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Team India rises like a phoenix at Perth

RAHUL DATTA ■ PTI/NEW DELHI/PERTH

India, on Monday, created history when it trounced Australia in the first Border-Gavaskar Trophy cricket Test match in Perth's Optus Stadium, and became the first country to beat the hosts at this Test centre. This is India's biggest ever Test win in Australia, as it lost by 295 runs. This emphatic victory came close on the heels of a three-nil drubbing in as many Test matches at home at the hands of New Zealand a few weeks ago. Moreover, India was bowled out by Australia in the first innings for a meagre 150 runs raising doubts of its prowess to tame the mighty hosts. After setting a mammoth 534-run target, India bowled Australia out

for 238 to take a 1-0 lead in the five-match series under stand-in captain Jasprit Bumrah.

In another achievement, India washed away its New Zealand defeat by this victory and stormed back to the top of the World Test Championship (WTC) standings with 61.11 percentage points. This victory is India's biggest ever, surpassing their previous record of 222 runs, set back in 1978 in Sydney when Australia fielded a weakened side amidst the mass exodus for the Kerry Packer World Series.

The stand-in skipper led from the front with a match-haul of 8/72 as India bowled out the hosts for 238 in 58.4 overs on the fourth afternoon of the opening Test. India are now 1-0 up in the five-Test



series with regular skipper Rohit Sharma ready to take over during the Day/Night game starting December 6 in Adelaide. "We were put under pressure in the

first innings, but the way we responded was great," a smiling Bumrah, who was deservedly adjudged man of the match, said after the game. "I played here in

2018 - I remember the wicket started soft. This one was less spicy, we were really well prepared. I told everyone to keep faith... If you have faith in your abilities, then you can do something special," he added. While Yashasvi Jaiswal, Virat Kohli and KL Rahul will be among the heroes with their solid second innings batting performances, it was Bumrah's unbelievable skill-set and self belief during Australia's first innings rout that formed the cornerstone of India's win. Not many teams have come back after being 150 all-out on the first day but this Indian team has time and again shown that it is built differently. Prior to the Test, Bumrah spoke about embracing challenges and he did walk the talk during all four days.



Musical chairs in Maharashtra CMO?

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ MUMBAI/NEW DELHI

While the incumbent Chief Minister Eknath Shinde from Shiv Sena and his Deputy Ajit Pawar from the Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) are leaving no stone unturned to retain their positions, after the just concluded Maharashtra polls, another deputy CM, Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leader Devendra Fadnavis has emerged as front runner to be the next chief CM of Maharashtra, for the second time. As per the 'musical chair option' for the MahaYuti faction Shinde could be deputy CM with Pawar, and then they may take turns later to be CM, as party insiders said that they will not back down from their claims since they supported the BJP to come in National Democratic Alliance (NDA) fold by breaking their parent parties. Sources said that the BJP's top leadership has reportedly cleared the names of Fadnavis

as CM, and the other two as Dy CMs, and have approved of the arrangement for the next government, Shinde will get 12 ministers and the NCP is likely to get 10 berths, sources said. Fadnavis will serve as CM for the first two-and-a-half years, after which Eknath Shinde will assume the role for the remainder of the term and once Fadnavis steps down as CM, he is expected to be appointed the BJP's national president. Party sources said Shinde, Fadnavis and Ajit Pawar are scheduled to meet Home Minister Amit Shah, and a formal announcement about the new government will be made after the meeting. MahaYuti alliance scripted a historic victory in Maharashtra assembly elections by winning 235 seats in the 288-member House. The BJP led the Mahayuti's victory by winning 132 seats - the highest among all allies. Shinde Sena won 57 seats and Ajit Pawar-led NCP won 41 seats in the election.



Country-made firearms used in Sambhal, death toll rises to four

BISWAJEET BANERJEE ■ SAMBHAL

The violence in Sambhal, sparked by a dispute over a mosque survey, has claimed four lives, all caused by bullets fired from country-made firearms. Authorities confirmed the findings through post-mortem reports as tensions remain high in the city. Moradabad Commissioner Anjaneya Kumar stated, "The post-mortem findings confirm that country-made firearms were used in all four fatalities. A magisterial inquiry will be conducted into these deaths." The unrest, which began last week, prompted the district administration to take stringent measures. District Magistrate Rajendra Painsiya ordered the closure of all educational institutions on Monday and imposed restrictions on the entry of outsiders, social organizations, and public representatives into Sambhal until November 30. Efforts to restore calm were disrupted on Monday afternoon when Zafar Ali, head of the Shahi Jama Masjid, made allegations against a Circle Officer (CO) during a press conference. Ali accused the officer of ordering water to be drained from the mosque's 'hauz' (ablution tank), which allegedly overflowed and drew a crowd outside the mosque. "When I questioned the CO about this, he abused me, used his baton on the people, and threatened to deal with me harshly if I continued asking questions," Ali alleged during the briefing. The situation took another turn when police detained Zafar Ali following the press conference, sparking renewed tension in the area.

SC tells CAQM to relax restrictions on educational institutions

RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court, on Monday, directed the Commission for Air Quality Management (CAQM) to consider relaxing the restrictions on physical classes of schools, colleges and educational institutions in Delhi-National Capital Region, noting students were being deprived of mid-day meals and lacked wherewithal to attend virtual classes. The restrictions on physical classes of schools and colleges were imposed recently due to severe air pollution. The SC, meanwhile, ordered the CAQM to initiate action against the officials of Delhi government and Delhi Police under Section 14 of

Commission for Air Quality Management (CAQM) Act for deploying police personnel admittedly only in 23 checkpoints, instead of all, on November 18 when GRAP IV kicked in. The SC also observed that a large number of students did not have air purifiers, suggesting that there may be little difference in conditions for children studying at home versus those attending school. A Bench of Justices Abhay S Oka and Augustine George Masih, however, refused to relax the anti-pollution GRAP-IV restrictions in Delhi-NCR and said unless it was satisfied that there was consistent decrease in AQI levels, it cannot order curbs below GRAP-III or GRAP-II.



Photo: Ranjan Dimri/Pioneer

Conduct classes in hybrid mode: CAQM

Following the SC directions, the Commission for Air Quality Management (CAQM), late on Monday, directed Delhi and state governments of the NCR to consider conducting classes in hybrid mode. The CAQM allowed institutions to conduct classes both in

"physical" and also "online" modes, wherever feasible, in Delhi, Gurugram, Faridabad, Ghaziabad and Gautam Buddha Naga. "The option to exercise online mode of education, wherever available, shall vest with the students and their guardians," it said.

Meanwhile, residents in the National Capital woke up to a sunny morning on Monday. Still, a thin layer of smog covered major areas in the city and the air quality in the national capital witnessed a slight improvement in comparison to last week, as the AQI dipped to 289 in the morning from hazardous to an unhealthy level. The Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) recorded an average AQI at 349 while IQ Air also recorded air pollution 374 at 4.30 pm which showed 706 in the afternoon. PM2.5 concentration is 52.4 times the World Health Organization (WHO) annual PM2.5 guideline value.

Parliament adjourns early, on day one of Winter Session



Prime Minister Narendra Modi addresses the media on the first day of the Winter session of Parliament, in New Delhi on Monday. Union Minister for Parliamentary Affairs Kiren Rijju and Ministers of State Jitendra Singh, Arjun Ram Meghwal and L. Murugan are also seen. Photo: Ranjan Dimri/The Pioneer

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Buoyed by the massive success in recent Assembly polls, after a tepid Lok Sabha performance that had dampened the ruling party's stature, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday came with regained confidence and attacked the Opposition saying "those rejected by people 80-90 times" were trying to control Parliament by resorting to hooliganism for their own political gains. Addressing the media ahead of the start of the Winter Session of Parliament, PM Modi said such a handful of people did not succeed in their intentions but people of the country observed their actions and punished them at an appropriate time. However, minutes after the PM urged the Members to allow the Parliament to function smoothly, and give opportunity to the new MPs, both the Houses, Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha, were adjourned due to the ruckus by the Opposition, over the latest Adani Group controversy. Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla asked political

parties to avoid ruckus in the House in the name of protests. In view of the Constitution Day celebrations in Samvidhan Sadan on Tuesday, Birla urged the members of various political parties to engage in a meaningful dialogue. President Droupadi Murmu is scheduled to start the year-long celebrations to mark the 75th anniversary of adoption of the Constitution at a joint sitting of the Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha in the Central Hall of the Samvidhan Sadan. PM Modi's remarks came days after the Bharatiya Janata Party-led coalition won the Maharashtra Assembly elections by a landslide, bagging 235 seats and relegating the opposition Maha Vikas Aghadi to a distant 49 seats in the 288-member House. Earlier, the BJP had registered a surprise third consecutive victory in the Haryana polls, trouncing the Congress, which was billed as a pre-poll favourite. "There should be a healthy debate in the Parliament but, unfortunately, certain individuals are trying to control

Parliament for their own political gains, resorting to disruptions and chaos. Though their tactics ultimately fail, the people watch their behaviour closely and deliver justice when the time comes," he added. The PM said he had been repeatedly urging opposition colleagues, and some also agreed that Parliament should function smoothly. The Winter Session of Parliament began on Monday and is scheduled to continue till December 20. "The most troubling aspect, however, is that such behaviour (disruptions) stifles the rights of new MPs, those who bring fresh ideas and energy from all parties," the PM said. He also said the new members were often denied opportunities to speak in the House. "We, as their representatives, must live up to these sentiments. It is time to reflect on the time we have lost so far and resolve to compensate by thoroughly debating various issues in the House," he said, adding, "Future generations will read and draw inspiration from these discussions. I hope this session will be highly productive, enhance the prestige of the Constitution's 75th year, strengthen Bharat's global stature, provide opportunities to new MPs, and welcome new ideas," he said. "With this spirit, I once again invite and welcome all esteemed members of Parliament to approach this session with enthusiasm and vigour," the PM said. He added that the current session of Parliament was special in many ways, with the most significant aspect being the 75-year journey of the Constitution. Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge expressed dismay over the Chair in both Houses of Parliament disallowing the opposition to raise under Rule 267 the issue of corruption allegations against the Adani Group and said the government should "let the truth come out" as the matter is affecting the country's image.



People protesting against a proposed ropeway project along the trek route to the Vaishno Devi shrine clash with police personnel, at Katra in Reasi district, PTI

Local tradesman wary of Vaishno Devi ropeway project

MOHIT KANDHARI ■ JAMMU

Katra township, the base camp of Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine located in the Trikuta hills Monday witnessed violent protests against the proposed ropeway project cleared by the Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board authorities last week. The 250-crore ropeway project between Tarakote Marg to Sanjhi Chhat along the 13-kilometer track is expected to be a game changer for millions of devotees paying obeisance inside the sanctum sanctorum. A large number of devotees welcomed the ropeway project and claimed it would make the spiritual journey more inclusive and accessible while maintaining the sanctity of the pilgrimage. In contrast, local shopkeepers, pony wallahs,

and palanquin owners have been protesting peacefully for the last three days demanding immediate withdrawal of the proposal or proper rehabilitation of all families likely to be affected by the project. Carrying banners and placards, they raised slogans against the Shrine Board and the ropeway project, which they claim, would render them jobless. However, peaceful demonstrations on Monday abruptly turned unruly after hundreds of protesters, assembled in the main chowk of Katra town went berserk. The agitators attacked a Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) vehicle and broke its windshield forcing law enforcement agencies to launch a crackdown to disperse the large crowd. Chaos prevailed in the area as agitators ran helter-skelter.

Cabinet approves One Nation One Subscription

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Union Cabinet on Monday approved One Nation One Subscription scheme to provide country-wide access to international high impact scholarly research articles and journal publications to students, faculty and researchers of all Higher Education Institutions managed by the Central government and State governments and Research & Development Institutions of the Central government. The initiative will open a goldmine of knowledge available in top quality scholarly journals to nearly 1.8 crore students, faculty, researchers and scientists of all disciplines, including those in tier-two and tier-three cities, thereby encouraging core as well as interdisciplinary research in the country. A total of 30 major international journal publishers have been included in One Nation One Subscription. All of the nearly 13,000 e-journals published by these publishers will now be accessible to more than 6,300 government Higher Education Institutions and central government R&D institutions.

NSUI bags DUSU president post after seven years

SAUMYA SHUKLA ■ NEW DELHI

After biting the dust in the recently held state Assembly elections including the big jolts in Maharashtra and Haryana, the Congress party's student wing the National Students' Union of India (NSUI) on Monday bagged two posts in the keenly contested Delhi University Student Union (DUSU) elections. The Congress-backed student body is making the claim on the presidential post after a period of seven years. However, the celebrations, which are usually



Newly elected DUSU president Ronak Khatri, and joint secretary Lokesh Chaudhary of NSUI celebrate their win. Photo: Ranjan Dimri/Pioneer

accompanied with dhols, colours and loud music, was replaced by a rather quiet one even though the members of the Congress student wing chanted slogans for the winning candidates, even as the counting began early at DU's North Campus under tight security with the police deploying three-layer barricading at the counting centre, ensuring law and order. The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) affiliated Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad's (ABVP) also secured two posts including Vice President and Secretary.

Meerut groom chases down pickup driver in Bollywood-style drama

BISWAJEET BANERJEE ■ LUCKNOW

Weddings are meant to be joyous occasions, but for Dev Kumar, a newlywed groom in Meerut, his post-wedding journey turned into an action-packed thriller worthy of a Bollywood blockbuster. The star of the show? Dev himself, who chased down a pickup driver accused of snatching a Rs 100 note from his traditional 'currency note garland' on NH-58. Decker in his wedding finery, including a vibrant red turban and a garland of Rs 100 notes, Dev was on his way home after the festivities when a sneaky pickup driver

allegedly swiped a note from his prized garland. Dev, however, was not one to let the matter slide. Spotting the theft, the groom sprang into action. He flagged down a passing motorist, requesting a lift, and the two embarked on a dramatic chase through Meerut's bustling National Highway. The suspense heightened as Dev closed in on the alleged thief's vehicle. Then came the pièce de résistance: Dev leapt onto the moving truck, climbing through the passenger-side window with all the agility of a seasoned stuntman. Caught on video, the scene has since gone viral, showing Dev retrieving his garland



from the startled driver's grasp and climbing back out of the truck - still dressed in his wedding attire. As the drama unfolded, Dev's relatives arrived at the scene, adding reinforcements to ensure the driver did not

escape. What could have been a simple case of theft quickly transformed into a comedy goldmine for social media users. One X (formerly Twitter) user quipped, "Cash mala was more important than varmala." Another joked, "Plot twist: The groom planned this to avoid the wedding night!" Comparisons to Bhojpuri action sequences and punchlines like "UP is not for beginners" dominated the online chatter. The video also captured the accused driver, later identified as Manish Sehgal, pleading with the groom to spare him as Dev and his relatives delivered a stern lesson in highway justice. While Dev Kumar has been hailed as a local hero, Manish Sehgal offers a different take on the incident. According to Sehgal, he had nothing to do with the alleged theft.

CM reaches London, receives warm welcome from Indian diaspora

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL
Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Mohan Yadav arrived in London on Sunday and received a warm welcome from Vikram Doraiswami, the Indian High Commissioner to the UK, and the Indian diaspora upon his arrival at his hotel.

case the vast investment opportunities in Madhya Pradesh, highlighting key sectors like Renewable Energy, Electric Vehicles, and Food Processing. It's an exciting opportunity to connect with industry leaders, engage with the Indian diaspora, and discover how Madhya Pradesh is driving growth and innovation.

engaging with industrialists, business leaders, and government representatives in both the UK and Germany. The Chief Minister will meet with representatives of industrial organizations and industrialists to increase investment and industrial cooperation in the state.

120 participants. The discussion will focus on sectors such as electric vehicles, automotive, renewable energy, and food processing in roundtable meetings after the lunch break. On Tuesday, CM Yadav will visit BR Ambedkar House and pay his respects.

India in Munich on the morning of November 28. After that, he will visit SFC Energy and participate in an interactive session on investment opportunities in Madhya Pradesh. Representatives from the Consulate General of India, CII, Invest India, and the Indo-German Chamber of Commerce will also be present.



Chief Minister Mohan Yadav held a meeting with Indian High Commissioner Vikram Duraiswami and other officials at St. James Court (Taj) London and discussed investments in the State. Pioneer photo

3 bike-borne youth returning from Ijtima site hit to death near Karond mandi

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL
Three youths died after their bike was hit by a speeding jeep near Karond Mandi late in the night on Sunday; they have gone to visit the ailing mother of one of the youths.

Aishbagh and Sameer (18) who hailed from Lateri district Vidisha was living in Ahmed Ali Colony in Aishbagh with a friend while his family lives in Karond. All three friends used to do carpentry work in a company named My Kitchen. They were working at a site in New Market. Sameer's site was far from Karond due to which for the last four months, he had started living on rent near his friend Sameer's house.

While overtaking on the 80 feet road near the bridge located near Karond Mandi, a jeep hit their vehicle hard. The three were taken to Hamidia Hospital where during treatment, doctors declared them dead. Alfaiz died on the spot in the accident while the other two died during treatment.

According to the police, 3-4 other people who were hit by the bus also suffered minor injuries. The injured have been admitted to a private hospital. The deceased was identified as Hirdesh Agarwal of Professor Colony and used to operate a garments shop in Lakherapura. He had brought his daughter Anika (6) to New Market. After roaming here, he was going to fill petrol at Nanke Petrol Pump. During this time the accident happened. The scooter got stuck in the bus and which kept dragging for 10 meters.

CM discusses investment and development with Indian High Commission

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL
Chief Minister Mohan Yadav held a meeting with officials of the Indian High Commission, London on the first day of his UK visit. During this, he discussed in detail the state's plans regarding industrial development, technical cooperation, and global investment.

Expressing happiness over starting his first international trip from Britain, Chief Minister Yadav appreciated the cooperation extended by the Indian High Commission

Chief Minister Yadav said that industrial development is one of the top priorities of the state government. He said that the Regional Industry Conclave organized in cities like Ujjain, Rewa, Gwalior, Jabalpur and Sagar has received positive responses regarding investment in the state. Chief Minister Dr. Yadav said that we are now moving beyond the national level and trying to connect investors at the

international level with the development of the state, beginning from London. Chief Minister Dr. Yadav underlined the immense potential of Madhya Pradesh in sectors like agriculture, automobile, auto components, pharmaceuticals and IT. He particularly talked about partnership with Britain in the field of technology transfer, skill development and research. Chief Minister Yadav requested special support from the Indian High Commission for the Global

Investors Summit to be held in Bhopal in February 2025. Chief Minister Dr. Yadav said that it is my special request that the High Commission team should cooperate with us in establishing Madhya Pradesh as an ideal destination for British investors. Indian High Commissioner Vikram K Doraiswami, Deputy High Commissioner Sujit Ghosh, Minister (Economic) Smt. Nidhi Mani Tripathi and First Secretary (Trade) Jaspreet Singh Sukhija were present at the meeting. This discussion between Chief Minister Dr. Yadav and the Indian High Commission, London is being seen as the beginning of a new chapter in promoting industrial and technical cooperation between the Madhya Pradesh and the UK.



Chief Minister Mohan Yadav was warmly welcomed by the NRIs at St. James Court (Taj) on his arrival in London. Pioneer photo

PWG meet held on money laundering and terrorism financing

PNS ■ INDORE
The 41st Plenary and Working Group meeting of the Eurasian Group on Combating Money Laundering and Financing of Terrorism (EAG) was inaugurated today in Indore, Madhya Pradesh, India. The welcome session was attended by Kailash Vijayvargiya, Minister for Urban Development and Housing, Government of Madhya Pradesh, Shankar Lalwani, Member of Parliament (Lok Sabha) from Indore, Pushyamitra Bhargava, Mayor of the City of Indore along with EAG Chairman and Director of Rosfinmonitoring, Yuri Chikachen. More than 150 Delegates from various countries in the Eurasian region and observer countries like USA, Japan, UAE, Armenia etc are participating in the deliberations in the working group and

plenary meeting. Additional Secretary to the Government of India and the Head of Indian Delegation, Vivek Aggarwal, welcomed the delegates and introduced the dignitaries from the State and City Administration to the delegates. In his speech in the inaugural session, Kailash Vijayvargiya was happy to note the progress made by India in its fight against money laundering and terrorist financing and credited the success to the leadership of Prime Minister of India. Lalwani and Bhargava welcomed the delegates to the city of Indore and invited them to experience the historical and rich cultural heritage of the city. Subsequently, the report of mutual evaluation of India's anti-money laundering and terrorist financing measures was tabled and discussed in the working group of EAG. India's mutual evaluation was

jointly conducted by member countries of Financial Action Task Force (FATF), Asia Pacific Group on Money Laundering (APG) and EAG. The report was earlier adopted in June 2024 during the FATF plenary held in Singapore and in September 2024 during APG plenary held in Abu Dhabi. EAG will adopt the mutual evaluation report in its plenary being held this week in Indore. All the member countries supported the report and appreciated India's efforts in tackling money laundering and terrorist financing. Following the assessment, India has been placed in "regular follow-up" which is the highest rating category by FATF. UK, France and Italy are among the only G-20 countries which have been placed in this category apart from India. The report highlights that India has made significant steps in financial inclu-

tion, more than doubling the proportion of the population with bank accounts, encouraging greater reliance on digital payment systems. These efforts have supported financial transparency, which in turn contribute to AML/CFT efforts. The countries congratulated India on achieving the highest rating in the process. India agreed to share its experiences on implementing effective AML/CFT systems to bolster region's capabilities against ML/TF risks in the region. During the day, other agenda items of various working groups were also discussed. Some of them are follow-up report of other Eurasian countries, typologies relating to money laundering (ML) and terrorist financing (TF), plan to minimize ML/TF risks in the Eurasian Region. The 41st EAG Plenary Meetings will continue in Indore till November 29, 2024.

Truck driver rapes 15-year-old girl in forest of Raisen district, arrested

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL
A 15-year-old girl was allegedly raped by a truck driver while his two associates restrained the teenager's male friend in Madhya Pradesh's Raisen district, on Saturday evening. Police have arrested two persons, including the truck driver, in connection with the alleged crime committed in Siyarmau forest on Silwani-Sagar Road, some 110 km from the district headquarters, on Saturday evening, he said. The teenager and her 21-year-old male friend were returning after visiting the Vandevi temple in the area when they parked their two-wheeler and entered the forest, said Silwani's Sub Divisional Officer of Police (SDOP) Anil Maurya. At the same time, a truck broke down following which its driver, later identified as Sanju Adivasi (21), and his two friends also went inside the forest, where they spotted the girl and her friend. The trio thrashed the young man and snatched the key of his motorcycle, he said, cit-

ing the FIR. The driver took the girl deep inside the forest and allegedly raped her, while his associates restrained her friend, the official said. After the three accused left, the girl and the youth alerted some policemen who were passing by. Police registered a case against Sanju Adivasi and his associates Shivnarayan Advasi and Akshay Ahirwar under Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita sections 64 (rape), 70-1 (gang rape) and the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, he said. Sanju and Shivnarayan have been arrested, while Ahirwar is on the run, the official said.

Complete ban on open sale of meat in city: Jain

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL
Additional Collector Siddharth Jain on Monday directed officials to completely ban the open sale of meat in the state capital. At a meeting with district administration officials, Jain said a far-reaching campaign should be launched for the purpose, and exemplary action must follow those refusing to adhere to guidelines. Jain also called for action against those illegally using loudspeakers and DJs in the city. Strict measures should be taken to prevent noise pollution, he said. He further exhorted officials to prioritise the resolution of time-bound letters and CM Helpline complaints. Jain underlined the need to retain an impetus on Revenue cases to ensure a top of the table position for the district in resolution of pending cases during Revenue Maha Abhiyan 3.0. Special camps and strategies should be set up in rural areas to engage with the public and ensure the resolution of as many revenue cases as possible, he said. The meeting was attended by ADMs Ankur Meshram, Bhupendra Goyal, and all SDMs of the district.

BHEL celebrates Tribal Pride Day

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL
Janjatiya Gaurav Divas (Tribal Pride Day) was celebrated with great enthusiasm at BHEL, Bhopal on Monday to mark the 185th birth anniversary of Bhagwan Birsa Munda. On this occasion, a huge rally was organised by the tribal employees of the organisation and their family members. SM Ramanathan, Executive Director, BHEL, Bhopal; BK Singh, General Manager (HR), Manish Thakur, Liaison Officer BHEL (ST), ST employees and a large number of others were present on the occasion. Ramanathan flagged off the rally from MGM Dispensary. He said on the occasion that the tribal communities of India have made an unparalleled contribution in preserving the cultural and social heritage of the tribals, promoting national pride, Indian culture & values. Keeping this in mind, it was decided to celebrate Janjatiya Gaurav Divas on 15th November, the birth anniversary of Bhagwan

Birsa Munda, in honour of the tribal freedom fighters on the occasion of completion of 75 years of India's independence. He praised the dedication and commitment of various tribal employees of BHEL, Bhopal and wished them on this occasion. At the beginning of the programme, Singh highlighted the importance of Janjatiya Gaurav Divas and said that he saluted Bhagwan Birsa Munda for his contribution. He said that how, in view of the plight and exploitation of the tribals during the British rule, the Government of India made laws in their interest and the Prime Minister has established this event as an important event not only at the national level but also at the global level. The rally saw men, women and children marching on foot from MGM dispensary to the office of BHEL Tribal Employees Union where garlands were placed on the portrait of Lord Birsa Munda. Arif Ahmad Siddiqui, Additional General Manager (HR) coordinated the entire program.

AIIMS Bhopal launches 'Happy Baby Zone'



STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL
AIIMS Bhopal has launched three dedicated breastfeeding counters under the initiative called Happy Baby Zone. These counters provide a safe, comfortable, and private space for mothers to breastfeed their children and even change diapers. The inauguration was led by Prof. Singh who interacted with one of the mothers and her child at the event. Speaking on the occasion, AIIMS Bhopal ED Prof. Ajai Singh emphasized the importance of such facilities in public spaces:

"The 'Happy Baby Zone' reflects AIIMS Bhopal's dedication for creating a supportive and inclusive environment for mothers and their children. Providing safe and private spaces for breastfeeding is crucial for promoting child health and maternal comfort. We hope this initiative sets a benchmark for similar efforts across the region." The Happy Baby Zone has been strategically designed to cater to the needs of mothers visiting the hospital, ensuring privacy and convenience. With facilities for both breastfeeding and diaper changing, it aims to reduce the stress of care giving and enhance

the experience for mothers and their babies. During the inauguration, Prof. Singh also presented a gift hamper, sponsored by Himalaya Baby Care, to the mother and child, symbolizing the institute's commitment to family-friendly healthcare practices. The event witnessed the participation of Prof. Shashank Purwar (officiating Medical Superintendent) along with faculty members, residents and patients. This initiative underscores AIIMS Bhopal's holistic approach to healthcare, prioritizing not just medical needs but also emotional and social well-being.

Guv participates in the National Physiotherapy programme

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Governor Mangubhai Patel has said that Arogya Bharti's spirit of service to victims is exemplary. Students and clients associated with physiotherapy should take inspiration from the future work of Arogya Bharti. Always take active participation in serving the poor, deprived and oppressed. Governor Shri Patel was addressing the National Physiotherapy Programme organized at Rabintra Bhawan, Bhopal. Governor Patel asked experts and doctors related to physiotherapy to brainstorm on the use and possibility of physiotherapy in the treatment and research of sickle cell anemia. He said that the youth should adopt a healthy



lifestyle for the fitness of body and mind. Make nutritious food, regular yoga, exercise, plenty of water, and sleep a part of your daily routine. Governor Patel said that we all experience deterioration in health, problems and suffering due to poor eating habits

and irregular lifestyle. At such a time, it is possible to completely cure the overall health without any medicine, ointment, or surgery through physiotherapy. He said that physical therapy, along with a person's lifestyle, diet and effective care of the body, can give miraculous

results. Governor Patel said that the spread of physiotherapy can make an important contribution to achieving Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi's goal of "Health for All". For this, there must be effective recording of the physiotherapy method. Study and research efforts should be given more encouragement. He said that organizations like Arogya Bharti can lead the society in efforts to increase the access of deprived and poor people to physiotherapy medical system. He praised the organization for its efforts in spreading health awareness and supporting efforts across the country. Governor Patel inaugurated the programme by garlanding the pictures of Lord

Dhanvantari and Bharat Mata. The executive president of Arogya Bharti Sanstha, Bhopal felicitated Shri Patel by presenting him shripthal and a memento. Dr. Abhijeet Deshmukh gave the welcome speech in the National Physiotherapy Programme. National Organization Secretary of Arogya Bharti Dr. Ashok Kumar Varshney gave detailed information about the work and efforts of the organization. Bharat Sharan Singh, Chairman of the State Private University Exchange Commission, and Ajay Goenka, Chairman of Viva Medical University presented their views. PR Suresh proposed the vote of thanks. Doctors, experts and students related to physiotherapy took part in the programme.



Woman and Child Development Minister Nirmala Bhuria addresses the 'Hum Honge Kamyab' campaign at Kushabhau Thakre International convention centre in Bhopal on Monday. Pioneer photo



Students participate in West Zone State-level Band competition at Subhash School of Excellence in Bhopal on Monday.

CG elephants trigger panic in Dindori, schools closed

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Fears of attacks on humans have forced a four-day holiday at local schools in Dindori district following the arrival of a particularly irreverent herd of elephants from neighbouring Chhattisgarh. Villagers in the forests of Thadpathra village, in the Western Karanjia forest area, have been living in fear for the past week due to increased elephant activity. In response, a four-day holiday has been declared for seven nearby schools from November 25 to 29. The holiday order was issued on Sunday evening by the Assistant Commissioner of the Tribal Affairs Department based on reports from block officials. Forest Department's SDO, SK Jatav, said that a herd of four elephants from the

Chhattisgarh forests damaged houses and crops in Thadpathra village last week before returning to their native area. Their activities have resurfaced, but this time they are only damaging crops, he said. Forest officials are using megaphones to advise villagers not to venture into the forest. Education and Resource officials have stated that students from several villages in the area have to pass through thick forests to get to school. Amid fears of attacks, the Forest and Tribal Welfare Departments have ordered the closure of schools in the Gopalpur area. According to reports quoting forest officials, a herd of four elephants caused panic in Pandripani village in the West Karanjia forest range when they destroyed crops in the afternoon of November 10. The

wild animals retreated after being chased away by forest employees. The herd returned and raided a house in a different village in the area on November 14. On Saturday, the herd returned for a third time and damaged houses and crops in the Imli Tola area, where their presence was last recorded. Forest officials have installed cameras in the area and are constantly monitoring the movements of the herd while advising villagers to stay cautious. This area of Western Karanjia is adjacent to the Kanha National Park and the forests of neighbouring Chhattisgarh. The ruckus caused by the large mammals gains significance as it comes shortly after the deaths of ten elephants in Umaria district, Madhya Pradesh, less than a month ago.

Cheetah gives birth to cubs at Kuno National Park

Bhopal: Cheetah Neerva has given birth to cubs at the Kuno National Park in Madhya Pradesh's Sheopur district. The state Forest department declared this on Monday. "Good news from Kuno. Female cheetah Neerva has given birth to cubs in Kuno National Park located in Sheopur district," the MP forest department said in a post on X. Last month, Chief Minister Mohan Yadav had shared the information that a female cheetah was pregnant and was expected to deliver cubs soon. Asked about reports on the birth of cubs in Kuno, Principal Chief Conservator of Forest (Wildlife) Aseem Shrivastava told that he would not be able to comment until a confirmation from the

park about the number of cubs born to the cheetah. Prior to this, 17 cheetah cubs had been born at the KNP. With 12 of those cubs surviving, the number of cheetahs at the KNP was last reported to be 24. On September 17, 2022, Prime Minister Narendra Modi released eight cheetahs - five females and three males - brought from Namibia into enclosures at the KNP as part of the world's first intercontinental translocation of the big cats, nearly eight decades after cheetahs were hunted to extinction. In February 2023, another 12 cheetahs were translocated to the national park in MP from South Africa as part of the Indian government's project to reintroduce cheetahs into the country.

Bhopal steps up fight against maternal mortality

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Over 800 pregnant women underwent medical examinations during the Pradhan Mantri Surakshit Matritva Abhiyan camps held in the state capital on Monday. So far this year, more than 3,000 pregnant women have been identified as high-risk. These women are being provided with special medical care and regular follow-ups. High-risk factors include previous Caesarean sections, pregnancy-induced high blood pressure, severe anaemia, habitual abortion, previous stillbirth, grand multiparity, and malpresentation, among other complications. Efforts under the campaign, aiming to minimise maternal mortality through time-



ly identification of high-risk women, have come in for praise from Collector Kaushalendra Vikram Singh. In the campaign, both government doctors and private sector doctors are providing voluntary consultations at government health institutions. During the camp on Monday, doctors from People's Medical College,

Chirayu Medical College, RKDF Medical College, Sagar Multi-Specialty Hospital, Apollo SEZ, Bidkar Clinic, Ashoka IVF Centre, and Unique Hospital provided consultations, examinations, and treatments. Chief Medical and Health Officer of Bhopal, Dr Prabhakar Tiwari, stated that Bhopal is hosting the most Pradhan Mantri Surakshit Matritva Abhiyan camps in health institutions, with the highest participation from private institutions and doctors. Women are being provided with free transport to and from the camps through 108 ambulances. Additionally, free sonography is being offered under the e-RUPI model at 21 private sonography centres.

Mahesh remains untraceable till now

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

The mere mention of his name by Prime Minister Narendra Modi during his 'Mann Ki Baat' programme on Sunday has triggered a massive administrative hunt for the elusive 'Mahesh of Bhopal'. During the widely broadcast monthly programme, PM Modi said Mahesh of Bhopal had taught many elderly people in his area how to make online payments using mobile phones. He also highlighted that young individuals in various cities are helping older people participate in the digital revolution.

Following his mention, both the district administration and BJP workers have launched a massive search to find the young man, present him to the media, and score a few brownie points. However, nobody has been able to identify or reach the legendary young man despite the lapse of 24 hours since his efforts earned him national acclaim. Perhaps a recluse, shy of the media limelight, Mahesh has chosen to remain quiet and let the attention storm pass him by. The Bhopal Collector and police officials are among those looking for the young man, and there are no signs of a let-up in the search just yet.

MKVVCL uses love for firearms to recover dues

Bhopal: In a first, the prospect of a revocation of his arms licence has forced a defaulting electricity consumer in Datia to cough up Rs 1,17,000 he owed to the central region power distributor in unpaid bills. Following a notice issued by the District Magistrate of Datia regarding the cancellation of his arms licence, Asharam, a consumer from the Kaseru area of the district, cleared his outstanding dues. The arms licence in question is in the name of Asharam's son. Notably, an electricity NOC is now mandatory for the purchase of weapons or the application for arms licences in the 16 districts under Madhya Kshetra Vidyut Vitran

Company (MKVVCL). The company says that any arms licence holder failing to pay outstanding bills will have their arms licence revoked immediately. Separately, a line attendant has been suspended due to negligence towards official work. The Deputy General Manager of the MKVVCL, Awadhesh Tripathi, said Senior Line Attendant Hari Giri Goswami was placed under suspension at the Narmadapuram Rural Distribution Centre. The suspension orders came after checks resulted in the unearthing of three illegal electricity connections in the area assigned to him.

Participate in city's development: Collector

PNS ■ GWALIOR

Community development can take place in a better way with the participation of citizens. If everyone together can contribute to the development of the city by preserving the city and heritage, then we can definitely write a new chapter of development. These were among some of the views expressed by Collector Ruchika Chauhan during a Meet the Citizens program organized by Udbhav Sanstha at the International Center of Media Excellence (ICOME) on Monday. She further said that maintaining vigorous community engagement is fundamental for the success of projects beyond the initial planning stages. The collector added that when citizens are involved in developmental projects, they can more readily understand the intricacies of various projects. Some of the citizens attending the meeting appraised her of the various issues faced by colonies, like wandering cattle, traffic blocks etc. The collector assured them that she would look into those matter and do the needful. ICOME Center Director Keshav Pandey assured Collector Chauhan of full cooperation in the development of the city. On this occasion, Collector Mrs. Chauhan was honoured by presenting shawl, coconut and a memento. MD Parashar, Vijay Parashar, PD Pandey, Surendra Pal Singh Kushwah, Rajendra Mudgal, Vijay Pandey, Manju Soni, Mahesh Mudgal, Manish Maurya, Rambabu Katara, Dr. Ejaz Khanuni, Ashish Mishra, Harish Pal, Manoj Agarwal, Alok Dwivedi, Arvind Jaimiti, Asha Kumar, Sachin Pandey, Vivek Sudele and Santosh Vashishtha were present in the program.

Directorate of Urban Administration & Development (Palika Bhawan)
6 No. Bus Stop, Shivaji Nagar, Bhopal (Pin-462016)
Notice Inviting Tender
Bhopal, Dated 22.11.2024

NIT No. 13419
Notice Inviting Tender (NIT) for INTERIOR WORK AT URBAN ADMINISTRATIVE AND DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT BHOPAL (M.P.), invite bids from eligible bidders in prescribed Request for Proposal (RFP) document having details as given below.

S. No	Name of work	(P.A.C.) Probable Amt of Contract (In Rs.)	EMD (In Rs.)	Tender Document Cost (In Rs.)	Contract period
1	INTERIOR WORK AT URBAN ADMINISTRATIVE AND DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT BHOPAL (M.P.)	40,76,486/- (Without GST)	1,22,295/-	5,000/-	03 Month including Rainy Season

Interested reputed parties should obtain detail information regarding Request for Proposal & download/Purchase the Request for Proposal document online only from the website <http://www.mptenders.gov.in> under Directorate of Urban Administration of Development Department by using tender no. 2024_UAD_383961_1

Interested reputed parties should submit their complete proposals online only. Amendment in the bid document, if any, will be notified on GOMP's www.mptenders.gov.in.

Urban Administration & Development, Bhopal reserves the right to accept/reject any or all bids, seek additional clarification, or cancel the bidding process all together without assigning any reason thereof.

ASSISTANT ENGINEER
DIRECTORATE URBAN ADMINISTRATION & DEVELOPMENT, BHOPAL

G-19455/24

OFFICE OF THE CHIEF ENGINEER PWD SAGAR ZONE SAGAR

PHONE No. 07582-220840
NIT No. 06/TC/2024-25
E-mail:- cepwdsagar@mp.nic.in
SAGAR DATE 20/11/2024
Online bids for the following works are invited from registered contractors and firms of repute fulfilling registration criteria:

S. No.	Tender Portal No.	Name of work	District	Probable Amount Contract (Rs. in)	Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) (in Rs.)	Cost of Bid Document (in Rs.)	Period of completion (in months i/c Rainy Season)	Remark
1	2024_PWD RB_383127_1	Construction of Different Roads Under PWD Sub Division Khurai Rs. 677.82 Lacs 1- Bikor Kala Pele Paar Near Crusher to Simariya Gambhiriya Main Road [Including Electrification Work (Total Length - 3.00 Km) PAC Amount: 374.05 Lacs 2- Four Lane to Chanari Road (Total Length - 3.50 Km) PAC Amount: 303.78 Lacs	Sagar	67782000	677820	20000	08 Months i/c Rainy Season	1st Call
2	2024_PWD RB_383130_1	Construction of Different Roads With Electrification Work Under PWD Sub Division Khurai Rs. 749.92 Lacs 1- Sarkhadri Perimary School to Silarpur Tigadda (Barghat Tigadda) Barghaat Tigadda to Barghaat Temple (Total Length - 3.00 Km) PAC Amount: 301.49 Lacs 2- Balop Tapra to Balop Dharanpur Janraho Road Total Length - 4.00 Km) PAC Amount: 353.14 Lacs 3- Barodiya Nonagir Road to Toda Kachhi Missing Road (Total Length - 1.10 Km)] PAC Amount: 95.29 Lacs	Sagar	74992000	749920	20000	10 Months i/c Rainy Season	1st Call
3	2024_PWD RB_383131_1	Construction of Different Roads With Electrification Work Under PWD Sub Division Khurai Rs. 654.28 Lacs 1- Khurai Singpur Road to Barodiya Baman Talapaar Road (Total Length - 3.50 Km) PAC Amount: 358.16 Lacs 2- Godu Vijaypura Main Road to Jholsi Inayatpur Main Road (Total Length - 2.00 Km) PAC Amount: 162.67 Lacs 3- Mangoos to Parson (Dabusa Ramchayri Road) Road (Total Length - 1.50 Km) PAC Amount: 133.44 Lacs	Sagar	65428000	654280	20000	08 Months i/c Rainy Season	1st Call
4	2024_PWD RB_383132_1	Construction of Dharmashri to Bhopal By-Pass Road (Total Length - 3.00 Km) PAC 1268.81 LACS	Sagar	126881000	1000000	30000	12 Months i/c Rainy Season	1st Call
5	2024_PWD RB_383134_1	Construction of Different Roads Under PWD Sub Division Deori Rs. 782.56 Lacs 1- ADHARPUR TO CHANDRAPURA DAU BAPPA MARAMADHO ROAD LENGTH-6.50 KM AMMOUNT- 485.14 Lacs 2- GOURJHAMAR POLICE THANA TO HOSPITAL ROAD MAHAKALI MANDIR LENGTH-2.00 KM WITH ELECTRIFICATION WORK AMMOUNT- 297.42 Lacs	Sagar	78256000	782560	20000	10 Months i/c Rainy Season	1st Call
				413339000				

1 All details relating to the Bid Document (s) can be viewed and downloaded free of cost from the website. <http://mptenders.gov.in>
2 Bid Document (s) can be purchased after making online payment of portal fees through Credit/Debit/Cash Card/Internet Banking.
3 The Bid Document (s) can be purchased only online from 20/11/2024 (time) 17.30 to 04/12/2024 time 17.30 Other key dates may be seen in Bid Data Sheet.
4 Amendment (s) to NIT, if any, shall be published on website only, and not in newspaper.

CHIEF ENGINEER
PWD SAGAR ZONE SAGAR

G-19410/24

Provide justice to rape victim teacher, nab BJYM leader: Cong

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Urging majority Hindus to rise against the politics of communalism and hate, Congress national spokesperson Sadhna Bharati, on Monday, exhorted them to embrace the principles enshrined in the Sanatan philosophy of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam. The firebrand orator, who was addressing the media at the Indira Bhawan headquarters of the state Congress unit, called for justice for the Dalit Hindu girl from Balaghat and promised to always fight for the dignity of Balaghat's daughters. She further stated that when crimes are committed, the corridors of power will reverberate with slogans of "Inquilab", and when the government becomes deaf



and mute and freedom of speech is restricted, the youth will breathe fire and express the truth. Using the strongest of terms, Bharati said that even government teachers have not been spared by the 'divisive' BJP leadership. She pointed out that BJP leaders, including Prime Minister Modi, have previously made

degrading remarks about women and even questioned the DNA of Bihar's Chief Minister Nitish Kumar. Bharati condemned the BJP's anti-Dalit and anti-women stance while recounting several anti-Dalit and anti-women statements made by BJP leaders. She brought up several crimes against Dalits, tribals,

women, and backward communities to strengthen her arguments while highlighting the 'exploitation and rape' of a Dalit teacher. She accused a BJP district-level office bearer of involvement. "Bhupendra Sohagpure, the BJP Youth Wing District President, made false promises of marriage. When the teacher discovered the deception, she approached the police, but it was only after much effort that a report was finally filed." She charged that it was under pressure from the state government that Sohagpure continues to remain at large. Bharati said that if there is any shame or honour left in the BJP, the BJP Youth Wing leader responsible for the exploitation and rape of the Dalit Hindu teacher should be immediately arrested and sent to jail.

President Murmu to lead celebrations marking 75 years of the Constitution

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■
NEW DELHI

President Droupadi Murmu will lead the celebrations at the Central Hall of the old Parliament complex on November 26 to mark 75 years of India's Constitution, the government announced on Monday. Vice-President Jagdeep Dhankhar and Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla will take part in Tuesday's function in the Central Hall of Samvidhan Sadan to mark the 75th anniversary of the Constituent Assembly's adoption of the Constitution. Leaders of various opposition parties of the INDIA bloc have written to Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla, urging him to allow leaders of the opposition in both Houses to speak during the Constitution Day celebration function. Union minister Kiren Rijju said Prime Minister Narendra

Modi will not be addressing the event and accused "some of the Opposition parties" of giving reactions without knowing the actual arrangement. The Union minister of parliamentary affairs made the remarks during a pre-event briefing here, in response to a query on leaders of various INDIA bloc parties having written to Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla to allow opposition leaders of both Houses to speak during the Constitution Day function. After a presentation by Union Culture Secretary Arunish Chawla, Rijju and Union ministers Arjun Ram Meghwal and Gajendra Singh Shekhawat interacted with media persons at the National Media Centre. "The problem with some of the Opposition parties is that without knowing the actual arrangement. They started giving reactions. The prime minister is not even speaking



tomorrow in the function. The Speaker, the vice president and the President of India will speak," he said. "Secondly, we have made sit-ting arrangements for the Leader of Opposition of both Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha on the dais. Without knowing anything, this kind of reaction on a very solemn occasion is condemnable," Rijju said. The Union minister also said that the Constitution Day celebration was above politics

and is a celebration of the country. "On the occasion of the 75 years of India's Constitution, we are getting an opportunity to take part in the celebrations at Parliament (complex). Tomorrow, will be the address of the President. There will be a joint sitting of the members of both Houses. It will be a celebration of 75 years of the adoption of India's Constitution in Delhi. And, many other events will be held in various parts of the country too," he said. "We will sit in the very same chamber where the Constituent Assembly sittings happened and the Constitution was adopted," Rijju added. He termed the event a "historic occasion". "I believe that it is not just an event of the judiciary, executive and legislative wings. Entire country has to take part in these celebrations, in full spirit and read the

Preamble," Rijju said. The minister extolled the Constitution and said it gave rise to a "successful and vibrant democracy". And the credit goes to the founding father, the makers of the Indian Constitution, he added. The letter written to the Lok Sabha Speaker which had been signed by leaders of various parties reads, "We are writing in the context of the function being held tomorrow (Tuesday) in the Central Hall of Samvidhan Sadan to commemorate the 75th anniversary of the adoption of the Constitution of India. We understand that the function will be addressed by the president, vice-president and the prime minister of India." "We believe that in the best traditions and interests of Parliamentary democracy, the Leaders of Opposition (LoPs) in both Houses should also be given an opportunity to speak

on this historic occasion," it added. The signatories to the letter include TR Baalu, Tiruchi Siva, Kanimozhi, Supriya Sule, Raghav Chadha, P Sandosh Kumar, ET Mohammed Bashir, K Radhakrishnan, Ramji Lal Suman, and NK Premachandran. As regards celebrations, a special website has also been created to mark the year-long celebrations, Union Culture Secretary Arunish Chawla told reporters during a briefing at the National Media Centre here. The commemorative portal urges people to read the Preamble of the Constitution, record a video and upload it on the website to get a certificate. Mass readings of the Preamble will also be held at schools across the country. To mark the occasion, the government will release a commemorative coin and stamp.

BJP slams Opposition for stalling Parliament



PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■
NEW DELHI

The BJP on Monday slammed the opposition parties and said it was not right on their part to stall Parliament proceedings in "retaliation" to their defeat in Maharashtra assembly polls and bypolls in various states, will you retaliate by not letting Parliament function? This is not right," senior BJP leader Ravi Shankar Prasad told reporters in Parliament complex. He said Prime Minister Narendra Modi and others

various issues, including indictment of Adani group chairman Gautam Adani and others in a US court on bribery charges. "If you are frustrated over your defeat (in just concluded Maharashtra assembly polls and bypolls in various states), will you retaliate by not letting Parliament function? This is not right," senior BJP leader Ravi Shankar Prasad told reporters in Parliament complex. He said Prime Minister Narendra Modi and others

from the government had asserted that discussions will be held on every issue in Parliament. "You could have discussed the Sambhal issue also," the former Union minister said. Union minister Giriraj Singh also flayed the opposition parties over adjournment of the House proceedings, alleging that they "deliberately" create disturbance as they do not want Parliament to function. "This is in a way an attack on the people," he told reporters in Parliament complex.

LS Speaker asks political parties to avoid ruckus in House

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■
NEW DELHI

Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla on Monday asked political parties to avoid ruckus in the House in the name of protests as the Winter Session of Parliament got off to a stormy start. Parliamentary sources said the Lok Sabha speaker flagged the issue of disruptions during a meeting of the Business Advisory Committee and urged the floor leaders of political parties to convey their dissent in a constructive manner. The Speaker's remarks came on a day when opposition members raised slogans and trooped to the Well of the Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha demanding discussion on the issue of indictment of industrialist Gautam Adani in a US court on bribery charges. The sources said that the speaker urged members to follow the highest traditions of debate and dialogue in the House.



Birla referred to 75 years of adoption of the Constitution and recalled the glorious traditions of "high quality debates by our founding fathers in the constituent assembly", they said. In view of the Constitution Day celebrations in Samvidhan Sadan on Tuesday, Birla urged the members of various political parties to engage in a meaningful dialogue. President Droupadi Murmu is scheduled to start the year-long celebrations to mark the 75th anniversary of adoption of the Constitution at a joint sitting of the Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha in the Central Hall of the Samvidhan Sadan.

Sanganer open air camp: Rajasthan Government opposes contempt plea in SC

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Rajasthan government on Monday opposed in the Supreme Court a plea accusing it of taking the area allotted to Sanganer open-air jail campus at Jaipur for the construction of a 300-bed hospital and termed it "sponsored litigation". A bench of Justices B R Gawai and K V Viswanathan directed the registrar of the apex court to act as a court commissioner and submit a report after inspecting the site. It was hearing a contempt plea alleging wilful disobedience by the Rajasthan authorities of the apex court's May 17 order which directed that there shall be no attempt to reduce the area of open-air camps/prisons functioning in the country. Semi-open or open prisons allow convicts to work outside the premises during the day to earn a livelihood and return in the evening. The concept was introduced to assimilate the convicts with society and reduce psychological pressure as they faced difficulties in leading normal lives outside. Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, appearing for



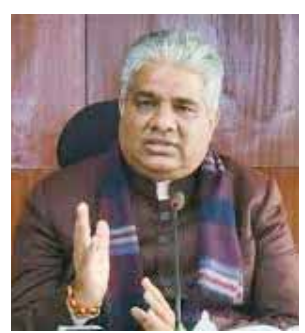
Rajasthan, said the state has neither reduced nor there is any attempt to reduce the area of Sanganer open-air camp. "This is the constituency of the chief minister (of Rajasthan) where there are interested people who do not want a hospital to come up," the top law officer said. He said the plea had been filed by a "public-spirited man" from Assam. Mehta said as per the government revenue records, the area allotted to the Sanganer open-air jail campus is around 1.78 hectares and neither the allotted area has been reduced nor there is any proposal or decision to reduce it. He said the area allotted for the construction of a 300-bed government hospital was totally

outside the actual allotted area for the open-air prison. When Mehta said it appeared to be a "sponsored litigation", the bench asked, "Who can be behind this? It is not as if that somebody has any commercial interest". "I know the reason, I do not wish to say. Let us not go into it. The purpose is that direction of the court must be complied with," the solicitor general said. "The hospital construction should not be stayed. That is the intended purpose," he said. Senior advocate S Muralidhar, appearing for the petitioner, said the open-air prison should be allowed to function as it is and nobody was objecting to the construction of the hospital.

Air quality improved in 97 out of 130 cities under NCAP since 2017-18: Environment Minister

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■
NEW DELHI

Ninety-seven of the 130 cities targeted under the National Clean Air Programme have shown improvement in air quality as compared to 2017-18, with 55 recording more than 20 per cent reduction, the Environment Ministry said on Monday.



Responding to a question in the Lok Sabha, Environment Minister Bhupendra Yadav said the National Clean Air Programme (NCAP) aims to reduce particulate matter (PM10) pollution by up to 40 per cent or achieving national air quality standards by 2025-26. As of 2023-24, 97 of the 130 cities targeted have shown improvement in air quality as compared to 2017-18, with 55 recording reduction exceeding 20 per cent, the minister said. However, concerns about pollution remain in the coal mining regions, particularly in Jharkhand, he added. Launched in January 2019 by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, NCAP covers 130 cities across 24 states and Union Territories. The programme has seen notable successes, with cities like Varanasi and Dhanbad achieving PM10 reductions of 68 per cent and 56 per cent, respectively, the ministry said. These improvements have been supported by city-specific action plans targeting the sources of pollution such as vehicular emissions, road dust, and industrial pollution. Financial backing under the 15th Finance Commission's Air Quality Performance Grants has been instrumen-

VHP demands NSA against Sambhal violence perpetrators

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■
NEW DELHI

The Vishva Hindu Parishad (VHP) on Monday condemned the violence in Sambhal district of Uttar Pradesh and demanded those involved in the case be booked under the National Security Act. VHP joint general secretary Surendra Jain also demanded that the culprits and their supporters be also booked under NSA and all of them should be made to compensate for the damage caused in the violence. Three people were killed and scores of others, including around 20 security personnel and four personnel of the

administration, were injured as protesters opposing a court-ordered survey of a Mughal-era mosque here clashed with police on Sunday. One injured person died on Monday. "The way Muslim fundamentalists pelted stones on police, fired bullets and committed arson in Sambhal is highly condemnable. The way Muslim leaders, maulanas and many leaders of the Samajwadi party and the Congress, including Rahul Gandhi, have supported this violence is also worrisome," Jain said. He alleged that the violence was carried out "at the behest of maulanas" and accused the Congress and Samajwadi



Party leaders of making "provocative statements." Jain added, "Rioters and their supporters should be booked under the NSA and arrested immediately. All the losses caused by them should also be recovered from them." Police on Monday said they have lodged seven FIRs in connection with the violence, naming Samajwadi Party MP Zia-ur-Rehman Barq and local SP MLA Iqbal Mehmood's son Sohail Iqbal as accused. Addressing a press conference, Superintendent of Police Krishan Kumar said six people, including Barq and Iqbal, were named in these FIRs and 2,750 others have

been mentioned as unidentified. "Due to Barq's statement earlier, the situation became worse here," he added. The district administration has already imposed prohibitory orders and barred the entry of outsiders into Sambhal till November 30. Internet services are suspended in Sambhal tehsil and the district administration declared Monday a school holiday. Tension has been brewing in Sambhal since November 19 when the local Jama Masjid was first surveyed on the court's orders following a petition claiming that a Harihar temple had stood at the site.

BIS in process of developing standards for 214 critical medical devices

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■
NEW DELHI

In line with the National Medical Device Policy, 2023 and aiming to address the growing need for reliable and affordable medical assistive technology, the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) is in the process of developing standards for 214 critical medical devices. The national standards body is expected to develop standards for innovative products such as "therapeutic footwear, portable ramps, braille displays, and fall detectors". The standardisation will be developed by December 2025, the Union Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food & Public Distribution said on Monday. The 214 critical medical devices, identified in consultation with the Department of Pharmaceuticals (DoP), also "includes septal closure devices, plasma sterilisers, and phototherapy machines".



Currently, there are over 1,700 standards for the medical sector, covering specialties such as cardiology, neurology, orthopaedics, ophthalmology, and more. Of these, around 1,200 standards specifically focus on medical devices critical to healthcare. This includes life-saving devices like cardiac pacemakers, heart valves, ventilators, and haemodialysis machines; advanced diagnostic tools like X-ray machines, CT scanners, MRI systems, and blood glucose monitors; and assistive technology tools like hearing aids, wheelchairs, Jaipur Foot, and tactile pathways for visually impaired individuals. The ministry pointed out that dentistry has the maximum number of standards (249), followed by surgical disposables (205), orthopaedics (155), and assistive products (152). ENT (70), gynaecology (70), and cardiology (69) have the lowest number of standards.

The Teacher App
Elevating Teachers. Elevating India.

Chief Guest

Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan on Monday launched "The Teacher App" which has been developed by Bharti Airtel Foundation and is dedicated to the capacity building of teachers. Pradhan said Centre is leveraging innovation and technology for continuous capacity building of teachers in the spirit of new National Education Policy (NEP). Vice Chairman of Bharti Enterprises Rakesh Bharti Mittal, top ministry officials amongst other stakeholders from education field were present on the occasion.

Kerala BJP finds no one responsible for poll loss



KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ KOCHI

It turned out to be a black Monday for the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) in Kerala as leaders came out in the open blaming each other for the crushing defeat suffered by the party candidate in the by-election held for the Palakkad Assembly constituency. While Prameela Sasidharan, the municipal chairperson of the BJP ruled Palakkad Municipality, blamed the state leadership for fielding C Krishnakumar as the party candidate, K Surendran, the Hindutva party's state chief, claimed that all the party candidates did exceptionally well in the hustings, even though the votes polled by them did not show any increase. "The candidates are selected and approved by the BJP high command and the state leaders have no role in the process," Surendran said, while speaking to reporters on Monday. He said there was no need for him to quit as the party chief though the party failed to poll even close to what E Sreedharan could

manage in the 2021 Assembly election from Palakkad. Former union minister V Muraliedharan washed off his hands from the Palakkad drubbing by claiming that he was busy with Maharashtra Assembly Election which the BJP-led alliance won with ease. "You may have to ask Kerala BJP chief about the reasons for the poor performance of the party candidates in the by elections held at Wayanad (Lok Sabha), Palakkad and Chelakkara (Assembly constituencies)," said Muraliedharan. There is widespread discontentment among the party's second rung leadership towards Surendran and Muraliedharan, according to Sasidharan. She said that despite their reservation over the fielding of Krishnakumar as a candidate from Palakkad, the entire party mechanism functioned like a well-oiled machine for his victory. But Krishnakumar failed miserably to reach the 35.34 per cent votes, which was what Sreedharan bagged in 2021 Assembly election

against Shafi Parambil of the Congress. Krishnakumar could poll just 28.63 per cent of the popular votes despite the high voltage campaign. Adding insult to injury was Prakash Javadekar, the in-charge of the Kerala affairs of the party. "The BJP will win many more seats in the 2026 Assembly election including Palakkad. We have done good work in the poll," said Javadekar. Interestingly, Javadekar had claimed during the run up to the Parliament election that he would see to it that the BJP wins a minimum of six seats from Kerala. Kerala's political chronicler, P Sujathan, says that since the present leaders have proved their all round incompetence, the BJP high command should launch a mission to find out and appoint new leadership. "The BJP leadership in the state is a blot on the people who are badly in need of a change from the Left Democratic Front (LDF) and the United Democratic Front (UDF). Both Surendran and Muraliedharan should be removed at the earliest to save the BJP," said Sujathan.

Rahul, Mamata, Tejashwi may attend Soren swearing in

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ RANCHI

Top leaders of the INDIA bloc, including Congress's Rahul Gandhi and RJD's Tejashwi Yadav, may attend the swearing-in ceremony of the Hemant Soren government here on November 28, a senior leader of the party said on Monday. In a stunning comeback, Hemant Soren's JMM-led alliance on Saturday stormed to power in Jharkhand for a second consecutive term, winning 56 seats in the 81-member assembly, despite an all-out blitz by the BJP-led NDA, which managed only 24 seats. Soren retained Barhait seat by defeating BJP's Gamlu Hembrom by a margin of 39,791 votes. "All top leaders of the INDIA bloc are being invited to attend the swearing-in ceremony at Morabadi Ground here on November

28. Leader of the Opposition in Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi, Trinamool Congress supremo Mamata Banerjee and RJD leader Tejashwi Yadav are likely to attend the event," the Congress leader told PTI. As far as ministerial berths are concerned, in all likelihood, there may be four ministers from the grand old party as per the initial plans of one ministerial berth for every four seats won. JMM contested 43 seats and won 34, the highest-ever tally of the party in its history. The Congress got 16 seats, RJD four and the CPI (ML) secured two seats in the INDIA bloc. As per the arrangement, RJD may get one ministerial berth. Meanwhile, preparations are underway for the oath-taking ceremony. Soren on Sunday met Governor Santosh Kumar Gangwar and staked claim to form the government, soon

after leaders of the INDIA bloc in the state unanimously elected him as the legislature party leader. He resigned as the chief minister, before staking claim to form the government. He will officiate as the acting chief minister till oath is administered to him on November 28. "I met the governor. We staked claim to form the government, and handed over support letter of alliance partners to him. He invited us to form the government. The swearing in ceremony will be held on November 28," Soren had told reporters after meeting Gangwar. Soren will be sworn in as the 14th chief minister of Jharkhand, which was carved out of Bihar on November 15, 2000. He will be sworn in as the chief minister for the fourth term. The majority mark in the state assembly is 41 seats.

India lauded for FATF ratings

PTI ■ INDORE

India was lauded for its efforts to implement measures against money laundering and terror financing on the first day of the 41st plenary meeting of Eurasian Group (EAG), which began in Madhya Pradesh's Indore on Monday, an official said. During the five-day meeting, nine member countries, including India, will deliberate and chart out a road map to deal with the growing challenges of cybercrimes, money laundering and financing of terrorism, the official said. "In the first session of the meeting, representatives from member countries hailed India for getting the highest rating of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF)," said Vivek Agrawal, additional secretary, revenue department of the Ministry of Finance, who is representing India at the meet. He said the FATF placed India in the category of regular follow-up, the highest

rating given by the independent inter-governmental body after assessing India's efforts to implement measures to combat illegal activities such as money laundering and terror financing. Talking to reporters, Agrawal said that in the upcoming meetings, member countries will discuss issues such as money laundering, illegal transactions, terror financing, cybercrimes and their solutions. He said representatives of the fintech industry will also discuss the financial products that can trigger crime. Agrawal said that based on the discussions held for three days, member countries will adopt a resolution during the plenary session of the meeting. Public representatives, including Indore MP Shankar Lalwani, state urban development minister Kailash Vijayvargiya, mayor Pushyamitra Bhargava and district magistrate Ashish Singh participated in the welcome session of the meet.

PM Modi to attend police chiefs conference in Bhubaneswar

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ BHUBANESWAR

Prime Minister Narendra Modi is scheduled to undertake a three-day visit to Odisha from November 29 to attend an all-India conference of Director Generals of Police and Inspector Generals of Police in Bhubaneswar. He will arrive in Bhubaneswar on the night of November 29 and stay in Odisha till the afternoon of December 1, state Law Minister Prithviraj Harichandan told reporters here on Monday. During his visit, the Prime Minister will attend the all-India conference of Director Generals of Police and Inspector Generals of Police in Bhubaneswar.

TMC to break ranks with INDIA in order to corner BJP in Lok Sabha

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

After sweeping the by-elections six-nil the Trinamool Congress (TMC) plans to steal a tactical march over the Congress by ensuring an atmosphere free of commotion in the Lok Sabha so that some issues can be debated and the government can be compelled to reply them. Taking part in a TMC National Working Committee (TMCNWC) meeting West Bengal (WB) Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Monday spelt out a clear policy line for the elected representatives in Delhi, where "the honourable members will raise questions on a number of burning issues such as price rise, unemployment, national fertilizer policy, central deprivation of WB in rural housing scheme, non-payment of funds despite collecting GST from the

state," Chandrima Bhattacharya, the state finance minister said. Besides the party would also raise the "Manipur issue in Parliament as the ongoing violence has impacted the entire North East while the government has failed to contain it," the minister said. He added that instead of contributing to fireworks inside the House that is "expected in the Winter Session," the TMC would "try to ensure a situation where the burning questions can be raised and discussed so that the government can be forced to come out with comprehensive answers on these issues." When a related question was asked as to why TMC would not join the Monday's meeting attended by the of Indian National Democratic Inclusive Alliance (INDIA) constituents or whether her party would join the future

meetings the minister said such things had not been discussed in the TMCWC meeting. Bhattacharya also said that issues such as Adani or Waqf Bill were not discussed in the TMCNWC meeting. "No such issues were discussed in the meeting today because it was a national working committee meeting," she said. Apparently the TMC leader's statement airing Mamata Banerjee's policy line tended to indicate a new tactic to be adopted by the party inside the House, which is different from the one that could be adopted by INDIA partners. The new tactical stand point comes close on the heels of senior party MP Kalyan Banerjee advising the Congress to accept Mamata Banerjee as the leader of the INDIA alliance. "All the Opposition parties nationally should accept Mamata Banerjee as their

leader. Some parties should set aside their ego and accept Mamata Banerjee as the leader of the Opposition against the BJP," Kalyan Banerjee said. On whether the TMC's decision to walk a different path from the Congress was the result of the same outlook of projecting Mamata Banerjee as a more effective leader against the BJP, a senior leader and an MP said, "It has been repeatedly proved that she is the only person who can handle the BJP and none else. So it is time she should assume the centre stage." Back to the decisions taken in the TMCNWC, Bhattacharya also said that it has been decided that three senior MPs in Delhi Sudip Bandopadhyay, Derek O'Brien and Kakoli Ghoshastidar would constitute the disciplinary committee in Parliament.

Stalin inaugurates centre to provide rehab services to differently-abled persons

PNS ■ CHENNAI

Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M K Stalin inaugurated the 'Vizhuthugal-Integrated Service Centre' to provide health related rehabilitation services for differently-abled persons here on Monday. An initiative of the Department for the Welfare of Differently Aabled Persons under the World Bank assisted TN Rights project, Stalin inaugurated the one-stop centre at Kannagi Nagar in Sozhingalur, the first facility out of the proposed 273 centres across the state. The TN Rights project aims delivering, "integrated and accessible services tailored to the individual needs of differently-abled persons either in their homes or in specialised vehicles for rehabilitation or in dedicated one stop centres," a statement said here. According to the government, this is the first time in the country that rehabilitation professionals of special education, optometry, audiology and speech therapy, physiotherapy, occupational



therapy and psychological counselling are brought under a single roof to meet the chronic health-related rehabilitation service requirements exclusively for differently-abled persons. The services in the centre are only available in pre-assigned

time slots to the differently-abled persons identified in a field survey held during 2023-24. Those who wish to access the services will have to approach the community rehabilitation workers of TN Rights project. "This centre has been empanelled under

the Chief Minister's Comprehensive Health Insurance Scheme." The centre has strategically placed surveillance cameras that ensure safety while protecting privacy and has all its restrooms equipped with panic buzzers.

Body of fisherman dead in Pak brought to India

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ BHUBANESWAR

The body of a 31-year-old fisherman, who died in a Pakistani jail last month, was handed over to his family in his native village of Nanavada in Gujarat's Junagadh district, officials said on Monday. Haribhai Sosa, a resident of Porbandar, had been imprisoned in Karachi for over three years after he was apprehended by Pakistani security forces in early 2021. He was arrested near the international maritime border while fishing in the Arabian Sea. According to officials, Sosa died of heart failure on October 25 while in the jail in Karachi on October 25. The body was handed over to Indian authorities at the Attari border in Punjab and flown to Ahmedabad from where it was transported to Nanavada village by road on Sunday night.

Fewer Crorepati MLAs make it to Jharkhand Assembly

PTI ■ RANCHI

Eighty-nine per cent of the newly elected MLAs in Jharkhand are crorepatas, and Rameshwar Oraon of the Congress is the richest legislator with total assets worth Rs 42.20 crore, according to a report released on Monday. The Jharkhand Election Watch and the Association for Democratic Reforms (ADR) analysed the affidavits of 80, out of 81 winning candidates, and found that 71 newly elected MLAs in 2024 are crorepatas, which is 20 per cent higher than the number of such legislators elected in 2019. Of the 81 MLAs elected five years ago, 56 were crorepatas, and there were 41 in 2014, according to the report. Of the 71 'crorepati' MLAs this year, 28 are from JMM, 20 from BJP, 14 from Congress, four from RJD, two from CPI(ML) Liberation and one each from IJP (Ram Vilas), JD(U) and AJSU Party. The JMM won 34 assembly seats, and its allies Congress 16, RJD four and CPI(ML) Liberation two constituencies.



On the other hand, the BJP won 21 assembly segments, and its partners IJP (Ram Vilas), JD(U) and AJSU Party secured one each. The average of assets per winning candidate in the Jharkhand assembly elections in 2024 is Rs 6.90 crore and the same was Rs 3.87 crore in the 2019 elections. Among the winning candidates, Congress Lohardaga MLA Rameshwar Oraon is the richest with total assets of Rs 42.20 crore, the report said. BJP's Kushwaha Shashi Bhushan Mehta, who secured the Panki constituency, is the

second richest winning candidate with total assets of Rs 32.15 crore, while RJD's Sanjay Prasad Yadav, who bagged the Godda seat, is the third on the list with total assets of Rs 29.59 crore, according to it. Jharkhand Loktantrik Krantikari Morcha's (JKM) Jairam Kumar Mahato, who won from Dumri seat, has the lowest assets worth around Rs 2.55 lakh. As many as 14 winning candidates have declared liabilities of Rs 1 crore and above, the report said. Altogether 42 MLAs have been re-elected and their average asset growth is Rs 2.71 crore in the last five years, it stated. As many as 28 winning candidates have declared their educational qualification to be between Class 8 and 12 pass, while 50 have an educational qualification of graduate and above, and one winner is a diploma holder, and another has declared himself just literate. The number of winning women candidates in the state assembly increased to 12 from 10.

Kerala POSCO report highlights lack of child safety in homes, schools

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KOCHI

Instances of sexual abuse of children in Kerala are on an upward spiral, leaving them unsafe even in schools and homes. According to a report released by the Kerala State Commission for the Protection of Child Rights recently, 21 per cent of such cases were reported at children's homes, and four per cent in schools. The alarming revelations have prompted the state's child rights panel to raise awareness about child abuse among parents, teachers and police officers. "Out of 4,663 cases under Protection of

Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act analysed, 988 (21 per cent) incidents occurred in the children's homes, 725 (15 per cent) in the accused's homes, and 935 (20 per cent) in public places," it said. In the report, it was noted that in 173 cases, the crime took place in schools, 139 in vehicles, 146 at various other locations, and 166 incidents in isolated areas. Additionally, 60 cases were reported in hotels, 72 in friends' homes, 73 in religious institutions, 16 in hospitals, and eight per cent in childcare institutions. However, in 791 (17 per cent) cases, information about the

crime was not available, the report added. In 2023, a total of 4,663 POCSO cases were reported across Kerala. According to police data, Thiruvananthapuram district recorded the highest number of cases, while Pathanamthitta district had the lowest, the report said. Of the 4,663 POCSO cases reported in the year, 4,701 ere survivors, indicating that many cases involved more than one victim. "This highlights the need to educate children about the POCSO Act and child-friendly procedures, along with providing them self-defense training," the report stated. As per the figures, the cases

are on the rise as 3,322 cases were reported in 2021 and 4,583 in 2022. It was 3,616 cases in 2019 and 3,030 in 2020. The Commission found that, out of 4,582 cases analysed during the specified period, involving 5,002 accused individuals, the relationship between the child victims and the accused was categorised as follows: 873 were known to the children, 631 were neighbours, 439 were family members, 435 were relatives, 477 were friends, 692 were romantic partners, 210 were teachers, 305 were strangers, 896 were undocumented or unidentified, and 36 were van, bus, or auto drivers. This

data underscores that the safety, protection, and well-being of children can only be effectively ensured if parents, relatives, society, police, and the government diligently fulfill their responsibilities without failure, the report added. Of the 4,701 victims reported during the year, 3,972 (85 per cent) were girls, while 659 (14 per cent) were boys. Gender information was unavailable for 70 children (one per cent), as it was not included in the report submitted to the Commission by the police. The data highlights that girls are disproportionately vulnerable to sexual assault. Raising concerns of the

children who survived sexual abuse, 73 (two per cent) were aged four to six, 423 (nine per cent) were aged five to nine, 1,574 (39 per cent) were aged 10 to 14, and 1,929 (48 per cent) were aged 15 to 18. Besides, two (0.03 per cent) children with unclear or undocumented ages were also victims. This highlights the need for parents and guardians to focus on enhancing children's ability to respond to uncomfortable situations and providing age-appropriate safety awareness. KV Manoj Kumar, Chairperson of the Kerala State Commission for Protection of Child Rights, said the commission is now

focused on raising awareness about child abuse as part of the recommendations outlined in the report. "As children are being abused in their homes and public places, society has the responsibility to prevent this. To address this, we have provided training for Kudumbashree workers on the Juvenile Justice Act, POCSO Act, child rights, and good parenting in seven districts of the state, and it will continue in the remaining districts," Kumar told PTI. Besides, we provided awareness for child protection committee members in block panchayats, teachers, parents

and police officials, he said. Nazeer Chaliyem, former member of the Kerala State Commission for Protection of Child Rights, said the government should intervene and initiate the necessary measures to address the issues highlighted by the commission in the report. "As per Section 16 of the Commission for Protection of Child Rights, the report should be laid before the state Assembly along with the recommendations and the action taken by the commission, so that the government can initiate the required measures for the redressal of the matters raised in it," he told.



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PAPER WITH PASSION

Celebrating Constitution Day

The Indian Constitution is not just a legal document; it is the soul of the nation, guiding India through its complexities

Every year, on November 26, India celebrates Constitution Day, also known as 'Samvidhan Divas'. This day commemorates the adoption of the Indian Constitution in 1949, a landmark event that laid the foundation for India's democratic ethos. As we reflect on this momentous occasion, it is imperative to understand the making, functioning and future challenges of this legal document that has been the guiding force for the world's largest democracy, India. The drafting of the Indian Constitution was an extraordinary achievement, considering the diversity and complexities of India. Following independence in 1947, the Constituent Assembly, comprising 299 members, undertook the monumental task of framing a constitution for a newly liberated yet diverse nation. Dr BR Ambedkar, the architect of the Indian Constitution, chaired the drafting committee, ensuring that the document reflected justice, equality, liberty, and fraternity. The Assembly took 2 years, 11 months and 18 days to complete the drafting process, during which it conducted exhaustive debates and deliberations. Drawing inspiration from the constitutions of various nations, such as the United States, Ireland and Canada, the Indian Constitution incorporated the best practices while tailoring them to Indian realities.

On January 26, 1950, the Constitution came into effect, marking the birth of the Republic of India. The Indian Constitution, with its 448 articles, 12 schedules and numerous amendments, is one of the most detailed constitutions in the world. Its core strength lies in its 'flexibility' and 'adaptability.' While being rigid in its foundational principles, it allows amend-

ments to address evolving socio-political challenges. Since its adoption, the Constitution has guided the nation through numerous challenges, including partition, economic crises, and social upheavals, ensuring continuity and stability. Despite its success, the Indian Constitution faces several challenges. India faces growing tensions between the Centre and states over resource allocation, legislative powers and administrative autonomy, while concerns about judicial activism and transparency persist despite the judiciary's role as a constitutional custodian. Issues such as money power, criminalisation of politics and declining voter turnout demand urgent reforms. At the same time, caste-based discrimination, gender inequality and regional disparities continue to undermine the nation's progress, despite constitutional safeguards. Balancing individual freedoms with national security has become increasingly challenging in the digital age. As India approaches its centenary as a Republic, there is a pressing need to reaffirm commitment to the Constitution's ideals by strengthening institutions for accountability and transparency, fostering participatory democracy, upholding the secular and pluralistic ethos and ensuring that constitutional amendments preserve its core principles.

PICTALK



Visitors at a stall at the International Trade Fair at Pragati Maidan, in New Delhi

Samvidhan Divas: A tribute to India's democratic vision



RAJDEEP PATHAK

Rooted in the Gandhian principles the Indian Constitution continues to guide the world's largest democracy in fostering a harmonious and equitable society

Constitution Day, known as 'Samvidhan Divas' in Hindi, is celebrated annually on November 26 in India. This day commemorates the adoption of the Indian Constitution, which was formally approved by the Constituent Assembly on November 26, 1949. It later came into effect on January 26, 1950, marking the birth of India as a sovereign democratic republic.

In 2015, the Government of India officially recognised November 26 as Constitution Day through a gazette notification issued on November 19. This followed Prime Minister Narendra Modi's announcement during the foundation-laying ceremony of the 'B R Ambedkar Statue of Equality' memorial in Mumbai on October 11, 2015.

As India marks the 75th anniversary of the Constitution in 2024, it is a moment to reflect on this transformative document, which serves as the bedrock of the nation's democracy and inclusivity.

The Vision Behind the Indian Constitution

The Indian Constitution is more than a legal charter; it is a visionary framework that upholds the values of justice, liberty, equality, and fraternity. It reflects the collective aspirations of a diverse population, drawing inspiration from Mahatma Gandhi's philosophy of truth, non-violence, and grassroots empowerment. Gandhi's ideals of swaraj (self-rule) emphasised moral values, social equity and the welfare of all, which deeply influenced the Constitution's framers. Although Gandhi and Dr BR Ambedkar had differences on certain issues, they shared a commitment to social justice and local self-governance. This shared vision is evident in foundational aspects of the Constitution, such as the Preamble, Directive Principles of State Policy and Fundamental Duties.

The Preamble: Soul of the Constitution

The Preamble encapsulates the essence of the Constitution, emphasising ideals like justice, liberty, equality and fraternity. These values resonate with Gandhi's



lifelong struggle against colonial oppression and social inequality. Historian Judith Brown aptly stated, "Gandhi's struggle was not just for legal justice but for ethical and humanistic justice that transcends caste, creed and gender." The Preamble remains a guiding light for India's pursuit of a just and inclusive society.

Directive Principles: A Vision for Social Equity

Part IV of the Constitution, the Directive Principles of State Policy, articulates a vision of economic equity, social justice, and upliftment of marginalised communities. Gandhi's influence is evident in provisions like Article 40, which advocates for the Panchayati Raj system, and Article 43, promoting cottage industries. Historian Anthony Parel observed that these principles are "the most visible articulation of Gandhi's socio-economic vision aimed at eradicating poverty and ensuring dignity."

Fundamental Duties: Rights and Responsibilities

Mahatma Gandhi emphasised the interconnectedness of rights and duties, asserting that rights derive their meaning from duties well-performed. Reflecting this philosophy, the 42nd Amendment introduced Fundamental Duties in 1976. These duties, such as fostering harmony, protecting the environment, and upholding the dignity of women, align closely with Gandhian principles of non-

violence, ecological stewardship, and gender equality. Gandhi's timeless reminder, "The Earth provides enough to satisfy every man's need, but not every man's greed," underlines the importance of responsible citizenship.

Gandhian Values in a Modern Context

As India navigates contemporary challenges, the values rooted in Gandhian philosophy remain profoundly relevant. Nobel laureate Amartya Sen, in "The Idea of Justice," highlights that justice involves removing barriers that prevent marginalised communities from realizing their potential. Gandhi's vision of Sarvodaya (welfare of all) aligns with this principle, urging inclusive growth and equitable resource distribution.

In geopolitics, Gandhi's commitment to peace and Ahimsa (non-violence) resonates globally. His campaigns, from the Salt March to the Quit India Movement, demonstrated how unity and empowerment can coexist in a diverse society. Historian Ramachandra Guha remarked, "Gandhi's idea of fraternity, rooted in empathy and non-violence, offers a moral compass for modern democracy."

Decentralized Governance

A cornerstone of Gandhi's political thought was decentralised governance. He believed true democracy could only be achieved by empowering local communi-

ties. The Panchayati Raj system, enshrined in the Constitution, embodies this vision. Similarly, Prime Minister Modi's initiatives, such as 'Vocal for Local' and 'Viksit Bharat 2047,' echo Gandhi's principle of 'Gram Swaraj'. These programmes aim to promote local entrepreneurship, sustainable development, and self-reliance, elevating India's global stature while empowering its citizens.

The Role of Citizens and Media

Democracy thrives on active citizen participation. Voting, engaging in public discourse, and addressing civic issues are essential for robust democratic institutions. Equally crucial is the media's role as the fourth estate, providing checks and balances while safeguarding the freedom of speech guaranteed by the Constitution. Exercising this freedom responsibly ensures accountability and transparency in governance.

A Living Document for a Dynamic Nation

The Indian Constitution, inspired by Gandhian principles, remains a living document that harmonizes individual aspirations with collective well-being. Its relevance extends beyond legal frameworks, addressing issues such as social justice, environmental conservation, and global leadership.

(The writer is Programme Executive, Gandhi Smriti and Darshan Smriti; views are personal)



AS INDIA MARKS THE 75TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE CONSTITUTION IN 2024, IT IS A MOMENT TO REFLECT ON THIS TRANSFORMATIVE DOCUMENT, WHICH SERVES AS THE BEDROCK OF THE NATION'S DEMOCRACY AND INCLUSIVITY

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

BJP'S STRONG COMEBACK

Madam — In just five months, the momentum in Indian politics has shifted dramatically. Following the BJP's underwhelming performance in the last Parliament elections, questions were raised about its durability and PM Modi's pan-national acceptability. Now, it's the opposition INDIA bloc that is looking fragile. The reason for the shift is a series of unexpected electoral reverses suffered by the INDIA bloc. The most significant of these setbacks occurred in Maharashtra, the second most consequential state in the Indian union. By handing the NDA a mammoth victory, Maharashtra voters have given the alliance a pretext to dismiss the Lok Sabha election jolt as an aberration. A reversal triggered more by a "fake narrative" spun by a desperate Opposition than any discernible anti-incumbency. In Maharashtra, the BJP with allies not only smashed a five-decade-old electoral record, but it has also come astonishingly close to winning the election on its own steam. The party has been able to reunite its coalition of disparate castes. Add to this, the BJP has been better able to present itself as the emissary of "political nationalism and economic welfare." Meanwhile, this victory is a stepping stone to the validation it needs to push ahead with its governance agenda.

N Sadhasiva Reddy | Bengaluru

GENDER BIAS IN THE US POLITICS

Madam — The United States is not ready for a woman president, as was evident in the just-concluded elections. There is little doubt that American voters have gendered biases that factored into their votes, both in the 2016 and 2024 elections. Both Hillary Clinton and Kamala Harris faced off against Trump under different circumstances and with different strategies. But the result was the same for both candidates. Another way of looking at the impact of gender is to compare how Harris did among women voters in comparison with Hillary Clinton, whose lead over Trump among women voters was 13 points in 2016. Eight years later now, Kamala Harris'

Kohli breaks Tendulkar's record



Team India's superstar King Kohli back in form after he reached his 30th century at the Opus Stadium, Perth. The Border-Gavaskar Trophy seems to be the redemption of pride for India after the worst loss in the home series. The year 2024 in Virat Kohli's career has been low while Kohli scored only one fifty in his 13 innings so far. By reaching this milestone of his 30th ton in

his 203rd innings across 119 tests, it was his seventh in Australia, breaking the record of six hundreds by the legendary Sachin Tendulkar in the format of this game. By this century, Kohli has equalled his record with Wally Hammond for the most test hundreds in Australia by a visiting batter, and Jack Hobbs holds the highest record of nine test centuries down under which one can be sure is in the mind of Virat to cross the figure during this series.

While India is in the driver's seat in the first test and assured of a win at the moment for the fans' delight, one hopes that Kohli may come out with many more flying kisses at different venues to cheer Anushka and his fans with his inimitable style of batting prowess.

A P Thiruvadi | Chennai

lead over Trump was only eight points. In other words, Harris lost support among women voters who had previously voted for a woman candidate. Neither Hillary Clinton nor Harris succeeded in winning a majority of American men. In fact, out of the nine nuclear powers in the world, only Britain, Israel, India and Pakistan have elected women to the top job. Indira Gandhi and Benazir Bhutto were daughters of powerful political fathers in dynastic democracies. Sexism and racism, inextricably woven into the culture of American politics, played a central role in 2016 and 2024 against women candidates getting elected as presidents. Under the Trump regime 2.0, this scenario could also reflect in the next election in the US.

Ranganathan Sivakumar | Urapakkam

ADDRESS FARMERS' DISTRESS

Madam — It is indeed a matter of concern that the distress of the farmers is not attended to with the amount of seriousness it requires. The agri sector that was contributing to the tune of more than 50 per cent to the GDP of the nation at the time the

nation attained independence is now reduced to a deplorable level of contribution, hardly 14 per cent.

The Green Revolution has helped in increasing the yield but the other aspects of the farmers, like input cost, subsidies and MSP, in spite of being vital, are not considered favourably but changes are made hostile to the farmers' needs and benefits. The policies of the successive governments are focusing on the industrial sector. A lot of incentives, like concessions, exemptions, and extending huge loans to write off or waive off, and PLI are extended to the industrial sector, though the desired results, like a substantial increase in employment and exports, are not forthcoming. Such apathy in the approach of the government towards agriculture has resulted in millions of farmers resorting to suicide, getting plunged in unbearable debt and small farmers deserting their fields and seeking livelihood in cities.

A G Rajmohan | Anantapur

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

Lessons from childhood, family and experiences

The past shapes our present. The present is past the next moment, to make way for the future. We are left with memories which also teach us invaluable lessons

I was also a mischievous child like any other young boy my age. I was assured of a haven, hiding behind my grandmother, whenever my parents were inclined to scold me. She would then counsel my parents to be more indulgent, simultaneously telling us to be particular about our behaviour.

I recall another memory from childhood. Our return home from school coincided with my mother's siesta. We would tiptoe into the house, careful not to disturb her. One afternoon I was excited enough to wake her to tell her about my outstanding results in the examinations. Still groggy, she hugged and blessed me, before continuing with her sleep. I still cannot forget her spontaneous reaction, even though I had interrupted her much needed rest.

My father was short-tempered in his younger days. He usually rested and slept on Sunday afternoons. We tried to be as quiet as children could be. One day, we might have been noisier than usual, and ended up soundly thrashed by him. Later in the evening, I witnessed a different facet of my father's per-



sonality. He gruffly apologized for having hurt me. I learnt an important lesson. There is no shame in accepting your mistake. I remember the day I met the young girl who became my wife and life partner in the next few months. I also remember I had eyes only for her during the wedding reception. Those were the heady days before we buckled up to the serious business of making a life together. We have been married for 40 years. These have not been easy decades, faced with the harsh realities of life. We never give up, whatever the setbacks. We work towards the common goal of leading a happy and contented life together. There is respect, and a recognition of the need

top line would help you find ways to tackle your most pressing issue. I also tried it sometimes. I learnt that I could not always tackle situations through conventional thinking while navigating the complex labyrinths of life. Fair play, guiding the team members, impartiality, giving undivided time to team members however busy you might be, empathy, working for the team, pride in the performance of the team members, and out-of-box thinking, were only a few of the invaluable lessons that my experiences taught me. They have stood me in good stead through the rough and tumble of life. The words of psychiatrist, Abraham Twerski would resonate with many, "Ruminating about the past will get you nowhere. So go ahead and learn from the past whatever you can, and then put it behind you. Remember, there is nothing you can do to change it, but you can use its lessons to improve your future."

(The author is an electrical engineer with the Indian Railways and conducts classes in creative writing; views are personal)



SANJAY CHANDRA

FIRST COLUMN
CORPORATE CAREWASHING

Many organisations falsely present themselves as socially responsible



SAKSHI SETHI

Nowadays we often see that companies are engaged towards launching mental health awareness campaigns while maintaining toxic work environments or failing to provide meaningful employee support; at times companies celebrate diversity during cultural moments without addressing systemic inequities, such as unequal pay or a lack of diverse leadership. But the question arises are the employees getting benefitted or are still victims?

In an age where ethical responsibility and social consciousness are increasingly demanded of corporations, governments and individuals, a troubling phenomenon termed carewashing has emerged. The term refers to the practice of falsely presenting an organisation, business or individual as socially or ethically responsible, particularly in areas of caregiving or support, to improve their reputation or deflect criticism. Much like its environmental counterpart greenwashing, carewashing also exploits emotional appeals to mask the absence of genuine commitment to caregiving causes.

Several factors such as modern consumers increasingly seeking brands that align with their values, create pressure for organisations to appear socially conscious or social platforms that provide both positive as well as failures, thereby encouraging companies to capitalise on social causes for visibility and if that not enough then such organisations outshine its competitors by attracting customers and talent with minimal invest-



ment in genuine reform contribute to the rising of carewashing. While these pressures reflect positive shifts in societal values, they also incentivise performative actions over authentic efforts. It is believed that when carewashing is exposed, it damages trust between organisations and their stakeholders as it is often when the dissonance between claims and actions becomes apparent. Employees who witness discrepancies between an organisation's statements and its actions often feel disillusioned.

This alienation leads to reduced morale, engagement and retention, especially among those drawn to the organisation by its purported values. Quiet often we hear once the trust is lost, rebuilding it is a slow and costly process. Exposure to carewashing through whistleblowers, investigative journalism, or public criticism can lead to significant reputational harm. By co-opting social causes for profit, carewashing trivializes important issues, potentially reducing the urgency of addressing them authentically. To counteract carewashing, organisations must prioritise authenticity and accountability. This involves providing measurable, verifiable data on social and environmental efforts rather than vague claims; including employees in shaping policies and initiatives to ensure alignment with internal realities; conducting regular audits and feedback loops that will help organisations stay true to their commitments and correct shortcomings and public statements should be backed by tangible actions, such as policy changes or resource allocation.

There is no denying that carewashing is a symptom of the growing demand for ethical behaviour in business and society, but it represents a shortcut that sacrifices trust and authenticity for superficial gains. While it may offer short-term visibility, its long-term consequences are overwhelmingly negative, eroding credibility and alienating stakeholders. Organisations must recognise that true social responsibility requires meaningful actions, transparency and a commitment to sustained progress. Only by moving beyond carwashing can businesses and institutions genuinely contribute to a better world while earning the loyalty and respect of their communities.

(The writer is an educator; views are personal)

Food subsidy: Go for direct transfer to curb leakages



UTTAM GUPTA

Despite extensive measures implemented by the government, including digitisation, pilferage persists, revealing systemic flaws in how food subsidies are administered

According to a Study titled 'Rationalising Public Distribution System in India' done by the Indian Council For Research On International Economic Relations (ICRIER), there was grain leakage under the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana (PMGKAY) of 20 million tons (17 million ton of rice and 3 million ton of wheat) which is 28 per cent of the 71 million ton of grain off-take by states (that included 52 million ton of rice and 19 million ton wheat) during August 2022 - July 2023. The Study estimates the annual fiscal cost of this leakage to be around Rs 70,000 crore. Under the PMGKAY, the Union Government asks the Food Corporation of India (FCI) and other state agencies to procure food from the farmers at MSP (minimum support price) and organise its distribution to around 820 million people for free. The entire cost i.e. MSP paid to farmers plus handling and distribution cost (HDC) is reimbursed to the FCI/other state agencies as a subsidy. The money comes from the Union Budget's allocation for 'food subsidy'. While, the PMGKAY has been in force since January 1, 2023, before that, the Centre was giving food to 820 million persons (7 kg of cereals per person per month to 120 million poorest of the poor persons covered under the Antyodaya Anna Yojana or AAY families and five kilograms of cereals per person per month to the remaining 700 million) at a heavily subsidised price of Rs 2/3/1 per kg for wheat/rice/coarse cereals under the National Food Security Act (NFSA). In addition, since April 2020, it has given 5 kg of food per person per month for "free" to all 820 million beneficiaries under PMGKAY to mitigate the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic.

From January 1, 2023, it merged the free part of PMGKAY with the regular food security schemes under NFSA. Now, food is available to all 820 million beneficiaries for free under the new incarnation of NFSA, the PMGKAY. As Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced in November 2023, this arrangement will continue for five years until the end of CY 2028. During the financial year (FY) 2022-23, the Centre's expenditure on food subsidy was Rs 272,000 crore. Apart from expenses under PMGKAY for the whole of that FY, this amount also included the subsidy on food grain given under NFSA at the subsidised price of Rs 2/3/1 per kg for wheat/rice/coarse cereals from April to December 2022. Within this total expenditure, how much money was lost due to pilferage? How does the Study reach Rs 70,000 crore? The authors look at the 'economic cost' (EC) of rice and wheat. This is the MSP paid to farmers plus HDC. During 2022-23, this was Rs 36.7 per kg or Rs 36,700 per ton for rice and Rs 25.9 per kg or Rs 25,900 per ton for wheat. Multiply the pilfered quantity of rice 17 million tons by its EC, we get the cost of its pilferage Rs 62,390 crore. Likewise, multiply 3 million tons of pilfered wheat by its EC, and the cost comes to Rs 7770 crore. Thus, the total cost was around Rs 70,000 crore. This



Representational Image: Pradeep Gaur/SH

is around 26 per cent of the food subsidy expenditure of Rs 272,000 crore for 2022-23. Taken as a percentage of the subsidy given under PMGKAY alone (the budget doesn't provide this figure; a back-of-the-envelope calculation using annual off-take of 55 million tons, EC for rice and wheat given above and their use in 75:25 ratio, yields Rs 187,000 crore), this is much higher at 37 per cent.

How has the Study arrived at the quantum of leakage?

The Study picked up monthly off-take (albeit "reported") data from the FCI from August 2022 to July 2023 and saw this in juxtaposition with "actual household consumption levels" taken from the Household Consumption Expenditure Survey (HCES) 2022-23. While the former was taken as an approximation for the quantity of food grain sent for distribution amongst the PMGKAY beneficiaries, the latter was taken as a proxy of the quantity received.

Based on the above comparison, it was concluded that as against 52.4 million tons of rice that were sent, 35.7 million tons were received suggesting a shortfall of 16.7 million tons. Likewise, against 19 million tons of wheat that was sent, 16 million tons were received pointing toward a shortfall of 3 million tons. Thus, a total of 19.7 million tons or close to 20 million tons was pilfered from the public distribution system (PDS). But, there is a flaw in such a comparison.

At the Off-take level, it can't be surmised that the quantities that

left the FCI warehouses and were picked up by states were 'entirely' meant for PDS stocks to be used for distribution (actual consumption) by the PMGKAY beneficiaries.

Off-take figures also include food stocks in transit, buffer stock, operational reserves and cereals set aside for social welfare schemes and commercial sales by the government. Each of these serves a specific purpose. For instance, 'buffer stock' refers to a strategic stock for smoothening out price fluctuations —buying a commodity when the price is low and releasing it in the market when the price is high. Likewise, 'operational reserves' are kept as a backstop which can be used quickly in the case of an unplanned event/emergency. Similarly, stock in transit can't be considered as part of food grain meant for PDS consumption within a given time frame.

The quantities meant for all such purposes need to be excluded from the grains that left FCI warehouses and only the net figure available for PDS consumption should be compared with actual household consumption levels as read from the Consumption surveys. It seems, the Study hasn't done it. This is also corroborated by the fact that the annual distribution of free food for PMGKAY beneficiaries is normally 55 million tons; against this, the Study uses 71 million tons.

At the beneficiary's end also, the actual household consumption level includes cereal consumed from multiple sources, such as

private purchases or state-specific schemes and not just the quantities available under PMGKAY etc. Therefore, it won't be on all fours to directly correlate with PDS off-take.

To conclude, there are leakages from the PDS though not on a scale indicated by the Study. Its root cause has to do with how food subsidy is administered. Under the extant system, the subsidy is built into the price which under this Scheme is Zero. Herein lies the rub.

The availability of a mammoth of around 55 million tons (the quantity distributed under the PMGKAY) in the supply chain with zero price tag is an open invitation to dubious operators to siphon off and sell in the open market raking in a moolah. However, foolproof one may make the system (Modi - government has done an exemplary job getting PoS (point of sale machines) installed at 530,000 fair price shops across the country; digitisation of supply chain from procurement to distribution; authentication of beneficiaries with their Aadhaar numbers and so on), as long as subsidy is routed through the State agencies, unscrupulous characters will always find ways to circumvent even the best of technology interventions aimed at curbing pilferage. Pilferage can be eliminated only when the government gives subsidies directly to the beneficiaries and allows the food markets to function competitively and efficiently.

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



'BUFFER STOCK' REFERS TO A STRATEGIC STOCK FOR SMOOTHENING OUT PRICE FLUCTUATIONS—BUYING A COMMODITY WHEN THE PRICE IS LOW AND RELEASING IT IN THE MARKET WHEN THE PRICE IS HIGH

Addressing rural housing challenges in India: A case study of PMAY-G
PMAY-G has transformed rural housing in India, delivering not just shelter but also dignity and opportunity to millions

Housing is a fundamental challenge for rural India, where a significant portion of households live in kutcha structures made of non-durable materials such as mud and bamboo. These homes are highly vulnerable to harsh weather conditions, exposing residents to risks and uncertainties. Recognising this, the Indian government launched the Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojana-Gramin (PMAY-G) as part of its commitment to achieving "Housing for All". This ambitious welfare program aims to provide financial and construction assistance to build durable 'pucca' houses equipped with essential amenities. The scheme targets both houseless households and those residing in 'kutcha'



JEEVANT RAMPAL

or dilapidated structures. As of October 2024, PMAY-G has facilitated the construction of 2.67 crore houses, marking a significant milestone in its progress. However, this raises critical questions: Will this initiative truly ensure housing for all? How effectively does it address rural India's housing challenges? **Leveraging Technology for Quality and Oversight**

A cornerstone of PMAY-G's success lies in its use of technology to enhance construction quality and ensure transparency in disbursement. One notable component is the 'Rural Mason Training (RMT) Program', developed in collaboration with the National Skill Development Corporation. The programme has trained 2.81 lakh masons, equipping them with the skills to deliver high-quality construction while fostering local expertise. This initiative not only improves housing quality but also accelerates construction. For instance, over 40 lakh houses were built in 2021-22, with the number surpassing 50 lakh in 2022-23, breaking all previous records. Further, the program prioritises disaster-resilient designs, supported by tools like the 'Pahal Compendium'. This resource offers diverse, region-specific house designs incorporating disaster-resilient features. Complementing the compendium is an app that provides 3D visualisations of recommended house designs, ensuring practicality and accessibility. **Transformative Impact on Beneficiaries** PMAY-G's impact extends beyond physical housing. Recent research highlights its role in improving living conditions, access to infrastructure, and overall wellbeing. Beneficiaries have reported enhanced social status, self-esteem, and a sense of belonging—factors that potentially reduce distress migration. A key feature of the programme



is its focus on marginalised groups, promoting transparency and ensuring female co-ownership, thereby empowering women. The initiative has also significantly contributed to rural employment. Each house constructed under PMAY-G generates approximately 314 person-days of work, distributed among skilled (81 days), semi-skilled (71 days), and unskilled (164 days) labour. This

employment impact is further amplified by integration with the 'Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGN-REGS)'. The quality of training under the RMT programme is evident, with certified masons even securing overseas employment opportunities. Such achievements underscore PMAY-G's dual focus on immediate housing needs and long-term skill development. **Comprehensive Programme Integration** One of PMAY-G's standout features is its integration with other government schemes to improve beneficiaries' overall quality of life. This includes:

- Toilets through 'Swachh Bharat Mission (SBM)'
- LPG connections via 'Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala

Yojana (PMUY)' **Ensuring Transparency and Fairness**

Transparency in beneficiary selection is another critical strength of PMAY-G. Beneficiaries are identified using the 'Socio-Economic and Caste Census (SECC) 2011' and 'Awaas+ 2018' lists, verified through Gram Sabhas and an appellate process. The program also uses the 'Awaas+2024 Mobile App', which enables households to self-survey and update their housing status. Recently, facial recognition systems were introduced to further improve oversight, ensuring fairness and reducing fraudulent claims. **Global Scale and Ambitions:** PMAY-G Despite its notable success, PMAY-G faces sever-

al challenges that need attention. A significant issue is the lack of awareness among many eligible beneficiaries, particularly in remote areas, about the programme's eligibility criteria, highlighting the need for better information dissemination. Additionally, the program would benefit from stronger feedback mechanisms to address potential blind spots and improve implementation efficiency. Another concern is the uneven progress across states, with some exceeding their targets while others fall behind. Achieving balanced implementation will require greater political consensus and more equitable resource allocation. (The writer is faculty, IIM Ahmedabad; views are personal)

Hezbollah ceasefire deal could come 'within days'

AP ■ JERUSALEM/DUBAI

The Israeli ambassador to Washington says that a cease-fire deal to end fighting between Israel and the Lebanon-based Hezbollah could be reached "within days."



Residents gather in front of a destroyed building that was hit Sunday night in an Israeli airstrike in Dahiyeh, in the southern suburb of Beirut, Lebanon

An Israeli ground incursion into the country's south. Hezbollah has fired thousands of rockets into Israeli cities and towns, including some 250 on Sunday.

'NETANYAHU SHOULD BE SENTENCED TO DEATH'

Israel's supreme leader has suggested that Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu should be "sentenced to death" for his role in the ongoing wars in the Gaza Strip against Hamas and in Lebanon.

"What the Zionist regime did in Gaza and Lebanon is not a victory, it is a war crime. Now they have issued a warrant for their arrest. This is not enough!" Khamenei said, according to remarks published by the state-run IRNA news agency.

'Israeli strike that killed 3 Lebanese journalists most likely deliberate'

AP ■ BEIRUT

An Israeli airstrike that killed three journalists and wounded others in Lebanon last month was most likely a deliberate attack on civilians and an apparent war crime, an international human rights group said on Monday.

or JDAM, guidance kit. The group said the US government should suspend weapons transfers to Israel because of the military's repeated "unlawful attacks on civilians, for which US officials may be complicit in war crimes."

well as Israel," said Richard Weir, the senior crisis, conflict and arms researcher at Human Rights Watch. Weir added that "the Israeli military's previous deadly attacks on journalists without any consequences give little hope for accountability in this or future violations against the media."

UAE arrests three Uzbek nationals for killing of rabbi

AP ■ DUBAI

The United Arab Emirates said on Monday police arrested three Uzbek nationals for the killing of an Israeli-Moldovan rabbi. The statement from the country's Interior Ministry offered no motive for the slaying of Zvi Kogan.

It wasn't immediately clear if the three men had lawyers in the UAE, an autocratically ruled nation of seven sheikhdoms on the Arabian Peninsula. The Uzbek Consulate in Dubai did not immediately respond to a request for comment regarding the arrests.

Iraq's population grew to 45.4 million according to first survey in decades

AP ■ BAGHDAD

Preliminary results from an Iraqi national census, the first in nearly 40 years, show that the population has grown to 45.4 million, the prime minister said on Monday.

also fear that a documented decline in their numbers will bring decreased political influence and fewer economic benefits in the country's sectarian power-sharing system.

Imran supporters march towards Islamabad amid crackdown

PTI ■ ISLAMABAD/LAHORE

Thousands of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf workers, led by Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur, were moving towards Islamabad on Monday as the top party leaders met

ing with Imran Khan on Monday in Rawalpindi's high-security Adiala Jail, where the former premier is lodged since last year.



Supporters of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf party, burn bushes to reduce the impact of tear gas shells fired by police officers to disperse them during a rally demanding Khan's release, at a motorway in Ghazi in Attock district, Pakistan

Chief Minister Gandapur urged party members to move forward, declaring, "We must advance and not turn back until Khan is released."

husband's release. "We will not end this march till Imran is not with us," she said while addressing supporters at a stop near the Hazara Interchange.

Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi has vowed to arrest everyone entering the capital to protest. Not only all major roads leading to the capital and within the city have been barricaded but also police and paramilitary troops deployed to deal with the miscreants.

Cargo plane crashes, killing Spanish crew member

AP ■ VILNIUS

A DHL cargo plane crashed on approach to an airport in Lithuania's capital and skidded into a house Monday morning, killing a Spanish crew member but not harming anyone on the ground.

is under investigation. A surveillance video showed the plane descending normally as it approached the airport before sunrise, and then exploding into a huge ball of fire behind a building.

Western security officials suspect that Russian intelligence is carrying out sabotage against their nations in retaliation for their support for Ukraine — including arson attacks, disinformation and by putting incendiary devices in packages on cargo planes.

other cases of sabotage — although they stressed that there is no evidence pointing to that yet. "Without a doubt, we cannot rule out the terrorism version," said Darius Jauniškis, chief of Lithuanian intelligence.

Aircraft Accident Investigation would be sent to Lithuania to help with the investigation. Officials there also cautioned against trying to draw conclusions before all the evidence has been examined.

Court acquits S Korean opp leader on charges of instigating perjury

AP ■ SEOUL

South Korean opposition leader Lee Jae-myung was acquitted on Monday on charges that he persuaded a witness to lie in court to undercut Lee's past criminal conviction, in a rare moment of relief from broad legal troubles that threaten to derail his political career.

month sentenced Lee to a suspended prison term for violating election law by making false public statements while running for president in the 2022 election, which he narrowly lost to conservative rival Yoon Suk Yeol.

whether the Supreme Court would decide on any of the cases before the vote in March 2027. The ruling Monday at the Seoul court was about whether Lee pressured a former employee of Seongnam city into giving false testimony in court in 2019.

Advertisement for Noida Industrial Development Authority featuring E-Tender Notice and contact information.

Advertisement for 'The Pioneer Classifieds' with a change of name notice for Sakshi Arora.

Education, opportunities pull Indian students to US univs

Washington (PTI): Globalisation, enormous opportunities in the US and a large Indian diaspora are the main attractions for students from India coming to America for higher education, especially in STEM, according to educationists.

University, told PTI in an interview. A recent report by the International Educational Exchange revealed that last year, India surpassed China as the top place of origin for international students, with a record 3,31,602 Indian students in the US in 2023-2024.

many Indians have come here and gotten their education. Some of them have stayed at least for a while and have had enormous success," Krislov said.

are two fundamental reasons for this. "One, from a US educational perspective, the quality of the Indian students is extraordinarily high. Close to about 60 per cent of them, about 2,00,000 of them are in the graduate programmes in the US out of the 3,30,000 (Indian students in the US)."

interview. "The second broader reason is from the US perspective. When you think about the two major countries, it has been China and India. Roughly about 60 per cent of the student base in the US international student base comes from these two countries.

India's economic outlook for coming months 'cautiously optimistic': Finmin Report

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

India's economic outlook for the coming months is 'cautiously optimistic', with agriculture likely to benefit from favourable monsoon conditions, increased minimum support prices and adequate supply of inputs, the finance ministry said in a report.

"Bright agricultural production prospects make the inflation outlook benign, despite existing price pressures in select food items," the October edition of Monthly Economic Review released by the Department of Economic Affairs on Monday said. Early November trends signalled moderation in key food prices, though geopolitical factors may continue to impact domestic inflation and supply chains, it said. A bumper kharif harvest is expected to lower food inflation in the coming months, it said, adding that a favourable monsoon, adequate reservoir levels and higher minimum support prices are likely to boost rabi sowing and production. Amidst a clouded global background, and after a brief period of softening momentum over the monsoon



months, the report said, many high-frequency indicators of economic activity in India have shown a rebound in October. These include indicators of rural and urban demand and supply side variables like Purchasing Managers' Index and E-way bill generation, it said. On the employment front, it said, the formal workforce is expanding, with

notable increases in manufacturing jobs and a strong inflow of youth into organised sectors. With regard to the external front, it said, India's export recovery may encounter challenges due to softening demand in developed markets. However, it said, trade in the services sector is sustaining momentum. Net foreign direct investment inflows registered remarkable growth in the

first five months of FY25, it said. Supported by stable capital inflows, India's forex reserves increased by USD 64.8 billion so far during 2024, the second-largest increase after China amongst major forex reserve-holding countries, it said. Apart from the emerging indications of domestic growth and stability, the dynamics of global interest rates, earning growth and valuation, geopolitical developments and policy decisions of the next administration in the United States will determine the course of trade and capital flows, the report said. Recent developments in the ongoing conflict between Russia and Ukraine have caused some concern in financial markets with safe-haven assets such as US Treasuries and gold finding a bid, it said, adding, that geopolitical conditions remain fragile. The report said the global economy reveals a mixed outlook as 2024 draws to a close. Structural weaknesses in parts of Europe and China's slowdown continued to weigh on growth. In contrast, the US economy has surpassed earlier expectations, maintaining steady expansion.

Sensex reclaims 80k mark; Nifty surges over one per cent

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Benchmark equity indices Sensex and Nifty surged more than 1 per cent on Monday, helped by a rally in blue-chip stocks and the BJP pulling off a stunning performance in Maharashtra, winning a record number of seats to propel the party-led ruling Mahayuti alliance to a landslide victory. Extending its previous day's sharp rally, the BSE benchmark Sensex jumped 992.74 points or 1.25 per cent to settle at 80,109.85. During the day, it soared 1,355.97 points or 1.71 per cent to 80,473.08. The NSE Nifty surged 314.65 points or 1.32 per cent to 24,221.90. From the 30-share Sensex pack, Larsen & Toubro, State Bank of India, Adani Ports, Reliance Industries, Power Grid, ICICI Bank, HDFC Bank, Tata Consultancy Services, Kotak Mahindra Bank and Axis Bank were the biggest gainers. On the other hand, JSW Steel, Tech Mahindra,



Infosys, Maruti, Asian Paints and HCL Tech were the laggards. Online food delivery giant Zomato will become a part of the benchmark BSE Sensex, replacing JSW Steel from December 23. This is part of the latest reconstitution announced by Asia Index Private Ltd, a subsidiary of BSE. "The ability of the market to surprise was evident in the 557 points spurt in the Nifty on Friday. This sharp upswing will continue today assisted by the super NDA performance in Maharashtra. The political message from this election is huge and highly positive from the market perspective," VK

Vijayakumar, Chief Investment Strategist, Geojit Financial Services, said. The BJP on Saturday pulled off a stunning performance in Maharashtra, winning a record number of seats to propel the party-led ruling Mahayuti alliance to a landslide victory, while the INDIA bloc stormed back to power in Jharkhand on the back of a spectacular showing by the JMM. In Asian markets, Seoul and Tokyo settled higher, while Shanghai and Hong Kong ended in the red. European markets were trading in the green. The US markets ended in positive territory on Friday. Global oil benchmark Brent crude dipped 0.40 per cent to USD 74.87 a barrel. Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) offloaded equities worth Rs 1,278.37 crore on Friday, according to exchange data. The BSE benchmark jumped 1,961.32 points or 2.54 per cent to settle at 79,117.11 on Friday. The Nifty soared 557.35 points or 2.39 per cent to 23,907.25.



About seven per cent workforce growth expected in H2 driven by logistics, e-comm: Report

PTI ■ MUMBAI

With 59 per cent of employers planning to increase headcount in October-March FY25, 7.1 per cent workforce growth is expected during the period, driven by logistics, e-commerce, and manufacturing sectors, a report said. According to TeamLease Services 'Employment Outlook Report for October 2024 to March 2025', an additional 22 per cent will maintain their current staffing levels. The report is based on primary and secondary research, taking inputs from 1,307 employers across 23 industries in 20 cities. These findings reveal a dynamic hiring landscape where industry-specific demands and macroeconomic factors are significantly shaping employment trends, the report added. This growth will mainly be driven by sectors including logistics, EV & EV infrastructure, agriculture and agrochemicals, and e-commerce, which are heavily investing in infrastructure and technological advancements, it said. Logistics, for instance, stands out with a 14.2 per cent net employment change, as 69 per cent of companies in the sector look to increase headcount. This growth is attributed to the sector's adoption of 5G logistics, green supply chain initiatives, and benefits from National Logistics Policy implementations, it noted. Logistics is followed by EV and EV Infrastructure (12.1 per cent), agriculture and agrochemicals (10.5 per cent), and e-commerce and tech startups (8.9 per cent), where startups are capitalising on AI-enabled customer insights, Web 3.0 applications, and seasonal demand from the festive period, it said. As technology continues to evolve, the automotive industry is also seeing 8.5 per cent growth, spurred by integrated smart technologies, while the retail sector's 8.2 per cent growth reflects the popularity of

hyperlocal deliveries and smart-store concepts. The report further said that cities like Coimbatore (24.6 per cent) and Gurugram (22.6 per cent) are becoming job hubs, representing a decentralisation of employment opportunities beyond traditional metros. While Bengaluru (53.1 per cent), Mumbai (50.2 per cent), and Hyderabad (48.2 per cent) remained central employment anchors with high workforce demand, demand in cities like Coimbatore, Gurugram, Jaipur, Lucknow, and Nagpur signals a broader spread of job growth across India, reinforcing the appeal of smaller cities as viable alternatives for job seekers and companies alike, it added. According to the report, major economic initiatives are also shaping workforce expansion. Policies such as the Global Capability Centres (GCCs), which are projected to add USD 60 billion to India's economy by 2025, are creating high-skill roles in technology and R&D. Meanwhile, National Industrial Corridors aim to generate 1 million direct jobs and 3 million indirect jobs in manufacturing and logistics. The semiconductor mission seeks to add 80,000 jobs by 2025 through an investment of Rs 1.25 lakh crore, underscoring India's drive toward high-tech manufacturing. "The employment landscape is increasingly shaped by technology and policy-driven shifts. Our latest findings underscore the diversity in job growth across India, from established urban hubs to emerging cities, and reveal a workforce that is evolving rapidly to meet demands in sectors like logistics, EV, and tech startups," TeamLease Staffing CEO Kartik Narayan said. As companies embrace flexible staffing models, digital skill sets such as problem-solving, critical thinking, and cloud technology are not only in demand but essential for maintaining a competitive edge in today's economy, he noted.

S&P cuts India's GDP growth forecast for FY26, FY27

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

S&P Global Ratings on Monday revised down its estimate for India's economic growth in the next two financial years as high interest rate and lower fiscal impulse temper urban demand. In an update to its economic forecast for Asia-Pacific economies after US election results, the rating agency projected a 6.7 per cent GDP growth rate in 2025-26 financial year (April 2025 to March 2026) and 6.8 per cent in the following fiscal year, down from 6.9 per cent and 7 per cent, respectively in previous projections. For FY25, S&P Global pegged GDP growth rate at 6.8 per cent. "In India we see GDP growth easing to 6.8 per cent this fiscal year as high interest rates and a lower fiscal impulse temper urban demand. While purchasing manager indices (PMIs) remain convincingly in the expansion zone, other high-frequency indicators indicate some transitory softening of growth momentum due to the hit to the construction sector in the September quarter," it said.



The agency expects India's GDP to grow at 7 per cent in FY28. S&P retained its growth projection for China at 4.8 per cent in 2024 but cut next year's forecast to 4.1 per cent from 4.3 per cent earlier and to 3.8 per cent in 2026 from the previous estimate of 4.5 per cent. "The impending change in the US administration will be challenging for China and the rest of Asia-Pacific. US tariff increases have become more likely, especially on China, and possible changes in the US macro picture are leading to different interest rate expectations," said the report titled 'Economic Outlook Asia-Pacific Q1 2025: US Trade Shift Blurs The

Horizon'. Louis Kuijs, S&P Global Ratings Asia-Pacific Chief Economist, said rising risks are blurring the economic outlook for Asia-Pacific in the first quarter of 2025. "While much of the region should be able to continue to grow solidly, central banks will probably remain cautious by not reducing their policy rates too fast." China's stimulus measures should support growth, but S&P expected its economy to be hit by US trade tariffs on its exports. The Asia-Pacific growth will be impeded by slower global demand and US trade policy. But lower interest rates and inflation should ease their drag on spending power.

Edible oil body SEA urges Govt to lift ban on commodity futures trading

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Edible oil industry SEA on Monday called on the government to lift a ban on futures trading in key agricultural commodities, including crude palm oil and soyabean, citing significant financial impact on its members. The ban, first implemented in December 2021 on seven agricultural commodities, has been extended multiple times with the current extension running through December 20, 2024. The Solvent Extractors Association of India (SEA) has appealed to five ministers, including Home Minister Amit Shah and Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, arguing that the absence of futures trading has hindered price risk management and market development. "The industry was hopeful that the suspension would be lifted to enable smoother operations, but the continuation of this restriction has further weakened an essential risk mitigation tool," SEA



President Sanjeev Asthana said in a representation made to the ministers. SEA emphasised that studies have shown futures trading does not significantly drive inflation, a key concern when the ban was implemented. Current soyabean prices are trading below the government-set minimum support price (MSP) of Rs 4,892 per quintal, while rapeseed prices are slightly above its MSP of Rs 5,950, the industry body said. The association particularly stressed the need to resume futures trading in internationally traded commodities like crude palm oil and crude soyabean oil, arguing that the ban has left businesses exposed to greater price volatility.

Coal India floats tender seeking bids from pvt players for e-auction

PTI ■ KOLKATA

Despite having switched to its internal e-auction platform in January this year, Coal India Ltd (CIL) has floated a tender seeking bids from private service providers to conduct e-auctions of the dry fuel for its subsidiaries over the next two years, officials said on Monday. This move has left external e-auction service providers, such as MSTC and mjunction, who have managed CIL's auctions through electronic platforms for nearly two decades, confused and they were seeking more clarity before deciding whether to participate in the tender, stakeholders said. The deadline for submission of bids is November 27.

CIL had engaged its subsidiary CMPDI to develop an internal coal e-auction system in collaboration with the National Informatics Centre (NIC), the officials said. The internal platform was successfully transitioned in January 2024 after conducting successful trials in 2023. "However, there have been complaints about the system's performance, prompting Coal India to seek external platforms for its e-auctions," an official told PTI. CIL's coal volume through the e-auction platform was estimated to reach around 60 million tonnes by September 2024. "Engaging service providers to conduct e-auction is aimed at having more options at hand. CIL should



be in a position to respond to changing market and consumer requirements," another Coal India official said. The new engagement with external service providers is expected to begin in April next year after the current contracts with service providers expire in March, he

said. There is speculation within the industry regarding the future role of CIL's internal e-auction platform. "We want to engage more firms to conduct coal auctions alongside our own platform to ensure smooth sales. The CMPDI platform will also continue to

function," the senior CIL official said. External service providers have expressed concerns about the new tender and are seeking clarity on the scope of work, especially given the CIL's reliance on its internal system. "We've sought greater clarity on the expected business in the tender, as our revenue depends on the number of auctions we conduct. Currently, most e-auctions are being handled internally by CIL. It remains unclear whether external providers will serve merely as a backup or whether there will be an assured revenue model. We have not yet decided whether to participate or not," said a top official from one of the two main service providers, requesting anonymity.

India's GenAI ecosystem soars with 6 times growth in Q2FY25 amid global slump: Nasscom report

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

India's Generative AI ecosystem has grown remarkably amid a global downturn, recording an impressive 6 times growth in quarterly investments driven by B2B and productivity solutions, according to a report by IT industry body Nasscom. Nasscom on Monday released the "Generative AI Tracker: Tech Industry Activity in Q2FY2025" report that revealed a robust rebound in funding and innovation within India's Generative AI landscape. "Indian GenAI startup funding, at about USD 51 million in

Q2FY2025, saw over 6 times rise quarter-on-quarter, led by B2B and agentic AI startups. Funding rounds continued to rise, with Q2FY2025 registering a record 20 rounds, after a tepid Q1. "GenAI applications garnered most funding, however, per-stage funding got capped lower due to no model funding in Q2," the report said. On the contrary, global GenAI startup funding, at about USD 4 billion in Q2FY2025, hit the lower circuit with a 2.3 times quarter-on-quarter (q-o-q) drop from Q1, the report revealed. Most major and mid-sized Indian tech companies have been

releasing GenAI platforms since early 2023. These platforms are gradually being offered with multimodal, multi-model data, AI, and cloud integration ecosystems. With more and more tech providers prioritising partnerships and advanced skilling, partnerships in the industry surged by 25 per cent sequentially, focusing on product enhancements, joint go-to-market strategies, and government-led skilling initiatives. This strategic pivot has led to improved revenue pipelines and stronger realizations from active Proofs of Concept (PoCs), the



study said. Companies are moving beyond basic AI literacy to focus on advanced and thematic upskilling that integrates platform capabilities and agentic AI functionalities. The evolution of the Indian GenAI ecosystem from experimental use cases to scalable, production-ready solutions is reflected in its growing maturity, Nasscom said, adding that improved finance inflows, more revenue realisations, and growing applications in customer interaction and enterprise productivity are the main drivers

of this expansion. "The generative AI landscape is evolving rapidly, reshaping technology service providers and unlocking new capabilities. Providers are re-evaluating strategies and increasing investments in technology and talent. Q2FY2025 marked a key shift in India's GenAI space, with funding focused on impactful applications that enhance productivity. Future success will rely on strategic innovations, pilot project results, and lessons learned along the way," Sangeeta Gupta, Senior Vice President and Chief Strategy Officer at Nasscom, said.

Emma McKeon retires from swimming

AP ■ SYDNEY
Emma McKeon, Australia's most decorated Olympian, announced her retirement from competitive swimming on Monday. McKeon holds the Australian record of 14 Olympic medals — six of them gold — won over three Summer Olympics, while her seven-medal haul at Tokyo 2020 is the most ever by a female swimmer at a single Games and equal most for any female athlete from any sport at a single Olympics. The 30-year-old McKeon had previously hinted that the 2024 Paris Games — where she won gold in the 4 x 100m freestyle relay — would be her final Olympics, but she had not said whether she would continue to swim competitively. "I am proud of myself for giving my swimming career absolutely everything, both physically and mentally. I wanted to see what I was capable of, and I did," McKeon said on social media. "Swimming has given me so much.



From the dream igniting at 5 years old, right through to my third Olympic games - I have so many lessons, experiences, friendships and memories that I am so thankful for." McKeon's 14 medals came across the Rio 2016, Tokyo 2020 and Paris 2024 Games, with six Olympic gold, three silver and five bronze. She's second only to Katie Ledecky in terms of Olympic swimming gold medals won. The American has won nine across four Olympics in her tally of 14. "Emma has added her own incredible chapter to Australia's history at the Olympic Games," Australian Olympic Committee President Ian Chesterman said in a written statement. "Emma has been an extraordinary athlete who has etched herself a special place in Australian sporting landscape, particularly through her success at the Olympics. "Her performances during Tokyo were particularly stunning. Emma is recognised not just in Australia, but around the world, as one of the greatest Olympians ever.



Hockey great Ashok Kumar suffers heart attack; to undergo angioplasty

PTI ■ NEW DELHI
Former India hockey player and son of legendary Major Dhyana Chand, Ashok Kumar suffered a heart attack after being hospitalised here for discomfort in chest but is now stable and out of danger, sources in his family said on Monday. The 74-year-old will undergo an angioplasty later on Monday. "He (Ashok Kumar) felt discomfort in chest yesterday (Sunday) evening. He was then taken to Escorts Hospital where angiography was performed. The angiography results showed there were a few blockages. The doctors will implant stents today," family sources told PTI. "He is out of danger and in a stable condition."

The former inside-right player, who was known for his ball control, was a member of the Indian team that won the 1975 World Cup under Ajit Pal Singh. He was also a member of Indian team that won a bronze medal in the 1972 Munich Olympics. He became a recipient of the Arjuna Award in 1974 and, in 1975, scored the winning goal against Pakistan to achieve India's only win in the World Cup. Kumar was awarded the Hockey India Major Dhyana Chand Lifetime Achievement Award earlier this year. His other accomplishments include two more World Cup medals (bronze in 1971 Barcelona and silver in 1973 Amsterdam), besides three Asia Games silver medals (1970 Bangkok, 1974 Tehran and 1978 Bangkok).

Davis Cup: Jannik Sinner leads Italy past the Netherlands for its second consecutive title

AP ■ MALAGA (SPAIN)
Italy went nearly a quarter-century without winning the Davis Cup. Then along came Jannik Sinner, and now the country is celebrating its second consecutive title. The No. 1-ranked Sinner clinched the championship in the annual team event and capped his breakthrough season by beating Tallon Griekspoor 7-6 (2), 6-2 on Sunday for a 2-0 win over the Netherlands in the final of the Davis Cup. "Coming back as defending champions and winning again — it's one of the best feelings I think for all of us," Sinner said. "We are very happy to lift this trophy and, of course, also to go into the pre-season with a bunch of confidence boosts."



mates rushed onto the court to begin the party, wrapping their arms around one another and bouncing in unison. Volandri grabbed Sinner and lifted him off the ground. It was clear who was key to this success. Sinner went 4-0 in Malaga, including a victory in doubles with Berrettini against Argentina in the quarterfinals. Berrettini played a vital role, too, after replacing Lorenzo Musetti for singles. Berrettini was the runner-up at Wimbledon in 2021 but since then went through a series of injuries and illnesses that have limited his playing time. He has spoken about the mental challenges he faced. "I didn't miss the wins or the losses," Berrettini said. "I missed these moments." He needed some time to find his groove against the 80th-ranked van de Zandschulp. But Berrettini took control by grabbing the opening set's last three games, and Sinner left his front-row seat behind Italy's bench to head to the locker room and prepare to close the deal. He hit 15 aces against the 40th-ranked Griekspoor and stretched his unbeaten streak in tour-level singles competition to 14 matches and 26 sets, including a title at the ATP Finals a week ago. Sinner's ascension is one of the year's biggest stories in tennis. He went 73-6 with eight singles titles in 2024, with his first two Grand Slam trophies at the Australian Open and the U.S. Open. The latter came shortly after he was cleared of wrongdoing in a doping case connected to two positive tests for steroids in March; the World Anti-Doping Agency's appeal of that ruling is still pending. The Netherlands reached the Davis Cup final for the first time. "We believed," Dutch captain Paul Haarhuis said about the Italians, "we could beat them." Until last year, Italy's only Davis Cup triumph came in 1976. So Volandri said he told his players to think of their goal this way: "We want to make history." Griekspoor, who fell to 0-6 against Sinner, held his own

until the first-set tiebreaker, which was preceded by dueling chants of "Italia! Italia!" and "Let's go, Tallon! Let's go!" Sinner was steadier, more ready for the moment, and he built a substantial lead before ending it with an ace.

Sindhu, Lakshya eye titles at Syed Modi International

PTI ■ LUCKNOW
PV Sindhu and Lakshya Sen will aim to end their title droughts when they spearhead India's challenge at the Syed Modi International Super 300 badminton tournament starting here on Tuesday. Fresh off a semifinal finish in their comeback tournament post the Paris Olympics, Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty, the former world No. 1 doubles pair, enter as favourites in the men's doubles category. Sindhu, a two-time Olympic medallist, last clinched a title at the Singapore Open in 2022, while Lakshya, a 2021 World Championships bronze-medallist, won the Canada Open in 2023. The 29-year-old Sindhu reached the final of the Malaysia Masters earlier this year but has struggled to find her peak form. Lakshya, 23, showed promise with semifinal finishes at the All England Championship, French Open, and Paris Olympics, where he lost the bronze playoff from a strong position to Malaysia's Lee Zii Jia. Both shuttlers have endured mixed fortunes since their Olympic outings. Lakshya faced early exits at the Arctic Open, Denmark Open, and Kumamoto Masters before recovering to an extent with a quarterfinal finish at the China Masters, avenging his Olympic loss to Lee in the process. Lakshya starts his campaign here against a qualifier, hoping to reclaim his spot on the podium. Sindhu, meanwhile, has battled inconsistency, with a shock first-round loss to Canada's Michelle Li in Finland and subsequent defeats at the Denmark Open and Kumamoto Masters.

She opens her campaign against compatriot Anmol Kharb, a 17-year-old rising star who has impressed with titles at the Belgium and Poland International Challenge events this year. The clash between the seasoned Sindhu and the prodigious Kharb promises to be an intriguing one, symbolising the generational shift in Indian badminton. In men's singles, second seed Priyanshu Rajawat is a strong contender alongside Lakshya. The 22-year-old from Dhar has shown promise on the international circuit, including a fighting performance at the China Masters. Other Indian hopefuls include third seed Kiran George, 2023 World Junior Championships bronze-medallist Ayush Shetty, Odisha Masters winner Sathish Karunakaran, and national champion Chirag Sen. The women's singles draw also looks competitive, with second seed Malvika Bansod aiming to better her runner-up finish in the 2022 edition. Third seed Aakarshi Kashyap, sixth seed Rakshitaa Sree Santhosh Ramraj, and fifth seed Anupama Upadhyaya are among others eyeing glory. Isharani Baruah, who has clinched titles at the Sri Lanka International, Dutch International, and India International, along with Devika Sihag, will also hope for a good outing. Unnati Hooda, a winner at the 2023 Abu Dhabi Masters, is another player to watch out for. In women's doubles, the top-seeded duo of Ashwini Ponnappa and Tanisha Crasto, along with second seeds Gayatri Gopichand and Treasa Jolly, are strong title contenders, with a potential all-Indian final on the cards.

Mumbai City FC eye third straight win against Punjab FC

PTI ■ MUMBAI
Mumbai City FC will face Punjab FC as the Islanders aim to go above the visitors in this crucial fixture of the Indian Super League here on Tuesday. Punjab FC have cruised to four victories from seven games to accumulate 12 points and be at the fifth spot in the standings, whereas Mumbai City FC are ninth in the table with 10 points to their name. The gap among teams is so narrow at this point that a victory here can propel the Petr Kratky-coached team above Punjab FC and bring

them straight back into the reckoning for the top-six. While it's also too early into the campaign to discuss point table scenarios, it also serves as a reminder to put the focus on the process. At this moment, both Punjab FC and Mumbai City FC have taken ample learning from their outings thus far and would want to fix that to get their units functioning both cohesively and consistently moving forward. The overall playing strategy of Mumbai City FC has been consistent of late and that involves building pressure onto the opponents through their passing sequences.

They average 329.9 successful passes this season, which is the highest amongst all teams, and their completion rate of 81.2 per cent is also the highest in the league. The Islanders won both their matches against Punjab FC last season, which was also the first campaign in the competition for the latter. Among all teams, Punjab FC have allowed the fewest touches (102) inside their box. They have also permitted only 36 shot attempts from within their 18-yard area. Punjab FC have been at the receiving end of defeats in each of their last two matches in the ISL.

Lasha Shavdatuashvili urges more competitions to develop judo in India

PTI ■ CHENNAI
Legendary Georgian judoka and Olympic gold medalist Lasha Shavdatuashvili believes the lack of a strong judo ecosystem in India is hindering the sport's growth as he urged the need for increased exposure. India has achieved notable milestones, including a bronze medal by Poonam Chopra way back at the 1994 Asian Games in Hiroshima, as well as four podium finishes at the 2014 Glasgow Commonwealth Games with Sushila Likmabam and Navjot Chana each winning a silver.

At the Olympics, Indian judokas have consistently qualified since London 2012, yet progress has remained limited as the 32-year-old two-time former world champion urged for an overall development of the sport in the country. "In my opinion, the approach had to be changed, so that the sportsman had to participate in as many competitions as possible, in order to progress, in order to achieve some trend," the Georgian, who had won gold at the London 2012 Olympics in men's 66kg category, told PTI in an interview. "Once you have four-five world



champions every year, that means there is competition inside the country. So, in this case, there will be good progress inside the country. "But before that, participating in different competitions is essential," added Shavdatuashvili, who is also a silver and bronze medalist at Tokyo and Rio Olympics respectively. "It's like a plant. If you don't water a plant, no matter how strong it is, soon or later it will die. That's why it is the same for the sportsman, the competition is as water for plants." Emulate Japan Describing Japan as the mother land of judo, the Georgian said he frequently trains in Japan to gain experience.

"You know, it's possible to achieve very serious success. "I myself, as I said, I'm going to different competitions, to different countries, and I would make this name in Japan. "You know that Japan is the mother of Judo, and I even stay sometimes a couple of months over there, and it gives me a huge experience... You can create great achievement and achieve great success." The star judoka visited India to conduct a Masterclass on the sport at the Inspire Institute of Sport, Bellary in Karnataka. "Judo can match wrestling success"

Indian Bank		INDIAN BANK BIMR Branch: Gwalior	
APPENDIX - IV (Rule-8(1)) POSSESSION NOTICE (for immovable property)			
Whereas, the undersigned being the Authorised Officer of the Indian Bank under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of the powers conferred under section 13 (12) read with rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued a demand notice to the below mentioned Borrowers & Guarantors, calling upon the borrowers and also the owner of the property/Surety to repay the dues within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice.			
The Borrowers/Guarantors / owners of the property having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the owner of property and the public in general that the undersigned has taken Possession of the movable/immovable property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him/her under section 13 (4) of the said act read with rule 9 of the said rules on the date mentioned against the borrowers.			
The Borrowers and Guarantors / owners of the property in particulars and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the properties and any dealings with the properties will be subject to the charge of the Indian Bank, BIMR Branch, Gwalior for the amount mentioned against the borrowers and interest thereon, costs etc. The borrower's attention is invited to the provisions of sub-section 8 of Sec 13 of the Act, in respect of time available, to redeem the secured assets.			
Name of the Borrower/ Guarantor	Amount Outstanding	Demand Notice Dt. Possession Date	Description of Movable / Immovable Property
Borrower: Shri Rajendra Prasad and Mr. Ravi Jataw	₹ 1781284.96 + Interest & other Charges	29/05/2024 20/11/2024	All that part and parcel of the property consisting of Municipal No.61/721, Ward No.61, Patwari Halka No.113 Old No.52 in Survey No.1527 Min 1 of Village Khurri, Madhuvanihar Colony, Morar within the Registration sub-district Gwalior And District Gwalior measuring total of 1000 sqft in the name of Mr.Rajendra Prasad S/o Shri Jwala Prasad Boundaries: North - Property of Kaptan Singh, South - Road, East -Property of Kaptan Singh, West-Property of Kaptan Singh
Borrower: Mr.Naveen Singh Gurjar and Mr.Bhagat Singh Gurjar and Guarantor: Mr.Akash Rana	₹ 521427.26 + Interest & other Charges	11/06/2024 20/11/2024	All that part and parcel of the property bearing No.26/846, Ward No.26, in Survey No.572/Min7 of Patwari halka No.92 of Village Morar near Adarsh Gausahala MORAR within the Registration sub-district Gwalior and District Gwalior (MP) measuring total area of 1200 Sqft in the name of Naveen Singh Gurjar S/o Gajraj Singh Gurjar, Owner of Property:- Naveen Singh Gurjar S/o Gajraj Singh Gurjar Boundaries: North - Property of others, South-Property of others, East-Common road/way, West - Plot of Rajak
Place: Gwalior, Date: 20/11/2024			Authorised Officer, (Indian Bank)

Aadhar Housing Finance Ltd.
Corporate Office: Unit No. 802, Natraj Rustomjee, Western Express Highway and M.V. Road, Andheri (East), Mumbai - 400069
Bhopal Branch: Office No.1, Plot No. 200, 1 St.Floor, Jyoti Cineplex, M.P. Nagar, Zone-1 Bhopal-462001, (Madhya Pradesh)
Sagar Branch: 1st Floor, Sakhi Baba Matrix, Makronia road, Sagar - 470004 (Madhya Pradesh)
Guna Branch: P. H. No. - 75, Building 1st Floor, in front of Hero Showroom, Near IICICI Bank, Mahaveerpura, AB road, Guna - 473001 (Madhya Pradesh)

POSSESSION NOTICE Appendix IV (for immovable property)				
Whereas, the undersigned being the Authorized Officer of Aadhar Housing Finance Limited (AHFL) under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act 2002 and in exercise of powers conferred under section 13(12) read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002, Demand Notice(s) issued by the Authorised Officer of the company to the Borrower(s) / Guarantor(s) mentioned herein below to repay the amount mentioned in the notice within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice. The borrower having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the Borrower(s) / Guarantor(s) and the public in general that the undersigned has taken possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him under Sub-Section (4) of the Section 13 of the said Act read with Rule 8 of the Security Interest Enforcement rules, 2002. The borrower's attention is invited to provisions of sub section (8) of section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available, to redeem the secured assets. The borrower in particular and the public in general are hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of AHFL for an amount as mentioned herein under with interest thereon.				
S. N.	Name of the Borrower(s)/ Co. Borrower(s) (Name of the Branch)	Description of Secured Asset (Immovable Property)	Demand Notice Date & Amount	Date of Possession
1	(Loan Code No. 00600002931 / Bhopal Branch) Jhanak Singh (Borrower), Dhan Bai & Laxman Singh Rajput (Co-Borrowers), Sanju Rajput (Guarantor)	All that part & parcel of property bearing, KH 163 166 167 170 171 176 193 Plot No 590 Turupati Vatika Colony Village Kalyanpur Near Transport Nagar Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh, 462010 Boundaries: East- Plot No. 602, West- Road, North- Plot No. 589, South - Plot No. 591	08-05-2024 & ₹ 3,12,091/-	23-11-2024
2	(Loan Code No. 00600004244 / Bhopal Branch) Late. Neelesh Sen (Represented Through the legal heir) (Borrower), Chinta Bai (Co-Borrower)	All that part & parcel of property bearing, Part of Kha No.280 1 KA NEW Highway City Plot No.55 Highway City Village Islam Nagar Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh, 462010. Boundaries: East- Road, West- Plot No. 93, North- Plot No. 56, South - Plot No. 54	08-05-2024 & ₹ 4,21,779/-	23-11-2024
3	(Loan Code No. 02300001335/ Sagar Branch) Late. Vishal Singh Ghosi (Represented through the legal heir) (Borrower), Geetarani (Co-Borrower)	All that part & parcel of property bearing, Khasra No. 299/ 23 Vill. Rehli Khas. Ph. 21 New Ph. No. 20 Ric Rehli Ward No.03 Shirram Ward Tehsil Rehli District Sagar MP Boundaries: East- Plot of Shubham Pateriya, West- Plot of Chaturbhuj S/o Chote Kurmi, North- Rest Land of Seller, South - 12 Ft Wide Road	06-09-2024 & ₹ 1,15,534/-	22-11-2024
4	(Loan Code No. 02300001497/ Sagar Branch) Subrati Khan (Borrower), Husen Kha (Co-Borrower)	All that part & parcel of property bearing, Khasra No. 393/ 23 Situated At Mouja Rehli Khas At Present Saroj Nayadu Ward Rehli Tehsil Rehli District Sagar Boundaries: East- Road, West- Plot of Sikander, North- Rest Land of Seller, South - Common Way	06-09-2024 & ₹ 3,13,580/-	22-11-2024
5	(Loan Code No. 05800000430/ Guna Branch) Amar Singh Advansi (Borrower), Guddade Bai (Co-Borrower), Kalu Ram Banjara (Guarantor)	All that part & parcel of property bearing, Land Survey No. 1175/1 situated at village, Aron P.H.20 The. Aron District Guna M.P Boundaries: East- Govt Land, West- Rest Part of Survey No. 1175/1 Min-01, North- Land of Bhura, South - Land of Survey No. 1174	06-09-2024 & ₹ 6,48,351/-	22-11-2024
Place : Madhya Pradesh			Authorised Officer Aadhar Housing Finance Limited	
Date : 26-11-2024				

I automatically want to put myself in tough scenarios: Jasprit Bumrah

PTI ■ PERTH
Jasprit Bumrah said on Monday that he relishes absorbing the pressure in tight situations as captain and bowler which can make the job of his less experienced colleagues much easier. The ace pacer was India's standout bowler with an eight-wicket haul in the Perth Test, shaping India's humongous 295-run drubbing of Australia. "Whenever the tough scenarios come, I look at myself to see how I can contribute, even when I'm not the captain. So, whenever tough scenarios are there, I look at answers — if I'm going to bowl at this moment, what can I do? I automatically want to put myself in tough scenarios," said Bumrah in the post-match press conference here. His fighting spirit found resonance in young bowlers like Harshit Rana and Nitish Kumar Reddy as all contributed at crucial junctures at the Optus Stadium. "I was trying to put myself in

that tough scenario to make the job a little bit easier for the new guys coming in. Because, you know, it's not very easy in the first tour to take a lot of responsibility. "So, I was trying to do that and very happy to be on the positive side," he added. Despite the historic win, Bumrah will have to vacate the top seat when Rohit Sharma returns for the Adelaide Test to lead India. So, how will he tackle a rather personal tough spot? Bumrah offered a cheeky reply. "I'm not going to tell him that I'm going to leave (captaincy)," he said. Going more matter of fact, the 30-year-old said: "I said that in the previous press conference as well, he's the captain and he's done a phenomenal job. I was filling in for him. "I had discussions when he was in India, you know, discussing how we are shaping up. But, yeah, But, yeah, I'm going to help him in whatever capacity I can," he noted. However, Bumrah was quite chuffed to see his side



responding to a marshy situation after getting bundled out for 150 in the first innings. The Indian bowlers struck

back to skittle the Aussies for 104 in their first essay. "I am very proud of the team. We were put under pressure in the first innings when we

were bowled out for 150. But then, you know, the team showed character and didn't lose belief. So, that is something that will be really

special for us. "Obviously, in this game, there are a lot of positives for us. You know, we scored a lot of runs in the second innings.

New guys coming in, also chipping in with a lot of runs. Of course, Virat scoring a 100 as well is a great sign for us," he added. So, what was the plan of the Indian bowling unit to be successful on the Perth pitch? "There was some health on the wicket. So, I want to make the batters play as much as I can because the new ball is crucial over here. So, with the wicket having dents in it, the ball would seam around." Bumrah said the key for his bowlers was not to get desperate to bag wickets even in helpful conditions. "Sometimes when you are bowled out for a lower score, you can be a little too desperate and try too much to get wickets. When you try too much here, it doesn't really help and the run scoring goes high. So, we had to be nice and disciplined." The 30-year-old pacer was delighted to see his colleagues adjusting to the Perth length very quickly to make an impact. "Usually in Perth, there could be a scenario when we come

from India, you tend to bowl a little short because you can get excited by the bounce and you can't find the length. It looks good when you bowl a back of length delivery and the batsman gets beaten, but the batsman is still there. "So, you have to find the right length. We were focusing on our strength. We as a bowling unit got a lot of dismissals through LBW and caught behind. So, yeah, we realised that, you have to stick to your strengths and find the right length and we were able to do that," he explained. However, Bumrah reminded the team that they needed to start afresh in the second Test since it would be the Pink Ball Test, starting from December 6 at Adelaide. "Adelaide might be totally different. It's a pink ball. So, yes, you can take the confidence from here. But, again, you have to start from zero. You have to build on this confidence. "You have to take learnings from this game as well. So we're going to take it in our stride and, you know, put our best foot forward," he noted.

Harshit Rana, Nitish Reddy prove detractors wrong

PTI ■ PERTH
Skipper Jasprit Bumrah was highly impressed by the fearless attitude and maturity of Harshit Rana and Nitish Kumar Reddy, saying he never got the feeling that the two youngsters were playing in Australia for the first time. Their selection was viewed with raised eyebrows in the run-up to the first Test in Perth, but they silenced the doubters, chipping in their own way in India's massive 295-run win over the Aussies. "When they made their debut, the biggest positive sign was that they were not nervous at all. It didn't feel like they were playing for the

first time in Australia or it was their first match," Bumrah said in the post-match press conference here on Monday. Rana took the prized wicket of Travis Head in the first innings with a gem of a delivery and was even not hesitant to exchange a few words with veteran Mitchell Starc, despite them being team-mates at the Kolkata Knight Riders during the IPL 2024. Nitish made nerveless 41 and 38 across two innings here, knocks that belied his lack of sufficient exposure in First-Class cricket. "If you are scared, then your fear will not go away. So, that is a very positive sign for me



that they are not afraid and have a lot of desire to learn. "They have started very well and hopefully, they will do well in the future as well," added Bumrah. The pace talisman said the two young players were more than happy to handle the responsibility once they were informed of their debut.

"They themselves were looking for responsibility. When you talk to them... they are more than ready. They were looking for responsibility. So, that is a very positive sign for our team. "All the youngsters who are coming (in), they are very hungry. They have a lot of faith in their ability. So, if that happens, then you can learn skills," he said. Similarly, Yashasvi Jaiswal was also playing his first Test Down Under but the left-hander left an indelible impression with a remarkable 161. Bumrah said it was the best Test innings in Jaiswal's fledgling career because the

22-year-old showed a lot of self-restraint. "If I had to choose a man of the match, I would choose Jaiswal. I think this was his best Test knock so far because, you know, he has an attacking nature. But in that second innings, he left certain balls, he took his time and batted deep. That gives us a lot of confidence. "He showed that he has patience as well and he's ready to adapt and change. That is a brilliant sign for Indian cricket that a batsman is able to adapt so early in his career," said Bumrah. The 30-year-old also did not forget the role KL Rahul played as an opener.

Getting Ishan Kishan a huge deal for us, nothing could offset Nattu's loss: Vettori

PTI ■ JEDDAH
Sunrisers Hyderabad head coach Daniel Vettori was most excited about securing Ishan Kishan on day one of the IPL mega auction here but admitted that losing T Natarajan to Delhi Capitals was a setback. Kishan, who made his name at the Mumbai Indians, was sold to SRH for Rs 11.25 crore on Sunday. The left-arm batter has had a tumultuous year, having lost his place in the Indian team as well as a BCCI central contract for defying the board's diktat to

play domestic cricket. However, he is back playing Ranji Trophy. SRH bought as many as eight players on day one including pacers Mohammed Shami (Rs 10 crore) and Harshal Patel (Rs 8 crore). However, they were not able to buy back T Natarajan and Vettori said nobody could offset the loss of the left-arm pacer. SRH had retained five players ahead of the auction including skipper Pat Cummins, Travis Head, Abhishek Sharma, Heinrich Klaasen and Nitish Reddy. "Nothing sets off Nattu's loss

(smiles). Every team goes through it, whether you try and find the players early and...Pounce on opportunities or you try and wait for the back end," said Vettori in a media interaction. Natarajan was bought by Delhi Capitals for Rs 10.75 crore. "We decided today to try and sense an opportunity when they came along and Mohammad Shami was one and then Harshal Patel, they were two guys that we potentially didn't think would go for those prices (bargain buys).

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