



Cattle herder held for murder

Lucknow (PNS): With the arrest of a cattle herder in Banthra, police on Thursday claimed to have worked out the blind murder case. The victim, 85-year-old Balwant, was hacked to death in Banthra on Tuesday. The police are investigating whether more than one person was involved in the crime.



NOTICE

I have changed my name from DANISH AKHTER to DANISH AKHTAR. In future I shall be known as DANISH AKHTAR.

NOTICE

This is to inform the general public that the possession letter of my House No.-MM 4/100, Vinay Khand Gomti Nagar is fully yours who use will be considered illegal.

NOTICE

I am Umesh Kumar Jaiswal S/o Late Shri Shamsheer Bahadur Jainwal, R/o-27, Vasundhara Colony, Pakaria Naugawa, Pilibhit, UP. In my daughter Agrim Jaiswal's Class 10 marksheet my name is wrongly printed as Umesh Jaiswal.

NOTICE

Be it known to all that I passed out ICSE Board class X unique Id No. 7187381 year 2020 & ICSE Board unique Id No. 7187381 class XII year 2022 actually has been lost.

NOTICE

Be it known to all that earlier my name was Amirul Haq Siddiqui which has now been changed to Amirul Haq. Now I be known and recognized as Amirul Haq for all future purposes.

सूचना

मेरा HDFC बैंक का FDR NO-KP/2953252 दि० 21.01.19 जिसका A/CN-0267010048097 है।

NOTICE

I hereby declare that in my Passport my name is wrongly registered as SURESH CHANDRA and father's name is wrongly registered as BHAGRAM while in my Aadhar Card and Pan Card my name is registered as SURESH CHANDRA ARYA and father's name is BHAGWAT RAM.

NOTICE

Sri Shashank Dixit and Smt. Divya Shukla (Borrower) have agreed to create mortgage in respect of House No. 128/751 Block Y-II Scheme No. II Kidwai Nagar Kanpur.

Hardware bizman hangs self

A hardware businessman from Banthra allegedly ended his life by hanging himself in a room where loud music was playing, police said on Thursday. His wife found him hanging when she returned home, they added.



NOTICE

I have changed my name from Sarah Baig to Megha Sharma. Sarah Baig and Megha Sharma is the same person.

NOTICE

I have changed my name from GULZAR ALI BEG TO GULZAR ALI BEG S/o Qamar Ali Beg R/o 90/208, Phool Wali Gali, Anwar Ganj Kanpur.

NOTICE

I HAVE CHANGED MY NAME FROM KULVINDER KAUR NAGIA TO KULVINDER KAUR KULVINDER KAUR W/O JAGJEEV SINGH R/O 122/176, SANT NAGAR KANPUR NAGAR.

NOTICE

It is informed that the original allotment letter and original possession certificate of my H. No. 77 C Chandrasekhar Azad Nagar, Unnao are actually lost.

NOTICE

My Pass Certificate of Class XII, Sheelma House School, Kanpur, ISC Board, year 2002 Index no. B/8754/077 and SRL No. 27826 is actually Lost.

सूचना

सर्वसाधारण को सूचित किया है कि मेरा वारसिक नाम प्रमिला मिश्र है जो मेरे आधारी कार्ड एवं बैंकिंग दस्तावेजों में अंकित है, जो सच्य व सही है।

NOTICE

That my old address was Plot No. 1, Adil Nagar, Near Tubule Wali Masjid, Kursi Road, Lucknow-226022.

NOTICE

The original Sale Deed dated 09.06.2011 Registered with Office of Sub Registrar Sitapur on 09.06.2011 at Book No. 1, Volume No. 3867, Pages from 21 to 70 at Serial No. 3633 & Original Sale Deed dated 30.03.2012 Registered with Office of Sub Registrar Sitapur on 30.03.2012 at Book No. 1, Volume No. 4175, Pages from 387 to 430 at Serial No. 1880.

NOTICE

दिनांक 05-09-2024 मध्यान्ह 12:00 बजे उ-प्र-कोऑपरेटिव बैंक लि.

Doc 'digitally arrested', duped of ₹45 lakh

Fraudsters duped a city doctor of Rs 48 lakh by placing him under 'digital arrest' and intimidating him with threats of police action related to alleged Hawala transactions and drug trafficking in Vikas Nagar.



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LDA to launch anti-epidemic campaign

Lucknow (PNS): The Lucknow Development Authority (LDA) has announced a new initiative to tackle water-borne diseases across its housing schemes, apartments, and commercial establishments.

RPNLUP inaugurates its Legal Aid Clinic

Dr Rajendra Prasad National Law University, Prayagraj (RPNLUP) inaugurated its Legal Aid Clinic and a three-day Para-Legal Volunteer (PLV) training programme on Thursday.

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Love everything about Lko: Anubhav Sinha

Bollywood director Anubhav Sinha, alongside actor Vijay Verma, visited Lucknow for the promotion of his latest web series 'IC 814 Kandahar Hijack'.

Pathak highlights improvement in health services

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# PM Modi to lay stone for ₹76,000 cr Vadhvan Port in M'ashtra today

**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■**  
NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday will lay the foundation stone of Vadhvan Port worth over Rs 76,000 crore during his visit to Maharashtra. It aims to establish a world-class maritime gateway that will boost the country's trade and economic growth by catering to large container vessels, offering deeper drafts, and accommodating ultra-large cargo ships.

Fest (GFF) 2024 at the Jio World Convention Centre in Mumbai. Thereafter, Prime Minister will inaugurate and lay the foundation stone of various development projects at CIDCO ground, Palghar. He will lay the foundation stone of Vadhvan Port. Located near Dahanu town in Palghar district, the port will be one of India's largest deep-water ports and will provide direct connectivity to international shipping routes, reducing transit times and costs. Equipped with state-of-the-art technology and infrastructure, the port will feature deep berths, efficient cargo handling facilities, and modern port management systems. The port is expected to generate significant employment opportunities, stimulate local businesses, and contribute to the overall economic development of the region.



The Vadhvan Port project incorporates sustainable development practices, with a focus on minimizing environmental impact and adhering to stringent ecological standards. Once operational, the port will enhance India's maritime connectivity and further strengthen its position as a global trade hub. Prime Minister Modi will also inaugurate and lay the foundation stone of 218 fisheries projects worth around Rs 1,560 crores, aimed at bolstering the sector's infrastructure and productivity across the nation. These initiatives are expected to generate more than five lakh employment opportunities in the fisheries sector.

Prime Minister will launch the National Roll Out of Vessel Communication and Support system at a cost of around Rs. 360 crores. Under this project, 1 lakh transponders will be installed in a phased manner on mechanised and motorised fishing vessels in 13 coastal States and Union Territories.

The vessel communication and support system is indigenous technology developed by ISRO, which will help in establishing two-way communication while fishermen are at sea and also help in rescue operations as well as ensure safety of our fishermen. Other initiatives to be inaugurated by the Prime Minister include the development of fishing harbours and Integrated Aquaparks, alongside the adoption of advanced technologies such as the Recirculatory Aquaculture System and Biofloc. These projects will be implemented across multiple States and will provide crucial infrastructure

and high-quality inputs to enhance fish production, improve post-harvest management, and create sustainable livelihoods for millions involved in the fisheries sector. Prime Minister will also lay the foundation stone for important fishery infrastructure projects including development, upgradation and modernisation of fishing harbours, fish landing centres and construction of fish markets. This is expected to provide necessary facilities and hygienic conditions for post-harvest management of fish and seafood. Prime Minister will address a Special Session of Global

Fintech Fest (GFF). It is being jointly organised by the Payments Council of India, the National Payments Corporation of India and the Fintech Convergence Council. Around 800 speakers, including policymakers, regulators, senior bankers, industry captains, and academicians, from India and various other countries will address more than 350 sessions in the conference. It will also showcase the latest innovations of the fintech landscape. Over 20 thought leadership reports and white papers will be launched at GFF 2024, offering insights, and in-depth industry information.

## Centre to unveil simplified pension form for its retiring staff: Official

**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■**  
NEW DELHI

The Centre will unveil a new simplified pension application form for its retiring employees on Friday, according to an official statement. The Department of Pension and Pensioners' Welfare (DoPPW) had vide its notification dated July 16, 2024 released the simplified pension application Form 6-A, it said. "This form will be available in Bhavishya/e-HRMS (online modules) to all the central Government employees who are going to retire in December 2024 and onwards. The retiring officials, who are on e-HRMS, will fill Form 6-A through e-HRMS (only superannuation cases) and the retiring officials, who are not on e-HRMS, will fill Form 6-A in Bhavishya," the statement issued by the Personnel Ministry on Thursday said.



forms/formats have been merged, the statement said. This new form and related changes in the business process of Bhavishya will be a game changer as on the one hand it simplifies the pension form submission for the employee through "a single sign only" and on the other hand achieves the end-to-end digitisation of the entire process of pension processing till the start of pension payment after retirement, it added. "This paves the path towards paperless working in the whole process of pension," the statement said. It added that with a pensioner-friendly user interface, pensioners no longer need to worry about the forms they have filled out or might have missed. In a related development, the Centre has organised a pre-retirement counselling (PRC) workshop for its employees to make them aware of retirement benefits, family pension, Income Tax rules and submission of digital life certificates among others, according to an official

statement. More than 750 retirees, who are going to retire up to March 31, 2025, benefitted hugely from this pre-retirement counselling (PRC) workshop held here on Wednesday, it said. The Department of Pension and Pensioners' Welfare (DoPPW) will continue to hold such workshops as part of good governance to ensure a smooth and comfortable transition for the Central Government retirees, said the statement issued by the Personnel Ministry. The department is taking all efforts to keep them updated of the Government initiatives being taken so that they can avail all the benefits post retirement, it said. "During the 55th pre-retirement counselling (PRC) workshop, various sessions on BHAUSHYA portal, integrated pensioners portal, retirement benefits, family pension, CGHS process, Income Tax rules, ANUBHAV, digital life certificate, investment modes and Opportunities etc. were conducted," the statement said. All these sessions have been curated to make the retirees aware of the process to be followed and forms to be filled pre-retirement and to provide information about the benefits available to them post-retirement, it added.

## Health screening, checkup programme by Ayush Ministry soon

**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■**  
NEW DELHI

The Union Ayush Ministry is mulling to soon launch a nationwide health screening and checkup programme to detect diseases at an early stage and help maintain people's well-being, said Union Minister of State for AYUSH Pratap Rao Jadhav on Thursday at the three-day 7th International Health and Wellness Expo launched here.

He also emphasised the importance of medicinal plants and announced the Government's goal to raise awareness about their benefits and encourage widespread plantation to make India self-reliant in this sector. After the inauguration, he visited several stalls, including the National Medicinal Plants Board's exhibit, where he gathered insights on various medicinal herbs. The mega expo which is a brain child of



Namo Gange Trust's features stalls by several State and Central Government Ministries, as well as private

organisations. Notable participants include the Ministry of AYUSH, CSIR, MDES, ICAR, NRDC, CDB, the National Medicinal Plants Board, and Uttarakhand Forest Resource Management-JICA, said a statement here. Speaking on the occasion, the Minister also highlighted that such expos are significant opportunities to raise awareness about health and wellness among the public. In

his inaugural address, Minister Jadhav stated that promoting a healthy India is a key agenda for the Government. According to reports, following various initiatives taken by the Government in recent years, the AYUSH market in India has witnessed an exponential rise, ballooning from a mere USD 2.85 billion in 2014 to a staggering USD 24 billion in 2024.

# India's second indigenously built nuclear-powered ballistic missile submarine commissioned

**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■**  
NEW DELHI

India's second indigenously designed and built nuclear-powered ballistic missile submarine INS Arighaat was commissioned on Thursday thereby adding to country's nuclear deterrence capabilities and boosting operational readiness. The first nuclear powered submarine INS Arihant was commissioned in 2016. The second Arihant-Class submarine 'INS Arighaat' was commissioned into the Indian Navy at Visakhapatnam in the presence of Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, Defence Ministry said here.

In his address, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh exuded confidence that 'Arighaat' will further strengthen India's nuclear triad, enhance nuclear deterrence, help in establishing strategic balance and peace in the region, and play a decisive role in the security of the country. He described it as an achievement for the nation and a testament to Prime Minister Narendra Modi-led Government's unwavering resolve to achieve 'Aatmanirbharta' in defence. The defence minister commended the Indian Navy, Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) and the Industry for their hard work and synergy in achieving this capability. He termed this self-reliance as the foundation of self power. He appreciated the fact that the country's industrial sector, especially MSMEs, have received a huge boost through this project, and more employment opportunities



have been created. Recalling former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee's political will which put India on a par with a nuclear power state, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh said, "Today, India is surging ahead to become a developed country. It is essential for us to develop rapidly in every field, including defence, especially in today's geopolitical scenario. Along with economic prosperity, we need a strong military. Our Government is working on mission mode to ensure that our soldiers possess top-quality weapons and platforms made on Indian soil". The construction of INS Arighaat involved the use of advanced design and manufacturing technology, detailed research and development, utilisation of special materials, complex engineering and highly skilled workmanship. It has the distinction of having the

indigenous systems and equipment which were conceptualised, designed, manufactured and integrated by the Indian scientists, industry and Naval personnel. The technological advancements undertaken indigenously on this submarine make it significantly more advanced than its predecessor Arihant. The presence of both INS Arihant and INS Arighaat will enhance India's capability to deter potential adversaries and safeguard its national interests. The second submarine INS Arighaat was commissioned in Visakhapatnam at Ship Building Centre (SBC). The submarine was launched in 2017 at its manufacturing base, Ship Building Centre (SBC), Visakhapatnam. In fact, the SBC is building

five nuclear powered submarines. While Arihant is already operational and Arighaat commissioned on Thursday, work is now on the remaining two submarines. They are in advanced stage of construction, it was learnt. INS Arighaat is 111.6 meters long and weighs 6,000 tonnes. It plays a crucial role in India's nuclear triad, enabling the nation to launch nuclear missiles from land, air, and sea. Powered by an 82.5 MW pressurised light water reactor developed with Russian assistance, INS Arighaat can achieve a top speed of 24 knots submerged and 10 knots on the surface. Its primary armament consists of 12 K-15 Sagarika submarine-launched ballistic missiles (SLBMs), each with a range exceeding 700

kilometers. These missiles are housed in four large vertical launch system (VLS) tubes and are a testament to India's indigenous missile development capabilities. The submarine is divided into seven compartments, housing propulsion and combat management systems, a platform management center, and a torpedo room. Additional safety measures include two standby auxiliary engines and a retractable thruster for emergency power and mobility. INS Arighaat follows in the footsteps of INS Arihant, India's first SSBN, which was commissioned in 2016. A third, yet-to-be-named SSBN was launched in 2021, further solidifying India's commitment to developing a credible sea-based nuclear deterrent.

In laying the groundwork for future cooperation, the talks this year focused on several pivotal areas, including operational training at improving readiness and efficiency; and the establishment of secure information exchange protocols between platforms. Additionally, the talks explored operational interactions to address the evolving complexities in the maritime domain, through continued exchanges and exercises. The dialogue included opportunities for exchange of best practices in Nuclear, Biological, Chemical Defence including Damage Control (NBCD); and Diving support, through Subject Matter Expert Exchanges (SMEE). A strong emphasis on personnel exchanges, and the potential for availing advanced training courses at respective training facilities were also deliberated.

## Healthy lifestyle can mitigate Type 2 diabetes side-effects, says study

**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■**  
NEW DELHI

Type 2 diabetes and prediabetes are associated with faster brain aging, causing dementia and Alzheimer's, according to a recent study published in Diabetes Care. However, good news is that adopting a healthy lifestyle can potentially mitigate these effects. This finding is particularly relevant for India, which has become the Diabetes Capital of the world. The WHO estimates that India has around 77 million people over 18 suffering from Type 2 diabetes and nearly 25 million with prediabetes. The number is expected to surge to 124.9 million by 2045. According to yet another



report, one in seven diabetic adults globally lives in India, and one in three households has diabetic patients. Researchers from Karolinska Institutet in Sweden analysed data from over 31,000 individuals aged 40 to 70 from the UK Biobank who had undergone brain MRI scans. Using machine learning, they assessed brain age relative to chronological age. The study found that

prediabetes and diabetes corresponded to brains that were 0.5 and 2.3 years older than their actual age, respectively. In those with poorly managed diabetes, the brain appeared more than four years older. Additionally, the gap between brain age and chronological age grew slightly over time in diabetic individuals. These effects were less pronounced among those who were physically active and avoided smoking and excessive alcohol consumption. "An older-appearing brain relative to chronological age may indicate deviations from normal aging and could be an early sign of dementia," explained Abigail Dove, from Karolinska Institutet and the lead author. "On a positive

note, it seems that maintaining a healthy lifestyle can positively influence brain health in people with diabetes," she added. While repeated MRI data were available for only a small number of participants, ongoing follow-up scans aim to further explore the link between diabetes and brain aging over time. "With the rising prevalence of Type 2 diabetes, our research aims to help prevent cognitive decline and dementia in people with diabetes and prediabetes," stated Dove. The research suggests that managing diabetes effectively and living healthily may help protect against brain aging and potentially delay the onset of dementia.

## SHe-Box portal to enhance workplace safety for women unveiled

**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■**  
NEW DELHI

A mid growing chorus for safety of women in the country, Union Women and Child Development Minister Annapurna Devi on Thursday launched a centralised platform designed to make workplaces safer for women by addressing and managing complaints of sexual harassment. "This initiative is a critical step forward in providing a more efficient and secure platform for addressing workplace-related sexual harassment complaints. It furthers the Government's commitment to creating a safer and more inclusive working environment for women across India," said the Minister. She expressed confidence that the portal will ensure that complaints can be safely registered without personal information being publicly accessible. The SHe-Box portal is a significant advancement in the Government's ongoing efforts to safeguard women in



the workplace. The launch event in Delhi also witnessed the introduction of a revamped ministry website. Emphasising the importance of the initiative in creating a more secure and inclusive working environment for women, Annapurna Devi maintained that the portal would function as a centralised repository for information related to internal committees and local

committees across the country, covering both the Government and private sectors. The portal will allow women to file complaints, track their status, and ensure that the grievances are processed in a timely manner. It also features a designated nodal officer to enable real-time monitoring of complaints, thereby providing a streamlined and assured redressal process, the statement said. The launch of the SHe-Box portal aligns with the Government's broader vision of Viksit Bharat by 2047, with a strong emphasis on women-led development. "The Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition, and Redressal) Act, 2013, serves to protect women from sexual harassment in the workplace and address their grievances. In line with this commitment, the new SHe-Box portal represents a significant step forward in addressing and managing complaints of workplace sexual harassment," said an official from the Ministry.



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PAPER WITH PASSION

### A close contest!

The rural-urban divide and the Jat-non-Jat paradigm could be crucial in deciding the Haryana assembly elections

As Haryana gears up for its upcoming elections, the state's political landscape is rife with complexities that reflect broader societal divides. Central to this is the rural-urban divide and the Jat-non-Jat paradigm, both of which are poised to play a crucial role in determining the electoral outcome. The recent request by the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) to the Election Commission of India (ECI) to change the polling date has added another layer of intrigue to an already charged atmosphere. Haryana's political fabric is deeply influenced by the rural-urban divide, a reflection of the state's socio-economic disparities. The urban areas, particularly key centres like Gurugram, Faridabad, and Rohtak, have traditionally been BJP strongholds. These cities, with their high migrant populations, represent a significant voter base for the BJP. However, the upcoming election is complicated by the timing of the polling date. Scheduled for October 1, the date falls within a period that could easily be extended into a six-day holiday, thanks to overlapping weekends and public holidays. The BJP fears that urban voters, particularly those in the NCR, may choose to use this extended break to travel, thereby potentially lowering voter turnout in areas where the party has a stronghold. Historically, rural turnout in Haryana has been higher than urban turnout, which could tilt the scales against the BJP if urban voters are absent.



Another crucial factor in the upcoming elections is the Jat-non-Jat divide. Jats, who form a dominant social group in Haryana, have traditionally been aligned with the Congress, especially in rural areas. The BJP, on the other hand, has found support among the non-Jat communities, particularly in urban regions. This division was evident in the 2024 general elections, where the BJP won all five Lok Sabha seats in non-Jat dominated areas. The BJP's support base in rural areas has been eroded, particularly among Jats, who have been disillusioned by the central government's response to their protests. The Congress is working to capitalise on this discontent by consolidating a Jat-Dalit-Muslim alliance in rural areas, which could pose a significant challenge to the BJP. In light of these challenges, the BJP's request to change the polling date has sparked controversy. The party argues that the potential for a long weekend could lead to lower voter turnout, particularly in urban areas where it has a strong base. The Congress has dismissed the BJP's request for date change as a sign of nervousness. The Election Commission's decision on the date change will be crucial, as it could influence the electoral outcome in a state where every vote counts. With ten years of incumbency and a narrowing margin of victory, the BJP is leaving no stone unturned to secure a favourable result. Whether the ECI will accommodate the BJP's request remains to be seen, but the upcoming elections in Haryana are shaping up to be a closely contested battle.

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### PICTALK



Visitors at India Gate enjoy the rains in New Delhi

RANJAN DIMRI

# How media shapes public perception



VINAYSHIL GAUTAM

In a world where sensationalism often trumps substance, it's time to rethink how we engage with the news and what it says about the society we've built.

The last few weeks have seen some major convulsions at the basic level of the Indian society. The listing can be long, depending upon the predisposition and values of the person making a list, or indeed brief if this person wants to strike a judgmental posture on what he considers important. This debate can merit its own resolution but the common-sense approach would make it obvious that the NEET examination and the Kolkata rape and murder episode have touched a very large number of minds and people who are in touch with the media. This itself raises another basic question. That has to do with the role of the media in attributing to an episode both circulation and importance. The reach and mode of the media become critical in identifying an issue and formulating it. One of the farthest reach of a media is through the radio. By and large, the radio is controlled by governmental agencies. This is followed by television, which is controlled both by the government and by some powerful private media houses. Both clusters claim a popular following, and both are accused of biases. Hence, to a fairly complicated question on what constitutes much of the news, there is a plausible answer: that which the media of the day decides to project and sustain as news. Thus it is that the role of governance/ownership of the mode of the media, in the identification of news, and sustaining it becomes critical. This brings us to a basic question: what constitutes news and how is it maintained at the frontlines? What is projected in so-called news is impossible for a private citizen to verify. That raises the question of the credibility of a channel. The credibility of the channel is itself a matter of popular perception, and it is also nurtured by reputation and conviction. To understand the gravity and implications of the statements and exposures above, one has to realize that news is both essential and dependent



upon the larger intellectual culture of the community where the news circulates. If the community is mature, it has developed safe parameters of credibility and conviction, and therefore one can be reasonably sure that what is being circulated is true. By and large, globally, the media, also, has its methods of checks and balances, standards and credibility, of reach and sustenance. Hence, whereas it may be a worthwhile debate to consider what constitutes news: origin, sustenance, and dissemination of news has certain standards across the globe. These, are like many things in life, having largely acknowledged standards without much vagueness. These are considered givens of a civil society. Hence the conclusion that if the general media projects something, it must be the truth, or at least the truth in good faith. Reference has been made above to the NEET episode and the Kolkata murder and rape case. The jury is out on both cases, and a conclusions are awaited. The civil society is maintained on such pillars. However, two questions emerge: given the attention which both of these cases have received, is this the only news which affected



THE BASIC TRUTH IS ALSO THAT IT IS NOT SOME INTRANSIENT STRENGTH AND WEAKNESS OF THE MEDIA THAT SUSTAINS ITS LIFE BUT THE ECONOMIC FORCES WHICH NURTURE ITS EXISTENCE

the wellbeing of the people, and is there a question of the proportion and inter-se importance of news? To debate the importance of both of the two episodes mentioned above would be a pointless exercise. However, by the same token, it is true that there are other activities effecting every-day living and have been, in a manner of speaking, overlooked. Hence, after resolving the concerns related to credibility arises an issue of the relative importance of the items being reported. It would be a common place to say that sensational news spreads faster and catches more attention than routine news, no matter how important it may be. Good news travels slower and catches less attention. The healthiness of a society needs to be assessed against objective indicators of health, and clearly one of them would be how much mileage does a positive news get as compared to the mileage a negative news gets. The strength of a society comes not only from handling the unhappy episodes which lead to news but also from giving positive news the importance that it deserves. It is here again that the media need continuous help in introspection. The basic truth

is also that it is not some intransient strength and weakness of the media that sustains its life but the economic forces which nurture its existence. As indicated above, if the media disseminates sensational information, it is because that kind of information is read more widely and followed more avidly. The problem therefore originates not just with the media but with the people who use the media. Further, it becomes a question of mass contact and mobilization of mass opinion. The time has come when one needs to revisit what constitutes a civil society and how a civil society exercises its choices and preferences. The economic and financial flows merely run in the channels which have been created with such efforts. Essentially, therefore, a question is: what is the kind of society which one has given to oneself and how do its norms get modified and operated, also, through the media? As indicated above, this is merely the sub-structure to a much larger edifice that the society has built for itself. (The writer is a well-known management consultant of international repute. The views expressed are personal)

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### A STATUE OF POLITICAL EXPEDIENCY

Madam — The recently collapsed statue of Shivaji in Maharashtra, is a grim reflection of political expediency. That a statue of one of the most revered and respected figures of Maharashtra has collapsed barely nine months after its inauguration, speaks volumes about the malpractices that must have gone into the installation of a statue that was expected to last a good part of a century.

Instead of expressing remorse and regret, the political class is doing what it knows best — ducking responsibility and pointing fingers. The pedestal and all that remains of the statue ought to be cordoned off, and preserved as a reminder of the gross failure of the present day dispensation. Near it, a stone plaque should read — This site is an admission of the government's failure to do justice to the memory of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj, whose statue collapsed just nine months after it was dedicated to the people of Maharashtra.

We promise that this will never happen again. We hope to be forgiven by the people of the state with whose money the statue project was commissioned. To atone for our grave mistake, another statue is being constructed nearby. We assure you that it will last many many years and be a fitting tribute to a historical figure who is so dear to our hearts. I know too well that the shameful episode will soon be forgotten by our netas as well as the public.

Avinash Godbole | Dewas

### IMPLEMENT MISSION SHAKTI

Madam — Many people are prone to depression due to the harsh realities of life like low income, pollution, bad relationships, lack of education, etc. During this post-depression, if a person does not hope to become well, then it is a sign of mental illness. The consequences of inaction are dire. Without effective support systems, women in the country are left vulnerable to violence, harass-

### The logic of Changing election date



Haryana BJP's State Election Management Committee has logically put forward the view that there is a weekend holiday before the assembly election date on October 1 and there are some holidays after that. INLD has also agreed to postpone the assembly elections. Opposition parties are hell-bent on condemning every aspect of the ruling party. Chief Election Commissioner Rajiv Kumar has expressed concern over low voting percentage where people use long weekend holidays on the day of polling.

Shifting the election dates will definitely help in increasing the voting percentage. Earlier also, the dates of elections were changed in Rajasthan, Mizoram and Arunachal Pradesh. Therefore, the change of date is not important but the change of mind of voters will be more meaningful. The election Commission is a statutory independent body and should remain firm on its stand rather than bowing to the political pressure which often times is self serving than for the public good.

Yugal Kishore Sharma | Faridabad

Mission Shakti and move beyond narrow-minded neglect. Only by prioritizing women's safety and mental health can we hope to create a society where every woman is protected, respected, and empowered. The time for change is now.

K Subramaniam | Mumbai

### REVIVAL OF VIVACITY

Madam — As an avid reader of The Pioneer, I am delighted to see that Vivacity is being published regularly for the past few months. I always enjoy reading Vivacity and Agenda, the reviews about art exhibitions, culture and movies being my personal favourites. Your past few features have been great, especially the Rakshbandhan one. Today, I read about the Heritage Walk and I will definitely visit Purana Qila now. The food review section is and has always been great!!!

Atharv Singh | Delhi

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

## Emotional intelligence: The secret of outstanding leadership



RACHNA LAKHPATRI

As the next era of leadership unfolds, the demand for emotionally intelligent leaders has never been clearer—are you ready to rise to the challenge?

Today's corporate climate is fast-paced and continually evolving. Emotional intelligence (EI) is the secret weapon that distinguishes great pioneers from average ones; it is accompanied by a long list of excellent technical qualifications. But what precisely is this elusive talent, and why is it becoming a defining characteristic of outstanding leaders? It is the ability to control our emotions and understand and empathise with others. It forms a link between self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and relationship management. To speak more specifically to leaders, emotional intelligence is not only desirable but even more crucial for leaders than the desire to influence others and inspire their teams to greatness. This is where EI comes into play, somewhat like the oil that keeps the motor of leadership running. Emotionally intelligent leaders express ideas with clarity and empathy, make judgements based on both logic and emotion and maintain strong team morale and productivity. They prefer to ride out the



storm rather than be tossed by it, and instead look to harness it for growth and innovation. But how do aspiring leaders cultivate this crucial ability? It begins with reflection. Frequent self-analytical practices, such as journaling or meditation, may promote insight. Encouraging feedback—even the difficult kind—and viewing failures as opportunities for improvement are also important components. The most critical aspect is empathy and listening to others rather than simply hearing them. This final trait will propel a good leader to new heights. Take, for example, Microsoft CEO Satya Nadella. Since the beginning of his term in 2014, he has been considered as the driving

force behind the company's cultural shift from fierce competitiveness to collaborative innovation. So, what's the magic? A leadership style relies mostly on emotional intelligence. Empathy-driven continuous learning and development mindset not only rebuilt Microsoft's reputation but also its financial performance to unprecedented heights. Another excellent example is Jacinda Ardern, the former Prime Minister of New Zealand. Ardern's leadership style, which includes speaking with compassion, making clear tough decisions, and uniting the country in the face of tragedy, highlights the importance of emotional intelligence in political leadership. Looking ahead, it is clear that one aspect of good lead-

ership will remain central: emotional intelligence. While the next wave of technology will undoubtedly replace occupations in the future, leaders in any area will need to possess increasingly humane qualities such as empathy, self-awareness, and emotional regulation. The message is clear: to be an effective leader in the twenty-first century, we must continue to improve our emotional intelligence alongside our technical proficiency. Whether you aspire to be an established CEO or a team leader, investing in your emotional intelligence can pay you in terms of career success and personal fulfilment. Remember that developing emotional intelligence is a lifetime journey that promises to improve not only your leadership style but also your overall approach to life and relationships. As leaders, we commit to leaving a legacy based on how we make others feel and the relationships we build. The future of leadership is in emotional intelligence: isn't it time you took the initiative? (The author is a freelance writer, views are personal)



## FIRST COLUMN

## UKRAINE: INDIA'S DIPLOMATIC TIGHTROPE

PM Modi's historic Ukraine visit signals new foreign policy approach



KUMARDEEP BANERJEE

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Ukraine, last week, comes at an interesting churn of events on the geopolitical landscape. The visit, a first, by any Indian PM since Ukraine was first carved out as an independent sovereign nation, had many layers of interpretations regarding India's new foreign policy approach. The timing was significant as this trip came barely six weeks after PM Modi's state visit to Moscow. The Russia trip was widely criticised by India's strategic ally US, primarily due to the timing. Even as PM Modi was in Moscow, the NATO leaders were huddled together in Washington, discussing military aid for Ukraine. Meanwhile, Russia bombed a children's hospital in Ukraine leading to the loss of lives for civilians and children. President Zelenskyy had condemned India's PM's first visit to Russia during his third term and the US State Department had also issued stern statements regarding the trip. Indian PM had also avoided participating in the Peace Summit organised in June, to find a political solution to the Russia-Ukraine crisis. The recent visit by PM Modi to Ukraine, even as Defence Minister Rajnath Singh was in Washington DC was a statement regarding India's fine balance diplomacy in times of war. President Biden, called up the Indian PM soon after his visit to Ukraine to apprise him of the prevailing situation. The readout released from the White House read "President Joseph R. Biden, Jr. spoke today with Prime Minister Narendra Modi of India to discuss the Prime Minister's recent trip to Poland and Ukraine, as well as the United Nations General Assembly meetings in September. The



President commended the Prime Minister for his historic visits to Poland and Ukraine, the first by an Indian Prime Minister in decades, and for his message of peace and ongoing humanitarian support for Ukraine, including its energy sector. The Leaders affirmed their continued support for a peaceful resolution of the conflict by international law, on the basis of the UN Charter." Interestingly, the Indian PM also spoke to President Biden regarding the ongoing crisis in Bangladesh and expressed concern regarding the safety of minorities, especially Hindus, which was highlighted in the Indian statement after the telephone conversation. The Bangladesh situation omission from the White House readout did create some murmurs across Delhi corridors. India is now making efforts to have its own Europe policy, which is not curated with a Russia factor in mind. For several decades post-independence, the Cold War era, the block approach mostly guided India's foreign policy, especially where Russia was involved. Russia has been a long-standing ally of India and is also one of the biggest exporters of defence equipment. While maintaining silence on sensitive Russia-related topics has been India's long-standing approach, things began to change in the past few years. There is a growing sense of having an independent need-based foreign policy, amongst the top policymakers. PM Modi initiated the concept of "not a time for war" at multilateral platforms such as G20, which started finding global resonance when vocalising concerns regarding Ukraine and Russia. He upped the narrative with his clear message to Russia during his Moscow visit that permanent solutions could not be found on the battlefield. The joint statement issued post PM Modi's meeting with President Zelenskyy read "The Indian side reiterated its principled position and focus on peaceful resolution through dialogue and diplomacy. Prime Minister Modi reiterated the need for sincere and practical engagement between all stakeholders to develop innovative solutions that will have broad acceptability and contribute towards early restoration of peace." The message to global leaders, particularly the US and Russia that the recent PM Modi visit highlighted was that India is willing to engage with any nation, even if they may be in opposite camps, to find the best possible outcomes for itself.

(The writer is a policy analyst; views are personal)

## Prospects of privatisation of PSUs are bleak

As the Modi government shifts its strategy towards 'prudent public wealth management' the prospect of privatising PSBs are increasingly unlikely.



UTTAM GUPTA



Announcing Modi - government's policy on disinvestment of central public sector undertakings (CPSUs) in her Budget speech for FY 2021-22 the Union Finance Minister, Nirmala Sitharaman had talked of privatizing two public sector banks (PSBs) and one insurance company. A CPSU is an undertaking in which the Central government has majority share holding of more than 50 percent. Disinvestment refers to sale of its shares to private investors. When, such sale results in reduction of the government's shareholding in the CPSU to below 50 percent and concomitant transfer of ownership and management control to private entity, this is termed as privatization. The disinvestment plans have met with disappointing results so far. During 2021-22, against a target of Rs 175,000 crore, the actual proceeds from share sale of CPSUs were a meager Rs 15,440 crore. During 2022-23, against a target of Rs 65,000 crore, the actual was Rs 31,059 crore. For 2023-24, the actual was Rs 14,564 crore against a target of Rs 30,000 crore which itself was watered down from the budget estimate (BE) of Rs 51,000 crore. As for privatization, except for the sale of Air India to the Tata Group during 2021-22, the government has little to show. Apart from offloading 3.5 percent of its shareholding in the Life Insurance Corporation (LIC), it is selling its stake in the IDBI Bank. The process of selling the latter that started in May 2021 is likely to get consummated during the current FY. However, it can't be termed as privatization as already the bank was operating as a private lender even as the Centre became its passive shareholder consequent to capital infusions to manage former's bad debt losses. Currently, the government and the LIC collectively own 94.72 per cent of IDBI Bank with shareholding of 45.48 percent and 49.24 percent respectively (the remaining 5.28 percent is with Public shareholders). Of this, the Centre plans to sell a 60.7 percent stake, comprising 30.5 per cent of its own and 30.2 percent of LIC's. Will the Centre take up selling of PSBs and an insurance company - as promised in the 2021-22 budget? It seems unlikely. If, that were to be the case,



AS FOR PRIVATISATION, EXCEPT FOR THE SALE OF AIR INDIA TO THE TATA GROUP DURING 2021-22, THE GOVERNMENT HAS LITTLE TO SHOW. APART FROM OFFLOADING 3.5 PERCENT OF ITS SHAREHOLDING IN THE LIFE INSURANCE CORPORATION (LIC), IT IS SELLING ITS STAKE IN THE IDBI BANK.

the government ought to have set a target for receipts from disinvestment in its budget for 2024-25. But, it hasn't even as the FM has made a provision for Rs 50,000 crore under the head "miscellaneous capital receipts". This has happened for the first time in a decade. Second, Team Modi is reviewing its strategy to shift its focus from selling CPSUs to what it euphemistically describes as 'prudent public wealth management (PWM)', supporting not-for-profit enterprises, and ensuring strong presence of state-run firms in strategic sectors'. Banking, insurance and financial services (BIFS) were one of the four strategic sectors mentioned by Nirmala Sitharaman in her budget speech for 2021-22. BIFS also qualifies for not-for-profit enterprises categorization especially when it comes to PSBs which are expected to contribute to realizing social objectives such as reaching out banking services to remote and inaccessible areas; making concessional credit available to small and marginal farmers and other vulnerable/deprived sections of the society; funding infrastructure development particularly in areas (for instance, rural roads, housing for the poor etc) where private banks may not be so keen to come. Modi - government's commitment to a strong presence of state-run firms in strategic sectors juxtaposed with support for not-for-profit enterprises clearly signals that it has lost interest in privatizing PSBs and insurance companies. Third, unlike the previous two terms when BJP had an absolute majority in the Lok Sabha on its own, in the third term, it depends on the support from its major allies namely TDP and JD (U) for implementing far reaching decisions such as privatization. Moreover, in the current political environment wherein even a small move such as 'lateral entry' of specialists from the private sector (the sole intent

behind this step was to deliver more effective governance in sync with contemporary challenges) is opposed by the opposition parties forcing the government to retreat, it wouldn't be inclined to make a big move such as privatization of PSBs. About a decade back, many of PSBs were on the brink. The present dispensation has made a lot of efforts to them pull back. These included amongst others capital infusion, enactment of the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC) for expeditious resolution of non-performing assets (NPAs), banks consolidation into fewer entities for achieving scale and greater efficiencies, computerization of bank branches and so on. Today, they are robust and healthy even as the performance of some of them is even better than private banks. This is fine. But, we shouldn't miss the big picture. Fundamentally, most of the ills associated with the functioning of CPSUs including PSBs have a lot to do with their continued majority ownership (share holding of more than 50 percent) and control by the government. This brings them under a plethora of controls and monitoring/surveillance/vigilance and has the effect of shackling its management. Armed with it, the political establishment makes all board level appointments viz. CMD/MD etc and deposes bureaucrats on a bank's board to represent its overwhelming ownership. In other words, the entire board is geared to listen to his master's voice (read the political bosses) when it comes to taking policy decisions or even in its day-to-day running. In the past, meddling in the affairs of PSBs took the form of what came to be known as the cult of 'crony capitalism'. The businessmen patronized by the ruling class managed loans on considerations other than merit and got them ever-greened (taking

a new loan to payback the earlier one). Neither, the banks insisted on repayment, nor the defaulters had any sense of fear as those who were expected to take action, chose not to. In the past, the political brass also rode piggy back on PSBs for absorbing losses/liabilities created by populist policies such as supplying power to farmers and households at subsidized rates, (or even free in some states). Be it a spate of bail-outs given to power distribution companies (discoms) or loan waivers given to farmers etc, these inflicted heavy loss on PSBs. The idea of disinvesting PSBs should be seen as a befitting response to the dire need for reducing bureaucratic interference and granting autonomy to their management for speedy decisions and improved functioning. It was first mooted by the NDA - dispensation under the then, prime minister Vajpayee (1999-2004). It had proposed reduction in government's shareholding in PSBs to less than 50 percent initially and eventually to 33 percent. In 2015, a RBI committee headed by P Nayak recommended setting up of a bank investment company (BIC) where all government shares in PSBs will be vested and divested of its shareholding in all PSBs to below 50 percent. It also proposed setting up of an autonomous Bank Boards Bureau (BBB) to select their top management. In 2020, the RBI recommended reduction in the shareholding of the government in six top PSBs to 51 percent. In a follow up meeting, it went a step further to recommend reduction in government's stake to 26 percent. The 2021-22 budget announcement to privatize two PSBs was a good step forward, though belated. To put it on the backburner now doesn't bode well for banks' health in the long-term. (The writer is a policy analyst; views are personal)

## Global interference and India's economic sovereignty

As India rises to become a global superpower, it faces challenges not only from within but also from international entities that aim to disrupt its economic and political stability

The prosperity and progress of a nation hinge on the efficiency of its governance, particularly in upholding the rule of law by those in top constitutional, administrative, and judicial positions. This also involves the transparency and accountability of regulatory regimes across various sectors of law and economy. In our modern era, characterized by freedom, equality, and democracy, many developing countries have emerged from the shadows of colonialism. Despite independence, the remnants of colonialism persist in governance and social structures, and former colonial powers often carry a lingering sense of superiority. This is evident in their interventions in other countries, where they create



V K BAHUGUNA

political and economic crises under the guise of promoting cosmopolitan values. These interventions are particularly harmful to independent and dynamic leaders in Third World countries. A recent example is the destabilization of the Hasina Wazed government in Bangladesh, fueled by agitation with foreign backing. In recent years, such external forces have formed an international cartel, often

referred to as the "deep state." This group, supported by a segment of religious extremists and a political elite, acts against their own country's interests for selfish reasons. This insidious influence is spreading to stable democracies like India. Direct military intervention is difficult in modern times, so these forces resort to destabilizing social, political, and economic fabrics with the help of internal collaborators. They present themselves as the arbiters of morality, creating narratives to discredit certain groups, undermine social harmony, and ultimately destabilize economies. Their goal is to generate public unrest and overthrow democratically elected governments by eroding the state's capacity to man-

age public welfare. This is a fallout of globalization and an attempt to reassert hegemonic control. One prominent example is the Hindenburg Research firm, which targeted Adani Enterprises last year, leading to a severe crash in the Indian stock market and a major political storm just before the 2024 Lok Sabha elections. The Congress party seized the opportunity, and the Supreme Court ordered an inquiry, which eventually discredited Hindenburg's report. However, this month, Hindenburg targeted the SEBI Chairperson, accusing her of investing in Adani companies abroad. Both SEBI and Adani Group denied any wrongdoing, explaining that the investments were made before she took on her



role at SEBI. Similar uproar was seen when the Rafale aircraft deal was signed in 2015. When Hindenburg first targeted Adani, it made a profit of \$4 million, while Adani lost \$153 million in market value. However, this time, the public saw through the ruse, dismissing it as the tantrum of a disgruntled entity. It is common for companies to

establish subsidiaries abroad, and such activities are always under regulatory surveillance, operating within the law. Historically, India lacked a robust private sector, with Tata being the only notable corporate entity during the era of the "license raj." However, thanks to economic liberalization under the Narsimha Rao government, the private sector has grown significantly and now contributes around 27% of the country's GDP. The Indian private sector is now a crucial engine for employment, service delivery, capital flow, and industrial growth. The public sector, on the other hand, focuses on activities serving the general public, funded by tax revenues. Gautam Adani's conglomerate plays a central role in India's ambition to

become the third-largest economy, with its involvement in key sectors like electricity, port management, mining, natural gas, and infrastructure. Among the top taxpayers in 2022-2023, only the State Bank of India (SBI) was a public sector entity, with Reliance Industries leading the list, followed by SBI and HDFC. The GDP at constant prices in May 2024 was tentatively estimated by the Indian Statistical Office at Rs173.82 lakh crore, with real Gross Value Added at Rs158.74 lakh crore for 2023-24, marking an 8% increase over the previous year. Various private sector industries played a pivotal role in this growth. Adani Group dominated the list of top value gainers in 2022, adding Rs 8.42 lakh crore to investor wealth.

When any country challenges the supremacy of these foreign powers, they attempt to destroy it by spending vast sums of money. The 'Make in India' initiative is gradually positioning Adani as a global industrial leader, alongside other Indian giants like Ambani, Tata, and Mahindra. India's technological advancements and the societal contributions of companies like Tata are gaining recognition. This is precisely why foreign forces forge alliances with frustrated leaders and anti-national elements, funding them to gain control over governance. The current government must take stronger actions rather than merely offering rhetoric. (The writer is a former civil servant; views are personal)





# HK court convicts 2 journalists in landmark sedition case

AP ■ HONG KONG

A Hong Kong court convicted two former editors of a shuttered news outlet on Thursday, in a sedition case widely seen as a barometer for the future of media freedoms in the city once hailed as a bastion of free press in Asia. Stand News former editor-in-chief Chung Pui-ken and former acting editor-in-chief Patrick Lam were arrested in December 2021. They pleaded not guilty to the charge of conspiracy to publish and reproduce seditious publications. Their trial was Hong Kong's first involving media since the former British colony returned to Chinese rule in 1997. Stand News was one of the city's last media outlets that openly criticised the government amid a crackdown on dissent that followed massive pro-democracy protests in 2019. It was shut down just months after the pro-democracy Apple Daily newspaper, whose jailed founder Jimmy Lai is fighting

collusion charges under a sweeping national security law enacted in 2020. Chung and Lam were charged under a colonial-era sedition law that has been used increasingly to crush dissidents. They face up to two years in prison and a fine of 5,000 Hong Kong dollars (about USD 640) for a first offense. Best Pencil (Hong Kong) Ltd., the outlet's holding company, was convicted on the same charge. It had no representatives during the trial, which began in October 2022. Judge Kwok Wai-kin said in his written judgement that Stand News became a tool for smearing the Beijing and Hong Kong governments during the 2019 protests. He said a conviction is deemed proportional "when speech, in the relevant context, is deemed to have caused potential damage to national security and intends to seriously undermine the authority of the Chinese central government or the Hong Kong government, and that it must be stopped".



Chung Pui-ken, the former chief editor of Hong Kong's now-shuttered outlet Stand News, walks outside on bail after he was found guilty in a landmark sedition trial under a colonial-era law, in Wanchai District Court in Hong Kong on Thursday. AP/PTI

The case was centred on 17 articles. Prosecutors said some promoted "illegal ideologies", or smeared the security law and law enforcement officers. Judge Kwok ruled that 11 carried seditious intent, including com-

mentaries written by activist Nathan Law and esteemed journalists Allan Au and Chan Pui-man. Chan is also Chung's wife. The judge found that the other six did not, including interviews

with pro-democracy ex-lawmakers Law and Ted Hui, who are among overseas-based activists targeted by Hong Kong police bounties. Chung appeared calm after the verdict while Lam did not

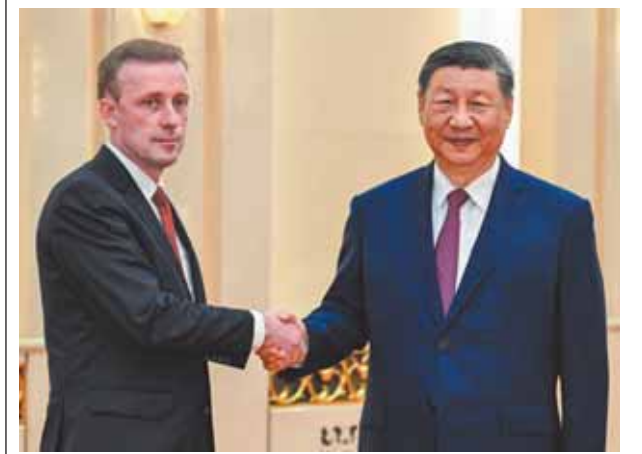
appear in court due to health reasons. They were given bail pending sentencing on September 26. Defence lawyer Audrey Eu read but a mitigation statement from Lam, who said Stand News reporters sought to run a news outlet with fully independent editorial standards. "The only way for journalists to defend press freedom is reporting," Eu quoted Lam saying. Eu did not read out Chung's mitigation letter in court. But local media outlets quoted his letter, in which he wrote that that many Hong Kongers who are not journalists have held to their beliefs, and some have lost their own freedom because they care about everyone's freedom in the community. "Accurately recording and reporting their stories and thoughts is an inescapable responsibility of journalists," he wrote in that letter. The delivery of the verdict was delayed several times for several reasons, including awaiting the appeal outcome of another landmark sedition case.

# Xi meets Sullivan, keen to keep ties on even keel

AP ■ BEIJING

Chinese leader Xi Jinping met with US National Security Adviser Jake Sullivan on Thursday as the latter wound up a three-day visit with the stated aim of keeping communications open in a relationship that has become increasingly tense in recent years. Sullivan, on his first trip to China as the main adviser to President Joe Biden on national security issues, earlier met with Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi and a top general from the Central Military Commission. Starting with a trade war that dates back to 2018, China and the United States have grown at odds over a range of issues, from global security, such as China's claims over the South China Sea, to industrial policy on electric

presidency in January. They said they remain committed to managing the relationship, following up on a meeting between Xi and Biden in San Francisco last November. "While great changes have taken place in the two countries and in China-US relations, China's commitment to the goal of a stable, healthy and sustainable China-US relationship remains unchanged," Xi said. "President Biden is committed to responsibly managing this consequential relationship to ensure that competition does not veer into conflict or confrontation, and to work together where our interests align," Sullivan said. The two countries agreed to work toward a phone call between Xi and Biden in the coming weeks, and Sullivan indicated the two could meet in



Chinese President Xi Jinping (right) meets with White House national security adviser Jake Sullivan at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing on Thursday. AP/PTI

vehicle and solar panel manufacturing. Sullivan's trip this week is meant to keep the tensions from spiralling into conflict. "We believe that competition with China does not have to lead to conflict or confrontation. The key is responsible management through diplomacy," he told reporters at a news conference shortly before leaving Beijing. Both governments are eager to keep relations on an even keel ahead of a change in the US

person at the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation or Group of 20 summits later this year. "The likelihood is they'll both be there and if they are, it would only be natural for them to have the chance to sit down with one another," he said. Xi and Sullivan's meeting also touched on the issues of American citizens detained in China, on Taiwan and also on the clashes between the China and Philippines in the South China Sea.

# Former Russian defence official detained in fraud case

AP ■ MOSCOW

A former Defence Ministry official was ordered held in a fraud case Thursday, the latest high-profile arrest in what appears to be a sweeping investigation into abuse of office in Russia's military leadership. Former Deputy Defence Minister Pavel Popov faces up to 10 years in prison if he is charged and convicted following his detention on suspicion of committing fraud, Russian state news agencies reported, adding that he was ordered held until at least October 29. The case against Popov relates to business activities at a sprawling park in Moscow sometimes called Russia's "military Disneyland."



Patriot Park, a pet project of former Defence Minister Sergei Shoigu, is designed to inspire national pride in younger generations and showcase Soviet and Russian weaponry. It has a firing range, air base, museums and conference centre and a massive, khaki-coloured Cathedral of the Russian Armed Forces, which features mosaics of Soviet and Russian soldiers. President Vladimir Putin personally donated money to commission the main icon for the church, according to the Kremlin. Popov is the eighth top military figure to be arrested on charges of fraud, bribery or abuse of office in recent months, includ-

ing Deputy Defence Minister Timur Ivanov, who was arrested for bribery in April and later dismissed from his position. The arrests began shortly before Putin replaced Shoigu with an economist, Andrei Belousov. Analysts suggest the arrests are a sign that Shoigu's associates are being removed from power and that the most egregious corruption in the Defence Ministry will no longer be tolerated. Popov was responsible for developing and maintaining Patriot Park and is accused of renovating his own properties in the Moscow region at the park's expense, according to the state news agency Tass. He is accused of fraud alongside the director of the park and Maj. Gen. Vladimir Shestеров, deputy of the Defence Ministry's innovations department, both of whom have already been detained.

# Russia continues aerial attack on Ukraine for 4th straight day

AP ■ KYIV

Russia conducted a heavy aerial attack on Ukraine for the third time in four days Thursday, again launching missiles and scores of drones that mostly were intercepted, Ukraine's air force said. Russian forces fired five missiles and 74 Shahed drones at Ukrainian targets, an air force statement said. Air defences stopped two missiles and 60 drones, and 14 other drones presumably fell before reaching their target, it said. Authorities in the capital, Kyiv, said debris of destroyed drones fell in three districts of the city, causing minor damage to civilian infrastructure but no injuries. Russia's relentless and unnerving long-range strikes on civilian areas have been a feature of the war since it invaded its neighbour in February 2022. Ukrainian officials have recent-

ly become more vocal in their long-standing insistence that Western countries supporting their war effort should scrap restrictions on what Ukraine is allowed to target inside Russia with long-range weapons they have provided. Ukraine President Volodymyr Zelenskyy renewed his pleas for Western allies to untie his hands in deciding what to strike on Russian soil. "All our partners should be more active — much more active — in countering Russian terror," Zelenskyy said late Wednesday. "We continue to insist that their determination now — lifting the restrictions on long-range strikes for Ukraine now — will help us to end the war as soon as possible in a fair way for Ukraine and the world as a whole." The European Union's top diplomat on Thursday backed Zelenskyy's push for international backers to end their lim-

its. Ukraine has deployed domestically produced drones to strike Russia. The Russian military said on Thursday it had thwarted an overnight attack on Crimea. The Russian Defence Ministry said its forces destroyed three Ukrainian sea drones aimed at the Black Sea peninsula that Moscow annexed from Ukraine in 2014. The Russia-installed governor of Sevastopol Mikhail Razvozhayev added that four Ukrainian aerial drones and three sea drones were destroyed "at a significant distance" from the peninsula's shore. In the meantime, Ukraine's Army General Staff acknowledged Thursday Ukraine's involvement in strikes this week on oil depots deep inside Russia, where blazes broke out. The attacks in the Rostov and Kirov regions were part of Ukraine's effort to disrupt logistical infrastructure supporting Russia's war machine.

# Dhaka court issues travel ban on 14 former Awami League lawmakers

PTI ■ DHAKA

A Dhaka court on Thursday issued a travel ban on 14 former Awami League ministers and lawmakers in connection with corruption allegations brought against them by the interim government in Bangladesh, according to a media report. The development comes after former prime minister Sheikh Hasina of the Awami League resigned and fled to India on August 5 following the mass movement against her government. An interim government replaced her regime and 84-year-old Nobel laureate Muhammad Yunus was named its Chief Adviser — a position equivalent to prime minister. The Daily Star newspaper reported that the travel ban has been issued against former social welfare minister Dipu Moni, former health minister Zahid Maleque, former education minister Mohibul Hasan Chowdhury, former food min-

## 'Over 1,000 killed during anti-govt protests'

PTI ■ DHAKA

Over 1,000 people have been killed during the protests against the Sheikh Hasina-led government in Bangladesh while more than 400 were blinded by police fire, with some of them losing sight in one or both eyes, a top adviser of the interim government said on Thursday. Health Adviser Nurjahan Begum disclosed this during a visit to the Central Police Hospital in the capital's Rajarbagh where she interacted with the police personnel injured in clashes and spoke to those at the surgical department to ask about their condition. "So far 1,000 people have been killed and more than 400 students and members of the general public have lost their sight. Many have been blind in one eye, while others are blind

in both," Nurjahan was quoted as saying by the bdnews24.com news portal. An anti-discrimination student movement against the government started in mid-July over a controversial quota system in jobs. The protests turned violent after crackdown by the forces. Several protesters were killed and injured during clashes with the police in different parts of the country. In the application, Jahangir said the former ministers and lawmakers, who have graft allegations against their names, were trying to flee the country. So, a travel ban is needed to prevent them from leaving the country. The ACC informed the court that an investigation is underway into the allegations that they all amassed huge amounts of money through illegal means during their tenure.

Judge Mohammed Ash-Shams Joglul Hossain of the Metropolitan Senior Special Judge's Court in Dhaka passed the order after Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) Deputy Director Abu Hena Ashiqur Rahman, who is also conducting the investigation, submitted an application. ACC Public Prosecutor Mahmud Hossain Jahangir had moved the petition on behalf of the ACC.

# PURULIA CASE Danish court turns down extradition of suspect to India

AP ■ COPENHAGEN

A Danish court on Thursday rejected the extradition request from India of a Danish national accused of being involved in an arms smuggling case 29 years ago, going against Denmark's top prosecuting authority which had given the green light to sending Niels Holck abroad. Holck admitted taking part in dropping assault rifles, rocket launchers and missiles from a cargo plane at Purulia in West Bengal in 1995. Indian police said they were meant for a revolutionary group in the country. The Hilleroed District Court said that despite "the additional diplomatic guarantees" given by India "there is a real risk" that Holck will face torture or other inhumane treatment in India.



Holck, 62, said he feared for his life, if extradited. "I would like to be held accountable in front of a judge because I believe it is a justified emergency, but I would rather not die from it," Holck told Danish radio DR Thursday morning before the ruling was announced. While a British citizen and five Latvians were arrested by Indian authorities after they dropped arms, Holck — previously known as Niels Christian Nielsen — escaped. India first asked Denmark to extradite Holck in 2002. The government agreed, but two Danish courts rejected his extradition, saying he would risk torture or other inhumane treatment in India. That led to tense diplomatic relations between the countries. In June 2023, Denmark again looked into a 2016 Indian extradition request, saying that the requirements in the extradition act had been met.

# Israel kills prominent militant, four others in West Bank raids

AP ■ TLKAREM (WEST BANK)

The Israeli military said it killed five more militants, including a local commander, early Thursday in the West Bank as it pressed ahead with what appeared to be the deadliest military operation in the occupied territory since the start of the war in Gaza. Israel says the simultaneous raids across the northern West Bank — which have killed a total of 16 people, nearly all militants, since late Tuesday — are aimed at preventing attacks. The Palestinians see them as a widening of the Israel-Hamas war aimed at perpetuating Israel's decades-long military rule over the territory. The Islamic Jihad militant group confirmed that Mohammed Jaber, known as Abu Shujaa, was killed during a raid in the city of Tulkarem. He became a hero for many Palestinians earlier in the year when he was reported killed in an Israeli operation, only to make a surprise appearance at the funeral of other militants, where he was hoisted onto the



shoulders of a cheering crowd. The military said he was killed early Thursday along with four other militants in a shootout with Israeli forces after the five had hidden inside a mosque. It said Abu Shujaa was linked to numerous attacks on Israelis, including a deadly shooting in June, and was planning more. The military said another militant was arrested in the operation in Tulkarem, and that a member of Israel's paramilitary Border Police was lightly wounded. The overall toll of 16 killed in less than two days would make it the deadliest Israeli operation

in the West Bank since Hamas' October 7 attack out of Gaza ignited the war there. The Palestinian Health Ministry says over 650 Palestinians have been killed in the West Bank since the start of the war. Most appear to have been militants killed in gunbattles during Israeli operations like the one this week, but civilian bystanders and rock-throwing protesters have also been killed, and the territory saw a surge of settler violence. Israel says the operations are required to prevent attacks on its citizens, which have also risen since the start of the war.

# Strong wave likely capsized Viking replica ship off Norway, police say

AP ■ COPENHAGEN (DENMARK)

A strong wave was likely responsible for the capsizing of a Viking ship replica earlier this week off Norway's coast that killed a US citizen, police said on Thursday, describing it as a "tragic accident" that did not constitute a criminal matter. The wooden replica, called Naddodd, was crossing the North Atlantic from the Faeroe Islands to Norway with an international team of six people. On Tuesday, it sailed into strong winds and high waves and late that night, the ship capsized off the coastal town of Stad, about 346 kilometers (215 miles) from the capital of Oslo. Survivors told police that



the weather "suddenly turned significantly worse than predicted with very high waves." Rescuers said some of the waves were up to 5 metres (16 feet) high at the time. The five survivors had man-

aged to get into an inflatable life raft and were later airlifted to safety by helicopter. A sixth person, who had been trapped underneath the vessel, drowned, police said. The victim's body was found on Wednesday. Police have not released the name of the victim but Norwegian and Faeroese media identified her as 29-year-old archaeologist Karla Dana, from Florida. "Thrilled to be a part of this crew, fearlessly embarking on this Nordic voyage on a Viking ship replica across the North Sea, pushing through physical and mental limits to sail into history," Dana had posted on her LinkedIn profile before the trip.

# Telegram CEO barred from leaving France, pending further probe

AP ■ PARIS

French authorities handed preliminary charges to Telegram CEO Pavel Durov on Wednesday for allowing alleged criminal activity on his messaging app, and barred him from leaving France pending further investigation. Both free-speech advocates and authoritarian governments have spoken out in Durov's defence since his weekend arrest. The case has also called attention to the challenges of policing illegal activity online, and to the Russia-born Durov's own unusual biography and multiple passports. Durov was detained on Saturday at Le Bourget airport outside Paris as part of a sweeping investigation opened earlier this year, and released earlier Wednesday after four days of questioning. Investigative judges filed preliminary charges Wednesday night and ordered him to pay 5 million euros bail and to report to a police station

twice a week, according to a statement from the Paris prosecutor's office. Allegations against Durov, who is also a French citizen, include that his platform is being used for child sexual abuse material and drug trafficking, and that Telegram refused to share information or documents with investigators when required by law. The first preliminary charge against him was for "complicity in managing an online platform to allow illicit transactions by an organised group", a crime that can lead to sentences of up to 10 years in prison and 500,000 euro fine, the prosecutor's office said. Preliminary charges under French law mean magistrates have strong reason to believe a crime was committed but allow more time for further investigation. David-Olivier Kaminski, a lawyer for Durov, was quoted by French media as saying "it's totally absurd to think that the person in charge of a social network could be implicated in criminal acts that don't concern him, directly or indirectly".

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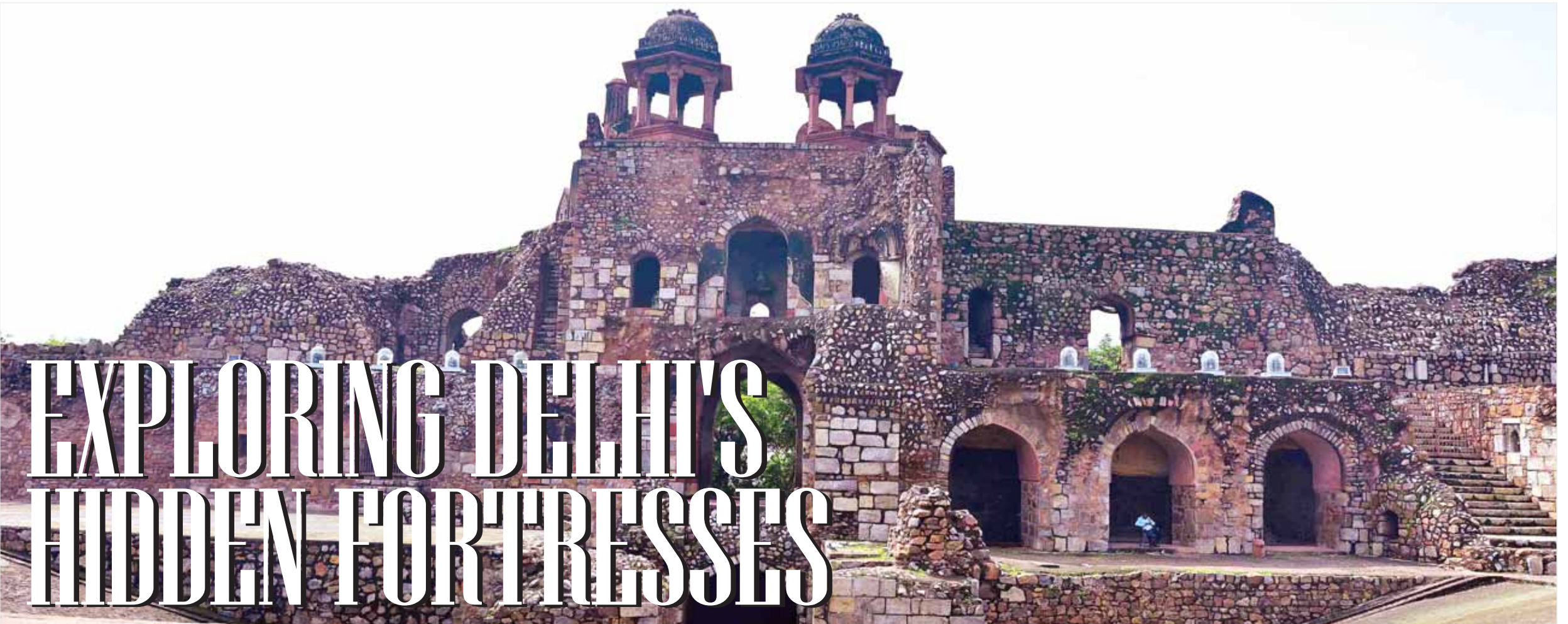


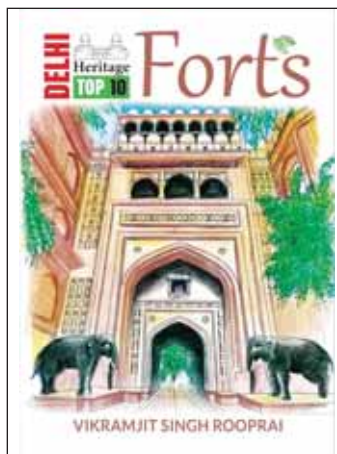
Photo: Pankaj Kumar

Discover the rich history and architecture of Delhi's forts in *Delhi Heritage: Top 10 Forts* by Vikramjit Singh Rooprai, offering an engaging and insightful exploration of the city's past, says **SAKSHI PRIYA**

**D**elhi Heritage: Top 10 Forts by Vikramjit Singh Rooprai is an engaging journey of ten prominent forts in Delhi. As part of the Delhi Heritage series, this book dives deep into the architectural and historical significance of these forts, offering readers a comprehensive view of Delhi's rich past. Rooprai, a dedicated heritage activist and educator has put together a guide that blends historical facts with intriguing stories, making it accessible to both history enthusiasts and casual readers. One of the highlights of the book is how it sheds light on not just the famous forts like the Red Fort and Purana Qila, but also on the lesser-known ones, such as Qila-i-Rai Pithora and Nai ka Kot. Rooprai takes readers on a journey through

the history of these forts, detailing their construction, purpose and the events they have witnessed over centuries. The book stands out because it goes beyond the typical tourist information, offering a more detailed look at how these forts fit into the broader historical and cultural context of Delhi. The book opens with a vivid portrayal of the Red Fort, a symbol of Mughal grandeur. Rooprai captures the momentous day of 18 May 1648, when Emperor Shahjahan inaugurated this architectural marvel. The description of Shahjahan's grand entry, with Prince Dara Shikoh showering him with coins, sets the tone for the book's rich narrative style. The Red Fort's formidable outer walls, crowned with ornate chhatris and punctuated by five

principal gates, are brought to life through Rooprai's evocative prose. Following the Red Fort, Rooprai delves into the history of Purana Qila, a site steeped in both myth and historical significance. The fort is traditionally believed to be built on the grounds of Indraprastha, the legendary capital of the Pandavas. Rooprai skilfully interweaves folklore with historical facts, recounting legends such as Lord Krishna's demand for Khandavprastha. The Bada Darwaza (large gate) of Purana Qila stands as an attestation to its historical importance and Rooprai's detailed descriptions make it clear why it has been a must-visit site since the British era. Tughlaqabad Fort, the largest surviving fort in Delhi, takes centre stage next. Commissioned by Sultan



Ghiasuddin Tughlaq between 1321-1323 CE, the fort's imposing ruins and its strategic significance during the Tughlaq dynasty are examined. Rooprai brings to light the fort's intriguing lore, including the

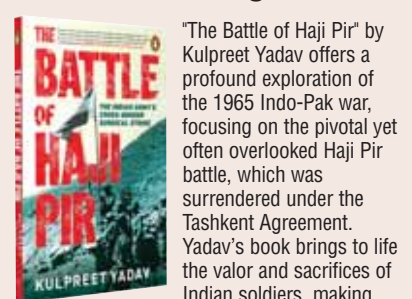
reputed curse by Sufi mystic Khwaja Nizamuddin Auliya that condemned it to remain abandoned. The fort's role in defending Delhi from Mongol invasions underscores its military importance, a facet Rooprai explores with both depth and clarity. The book also highlights the contributions of Feroz Shah Tughlaq, whose focus on public works and irrigation earned him the title 'Father of the Indian Irrigation System'. Rooprai describes Feroz Shah's efforts to improve the lives of his subjects and his legacy of equality and prosperity. This section provides insight into the ruler's priorities and the architectural innovations that characterised his reign. Salimgarh, another significant fort, is

introduced as a strategic outpost built by Islam Shah Suri, son of Sher Shah Suri. Rooprai's account of Salimgarh's strategic location on a riverine island near the Yamuna and its role in defending Delhi adds a layer of understanding to the city's fortification network. Rooprai's narrative is enriched by his ability to convey the fort's historical and cultural significance. His engaging writing style and meticulous research offer readers a window into the past, highlighting how these structures reflect the evolving history of Delhi. The book is peppered with narrative and detailed descriptions that humanise the history of these fortresses, making their stories accessible and compelling. *Delhi Heritage: Top 10 Forts* by Vikramjit Singh Rooprai is more

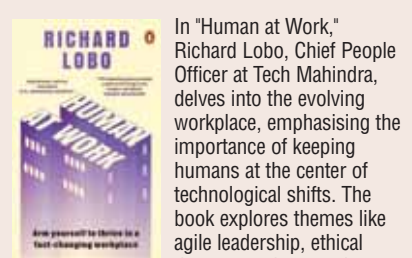
than just a guide, it's a celebration of Delhi's rich historical and architectural heritage.. Rooprai's engaging narrative brings these majestic structures to life, making it an invaluable resource for both history enthusiasts and those curious about Delhi's cultural legacy. Through its insightful and meticulously researched content, the book highlights the importance of preserving our historical landmarks and provides a compelling journey into the depths of Delhi's heritage.

**BOOK DETAILS:**

**Book Name & Author:** Delhi Heritage: Top 10 Forts by Vikramjit Singh Rooprai  
**Price:** INR 499  
**Pages:** 214  
**Publisher:** Niyogi Books

**NEW ARRIVAL****The Battle of Haji Pir: The Indian Army's Cross-Border Surgical Strike**

"The Battle of Haji Pir" by Kulpreet Yadav offers a profound exploration of the 1965 Indo-Pak war, focusing on the pivotal yet often overlooked Haji Pir battle, which was surrendered under the Tashkent Agreement. Yadav's book brings to life the valor and sacrifices of Indian soldiers, making the complexities of military history accessible to all readers. Yadav's detailed account highlights the strategic maneuvers of the Indian Army during Operation Gibraltar and their critical role in defending Kashmir. The book also delves into the behind-the-scenes diplomacy and concessions made for peace, providing an insider's perspective on the conflict. With over 15 books to his name, Kulpreet Yadav combines thorough research with engaging storytelling, making "The Battle of Haji Pir" a compelling read for military enthusiasts and history buffs. Available this September in major bookstores and online platforms.

**Human at Work by Richard Lobo**

In "Human at Work," Richard Lobo, Chief People Officer at Tech Mahindra, delves into the evolving workplace, emphasising the importance of keeping humans at the center of technological shifts. The book explores themes like agile leadership, ethical decision-making, and human-centric technology, offering practical insights and real-world examples. Lobo underscores that every company today, regardless of industry, is fundamentally a tech company, driven by human expertise and strategy. "Human at Work" highlights the power of micro-transformations to spark significant change, making it a valuable read for HR professionals, managers and anyone navigating today's complex work landscape. Lobo's approach is particularly relevant to the Indian market, with timely discussions on hybrid work models and managing technological disruptions. Available this September in major bookstores and online, this book serves as a roadmap for leading with a human-first mindset in an increasingly digital world.

**Genetic Study Refutes Eelam Tamil Origins**

A new genetic study reveals that Sri Lanka's Tamil and Sinhala populations are genetically similar, challenging claims of distinct Eelam Tamil origins and questioning the basis for separatist movements

BY KUMAR CHELLAPPAN

**A**n international team of scientists, drawn mainly from Sri Lanka and India, have demolished the concept of Eelam Tamils in the island nation through a comprehensive genetic study. A three-year long molecular biology research spanning across Sri Lanka and India have established that the population in the island nation is homogeneous in nature and there is no scientific basis for the claims by the Tamils that they had their origin in that country. The findings prove that the demand for a separate Eelam(country) for Tamils is bunkum and thousands of Tamils and Sinhalese massacred in the war for Eelam died for a non-existent cause. "The Sri Lankan population, mainly the Sinhala and Tamils, have massive genetic mixing. If the Tamils had their origin in Sri Lanka, their DNA should be visible and discernible. But it is missing," said Prof Gyaneshwer Chaubey, Department of Zoology, Banaras Hindu University who led the team of scientists in this path breaking research.

The peer-reviewed research paper "Reconstructing the Population History of the Sinhalese, the major ethnic group of Sri Lanka," has been published in iScience, a widely respected scientific portal. While Dr Chaubey led the team of Indian scientists, R Ranasinghe (Institute of Biochemistry, Molecular Biology and Biotechnology, University of Colombo) led the researchers from the island nation. It may be remembered that Dr Chaubey and a team of researchers from Estonia, Harvard and Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology (Hyderabad) had demolished the Aryan and Dravidian linguistic theory and proved that both of these groups share the same forefathers. "The analysis based on



Dr Gyaneshwar Chaubey in discussion with a Sri Lankan student of his research team

the frequency of various genetic mutations showed a tight cluster of Sinhalese and Tamil populations, suggesting strong gene flow beyond the boundary of ethnicity and language. A further connection of Sinhalese with the West of India has been established based on the traces of DNA segments. Overall in the South Asian context, Sri Lankan ethnic groups are genetically more homogenous than others," said the team leaders.

The study also found that the Sinhala language spoken in the country is a combination of Konkani, Marathi, Sanskrit and Gujarati and reached the island nation through Arabian Sea. According to K M Raghavan, a Sri Lankan historian, the Tamils could have reached Sri Lanka as part of the Kaurava army units hired by the princes of the island nation to fight for them as private army warriors. The Kauravas, who were defeated by the Pandavas in the Mahabharata War took refuge in the East Coast of India and reached Sri Lanka at the invitation of various Kings in the island nation. Following the Portuguese occupation of Sri Lanka, the Kauravas converted to Christianity and their name was

changed to Karavas, writes Raghavan in his book. Ramaswami Wijayabalan, a plantation owner and Tamil scholar based in Colombo, told The Pioneer that the Tamils in north and north east of Sri Lanka are descendants of migrant workers from Malabar province in present day Kerala. "The Tamil they speak, their food habits and social life have their origin in Malabar. The priests in temples in North and East are addressed as Gurukkal as they had come here for teaching martial arts and offering poojas," said Wijayabalan. He asked how puttu, appam etc became the staple food of the Jaffna and Batticaloa Tamils. Interestingly, Ceylon and Colombo find mention in novels and short stories in Malayalam whereas the same is not that common in yesteryear literary works in Tamil, said Josephine Jayashanthi, leading novelist in Tamil Nadu. Dr S Kalyanaraman, Indologist of repute, concurred with the findings of Dr Chaubey and his team. "You may be able to distort history but you cannot distort science. The study by Dr Chaubey is based on pure science and no force can repudiate the same," said Dr Kalyanaraman who has deciphered the Indus script.

**Revolutionising India's Dairy Industry: The Inspiring Legacy of Verghese Kurien**

MS Meenakshi's "Verghese Kurien: The Man Who Brought Milk to a Million Homes" chronicles the transformative journey of the 'Milkman of India,' whose visionary leadership and innovative approach revolutionised India's dairy industry and empowered rural communities, writes **TEAM VIVA**

**V**erghese Kurien: The Man Who Brought Milk to a Million Homes by MS Meenakshi is a compelling tribute to the 'Milkman of India,' whose visionary leadership and relentless dedication transformed India's dairy industry and rural economy. This book, part of the Pioneers of India series, meticulously chronicles Kurien's journey from a young, unconventional engineer in Anand, Gujarat to becoming the architect of the White Revolution and a pivotal figure in post-Independence India. MS Meenakshi vividly captures the essence of Kurien's pragmatic leadership and his many accomplishments in the development of cooperative societies, which became a bedrock of India's dairy sector. The book emphasises Kurien's commitment to sustainable development and social entrepreneurship, highlighting how he championed the interests of rural stakeholders. Through initiatives like the creation of AMUL and the Institute of Rural Management in Anand, Kurien not only revolutionised dairy management but also spurred significant changes in rural socio-economic structures, industries, and developmental policies. One of the book's strengths lies in its detailed portrayal of Kurien's partnerships with



entrepreneur whose initiatives under Operation Flood linked the entire country through milk, a staple necessity. Meenakshi's portrayal of Kurien's character is both respectful and intimate, offering a balanced view of a leader who was as astute as he was compassionate. MS Meenakshi's writing is both informative and engaging. Her expertise is evident in the way she presents complex economic and social concepts in a manner that is accessible to readers, making Kurien's achievements all the more inspiring. *Verghese Kurien: The Man Who Brought Milk to a Million Homes* is more than just a biography, it's an inspiring roadmap for future thinkers and leaders in sustainable development. It reminds us of the power of visionary leadership and the impact that one dedicated individual can have on a nation. For anyone interested in the history of India's economic development, social entrepreneurship or the story of a man whose legacy continues to feed millions, this book is a must-read.

prominent Indian leaders such as Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, Lal Bahadur Shastri and Jawaharlal Nehru. These collaborations played a crucial role in the growth of India's economy post-Independence. The author also delves into the challenges Kurien faced, from bureaucratic hurdles and corruption to dealing with inefficient officials and self-serving lobbies. Despite these obstacles, Kurien's unwavering dedication to rural development and his iron will to stand by his principles shine through. His first loyalty was always to the farmers and rural stakeholders, a stance that led him to establish a network of small-scale cooperatives that empowered millions of farmers and made India a self-sufficient producer of milk by the 1970s. The narrative is enriched with insights into Kurien's personal growth, from a misfit engineer who initially struggled to find his place in Anand to a formidable social

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