads are promptly repaired. Additionally, he directed that roads affected by ongoing works under the Jal Jeevan Mission or Amrit Yojana be repaired as quickly as possible. Furthermore, the CM instructed the officials to maintain cleanliness on the 'Parikrama Marg' and repair roads connected to it. Yogi instructed that door-to-door garbage collection be made more effective, highlighting the importance of public participation through mohalla committees for maintaining cleanliness. He also directed the deployment of additional manpower for cleanliness in the Mathura-Vrindavan area and urged that garbage management efforts be enhanced, drawing inspiration from the Prayagraj Kumbh model. The chief minister instructed that street lighting and decorations in Mathura be improved. He recommended installing solar-powered street lights on major routes and key areas.

At the outset, he offered prayers at the Gorakhnath Temple. He then paid homage to his guru, Brahm malin Mahant Avaidyanath, at his memorial before proceeding to the cowshed. He also inquired about the cows' health and nutrition from the cowshed workers and provided necessary instructions for their care. Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath also interacted with the children and their families on the temple premises. He also seized the moment to encourage them to study hard and excel in life, emphasising the importance of education.

Additionally, he called for the organisation of street vendors and the creation of designated vending zones. He also directed the officials to make arrangements for piped drinking water facilities for the convenience of devotees. The CM instructed the Braj Tirtha Vikas Parishad, municipal corporation, police, and development authority to enhance parking facilities. "Develop additional multi-level parking facilities and establish commercial complexes within these parking areas, incorporating retail shops. Engage with the community to lease these shops, as this will not only generate revenue but also help alleviate traffic congestion," he stated. Highlighting the need for improved facilities, the chief minister noted that the number of devotees visiting the Mathura-Vrindavan area from both within the country and abroad is steadily increasing each year. He stressed the importance of enhancing all amenities to

ensure that devotees leave with a pleasant experience. Additionally, the chief minister called for the creation of multi-level parking and commercial spaces within the corridor. Yogi stated that the state has vast potential for religious tourism, with key centres like Ayodhya, Mathura-Vrindavan, Kashi, and Prayagraj. Over the past seven years, these areas have undergone significant transformation, leading to an unprecedented increase in tourist footfall, he added, pointing out that the surge in visitors is set to boost the local economy. "With the Prayagraj Maha Kumbh scheduled for next year, millions are expected to attend, including visitors to Mathura-Vrindavan. In this context, it is crucial to ensure top-notch services for the devotees," he stated. Regarding the Sri Banke Bihari Temple Corridor, the chief minister stated that discussions would take place with all relevant stakeholders. Meanwhile, Yogi unveiled the statue of Rashtreev Durgadas Rathore. Addressing a public gathering at the Taj Mahal Metro Station, he emphasised the paramount importance of national unity. "Nothing is greater than the nation," he stated. He added, "Our strength lies in our unity. If we allow ourselves to be divided, we will fall. The situation in Bangladesh serves as a warning—those mistakes must not be repeated here. We must stay united, uphold our noble values, ensure our safety, and strive for the pinnacle of prosperity." "On August 9, 1925, revolutionaries like Pt Ram Prasad Bismil, Thakur Roshan Singh, Ashfaqulla Khan, and Chandrashekar Azad boldly challenged British rule with the train action. Though the revolutionaries secured only Rs 4,600, the British spent a staggering Rs 10 lakh to arrest and punish them. Yet, the fight for India's independence remained unshaken. These great sons of Mother India, with their enduring spirit, continued their relentless efforts to undermine foreign rule," he stated. Yogi also touched upon historical connections, stating, "We know our history. Aurangzeb had ties to this very Agra, where Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj, the great hero of the Hindavi Swarajya, defied his power. Shivaji boldly declared that Aurangzeb would struggle like a rat but would never conquer Hindustan. Maharaja Jaswant Singh led the resistance in Rajasthan, with Rashtreev Durgadas Rathore as his key commander. Despite Aurangzeb's repeated attempts, he couldn't conquer this land. How could any foreign invader succeed where brave nationalists like Rashtreev Durgadas Rathore stood firm? But Aurangzeb, being wicked and cunning, resorted to deceit. He made a treaty with Maharaja Dashrath Singh, promising no harm to Jodhpur, and lured him by claiming that Afghans were about to invade India. Through trickery, he captured and killed him." Extending his greetings to the people of Agra on Shri Krishna Janmashtami, the CM remarked, "Lord Krishna resides in every speck of Agra's soil. This city is a beacon of art, trust, faith, and dedication. Let this trust, faith, and rich cultural heritage flourish with national pride."

Woman throws 2-yr-old child from roof

Lucknow (PNS): A woman has been accused of throwing her two-year-old daughter from the roof of their home in Mohanlalganj. The child, identified as Nishu, suffered injuries and is currently receiving treatment in a hospital. A video of the incident, which surfaced on social media, prompted the police to take immediate action and register a case on Monday. The video shows a woman hanging her young daughter from the roof before dropping her head-first onto the ground. The police noted that the footage indicated the act was likely intended to cause harm. "Based on the video, it appears that the woman threw her daughter from the roof with the intent to kill her," a police spokesperson said. The incident took place in the Baghankheda village of Mohanlalganj. According to the police, Savita, the mother, was identified as the perpetrator. The video was brought to the police's attention by the girl's uncle and aunt. A case has been filed against Savita.

बैंक ऑफ बड़ोदा Regional Office, Kanpur Metro Region: 118/330, 1st Floor, Gumti No. 5, Kaushalpur, Kanpur - 12
Bank of Baroda Branch: Yashoda Nagar, Kanpur

Possession Notice

Whereas the undersigned being the Authorised Officer of Bank of Baroda under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of powers conferred under Section 13 (12) read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued a demand notice calling upon the borrower & guarantor to repay the amount mentioned in the notice being with in 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice.

The borrower/guarantor having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the borrowers/guarantors and the public in general that the undersigned has taken possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him/her under section 13 (4) of the said Act read with rule 8 & 9 of the said rules.

The borrower/guarantor in particular and the public in general are hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the first charge of Bank of Baroda for amount & interest thereon.

The borrower's attention is invited to provision of sub-section (8) of 13 of the act, in respect of time available to redeem the secured assets.

Name and Address of Borrower/Guarantor & Description of Mortgage Property & O/S Amount as per Demand Notice/Demand Notice Date & Possession Notice Date
Borrower : Shri Rahul Singh Sengar S/o Shri Dinesh Singh & Smt Kusum Singh W/o Shri Dinesh Singh and Shri Dinesh Singh S/o Shri Kunwar Singh, All R/O : 12B/3/4B, B-Block, White House, Thana Naubasta, Yashoda Nagar, Kanpur Nagar. Demand Notice Date: 23-01-2024 • Date of Constructive Possession: 23-08-2024 Property : Flat No. B-15/10, Shivalik (2nd Floor), Scheme-Shatabdi Nagar Phase No. 4-B, (Panki Gangaganj) Sulabh Awas Yojna, Type-3, Kanpur Nagar in the name of Shri Rahul Singh Sengar S/o Shri Dinesh Singh, Area : Builtup Area 28.70 Sq. Mtr. and Undivided Share in Land 12.30 Sq. Mtr., Bounded-North : Flat No. B-15/11, South : Block No. B-14, East : Flat No. B-15/9, West : Block No. B-4. Outstanding Amount as per Demand Notice : Rs. 10,00,516.41 + Intt. + Others Charges Total Dues Amount as on Dated 23-08-2024 : Rs. 10,94,078.41 + Intt. + Others Charges Date : 23-08-2024 Place : Kanpur Authorised Officer

बड़ोदा यू.पी. बैंक Regional Office : 2A Gautam Nagar (2nd Floor) Fatehpur 212601
Baroda U.P. Bank Mob: 9554969117, 9554969118, E-Mail: fatehp@barodauprrb.co.in

Possession Notice [Rule 8(1)] (For Immovable/Movable Property)

Whereas, the undersigned being the Authorized Officer of the Baroda U.P. Bank under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of powers conferred under Section 13(12) read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002 issued a Demand Notice calling upon the borrowers to repay the amount mentioned in the notice within 60 days from the date of Receipt of the said notice. The Borrower's/Guarantor's having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the Borrower's/Guarantor's and the public in general, that the undersigned has taken possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him/her under section 13 (4) of the said Act read with Rule 8 of the said rules on below mentioned date. The Borrower's/Guarantor's/Mortgagor's in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of the Baroda U.P. Bank. The Borrower's/Guarantors attention is invited to provisions of Section 13 (8) of the Act, in respect of time available, to redeem the secured assets.

Sl. No.	Name of the Borrowers/Legal Heirs Demand Notice Date/Branch	Detail of Property / Name of the owner/ Type of Possession	Outstanding Amount (Rs.)
1.	Borrower: Neeraj Singh S/O Shri Rajendra Singh Demand notice Date: 07.06.2024 Possession date: 22.08.2024 Branch: Main Branch, Fatehpur	Equitable Mortgage of House in the name of Neeraj Singh S/O Shri Rajendra Singh situated at- House No. 298, R.K. Puram Colony, Fatehpur, Area 84 sq meter. Bounded: East: Rasta, West: House of Udai Mali, North: Plot of Pandey J., South: House of Santosh Bajpai Type of Possession: Symbolic	Rs. 10,16,459.40 as on 31.05.2014 and interest expenses thereon
2.	Borrower: Sri Lal Bahadur Nishad S/O Sri Lalata Prasad Demand notice Date: 07.06.2024 Possession date: 22.08.2024 Branch: Main Branch, Fatehpur	Equitable Mortgage of House in the name of Mrs. Kunna Devi W/O Mr. Lal Bahadur Nishad (Guarantor) situated at-House No. 494, South Murav Toia, Tehsil & Dist Fatehpur, Area 93.00 sq mt Bounded: East: House of Jagroop Kashyap, West: Nail & than House of Anwar, North: 12 ft. road, South: 12 ft. road Type of Possession: Symbolic	Rs. 6,28,518.00 as on 31.05.2018 and interest expenses thereon
3.	Borrower: M/S Shree A.K. Enterprises Prop. Kuldeep Kumar S/O Ram Khelawan Gupta Demand notice Date: 07.06.2024 Possession date: 22.08.2024 Branch: Main Branch, Fatehpur	Equitable Mortgage of House in the name of Smt. Shanti Devi W/O Sri Ram Khelawan Gupta & Sri Ram Khelawan Gupta S/O Sri Shripal situated at House No.376/337, Abunagar, Tehsil & Dist Fatehpur, Area-27.00 sq mt At present Area 9.43 Sq. m. Bounded: East: House of Ram khelawan, West: Vikrit house door after gali after house of Vishal Singh, North: Vikrit house door after road, South: House of Ram Khelawan Type of Possession: Symbolic	Rs. 29,33,392.00 as on 31.05.2017 and interest expenses thereon

Date: 28.08.2024, Place: Fatehpur Authorised Officer, Baroda UP Bank

UPCC chief demands action against Kangana for remarks on farmers

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

Uttar Pradesh Congress Committee (UPCC) president Ajai Rai strongly criticised Bollywood actress-turned-politician Kangana Ranaut for 'insulting' the farmers and urged Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) president JP Nadda to expel party MP Kangana. "In fact, it is not just Kangana Ranaut's statement but as an MP, it will be considered the statement of the entire government", he said while talking to reporters at his residential office in Lahurabir here on Tuesday.

He said that Kangana abused the farmers of the entire country. "Insulting the farmers' movement in which about 750 innocent farmers sacrificed their lives is like insulting not only them but the entire country", he said, demanding action against Kangana for her 'irresponsible' and 'insulting' statement. He expressed concern



UPCC chief Ajai Rai addressing a press conference in Varanasi on Tuesday

over the BJP reaction saying that just distancing from her statement or calling it her personal opinion will not be the right action. "As we are all sons of farmers and the blood of farmers flows in our veins, so this statement of Kangana is like insulting all of us", said the state Congress chief. Rai said when Modi came to Banaras in 2014, he called himself a self-proclaimed

son of Ganga. "In the period from 2014 to 2024, he served Maa Ganga so much that till date he has not made any arrangement to stop even a single drop from falling into the river", he said. He alleged that billions of rupees were looted in the name of Maa Ganga. "Recently, it was reported that the Mahamana Pandit Madan Mohan Malviya Centre, which was started for cleaning of

Ganga river with the efforts of former Prime Minister Late Rajiv Gandhi in Banaras Hindu University, was closed. This centre used to monitor the quality of water and pollution in the river for the last several decades and also used to conduct necessary campaigns to stop pollution", he said terming the centre's closure as unfortunate.

On the Bangladesh episode, he said that just a few days ago, BJP protested in the city against the atrocities on Hindus in Bangladesh and asked that while Modi and BJP on one hand give shelter to the exiled PM of Bangladesh Sheikh Hasina in India, on the other hand they also raise slogans against the atrocities being committed on Hindus in Bangladesh, why this double standard? "The Modi government should tell the country how many Hindu refugees were given shelter in India and how many camps they set up for Hindus?", he said.

Boy meets tragic end

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ PRAYAGRAJ

A four-year-old boy died after falling from the roof while playing in Hargarh village under Meja police station area on Monday evening. This caused panic in the family. The boy had come to his maternal grandmother's house with his mother a month ago. Later the child was cremated at Sirsa Ghat. Reports said Reema, wife of Bhagwati Prasad Patel, Reema had come to her maternal home Hargarh a month ago with her two children Ayush and Baby (four months). Ayush fell down from the roof while playing on Monday evening. Uncle Raju Patel took the seriously injured Ayush to a private hospital in the city where he died during treatment which lasted for about two hours.

Meanwhile the youth, who was shot dead in Yamunanagar here on August 23 was identified here on Tuesday. The family members reached Ghurpur police station and identified him as Raju Bhartiya (35), a resident of Dandi Vidyanagar. Police said investigation so far revealed the possibility of monetary dispute behind the murder.

In another incident five people sustained serious injuries in a clash in Phoolpur, over an issue related to eve-teasing here on Tuesday. All of them were admitted to the community health centre (CHC), Phoolpur for treatment where the condition of three was reported to be precarious and they were later referred to city's SRN Hospital. The police have registered a case against three people in this regard.

Varanasi once again secures 1st position in UP health dashboard

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

Varanasi has once again secured the first position in the state in the Health Ranking Dashboard of Uttar Pradesh. In the recently released dashboard, the district has scored 78 per cent marks. With this, the district has secured the first position in the UP Health Ranking Dashboard for the 10th time so far, informed Chief Medical Officer (CMO) Dr Sandeep Chaudhary here on Tuesday.

The chief medical officer said that recently the ranking of all the districts has been displayed in the Health Ranking Dashboard of UP (July 2024), in which Varanasi is once again in the first place. The achievement of Varanasi so far in this financial year is 67 per cent while the achievement of the month of July is 78 per cent. The state's achievement so far this year is 54 per cent while this month's is 63 per cent. In this way, the situation of Varanasi is much better than the state's achievement.

The chief medical officer said that in the last financial year, the district had secured first place in the state nine times. He said that according to the monthly dashboard, Varanasi has achieved around 70 per cent marks by performing better in Caesarean delivery. It has also secured first place in the use of permanent means of family planning. "ASHA workers are being paid on time.

Better performance is also being done on 16 indicators, including regular and complete vaccination, temporary means of family planning, prenatal checkup (haemoglobin) in pregnancy, home-based newborn care, TB notification, HIV checkup during pregnancy. Delivery and prenatal checkup services are being strengthened at all 10 First Referral Units (FRUs)", said the chief medical officer, adding that quality medical and health services of the maternal-child health and family welfare programme are being provided at all the government hospitals, community and primary health centres, Ayushman Arogya Mandirs (Health and Wellness Centres) and health sub-centres of the district. For this, necessary guidelines are being given to all medical officers, doctors, health workers and ASHA workers. Medical units are being inspected and evaluated continuously, Dr Chaudhary said.

The chief medical officer said that in the Health Ranking Dashboard of the month of August, Araziline community health centre (CHC) has got the first place, followed by Kashi Vidyapeeth, Pindra, Baragaon primary health centre (PHC), Harhua PHC, Cholapur CHC, Sewapuri PHC and Chiraigaon PHC. The urban unit has got the ninth place. The blocks whose situation is disappointing have been directed to show seriousness towards the work, he added.

Emphasis on plantation

Varanasi (PNS): Principal Chief Electrical Engineer (PCEE) of Banaras Locomotive Works (BLW) Sushil Kumar Srivastava paid a courtesy visit to Inspector General-cum-Principal Security Commissioner Ranveer Singh Chauhan and other retiring employees in the workshop premises here on Tuesday.

During this, Principal Chief Personnel Officer Janardan Singh, Senior Personnel Officer Rajkumar Gupta, Public Relations Officer (PRO) Rajesh Kumar and employees of the Welfare depart-

ment were also present. In a unique initiative started by BLW, plantation was done under the campaign 'Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam' with the retiring employees with a sense of dedication towards the environment. "This plantation is not only beneficial for the environment, but it also makes our life prosperous and happy. Also, it also sends a message of keeping the society green", said the PCEE. He also enquired about the well-being of the retiring officers and employees and appreciated the work done by them during their railway service.



United Mercantile Cooperative Bank celebrates foundation day

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

The United Mercantile Cooperative Bank Ltd celebrated its foundation day with enthusiasm. With all the branches and headquarter decorated with flowers and balloons, a customer symposium was also organised at branch level in which chief manager (HQ) Sarvesh Kumar Mishra, senior manager Viresh Kumar, managers Baby Saxena and Ms Manali Tewari took part. Chief Executive Officer RC Verma said the bank had completed 49 years of its inception and



Officials of United Mercantile Cooperative Bank Ltd assemble during the foundation day celebrations.

entered the golden jubilee year (50th year). He expressed gratitude to the customers, well-wishers for their contribution in the progress of the bank and RBI, Cooperative department, UP Government for their guidance. He said through its 14 branches, the bank is committed to serve its customers better. It is providing attractive interest on deposits with 0.5 per cent more to senior citizens on FDRs. All of its branch-

es were fully computerised and air-conditioned. Facilities available in the bank include locker, RTGS/NEFT, deposit/withdrawal SMS, mini statement, account balance information and QR code. On cash deposit customers were not charged any cash handling charge. Its two branches in Kalyanpur and Lal Bungalow had started gold loan facility from January 1. FOUND HANGING: Panic prevailed among the villagers when two girls were found hanging from a tree in Bhagaatpur village under Kayamganj Kotwali police station of Farrukhabad on Tuesday morning. Both the girls were found hanging from a single dupatta. Police sent the bodies for an autopsy and have started a probe in it.

Ishanvi Gupta felicitated

Kanpur (PNS): Ishanvi Gupta, a student of class VIII at Pathways World School, Gurgaon, has been felicitated with the honor roll. Under the Middle School Award 2023-24, she had also been awarded the Certificate of Excellence for her astounding performance in the school. Ishanvi is the granddaughter of Goldie Masale's Managing Director (MD) Surendra Gupta and daughter of its Director Shubham Gupta.



Bank of Baroda Regional Office, Kanpur Dehat Region: 118/330, 2nd Floor, Gumti No. 5, Kaushalpur, Kanpur-12

DEMAND NOTICE Branch : Chhibramau, Distt. Kannauj

Here by this is to inform that under named borrower has not repaid principal and interest thereon of the loan. Therefore the loan become NPA on below Date . A notice under section 13(2) of the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act 2002 was issued at last known address, which was returned undelivered. Therefore we again inform to under named borrower/ Guarantor by this public notice to repay the loan amount due including interest and other expenses as mentioned in this notice within 60 days from the date of publication of this notice otherwise bank will take action u/section 13(4) of the SARFAESI Act 2002.

The borrower's attention is invited to provision of sub-section (8) of 13 of the act, in respect of time available to redeem the secured assets, that after publication of public auction/involving quotation/tender/private treaty your right to redeem the secured assets will not be available.

Name and Address of Borrower / Guarantor and Security agreement with brief description of securities/N.P.A. Date & Outstanding Amount as per Demand Notice

Borrower : M/s Sita Ram Ji Traders, Proprietor : Shri Charat Lal S/o Shri Shanti Swaroop Gupta, **Address :** Mohalla Greiseyganj, Chhibramau, Kannauj, **Guarantor :** Shri Shiva Nand Gupta S/o Shri Chandra Bhan Gupta, R/o : Mohalla Greiseyganj, Chhibramau, Kannauj

Outstanding Amount as per Demand Notice : Rs. 10,37,578.18 + Intt. +Others Charges

Property : Residential House Situated at Mohalla Ibrahim Ganj, Tehsil Chhibramau, Distt. Kannauj in the name of Shri Charat Lal S/o Shri Shanti Swaroop Gupta, **Area :** 79 Sq. Mtr. **Bounded-North :** House of Shiv Prasad, **South :** Kunwar, **East :** Lane of Nagar Palika, **West :** Field.

N.P.A. Date : 03-07-2024 • Demand Notice Date : 17-08-2024

Date : 28-08-2024 Place : Kannauj Authorised Officer

55-year-old man hit by dumper, dies

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ PRAYAGRAJ

A man died on the spot after being hit by a dumper near the TCI intersection on Rewa Road under Naini police station area here. His companion riding on the bike was seriously injured in the accident. After the accident a crowd of people gathered at the spot which led to a traffic jam on the road for some time.

On getting information the police reached the spot. However, the driver fled with the dumper after the accident. The police have started searching for him. The family members became distraught after getting information about the incident. According to a report, former village head Amritlal Bhartiya (55) of Neebi village under Chaka block under Naini police station was going to city with his companion on the bike when the dumper hit the bike near the TCI intersection. People tried to stop the dumper, but the driver fled with the vehicle. A crowd of people gathered after the incident. The youth injured in the accident was treated at a nearby hospital. Naini SHO Vaibhav Singh said a case has been filed against the dumper driver who managed to flee from the spot and he is being searched.

SUICIDE CASE: The basic education officer has taken action of suspension against the accused headmaster in connection with the suicide by a student of class VIII in Phulpur. The family members alleged that the headmaster used to harass him. A report has also been lodged against the headmaster at Sarayammarej police station. Dharmendra Kumar of Haripur Patti said his son Hardik Vishwakarma (13) was a student of class VIII. Dharmendra alleged the headmaster was harassing Hardik over some issue or the other for a long time. A week ago, the headmaster got his seventh class TC made and sent it home through some children. When Hardik saw the TC, his date of birth was wrongly recorded in it due to which he got upset and committed suicide by going into the room. The police reached the spot and started taking action. On the other hand, BSA Prayagraj got the matter investigated by the block education officer and suspended the headmaster in charge with immediate effect. Inspector Yogesh Pratap Singh said a case has been registered against the headmaster.

Kashi celebrates Janmashtami with devotion

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

Shri Krishna Janmashtami was celebrated with religious fervour and traditional gaiety at several places, including at the Traffic Police Lines, police stations and some educational institutions and temple premises here on Monday evening. In the midnight hours, this city of Lord Shiva echoed with bhajans like 'bhay prakat Kripala, Deendayala...'. In the Police Lines, the festival was organised in a grand way and the festival was inaugurated by Joint Commissioner of Police (JCP) Dr K Ejilearassane. On the occasion, school students presented several cultural programmes. Several senior officers and other dignitaries attended the function.

The festival was celebrated in Banaras Hindu University (BHU) with religious fervour and devotion. Apart from the schools located in Kamachha, attractive tableaux of 'Leeladhar' Lord Krishna were decorated and worship was performed in various hostels, especially Mahila Mahavidyalaya, Triveni Mahila Hostel, Ruiya Hostel, New International Girls Hostel etc. Bhajans and kirtans were also sung by decorating tableaux in Shri Vishwanath Temple located on the university campus. Various aspects of Lord Krishna's life and his 'leelas' were beautifully presented in the tableaux placed at many places in the university, which were emotionally observed by a large number of students, visitors and members of the university family.



Students presenting a programme on Shri Krishna Janmashtami at BHU in Varanasi on Monday night.

A grand ceremony was organised at Malviya Bhawan in BHU under the chairmanship of Honorary Director of Malviya Bhawan and Head of the Department of Vedic Darshan (Sanskrit Vidya Dharma Vignya Faculty) Prof Rajaram Shukla. The stage was decorated and a 'palana' (cradle) was placed on which the idol of Lord Shri Krishna was installed. At the beginning of the programme, the priest of Shri Vishwanath Temple performed 'puja-arohan'. A beautiful 'bhajan' of Shri Krishna was presented by the members of the Faculty of Music and Performing Arts. Then religious discourses were delivered by Prof Vindhyaeshwari Prasad Mishra underlining the life of Lord Shri Krishna and its relevance in the current perspective. BHU Registrar Prof Arun Kumar Singh, Finance Officer Dr Abhay Thakur, Dean of

Students Prof AK Nema, Chief Proctor Prof SP Singh and other officials were present. The vote of thanks was proposed by SVDV Faculty Dean Prof Kaushalendra Pandey. Besides, the festival was also celebrated at Mani Mandir (Dharma Sangh) located at Durgakund. The worship began in the morning itself. First of all, special decoration of Thakurji was done. After that Mahakal decoration of the huge Narvadeshwar Shivling was also done. On the occasion grand decoration was done with garlands and electric lights in the entire Dharma Sangh complex. The festival was held in the presence of Peethadheeshwar Swami Shankardev Chaitanya Brahmachari Ji Maharaj at midnight. In the beginning, Thakurji was bathed with 'panchamrit'. Thousands of devotees felt blessed on seeing the

image of Lord Krishna on the occasion of Janmashtami. 51 quintals of halwa was offered as prasad which was distributed among the devotees. The sound of shehnai started resonating in the temple from 4 pm itself. After that Sohar and Badhai songs were presented by local artists. Along with this, a dance drama based on the birth of Shri Krishna was also presented by the local Juhi Nriyaya Kala Kendra. All the religious programmes were organised by Pandit Jagjitan Pandey. The makeup was done by Rajiv Lochan. The artists were welcomed by Rajmangal Pandey.

With the wish of peace and brotherhood, happiness and prosperity in the world, on the birth anniversary of Lord Krishna, who gave the message of egalitarian society to the whole world, the activists of Namami Gange performed the 'aarti' at ancient Vishnu Tirtha Adi Keshav Ghat where the temple premises were filled with 'Om Jai Jagdish Hare', 'Aarti Kunjibihari ki Shri Girdhar Krishna Murari ki, Baj Re Muraliya Baj', 'Shri Krishna Govind Hare Murari Hey Nath Narayan Vasudeva' etc. Regional coordinator Rajesh Shukla said Kansa, that is, ego should not rule the body, but Shri Krishna's flute of love and equality should play. Adi Keshav Temple's Mahant Pandit Vinay Kumar Tripathi, city coordinator of Namami Gange Sarika Gupta, Bhavana Tripathi, Sanjay Gupta, Nandlal, Pinky Ashutosh Singh and devotees were present in the event.

Devotees enjoy Krishna Leela performance

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

The Janmashtami festival was inaugurated at the Shri Radha Krishna Temple (JK Temple). The spiritual evening commenced at 4:30 pm with a Vedic chanting presentation by the students of JK Temple's Gurukul. Following this the artistes of Kalakunj Group gave a captivating performance of Krishna Leela, beautifully blending music, drama and dance. At 7 pm the Rhythm Group artistes staged a wonderful dramatisation of the marriage of Devaki-Vasudev and the prophecy. It was followed by a mesmerising Krishna Leela performance by the artistes of Swaranjali Group at 8:00 pm, which was thoroughly enjoyed by the devotees. Thousands of devo-



Beautifully decorated Shri Radha Krishna temple (JK Temple).

tees flocked to the temple to enjoy the darshan and various programmes. The temple has been beautifully decorated with flowers and both the temple complex and the temple itself are illuminated with stunning lights, including

multiple par lights and sharp lights. A grand setup of the Mata Vaishno Devi and Baba Amarnath caves/temple has been arranged, where devotees delighted in the 'darshan' of Mata Rani and Baba Amarnath. Devotees enthusi-

atically shopped for Lord Krishna's adornments, jewellery, and puja materials from the temple's "Kanha Kothi" and enjoyed the festive fair as well. On Monday, Janmashtami was celebrated with great joy and enthusiasm. The temple management extended warm greetings to all devotees on Janmashtami and invited everyone to celebrate the birth anniversary of Lord Yogeshwar Shri Krishna and enjoy various programmes. On the auspicious occasion of Yogeshwar's birth anniversary on Monday, beautiful performances were presented by Kalakunj Group, Rhythm Group, Kalanidhi Group, Navrang Group, Krishna Kalakunj Group and Dhanashree Band.

JM FINANCIAL ASSET RECONSTRUCTION COMPANY LIMITED

Corporate Identity Number: U67190MH2007PLC74287

Registered Office Address: 7th Floor, Energy, Appasaheb Marathe Marg, Prabhadevi, Mumbai 400025

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DEMAND NOTICE

Under Section 13(2) of the Securitisation And Enforcement of Financial Assets And Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with Rule 3 (1) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002. The Piramal Capital and Housing Finance Ltd have assigned a pool of Loan (including below mentioned Loans) together with underlying security interest created therefor along with all the rights, title and interest thereon under Section 5 (1) (b) of the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 ("SARFAESI ACT") wide an assignment agreement dated March 29, 2023 ("the Assignment Agreement") in favour of JM Financial (JM) (herein referred as Assignee). The undersigned is the Authorised Officer of JM assignee. Under Securitisation And Reconstruction of Financial Assets And Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 (the said Act). In exercise of powers conferred under Section 13(12) of the said Act read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002, the Authorised Officer has issued Demand Notices under Section 13(2) of the said Act, calling upon the following Borrower(s) (the "said Borrower(s)"), to repay the amounts mentioned in the respective Demand Notice(s) issued to them that are also given below. In connection with above, Notice is hereby given, once again, to the said Borrower(s) to pay to JM, within 60 days from the publication of this Notice, the amounts indicated herein below, together with further interest as detailed in the said Demand Notice(s), from the date(s) mentioned below till the date of payment and/or realization, payable under the loan agreement read with other documents/writings, if any, executed by the said Borrower(s). As security for due repayment of the loan, the following assets have been mortgaged to JM by the said Borrower(s) respectively.

Name of the Borrower(s)/ Guarantor(s)	Demand Notice Date and Amount with NPA date	Description of secured asset (immovable property)
(LC No. 06000008292 of Lucknow Branch) Harshit Kumar Yadav (Borrower) Saraswati Devi (Co Borrower 1)	25-07-2024/ Rs. 5,70,592/- (Rs. Five Lakh Seventy Thousand Five Hundred Ninety Two Only) NPA (09-06-2024)	Plot No. 15, Being Kharsa No. 759, Situated at Village- Saraswan, Ward Tehsil & District Lucknow Lucknow Uttar Pradesh :- 226020
(LC No. 06000008424 of Lucknow Branch) Sumit Kumar Verma (Borrower) Neetu (Co Borrower 1)	25-07-2024/ Rs. 4,02,514/- (Rs. Four Lakh Two Thousand Five Hundred Fourteen Only) NPA (08-01-2023)	Plot No. 10 A Part of Khata No. 00247, Kh. No. 297/3 Sa. Vill- Miranpur Pinwar, Pargana- Bijnaur, Tehsil- Sarojini Nagar, Lucknow Lucknow Uttar Pradesh :- 226020
(LC No. 06000006763 of Lucknow Branch) Vijay Kumar (Borrower) Umesh Ram (Co Borrower 1)	12-07-2024/ Rs. 13,08,209/- (Rs. Thirteen lakh Eight Thousand Two Hundred Nine Only) NPA (08-01-2023)	Plot No. 37 C Part of Kharsa No. 1228, 1245, 1246, 1248 Vill- Kallii Paschim Pargana Bijnaur, Lucknow Lucknow Uttar Pradesh:- 226020
(LC No. 06000007845 of Lucknow Branch) Anvish Kumar Singh (Borrower) Nitya Anand Bharati (Co Borrower 1) Vipin Singh (Guarantor 1)	12-07-2024/ Rs. 14,66,373/- (Rs. Fourteen lakh Sixty Six Thousand Three Hundred Seventy Three Only) NPA (08-01-2022)	Part of Plot No. 08 Kharsa No. 568 Min, Situated At Gram- Madiyaon, Pargana- Mahona, Tehsil- Bkt Dist- Lucknow Lucknow Uttar Pradesh:- 226020
(LC No. 06000008659 of Lucknow Branch) Rajesh Kumar Yadav (Borrower) Ram Asare (Co Borrower 1)	12-07-2024/ Rs. 23,42,002/- (Rs. Twenty Three lakh Forty Two Thousand Two Only) NPA (30-09-2020)	Plot No. 18, Being Part of Kharsa No. 36 at Village- Mehaur, Pargana & Tehsil & District Lucknow Lucknow Uttar Pradesh:- 226020
(LC No. 01400004953 of New Delhi Branch) Dhiraj Kumar Mishra (Borrower) Abhilasha Mishra (Co Borrower 1)	12-07-2024/ Rs. 42,71,477.18/- (Rs. Forty Two lakh Seventy One Thousand Four Hundred Seventy Seven Only and Eighteen Paise) NPA (28-02-2021)	Flat No. B-2104, 21st Floor, Tower-B, Oneleaf Troy, Plot No. GH-01D, Sector 10, Greater Noida (West), Uttar Pradesh- 201301
(LC No. 06000001493 of Lucknow Branch) Karunesh Kumar Shukla (Borrower) H/o and legal heir of co-borrower of late Mrs. Meenakshi Shukla), Dr Mansi Shukla D/o of Mr. Karunesh Kumar Shukla (D/o and legal heir of co-borrower of late Mrs. Meenakshi Shukla), Yogesh Shukla S/o Mr. Karunesh Kumar Shukla (S/o and legal heir of Co-Borrower of late Mrs. Meenakshi Shukla), Akash Shukla S/o Mr. Karunesh Kumar Shukla (S/o and legal heir of co-borrower of late Mrs. Meenakshi Shukla)	12-07-2024/ Rs. 10,56,03,729/- (Rs. Ten Core Fifty Six lakh Three Thousand Seven Hundred Twenty Nine Only) NPA (01-11-2018)	Land Part of Kharsa No.511, Naubasta Kalan, Tehsil & District Lucknow UP- 226001

If the said Borrowers shall fail to make payment to JM as aforesaid, JM shall proceed against the above secured assets under Section 13(4) of the Act and the applicable Rules, entirely at the risks of the said Borrowers as to the costs and consequences. The said Borrowers are prohibited under the Act from transferring the aforesaid assets, whether by way of sale, lease or otherwise without the prior written consent of JM. Any person who contravenes or abets contravention of the provisions of the said Act or Rules made there under, shall be liable for imprisonment and/or penalty as provided under the Act.

Date: 28-08-2024 Place: Uttar Pradesh

Sd/- (Authorised Officer)
JM Financial Asset Reconstruction Company Limited

BJP targets 10 cr new members in one month

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The BJP will launch a fresh membership drive with Prime Minister Narendra Modi scheduled to get the certificate for the renewal of his membership from the party President Jagat Prakash Nadda. The BJP this month set a target of enrolling at least 100 million new members across the country except in the election-bound Jammu and Kashmir, Haryana, Maharashtra, and Jharkhand. The first phase of the membership drive will go on till September 25 and then a review of the exercise will be carried out before the launch of the second phase on October 1. It will continue till October 15. Party sources said that Sadasyata Abhiyan 2024 will be launched in the presence of Prime Minister Narendra Modi on September 2, in the National Capital. According to BJP leaders, Union



Ministers, Chief Ministers and elected representatives from Sarpanch to parliamentarians will spearhead the BJP's nationwide membership drive starting from September 2, an exercise which will serve as the launch pad of the party's internal polls leading to the election of its new President. BJP National General Secretary Vinod Tawde, who is also the head of the membership drive, appealed

to people to join the party in a big way. "A strong BJP will lead to the making of a 'Viksit Bharat', he said. Active members, a term for party workers who can contest organisational elections after making a certain number of new members, will be enrolled between October 16-31. Sources said there was no plan as of now to appoint a working President before a full-fledged President is

elected. They, however, added that the party leadership may take a fresh call depending on organisational needs. Tawde said party workers across the country have been trained for the drive, which relies heavily on the digital medium. The party is relying on its 10 lakh active members to carry out the exercise, he added. All existing members of the BJP have to renew their membership every six years. The current drive will be marked by the renewal of existing membership as well as making new members. The BJP had earlier announced that the party aims to induct more than 10 crore members during the drive that will not cover the States going to polls in the coming months. The party's membership strength was 18 crore after the last such exercise, and it has expressed hope that the party will cross the figure this time.

About 110 million people signed up as BJP members in 2014 and about 70 million in 2019 when the membership drive was opened for a limited period. New members will be made through four methods - calling a mobile number (8800002024), scanning QR code, by NaMo app and through the BJP's website. However, in remote areas, the party will use the traditional method with papers to enrol new members. The campaign will set membership targets for each unit, from Booth to State levels, based on the party's performance in recent elections. Notably, State workshops were conducted on August 19 to 21 and district workshops on August 22 to 24, whereas, Mandal workshops had to be conducted on August 25 to 27. On August 31, a meeting of Page Pramukhs is also to be held at all booths to prepare for the campaign.

Amit Shah to throw light on new criminal laws at police think tank meet



PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Union Home Minister Amit Shah will attend 54th foundation day of Indian police's think tank Bureau of Police Research and Development (BPR&D) as the chief guest on Wednesday where he will deliver Anand Swaroop Gupta Memorial Lecture on "New Criminal Law - Citizen Centric Reforms". The minister will also honour the recipients of the President's Medal for Distinguished Service (PSM) and President's Medal for Meritorious Service (MSM) for the years 2023

and 2024. A special edition of the Bureau's publication "Indian Police Journal" on new criminal laws will also be released by him during the function, said a statement from the Ministry of Home Affairs. "Under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and guidance of Union Home Minister Shri Amit Shah, BPR&D is committed to transform the Indian Police Forces into SMART forces to successfully meet the challenges of policing as well as internal security by equipping them with the necessary intellectual, physical and organisational resources," it said. BPR&D has been serving as the think tank of the Indian Police since its inception in 1970 by developing policies and procedures for police and correctional services, exploring new technologies for enhanced service delivery to the citizens, capacity building of law enforcement agencies, promote cooperation and coordination between States and central police organisations, it said. Home Secretary Govind Mohan, Director General of Central Armed Police Forces (CAPFs), heads of central police organisations as well as senior officials of the Home Ministry and other departments will also attend the inauguration ceremony.

NEP advocates access, equity, quality and Bharat-centric education, says NIOS chief

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS) Chairperson Prof Saroj Sharma on Tuesday said the New Education Policy introduced by the Narendra Modi Government focuses on value education so that today's students become a responsible citizens. Addressing the National Symposium on the National Curriculum Framework (NCF) aligned with the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 at Jiva Public School in Faridabad, Prof Sharma said the NEP advocates access, equity, quality and Bharat-centric education. "The NEP envisages creation of 'New India'. It focuses on value education. The NEP is rooted in our ancient culture and traditions which we need to preserve," she said. "There is a difference between literacy and knowledge. We may be fully literate in a few years now but then knowledge can only bring the change in society and prevent untoward incidents like the recent West Bengal traumatic incident," she said, differentiating that though all were literate and getting good education but knowledge to keep society healthy failed. "I understand there is a problem with the education system and most of the things have been addressed in the NEP," Prof Sharma added. She further said: "India aims to achieve 100 per cent literacy by 2030, and to achieve this NIOS will impart education to students who are not attending regular schools besides covering marginalised



sections into our education system which includes special and underprivileged children." Addressing the symposium, Shiksha Sanskriti Utthan Nyas Secretary, Dr Atul Kothari, said: "NEP focuses on development of human values. The world knows that it is only India which understands the value system and can teach the world about it. There is a growing demand for this from various countries and institutions. Our educators should prepare for this challenge." Stating that the NEP focuses on a holistic approach to education, Dr Kothari said: "We need to create a model for effective implementation of the NEP." Addressing the symposium, NCERT's Head of Teacher Education Department, Prof Sharad Sinha, said that bringing out NEP in a diverse and huge country like India was a Herculean task. "There is so much diversity. There are different school formats like Government schools, private institutions, trust etc, several languages across the length and breadth of vast Bharat, teachers and educators of vivid vision had to be taken into account in making of the epic over 600-page National Curriculum Framework (NCF) for School Education," she said.

BJP alleges scam in land to Trust run by Kharge's family, seeks CBI probe

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The BJP on Tuesday alleged a "scam" in allocation of a piece of land to a trust run by Congress President Mallikarjun Kharge's family in Karnataka and demanded a CBI probe into the matter. Addressing a press conference at the BJP headquarters here, party national spokesperson Gaurav Bhatia demanded Mallikarjun Kharge's resignation as the Congress President and that of his son Priyank Kharge, who is a Minister in the Karnataka Government. He also demanded Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah's resignation. "There is a consistency in the

Congress' acts of corruption. Wherever we will go we will do corruption is the new slogan of the Congress. It will not be wrong to say that the Congress has become synonymous with corruption," Bhatia said. "We saw the MUDA scam and Valmiki Development Corporation scam happening under the nose of Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah. Now a case of allocation of five-acre land to a trust run by Mallikarjun Kharge and his family in Karnataka has emerged," he added. The land has been allocated to the Kharge family-run trust by flouting of rules, the BJP Spokesperson said, claiming that Mallikarjun Kharge, his wife, his son-in-law Radhakrishna

and sons - Priyank Kharge and Rahul Kharge - are in the trust. "As per information with us, several companies and organisations had given application for the land but it was allocated to the Kharge family-run trust by flouting the rules," Bhatia claimed. The BJP spokesperson demanded that Mallikarjun Kharge immediately resign as the Congress President and his son Priyank Kharge as the state Minister. "There should be an impartial probe into it by an independent agency CBI to ascertain the truth," he said. BJP leader Lahar Singh Siroya, also a Rajya Sabha member, had on Sunday questioned the alleged allocation of Karnataka Industrial Area

Development Board (KIADB) land to a trust run by Kharge's family and asked when did they become aerospace entrepreneurs to be eligible for the land. He had also sought to know whether the case was about misuse of power, nepotism and conflict of interest. Karnataka Large and Medium Industries Minister M B Patil said on Monday that the educational trust run by AICC President Mallikarjun Kharge's son Rahul Kharge was allotted a Civic Amenity (CA) plot at Aerospace park at a prescribed price in accordance with the norms. In a statement, Patil dismissed the allegations made by Siroya and insisted that no rules were violated in the process.



BJP demands WB CM Mamata's resignation, calls her dictator

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Accusing West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee of shielding those involved in the rape and murder of a trainee doctor in Kolkata, the BJP on Tuesday called her a "dictator" and demanded her resignation to ensure a fair probe into the matter. The BJP has also demanded that the CBI conduct a polygraph test on Banerjee and Police Commissioner Vineet Goel, who the party alleged had initially said that the victim died by suicide. The BJP condemned the incident of lathicharge by the West Bengal Police on the students, who had taken out a rally in Kolkata demanding justice for the victim and the Chief Minister's resignation. "Whatever is happening in West Bengal is worrisome. It's akin to tearing the Constitution to shreds. It's clearly visible that if at all there is a dictator in the country, it's Mamata Banerjee," BJP national spokesperson Gaurav Bhatia told a Press Conference at the party headquarters here. He accused Banerjee of shielding those involved in the rape and murder case, and demanded that she immediately resign as the Chief Minister so that a fair probe into the case can take place. The BJP spokesperson also demanded that the Police Commissioner, who had called the case of the victim's rape and murder a suicide earlier, should also resign and face investigation. "Truth must come out. The CBI is investigating the case. It should conduct a polygraph test on Mamata Banerjee and the police commissioner to ascertain the truth," he added. BJP co-incharge for West Bengal Amit Malviya said that Sanjoy Roy, accused in the trainee doctor rape and murder case, was on that fateful night riding a bike registered in the name of the Kolkata Police Commissioner, "as per the Kolkata Police and the TMC." "This is serious and needs investigation. Both Mamata Banerjee and Kolkata Police Commissioner must step down immediately for a free and fair probe," he said in a post on X. The CBI should take them into custody, go over their phone records and subject them to polygraph test to unearth the conspiracy behind the young woman doctor's rape and murder, Malviya demanded.

Monkeypox: Testing kit to deliver result in 40 minutes

ARCHANA JYOTI ■ NEW DELHI

As Monkeypox increasingly threatens global health, India has taken a significant step forward with the Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation's (CDSCO) approving a new indigenously developed RT-PCR testing kit that can deliver results within 40 minutes. The IMDX Monkeypox Detection RT-PCR Assay, created by Siemens Healthineers, is designed to detect both clade I and clade II variants of the virus. This advancement marks a crucial milestone for India's "Make in India" initiative and is a pivotal addition to the country's arsenal in combating the Monkeypox public health emergency. "IMDX Monkeypox Detection RT-PCR Assay will be manufactured at our molecular diagnostics manufacturing unit in



Vadodara, which has a manufacturing capacity of 1 million reactions per year. The factory is all set to make the kits available," said Siemens Healthcare Private Ltd. Explaining about its functioning, the company said that "The IMDX Monkeypox Detection RT-PCR Assay is a groundbreaking molecular diagnostic test that targets

two distinct regions in the viral genome, spanning both clade I and clade II variants of the virus. Hariharan Subramanian, Managing Director, Siemens Healthcare Private Limited, said that the urgency for precise and accurate diagnostics couldn't be more crucial than now amid the WHO announcement of its second public health emergency of global concern

due to the virus. The new strain of this virus (Clad-1) is considered to be more transmissible and has higher mortality rates. The WHO has launched a global Strategic preparedness and response plan to stop outbreaks of human-to-human transmission of mpox through coordinated global, regional, and national efforts. Dr. Anurag Agrawal, Scientists and Head, Koita Center for Digital Health at Ashoka Dean, BioSciences and Health Research, Trivedi School of Biosciences, Ashoka University highlighted the ongoing need for vigilance and investment in diagnostics and vaccines. The former director of the Institute of Genomics and Integrative Biology, a national laboratory of CSIR noted that leveraging the infrastructure developed during the COVID-19 pandemic could enhance

global cooperation and containment efforts. Reflecting similar opinion, Gautam Menon, Dean of Research and Professor of Physics and Biology, Head of Centre for Climate Change and Sustainability (3CS) at Ashoka University stressed the importance of monitoring and tracking travelers, along with keeping up-to-date with the latest epidemiological insights into Monkeypox. He suggested that Indian medical agencies must lead in understanding the virus's transmission dynamics and potential asymptomatic spread. India has not recorded any Mpox case so far but as a precautionary step amid rise in cases of zoonotic virus cases in neighbouring Pakistan, the Government has kept the airports on the alert and identified nodal hospitals to handle the cases when needed.

Women's groups demand action on sexual violence after Kolkata tragedy

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

In response to a series of recent rape cases across the country, a battery of Women's rights groups on Tuesday issued a joint statement demanding urgent action and systemic change to end sexual crimes and break the silence surrounding gender-based violence in the country. The 35 organizations who made the appeal involved, included the All India Dalit Mahila Adhikar Manch (AIDMAM), All India Democratic Women's Association (AIDWA), All India Mahila Samskritik Sanghathan (AIMSS), All India Progressive Women's Association (AIPWA), All India Feminist Alliance (ALIFA), All India Lawyers' Association for Justice (AILAJ), calling for an end to sexual crimes and gender-based violence. The trigger for the outburst was a tragic rape and murder of a 31-year-old medical practitioner at RG Kar Hospital and Medical College in Kolkata. The groups criticised both the brutal nature of the crime and the subsequent handling by authorities, which they allege involved a "cover-up." They also accused the Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee led West Bengal Government of mishandling the case by initially labeling it a suicide and transferring key hospital officials amidst national protests. The women activists in the statement said that sexual violence cases from various parts of the country including Kolkata, Manipur, Gujarat, Uttarakhand, Bihar, and Uttar Pradesh are a grim reminder of the ongoing



threat to women's safety in India. The statement also highlighted the challenges of securing justice in an environment where the Government has been accused of releasing and even honouring individuals convicted of heinous crimes, such as those involved in the Bilkis Bano case, the Kathua case, and the violence in Manipur. Despite the existence of mechanisms to monitor the laws to protect the women, the groups argued that they are often ignored, creating a climate of impunity that allows gender-based violence to continue unabated and cited data from the NCRB, which reports an average of 86 rapes per day in India, with a national conviction rate as low as 27 per cent. The statement also criticised the recent budget allocations, questioning the lack of funding for monitoring the implementation of key protective laws. The Ministry of Women and Child Development's refusal to disclose whether mandated mechanisms are in place and functioning is seen as further evidence of governmental neglect, the statement said.

CBI to consult AIIMS experts on DNA, forensic reports in Kolkata horror case

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) will consult experts from the All India Institute of Medical Science (AIIMS) on the DNA and forensic reports related to the alleged rape and murder of a trainee doctor at RG Kar Medical College, officials said Tuesday. In order to build a watertight case, the CBI will send the reports to AIIMS to seek their opinion in the case, they said. The reports will also help the agency to ascertain if Sanjay Roy was the only accused who committed the crime or there were others involved, they said. So far, the agency is working on the leads that Roy was the only accused in the crime but involvement of others will only be ruled out after receiving the opinion of AIIMS experts, the officials said. The rape and killing of the junior doctor in a seminar hall of the hospital has sparked widespread



protests. The medic's body with severe injury marks was found inside the seminar hall of the hospital's chest department in the morning of August 9 by a doctor who was on round. Kolkata Police had arrested Roy on August 10 based on CCTV footage in which he was seen entering the seminar hall at 4.03 AM on August 9 when the crime was allegedly committed. Based on CCTV footage, Roy was put through extensive interrogation and

the Kolkata Police to the CBI, which started its investigation on August 14. The CBI took over all the forensic evidence from Kolkata Police and also subjected Roy, former principal of the medical college Sandip Ghosh, four doctors who were on duty with the victim, and a civic volunteer to polygraph tests to get further leads about the crime. The initial reports from CFSL are being analysed and corroborated with evidence to get further direction to the probe, the officials said. A polygraph test can help in assessing inaccuracies in statements of suspects and witnesses. By monitoring their psychological responses - heart rate, breathing patterns, sweating and blood pressure - investigators can determine if there are discrepancies in their response, these are not admissible evidence during the trial and can only be used to get further leads in a case.



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PAPER WITH PASSION

Step in the right direction

Modi Govt launches assured pension scheme for Central Govt Employees, amid concerns of financial implications

The Modi Government has announced the fixed pension scheme for the central government employees. This must be music to the ears of central employees who were not happy with the ongoing market-linked pension scheme and were demanding its scrapping. In a significant policy shift, the Indian government has approved a new pension scheme guaranteeing central government employees 50% of their base salary as a pension. This move marks a departure from the current National Pension Scheme (NPS), which links payouts to market returns. The newly introduced Unified Pension Scheme (UPS) is set to be implemented from April 1, 2025, and will impact over two million federal employees. The shift towards the UPS stems from growing dissatisfaction with the NPS, which was adopted in 2004 as part of a broader fiscal reform. Under the NPS, employees contribute 10% of their base salary, and the government adds 14%, with the eventual pension amount depending on the market returns from investments, primarily in federal debt. However, as some states began reverting to the older, more fiscally burdensome system of guaranteed pensions, the Modi government faced mounting pressure to reassess the NPS.



The decision to approve the UPS aligns with demands from trade unions and the Opposition parties, who have long advocated for a guaranteed minimum pension. The issue gained political traction during recent general elections, where the lack of pension security under the NPS became a contentious topic. The UPS guarantees that employees who have completed at least 25 years of service will receive 50% of their base salary,

calculated over the last 12 months before retirement, as a pension. This assured payout provides a safety for retirees, addressing concerns about the volatility of market-linked pensions. While the UPS offers greater security for employees, it also imposes a significant financial burden on the government. The expected cost to the exchequer for the fiscal year 2024-25 is approximately Rs 62.5 billion. This annual expenditure is likely to fluctuate based on the number of employees retiring each year. However, the shift to the UPS raises several concerns. First, the financial sustainability of the scheme is a critical issue. The guaranteed nature of the pension could strain government finances, especially if economic growth slows or tax revenues decline. Additionally, the UPS may lead to disparities between central and state government employees. Moreover, there is a risk that the shift back to a defined benefit pension system could set a precedent for other sectors, potentially leading to broader demands for similar guarantees. This could exacerbate fiscal challenges, particularly in a country where social welfare spending is already under pressure. As India prepares to implement the UPS in 2025, careful management and ongoing evaluation will be essential to ensure that the benefits of the scheme are balanced against its fiscal impact.

PICTALK



A painter gives final touches to the Goddess Durga's idol ahead of Durga pooja, in Kolkata

The risk of monetising public education

Commercialisation of these institutions undermines their core mission which is to provide inclusive, affordable high-quality education to all

The Vice-Chancellor of JNU, Prof. C Santhoshree D Pandit recently remarked that the country's top university is facing a financial crunch with little regular income generated from its resources. The VC has decided to repurpose the university's properties with private participation. This culture of looking at public academic institutions as a source of revenue has been rhyming among our policymakers during the past several years.



One reason is the huge prime land area holding maintained by the public sector institutions and another is the change in the shift in societal perception. Today's society evaluates everything based on money. The primary objective of public sector academic institutions is to offer an inclusive and excellent education to all sections of the population. Central to these institutions is the concept of education as a public good—a valuable asset that has advantages for society as a whole, rather than solely for individuals. Education, in this view, is not simply a product that can be purchased and

impact of market ideology in public policy. Consequently, numerous public universities and colleges have resorted to alternate sources of income, such as raising tuition fees, extending online programs, providing executive education courses, renting out spaces and forming alliances with private industry.

Private parties, if allowed to rent out spaces, should work closely with the academic and research community of the university. It should also help in imparting knowledge and transformation to students. In many NITs, the guest house rate has been increased tenfold, as mandated by the policymakers.

Unfortunately, people who visit these institutions including academicians and parents of students have to pay more than what is the market rate in that area. Although these initiatives can offer significant financial support, they also pose a potential threat of altering the core purpose of public sector institutions. It can be detrimental to maintaining high academic standards and fostering a wide range of intellectual perspectives.

A new standard for global populism

Kamala prioritises the everyday citizen over corporate interests and her message is getting traction not only in the US but across the globe



SHIVAJI SARKAR

The global economic landscape could shift dramatically if the US Democratic Party's presidential nominee, Kamala Harris, succeeds in implementing her bold stance on prices and corporate control. This move could send shockwaves across the world, compelling nations like India to reconsider their current economic models—just as they did during the liberalization era when corporate power surged. It appears the tide is turning, as people worldwide demand freedom from the manipulative tactics that drive up prices. Harris's message is clear: Americans can no longer tolerate skyrocketing costs. Her aggressive, populist economic agenda aims to rein in corporate power and lower the cost of living, potentially setting a new standard for global economic policies.

A 74-year-old Indian blogger after a lavish Indian corporate marriage in July blurted out on X-twitter, "In my 74 years, I have not seen, or even heard of, a more tasteless, egotistical or pretentious wedding than the recent, 24X7 televised extravaganza. The perversity and its real portent lie elsewhere. "It lies in the way money was expended, at a time when the average Indian has never been worse off economically, when inequality and unemployment have reached record heights, when 67 percent of the GST is paid by 50 percent of its poorest citizens, when the top 1 percent control 40 percent of the country's wealth, when 800 million people have to be provided free/subsidized foodgrains to survive."

Not much different is the weekend speech of Harris. She says, "We know that many Americans don't yet feel that progress in their lives. Costs are still too high and it feels too hard to get ahead." No wonder Republican nominee Donald Trump calls her too liberal. It seems so similar to the echoes of severe price rises and joblessness during the June Lok Sabha elections in India amid rows of mutton, muslim, mandir and mujra, mehngai and berongari. Yes, Indians and Americans need food, a minimum quality of



life and freedom from organised oppression. Indians are certainly more concerned because with whatever rank in the world economy, it is nowhere near the US.

If the American economy is not in good shape, Indians can at best be convalescing, post-COVID-19. But the stranglehold of the honchos in India is more gripping than in the US, which has strong anti-trust laws despite the protests from the big. Indian policies suit the big shops more with quite a few trillions being waved off in taxes and other benefits, including tailoring national and stock market policies. Harris instead, despite being the Vice President of the USA, empathising with the American people, says, "The bills add up. Food, rent, gas, back-to-school clothes, prescription medication. After that, for many families, there's not much left at the end of the month. As president, I will take on the high costs that matter most to most Americans." Those words any Indian voter would love to hear from their leaders. It follows a dozen proposals for improving the lives of Americans. Some like 3 million new housing units to the people seemingly have been picked up from Indian political party manifestos. Like India's PM Avas, she proposes to provide up to \$25,000 in down payment support for a million first-time home buy-



AMERICANS CAN NO LONGER TOLERATE SKYROCKETING COSTS. HER AGGRESSIVE, POPULIST ECONOMIC AGENDA AIMS TO REIN IN CORPORATE POWER AND LOWER THE COST OF LIVING, POTENTIALLY SETTING A NEW STANDARD FOR GLOBAL ECONOMIC POLICIES

ers. An addition is tax incentives for builders, who build affordable rental housing. It could be a welcome scenario for most Indians. As now being debated in India on capital gains tax indexation or also rentals, Harris is keen on preventing corporate landlords from using algorithmic price-setting tools to increase rents by large margins. It is gradually becoming a problem in areas in the national capital regions of Noida, Gurgaon, Delhi's Dwarka, Bengaluru, and Chennai. India has just started feeling it. Medical costs and health insurance fraud are the worst in the US. Many Indian companies now have emulated it.

Medical expenses are increasing in India and the US. Both countries are discussing it intensely and often end up saying the United Kingdom has the best medical facilities. Harris promises to eliminate medical debt for millions of Americans, possibly by using federal funds to buy and forgive outstanding debt from health providers. She wants to limit Americans' annual out-of-pocket spending on prescription drugs to \$2,000. Thousands of kilometres apart the conditions are so similar! The one difference is that India wants to repeat the US insurance follies and they are trying to change it. Though in some cases like PM

JanAushadhi, India is doing better in providing generic medicines at low prices. Harris does not have that option and says would cap the out-of-pocket cost of insulin at \$35 per month for all. As direct benefit pensions are given to kisans in India, Harris would give a child tax credit that would provide \$6,000 per child to families for the first year of a baby's life.

Indian budgetary novelties introduced as direct benefits or pensions in various ways have fascinated Harris. Each of Harris's proposals, whether in terms of food, medicine, housing or child care is "populist", involving government intervention against corporate interests on behalf of consumers. Socialism, direct or indirect, despite big companies ruling the roost, is returning to world politics. What Harris does may just create a flutter, but countries like India, who claim to be the next global leaders, have to trudge more cautiously to safeguard the poor, farmers and the working class. Harris has borrowed quite a few of it from the Indian budget. Now it is India's turn to ensure how it could check the corporates to serve people's interests. The world is changing and India's populism is winning big one's heart.

(The author is a freelance writer and columnist; views are personal)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

CELEBRATING KRISHNA'S BIRTH

Madam — Krishna Janmashtami, the birthday of Lord Krishna, is a joyous celebration that embodies the triumph of love and divine joy over evil and negativity. This auspicious occasion marks the arrival of Krishna, the eighth avatar of Lord Vishnu, who brought hope and redemption to a world plagued by darkness and despair. As devotees around the world honor Krishna's birth, they are reminded of his profound teachings in the Bhagavad Gita, which emphasize the importance of spiritual growth, self-realization, and the eternal victory of good over evil. Through vibrant festivities, soulful bhajans, and heartfelt pujas, Krishna Janmashtami celebrates the unconditional love and divine joy that Krishna embodies, inspiring devotees to embrace their own spiritual journey and revel in the bliss of the divine.

Purva Pandya | Ujjain

STALIN'S NEW MOVE

Madam — As against the Sanatana Dharma before the Lok Sabha elections, the DMK has changed its stand now by a mix in the Dravidian model by supporting the individual's faith of choice and wanting to help them in their religious pursuits. By inaugurating the two day Global Muthamizhil Murugan Conference, the Chief Minister of TN M K Stalin is bringing in a new colour other than black and red as he's well aware that this will help him in the forthcoming assembly elections to woo the votes of the Hindus by using the Murugan card to play to DMK's advantage. We welcome this change and are happy if something good for the people happens from the leadership of M K Stalin whom I respect for his flexibility of principle if he finds something worth it. One hopes Stalin's new found alliance with the Lord Murugan may bestow the blessings for the people for the prosperity of the state.

A P Thiruvadi | Chennai

Unified pension scheme launched



This refers to the news report, "Unprecedented Unified Pension Scheme by Modi Government" (August 25). Though driven by the huge political pressure after jolts in recently held Lok Sabha polls, the NDA Government's decision to roll out a new guaranteed Unified Pension Scheme for its employees is a step in right direction. In fact, pension is a social welfare measure which is granted to ensure that a retired employee lives with dignity in his

old age. Reversing its 21 year old pension reforms partially, the Government has introduced OPS features like assured pensions, inflation-linked adjustments, family pensions, and a guaranteed minimum pension in the UPS. Employees are still required to contribute 10% of their basic pay and dearness allowance to UPS remains only major difference between the OPS and the UPS. The government will also contribute to the UPS, which will increase from 14% (currently contributed to NPS) to 18.5%. Thus, the UPS will lead to higher burden on the exchequer. Thus, it remains to be seen whether state governments adopt the UPS, which certainly would not augur well for their financial health.

Manoj Parashar | Ghaziabad

PM MODI BROKERS PEACE

Madam — Modi's visit to Kyiv will strengthen India-Ukraine bilateral relationship. Like with Russia in March 24 Modi is likely to have had the message of peace with Zelenskyy about ending the war and restoring peace. The catch is both Russia and Ukraine are not keen in fighting any further but both wanting to end the war on their own terms. Kyiv does not want to compromise on its sovereignty and territorial integrity which could lead to an instability and even a revolution in Ukraine.

Kyiv wants to retrieve all the Ukrainian territory occupied by Russia something that Russia is unwilling to do. The US and NATO have rejected Russia's demand to end the war. Under this situation it is extremely unlikely that a peace can be brokered by PM Modi as an one off attempt. Unlike other leaders of the world PM Modi enjoys a special relationship with Putin who in his words has called Modi as his best friend. India also in none of the resolu-

tions passed by the UN has gone against Moscow. While on the same lines has been maintaining good equation with Zelenskyy (post his ire after having a hug with Putin in March 24) through telephone calls and the sidelines meetings in summits. With Modi's Aug 23 personal visit and signing of the trade agreements and India's commitment to be on the side of the PEACE and just a not a neutral country one can expect PM Modi will make attempts for a peace talk between the two warring leaders. Besides, PM Modi's initiative also takes care of the growing Chinese influence in the region and places India at par with it if not above, India must be more proactive in the region to safeguard its own interests. With US already started feeling the heat of recession and a leadership change in the offing one can see the light at the end of the tunnel!

Gopalaswamy J | Chennai

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FIRST COLUMN

LIVE IN THE PRESENT

MOMENT, IT MATTERS MOST

One needs to inculcate habits of equanimity, and remaining calm, whatever the circumstance



RAVI VALLURI

The romance was in the air as India attained freedom from the British yoke. The period was the 1950s as India embarked upon the socialistic pattern to revive the country, which had inherited an impecunious economy. Two bright students from coastal Andhra landed in rain-washed Delhi University to pursue their dreams. To remain connected with their past, they made recurrent trips to the New Delhi Railway Station to receive students arriving in droves from their state and revive those nostalgic moments. When it is repetitively said, "Those good old days!", in one stroke we send a signal to our Universe that the present is not congenial. As Buddha says, "The mind is everything. What you think you become." If we live in the past, we keep fretting and fuming about the missed opportunities and those past impressions create roadblocks in our physical and metaphysical advancement.

On completion of their studies, the more aspiring students stayed back and the less enterprising ones returned home. The person in Delhi aspired to be a civil servant like his more illustrious siblings and their children. But destiny had carved out its plan. His friends and acquaintances qualified for the coveted job, a sinecure that eluded him. So, the mind became envious of his siblings, their children and friends and started implanting his failed mission upon his children, much to their discomfiture. How does one reach that state of 'present moment'? Before dwelling on some techniques, it will be useful to read a fas-



cinating Buddhist parable. One afternoon a Buddhist monk was carrying a bucket filled with water in a dense forest. Suddenly he heard a rustle. It was a tiger, smacking its lips and intently looking at the potential prey. The monk ran for his life, with the tiger in pursuit. The monk reached a precipice and had a choice to make, either be devoured by the ferocious tiger or jump off the cliff. Death stared in his face. The monk jumped and fortuitously clung onto a branch of a strawberry tree. He ate the strawberry—considering it to be his last meal—and thoroughly relished it. The monk had never had such a meal, as was absolutely in the present moment. A simple yet profound technique of sadhana is to be a witness to all the actions and activities that take place. The actor in us becomes the spectator too. This is what is espoused in the esoteric philosophy of Ashtavakra Gita (a classic dialogue between King Janaka—who himself was a Raj Rishi—and the sage Ashtavakra).

Any individual, householder or seeker needs to inculcate habits of equanimity, equilibrium, and equipoise to remain calm, whatever the circumstance or situation, to be contented and remain in the present moment. The protagonist who stayed back in Delhi could fulfil his dreams only partially. His son did qualify for the civil services, but could not join the service of his choice; this was due to excessive pressure applied by family members already in the elite services. Eventually, the son turned into an alcoholic. Perhaps it was because both father and son were not grateful to the Universe and did not adhere to the Law of Gratefulness.

Thus, lives were ruined. Meanwhile, the friend who returned home did not lose his way in the sands of time. He became a trade union leader and politician, living in the present. "Life is one big road with lots of signs. So, when you are riding through the ruts, do not complicate your mind. Flee from hate, mischief, and jealousy," sang Bob Marley.

(The writer is a faculty at Art of Living, views expressed are personal)

Catalyst for cinematic evolution and excellence



CHAITANYA K PRASAD

The 70th National Film Awards once again celebrated the rich tapestry of Indian cinema, where diverse languages and cultures converged to showcase the best talent

The National Film Awards: A Platform for The Great Leap Forward. At the 70th National Film Awards, India's cinematic excellence once again took centre stage, showcasing vibrant and diverse storytelling from across the nation's many languages. Southern cinema emerged as a dominant force this year, with films and artists from the region sweeping some of the most prestigious honours. The Malayalam film 'Aattam' captured the Swarna Kamal for Best Feature Film, while the Kannada blockbuster 'Kantara' clinched the title of Best Popular Film.

Rishab Shetty, the driving force behind Kantara, took home the Best Actor award, sharing the limelight with Nithya Menon and Manasi Parekh, who shared Best Actresses for the Tamil film 'Thiruchitrambalam' and Gujarati film 'Kutch Express' respectively. Meanwhile, the Haryanvi film 'Fouja' gathered acclaim, earning Pramod Kumar the award for Best Debut Director, while Pavan Raj Malhotra secured Best Supporting Actor. The epic Tamil drama 'Ponniyin Selvan: I' also made its mark, with AR Rahman's power-packed music earning him the Best Music Director (Background Music) award, alongside wins for Best Sound Design by Anand Krishnamoorthi and Best Cinematography by Ravi Varman. In the Hindi cinema category, 'Gulmohar' emerged as the Best Hindi Film, adding another feather to Sharmila Tagore's illustrious cap with her third National Film Award.

This year's awards not only celebrated individual excellence but also highlighted the ever-evolving and dynamic landscape of Indian cinema. The lifeline and longevity of any artist and any film is fuelled by the adrenaline of 4A's "Acknowledgment, Awards, Appreciation, and Applause". Globally, awards are given for excellence in the celluloid space which has opened a new phase of creativity, innovation perspective perspective-building through storytelling and film narration. Since its inception in 1954, the National Film Awards for Excellence in Cinema have symbolised the journey of excellence and creativity. The awards have offered an equal platform to cinemas of various languages, cultures, diversities, themes, and perspectives, where all the creative energies of India converge to speak the unified language of artistic excellence. These awards in the last seventy-odd years have showcased the gold standard of filmmaking across different verticals reinventing and shaping the diverse landscape of cinema in this country.

Each edition of the National Film Awards has strengthened inclusivity and converged the diversity of celluloid space seamlessly. The National Film Awards are unique in terms of their magnitude, canvas, and spectrum. Every award ceremony has been an opportunity to witness the emergence of different forms and categories of cinema that reflect continuity and legacy. The landscape of the National Film Awards is deep and insightful, promoting diversity, storytelling, and narration.

It has truly elevated parallel, regional, and experimental cinema; voiced social concerns; and embraced and adapted to contemporary standards, content, and style



THIS YEAR'S AWARDS NOT ONLY CELEBRATED INDIVIDUAL EXCELLENCE BUT ALSO HIGHLIGHTED THE EVER-EVOLVING AND DYNAMIC LANDSCAPE OF INDIAN CINEMA

of presentation. Over the years, Indian cinema has witnessed a remarkable evolution, with regional films gaining recognition for their artistic brilliance. It all began in 1954, as the film "Mirza Ghalib" made history as the first recipient of the Best Feature Film award.

This milestone paved the way for a treasure trove of cinematic gems from various regions. Bengali cinema, in particular, has been a shining beacon, with timeless classics like Satyajit Ray's "Pathar Panchali", "Apar Sansar", and "Charulata" earning the prestigious Swarna Kamal. The legendary Soumitra Chatterjee, a revered Bengali actor, has been lauded for his performances in classics like "Apar Sansar" and "Charulata", earning him his National Film Awards for his works.

The spotlight has also turned to Southern cinema, which has produced its own set of trailblazers. In 1965, the Malayalam masterpiece "Chemmeen" captivated audiences and critics alike, winning the Best Feature Film award. Kannada cinema made a powerful statement with "Chomana Dudi" in 1976, sweeping the National Awards for Best Feature Film, Best Actor, and Best Story. Tamil cinema joined this illustrious list in 1990 when Marrupakkam became the first Tamil film to clinch the Best Feature Film award.

The northeastern region of India has also produced its share of winners at the National Film Awards, bringing regional tales to the national stage. "Halodhia Chorai Baodhan Khai", the first Assamese film to win the Swarna Kamal for the Best Feature Film in 1987. Rima Das, a director has been recognized for her movies "Village Rockstars" and "Bulbul Can Sing", which capture the essence of life in Assam by portraying simplicity and resilience. At the 60th National Film Awards, Jahnur Barua's Assamese film "Baandhon" won

the Best Feature Film in the category while "Ko;Yad", a Missing film won the Best Feature Film in the non-Eighth Schedule language category. At the 62nd National Film Awards the movie "Phum Shang", from Manipur was honoured with the Best Investigative Film award showcasing the contributions of filmmakers from North East India. Such examples also prove that the National Film Awards serve as a crucible for bringing together a convergence of ideas, creativity, and talent. They offer hope that creativity knows no barriers in India, allowing unknown filmmakers and names to become stars. One of the most coveted awards of the National Film Awards is the Dadasaheb Phalke Award, India's highest award in the field of cinema honouring the artists' lifetime achievement. Named after Shri Dadasaheb Phalke, the visionary often hailed as the father of Indian cinema, this award is a tribute to those whose contributions have indelibly shaped the landscape of Indian filmmaking.

This award was introduced in 1969 and was presented to Devika Rani. Since then this distinguished honour has been awarded to Waheeda Rehman, Satyajit Ray, B.N. Reddy, L.V. Prasad, Bhupen Hazarika, Sivaji Ganesan, B.R. Chopra, Soumitra Chatterjee, Lata Mangeshkar, Raj Kapoor, Shyam Benegal, Amitabh Bachchan and Rajnikant are some of the renowned names who have been recognized for their lasting impact and their outstanding contribution to cinema. The National Film Awards also spotlight the significance of non-feature films by inspiring emerging directors to experiment and push boundaries.

This platform has nurtured talent, with acclaimed works like "Ek Tha Gaon" and "An engineered Dream", the Marathi film "Girni" and the Bengali film "Aamaar Katha: Story of Binodini" winners at the 52nd and the 62nd

National Film Awards. These awards bring attention to themes and innovative storytelling approaches demonstrating that Indian cinema thrives on creativity and embraces diversity beyond commercial considerations. The non-feature segment of awards over the years has acted as a catalyst for young film-makers who have unleashed their creativity across diverse subjects and narratives. This segment has showcased a unique simplicity, aesthetics and deep understanding of filmmaking and creativity. The recent changes to the regulations for the 70th National Film Awards demonstrate an evident wave of evolution. Changes like renaming awards and merging categories reflect an approach to acknowledging excellence in filmmaking.

The National Film Awards of India have witnessed several historic moments that have not only enhanced the country's cinematic excellence but also served as a stepping stone to celluloid success and international acclaim. One such landmark was the recognition of Satyajit Ray's "Pathar Panchali" in 1956, which won the Best Feature Film award and subsequently brought Indian cinema to global attention. Another significant milestone was Aamir Khan's "Lagaan" in 2001, which not only won the National Film Award for Best Popular Film Providing Wholesome Entertainment but also earned an Academy Award nomination for Best Foreign Language Film. The National Film Awards have played an instrumental role in shaping the course of Indian cinema. By celebrating a variety of perspectives and pushing boundaries the awards not only recognize exceptional achievements but also inspire upcoming filmmakers and artists.

(The writer is former additional DG, DFF and Festival Director, IFFI; views are personal. Inputs provided by Zoya Ahmad and Vaishnavi Srinivasan)

How personalised and adaptive technologies are shaping the future of education

The future of education is personal, adaptive, and brimming with possibilities for individual success. It's time to embrace this change

The education system is witnessing a revolutionary shift, one that promises to reshape how we learn, grow, and succeed. At the core of this transformation lies advanced personalized and adaptive learning—a groundbreaking approach set to redefine the educational landscape.

With the global adaptive learning market projected to reach \$5.3 billion by 2025 and the personalized learning market expected to soar to \$19.86 billion by 2030, it's clear that these technologies are more than just a passing trend.

Unpacking Personalized and Adaptive Learning Personalized learning crafts educational experiences that resonate with each student's



VEDANT HAMIRWASIA

unique needs, skills, and interests. It's about creating learning journeys that allow individuals to flourish in their way. Adaptive learning takes this concept further, using AI to adjust content difficulty and style in real time based on student performance.

It's like having a high-tech tutor that ensures learning is always challenging but never overwhelming.

The Power of Data-Driven Insights: One of the most exciting aspects of these systems is their ability to harness data for good. Through sophisticated learning analytics, educators gain unprecedented insights into each student's progress.

This foresight allows for timely interventions, ensuring no student falls behind. Predictive analytics even allows these systems to anticipate which students might struggle, enabling proactive support measures.

Customized Learning Paths: Gone are the days of one-size-fits-all education. Advanced personalized learning creates individual learning plans that adapt to each student's unique learning style.

Whether you're a visual learner who thrives on interactive simulations or prefer diving deep into text-based explanations, these systems have you covered. The flexibility extends to pacing as well, allowing students to linger on challenging concepts or race ahead in areas they excel.

Engagement, the Secret Sauce of Success: Engagement is crucial for effective learning, and these technologies serve it up in spades. Interactive content, gamification elements, and multimedia experiences make learning feel less like a chore and more like an adventure.

By catering to diverse learning preferences, these systems ensure that every student finds their groove and stays motivated.



Levelling the Playing Field: Perhaps one of the most profound impacts of these technologies is their potential to promote equity in education.

Assistive features embedded within these systems support students with disabilities, offering tools like

text-to-speech and customized interfaces. This push for inclusivity ensures that quality, personalized education is accessible to all, regardless of individual challenges.

The Benefits and Challenges Ahead: The benefits of advanced personalized and adaptive learning are clear and compelling. Studies consistently show improved learning outcomes, increased student engagement, and the potential to bridge achievement gaps.

However, it's important to acknowledge the challenges that come with this educational revolution. Privacy concerns surrounding student data and the persistent digital divide are hurdles

that must be addressed thoughtfully. Embracing the Future of Education The educational landscape is evolving rapidly, propelled by the transformative potential of advanced personalized and adaptive learning.

By embracing these technologies thoughtfully and addressing the challenges head-on, we can create an educational landscape where every student has the opportunity to thrive, learn, and reach their full potential. The future of education is personal, adaptive, and brimming with possibilities for individual success. It's time to embrace this change and unlock the potential of every learner.

(The author is director, ODA Class; views are personal)

India offers full support to Brazilian G20 presidency: EAM

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The India-Brazil strategic partnership has "deepened and diversified" over the years and now spans a very wide range of domains, including defence, space, security, technology and people-to-people relations, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar said here on Tuesday.

In his opening remarks at the 9th India-Brazil Joint Commission Meeting (JCM), Jaishankar congratulated the Latin American country for conducting the G20 meetings successfully. "I would like to reiterate India's full support to the Brazilian G20 presidency and also recall that we got your fullest support during our own presidency. We appreciate various unique initiatives centred on the theme of building a just world and a sustainable planet," he said.

Brazilian Foreign Minister Mauro Vieira, who arrived here on August 25, said in his opening remarks that President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva will be



glad to welcome Prime Minister Narendra Modi at the G20 Summit in Rio de Janeiro in November. Brazil is currently the chair of the influential bloc. The G20 presidency was relayed to Brazil by India last year. Jaishankar, in his address, welcomed his Brazilian counterpart and the delegation and said he looks forward to a "very productive Joint Commission Meeting". "Our strategic partnership, which was established in 2006, has deepened and diversified over the years. It

now spans a very wide range of domains from defence, space and security, including cyber, trade and investment, oil and natural gas, biofuels, agriculture, animal husbandry, food processing, health and medicine, traditional medicine, science and technology, culture and people-to-people relations," he said. The external affairs Minister said India and Brazil have a "substantial bilateral trade basket" and it has by and large gone up, adding that in the last year, "we have had some chal-

lenges" and that is something he looks forward to discuss with Vieira.

"We also have very important energy cooperation between our two countries and we have particularly valued the biofuels cooperation that India and Brazil have established. On the people-to-people relations, these are again a very big source of support for our relationship. We are very pleased to see greater appreciation of Indian culture, performing arts, philosophy in Brazil and celebrations related to India in various platforms," he added. Vieira, in his opening remarks, said Brazil and India, as "vibrant and multi-ethnic democracies" from the developing world, represent a "positive drive" to international affairs.

"Both our Governments work towards achieving sustainable development and prosperity for our societies. We hold a common view on many pressing issues on the global agenda," he said.

Vieira said India and Brazil are also "close partners" in inter-

national arrangements, such as IBSA, BRICS, G20, G4 and BASIC (a bloc consisting of Brazil, South Africa, India and China).

The Brazilian foreign Minister said India and Brazil's strategic partnership has "promoted a fast-growing cooperation in many sectors". Jaishankar later also posted a few pictures of his meeting with Vieira on social media. "Co-chaired a fruitful and comprehensive meeting of the 9th India-Brazil Joint Commission with FM Mauro Vieira. Took stock of our bilateral ties, including our cooperation in trade, defence, energy and biofuels, health, sustainable agriculture, space, connectivity, technology and furthering business linkages.

"Also exchanged views on global geopolitical developments, the shared concerns and aspirations of the Global South, and advancing our engagement in BRICS, IBSA, G20 and the UN. Reiterated India's continued support to Brazil's G20 presidency," he wrote on the microblogging platform.

Gurugram DEO's directive on enforcement of model code

STAFF REPORTER ■ GURUGRAM

District Election Officer and Deputy Commissioner Gurugram, Nishant Kumar Yadav directed the officers and employees to keep a strict watch on the implementation of Model Code of Conduct (MCC). Yadav directed officials while addressing a meeting with concerned officials of the four assembly constituencies of the district here in Gurugram on Tuesday. During the meeting Additional Commissioner of Municipal Corporation Gurugram (MCG) Balpreet Singh said, that after the implementation of Model Code of Conduct, 62 FIRs have been registered against the concerned persons and liquor worth Rs 7 lakh has been seized. At the same time, hoardings and banners have been removed from 2,155 places. Yadav informed that the dis-

trict administration is fully prepared for fair and peaceful elections. The Election Commission has also issued several guidelines regarding the Model Code of Conduct. "According to the instructions issued by the election commission, no candidate will be able to use any person's private land, building premises, wall for campaigning purposes like hanging flags, pasting posters and writing slogans," Yadav said. Despite this if anyone found floating norms, strict action will be taken against them as well as their supporters and workers. The officials of the concerned assembly should fix the responsibility of his subordinate officers and ensure that the campaign material is removed with immediate effect," Yadav added. He said that it has come to his notice that after removing the campaign material at some places, hoardings are being put up again by

political parties. At the same time, even after the implementation of the code of conduct, the campaign of the candidate is running on through some autos and other vehicles.

The District Election Officer directed to identify such persons and register an FIR against them. The District Election Officer clarified that the candidates can use banner posters for election campaign at their residence, office, campaign vehicle and can open an office for election campaign. The expenditure incurred in opening offices etc. during the election will be within the scope of the instructions given by the Election Commission.

Yadav also expressed displeasure over the working style of the four Joint Commissioners of the civic body regarding removal of promotional material and also gave instructions to issue show cause notice to them.

DAHI HANDI SHOW



Devotees form a human pyramid to break the 'dahi handi', an earthen pot filled with curd, as part of Janmashtami celebrations, at Dadar, Mumbai, on Tuesday. PTI

UP cabinet nod ...

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the better functioning of newly constructed airstrips. Additionally, the cabinet sanctioned the development of extra-curricular activities on unused land at Government Inter Colleges and High Schools.

The Uttar Pradesh Digital Media Policy-2024 was also approved to regulate and promote digital media in the state. Finally, the cabinet agreed to a customised incentive package for ultra mega industrial units and approved an amendment to lighten the land acquisition limits in Gautam Buddha Nagar district under the Right to Fair Compensation and Transparency in Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation, and Resettlement Act, 2013.

Scholarship for students of Sanskrit schools: It was decided to give scholarships to all students studying in over 500 Sanskrit schools in the state, doing away with the condition that their family income should be less than Rs 50,000 annually.

In the cabinet meeting, it was also decided to hike the scholarship amount for those in classes 9 to 12 in these schools. The new scholarship amount ranges between Rs 50 and Rs

200 per month. After the meeting, Secondary Education Minister Gulab Devi said, "Since most of the children receiving Sanskrit education are from poor sections, a provision has been made now to provide scholarships to students of Pratham that is classes 6, 7 and 8 under Sanskrit education."

The minister said that now, Rs 50 per month would be given to the children of class 6 and 7, and Rs 75 to the children of class 8. Earlier, students of Purva Madhyama (classes 9 and 10) were given a monthly scholarship of Rs 50 and children of Uttar Madhyama (classes 11 and 12) were getting Rs 80 a month.

Now, the students of classes 9 and 10 will get Rs 100 per month and those studying in classes 11 and 12 will be given Rs 200. Parliamentary Affairs Minister Suresh Kumar Khanna said that earlier, only the children of families with annual income up to Rs 50,000 were given scholarships, but now the income limit had been removed.

He said that at present there are 517 Sanskrit schools in the state in which 1,21,573 students are studying.

Shivaji statue collapse: MVA seeks resignation of CM, DCM

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

A day after the shocking collapse of a 35-foot tall statue of Maratha king Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj at Rajkot Fort in Sindhudurg district, the Indian Navy on Tuesday deputed a team to investigate the cause of the sudden crash of the imposing Shivaji statue, even as the Opposition Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) rooted for registration of an FIR against those responsible for the mishap.

In a statement issued to the media, the Indian Navy expressed its "deep concern" over the incident and said: "Along with the State Government and concerned specialists, the Navy has deputed a team to immediately investigate the cause of this unfortunate accident and initiate steps to repair, restore and reinstate the statue at the earliest."

On a day when the Opposition MVA rooted demanded registration of an FIR against those responsible

"hastily" erecting the tall Shivaji statue on the Navy Day on December 4, 2023, the Congress staged protests in Karad, Kolhapur and Nashik in protest against the collapse of the monument within nine months after its installation.

Former chief minister and senior Congress leader Prithviraj Chavan, who led the protest in home town of Karad in western Maharashtra, said that Maharashtra chief minister Eknath Shinde, deputy chief minister Devendra Fadnis and Public Works Department (PWD) Minister Ravindra Chavan should accept their "moral responsibility" for the collapse of Shivaji's statue and resign from their posts.

Alleging that the statue of Shivaji came to be erected at Rajkot fort in Sindhudurg district with a political intent ahead of the Lok Sabha polls, Chavan said: "The material used and the work that went into the construction was of inferior quality. There was



corruption in the construction of the statue. The incident has caused a blot on the self-respect of Maharashtra. Chief minister Shinde, his deputy Fadnis and PWD Minister Ravindra Chavan should resign from their posts, accepting moral responsibility".

Following the Shivaji statue collapse, Thane-based sculptor Jaydeep Apte and structural consultant Chetan Patil have come under scanner. Also under the scanner is an Assistant Engineer of the

Public Works Department. That the statue was erected "hastily" could be evidenced from the fact that the work order for the erection of the statue was issued on Sep. 8, 2023. The statue was unveiled by Prime Minister Narendra Modi 85 days later on December 4, 2023.

Demanding registration of an FIR against the Maharashtra government and the Centre in connection with the incident, State Congress President Nana Patole said: "Ministers in the state gov-

ernment are now shirking their responsibility. They are pointing fingers at the central government. Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj is the deity of Maharashtra. We will not tolerate any insult or disrespect to iconic Shivaji Maharaj". "The BJP-led coalition government in Maharashtra is a commission agent. This government takes commission in cement, sand, bricks and iron. They are not ashamed of anything. The task of erecting a grand idol of Shivaji Maharaj was given to Apte, a novice and inexperienced sculptor from chief minister Shinde's home district of Thane. As much as Rs 2.36 crore was spent on this work, while Rs 5 crore was spent on beautification," Patole said.

"Actually, the task of erecting the statue of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj should have been given to an expert and experienced person. Salt water in the sea, speed of wind should have been studied but in the name of taking credit and commission, the government has insulted

Maharaj without paying attention to the quality of work," Patole said.

Shiv Sena (UBT) Rajya Sabha member Sanjay Raut claimed that even Aurangzeb and Mughals did not insult Shivaji Maharaj "in a manner as the BJP-led MahaYuti government has done." "We demand the resignation of the chief minister for hurting the feelings of (the people of) Maharashtra. Public Works Department Minister Ravindra Chavan should be sacked. They did not even spare Shivaji Maharaj when it came to corruption," Raut said.

MNS President Raj Thackeray said: "Statues, monuments are only for political convenience. I have said many times in the past that the real memorial of the Maharaj is not some grand statue, but his forts and forts... People should destroy this system of politicizing symbols. And only if that happens, we can say that we are living in Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj's Maharashtra."

NDA touches majority mark in...

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The 12 vacant Rajya Sabha seats include those held by Union ministers Piyush Goyal, Sarbananda Sonowal, and Jyotiraditya Scindia, who have since been elected to the Lok Sabha. In addition to Goyal, Sonowal, and Scindia, other Rajya Sabha members who transitioned to the Lok Sabha after winning parliamentary elections include Kamakhyia Prasad Tasa (BJP), Misha Bharti (RJD), Vivek Thakur (BJP), Depender Singh Hooda (Congress), Udayanraje Bhosle (BJP), KC Venugopal (Congress), and Biplob Kumar Deb (BJP).

Protests singe...

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The Left Front earlier detached itself from the movement with Meenakshi Mukherjee on Sunday night telling that neither the Students' Federation of India nor the Democratic Youth Federation — the students' and youth arms of the CPI(M) — would join the movement. Meanwhile, in protest against the "atrocities perpetrated by the police on a peaceful march," the BJP on Tuesday declared a 12-hour bandh in Bengal.

Union Minister and State party president Sukanta Majumdar, urged the people to "participate in the general strike" from 6 AM to 6 PM "so as to knock some shame in the police and the State Government. However the State administration said that as it

was the policy of the government not to allow any kind of strike, "government will not allow any bandh on Wednesday", asking the people not to participate in the strike. Alapan Bandopadhyay, the chief advisor to the Chief Minister said that "all the transport services will remain operational, and shops, marketplaces and other business establishments will remain open."

Congress spokesperson Kunal Ghosh said that "despite the act of shame in RG Kar Hospital and despite the Government taking all the steps some vested interests have made it a political agenda to pull down an elected Government... and the strike is a part of that... as strikes are out of fashion in Bengal there will be no bandh in on Tuesday."

Safety of healthcare workers...

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"It is operational as of today." The 10-member panel was set up following Apex court's suo motu action last week regarding the alleged rape and murder of a trainee doctor at RG Kar Medical College and Hospital in Kolkata, a case that ignited nationwide protests and disrupted medical services. Given the gravity of the

situation, on Wednesday, a meeting co-chaired by the Union home secretary and Union health secretary will be held with state chief secretaries and DGPs through video conference to discuss short term measures regarding the security of medical professionals. The NTF members informed that they have been approached directly by various stakeholders and have individually received almost 300 to 400 suggestions.

The states have also been requested to provide information on the security measures available in the medical institutions. A Google sheet has been shared

Rise of daughters in J&K...

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Omar had to take a U-turn as he had earlier decided to not fight for a seat in the legislature of a Union Territory. Ganderbal is seen as a stronghold for the National Conference, having elected three generations of the Abdullah family. NC founder Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah had won the seat in 1977, followed by his son Farooq Abdullah who secured victories in 1983, 1987 and 1996. Omar Abdullah was later elected from the constituency in 2008.

PM Modi shares...

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"We (India) are not neutral. From the very beginning, we have taken sides. And we have chosen the side of peace. We have come from the land of Buddha where there is no place for war," Prime Minister Modi said.

"I want to assure you and the entire global community that India is committed to respecting sovereignty and territorial integrity (of States) and it is of utmost importance to us," he added.

During his visit to Ukraine, Prime Minister Modi had also said he hoped to see the "rising sun of peace". "I want to assure you that India is ready to play an active role in any effort towards peace. If I can play any role in this personally, I will do that. I want to assure you as a friend," he had said to Zelensky.

On August 23, Modi paid a

nearly nine-hour visit to Kyiv, the first-ever trip to Ukraine by an Indian Prime Minister since it became independent over three decades ago, and held wide-ranging talks with President Volodymyr Zelensky.

He also invited Zelensky to visit India and the Ukrainian leader said he would be happy to travel to the "great" country.

Last month, Prime Minister Modi had visited Moscow and met President Putin. Reiterating India's stand on the Ukraine conflict, he had urged the Russian President to return to the path of dialogue and diplomacy asserting that "no solution can be found on the battlefield".

The Russia-Ukraine war is in its second year and shows no sign of ending anytime soon. On Monday, Russia carried out drone and missile attacks across Ukraine.

BRS leader Kavitha gets...

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The bench reiterated its observation in the Manish Sisodia judgment that the undertrial custody should not be turned into a punishment. It also set aside a July 1 order of the Delhi High Court which denied bail to the BRS leader in the two cases. The Delhi HC on July 1 had denied bail to Kavitha. Among other grounds, Justice Swarana Kanta Sharma held that Kavitha was a "well-educated" woman who could not be considered "vulnerable", so the exception would not apply to her. A trial court order by Judge Kaveri Baweja had interpreted the provision on the same lines to deny bail to Kavitha.

Both CBI and ED came in for some sharp criticism over the "fairness" of their investigation, with the apex court observing "Sorry to see this state of affairs". "You will pick and choose anyone?" it asked, while referring to one of the witnesses whose statements were read out in the court during the arguments. "The prosecution has to be fair. You can't pick and choose anyone. What is this fairness? A person who incriminates himself has been made a witness," the bench said.

Mollywood's MeToo movement topples South...

From Page 1

Also, he asked others to submit their resignations. Lal is undergoing treatment in a corporate hospital in Ernakulam following dengue fever.

Meanwhile Mukesh, the CPI(M) MLA who has been alleged of misbehaviour by Minu Muner has filed a complaint with the director general of police against the female artist accusing her of trying to abuse him. A section of CPI(M) is of the view that Mukesh is being helped by the Eezhava lobby in the party to wriggle out of the dilemma.

While a section of film artists welcomed the move by Lal and his associates to quit, another section challenged the move. "I was shocked to hear about the new development. It would have been ideal had the office bearers facing the allegations submitted their resignations," said Anup Chandran, a senior character artist.

The ongoing "crisis" in the film industry has its roots in the internal wrangle in the CPI(M) as well as the turf war in film industry between two directors.

Nursing student raped by auto-driver in Maharashtra

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

In yet another sexual crime that came on the heels of rape and murder of a junior doctor in Kolkata and abuse of two nursery girls at Badlapur, a 19-year-old nurs-

ing student was allegedly raped by an autorickshaw driver at Ratnagiri district in Maharashtra's coastal Konkan region. After the latest incident came to light, nurses and hospital staff members staged protests demanding action against the accused.

conditions, and preventing sexual violence against them. The task force's agenda also involves ensuring compliance with the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act 2013, mandating the formation of Internal Complaints Committees in all hospitals and nursing homes. The 10-member NTF includes notable figures such as Vice Admiral Arti Sarin, Director General (Medical Services), Dr D Nageshwar Reddy, Chairman and Managing Director, Asian Institute of Gastroenterology and AIG Hospitals, Hyderabad, Dr M Srinivas,

AIIMS-Delhi Director and Dr Pratima Murthy, Director, National Institute of Mental Health and Neurosciences, Bengaluru who bring a wealth of experience from various sectors of healthcare. The Union Health Ministry has already issued directives to the hospitals and medical colleges to ensure safety of the medical professionals. These include enhancing security in high-risk areas like emergency rooms and intensive care units, implementing baggage screening at hospital entrances, and improving infrastructure with separate resting and duty rooms for male and female staff.

Israel rescue hostage from Gaza Strip

AP ■ JERUSALEM

The Israeli military said Tuesday that it has rescued one of the scores of people abducted in Hamas' October 7 attack, which ignited the ongoing war in Gaza. The rescue brought a rare moment of joy to Israelis amid months of grinding war but also another painful reminder of the scores of hostages remaining in captivity despite international efforts to broker a cease-fire agreement in which they would be released. The military said Qaid Farhan Alkadi was rescued from a tunnel "in a complex operation in the southern Gaza Strip," without providing further details. It was not immediately known if the rescue was made under fire or if anyone was killed or wounded during the operation. The 52-year-old was one of eight members of Israel's Arab Bedouin minority who were

abducted on October 7. He was working as a guard at a packing factory in Kibbutz Magen, one of several farming communities that came under attack. He has two wives and is the father of 11 children. Israel's Channel 12 showed Alkadi's family members sprinting through the hospital where he was brought after they received the news. His brother, Hatem, told reporters they saw him disembark from a helicopter and walk to the ambulance that took him to a nearby hospital for medical checks. Israeli media ran a photo of Alkadi appearing gaunt but smiling with his family. "We're so excited to hug him and see him and tell him that we're all here with him," a family member who gave his name as Faez told Channel 12. "I hope that every hostage will come home so the families can experience this happiness." Israeli Defence Minister Yoav



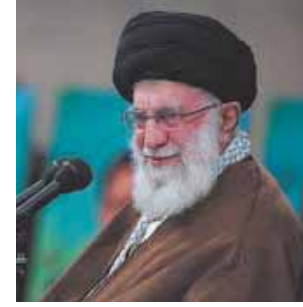
Gallant said the rescue operation was part of the army's "daring and courageous activities conducted deep inside the Gaza Strip," adding that Israel is "committed to taking advantage of every opportunity to return the hostages." Hamas-led militants abducted some 250 people in the October 7 attack, in which some 1,200 people, mostly civilians, were killed. Israel's retaliatory offensive has

killed over 40,000 Palestinians, according to local health officials, who do not say how many were fighters. It has displaced 90 per cent of Gaza's 2.3 million people from their homes and caused heavy destruction across the besieged territory. Israel believes there are still 108 hostages inside Gaza and that more than 40 of them are dead. Most of the rest were freed during a weeklong cease-fire in November in exchange for the release of Palestinians imprisoned by Israel. Israel has rescued a total of eight hostages, including in two operations that killed scores of Palestinians. Hamas says several hostages have been killed in Israeli airstrikes and failed rescue attempts. Israeli troops mistakenly killed three Israelis who escaped captivity in December. The United States, Egypt and Qatar have spent months trying to negotiate an agreement in which the

remaining hostages would be freed in exchange for a lasting cease-fire. Those talks are ongoing in Egypt this week, but there has been no sign of any breakthrough. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has faced intense criticism from families of the hostages and much of the Israeli public for not yet reaching a deal with Hamas to bring them home. Hamas hopes to trade the hostages for a lasting cease-fire, the withdrawal of Israeli troops from Gaza and the release of a large number of Palestinian prisoners, including high-profile militants. Last week, after the Israeli military recovered the bodies of six hostages in southern Gaza, Israel's military spokesperson, Rear Adm. Daniel Hagari, said the army was working to gather more intelligence for rescue operations. But he added that "we cannot bring everyone back through rescue operations alone."

Khamenei open to talks with US on Tehran's nuclear programme

AP ■ DUBAI



Iran's supreme leader opened the door Tuesday to renewed negotiations with the United States over his country's rapidly advancing nuclear programme, telling its civilian government there was "no barrier" to engaging with its "enemy." Ayatollah Ali Khamenei's remarks set clear red lines for any talks taking place under the government of reformist President Masoud Pezeshkian and renewed his warnings that Washington wasn't to be trusted. But his comments mirror those around the time of Iran's 2015 nuclear deal with world powers, which saw Tehran's nuclear programme greatly curtailed in exchange for the lifting of economic sanctions. Yet it remains unclear just how much room Pezeshkian will have to maneuver, particularly as tensions

remain high in the wider Middle East over the Israel-Hamas war and as the US prepares for a presidential election in November. "We do not have to pin our hope to the enemy. For our plans, we should not wait for approval by the enemies," Khamenei said in a video broadcast by state television. "It is not contradictory to engage the same enemy in some places, there's no barrier." Khamenei, who has final say on all state matters, also warned

Pezeshkian's Cabinet, "Do not trust the enemy." Khamenei, 85, has occasionally urged talks or dismissed them with Washington after then President Donald Trump unilaterally withdrew the United States from the deal in 2018. There have been indirect talks between Iran and the US in recent years mediated by Oman and Qatar, two of the United States' Middle East interlocutors when it comes to Iran. Khamenei's remarks came a day after Qatar's prime minister visited the country. Asked for comment, the US State Department told The Associated Press: "We will judge Iran's leadership by their actions, not their words." "We have long said that we ultimately view diplomacy as the best way to achieve an effective, sustainable solution with regard to Iran's nuclear program," it said.

US, China working to avoid conflict at talks in Beijing

AP ■ BEIJING

The United States and China are working to ensure the competition between them does not veer into conflict, a top White House official said Tuesday as the two sides started talks on a relationship that has been severely tested during President Joe Biden's term in office. Jake Sullivan, the US national security adviser, is meeting over two days with Wang Yi, a senior foreign policy official for Chinese leader Xi Jinping, in a scenic lake area on the northern outskirts of Beijing. "President Biden has been very clear in his conversations with President Xi that he is committed to managing this important relationship responsibly," Sullivan said in brief remarks to media before the talks began. The goal of his visit, which lasts through Thursday, is limited — to try to maintain communication in a relationship that broke

down for the better part of a year in 2022-23 and was only nursed back over several months. No major announcements are expected, though Sullivan's meetings could lay the groundwork for a possible final summit with Chinese leader Xi Jinping before Biden steps down in January. Wang, the director of the Communist Party's Central Foreign Affairs Commission Office, noted that the China-US relationship has gone through twists and turns in past few years. "The key," he said, "is to keep to the overall direction of mutual respect, peaceful co-existence, and win-win cooperation." According to Da Wei, a US and international relations expert at Tsinghua University in Beijing, it's important for the two countries to avoid any crisis in the remaining months of the Biden administration, as it could set the tone for US-China ties under the next one,

"The goal of this visit is not reaching new breakthroughs or progress but to continue the stable momentum of China-US relations in the past year through strategic communication, and to avoid new crises in the next few months," he said. The Biden administration has taken a tough line on China, viewing it as a strategic competitor, restricting the access of its companies to advanced technology and confronting the rising power as it seeks to exert influence over Taiwan and the South China Sea. Already frosty relations went into a deep freeze after then-Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi, a senior US lawmaker, visited Taiwan in August 2022. Hopes of restoring ties were dashed the following February when a suspected Chinese spy balloon drifted across the US before being shot down by the US military. Sullivan has been Biden's point person for often unannounced

talks with Wang, who is the foreign minister as well as the ruling Communist Party's top foreign policy official. Wang had initially stepped down as foreign minister when he took the party post, a more senior position, but he returned about seven months later, in July 2023, after his successor was removed for reasons that have not been made public. At a meeting between Sullivan and Wang in Vienna in May 2023, the two countries launched a delicate process of putting relations back on track. Since then, they have met two more times in a third country, Malta and Thailand. This week will mark their first talks in Beijing. China's Foreign Ministry said this week that relations with the US remain at "a critical juncture." It noted that the two sides are talking on climate and other issues, but it accused the US of continuing to constrain and suppress China.

Former Malaysian PM charged with sedition for mocking former king

AP ■ KUALA LUMPUR



Former Malaysian Prime Minister Muhyiddin Yassin was charged Tuesday with sedition over a speech he made that allegedly questioned the integrity of the country's previous king. Muhyiddin, who led Malaysia from March 2020 until August 2021, pleaded not guilty in a court in northeast Kelantan state. According to the charge sheet, Muhyiddin made the seditious remarks last month during a by-election campaign in Kelantan. Nine ethnic Malay state rulers take turns as Malaysia's king for five-year terms under the country's rotating monarchy, which began when Malaysia gained independence from Britain in 1957. The monarchy plays a largely ceremonial role, but are revered by the nation's majority Muslims. In his speech on Aug. 14, Muhyiddin had questioned why then-King Sultan Abdullah

ermment. Sultan Abdullah from central Pahang state, who ended his reign on Jan. 30 this year, didn't comment on the case. But his son issued a strong rebuke to Muhyiddin, saying his remarks were dangerous and could divide the people and undermine the royal institution. Muhyiddin was questioned by police following complaints against him. He had denied insulting the royalty, saying his remarks were factual and that he had handed in sworn oath of support by 115 lawmakers in the 222-member parliament. Zaid Malek from Lawyers for Liberty, a human rights and law reform group, slammed the use of the colonial-era Sedition Act against Muhyiddin. He said questioning or criticizing the exercise of constitutional power by the king wasn't seditious. The law, introduced by the British in 1948, criminalizes speech or actions with an undefined "seditious tendency,"

including that which promotes hatred against the government and monarchy or incites racial discord. "The king is a constitutional monarch, and not a feudal ruler. His exercise of his power can thus be debated, questioned or criticized. This is the very bedrock of our system of constitutional monarchy," Zaid said. Anwar had backtracked on his pledge to repeal the Sedition Act, which has long been used to suppress dissenting voices, he added. Muhyiddin, 77, faces up to three years in prison or a fine or both if found guilty. He is also still battling corruption and money-laundering charges that he claims are politically motivated. Muhyiddin was the second former leader charged with crimes after ex-Prime Minister Najib Razak, who received multiple charges after losing a 2018 general election. Najib began a 12-year prison term in 2022, with several more graft trials underway.

25 terrorists neutralised by Pak security forces

PTI ■ PESHAWAR

Twenty-five terrorists, including a top militant commander, were neutralised while eleven others injured after Pakistan's security forces conducted "extensive" intelligence-based operations in the restive Khyber tribal district against the Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) and two of its affiliate groups, the army said Tuesday. The operations were based on "robust intelligence" and resulted in major setbacks to Fitna al-Khawarij and its affiliates, the Pakistan military's media wing - the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) - said in a statement, referring to the TTP. "During these daring and highly successful IBOs being conducted since 20 August 2024, security forces have so far successfully neutralised twenty-five Khawarij, including Kharij ring leader Abuzar alias Saddam, who has been sent to hell, while eleven Khawarij have been injured," the statement said. During the operations, four soldiers were also killed, it added. The heavy losses inflicted upon 'Fitna Al Khawarij' in these operations were a testament to the valour and commitment of the security forces to eliminate the menace of terrorism from the country. Earlier this month, the government

China backs Pak's counter-terror ops
Beijing (PTI): China on Tuesday strongly condemned the terrorist attacks in Pakistan's restive Balochistan province in which 37 people were massacred and said it would continue to back Islamabad's counter-terrorism operations. "We strongly condemn the terrorist attacks and express our deep condolences over the lives lost," Chinese foreign ministry spokesperson Lin Jian told a daily press briefing. "China stands firm against all forms of terrorism. We will continue giving staunch support to Pakistan in their effort to advance counterterrorism operations, uphold social solidarity and stability, and protect the safety of the people," he added. "China stands ready to further enhance counterterrorism and security cooperation with Pakistan and jointly safeguard peace and security in the region," he said.

declared TTP as 'Fitna al-Khawarij' and all other terrorists associated with the group as khariji, a reference to a group in earlier Islamic history which was involved in violence.

Sharif reiterates resolve to root out terrorism

PTI ■ ISLAMABAD

Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif Tuesday strongly condemned the terrorist attacks in the restive Balochistan province as he reiterated the unwavering resolve of his government to root out terrorism from the country. Heavily armed Baloch gunmen killed at least 37 people in separate attacks in Pakistan's restive Balochistan province on Monday, as insurgent attacks spiked in the region bordering Iran and Afghanistan. Chairing a Cabinet meeting a day after violence in Balochistan stunned the country, Sharif strongly condemned the terrorist incidents that resulted in the death of innocent Pakistanis including the security personnel, state-run Radio Pakistan reported. He said the sacrifices rendered by the people and the Armed Forces of Pakistan in the war against terrorism will not go waste. "The entire nation is committed for complete elimination of terrorism from the country," he said. Prime Minister Sharif said all available resources would be provided to the Armed Forces to curb terrorism. He said time has come to eliminate terrorism. "We need to move forward towards this path with firm resolve," he said. He said doors of dialogue are open for those who believe in Pakistan and its Constitution. However, no talks will be held with the enemies and terrorists, he added. Referring to the terrorist incidents, he said it is no secret now that the terrorists of the Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan, operating from Afghanistan, are behind terrorist attacks. He said the government has already sensitized the Afghan government on the issue.

Starmer hints at tough tax measures ahead

PTI ■ LONDON

British Prime Minister Keir Starmer on Tuesday gave the first indication of some tough tax measures in store in the October budget in the first keynote address of his premiership since taking charge at 10 Downing Street last month. In a planned speech at the Rose Garden before a gathering of apprentices, medics and other professionals, Starmer declared the state of the public finances was left in a much worse condition by the previous Conservative Party regime than the Labour government had expected. He declared that his job was now to fix the foundations which would involve "short-term pain for long-term good" and admitted that "unpopular" decisions would have to be made. "There is a Budget coming in October and it is going to be painful. We have no other choice given the situation that we are in," said Starmer. "I promised that this government would serve people like you - apprentices, teachers, nurses, small business owners, firefighters, those serving our community and our country every day," he said, with reference to the Downing Street gathering. The keynote, timed a week before Parliament resumes after its summer

recess next week, was designed to assert that "it won't be business as usual because we can't go on like this any more". "Things will have to be done differently. We will do the hard work to root out 14 years of rot, reverse a decade of decline and fix the foundations. Between now and Christmas, we will carry on as we started: action not words. We will introduce legislation and take decisions to protect taxpayers' money," said Starmer. Referencing the recent far-right riots across different parts of the UK, the former barrister and chief prosecutor said the violent clashes didn't just "betray the sickness" left in the wake of the former government's "cynical conflict of populism" but also revealed that the cure was to be found in the "coming together of a country". "When, after the hard work of clearing up the mess is done, we have a country that we have built together, built to last, that belongs to every single one of us... This is our country. Let's fix it - together," he noted. Addressing media queries after the speech, Starmer reiterated that the tough economic decisions ahead were down to a GBP 22 billion "black hole" left at the end of 14 years of Tories in charge.

Telegram CEO Durov's custody extended

AP ■ PARIS

A French investigative judge extended police custody for the CEO of the popular messaging app Telegram, Pavel Durov, prosecutors said on Tuesday. Durov was detained Saturday at Le Bourget airport as part of a judicial inquiry opened last month involving 12 alleged criminal violations. They include complicity in selling child sexual abuse material and in drug trafficking, fraud, abetting organized crime transactions and refusing to share information or documents with investigators when required by law. A statement from the Paris prosecutor's office said Durov's police custody order was extended on Monday evening for up to 48 hours. After that, authorities must release or charge him, the prosecutor's office said in an earlier statement. Durov is a citizen of Russia, France, the United Arab Emirates and the Caribbean island nation of St Kitts and Nevis. Russian government officials have expressed outrage at his detention, with some calling it politically motivated and proof of the West's double standard on freedom of speech. The outcry has raised eyebrows among Kremlin critics because in 2018, Russian authorities themselves tried to block Telegram but failed, withdrawing the ban in 2020. French President Emmanuel Macron said Monday that Durov's arrest wasn't a political move but part of an independent investigation. Macron posted on X that his country "is deeply committed" to freedom of expression but "freedoms are upheld within a legal framework, both on social media and in real life, to protect citizens and respect their fundamental rights."

B'desh garment industry faces crisis amid political unrest, floods

PTI ■ DHAKA

Bangladesh's garment industry, a vital economic pillar, is facing a severe crisis due to a volatile mix of political unrest, including violent protests, and catastrophic flooding, threatening to unravel years of rapid growth and global prominence. The textile and garment industry, which accounts for over 80 per cent of Bangladesh's total export earnings and contributes approximately 11 per cent to the nation's GDP, has been hit hard. This industry contributes significantly to export earnings and employs millions. Following the unprecedented anti-government protests, which reached a crescendo on August 5, Sheikh Hasina resigned as prime minister and fled the country. She landed in India on August 5 and is currently

staying there. The two-month-long anti-quota protests have led to widespread demonstrations, curfews, and violence. This unrest has not only disrupted factory operations but has also caused significant economic losses. Factories were forced to close, and with the peak season for Christmas shipments and the booking of next season's orders upon us, the timing of the unrest has exacerbated the crisis. The Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA) recently has reported substantial financial losses, estimating a shortfall of Tk 6,400 crore (approx Rs 4,500 crore) due to the shutdowns and communication breakdowns. Khandoker Rafiqul Islam, the newly elected president of the BGMEA, mentioned that the goal of reaching nearly USD 45 billion in exports this

year may not be achieved. He attributed this to disruptions in both export activities and production. "I think this is a temporary crisis and we will tide over it. The exact magnitude of the losses will be known later, but yes, there has been an impact," he told PTI. Echoing similar sentiments, former cabinet minister and president of BGMEA, Gholam Sarwar Milon, said the garment industry has been badly hit by both the political unrest and the floods, as both production and the supply chain of raw materials have been severely affected. "The crisis in the garment industry is unprecedented. Production is nearly 15-20 per cent less than the corresponding period last year. Several orders have dried up as investors and order suppliers are wary about investing. Several small factories have either closed down or are working on sub-con-

tracts for big factories," he told PTI. According to BGMEA sources, out of 3,000 major and small garment factories in Bangladesh, nearly 800-900 have closed since last year. "The big factories have survived, but the small and medium factories have borne the brunt. If the situation persists, it will worsen further," he said. Milon suggested that the garment industry needs to diversify into making jute bags and other high-end clothing and also look for new markets. The Bangladesh Textile Mills Association has projected losses of around USD 58 million. The impact on the industry is compounded by the recent flooding, which has further disrupted logistics and exacerbated the economic fallout. Bangladesh's main port, Chattogram, through which more than 90 per cent of the country's international trade transits, has

become a focal point of the chaos. The port's operations were paralysed during the political unrest, leading to significant delays in shipments. Factories have struggled to maintain production schedules, and backlogs at ports and airports have stretched to a month in some cases. To mitigate the damage, factories have turned to air freight and extended working hours, but these measures have not fully alleviated the delays. The president of the Bangladesh Knitwear Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BKMEA), Mohammad Hatem, said orders are down by 15-20 per cent. "The industry has incurred huge losses in the last few months. In 2014, during political unrest, we suffered a similar situation. It then took us three years to return to the previous state. We hope to tide over the situation soon as Chief Advisor

Muhammad Yunus is taking several steps to restore normalcy," he told PTI. Hatem feels that if the situation is not overcome soon, there is a growing perception that foreign investors might look at new markets in other South Asian nations. The garment industry's workforce, which employs over 4 million people directly and nearly 15 million indirectly, with a significant proportion of women, faces mounting uncertainty. The sector's remarkable growth over the past two decades—from USD 5 billion in exports in 2001 to nearly USD 40 billion in 2023—now stands at risk. The floods have compounded the challenges, causing damage to infrastructure and further complicating logistics. Monsoon rainfall-triggered floods in deltaic Bangladesh and upstream Indian regions have killed several people and marooned or affected

nearly 3 million others in Bangladesh, posing a huge administrative challenge to the newly installed interim government amid a political transition. "Due to the floods, the supply chain has been badly affected. We reached a high in 2023-24 where our garment exports touched around USD 46 billion. This time it is likely to be much less," said former army major and owner of a woollen garment factory, Mahfuzur Rehman. The sector's growth from a small-scale operation in the early 1980s to becoming the world's second-largest apparel exporter, after China, underscores its strength. In the financial year 2009, Bangladesh's apparel exports were valued at USD 12 billion. By the financial year 2023-24, this figure had surged to over USD 46 billion, reflecting the industry's capacity for recovery and growth even amid adversity.

Markets settle almost flat

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Stock market benchmark S indices Sensex and Nifty ended on a flat note after a volatile session on Tuesday due to the emergence of profit-taking near record high levels amid rising geopolitical tensions in the Middle East and Ukraine. The NSE gauge, however, hit a new lifetime peak of 25,017.75. According to traders, profit booking in metal, consumer durable and FMCG shares negated gains in telecom, tech and IT stocks. After oscillating between highs and lows, the 30-share BSE Sensex eked out a marginal gain of 13.65 points or 0.02 per cent to settle at 81,711.76 — its sixth consecutive session of rise. During the day, it hit a high of 81,919.11 and a low of 81,600.51. The NSE Nifty ended almost flat, up 7.15 points or 0.03 per cent, at 25,017.75 — its ninth straight session of gains. “The domestic market witnessed profit-booking near record highs. While the positive expectations regarding a potential rate cut by the Fed in September remain, the recent geopolitical tensions



and rising crude oil prices have made investors cautious amid high valuations. “Further, the recent shift in FII stance towards the domestic market and the anticipation that the RBI will align with the Fed’s actions are expected to foster a positive outlook in the near term,” said Vinod Nair, Head of Research, Geojit Financial Services. On the Sensex chart, Bajaj Finserv, Maruti, Larsen & Toubro, Bajaj Finance, Infosys, Axis Bank and ICICI Bank were the biggest gainers. In contrast, Hindustan Unilever, JSW Steel, Titan, NTPC and Tata Motors were

among the laggards. In the broader market, the BSE midcap gauge climbed 0.58 per cent, and smallcap index went up by 0.50 per cent. Among the indices, telecommunication jumped 1.13 per cent, tech (0.70 per cent), financial services (0.68 per cent) and healthcare (0.44 per cent). On the other hand, metal, consumer durables, power, commodities and consumer discretionary were among the laggards. Trading session lacked momentum due to weak investor participation on

account of Janmashtami and ended almost unchanged from its previous close. Weak US market cues and subdued Asian indices prompted local investors to book profit towards the fag-end, indicating that intraday volatility will continue amid growing geopolitical tensions and sluggish global growth,” Prashanth Tapse, Senior VP (Research), Mehta Equities Ltd, said. In Asian markets, Tokyo and Hong Kong settled in the positive territory, while Seoul and Shanghai ended lower. European markets were trading higher in mid-session deals. The US markets ended mostly lower in the overnight trade on Monday. “There are both headwinds and tailwinds for the market now. Headwinds are coming from the escalation of geopolitical tensions in the Middle East and Ukraine. Brent crude has shot up above USD 81. The strongest tailwind comes from the expected rate cuts by the Fed which will spill over to other central banks, including the RBI,” said VK Vijayakumar, Chief Investment Strategist, Geojit Financial Services.

GCCs offering up to 20 per cent higher salaries than IT services: Report

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Global Capability Centres (GCCs) in India are offering up to 20 per cent higher salaries as compared with the IT services, especially at entry and mid levels, a report said on Tuesday. According to the report by TeamLease Digital, India has over 1,600 GCCs employing over 1.66 million professionals. It is poised to welcome 800 new GCCs in the next 5-6 years, which shows the country’s growing prominence as a global tech hub. GCCs are centralized units established by multinational companies to manage specific business functions or processes, leveraging cost advantages, a skilled workforce, and favourable business environments in strategic locations worldwide. GCCs play a vital role in driving efficiency and innovation across sectors such as IT, finance, and research and development. On the other hand, IT products & services encompass development, production, and management



of hardware, software, networks, and services that enable organizations in the creation, management and optimization of or access to information and business processes. “GCCs are rapidly surpassing the IT sector in the talent market, especially at entry and mid levels. They offer salaries that are, on an average, 12-20 per cent higher than those in IT services and non-tech industries,” TeamLease Digital CEO Neeti Sharma said quoting the report. This wage premium underscores the growing influence of GCCs as they attract top talent from the IT sector to fuel their expansion, signalling a shift in market dynamics where GCCs are emerging as the dominant

force, she added. The ‘Digital Skills and Salary Primer for FY25’ report is based on an analysis of 15,000 job roles from the 3 sectors, including GCCs, IT services and non-tech sectors. Currently, in GCCs, there are more opportunities for people with 0-10 years experience. The senior level has a wider salary gap for many of the functional areas, and the premium for niche skills is also higher. The report further showed that there is a growing trend of setting up GCCs in tier-II cities like Kolkata, Ahmedabad, and Vadodara, which indicates a geographical diversification of tech opportunities across the country. Skills that are seeing an increasing demand in GCCs are PyTorch, AWS, DevOps, NLP, Kubernetes, Hyperledger Fabric, Blockchain, Tableau, SQL, and ServiceNow, the report added. In GCCs, the percentage of women tech professionals is expected to increase to 35 per cent from the current 25 per cent by 2027.

Over 200 global players to take part in Bharat Battery Show 2025



PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Over 200 global players are likely to showcase cutting-edge battery and charging infra technologies at the Bharat Battery Show in January 2025. Industry body India Energy Storage Alliance (IESA), in a statement, said it is organising the Bharat Battery Show at the second Bharat Mobility Global Expo 2025. According to the statement, the Bharat Mobility Global Expo 2025 led by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry is set to be held on January 17-22, 2025, across three major venues — Bharat Mandapam, Yashbhoomi (IICC) Dwarka, and India Expo Center & Mart, Greater Noida. IESA, as a key industry partner, has been entrusted with the organisation of the Battery Tech Pavilion, Recycling Pavilion, and Charging Infra Pavilion under the umbrella of the Bharat Battery Show. Bharat Battery Show — part of the Bharat Mobility — will be organised at the central Delhi venue Pragati Maidan, New Delhi, from 19 to 21 January 2025. The Bharat Battery Show (an expo on batteries and charging) will feature cutting-edge technologies in battery storage, battery recycling, and charging infrastructure, reflecting IESA’s commitment to driving the adoption of clean energy and sustainable mobility solutions in India. IESA said that it is expecting 200+ global players to showcase their cutting-edge battery and charging infra technologies during this event. Some of the key firms already confirmed include Amara Raja, Replus Engitech, Epsilon Advanced Materials, Advik Hitech, Amphenol FCI, Bry-Air (Asia), Elcom International, EMO Energy, HENN Indo Pacific, Maestrotech Systems, Neenjas Electric, Polyprotic Chemicals, Huge Hippo Energy, MNE components, Hioki, Glida, Ipower batteries, and Molsynth, among others.

Rupee falls 5 paise to close at 83.92 against US dollar

PTI ■ MUMBAI

The rupee depreciated by 5 paise to close at 83.92 (provisional) against the American currency on Tuesday, on overnight jump in crude oil prices and a surge in commodity prices. However, positive domestic markets and a soft US dollar cushioned the downside, forex traders said. At the interbank foreign exchange market, the local unit opened at 83.91 and touched an intra-day low of 83.95 against the US dollar. The domestic currency finally settled at 83.92 (provisional), 5 paise lower from its previous close. On Monday, the Indian rupee settled for the day 3 paise higher at 83.87 against the American currency. “We expect the rupee to trade with a slight positive bias on rise in global risk sentiments amid dovish Fed speak and



rising expectations of a rate cut by the Fed in September. “However, geopolitical tensions in the Middle East and rising crude oil prices may cap sharp upside. Traders may take cues from US consumer confidence data,” Anuj Choudhary, Research Analyst at Sharekhan by BNP Paribas, said. Forex traders said the rupee is likely to remain within a narrow range as the Reserve Bank of India has been actively intervening in the market, consistently absorbing inflows.

Meanwhile, the dollar index, which gauges the greenback’s strength against a basket of six currencies, was trading 0.05 per cent lower at 100.79. Brent crude, the global oil benchmark, declined 0.87 per cent to USD 80.72 per barrel. On the domestic equity market front, Sensex rose 13.65 points, or 0.02 per cent, to close at 81,711.76 points. The Nifty closed 7.15 points, or 0.03 per cent, up at 25,017.75 points. Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) were net buyers in the capital markets on Monday, as they purchased shares worth Rs 483.36 crore, according to exchange data. Reserve Bank Governor Shaktikanta Das on Monday said the central bank is constantly working on policies, systems, and platforms to make the country’s financial sector strong, nimble and customer centric.

India-Oman free trade pact talks at advanced stage: Official

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Discussions for the proposed free trade agreement (FTA) between India and Oman are at an advanced stage and both sides hope to conclude the pact early, Indian Ambassador to Oman Amit Narang said on Tuesday. The pact will give a significant push to bilateral trade and investment ties between the two countries, he said. The pact, officially known as the Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA), is expected to boost Indian exports to the west Asian country by eliminating duties, especially on petroleum products, textiles, electronics, pharmaceuticals, machinery, and iron and steel. “Discussions for a bilateral CEPA with Oman are at an advanced stage. We hope to conclude these discussions early and once this is done, this will be a significant push



to bilateral, not just trade, but also bilateral investment ties,” Narang said. Organising an event addressed by Ficci here, the Indian Ambassador to Oman also highlighted the significant potential for enhancing direct shipping links between the two nations as a large part of Indian exports to Oman come not directly but through the UAE. He said the India-Oman bilateral trade, which crossed USD 12 billion in 2022-23, has moderated and settled at USD 8 billion in FY24. “Between 2021 and 2023 the

commodities globally,” Narang said. He pointed out that a large part of Indian exports to Oman come not directly but through the UAE and these are not reflected in the India-Oman bilateral trade but in India’s trade with the UAE, adding that there is potential for enhancing direct shipping links. “Currently, I understand that there are two shipping lines... There is therefore huge potential for direct shipping to reduce cost of bilateral trade and that will have a significant impact in further improving our bilateral trade figures,” Narang said. Addressing the event virtually, Indian Ambassador to the UAE Sunjay Sudhir said India will soon upgrade its political engagement with the GCC (Gulf Cooperation Council) as a whole in the very near future. The Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) brings together six Arab countries — Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE.

India ranks 31st in JLL’s Global Real Estate Transparency Index

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Global property consultant JLL on Tuesday said that India’s top real estate markets have entered into a ‘transparent’ zone for the first time, driven by institutionalisation of commercial assets and improvement in data access. JLL has released its ‘Global Real Estate Transparency Index, 2024’, which showed that India’s tier-I markets have entered into the ‘transparent’ zone for the first time with a composite score of 2.44. India ranks 31st in the list of 89 countries. The consultant noted that “India has made a remarkable leap forward in JLL’s Global Real Estate Transparency Index 2024, reaching the transparent tier for the first time.” This progress is a result of institutionalisation in the commercial market and



improved access to diverse real estate data sets, it said. “India is the top global improver in the 2024 index, making significant strides in transaction processes and market fundamentals,” JLL said, the country is leading the global front in enhancing transparency, with expanded data coverage and improved data quality across various property sectors. There are 13 countries featured in the high-transparency zone. The United Kingdom is at the top (with a score of 1.24) in

and Slovakia. The remaining countries are in ‘semi-transparent’, Low transparency and opaque zones. “India is the top global improver, with greater data coverage and quality across both core and niche property sectors — ranging from industrial to data centres - as institutionalisation in the market increases. “A more proactive financial regulator, new climate risk disclosure guidelines, streamlined building regulations and digitised land records have also contributed to its leading cities entering the ‘Transparent’ tier,” the report mentioned. Samantak Das, Chief Economist and Head-Research, India, JLL, said, “Increasing institutional participation, along with a push for transparency, has led to the adoption of best industry practices in India’s commercial real estate

market.” Notably, he said four existing listed REITs have driven growth in stabilised commercial assets, while standardised market valuation processes and REIT regulations have fostered market-based approaches. “Regulatory enhancements such as RERA and the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code have improved investor protection, while digital land registry records and strict monitoring by RBI and SEBI have created a robust regulatory landscape,” Das said. Karan Singh Sodi, Senior Managing Director (Mumbai MMR & Gujarat) and Head-Alternatives, India, JLL said, India’s ascent to the transparent tier in JLL’s Global Real Estate Transparency Index underscores the industry’s cohesive efforts and governmental backing.

Auto majors to offer 1.5-3 per cent discount on purchase of new vehicles against scrappage certificate

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Ahead of the festive season, several passenger and commercial vehicle manufacturers have agreed to offer discounts of 1.5-3 per cent on new vehicle purchase against scrapped old vehicles after a meeting with Union Minister Nitin Gadkari, an official statement said on Tuesday. The statement further said Mercedes Benz India has offered a flat discount of Rs 25,000, which will be over and above all existing discounts. Union Road Transport and Highways (RT&H) Minister Nitin Gadkari on Tuesday chaired a meeting with the SIAM delegation at Bharat Mandapam, where he addressed pressing issues in the automobile industry. “During this interaction, responding positively to the advice of the minister RT&H



and recognising the importance of Fleet Modernisation and Circular Economy, multiple Commercial Vehicle Manufacturers and multiple passenger vehicle manufacturers have agreed to offer discounts for a limited period against a certificate of deposit (Scrappage Certificate),” the statement said. It said commercial vehicle manufacturers are willing to offer discounts for a limited period of two years and

passenger vehicle manufacturers are willing to offer discounts for a limited period of one year. The statement noted that these discounts will further incentivise the scrapping of vehicles, thereby ensuring the plying of safer, cleaner and more efficient vehicles on roads. As per the statement, passenger vehicle manufacturers namely Maruti Suzuki India Ltd, Tata Motors, Mahindra & Mahindra, Hyundai Motor India, Kia Motors, Toyota Kirloskar Motor, Honda Cars, JSW MG Motor, Renault India, Nissan India and Skoda Volkswagen India, will offer discount of 1.5 per cent of the ex-showroom price of new car or Rs 20,000, whichever is less, against the passenger vehicle scrapped by the owner in the last 6 months.

Gold climbs ₹550 to ₹74,350 per 10 gm; silver rallies ₹1,200

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Gold prices climbed Rs 550 to Rs 74,350 per 10 grams in the national capital on Tuesday on the back of fresh demand from local jewellers. The precious metal of 99.9 per cent purity had closed at Rs 73,800 per 10 grams in the previous session on Friday. Silver prices also rallied Rs 1,200 to Rs 88,200 per kilogram on Tuesday from Rs 87,000 per kg in the previous close, according to the All India Sarafa Association. Meanwhile, gold of 99.5 per cent purity also jumped Rs 550 to Rs 74,000 per 10 grams.



Traders attributed the rise in yellow prices due to a pick-up in demand by local jewellers and retailers in the domestic market. The bullion markets were closed in New Delhi on Monday on account of Krishna Janmashtami. In the Asian trading hours, gold is trading at USD 2,543.90 per ounce, down USD 11.30 per ounce.

“Gold declined marginally on Tuesday, weighed down by better than expected US macro data and an uptick in US Treasury yields,” Saumil Gandhi, Senior Analyst of Commodities at HDFC Securities, said. According to Manav Modi, Senior Analyst, Commodity Research, MOFSL, gold prices fell but remained in sight of record highs it hit last week as the prospect of lower US interest rates battered the US dollar and presented a brighter outlook for metal markets. Further, bullion surged to record highs last week, as market participants welcomed

dovish comments from the Federal Reserve. Some safe haven demand also buoyed gold as ceasefire talks between Israel and Hamas yielded few results, while hostilities in the Middle East persisted, Modi added. Additionally, silver was quoted lower at USD 30.34 per ounce in the global markets. “Traders will focus on the US consumer confidence data going to be released later on Tuesday which will provide more insights on the direction of the bullion prices,” Navneet Damani, Group Senior VP of Commodity Research at Motilal Oswal Financial Services (MOFSL), said.

Coal India’s contribution to Govt exchequer rises 2 per cent in April-July

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

State-owned Coal India Ltd’s contribution to the government’s exchequer rose 2.06 per cent to Rs 20,071.96 crore in the April-July period of the ongoing fiscal year. Coal India Ltd (CIL), which accounts for over 80 per cent of domestic coal output, paid Rs 19,666.04 crore to the government exchequer in the year-ago period, according to provisional figures of the coal ministry. Total levies paid to the government in July went up to Rs 4,992.48 crore from Rs 4,789.42 crore paid a year earlier.



The amount paid to the Centre and state governments include royalties, GST, cess on coal, and other levies. Coal production generates substantial revenue for both central and state governments. Of the total amount paid to the government exchequer in the first four months of FY24,

maximum amount of Rs 4,417.12 crore was made to the state government of Jharkhand, followed by Rs 4,319.67 crore to the Odisha government, Rs 3,950.41 crore to Chhattisgarh, Rs 3,526.27 crore to Madhya Pradesh, and Rs 2,086.35 crore to Maharashtra, among others. State governments are entitled to receiving 14 per cent of royalty on the sale price of coal and 30 per cent of the royalty as contribution towards the proposed district mineral foundations (DMFs) -- which are meant to support people affected by various projects -- and two per cent of

NMET from dry-fuel produced by the coal companies and also the private sector. In case of captive, commercial mines, states are also entitled to receiving the revenue share offered by the auction holder in a transparent bidding process. Apart from this, state governments also benefit from increased employment, land compensation, increased investment in allied infrastructure like railways, road and several other economic benefits. Coal India is aiming to produce 838 MT of coal in the ongoing financial year.

PARALYMPICS

INDIA EYE RECORD HAUL WITH LARGEST EVER CONTINGENT IN PARIS

PTI ■ PARIS

Beaten by life but not by its many challenges, an 84-strong contingent of Indian para-athletes, the largest ever in the country's history and a heady mix of youth and experience, would be eyeing an unparalleled gold rush when the Paralympic Games begin here on Wednesday. India won a record 19 medals, including five gold, in the Tokyo Paralympics in 2021 for a 24th-place finish in the overall rankings. Three years on, the country's target is more than 25 medals with a double-digit haul in gold. What has fuelled this ambition is the size of the contingent and the exceptional performances in the past one year. India won a record 111 medals, including 29 gold, at the Hangzhou Asian Para Games last year. This was followed by unprecedented success at the World Para Athletics Championships in May where the country snared 17 medals, including half a dozen gold for a sixth-place finish in the overall standings. Several medal winners in Hangzhou are in this Paralympics team, including top stars like world record-



holding javelin thrower Sumit Antil (F64) and rifle shooter Avani Lekhara (10m Air Rifle Standing SH1). Both of them would be defending their gold medals won in Tokyo. The Games, as much a celebration of sporting skills as human endurance, club athletes with similar functional abilities in terms of movement, coordination and balance into various classifications. The "degree and nature of their eligible impairments" decide these groups. For India, the para-athletics team has been a major medal giver in the past and this time too, it is expected to be the

biggest contributor with as many as 38 names in fray. Other top medal contenders include the likes of para-archer Sheetal Devi, who shoots with her legs as she was born without arms, landmine blast survivors Hokato Sema (shot putter) and Narayana Konganapalle (rower) and several other accident amputees. India is competing in 12 sports this time, as against nine by a 54-member team in Tokyo. Shooter Manish Narwal and shuttler Krishna Nagar are also among those who would be looking to defend their gold medals won in Tokyo.

Antil, whose left leg was amputated owing to an accident when he was 17, had also won gold in the para world championships in May and he is hoping to cross the 75m mark in Paris at the same venue where his able-bodied counterpart Neeraj Chopra won an Olympic silver earlier this month. Lekhara was the best performer in Tokyo with one gold and a bronze and one of the two athletes to win two medals, the other being Singhraj Adhana (silver and bronze). Adhana, however, could not make the current team.

Lekhara was the first Indian woman to win a Paralympic gold medal. She is now primed to join the club of three medal winners in the Paralympics. Current Paralympics Committee of India (PCI) President Devendra Jhajharia, a javelin thrower, is the most decorated Indian Paralympian with two gold (2004 Athens and 2016 Rio) and a silver (2021 Tokyo). Joginder Singh Bedi won three medals in the 1984 Paralympics (silver in shot put, a bronze each in javelin and discus throw). Deepthi Jeevanji (women's 400m T20; intellectual disability), Rio Olympics gold-medallist Mariyappan Thangavelu (men's high jump - T63), whose right leg was disabled after being run over by a bus, and Yogesh Kathuniya (men's Discus Throw - F56), born with a neurological disorder that damaged his nervous system, would be also aiming to add to their existing Paralympic medal tally. Shuttler Krishna Nagar (men's singles SH6), who has overcome the disadvantage of his short height, is also looking good to defend his gold medal won in Tokyo, more so after winning the title in the World Para Badminton Championships in Thailand in

February. The other gold winner in Tokyo, Pramod Bhagat, is, however, serving suspension after whereabouts failure. Suhas Yathiraj (Men's Singles SL4 and Mixed Doubles SL3-SU5), who won a silver in Tokyo, will again be a medal contender. In para-archery, Sheetal and Harvinder Singh will be among the medal contenders. Harvinder had won a bronze in Tokyo in men's individual recurve open. Sheetal, the first and the only international para archery champion without upper limbs, bagged two gold medals in a stunning performance in the Asian Para Games in women's in individual compound and mixed doubles, and a silver in the women's doubles compound event. In table tennis, after winning a silver in class 4 event in Tokyo, Bhavin Patel will hope to better the colour of the medal. The wheelchair-bound player is competing in women's singles S4 and women's doubles D10 events. Antil and shot putter Bhagyashri Jadhav, who won a silver in the F34 event in Asian Para Games, will be the joint flag bearers at Wednesday's Opening Ceremony to be held outside a stadium for the first time in the history of Paralympic Games.



US OPEN

16-year-old Californian Iva beats Magda in first round

AP ■ NEW YORK

Iva Jovic, a 16-year-old from California, became the youngest American to win a women's main-draw match at the U.S. Open since 2000, eliminating 2023 Australian Open semifinalist Magda Linette of Poland 6-4, 6-3. "Surprised, but not surprised," Jovic said on Monday about the result against someone who's been ranked in the top 20. "I just had a plan about what I was going to do before we started, and there weren't that many needs for crazy adjustments, because it was going well," Jovic said. "So just kind of sticking to that."

Katrina Scott of the U.S. Was 16 when she won a match at the U.S. Open four years ago. Last year, Mirra Andreeva of Russia was 16 when she did it. Here's one indication of Jovic's youth: She still is planning to enter the junior event later in the tournament. Here's another: "Obviously she plays with a lot of passion," Shelton, 21, said about Gauff. "You could tell that she cares out there. She's into it every time that she's on the court. I think that's something that the people love." Gauff was not the only past U.S. Open champ on Monday's schedule: The night session in Ashe began with 2017 winner Sloane Stephens blowing a huge lead against Clara Burel and losing 0-6, 7-5, 7-5 after taking the first nine games, followed by Novak Djokovic - whose collection of 24 Slam titles includes last year's in New York - against Radu Albot.

Just keep working. I'm on a good path, but there's a lot more to do." She earned a wild-card entry for the main bracket at the year's last Grand Slam tournament by winning the U.S. Tennis Association Girls' 18s national championship. She also paired with Tyra Grant there to take the doubles title, which gave them a wild card for women's doubles at Flushing Meadows; the USTA granted Jovic and another American teen, Kaylan Bigun, a spot in the mixed doubles final, too. Jovic and Grant teamed up to win junior doubles titles at the Australian Open in January and Wimbledon in July; they also were the runners-up at the French Open in June. Jovic's favorite players are 24-time Grand Slam champion Novak Djokovic - he's Serbian, and so are her roots; after the English portion of her news conference concluded Monday, she answered questions in Serbian - and Tokyo Olympics gold medalist Belinda Bencic. Why? "Djokovic, I mean, do I need to say? We all know how great he is," Jovic responded. "And then Belinda, she just takes the ball so early and her footwork is very cutting the angle, so she just makes her opponents feel kind of suffocated. That's what I would like to try to do." Jovic would love the chance to have a conversation with Djokovic, but their lone interaction so far was when she asked if he would mind posing for a photo.

GRAND CHESS TOUR Gukesh holds Caruana; Firouzja consolidates lead



PTI ■ SAINT LOUIS (USA)

Grandmaster D Gukesh played out a hard-fought draw yet again, signing peace with top seed and local favourite Fabiano Caruana, while Frenchman Alireza Firouzja stretched his lead by a full point after the seventh round of Sinquefeld Cup, which is a part of the Grand Chess Tour. The other Indian in fray, R Praggnanandhaa, drew his seventh game on the trot to remain on a fifty per cent score. Ian Nepomniachtchi of Russia was happy with a quick draw as Praggnanandhaa decided to save his energy. With just two rounds to come, Firouzja, who put it across world champion Ding Liren of China, has five points in his kitty and Caruana continues to trail him a full point behind. As many as five players -- Wesley So of United States, Nodirbek Abdusattorov of Uzbekistan, Maxime Vachier-Lagrave of France, Gukesh and Praggnanandhaa -- share the third spot on 3.5 points each. A half point behind are Liren and Nepomniachtchi while Dutchman Anish Giri is still at the bottom of

the table on 2.5 points. Besides Firouzja's victory, Abdusattorov halted So's party with a clinical performance. In the other game of the day, Maxime Vachier-Lagrave drew with Giri. Gukesh continued with his uncompromising play but found Caruana adequately prepared in an Italian opening game. The Indian was much worse in the ensuing endgame but Caruana missed out on his 39th turn when he could have gotten a real advantage. Exchanges at regular intervals thereafter ensured the draw for the Indian. Praggnanandhaa got nothing as white against Nepomniachtchi's Petroff defense and the Chennai-based player had to be content with repetition of moves very early in the middle game. The game lasted a mere 19 moves. The day belonged to Firouzja, who came up score. Ian Nepomniachtchi of Russia was happy with a quick draw as Praggnanandhaa decided to save his energy. With just two rounds to come, Firouzja, who put it across world champion Ding Liren of China, has five points in his kitty and Caruana continues to trail him a full point behind. As many as five players -- Wesley So of United States, Nodirbek Abdusattorov of Uzbekistan, Maxime Vachier-Lagrave of France, Gukesh and Praggnanandhaa -- share the third spot on 3.5 points each. A half point behind are Liren and Nepomniachtchi while Dutchman Anish Giri is still at the bottom of

Coco begins her US Open title defense with an easy win after a two-match losing streak

AP ■ NEW YORK

The chant rang out in cavernous Arthur Ashe Stadium at the U.S. Open before Coco Gauff's first service game of her first match of her first Grand Slam tournament as a defending champion: "Here we go, Coco! Here we go!" Coming to Flushing Meadows off a series of early exits at other events, Gauff already was down 1-0 to Varvara Gracheva on Monday, having dropped the match's initial game at love by making four groundstroke errors. What followed was a tough, tight game, featuring 14 points across eight minutes and three break chances for Gracheva. The important part, of course, was that Gauff saved all of those break points, claimed that game, and suddenly was in complete control on the way to a 6-2, 6-0 victory that not only



put the 20-year-old American in the second round but also told her - and everyone else - that her game is in better shape than it appeared lately. "The last couple of weeks were tough, and I was like, I have to do this and do that, but I don't have to prove anything to anyone except myself. So ... (these) two weeks are just about proving all the

expectations that I have on myself," the No. 3-seeded Gauff said. "I have many more years coming back here and I'm not going to win every year. Just that perspective and just having the belief that I can - but not the expectation that I should." Day 1 at the year's last Grand Slam tournament went about as well as possible for Gauff

and another young American featured in Ashe, 13th-seeded Ben Shelton, a semifinalist a year ago who beat 2020 champion Dominic Thiem 6-4, 6-2, 6-2. It was the last U.S. Open match for Thiem, who turns 31 next week and is retiring after this season. "Obviously she plays with a lot of passion," Shelton, 21, said about Gauff. "You could tell that she cares out there. She's into it every time that she's on the court. I think that's something that the people love." Gauff was not the only past U.S. Open champ on Monday's schedule: The night session in Ashe began with 2017 winner Sloane Stephens blowing a huge lead against Clara Burel and losing 0-6, 7-5, 7-5 after taking the first nine games, followed by Novak Djokovic - whose collection of 24 Slam titles includes last year's in New York - against Radu Albot.

India to face West Indies, South Africa in Women's T20 World Cup warm-up matches

PTI ■ DUBAI

India will take on West Indies and South Africa in their two Women's T20 World Cup warm-up fixtures in Dubai, the International Cricket Council announced on Tuesday. India will take on West Indies on September 29 while Harmanpreet Kaur and Co. Are slated to play South Africa on October 1. All 10 teams that have qualified for the Women's T20 World Cup will participate in the practice games, with every side playing two warm-up games each. The warm-up fixtures will start on September 28 with Pakistan taking on Scotland and Sri Lanka facing Bangladesh.

Defending champion Australia will face arch-rival England on September 29, followed by West Indies on October 1 in Dubai. The warm-up fixtures will be 20 overs per side and will not have international T20 status, allowing teams to field all members of their 15-player squad. No two sides who belong to the same group will take on each other in the warm-up round. India has been clubbed in group A alongside Australia, New Zealand, Pakistan and Sri Lanka while group B comprises England, South Africa, West Indies, Scotland and Bangladesh. The competition, starting October 3, was moved to the

UAE by the ICC following the ongoing political unrest in Bangladesh, the original host. **WARM-UP FIXTURES:** September 28: Pakistan v Scotland (Sevens, Dubai) September 28: Sri Lanka v Bangladesh (ICCA1, Dubai) September 29: New Zealand v South Africa (Sevens, Dubai) September 29: India v West Indies (ICCA2, Dubai) September 29: Australia v England (ICCA1, Dubai) September 30: Sri Lanka v Scotland (Sevens, Dubai) September 30: Bangladesh v Pakistan (ICCA2, Dubai) October 1: West Indies v Australia (Sevens, Dubai) October 1: England v New Zealand (ICCA2, Dubai)

Nigeria hires German coach Bruno in bid to get World Cup qualifying back on track

PTI ■ LAGOS (NIGERIA)

Nigeria hired German coach Bruno Labbadia on Tuesday to lead the men's national soccer team in a bid to get its flagging World Cup qualifying campaign back on track. "The appointment is with immediate effect," said Mohammed Sanusi, the general secretary of the Nigeria Football Federation. The 58-year-old Labbadia has been out of work since April 2023 when he was fired by Stuttgart after failing to arrest its slide to the bottom of the Bundesliga. Nigeria is second from bottom in its 2026 World Cup qualifying group after failing to win any of its opening four

games. The Super Eagles drew 1-1 with both Lesotho and Zimbabwe in November last year before Portuguese coach José Peseiro led the team to the final of the Africa Cup of Nations. Nigeria lost the final to the host nation Ivory Coast in February. The NFF promoted Peseiro's assistant, Finidi George, to the top position in April after the Portuguese departed. But, the former right winger was unable to improve the team's fortunes in World Cup qualifying. George oversaw a 1-1 draw with South Africa followed by a 2-1 defeat in Benin in June. George then reportedly resigned after not being told of the NFF's plans to appoint a

technical advisor to oversee his work. The NFF did not publicly acknowledge the resignation. Labbadia only oversaw two wins from his 12 games in charge of Stuttgart during his second stint at the club - one each in the league and German Cup. His successor, Sebastian Hoeneß, ultimately saved Stuttgart from relegation and led the team to a club-record points total last season. Labbadia previously coached Hertha Berlin, Wolfsburg, Hamburger SV, Bayer Leverkusen and Darmstadt. As a goal-scoring forward, he helped Bayern Munich and Kaiserslautern win Bundesliga titles in the 1990s.

Duleep Trophy: Indisposed Siraj ruled out, Jadeja allowed more rest

PTI ■ MUMBAI, AUG 27 (PTI)

Seamer Mohammed Siraj will miss the Duleep Trophy's first round games due to illness while veteran all-rounder Ravindra Jadeja has been allowed an extended period of rest by the BCCI's national selection committee, which announced a few changes to the participating squads on Tuesday. The first round of the Duleep Trophy, comprising two matches, will be held from

September 5-8 with India A taking on India B at the M Chinnaswamy Stadium in Bengaluru and India C facing off against India D at the Rural Development Trust Stadium A in Anantapur. Siraj, who was a part of India's last away assignment in Sri Lanka, along with Umran Malik have both been ruled out of the first round games and have been replaced by Navdeep Saini and Gaurav Yadav respectively. "Both Siraj and Malik are



suffering from an illness and are not expected to be fit in time for their Duleep Trophy fixtures," the BCCI informed in a release. "All-rounder Ravindra Jadeja has also been released from the Team B squad," the board added. Jadeja was last seen in action in the T20 World Cup final in June against South Africa and was rested from the ODI series in Sri Lanka. The 32-year-old Yadav, who hails from Madhya Pradesh, took 41 wickets in seven

matches for Pondicherry in the last season of Ranji Trophy to finish as the second highest wicket-taker in the country's premier domestic competition. **REVISED SQUADS:** **India A:** Shubman Gill (c), Mayank Agarwal, Riyan Parag, Dhruv Jurel (wk), KL Rahul, Tilak Varma, Shivam Dube, Tanush Kotian, Kuldeep Yadav, Akash Deep, Prasadhi Krishna, Khaleel Ahmed, Avesh Khan, Vidwath

Kaverappa, Kumar Kushagra, Shaswat Rawat. **India B:** Abhimanyu Easwaran (c), Yashasvi Jaiswal, Sarfaraz Khan, Rishabh Pant (wk), Musheer Khan, Nitish Kumar Reddy*, Washington Sundar, Navdeep Saini, Yash Dayal, Mukesh Kumar, Rahul Chahar, R Sai Kishore, Mohit Awasthi, N Jagadeesan (wk). **India C:** Rituraj Gaikwad (c), Sai Sudharsan, Rajat Patidar, Abishek Porel (wk), Suryakumar Yadav, B Indrajith, Hrithik Shokeen,

Manav Suthar, Gaurav Yadav, Vyshak Vijaykumar, Anshul Khambaj, Himanshu Chauhan, Mayank Markande, Aryan Juyal (wk), Sandeep Warrier. **India D:** Shreyas Iyer (c), Atharva Taide, Yash Dubey, Devdutt Padikkal, Ishan Kishan (wk), Ricky Bhui, Saransh Jain, Axar Patel, Arshdeep Singh, Aditya Thakare, Harshit Rana, Tushar Deshpande, Akash Sengupta, KS Bharat (wk), Saurabh Kumar.

HOPEFULLY, WE WILL BREAK FINAL BARRIER IN T20 WC: HARMANPREET

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Skipper Harmanpreet Kaur remained optimistic that India can grab their maiden global title in the upcoming ICC Women's T20 World Cup, and said conditions in the UAE could work to their advantage. The International Cricket Council has recently shifted the showpiece, to be held between October 3 and 20, to the UAE from Bangladesh owing to the political unrest in the latter nation. "Whenever we play on this kind of stage (World Cup), we always want to do well. We have always done well in the past as well, and hopefully, this time we will break that final barrier and go all the way," Harmanpreet told PTI videos. Harmanpreet was on Tuesday appointed as the captain of the Indian team for the T20 World Cup. The 35-year-old did not read too much into the venue shift, and said the conditions in the UAE are quite similar to India. "We have not played much cricket in the UAE. But the conditions in the UAE are going to be similar to Indian conditions."



"We will see how the conditions play out (there) and try to adjust ourselves to the conditions as soon as possible," said Harmanpreet, who led India to the final of the 2020 T20 World Cup. Irrespective of the playing conditions, she wanted the team to dish out a "positive" game in the World Cup. "As a team, we learn from our defeats and break those barriers that are pushing us back. Hopefully this time we can express ourselves in a more positive way in the World Cup," she said. Harmanpreet also backed the Indian bowlers, who floundered in the recent Asia Cup final against Sri Lanka, to deliver in the World Cup. "The bowlers are working really hard as a team and, hopefully, in this World Cup we tick all the boxes." Harmanpreet, who led Mumbai Indians to WPL victory last year, said the key to winning the World Cup will be to keep themselves in the present. "It is always important for us to play good cricket, keeping ourselves in the present. Whatever the situation is in front of us...we go there and evaluate (it) as soon as possible," she signed off.



Jeev, Jyoti among Indian stars to compete in country's inaugural Legends Tour

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Indian golfing greats Jeev Milkha Singh and Jyoti Randhawa will be among 64 international players vying for top honours in the inaugural HSBC India Legends Championships to be played at Jaypee Greens course at Greater Noida from August 30 to September 1. The first Legends Tour tournament in the country, which will have USD 0.5 million as prize purse, will also see 2005 US Open champion Michael Campbell of New Zealand in action. The winner of the HSBC India Legends Championship is set to take home USD 74,250, while the runner-up will receive USD 49,000. The third-place finisher will pocket USD 32,700. The event will be played over 54 holes and it will be preceded by a star-studded Pro-Am event on August 28 and 29, which will see top golfers play alongside amateurs. The Legends Tour is a professional golf tour for male golfers aged 50 and over, run by the PGA European Tour. It began as European Senior Tour in 1992 and was rechristened as Legends Tour in 2020. Jeev is the host of the tournament, co-sanctioned by the Professional Golf Tour of India (PGTI). The event will see a participation from 17 countries. Randhawa qualified after winning the Legends Tour's tough and challenging Qualifying School finals in Turkey. "Since I am the host, I will ensure that I don't win the tournament this weekend," the 52-year-old Jeev joked at the press conference to launch the tournament. "It's great for the country's golfers and for world golf in general. Golfing career is over when you are 40 or 45. But with the Legends Tour, you can have a second innings after reaching 50 years."

"Now, you can play golf as a career till 60." Randhawa, also 52, said not only the money, a golfer can also maintain the competitive spirit by continuing to play in the Legends Tour. "It's good for the budding Indian golfers and amateurs. They will now know that a golfer can play another 10 years after retirement," he said. "By playing in the Legends Tour, you are keeping your golfing passion and competitive spirit intact as well as keeping yourself fit." Jeev (twice Asia No. 1 in 2006 and 2008) and Randhawa (once Asia No. 1 in 2002) are well-known names around the world with numerous appearances in Majors too. Jeev has won four times each on the European and Japan Tours, one on the Korean Tour besides six times on the Asian Tour. Randhawa has won eight times on the Asian Tour and once in Japan. Jeev, who has played all four Majors, was the first Indian to tee up at the Masters at the Augusta National in 2007. He was a former captain of Asia in EurAsia Cup (Europe vs Asia team event). He has five top 10 finishes on the Legends Tour since 2022. Besides Jeev and Randhawa, there are other seven Indians in the fray. They are Mukesh Kumar, Digvijay Singh, Harmeet Kahlon, Vijay Kumar, all past winners on the Asian Tour, Amandeep Johl, Vishal Singh and Sanjay Kumar. The 55-year-old Campbell, who has also won 15 other tournaments around the world, said, "I started playing golf when I was 10. My grandmother told me that time when I achieve success, I should remember I have two hands, one for receiving and another for giving back," he said. "Legends Tour is great in that way. You keep playing after retirement and inspire youngsters to take up the game. We have to give back to the game."

US OPEN

Djokovic starts his bid for record 25th Grand Slam title with straight-set win

AP ■ NEW YORK

Novak Djokovic began his bid for a record 25th Grand Slam title and tied Roger Federer with his 89th match win at the U.S. Open by defeating qualifier Radu Albot of Moldova 6-2, 6-2, 6-4. The second-seeded Djokovic, again wearing a gray sleeve over his surgically repaired right knee, was competing for the first time since claiming an Olympic gold medal three weeks ago at the Paris Games, the last significant achievement that was missing from his resume. "It's always challenging to start, particularly when you haven't played on this surface for five, six months,

and coming off an Olympic gold and playing on clay. I haven't had any official matches before the U.S. Open. So I'm expecting to be probably challenged a little bit more in the opening rounds," he said. "Hopefully, I can play better each day." He said his knee, which was operated on in early June, feels fine. Djokovic, a 37-year-old from Serbia, improved to 18-0 in first-round matches at Flushing Meadows and is now 89-13 overall at the hard-court tournament, which he's won four times, including a year ago. He's never lost earlier than the third round at the U.S. Open; Albot never has been past the third round in 30 appearances at majors.



The retired Federer won 89-14 in New York, with five consecutive championships from 2004 to 2008. He's the most recent man to win the U.S. Open at least twice in a row. Among men, only Jimmy Connors, who went 98-17, won more matches than Djokovic and Federer at the event. Djokovic never has lost a Grand Slam match to someone ranked as low as No. 138 Albot. And Albot is now 0-12 against opponents ranked in the top 10. Next up for Djokovic is a countryman, familiar opponent and friend, Laslo Djere, who advanced with a 6-7 (7), 6-1, 6-7 (7), 6-4, 6-2 victory over Jan-Lennard Struff. A year ago, Djokovic

met Djere in the third round at the U.S. Open; Djere took the first two sets before Djokovic came through in five. "It's a guaranteed third round for one of the Serbian guys. Hopefully it's going to be me. But Djere is a guy that really likes playing on a big stage. I think he also loves the conditions here. It's a bit quicker. Ball stays low. He has a very flat backhand particularly and very good serve, great return. He's physically as fit as anybody," Djokovic said. "I remember very well our match. It was a very tough match. I'm going to try to analyze that and hopefully do some things even better than I did last year."

New Champions League format promises more

AP ■ GENEVA

The new Champions League format this season will see more teams playing more games for more prize money. On Thursday, the Union of European Football Associations makes the draw in Monaco for the match schedule of the new single-standings league phase that replaces the traditional group stage. The first new Champions League format since 2003 promises more of almost everything that Europe's wealthiest and most influential clubs wanted from UEFA. There are four more places in a 36-team lineup; at least eight games each instead of six; Champions League games scheduled in January for the first time; a prize money rise of at least 25% to a minimum of 2.5 billion euros (USD 2.8 billion). There also was more evidence, at UEFA's European Championship this summer, that constant expansion of international competitions is leaving players tired and unable to perform at their best year-round. The new league phase in European club soccer's marquee event will have 144 total games compared to 96 in the group stage last season. The "key aims," UEFA said, is to "improve competitive balance

and sporting interest and in the process increase the number of meaningful matches - matches with something at stake for both sides - throughout the competition." In the eighth and final round, all 36 teams play on the same January 29 evening to finalize the standings which will decide which eight teams advance directly to the pre-quarterfinals - and with what seedings in a tennis-like knockout bracket - as well as which 16 go into a new knockout playoff round in February, and which 12 are eliminated. "We simulated that qualification should be possible with an average of 7.6 points, which means two victories and two draws," said UEFA's head of competitions strategy, Stéphane Anselmo. **Why change such a successful competition?** Money, mostly, though that's not the only reason. The Champions League in Europe has for the past 32 years showcased the highest quality play in world soccer. It let UEFA steer billions of euros (dollars) of prize money to clubs that pay the highest transfer fees and salaries. Still, influential officials at the European Club Association (ECA) got bored of the group



stage, saying it was too repetitive and lacked drama. They wanted more games against stronger opponents that would be more valued by broadcasters, viewers and new fans worldwide. Their leverage over UEFA was potentially launching their breakaway competition. The road to agreeing on the format was rocky. A controversial first proposal in 2019, favoring storied clubs, was stopped by a backlash from mid-ranked clubs

and domestic leagues. There was intense turmoil sparked by the failed Super League launch in April 2021 by most of the same club officials who negotiated Champions League reform with UEFA. Final format approval came in May 2022 - when Real Madrid, Barcelona and Juventus were exiled from the talks and still pursued UEFA in court - and it was broadly what the rebel Super League clubs had negotiated.

What is the new format?

Out goes the group-stage format played for 21 seasons where 32 teams were put into eight groups of four teams from a seeded draw. The top two in each group advanced to the pre-quarterfinals. Groups gave each team six games from September into December, playing each rival once at home and once away. In comes a single-standings league - 36 teams each playing eight

games against eight different opponents through January. The top eight in the standings go directly to the pre-quarterfinals in March. Teams ranked ninth to 24th go into the knockout playoffs in February. The bottom 12 teams are eliminated. In the playoffs, teams ranked Nos. 9-16 are seeded in the draw to play second legs at home against unseeded teams Nos. 17-24. **Who gets the four extra places?** Two for countries whose teams collectively had the best record in UEFA club competitions in the previous season. That was Italy and Germany so the fifth-placed teams in Serie A and the Bundesliga qualified: Bologna and Borussia Dortmund. The fifth-ranked national league (based on five years of results in UEFA club competitions) gets a third direct entry. That is currently France and Brest was third in Ligue 1. An extra place goes to the qualifying rounds path for national champions from lower-ranked countries. They now play for five total qualifying places instead of four last season. **How will the draw be done?** The 36 teams come out of four seeding pots graded by each team's "UEFA club coefficient" - its ranking by results in five years of

European competitions. The top-seeded pot contains recent Champions League winners and beaten finalists, plus Leipzig and Barcelona. When a team's ball is drawn, its slate of eight opponents - two from each seeding pot, one to play at home and one away - will be allocated by a software program and displayed within seconds. Match dates will be confirmed Saturday, to avoid city clashes with Europa League and Conference League games being drawn Friday in Monaco. Those lower-tier competitions also are a 36-team single-standings league. Conference League teams play just six games. **Billion-dollar prize money fund** Winning the Champions League title in 2023 earned Manchester City 135 million euros (USD 151 million) from UEFA. This season's winner can reach 150 million euros (USD 168 million), with total competition revenue boosted by selling 189 total games instead of 125. Commercial strategy is managed by a UEFA-ECA joint venture, and new sponsors for the Champions League include a cryptocurrency trading platform and a betting site. Each of the 36 teams gets a basic 18.6 million euros (USD 20.8 million), then 2.1 million euros (USD 2.4 million) for each additional game played.

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