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ADANI ISSUE TO HEAT UP WINTER SESSION

DEEPAK KUMAR JHA ■
NEW DELHI

A massive political storm erupted in India soon after Billionaire industrialist Gautam Adani was charged by United States prosecutors over his role in an alleged scheme to pay USD 250 million bribe to Indian officials in exchange for favourable terms for solar power contracts. It may be a coincidence that some of the major controversies, including the latest one, and the ones that came before it such as 'Hindenburg, Pegasus, Soros' have surfaced just before the beginning of a Parliament session. This time, the Winter Session begins on Monday, with the Opposition announcing to raise the issue during the session while ruling

Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) calling it preparation for another 'drama' to stall proceedings of yet another important Session. While the BJP said all the states mentioned in the indictment were at that time ruled by Opposition parties, Congress led INDIA Bloc partners have demanded immediate arrest of Adani. The Adani group has denied charges of paying bribes to secure favourable terms for solar power contracts, saying the allegations by US prosecutors are baseless and the conglomerate is compliant with all laws. It said all possible legal recourse will be sought. According to agency reports from New York, United States prosecutors charged Adani and his nephew Sagar and other defendants for paying over USD 250 million in



Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi and Congress leader Jairam Ramesh address a press conference in New Delhi
Photo: Ranjan Dimri/The Pioneer

bribes between 2020 and 2024 to Indian government officials to win solar energy contracts on terms that could potentially bring in more than USD 2 billion in profit. This, they alleged, was concealed from the US banks and investors from whom the Adani group raised

billions of dollars for the project. US law allows pursuing foreign corruption allegations if they involve certain links to American investors or markets. The indictment has thrown Adani Group in yet another financial trouble after it suffered a jolt by US short seller Hindenburg Research's damning fraud allegations. Senior Congress leader Rahul Gandhi demanded immediate arrest of Gautam Adani. Addressing a Press conference Rahul said it is now pretty clear and established in the US that the businessman has broken Indian as well as American laws. Rahul also demanded Adani's "protector" and SEBI chairperson Madhabi Puri Buch be removed from her post and a probe should be initiated.



Photo: Ranjan Dimri/The Pioneer

From 'severe' to 'very poor'

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

New Delhi's air quality saw a slight improvement on Thursday, moving from the 'severe' category to 'very poor'. The city had been experiencing hazardous air quality for several days. The Centre has announced staggered working timings for its employees in view of the severe air pollution here. Meanwhile, the restrictions imposed under the Stage IV of the Graded Response Action Plan (GRAP) by the Commission for Air Quality Management (CAQM) which bans BS-3 and BS-4 diesel vehicles, has disrupted travel and transportation, particularly for those engaged in the wedding business. The National Capital emerged as the most polluted city in India, recording an average PM2.5 level of 243.3 micrograms per cubic metre air (µg/m³), with pollution surging by 19.5 per cent in week-on-week increase. The Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT), employees have also been asked to pool vehicles and use public transport to minimise vehicular pollution. These measures may be adopted by ministries/departments/organisations as per their functional requirements ensuring that it should not have an adverse impact on efficiency and productivity in any manner," the order read. The order said offices can be open from 9 am to 5.30 pm and 10 am to 6.30 pm. The move assumes significance as a body representing the Central Secretariat Service (CSS) officers had, on November 18, demanded work-from-home, staggered working hours and air purifiers in all office buildings to mitigate the health impact of the severe pollution levels. A thin blanket of smog continued to envelop the National Capital Region (NCR), including Delhi, Noida, Ghaziabad, and Gurugram. According to the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB), the Air Quality Index (AQI) in Delhi was recorded at 371. A data from AQICN.Org showed AQI of 569 at Delhi Institute of Tool Engineering and 479 at Satyawati College monitoring stations.



Set up courtroom in Tihar: SC on Yasin Malik case

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■
NEW DELHI

Pointing out that "how can cross examination be done online," the Supreme Court on Thursday indicated that it may set up a courtroom inside Tihar Jail for the trial of Jammu and Kashmir separatist leader Yasin Malik in a kidnapping case. A Bench of Justices Abhay S Oka and Augustine George Masih was hearing a Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) plea against the September 20, 2022 order of a Jammu trial court that directed Malik, serving life term in Tihar jail, to be produced before it physically to cross-examine the prosecution witnesses in the kidnapping case of Rubaiya Sayeed, daughter of politician Mufti Mohammad Sayeed. Observing that even Ajmal Kasab was given fair trial, the bench, however, remarked, "How will cross-examination be done online? There is hardly any connectivity in Jammu... In our country, a fair trial was given even to Ajmal Kasab and legal assistance was given to him in the high court." The Bench told Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, representing the CBI, to take instructions on the total number of witnesses in the case. Mehta pointed out security concerns and said Malik couldn't be taken to Jammu for the trial. The law officer accused Malik of "playing tricks" for having asked to appear personally and not engaging a lawyer.

Mehta said Malik was not an ordinary criminal and showed a purported photograph of Malik sharing the dais with terrorist Hafiz Saeed. The Supreme Court said it could order a trial to take place inside the jail besides asking the judge to come to the national capital for the proceedings. The Bench, however, noted all the accused had to be heard before it passes an order. Mehta said Malik physically appearing in the Supreme Court had raised security concerns previously. Later many jail officials faced suspension and notice for this goof up. The Bench said Malik could be allowed to appear virtually in the apex court proceedings and posted the matter on November 28. Malik, serving life sentence in a terror-funding case, was brought to the high-security apex court premises in a prison van escorted by armed security personnel without the court's permission. The CBI said Malik, the top leader of the Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front, was a threat to national security and cannot be allowed to be taken outside the Tihar jail premises. On September 20, 2022, a special TADA court in Jammu directed Malik to be physically produced before it on the next hearing for him to cross-examine prosecution witnesses in the kidnapping case. The CBI challenged the trial court order before the Supreme Court as appeals in TADA cases are only heard by the top court.

Ukraine says Russia launched intercontinental missile

AP ■ KYIV

Ukraine says Russia launched an intercontinental ballistic missile overnight targeting Dnipro city in the central-east of the country, which, if confirmed, would be the first time Moscow has used such a missile in the war. In a statement Thursday on the Telegram messaging app, Ukraine's air force did not specify the exact type of missile, but said it was launched from Russia's Astrakhan region, which borders the Caspian Sea. It said an intercontinental ballistic missile was fired at Dnipro city along with eight other missiles, and that the Ukrainian military shot down six of them.



Two people were wounded as a result of the attack, and an industrial facility and a rehabilitation centre for people with disabilities were damaged, according to local officials. While the range of an ICBM would seem excessive for use against Ukraine, such missiles are designed to carry nuclear warheads, and the use of one would serve as a chilling reminder of Russia's nuclear capability and a powerful message of potential escalation. The attack comes two days after Russian President Vladimir Putin signed a revised nuclear doctrine that formally lowers the threshold for the country's use of nuclear weapons. Ukraine on Tuesday fired several American-supplied longer-range missiles and reportedly fired UK-made Storm Shadows on Wednesday into Russia. The Russian Defence Ministry said in a statement Thursday that its air defence systems shot down two British-made Storm Shadow missiles, six HIMARS rockets, and 67 drones. The announcement came in the ministry's daily roundup regarding the military actions in Ukraine.

Prez Murmu hails Mahtab's contributions



At his 125th birth anniversary event in Delhi

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

President Droupadi Murmu on Thursday hailed freedom fighter and former Odisha Chief Minister late Dr Harekrushna Mahtab as an inspirational leader whose legacy would continue to inspire people in the future. In her address at an event held at the Vigyan Bhawan here to mark the 125th birth anniversary of Mahtab, she also recalled the literary works produced by him even while he was imprisoned during the

freedom struggle. Dr Mahtab, popularly known as 'Utkal Keshari', was imprisoned for taking part in the Salt Satyagraha launched at the call of Mahatma Gandhi, the President recalled. In 1942, during the Quit India Movement, he was again imprisoned along with other nationalist leaders. At Ahmednagar Fort Jail where he spent a long time, Mahtab and other leaders "turned the jail into a learning centre", Murmu said. During his incarceration, he wrote many poems, stories and novels and also authored the book 'Orissa Itihas', she added. A special commemorative stamp and a coin were also released on the occasion. Union Minister of Education Dharmendra Pradhan, Union Minister of Culture and Tourism Gajendra Singh Shekhawat and Odisha Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi also attended the event. Pradhan said it is a matter of delight that the Odisha Government has taken a decision to hold year-long celebrations to mark the 125th anniversary of Mahtab. Member of Parliament from Cuttack and son of Harekrushna Mahtab, Bhartruhari Mahtab also attended the programme.

10 held for attack on Dharmasala MLA

Dy CM vows stringent action against culprits

PNS ■ JAJPUR

A day after Dharmasala BJP MLA Himanshu Sahoo was attacked allegedly by BJD organisational secretary Pranab Prakash Das' supporters near the Budhapola area of Jajpur district, police on Thursday arrested 10 persons in this connection. The accused were sent to prison after their bail pleas were rejected by the Jajpur Sub-Divisional Judicial Magistrate (SDJM) Court. The accused were forwarded to the court following health checkups after their ar-

rest. Earlier, the miscreants were arrested following raids at different places by police based on the complaint filed by Himanshu's PSO. As many as three special teams have been formed by Jajpur Police to investigate into the incident. Sahoo has condemned the incident of violent attack on him. In a Presser, he appealed to one and all to cooperate with the police in the investigation process and maintain peace in the area. Taking the name of BJD leader Pranab Prakash Das, Himanshu said BJD hooliganism would not be tolerated in Jajpur. As per reports, MLA Sahoo

was on his way to attend a meeting when he was attacked by alleged supporters of Pranab Das. The attackers thrashed him and snatched his gold chain. They also damaged the MLA's vehicle. However, Pranab Das' brother claimed that it was the MLA who got into a heated argument with the protesters that led to the scuffle. However, Deputy Chief Minister KV Singh Deo said no one involved in the attack would be spared. "Our government will not spare anyone who is involved in the attack. Without any doubt, we will launch a thorough probe and the culprits will be taken to task," Singh Deo said.

Singapore mission Odisha eyes Rs 5 lakh-cr investment

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

Industries Minister Sampad Charan Swain, alongside Chief Secretary Manoj Ahuja, returned here from Singapore on Thursday after discussions on fostering significant industrial partnerships. He told the media that Odisha aims to attract investments amounting to Rs 5 lakh crore within the next five years. Swain remarked that unlike the previous administrations that restricted development to just memorandums of understanding (MoUs), the current government is committed to converting these investment initiatives into real job opportunities for the people of Odisha.



"Led by CM Mohan Majhi, a delegation including senior officials had gone to Singapore and the visit was very fruitful. Our government aims to draw investment worth Rs 5L crore in five years," said Swain. He said, "The CM has directed us to implement the modern technology and facilities in Odisha like in Singapore. Be it green hydrogen, green ammonia, renewable energy, textile, shipbuilding or container manufactur-

Dental surgeon recruitment: HC raps OPSC

Court seeks OPSC Chairman's appearance on Monday
PNS ■ CUTTACK

While hearing a dispute pertaining to the dental surgeon recruitment examination, the Orissa High Court on Thursday directed the Odisha Public Service Commission (OPSC) Chairman to appear in person before the court next Monday. The High Court came down heavily on the OPSC for failing to submit the merit list in the dental surgeon recruitment case despite repeated directives. An advertisement for the recruitment of 198 dental surgeons had been published by the OPSC in 2017-18. After the recruitment process, a merit list was published and as many as 171 applicants were given appointments. However, as per the system of OPSC recruitment, answer sheets were later published and the applicants found that as many as 15 questions that appeared in the examination were wrong. They moved the High Court over the matter. Meanwhile, an expert committee was constituted by the OPSC which said 12 questions were wrong. As per the report of the committee, two more applicants were to be given appointment. The court had also ordered the OPSC to adjust the two applicants in the appointment list. However, it was challenged by the OPSC. Hearing the matter, the High Court had asked the OPSC many times to submit the merit list before it. However, the OPSC failed to produce the list.

In Kandhamal Couple ends lives after fight over mobile phone

PNS ■ PHULBANI

A man and his wife were found hanging allegedly after a fight over mobile phone at Budukiya village under the Balliguda police station in Kandhamal district on Thursday. The deceased were identified as Pramod Malik and his wife Puari Malik. As per information, the woman had brought a smartphone from her father's

house recently. However, her husband took the phone and mortgaged it for buying liquor. Since then, frequent quarrels took place between the two over the mobile phone. As the fight escalated on Wednesday, Puari locked herself in a room of the house and hanged herself from the ceiling. Later, Pramod went to another room in the house and ended his life by hanging. Neighbours heard the loud

cries of the couple's 11-month-old daughter and knocked at their door. As no one opened the door, they became suspicious and looked inside the house through the windows. They were shocked to see the couple hanging from the ceilings of two rooms and informed police about the incident. Police reached the spot and recovered the bodies in the presence of a magistrate and sent them for postmortem.

In Kalahandi 6 get life imprisonment for raping woman

PNS ■ KALAHANDI

Dharmagarh Additional and Sessions Judge Suresh Chandra Pradhan on Wednesday sentenced six persons to life imprisonment for raping a woman five years ago in Kalahandi district. Public Prosecutor Purna Chandra Nag said the convicts are Lalindra Sabar, Labanya Chatria, Anirudha

Chatrria, Prakash Naik, Santa Naik and Amit Naik. Three other accused, who had allegedly shot a video of the crime and made it viral on social media, were released due to lack of evidence. The victim was going home from Bhawanipatna town in September 2019 and at that time, Lalindra Sabar, who was known to the woman, offered her a lift by his motorcycle.

On the way to her residence, the man along with his associates raped the woman in a forest area. They also video-graphed the crime and the video clip was made viral on social media, the Public Prosecutor said. Later, the Junagarh police registered a case on the basis of a complaint lodged by the parents of the woman and arrested the culprits, he added.

In Malkangiri Maoist gunned down during infiltration bid

Arms seized; 1 commando injured
NALINI S AHU ■ MALKANGIRI

A Maoist was killed in a gun battle with security personnel near MV-79 Jindalguda in Malkangiri district on Wednesday during an infiltration bid by the extremists. One security personnel sustained injuries in the exchange of fire and was shifted to hospital. The ultras were trying to cross over into Malkangiri

from Chhattisgarh. After getting information, security forces reached the border, leading to an exchange of fire between them and the Red rebels.

The exchange of fire continued for nearly two hours until one of the Maoists was shot dead and others fled the scene.

DGP YB Khurania said, "Since combing operations in Chhattisgarh have picked up, we are aware that Maoists from Chhattisgarh may try to enter Odisha. To prevent such entries, we are keeping a close

watch on the bordering areas." "We are also exchanging information with other agencies and also with the counterparts in other States. There was some information regarding the possibility of infiltration from the Sukuma district of Chhattisgarh towards Malkangiri. The area was kept under surveillance and an operation was launched to prevent any infiltration. Last night when such infiltration came to our notice, there was an exchange of fire in which

one of our DVF commando has sustained gunshot injuries," he said.

"During the search of the area, one body has been found. One 303 rifle and one country-made weapon have been found and several other materials of the rebels have been found from the spot. The operation is still in progress. Our efforts to identify the body of the deceased are still in progress. We are keeping a close eye on the situation. Right now, the operation is in progress in several locations," the DGP added.

Supplies Officer arrested by Vigilance For disproportionate assets

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

Vigilance officials on Thursday arrested Civil Supplies Officer (CSO), Sonepur, Suresh Kumar Panigrahi, for allegedly amassing huge assets disproportionate to his known sources of income.

The arrest was made after Vigilance sleuths unearthed two buildings, 19 plots and deposits worth Rs 1.72 crore during raids conducted on Wednesday at places linked to Panigrahi.

The CSO was found in possession of disproportionate assets including two build-



ings, a farmhouse spread over 4 acres of land with 500 teak trees, 19 plots including three in Bhubaneswar, four in Sambalpur, one in Balangir and 11 in Bargarh, deposits worth over Rs 1.72 crore, cash of Rs 1.49 lakh, etc., which he could not explain satisfactorily.

Benami investments (properties in the name of others) in a petrol pump, fly ash factory and JCB machine were also suspected.

In Cuttack 2 cattle smugglers nabbed after hot chase



26 cows rescued by cops

PNS ■ CUTTACK

CUTTACK: Police gave a hot chase to cattle smugglers on the Banki T-Bridge of Cuttack district after the latter tried to escape by hurling bombs at the cops on Wednesday night.

Officials from the Baideswar police station made blank firing.

The chase resulted in the detention of two suspects and the rescue of 26 cows.

The cows were being smuggled from Begunia in Khordha district to be sold in

Tigra of Cuttack district. Acting on a tipoff, the police team wanted to apprehend the smugglers, but they tried to escape after hurling bombs, leading to the chase.

After chasing them for more than 15 to 20 km, the cops managed to nab two of the cow smugglers while others managed to escape. In a recent incident, a cow was burnt alive and four others suffered severe burn injuries after a pickup van carrying cattle overturned near Podadiha Square under the Kaptipada police station in Mayurbhanj district on Monday night.

Truck crushes woman to death at Palasuni

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

A woman was crushed to death after being hit by a speeding truck at Palasuni Square in Bhubaneswar on Thursday morning.

The tragic accident occurred at around 10.30 am when the woman was trying to cross the busy road. The identity of the deceased was not ascertained immediately. The driver reportedly ran away with the vehicle from the spot.

Tension prevailed in the area following the accident. Movement of vehicles was disrupted for some time due to a

traffic jam. Hundreds of vehicles remained stranded on the National Highway as locals staged a road blockade demanding construction of a foot over-bridge to avoid such incidents in the area. The Mancheswar police reached the accident spot and pacified the agitators. An investigation into the incident was launched.

Notably, the Palasuni area has virtually turned into a deathtrap for people with frequent accidents taking place. Despite repeated demands by the locals, the authorities are yet to construct a foot over-bridge in the area.

Mini Bali Yatra to illuminate Cuttack every day

As Mahanadi Riverfront Project to commence

SOON

PNS ■ CUTTACK

The plans for the Mahanadi Riverfront Project are advancing steadily with construction expected to commence soon. A Mini Bali Yatra will illuminate Cuttack every day.

Residents no more have to wait for the annual Bali Yatra. They can visit the Mini Bali Yatra that will be held daily. The ambitious project aims to establish permanent attractions, featuring an amusement park set amidst expansive green spaces along with recreational facilities for children. Moreover, a footpath is envisioned to enhance accessibility and enjoyment of the riverfront.

Engagements are underway with various organisations to finalise the development plan for the riverfront. An expert team will conduct a study of Ahmedabad's Sabarmati Riverfront to draw valuable

insights. Subsequently, field assessments will be conducted in the Mahanadi in Cuttack to fine-tune the blueprint.

During his visit to the Cuttack Bali Yatra, Urban Development Minister Krushna Chandra Mahapatra had shared these updates.

The ambitious riverfront project promises to invigorate the local economy and provide a nexus of cultural activities along the majestic Mahanadi river.

Mahapatra said, "There will be a Mini Bali Yatra every day in the Mahanadi riverfront after the completion of the project. But the annual trade fair will be conducted in a grand manner like every year. We already held a meeting in this regard. CM Mohan Majhi has advised to take up the project soon. There will be another meeting very soon," he said. "We are in talks with several companies. We have also contacted the company that was the mastermind behind the Sabarmati riverfront project. Their team is expected to come here on a visit," he added.

All A'wadi Workers to be in Subhadra scheme in 3rd phase

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

All Anganwadi Workers would be included in the third phase of Subhadra Yojana, the BJP government's flagship scheme aimed at empowering women in the State, informed Deputy Chief Minister Pravati Parida on Thursday.

The next phase of the Subhadra assistance will be released on November 24 benefiting 80 lakh women beneficiaries.

Speaking to the media Parida said, "The next phase of Subhadra Yojana assistance will be released on November 24 during a special programme in Sundargarh. We have set a target to cover 80 lakh beneficiaries. So far, we have disbursed assistance to 60.27 lakh beneficiaries. More than 20 lakh women will get the money on November 24." "Verification of the documents has been completed.



Over 1 crore women will get financial assistance by December 2024," Parida added.

Sharing details about the rejected application, Parida said, "An important meeting will be convened this evening to decide the fate of 2.67 lakh excluded beneficiaries. The inclusion of left-out Anganwadi Workers has been done. They all will get the money this time."

Around 5 lakh applicants have some mismatch in their bank accounts. Those who have rectified it would get the assistance on November 24, Parida assured.

"We have received 1.16 crore application so far. We have set a target to cover 1 crore women by December," she stated.

Subhadra Yojana was one of the major promises made

by the BJP for women in its election manifesto in Odisha. PM Modi launched the ambitious scheme of the BJP government on his birthday on September 17, 2024.

Under the scheme, each beneficiary receives Rs 10,000 per year in two installments of Rs 5,000 each one on Rakhi Purnima, and the other on International Women's Day (March 8).

CPM blames govt policies for price rise

Holds demo in Brahmapur

RAJEEV RATHAN ■ BRAHMAPUR

Blaming the Union Government for the spiraling price hike, the Communist Party of India (Marxist) on Tuesday accused the administration of implementing policies that burden the common people.

Addressing a protest meeting, party members highlighted that the government collects Rs 3.5 lakh crore annually in taxes from petroleum products, significantly



increasing transportation costs and leading to a rise in the prices of essential commodities.

The protesters also pointed out a 50% increase in the prices of certain medicines, allegedly benefiting pharmaceutical companies, and attrib-

uted the hike to excessive GST rates. Additionally, the removal of government control over essential commodities has allowed large corporations to exploit consumers, further aggravating the crisis.

The CPM demanded immediate government interven-

tion to control prices and criticized the administration for focusing more on publicity than on practical solutions. They also declared that protest activities would continue until effective measures are implemented to curb inflation.

Prominent speakers at the protest included Judhistira Behera, Pratap Choudhury, Siba Prasad Choudhury, Babula Nayak, Madhu Behera, Nrusingha Brahma, Dharma Rao, Loknath Khuntia, Raja Rao and Ranjan Patra. They called for urgent steps to provide relief to the people and ensure economic stability.

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

Dr Samanta was also conferred the Rabindranath Tagore Award for promoting art, culture and literature. On a special recommendation of the WCP, Prof Samanta has been inducted as a member of its executive board in recognition of his commitment to promoting art, culture and literature.

Prof Samanta remarked, "This recognition strengthens my commitment to leveraging art, literature and culture to inspire change and foster unity across communities that I have been doing for three decades."



SOCIAL CANVAS

Tribals' food insecurity issue still unaddressed in Odisha

MK Gandhi after visiting Puri in March 1921 wrote in 'Harijan', "Odisha is the epitome of India's poverty". Dr Ambedkar, as labour, irrigation and electricity member of government of India under British rule attended a conference on Odisha's rivers in Cuttack on November 8, 1945 and spoke about the poverty of Odisha. He said, "when I think of Odisha, the picture that comes to my mind is that of a people subject not to one affliction, but many." After so many years their observations are still relevant even today in Independent India when we come across mango kernel deaths of tribal women in Kandhamal and hunger in south-western parts of Odisha.



MANAS JENA

not available to a section of people who are historically poor and neglected by our enlightened society for a long time. The government reports on social development have also substantiated these realities by providing data in its number of surveys and evaluation studies

which are just ignored by ruling elites of Odisha. Some one may visit the NITI Aayog reports on social exclusion and ranking of poorest districts of India to get a better understanding over the issues of multidimensional poverty in Odisha and its tribal population.

The Constitution of India has a number of provisions based on which both the Union and State governments have made legislations and programmes to address poverty and hunger death. There are dedicated institutions and annual budgetary provisions for their effective implementation.

If we look at financial and human resources, there is no dearth of resources with the government and multiple sources are available. There are exclusive budgetary provisions under sub-plan schemes and a host of non-budgetary schemes and departmental allocations for tribal development. There are also an equal number of

non-government actors with enthusiasm and dedication for tribal development including corporate and international aid agencies, religious bodies and many more but why do we all fail in Odisha while in other parts of the country we do not come across reports of such vulnerability of indigenous people?

After 2013, we have a strong law to address hunger, i.e the National Food Security Act, that ensures supply of minimum food intake in the human life cycle through access to adequate quality food to people by the government. It is a paradigm shift from charity and welfare based approach to rights based approach to ensure right to life with dignity which is more constitutional and legal in its approach. Right to food to live with dignity is a fundamental non-negotiable human right. We have a department to manage and administer like the Odisha State Food Commission to

do monitoring and undertake evaluations of the whole process of implementation. Such bodies under law have made provisions to ensure the presence of representatives of marginalized sections such as STs and SCs in leadership roles so that they can proactively address the issues of the community. But we experience institutional failure and lack of accountability. The question is are the concerned Minister and officials and commission members not accountable to the people specially to the communities suffering in hunger and poverty while they are paid out of the State treasury to look into such sensitive issues relating to life and liberty and dignity of suffering people.

It is most unfortunate that the ruling parties, bureaucracy and civil society in Odisha are largely dominated by a microscopic minority that is the upper caste, mostly Savarna people and a very

insignificant participation has been made by tribal and others in all kinds of tribal affairs, specially relating to their development and sharing of power and resources. The participation of STs in civil societies has not been encouraged in Odisha; rather their space has been occupied by others in the name of tribal development. They are seen as project beneficiaries without dignity and recognition as fellow participants. Tribal representatives suffer with language problems and social isolation in public places due to their socio-cultural identity and continued long time marginalization process.

The social sector of Odisha from the days of Gandhians to present day development professionals are mostly dominated and occupied by people who are culturally and socially not connected to STs. The tribal community leaders and intellectuals are not visible in development sector assemblies. At gov-

ernment level the natural tribal leaders of the community are not the choice of ruling elites; rather they recruit people of their own perception to manage the legal formalities and constitutional obligations so that the real voice of the communities and their issues is not heard in power corridors. They choose people who are too loyal and parrot them to speak the language of the oppressor who are historically responsible for their such sub-human condition today.

We need to revisit our approach to development in general and tribal development in particular while addressing hunger and food security, where the first thing we have to ensure is that the affected communities must be taken into confidence and their involvement is a must while we are discussing their issues and framing policies for their development.

(manasbbsr15@gmail.com)

In Balangir Tribal woman assaulted; faeces forced into mouth

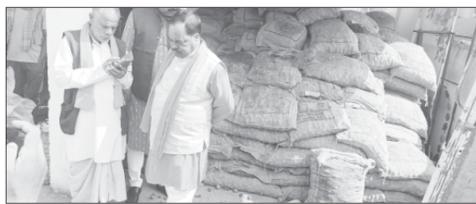
Accused still at large
PNS ■ BALANGIR
A 20-year-old tribal woman was allegedly assaulted and human faeces were forced into her mouth at Jurabandha village under the Bangamunda police station in Balangir district on November 16.



an FIR. Balangir SP Khilari Rishikesh Dnyandeo said the accused has been on the run since the incident. "We have formed two special teams to nab him. Even police teams have been sent to neighbouring States in search of him. A case under the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act has been registered, the SP said.

K'ihar horticulture office has rotten potato seeds for farmers

BJP Agri wing dist prez miffed
PNS ■ KEONJHAR
State BJP Agriculture wing president Maheswar Sahoo on Monday visited the district horticulture office and found a stock of rotten potato seeds which were packed in bags for the purpose of supplying to the farmers to grow on their land.



He said that he would appraise the matter to the Agriculture Minister and demand action against the officials responsible for such situation. When contacted, Deputy Director of Horticulture, Keonjhar Soumendra Narayan Panigrahi told that there was a target of supplying 7,475 MT potato seeds to the farmers to grow on 575 hectares of land across 13 blocks the district. As on date, the department has supplied 4,277 MT potato seeds to farmers out of 4,752 MT potato seeds available with the department. He further said that there was smooth supply of seed throughout the district except the present mess. He explained that there was a lot of 10 - 15 quintal of potatoes which was meant to be supplied to the beneficiaries of Sadar block. As they did not come to receive the same in stipulated time, the conditions of the stock deteriorated.

9-day 'Queen of the Mission' fest in B'pur

PNS ■ BRAHMAMPUR
The Festival of "Queen of the Mission" kicked off on Tuesday with a grand procession at the Mission Queen Cathedral in Brahmapur, marking the first day of the nine-day-long festival. The sacred festival, dedicated to Mother Mary, the Queen of the Mission, will continue until November 27. The opening ceremony was attended by prominent religious leaders. Chief priest Sanjeev Kumar Nayak, assistant priest Prabhudas Naik, priest Ajit Kumar, priest Sanjeev Kumar Biro, Rector Viani Bhawan Rector Father Thomas Parel, Capuchin Priests Federation Father Gregory Jena and priest Yusman participated in the divine ritual. The festival is a significant occasion in the Brahmapur Diocese, drawing many Catholic devotees for worship and celebration in honor of the "Queen of the Mission".

Ex-Akademi member Gantayat no more



PNS ■ BRAHMAMPUR
Late Mahapatra was a former Sahitya Akademi member and was known among his peers and well wishers for some of his excellent writings like, "Sesh Barshar Jishu" and "Batabana Nayee O'Samudra". Besides, he had also successfully served as the chairperson of "Swadeshi Lekhaka Manch" and published book as "Biju Maha Nayak" which acclaimed recognition to him. He has compiled and edited hundreds of prominent literary texts over last five decades. His body was cremated at his native village cremation ground. 55 representatives of NGO

Strategies discussed to tackle distress migration

By Odisha, TN NGOs
PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR
A State level consultation on migration was held here on November 18 with special focus on adolescent girls and young women in Odisha to textile industry in Tamil Nadu was organised by the Centre for Social Education and Development (CSED), Tamil Nadu in cooperation with networks like National Action and Coordination Group for Ending Violence Against Children (NACG - EVAC), Odisha Alliance for Child Rights(OACR), Campaign Against Child Labour (CACL-National) to end forced migration of adolescent girls and young women. Chairman OACR Ranjan Kumar Mohanty welcomed all dignitaries and chaired the inaugural session. C Nambi, CSED shared the objective of the consultation.



networks from both the States participated in the workshop to develop an action plan to prevent forced migration of children and ensure safe migration for women, especially. In the inauguration session, former Union Labour Secretary and former senior advisor to ILO Dr Laxmidhar Mishra highlighted the gaps in the present law and protection mechanism and suggested bold action for government and NGOs for protection of migrants from exploitation. He suggested some pragmatic actions like ensuring minimum wage by the Central Government, compulsory registration of migrants, national functionality of ration cards of migrants, activation of seasonal hostels for children of migrants and effective Information, Education and Communication strategies to be worked out by NGOs to educate the migrant for safe migration. Convenor, NACG-EVAC, Odisha Prakash Ratha, former national convener, CACLP Joshep Victor Raj and Prapud Behera from ADARSA, Odisha facilitated the technical sessions. Director, Aide-et-Action Umi Daniel highlighted the need for ensuring social security of migrants nationwide. Former State Convener, CACL, Odisha Umesh Prohit shared the challenges in rescue and rehabilitation of child labours in the State of Odisha. Executive Director, PECUC Anuradha Mohanty shared the learning from project on preventing forced migration of children in two gram panchayats in Rayagada and Nabarangpur districts. The NGO networks of Odisha and Tamil Nadu together developed an action plan to map the vulnerable pockets of migration, strategies for preventing distress migration including protective strategies at destination points and the need to work in co-ordination with respective State governments. Ranjan Mohanty concluded the consultation with a suggestion to come together at both source and destination and work intensively with gram panchayats and as well as government protection mechanism to protect children and adolescents from exploitation.

Centurion hosts parent-teacher meet in B'pur



PNS ■ BRAHMAMPUR
The Centurion University organised a parent-teacher meeting on Tuesday here. The event emphasized collaboration and peace, focusing on the holistic development of students. The meeting was attended by the Dean of Agriculture Dr SP Nanda, Dean of Engineering Dr Prafulla Panda, Registrar Dr Anita Patra, Campus Director Dr Durga Prasad Padhi and Regional Admissions Manager S Phalguna Rao. The event was facilitated by Admissions Managers from the Ganjam zone Rajani Kant Padhi and Ganesh Dakua. Discussions centered on the advantages of the New Education Policy and its role in shaping students' futures. Parents actively participated in the session, which highlighted the importance of skill development and career planning for students. Guardians, including Laxmikant Mishra commended the university's initiatives and its commitment to academic and professional excellence.

Seafood waste into bioplastics: B'swar unit shows the way

UBACHAK MOHNATY ■ BALESWAR
Fisheries waste has been converted into bio-polymers by the scientists at Natnov Bioscience, a unit here in the district. The unit is transforming the plastics sector by converting seafood waste into bioplastics, addressing both environmental and food waste challenges. The environment-friendly innovative technique can tackle the pressing issue of food waste and can be applicable in diverse fields such as packaging, agriculture, and functional foods. Bioplastics offer a promising solution to mitigate the environmental damage caused by traditional plastics. These bioplastics present a practical and appealing alternative to conventional fossil fuel-based plastics. They can be synthesized through bioconversion processes, said Natnov Bioscience director Dr Siddharth Pati. The production of traditional plastics is closely linked with fossil fuel extraction, contributing to significant environmental issues, as around 80 percent of manufactured plastic ends up accumulating as waste in landfills and ecosystems. Bio-based plastics provide a compelling solution by de-



composing naturally without releasing harmful byproducts, thus lowering their ecological footprint. Produced from various bio-based resources, they offer renewable alternatives and support a transition to sustainable circular bioeconomies through integrated strategies and innovative business models, he added. As a recognized biotech startup and a leader in the circular bioeconomy, Natnov

Bioscience has made significant strides through cutting-edge technologies and investments in research and development. Established in 2021, the company specializes in transforming food waste into biopolymers using a proprietary bioconversion process, Pati claimed. According to the United Nations, a staggering one-third of all food produced for human consumption is wasted, contributing significantly to global greenhouse gas emissions. Approximately 1.3 billion metric tons of food go to waste annually. Natnov Bioscience's scientists are focused on expanding the spectrum of materials derivable from food waste while exploring novel applications for their biopolymers, including water treatment, nutraceuticals, and the medical sector. Natnov Bioscience's overarching mission is to establish a circular bioeconomy where waste is converted into valuable resources. With their innovative approaches, they are well on their way to achieving this goal. The company has developed eco-friendly bioplastics from these biopolymers and is actively seeking strategic partnerships and investors to scale up production to meet market demand.

Brahmapur Man held for wife's murder in lodge

PNS ■ BRAHMAMPUR
The Baidyanathpur police in Brahmapur on Tuesday arrested one Sameedmon AS (42) on the allegation of murdering his wife Kamanapalli Krishna Veni (35). The latter's decomposed body had been found at Brahmapur Lodge on November 25, 2023. The arrest was made following a breakthrough in Kerala, where the accused was already in custody for a ganja-related case. The incident came to light when the manager of the lodge reported foul smell emanating from Room No. 4 at Gollundi Chak. Upon investigation, police found the victim's body lying on the bed with the room in disarray and the accused missing. Postmortem results confirmed that the victim was smothered to death. The couple had checked into the lodge posing as husband and wife, but when room charges went unpaid and calls went unanswered, the manager discovered the crime scene. Police traced Sameedmon to Kerala, where he was involved in a ganja case. After completing formalities, the Baidyanathpur police brought him back to Brahmapur.

Let Mohan govt revive OSFC to fund MSMEs

The last government grossly neglected the MSME sector except in the last phase when Dr Saswat Mishra as Principal Secretary MSME energised the sector on his own accord, but he remained in charge of it only for a short while. It cannot be denied that the OSFC's (Odisha State Financial Corporation) contribution towards industrialisation of the State is immense. The OSFC is incorporated under the OSFC Act 1951 for providing assistance to small scale industries which as per the present norm is categorised under MSME has contributed towards the generation of maximum employment in the State. Even the agriculture sector invariably needs the support of MSMEs to process its produce for higher value addition. Under such conditions, it is imperative that we primarily focus on the rehabilitation of OSFC, which, in turn, can rehabilitate hundreds of potentially-viable sick units and provide funding to new MSMEs/ startups that are presently not able to raise funds through commercial banks



HARENDRA N MAHAPATRA

due to their stringent sanction eligibility criteria. Through its revival, the OSFC can boost employment generation significantly in our State. Of course, initial investments to boost the morale of the OSFC staffs and to kick-start the business in OSFC is required. Surprisingly, the few old and experienced senior staffs who were responsible for keeping the corporation afloat have recently left the organisation with the OSFC virtually being closed as on date. There is an im-

mediate need to post some experienced, capable and committed staffs along with a Chairman-cum-Managing Director, who could revive the corporation with his team and work for the benefit of the State. One such committed and capable person could be Panchanan Dash, who, in the capacity of Secretary MSME & Chairman OSFC, tried sincerely to revive the corporation but could not succeed since the last government was not inclined to revive the OSFC and neither did they extend financial support to the MSMEs through any other State-level banks or FIs. The investment required to revive the OSFC could be as low as Rs 1,000 crore, which can turn around OSFC. The government's keen interest to revive the MSME sector is evident from various schemes that are launched at the Centre and even in the State. The present drive for startups could also be funded through the OSFC. But we should channel our focus on manufacturing sectors that produce tangible products and

drive the economy forward through labour-intensive industries. This was the kind of responsibility that the OSFC undertook; and even today, it has the infrastructure ready to take up the challenges and perform. But this is possible only with the support of the present government. In the first place, the OSFC became sick not because of unscrupulous entrepreneurs or bad financing, which could be less than 5% true, but because of inadequate availability of working capital from commercial banks. Initially, the OSFC was designed to lend only term loans and the commercial banks provided working capital. The tenure for term loan was about five years whereas the working capital was for one year and had to be renewed every year. The banks normally took much longer periods to renew the limits; and in many cases, they even refused renewal/enhancement if any! The applicant industries in such case had no option but to suffer capacity underutilisation and finally became unviable and sick.

Hence, the units could not repay their instalments in time to the OSFC; and eventually, the OSFC also became sick. The principal outstanding of the OSFC as on 31/03/2024 is about Rs 245 crore whereas the accrued interest is about Rs 6,000 crore. The interest is compounding and calculated on the principal which is mostly non-recoverable due to various legal issues mainly. In any case, we need to pay the cost for industrialisation; and fortunately, it is not huge. The occurred interest can be waived since after NPA interest is not chargeable, and with investment of proposed capital and with a committed team, the OSFC can be revived. Similarly, the IPICOL, which was also funding small and medium enterprises in the State and in many cases jointly with the OSFC had also contributed immensely towards the industrialisation of the State. When both OSFC and IPICOL were financing, the State was vibrating with industrial activities and employment generation was also at its peak.

Realising that funding through banks for a startup or for an MSME, especially for rehabilitation of the unit, is virtually not feasible today, almost all States have around two State-level financing institutions whereas in Odisha from 2002 both OSFC and IPICOL have discontinued their funding activities from 2002/ 2003. Both OSFC and IPICOL have initiated OTS proposals pending with the government for sanction. Many units due to circumstances beyond their control like damages caused through super cyclones, ban by the government on certain products, non-availability of need based funding, loss through foreign collaborators, etc. If such OTS policies are approved on liberal and feasible terms, realising that mostly closed units have to organise funds to pay the settlement amount, many such units can settle their pending dues through the OTS and restart. Association viewpoints: Let the State Government allocate around Rs 1,000 crore for revival of the OSFC and appoint a committed and capable MD or

CMD to revive the corporation. OSFC and IPICOL must resume their funding activities to MSMEs of the State. We are proud that the IPICOL is a profit-making organisation and contributing to development of the State through its single-window policy for new projects. But some of the old units which had applied for settlement of their dues under MFD 07 OTS floated by IPICOL and those who have already paid the ID as per the Scheme may be allowed to exit under this policy. Similarly, the OTS policy of OSFC which is pending with government may be approved on liberal terms. Vide our above suggestions, the old MSME units still suffering for last about two decades can settle their pending dues and revive along with new projects which can be set up for further industrialisation of the State. (The writer is working chairperson, Entrepreneurs & Finance Customers Association of India and ex-chairman, Orissa Assembly of Small & Medium Enterprises. Mob: 9437057659, efc12@gmail.com

Rajnath Singh holds bilateral talks with US Secretary of Defence

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■
NEW DELHI

India and US on Thursday reviewed the entire spectrum of their bilateral defence ties during talks between Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and US Secretary of Defence Lloyd J Austin on the sidelines of 11th ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting (ADMM)-Plus at Vientiane, Laos.

The two leaders commended the progress achieved by the India-US defence partnership, based on increased operational coordination, information-sharing, and industrial innovation, defence ministry said here.

Both sides recognised the remarkable progress made under the US-India Defence Industrial Cooperation Roadmap, including ongoing collaboration to advance priority co-production arrangements for jet engines, munitions, and ground mobility systems.

Rajnath Singh recalled his recent productive and successful visit to the US in August 2024, wherein two important documents were concluded – the Security of Supplies Agreement (SOSA) and the Memorandum of Agreement regarding the deployment of Liaison Officers. Both sides welcomed ongoing efforts to deepen the



military partnership and interoperability to maintain a free and open Indo-Pacific. Drawing attention to the successful QUAD Summit attended by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on September 21, 2024, Rajnath Singh emphasised the need for both sides to work together on the agreed deliverables including the new regional Maritime Initiative for Training in the Indo-Pacific (MAITRI), the first-ever Quad-at-Sea Ship Observer Mission, and the launch of a Quad Indo-Pacific Logistics Network pilot project, to support civilian response to natural disasters more rapidly and efficiently across the Indo-Pacific region.

Both sides affirmed support to the growing defence innovation collaboration between the two governments, businesses, and academic institutions fostered by India-US Defence Acceleration Ecosystem, by providing them with more joint challenges, funding opportunities and visibility. Both leaders agreed to continue the momentum achieved in the last two and a half years through growing convergence to strategic interests and enhanced India-US defence cooperation. Rajnath Singh expressed gratitude to Secretary Austin for his enriching and lasting contribution for deepening and expanding India-US defence

partnership. In a social media post, Rajnath Singh termed Secretary Lloyd Austin as a great friend to India, whose contribution towards strengthening India-US defence partnership has been exemplary. He wished him very best in all his future endeavours.

In addition to his meeting with US Secretary of Defence, Rajnath Singh met Minister of National Defence, Republic of Korea Kim Yong Hyun, Minister for Defence Industry and Capability Delivery of Australia Pat Conroy and Defence Minister of New Zealand Judith Collins on the sidelines of the ADMM-Plus on Thursday.

Number of hoax bomb threats to airlines have reduced: Civil Aviation Secretary

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■
NEW DELHI

Authorities have successfully handled the menace of hoax bomb calls to airlines and such calls have reduced. To a query about hoax bomb calls, Civil Aviation Secretary Vumlung Vualnam also said that authorities have tackled them successfully. He further said that procedures being adopted to deal with fog-related disruptions have been streamlined.

A few weeks back, hundreds of flights had received bomb threat calls that later turned out to be hoaxes. These threats had significantly impacted flight operations of various domestic carriers. "Our security has tackled this (hoax bomb calls) and we have seen also that we have been successful. The numbers have now gone down and from the airport threat assessment committee also, the consultation process has been streamlined. They have been made more responsive, (for) quick response..."

"We have successfully handled the hoax cases so that passengers and flights are not disrupted by hoax calls," Vualnam said.

As part of preparations for the



fog season during which generally there are flight disruptions due to low visibility conditions, the secretary said airlines have been instructed to timely inform passengers about delays or cancellations. "We will be issuing fresh instructions to remind airlines and airports for the arrangements for passengers."

"If there is any unavoidable delay in flights or cancellations, the procedures being adopted have been streamlined... BCAS has issued the circular and the drills are taking place. With this, there will be a better handling of fog season this year," he said.

Other steps include allowing passengers to exit from an aircraft through an airport depart-

ment gate in case there is a long delay in operating the flight after boarding. In this regard, the Bureau of Civil Aviation Security (BCAS) had issued a circular earlier this year.

"Now, with the drills and the space being earmarked, it has been activated. It requires holding areas to be earmarked and all those things... It will be applicable everywhere (airports) but Delhi is the top priority because of the weather and the volume of people," the secretary said on the sidelines of an event in the national capital.

On Wednesday, Civil Aviation Minister K Ram Mohan Naidu held a review meeting with various stakeholders on fog preparedness.

Powergrid to revive crematoriums, graveyards in 658 villages under CSR scheme



PARVESH SHARMA ■
GURUGRAM

Under the Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) scheme, Powergrid will revive crematoriums and graveyards in 658 villages of four districts of Haryana, Karnal, Panipat, Rewari and Kurukshetra, with an amount of about Rs 50 crore.

For this, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed between Powergrid and the Development and Panchayat Department in the presence of the Haryana Chief Minister Naib Singh Saini in Gurugram on Thursday.

The Chief Minister said that under the CSR scheme, corporate companies are making incomparable contributions in

the field of rural development, which is a commendable step towards social upliftment. Commerce, Industry, Forest and Environment Minister Rao Narbir Singh and Cooperation and Tourism Minister Dr Arvind Sharma were also present on this occasion.

Chairman of Powergrid R.K. Tyagi said that an amount of Rs 49.94 crore will be spent for the revival of these crematoriums and graveyards. Under the MoU, boundary walls and paved roads will be constructed for all these 658 crematoriums and graveyards. Dr Jai Kishan Abir said that the population of these 658 villages is around 40 lakh. Rs 10.97 crore will be spent on the reconstruction of crema-

toriums and graveyards in 198 villages of Karnal district. Rs 18.46 crore will be spent on 237 villages in Kurukshetra district. Rs 5.15 crore in 106 villages of Panipat and Rs 15.37 crore in 117 villages of Rewari district.

In Haryana, a CSR Board was constituted in November 2018, which was made Haryana State CSR Trust under the chairmanship of the Chief Minister in March 2021. "Development works worth Rs 750 crore have been done in the state under the Social Participation Program from November 2018 to March 2024. In the current financial year, development works worth Rs 350 crore will be done under this scheme," CM Saini said.

Opposition members demand tenure extension of Parliamentary Panel on Waqf

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■
NEW DELHI

Opposition members on Thursday demanded extension of the tenure of the Joint Committee on Waqf Amendment Bill, contending that they need more time to study the changes to the draft legislation.

At a meeting of the committee, Chairman and BJP member Jagdambika Pal announced that Thursday's meeting would be the last sitting of the panel and a draft report would be circulated to the members shortly.

This led to protests by the Opposition members who resorted to sloganeering and some of them called Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla and sought his intervention in the matter.

The committee has been asked by the Lok Sabha to submit its report on the last day of the first week of the winter session of Parliament beginning Monday. The government has already listed the Waqf (Amendment) Bill for consideration and



passage in the Winter session after the report of the joint committee is presented to the Lok Sabha".

In the past too, opposition members on the panel have accused Pal, a BJP MP, of doing the government's bidding. They had earlier even threatened to disassociate themselves with the panel's work.

Their main concern was the frequent day-long meetings of the panel which did not allow them to prepare adequately and had accused Pal of "bulldozing proceedings" by not consulting them in picking whom to call to depose. Several opposition members of the committee had earlier too approached Speaker Birla against Pal.

Peaceful environment necessary for growth: Dhankhar

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■
NEW DELHI

Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar on Thursday asserted that India's foreign policy emphasises respect for sovereignty, territorial integrity of nations and the primacy of dialogue over conflict and said as wars intensify, the world can learn from the country's age-old principles of harmony and coexistence.

He also stressed the need for nations to focus on strategic security through strong defence capabilities and underlined that a peaceful environment is necessary for growth.

Noting that peace disruption or conflagration in any part of the globe has the potential to upset and unsettle growth, he



said a robust national security architecture based on a clear national security strategy is a precondition for achieving our developmental goals.

Delivering a lecture at the National Defence College here on 'India's Core Values, Interests and Objectives', Dhankhar underlined that inclusive development, peace, and universal well-being, while nurturing the environment, is at the heart of Indian philosophy.

He said India's core values for ages are the foundation of its identity and are premised on its civilisational ethos. In the present times, they are a blend of ancient wisdom and modernity aimed at fructifying people's aspirations.

As the world's largest democ-

cracy, the vice president said, India celebrates its diversity with several official languages, multiple religions, and varied ethnicities canvassed under one constitution ensuring freedom and equality.

In his address, Dhankhar said India's interests are driven by the welfare of its people and global peace while emphasising that the menace of terrorism and fundamentalism need to be combated in tandem and togetherness.

Highlighting the nation's commitment to gender justice he said, "India is committed to gender justice, this being vital to economy and societal values, as also harmony. This has resulted in not only the empowerment of women, it has graduated to the next level of women-led growth."

New Tidel Park at Pattabiram to ensure IT development in northern TN

PTI ■ CHENNAI

The stage is all set for the formal launch of the Rs 330 crore Tidel Park at Pattabiram here to foster development of information technology in northern Tamil Nadu, the state government said on Thursday.

The project established on an area of 11.41 acres in neighbouring Thiruvallur district will employ 5,000 to 6,000 people in the initial phase in the IT/ITeS sector.

"The project aims to bring information technology development to the cities in the northern part of Tamil Nadu. The complex with a floor area of 5.57 lakh square feet and 21 floors, will be inaugurated on

November 22 by the Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu (M K Stalin)," a release here said.

The building has all the necessary facilities for IT companies to function such as modern telecommunication facilities, uninterrupted high-voltage three-phase power connections and electrical drive facilities, elevators, sanitary facilities, fire safety, and building management facilities, CCTV cameras, 24x7 security, a restaurant, and a gymnasium. "The building will house 6,000 IT professionals and has been built according to green building guidelines," the release said.

With the establishment of this new Tidel Park, the educated youth of the northern part of

Tamil Nadu, especially the surrounding districts including Thiruvallur, will get employment and the socio-economic status of these districts will improve, the release added.

The chief minister will also issue orders for the allotment of sites in the park to various private IT companies during the opening ceremony.

Also, Stalin would inaugurate the Precision Engineering and Technology Centre at SIDCO Industrial Estate, Thirumudivakkam, Kancheepuram district, which has been set up at an estimated cost of Rs 18.18 crore. Young engineers and college students would benefit from this project.

India's first indigenous antibiotic drug Nafithromycin for resistant infections launched

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■
NEW DELHI

In a ground breaking step for India's biotechnology sector, Union Minister Dr. Jitendra Singh has formally launched the first indigenous antibiotic 'Nafithromycin' for resistant infections at an event here. The drug is now awaiting final approval from the Central Drugs Standard Control Organization (CDSCO) for manufacturing and public use, marking a major leap forward in India's fight against AMR.

The antibiotic has been developed with the support of "Biotechnology Industry Research Assistance Council" (BIRAC), a unit of the Department of Biotechnology and has been brought to market under the trade name "Miqnaf" by pharma company "Wolkardt".

It is the country's first indigenously developed antibiotic aimed at tackling Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR). This innovation is designed to treat Community-Acquired Bacterial Pneumonia (CABP), a



severe illness caused by drug-resistant bacteria, which disproportionately affects vulnerable populations, including children and the elderly as well as immune compromised hosts like Patients with Diabetes, Cancers etc, said the Minister, as per a statement here.

Dr. Singh described the three-day treatment regimen of Nafithromycin as a game-changer in addressing drug-resistant pneumonia, a condition responsible for over two million deaths globally each year. India, which bears 23% of the

world's community pneumonia burden, faces challenges with existing treatments, including widespread resistance to drugs like azithromycin. The new antibiotic is said to be ten times more effective than current options and offers a safer, faster, and more tolerable solution for patients.

Nafithromycin's efficacy stands out as it targets both typical and atypical pathogens, offering a potent solution where no new antibiotic in this class has been developed worldwide for over three decades.

Beyond its efficacy, Nafithromycin boasts superior safety and tolerability. The antibiotic has minimal gastrointestinal side effects, and remains unaffected by food, making it a versatile option for patients.

The antibiotics marks a historic breakthrough as the first new antibiotic in its class to be developed globally in over 30 years. "This significant milestone comes at a time when antimicrobial resistance (AMR) is a growing global health crisis, with few new drugs entering the pipeline," said the Minister.

The development of Nafithromycin is a testament to India's scientific advancement, offering a much-needed solution to combat multi-drug-resistant pathogens. Its innovative design, targeting both typical and atypical organisms and its ability to overcome existing resistance mechanisms, positions it as a beacon of hope in the fight against AMR, with the potential to save countless lives worldwide.

MP Congress committee president faces ire from leaders after declaration of State executive body

GIRISH SHARMA ■ BHOPAL

The red carpet was rolled out but the tent wallah was summoned to take away the carpet that was brought in to greet senior Congress leaders invited for the MPCC executive meet, as none of them turned up.

Madhya Pradesh Congress committee president Jitu Patwari continues to face the ire from senior party leaders and their camps after the State executive body was declared in first week of November.

At least six leaders have already expressed their annoyance over inclusion of their names at lower posts and submitted resignations. After the announcement of a jumbo executive body, the first meeting of the new body was convened on Thursday, which met in the absence of all senior party leaders from Madhya Pradesh. Former chief ministers Kamal Nath and Digvijay Singh did not attend the meeting claiming that they had to attend a meeting in New Delhi, while



Leader of the Opposition on the State Assembly Umang Singhar cited the reason of being sick.

Other senior leaders Jay Singh, Arun Yadav and Deputy Leader of the Opposition in the State Assembly Hemant Katore maintained distance with an excuse that it is a marriage season. Besides, Congress legislator from Bhopal Central also remained absent. Since, it was the first State

executive meeting, All India Congress Committee (AICC) General Secretary and in-charge of Madhya Pradesh Bhanwar Jitendra Singh was present and he addressed the new member of the body.

Notably, former chief minister Kamal Nath had remained absent from the campaigning in the Budhni and Vijaypur assembly by-elections in the State stating that he was sick. However, soon after the polling on November 13,

Nath celebrated his birthday at Bhopal and Chhindwara with a show of strength. When he was in Bhopal, Leader if the Opposition Umang Singhar had reached Chhindwara and thus he failed to meet Nath. Just the next day, on November 19, Jitu Patwari celebrated his birthday in Bhopal, but both Nath and Singh maintained a distance from them, they did not even post their message on social media.

While talking to media persons, Bhanwar Jitendra Singh said that those could not reach would attend the meeting through video conferencing. On the other hand, a local leader said that they have been informed that those senior leaders remained absent would attend the meet on second day, on Friday.

Furthermore, two-term Congress legislator and son of senior party leaders Digvijay Singh, Jaivardhan Singh attended the Hindu yatra being taken out by Pandit Dheerendra Shastri at Bageshwar Dham in Chhatarpur district.

Centre deploys additional forces to quell Manipur violence

PTI ■ IMPHAL

Amid an escalation in violence in Manipur, eight companies of the Central Armed Police Force (CAPF) have reached the state capital Imphal, and these forces will be deployed in sensitive and fringe areas, an official said. These forces arrived in Imphal on Wednesday, a day after another batch of 11 companies of CAPF reached the state. "Four companies each of CRPF and BSF will be deployed in sensitive and fringe areas of the state," the official said. Of the CRPF companies, one belongs to the Mahila Battalion. The Centre recently announced that 50 fresh companies of CAPF would be deployed in Manipur. Violence has escalated in the



state as offices of the Congress and the BJP have been ransacked in the hill district of Jiribam last week. The incidents occurred after

gangs set fire to the residences of three BJP legislators, one of whom is a senior minister, and a Congress MLA in various districts of Imphal

Valley where an indefinite curfew has been clamped. Security forces also foiled the attempt of the agitators to storm the ancestral residence of Manipur Chief Minister N Biren Singh on Saturday evening. The violence escalated after three women and three children belonging to the Meitei community had gone missing from a relief camp in Jiribam district after a gunfight between security forces and suspected Kuki-Zo militants that resulted in the deaths of 10 insurgents on November 11. Bodies of those six were later found over the past few days. More than 220 people have been killed and thousands rendered homeless in ethnic violence between Imphal Valley-based Meiteis and adjoining hills-based Kuki-Zo groups since May last year.

VP M Venkaiah Naidu calls for revival of Indian roots and languages

PTI ■ HYDERABAD

Former Vice President M Venkaiah Naidu on Thursday stressed the need for going back to the roots of Indian culture and encouraging its languages. Speaking after inaugurating an exhibition here organised as part of LokManthan-2024, a colloquium of "nationalist thinkers", Naidu said there is a necessity that everyone should again start following "our traditions, culture and dressing". Asserting that 'Sanatana Dharma' is superior, Naidu said Hindu Dharma is so sacred that the people feed ants, snakes and worship trees and cattle also. "Please observe where we are going from there. The Englishmen came and invaded us. They not only looted us but took away our diamonds and other valuables. Not only that, they also



"robbed" some of our people's minds. That's the reason there are changes in us (with respect to practising culture and traditions) today," he said. He advised the youngsters to be friendly with nature. Naidu further emphasised the importance of practising yoga to become physically fit and mentally alert and pointed out that the ancient practice has no religion. On LokManthan, Naidu said

the underlying idea of this event is to decolonise the minds of Indians and to foster a sense of pride and commitment to Bharatiya intellectual discourse, culture, heritage, music and dance. "That is the purpose of this programme. It's a noble idea behind the programme," he said. Union Minister G Kishan Reddy was also present. President Droupadi Murmu will inaugurate LokManthan-

2024 on November 22. Organised by Prajna Pravah, an organisation of 'nation-first' intellectuals, researchers, and academicians, the event will feature debates on various topics as well as cultural programmes. Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, RSS chief Mohan Bhagwat, and other dignitaries are also expected to attend the event to be held till November 24. Delegates from foreign countries, including groups that follow pre-Abrahamic traditions, will also participate and perform cultural dances and other exhibitions. The Yazidis, who faced attacks by ISIS, are also expected to attend the conference, the organisers said. LokManthan, a biennial event, was previously held in Bhopal, Ranchi, and Guwahati, starting in 2016.

Gujarat government declares 'The Sabarmati Report' film tax-free



PTI ■ AHMEDABAD

The Gujarat BJP government has declared 'The Sabarmati Report' Hindi film, based on the Godhra train burning incident of 2002, as tax-free in the state, officials said on Thursday. Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel took the decision after watching the movie at a multiplex here on Wednesday night, an official release said. Patel watched the film along with its producer Ekta Kapoor, veteran Bollywood star Jitendra, movie's actress

Ridhi Dogra and Gujarat Minister of State for Home Harsh Sanghavi, it said. "The chief minister has praised the movie and made it tax-free in Gujarat," the release said. Gujarat is the fifth BJP-ruled state to give tax-free status to the Vikrant Massey-starrer film, which released in theatres last week. Earlier this week, Rajasthan, Haryana, Chhattisgarh and Madhya Pradesh declared the movie as tax-free, which will effectively reduce its ticket prices. On February 27, 2002, 59 persons, mostly kar sevaks, were killed when a coach of the Sabarmati Express train was set afire near Godhra station in Gujarat, triggering widespread riots in the state. Notably, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Home Minister Amit Shah were among the leaders who had praised the movie.

Mob loots ₹ 1.68 Crore from Manipur MLA Kh Joykishan Singh's residence

PTI ■ IMPHAL

The mother of JD(U) MLA Kh Joykishan Singh in Manipur has lodged a complaint, alleging that Rs 18 lakh in cash and jewellery items worth Rs 1.5 crore were looted by a mob that vandalised the legislator's residence on November 16, police said on Thursday. Several items kept at the MLA's residence in West Imphal's Thangmeiband area for internally displaced people were also destroyed during the attack, a senior officer said. "The mother of Thangmeiband constituency legislator Kh Joykishan Singh filed a complaint with the Imphal Police Station that Rs 18 lakh in cash and several valuable items worth Rs



1.5 crore were looted and destroyed during a mob attack. An FIR has been registered," the police officer told PTI. The mob vandalised the residence of the legislator for about two hours on the November

16 evening, he said. Notably, the MLA was in Delhi due to medical treatment for one of his family members when the mob attacked his residence last week. An internally displaced person, staying in a relief camp set up at

Tombisana Higher Secondary School in Thangmeiband, a few meters away from the residence of Joykishan, said, "Vegetables like potatoes and onions, and other items such as winter clothes were kept for people like us.

All these materials were looted." "We urged the mob not to vandalise the residence of the MLA as several items meant for distribution among displaced people were kept there," Sanayai, a volunteer who manages the relief camp under the supervision of Joykishan, said. Lockers, electronics goods and furniture were vandalised, she claimed, adding that the mob attempted to take away three air conditioners but failed. Seven gas cylinders were also taken away by the mob, she claimed. Documents of internally displaced people were also destroyed during the attack, Sanayai said. The mob also pushed internally displaced people and one of the volunteers there was

injured after being beaten up, she claimed. Houses of several legislators in Manipur were vandalised as violence escalated last week after three women and three children belonging to the Meitei community had gone missing from a relief camp in Jiribam district following a gunfight between security forces and suspected Kuki-Zo militants that resulted in the deaths of 10 insurgents on November 11. Bodies of those six were later found over the past few days. More than 220 people have been killed and thousands rendered homeless in ethnic violence between Imphal Valley-based Meiteis and adjoining hills-based Kuki-Zo groups since May last year.

Assam Rifles, Mizoram Police seize banned tablets, heroin



PTI ■ AIZAWL

Assam Rifles in collaboration with Mizoram Police seized banned methamphetamine tablets and heroin worth over Rs 86 crore in two separate operations in Champhai district and two Myanmar nationals were arrested in one of these connections, an official statement said on Thursday. A joint team of Assam Rifles and state police launched an operation in a village on Wednesday after security forces received information about the movement of a suspicious consignment across the Tiau river along the India-Myanmar border. During the operation, the traffickers escaped from the spot but the consignment was seized, the Assam Rifles statement said. During the search, 28.52 kilograms of methamphetamine tablets worth Rs 85.56 crore were recovered, it said. Methamphetamine tablets, also called 'crazy drug', have been banned in India. In another operation in the district, a woman and a man, both residents of Myanmar, were arrested after 52-gram heroin worth Rs 39 lakh was seized from their possession, the statement said. One motorcycle used for transporting the narcotics substance was also seized, it added.

Haryana chief secretary oversees ₹ 58,274 Crore infrastructure projects



PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ CHANDIGARH

Haryana Chief Secretary Vivek Joshi on Thursday reviewed the progress of nine infrastructure projects currently underway in the state with an anticipated investment of Rs 58,274.05 crore. Reviewing the projects listed in the Project Monitoring Group (PMG) at a state-level

meeting here, Joshi held detailed discussions with the concerned deputy commissioners via video conferencing along with senior officials of NHAI, power, public works, health, and medical education departments. Expressing satisfaction over the progress of work, the chief secretary directed the concerned deputy commissioners to resolve the pending issues within the stipulated time frame, an official statement said. Reviewing the Delhi-Amritsar-Katra Expressway project, Joshi directed the Kaithal district administration to complete the possession of a 30-metre strip at Kharak Pandwa village in Kalayat by December-end. The four-lane greenfield project is being implemented under

the Bharatmala Pariyojana in Haryana, the statement said. Joshi also reviewed the construction of greenfield connectivity to the Jewar Airport from the DND-Faridabad-Ballabgarh Bypass KMP Link and directed the district administration of Faridabad "to remove the bottlenecks" within a month so that the project is completed expeditiously. Travel time will be reduced significantly for the traffic originating from south Delhi, Faridabad and Gurugram to Agra and beyond on completion of the project, the statement said. On land allotment for a 150-bed ESIC Hospital in Sonapat, the chief secretary directed the district administration to hold discussions with the Haryana State Industrial and

Infrastructure Development Corporation (HSIIDC) and find a suitable piece of land at the earliest. Regarding the construction of a 100-bed ESI Hospital in Hisar, officials informed Joshi that the letter for allotment of land for the hospital has been sent to the concerned authority. Citing encroachment on the land allotted for the construction an AIIMS at Majra in Rewari district, the concerned deputy commissioner informed the meeting that the Indian Railways has assured to clear the encroachment within 15 days. On the status of the Eastern Dedicated Freight Corridor, the Yamunanagar deputy commissioner assured that the issue of land compensation will be resolved at the earliest.

Tragic bus accident in Jharkhand, seven killed and many injured as Patna-bound bus overturns

PTI ■ HAZARIBAG/JHARKHAND

At least seven people were killed and several others injured on Thursday after a Patna-bound bus with passengers on board overturned in Jharkhand's Hazaribag district, police said. The accident occurred near Gorhar Police Station area, around 50 km away from district headquarters, when the bus overturned while negotiating a sharp bend, a senior officer said. "Seven deaths have been confirmed so far. Some more people may be trapped in the bus," Hazaribag SP Arvind Kumar Singh told PTI. There were about 50 passengers on the bus which was going to Patna from Kolkata when the accident took place, another officer said.



Motichand Prasad, a passenger of the bus, said his wife Rajkumari Prasad was killed in the accident. "We were asleep when the accident occurred in the morning. We boarded the bus in Kolkata on Wednesday for Bihar," Prasad, a resident of Bihar's Gopalganj, said. Another passenger from Bihar Sharif Ganesh Kumar

said that the accident took place around 6 AM. "There were around 50 passengers on the bus. As the driver negotiated a sharp bend, he lost control over the bus and the vehicle overturned," Kumar said. A police official on the spot said that around 10 people of those injured in the accident are in critical condition.

Punjab by-elections see impressive 63.91 per cent voter turnout, Gidderbaha leads with 81.90 per cent

PTI ■ CHANDIGARH

A voter turnout of around 63.91 per cent was recorded in the by-elections to Punjab's four assembly segments with the Gidderbaha segment recording the highest polling at 81.90 per cent, officials said on Thursday. Polling for the bypolls to the Gidderbaha, Dera Baba Nanak, Chabbewal (SC) and Barnala assembly segments took place on Wednesday. The by-elections were necessitated after the incumbent legislators were elected to the Lok Sabha. Of the 6.96 lakh eligible voters in these four assembly segments, 4.45 lakh voters, including 2.15 lakh women, cast their votes, according to officials. The Gidderbaha segment recorded 81.90 per cent polling, Dera Baba 64.01 per cent, Barnala 56.34



percent and Chabbewal 53.43 percent, they said. In the 2022 assembly polls, Gidderbaha had recorded 84.93 voter turnout, Dera Baba Nanak 73.70 percent, Barnala 71.45 percent and Chabbewal 71.19 percent. The main contesting political outfits in the bypolls were the Aam Aadmi Party, Congress and BJP. The Shiromani Akali Dal did not fight the elections.

Among the key contestants in the fray were former Punjab finance minister Manpreet Singh Badal, Kewal Singh Dhillon, Sohan Singh Thandal and Ravikaran Singh Kahlon (BJP), Amrita Warring and Jatinder Kaur (Congress), and Hardeep Singh Dimpy Dhillon and Ishank Kumar Chabbewal (AAP). Amrita Warring is the wife of the Congress' Punjab chief and Ludhiana MP Amrinder Singh Raja Warring. Jatinder Kaur is the spouse of Gurdaspur MP and former deputy chief minister Sukhjinder Singh Randhawa. The AAP currently has 91 MLAs in the 117-member Punjab Assembly, while the Congress has 15. The Shiromani Akali Dal has three MLAs, BJP two and the Bahujan Samaj Party one.

ISRO and ASA strengthen ties with landmark agreement

PTI ■ BENGALURU

Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) on Thursday said it has signed an Implementation Agreement (IA) with Australian Space Agency (ASA) for further strengthening of cooperation in space activities between the two countries. The IA enables the Australian authorities to work with Indian authorities to ensure support for search and rescue of crew and recovery of crew module as part of a contingency plan for ascent phase that aborts near Australian waters, ISRO said. India and Australia are enduring strategic partners and both space agencies are working closely and are committed to explore current and future collaboration activities, it said.

ISRO has embarked on the Human Spaceflight "Gaganyaan" programme with an objective of demonstrating capability to carryout Low Earth Orbit in an Indian Crew Module with up to three crew members onboard, for up to three days and to safely recover the module. The IA enables the Australian authorities to work with Indian authorities to ensure support for search and rescue of crew and recovery of crew module as part of a contingency plan for ascent phase that aborts near Australian waters, ISRO said. India and Australia are enduring strategic partners and both space agencies are working closely and are committed to explore current and future collaboration activities, it said.

Kuki MLAs demand extension of AFSPA across Manipur to recover looted arms

PTI ■ IMPHAL/GUWAHATI

Manipur Assembly's 10 Kuki MLAs, including seven of the state's ruling BJP-led alliance, have demanded that AFSPA be extended to the entire state to recover looted arms. The Centre on November 14 reinforced the Armed Forces Special Powers Act (AFSPA) in Manipur's six police station areas, including the violence-hit Jiribam, with the Union Home Ministry asserting that the decision was taken given the "continuous volatile situation" there due to ethnic strife. In a joint statement, the 10 Kuki MLAs said, "The imposition of AFSPA as per orders dated 14 November, 2024 indeed needs immediate review to extend the Act in the remaining 13 police jurisdictions."

They asserted that AFSPA should be imposed in the entire state in order to facilitate the recovery of the "more than 6,000 sophisticated weapons" looted by Meiteis since May 3 last year as it is a long overdue action required to contain the violence. Ethnic violence between Meiteis and Kukis began on May 3, 2023, after a Tribal Solidarity March was organised in the state's hill districts to protest the Meitei community's demand for Scheduled Tribe (ST) status. More than 220 people have been killed in the violence since then. The central and state governments must take all necessary steps to restore peace and normalcy in Manipur by initiating political dialogue to bring lasting peace to the troubled region, according to the

statement of the Kuki legislators including five of the BJP and two of JD(U). The 10 tribal legislators also criticised the resolution adopted by the MLAs of the ruling BJP-led NDA in Manipur, calling for a "mass operation" against the Kuki militants responsible for killing three women and three children in Jiribam district within seven days. The Kuki legislators alleged that the resolution was "divisive, one-sided and communal". They also claimed that the resolution seeking the handing over of cases relating to the death of six civilians to NIA "smacks of a communalised state". "We recommend that all civilian killings from the 3rd of May, 2023, both in the valley and hills be handed over to the NIA," they added.



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PAPER WITH PASSION

Mending fences with China

Faced with a slowing economy and increasing geopolitical challenges, Beijing seems eager to seek a thaw with India

In a notable shift, the Chinese government has signalled its intent to recalibrate its ties with India following a series of disengagement measures along their disputed border. The thaw reflects both strategic considerations and economic imperatives as Beijing grapples with slowing economic growth and rising geopolitical challenges. After years of strained relations exacerbated by the 2020 Galwan Valley clash, which resulted in casualties on both sides, the disengagement at friction points offers a moment to 'look into the future.' Chinese officials and business leaders have expressed optimism about a potential reset in ties, framing peace and stability as prerequisites for deeper bilateral engagement. China's economy has been under pressure from multiple fronts: sluggish growth, weakening consumer demand and the looming threat of escalating tariffs from the United States under Donald Trump's proposed policies. Beijing has already announced two rounds of monetary and fiscal stimulus packages, with a third expected soon, aiming to rejuvenate its domestic economy and strengthen trade ties with key partners like India. India, with its vast middle-class market and growing manufacturing sector, represents an attractive prospect for Chinese businesses.

Despite a persistent trade imbalance—India's imports from China stood at \$99.59 billion in 2023, dwarfing its exports of \$16.23 billion—there is scope for collaboration. Chinese businesses see opportunities in India's pharmaceuticals, services and burgeoning electric vehicle market. China's business leaders and scholars have called for a pragmatic approach that separates border issues from economic and cultural ties.

Influential figures in China's economic hubs—Beijing, Shanghai and Shenzhen—have emphasised the benefits of collaboration. Companies like Shanghai Pharmaceuticals and carmaker BYD have expressed interest in leveraging the Indian market, highlighting areas like healthcare and electric vehicles as promising fields for cooperation. While Beijing appears eager to reset relations, New Delhi's emphasis on resolving border disputes as a precondition for normalisation remains a sticking point. India is likely to continue leveraging its trade policies to address the trade deficit and ensure balanced economic ties. Additionally, mutual trust needs rebuilding after years of diplomatic and military stand-offs. Indeed, the disengagement along the border is a significant step toward restoring confidence between the two nations. If both sides prioritise dialogue and economic cooperation, the thaw could lead to a more stable and mutually beneficial relationship. China's acknowledgment of India's potential as a key trade and investment partner, coupled with India's focus on reducing its trade deficit and securing fair access to Chinese markets, could lay the foundation for a new era in Sino-Indian relations. Whatever the reasons behind China's willingness to engage in dialogue, this is an opportunity that must be fully seized.

PICTALK



A worker spreads 'Finger Fryums,' for drying under the sun at a factory on the outskirts of Agartala

Congress party's political opportunism



SYED ZAFAR ISLAM

The glaring contradiction between Congress party's diatribes against Adani and its actions underscores a deeper issue of political expediency eroding its trust

The relationship between the Congress Party and the Adani Group is a masterclass in political hypocrisy. For all its vocal criticisms of the Adani-BJP nexus, Congress's historical and current actions tell a different story—one of close collaboration and mutual benefit. While Rahul Gandhi and his party present themselves as crusaders against crony capitalism, the truth is that Congress has been instrumental in the growth of the Adani empire. If anything, Congress's attacks on Adani only serve to highlight its duplicity.

Adani's early growth can be traced back to the 1990s when the Congress Party was in power. In 1993, under the Chimanbhai Patel-led Congress government in Gujarat, Adani was granted land at just 10 paise per square meter for his Mundra Port project. Further land allocations were made by Shanker Singh Vaghela, who was supported by the Congress Party. Interestingly, only about a third of Adani's total land acquisitions in Gujarat occurred during Modi's tenure as Chief Minister.

Despite Rahul Gandhi's relentless attacks on Adani, Congress-ruled states continue to roll out the red carpet for the conglomerate. In Rajasthan, Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot's government has signed agreements with Adani for a massive 10,000 MW solar power project and handed over operational control of Jaipur International Airport.

In Chhattisgarh, Bhupesh Baghel's administration has approved Adani's role as a Mine Developer and Operator for coal blocks, while Himachal Pradesh's Congress Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu brokered a deal to reopen Adani-owned cement plants. These are not isolated incidents but part of a broader trend where Congress governments actively court the same group their leaders lambast at the national level. This two-faced approach isn't just political theatre—it's deeply cynical. The group's ability to



deliver large-scale infrastructure projects, attract investments, and create jobs makes it indispensable to state governments, including those led by Congress. Yet, instead of owning this reality, Congress chooses to vilify Adani on the national stage, using him as a convenient punching bag to score political points against the BJP.

It's a strategy designed to mask its complicity while hoping voters don't notice the glaring contradictions. Rahul Gandhi, in particular, has made Adani the centerpiece of his attacks on Modi, framing the group as a beneficiary of crony capitalism. But his rhetoric collapses under scrutiny. Congress's historical and ongoing engagement with Adani exposes its attacks as hollow. If Congress truly believes Adani is emblematic of everything wrong with India's economic system, why does it continue to facilitate his projects in Rajasthan, Chhattisgarh and Himachal Pradesh? Why does it refuse to acknowledge its role in Adani's rise, from land allocations in the 1990s to the financial wind-



THIS DUPLICITY ISN'T JUST BAD POLITICS; IT'S BAD FOR INDIA. CONGRESS'S SELECTIVE OUTRAGE OVER ADANI DISTRACTS FROM THE REAL ISSUES OF ECONOMIC CONCENTRATION AND REGULATORY CAPTURE

falls his group enjoyed during UPA rule?

The answer lies in political expediency. Adani Group's growth and expansion have not been limited to any single political party or government. The conglomerate has secured projects, investments, and approvals from governments led by Congress, regional parties, and other opposition parties across various states. But at the state level, where governance realities take precedence over rhetoric, the result is a schizophrenic approach that undermines whatever credibility Congress hopes to claim in its critique of crony capitalism.

This duplicity isn't just bad politics; it's bad for India. Congress's selective outrage over Adani distracts from the real issues of economic concentration and regulatory capture. While concerns about corporate influence on politics are valid and must be addressed, it is crucial to have a balanced and fact-based perspective on the issue. Worse, it perpetuates the very system it claims to oppose, enabling Adani's expansion while pre-

tending to stand against it. For Congress, the cost of this hypocrisy is more than just bad optics—it's a loss of trust. Voters are not blind to the contradictions between what Congress says and what it does. Rahul Gandhi's crusade against Adani might make for compelling headlines, but it rings hollow when Congress-ruled states continue to partner with the group. This gap between rhetoric and reality exposes Congress as a party more interested in political opportunism than principled opposition.

The people of India are wise enough to see through the opposition's double standards and political opportunism. They understand that the BJP government has always prioritised the nation's interests and has worked tirelessly to promote inclusive growth and development. We will continue to focus on our agenda of good governance, economic reforms, and social welfare, regardless of the opposition's baseless attacks and allegations.

(The writer is BJP national spokesperson; views are personal)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

GANGA UNSAFE FOR BATHING

Madam — The National Green Tribunal has ordered Varanasi DM to put up a board as the Ganga is not fit for bathing. It is unfortunate. Ganga is a lifeline to tens of millions of people who live in its basin and depend on it for their daily life. But in the recent years, the Ganga has become not suitable for drinking purposes and more pathetically for bathing too since it is severely polluted with human waste and industrial contaminants. Three quarters of sewage from the northern plains is discharged into the Ganga without treatment. The Central Pollution Control Board states that BOD levels should be less than 3 mg per litre for bathing, but in the Ganges, BOD levels can be up to 6.4 mg per litre.

Therefore, swimming in the river, which has high levels of harmful bacteria and toxic chemicals, can increase the chance of developing diseases like viral fever, nausea, typhoid, hepatitis, gastroenteritis and so on. The Ganga Action Plan was launched in 1985 with the aim of improving water quality through interception, diversion and treatment of domestic sewage and to prevent toxic and industrial chemical wastes from identified polluting units from entering the Ganga should be strictly implemented. The Namami Ganga project was launched in 2014 with the objective of effective abatement of pollution, conservation and rejuvenation of the Ganga should be given life.

P Victor Selvaraj | Tirunelveli

BENGAL'S MISSED OPPORTUNITIES

Madam — The article 'West Bengal's lost opportunity' (November 20), reshapes the genesis of Bengal's apathy for industry for decades and its doomed economy. The militancy of trade unionism under CPI(M) and TMC regimes has left Bengal de-industrialised for over five decades. CPI(M) and TMC are synonyms as the leftist cadre of CPI(M) has shifted en masse to TMC. Besides Tata Nano and Haringhata Dairy, the successive governments had opposed the Nuclear plant in

Winter smog chokes Delhi



The recurrent worsening of air quality in North India, particularly New Delhi, in the winter season is the cause for concern, which needs a comprehensive and long-lasting solution. This year the air quality index there reached 500 points, a severe plus range. Despite

the stubble burning being restricted, it has been frightening for one and all. The stubble burning in the fields of adjacent states has been considered a major contributing factor for the worsening of air quality there.

Apart from discouraging stubble burning, other measures like restricting the number of constructions, putting a cap on industrial emissions, and encouraging public transport should be implemented. Instead of passing the buck to the next, the centre and states should work in tandem to chalk out a comprehensive plan and implement it effectively. The authorities should involve the scientific community and include the people for better results. The public health, schools, transport, work and livelihood getting a halt with regularity every winter for decades in the capital region of India augurs no good at all.

DVG Sankara Rao | Vizianagaram

Haripur through violent agitations. In fact, the state governments and leadership of CPI(M) and TMC have been confrontational with Union Governments on setting up industries. The leftist agenda aims to weaken India and is subservient to the interests of China. The vote bank politics of CPI(M) and TMC have failed the state. Lakhs of youth have migrated to the other states for jobs.

The infrastructure of the state is in the worst condition and the political ecosystem thrives on violence. Therefore, alternative leadership outside CPI(M) and TMC has not emerged. Mamata Banerjee's leadership is more leftist than the Communist leadership of CPI(M) and CPI. Bengal is badly bruised on economy and GST and income tax collections are some of the poorest in the country with the size and population of the state. The successive governments of CPI and TMC have been oppressive, as evident from the recurrent violence in all Lok Sabha, Assembly, and Panchayat elections. A poor state with potential to be the most developed is very unfortunate for the

country. Bengali people deserve a better life and opportunity to grow.

Vinod Johri | Delhi

CASH CONTROVERSY

Madam — As Maharashtra hurtles toward a critical election, a political firestorm has engulfed the state, with BJP veteran Vinod Tawde and Bahujan Vikas Aghadi (BVA) leader Hitendra Thakur locked in a battle of accusations and counter-claims. Tawde, long embroiled in controversies and estranged from BJP heavyweight Devendra Fadnis, has found himself at the epicentre of fresh allegations of voter bribery. In Virar, BVA workers alleged that Tawde was caught red-handed with Rs 9.93 lakh in cash, sparking chaos. Thakur, claiming Tawde also possessed Rs 5 crore in cash and incriminating diaries listing names for monetary distribution, led the charge, insisting the BJP was attempting to buy its way to victory.

Dorai Ramani Suresh | Mumbai

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

Are taxpayers getting their money's worth?

From understaffed schools and ill-equipped hospitals to failing sanitation systems, taxpayers are left wondering: where is their money really going?

Each month, countless individuals contribute a significant portion of their earnings to the government, with the expectation that it will deliver essential services and build a nation worthy of our pride. Despite decades of commitments and the collection of hundreds of billions in taxes, numerous regions still suffer from shockingly inadequate basic infrastructure. Educational institutions lack adequate teaching personnel, public healthcare facilities consistently face shortages in supplies, and the sanitation system remains in its early developmental phase. What is the reason for this recurring issue? Is the hard-earned money of taxpayers truly being utilised efficiently, or is it time for citizens to demand more accountability?



The irony lies in the fact that the middle-class sector shoulders the weight of taxes, yet they find themselves unable to reap the rewards of the services those taxes are intended to provide. Government schools are supposed to deliver affordable and quality education; however, many lack essential facilities like toilets, adequate classrooms and dedicated teachers. Instead, middle-class families find themselves having to extend their budgets to enrol their children in private schools. Government hospitals, which are meant to provide free health care, are often overcrowded, dirty and severely lacking in staff. The middle class has ultimately turned away from these facilities, leading them to seek costly private care—where once more, their taxes and the expected refunds were meant to support them. Each year, governments amass billions in tax revenue, yet a significant portion frequently gets redirected to non-essential projects, bureaucratic inefficiencies, or, even more troubling, cor-

ruption. Extravagant government offices, regular overseas travel for officials and inadequately planned infrastructure initiatives consume resources that ought to be allocated to enhancing public services. Systemic leakages in public sector spending result in a significant portion of the allocated budget failing to reach those it was meant to benefit. It is not merely a matter of inefficiency; it represents a profound betrayal of public trust. Taxpayers deserve clarity and results. Therefore, it is essential for governments to create detailed spending breakdowns that enable citizens to follow the flow of their funds. It is essential for governments to reassess their spending priorities. Rather than focussing on grand symbolic infrastructure projects, efforts will be directed towards grassroots enhancements—cleaning hospitals, recruiting skilled teachers, and ensuring proper sanitation in every school. Technology can play a crucial role in monitoring advancements on extensive spreadsheets and digital platforms, highlighting areas that

require urgent focus.

The key takeaway is the importance of civic engagement. People must insist on greater accountability from those they elect. Advocacy, community assessments, and exerting influence can indeed compel a government to establish fundamental infrastructure for the public. If the government disregards the opinions of the taxpayer, the collective voting strength and lobbying activities can convey a different kind of message. Public funds should serve as a means for advancing the nation, rather than being squandered on wasteful expenditures or corrupt practices. The true measure of a nation's greatness lies not in its towering skyscrapers or grand monuments, but in the care and support it provides to its people. Quality education, hygienic healthcare facilities, and essential sanitation are not privileges—they are basic entitlements. Now is the moment to hold the influential responsible for fulfilling their commitments.

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



RACHNA LAKHPATRI

FIRST COLUMN

THE FRAGILE MIND AND OVERCOMING FEAR

understanding the causes of mental fragility and embracing methods of healing can help us fight fear



RAVI VALLURI

The cell rang and dropped from her hands. There was an agonising silence across continents. Her only son in the US, a brilliant student, committed suicide. Bill Maher writes, "Suicide is man's way of telling God: You can't fire me, I quit." But do brave men commit suicide? It appears to be a permanent solution to a transitory problem. Marcus Trescothick and Chetan Sharma come to mind. The former suffered from xenophobia in the subcontinent and Chetan Sharma after being hit for that last ball six at Sharjah by Javed Miandad lost his mojo and rhythm.

Fear, anxiety, emotional upheavals, unpleasant feelings, panic attacks and phobias are all symptomatic of a fragile and delicate mind. A fragmented mind is invariably a victim of irrational fear. Such an individual is unable to distinguish between what is logical and what is not. People harbouring fear suffer from panic attacks, sweaty palms, disturbed sleep, palpitation, shortness of breath, inability to remain calm, dry mouth and numbness of the feet and hands. A contributor to the magnification of fear is our pent-up emotions. These emotions are not based on a rational or scientific thinking pattern. We end up violently or irrationally reacting rather than responding in a coherent and clear-sighted manner. Humans should be prudent to ponder, that if left untreated this situation can become mourning regalia. A person can suffer from psychosomatic illnesses, loss of appetite, self-deprecatory behaviour or even schizophrenia. An element of fear is perhaps required, because then we can patrol our fences. Perhaps the only fearless people are sages and mentally deranged personalities! They are insulated from fear! The



brain is an organ and the mind is our intellect. It makes us aware and enhances the quality of consciousness. The mind is a movie theatre where the soap opera of our life is enacted. We play, rewind, and rerun an enormous number of movies. Thoughts are impacted by the kind of food we partake in (Tamasik, Rajasik, Sattvik), the company we keep and the amount of rest we take. The quality (guna) of food has a bearing on our disposition and approach to life.

Tamasik food makes us sluggish, Rajasik food makes us feverish or anxious in disposition and Sattvik food makes us feel calm. The first two lead us to fearful situations. If we are closeted with individuals who have a negative thought process, we imbibe such attributes and evince such a behavioural pattern. "Man is known by the company he keeps" is a very old adage and so is "man is born free but always is in chains". It is cardinal to have adequate physical and mental rest. If we are rested, then we are at peace and do not complain or quibble.

Then we are physically and mentally alert and high-yielding. In our minds, we need to keep space to just dump the garbage which disappears into the recycle bin, NEVER to APPEAR again. We need to pursue passions, and hobbies, indulge in sports, participate in extracurricular activities, avoid negative company, take up initiatives, practice meditation, keep the mind occupied, footslog on the treadmill, go for long walks, go for treks and read autobiographies of entrepreneurs and achievers. There are others who adopt the spiritual path by practising pranayama, learning yoga, undertaking the Art of Living course, or observing the breath through the Vipassana technique. To conquer fear, we need to log out of our comfort zone so that the virus of fear does not enter our operating system. And if nothing works out, the magic is to surrender to the Divine and feel grateful.

(The writer is the CEO of Chhattisgarh East Railway Ltd. and Chhattisgarh East West Railway Ltd. He is a faculty of the Art of Living; views are personal)

Dedicated bank for MSMEs to boost credit access



A S MITTAL

This new initiative seeks to bridge that gap and stimulate job creation and economic activity by providing MSMEs with the financial support they desperately need

The government plans to establish a dedicated bank to lend directly to Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) to enhance credit availability in this crucial sector. The industry has called for increased financial support, as current institutions like the Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI) primarily focus on refinancing loans rather than providing direct funding. In contrast, state financial and industrial development corporations do lend directly to MSMEs.

However, many, such as the Punjab State Industrial Development Corporation (PSIDC) and Punjab Finance Corporation (PFC), are experiencing funds crunch and have stopped credit flow. PSIDC gathered liabilities worth Rs 4700 crore, therefore, has not given any fresh loans to any company for the last 16 years. According to an Ernst&Young(EY) report, MSME credit penetration in India is only 14 per cent, significantly lower than in larger economies like the US and China, where the figures are 50 per cent and 37 per cent, respectively. Indian MSMEs face a critical credit shortage of? 25 trillion, indicating a substantial untapped credit market. Increasing lending to MSMEs can stimulate economic activity and create jobs. The proposed establishment of a separate bank dedicated to the MSME sector would help address these direct credit shortages. However, the government needs to finalise various details, such as the bank's ownership structure, which may adopt a hybrid public-private partnership model. Although large banks operate in the sector, they often struggle to meet the unique needs of MSMEs.

Countries in Europe provide valuable lessons by grouping MSMEs with home loan customers, both considered small borrowers. If the government does not establish a new bank, SIDBI could be transformed into a full-fledged bank focused on direct lending to MSMEs instead of merely refinancing. SIDBI plays a vital role in financing India's MSMEs and is owned by a consortium that includes the government and major financial institutions. In 2023-24, the National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) supported the agricultural sector with a loan portfolio of Rs 6.68 lakh crore, with the agriculture sector contributing 18 per cent to the country's GDP. On the other hand, SIDBI had a refinancing loan portfolio of? 84,000 crore in FY 2023-24, with the MSME sector contributing 30 per cent to the GDP. For micro and small enterprises to grow, obtaining capital remains one of their most significant challenges.

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has designated MSMEs as a priority sector and directed banks to allocate 40 per cent of the Adjusted Net Bank Credit (ANBC) to priority sectors, including MSMEs. However, a study by the RBI has found that most banks do not exceed 25 per cent for MSME credit. SIDBI's future growth depends on how effectively commercial banks fulfil their priority sector lending targets. A report by ICRA warns that if banks successfully meet their quotas, there could be a reduced need for SIDBI's refinancing services. Challenges: Despite the vital role MSMEs play in the country's economy, access to adequate, timely, and low-cost finance poses a significant hurdle to the sector's growth prospects. Limited credit history, insuffi-



INCREASING LENDING TO MSMEs CAN STIMULATE ECONOMIC ACTIVITY AND CREATE JOBS. THE PROPOSED ESTABLISHMENT OF A SEPARATE BANK DEDICATED TO THE MSME SECTOR WOULD HELP ADDRESS THESE DIRECT CREDIT SHORTAGE

cient collateral, lack of knowledge about government support, and high borrowing costs complicate access to funding for MSMEs. Unlike large corporations, MSMEs often lack an established track record, making it challenging to secure loans from banks and other financial institutions. There are 64 million MSMEs in India, with 99 per cent classified as micro-enterprises. Despite global adversities, the sector has helped cushion the economy from shocks. In a nation marked by significant disparities between urban and rural areas, MSMEs contribute to the upliftment of less developed regions, thereby reducing regional imbalances and inequality. The sector provides over 110 million jobs, accounting for 23 per cent of the country's labour force, making it the second-largest employer in India after agriculture.

The importance of MSMEs to the Indian economy cannot be overstated. They drive innovation, generate employment, and contribute significantly to exports and GDP. By fostering entrepreneurship and supporting large-scale industrialisation, MSMEs play a pivotal role in reducing regional imbalances, uplifting economically weaker sections, and stimulating socio-economic development. Their adaptability and resilience make them indispensable in the face of economic adversities, ensuring the continuous dynamism of the Indian economy. With a contribution of 27 per cent to India's GDP, 38.4 per cent of total manufacturing output, and 45 per cent of the country's total exports, the MSME sector serves as the backbone of the economy.

Global Models to Emulate: However, the government has launched several initiatives to promote financing for Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs), including the Credit Guarantee Fund Trust for Micro and Small Enterprises (CGTMSE), Pradhan Mantri

Mudra Yojana (PMMY), and Stand-Up India. While these efforts are commendable, the government must ensure awareness of and effective disbursement for these schemes so that more enterprises can benefit. Additionally, the private sector needs to step up and promote MSME financing.

Without public-private partnerships, alliances, and collaborations, MSME financing will continue to face challenges. One pressing issue is the introduction of interest subvention to address high borrowing costs, which range from 10 to 12 per cent. This creates an uneven playing field when compared to countries like China, where the borrowing rate is 3.1 per cent, the US at 4.37 per cent, and the European Union, which averages 5.1 per cent for MSMEs.

In the US, MSMEs can access funding through various federal and state programmes. The Small Business Administration (SBA) plays a vital role by offering loan guarantees and encouraging banks and other financial institutions to lend to small businesses. The Microloan Programmes provide capital for various business needs, including working capital, equipment purchases, and real estate acquisitions. Furthermore, the US government supports MSMEs through grants, venture capital initiatives, and state-specific funding programs tailored to local business environments. This diverse range of financial products ensures that MSMEs can find suitable funding options for their specific requirements.

In European Union countries, MSMEs benefit from robust financial support frameworks facilitated by institutions such as the European Investment Bank (EIB) and the European Investment Fund (EIF). These entities provide funding through intermediaries like banks and microfinance institutions, offering loans, guarantees, and equity

financing. The EU also promotes MSME funding through programs focused on the competitiveness of enterprises and small and medium-sized enterprises, which emphasise innovation and competitiveness. In China, the government has implemented several measures to enhance MSMEs' access to finance through dedicated banks, such as the China Development Bank, which offers targeted lending. Local governments have established credit guarantee funds as well. Moreover, China's financial technology sector has significantly grown, with online lending platforms and digital financial services providing alternative funding sources for MSMEs.

Way Forward: The inherent challenges faced by MSMEs cannot be overlooked. It is essential to address the issues within the MSME sector that hinder financial accessibility. As recommended by the Parliamentary Committee on Finance, the comprehensive approaches in the US, EU, and China serve as valuable models for India to enhance its financing landscape for MSMEs, improve credit access, and make these enterprises globally competitive.

The government also proposed establishing a Merchant Credit Card (MCC) Scheme for traders and a Vyapar Credit Card (VCC) for micro-units, similar to the Kisan Credit Card (KCC). Under the Credit Guarantee Fund, a scheme to provide short-term loans with interest subvention is still awaited. There is still much work to be done to ensure that all MSMEs can access affordable and timely financing.

(The Author is vice-chairman of Sonalika IITL Group, vice-chairman of the Punjab Economic Policy and Planning Board, Chairman of ASSOCHAM Northern Region Development Council and president of Tractor and Mechanisation Association; Views expressed are personal)

India's gender gap in labour force participation: A missed opportunity

India must act swiftly to secure its digital future in an era where technological prowess is now essential for national security

A recent International Labour Organisation and Niti Aayog report shows that less than 50 per cent of women are in the labour force in India, compared to 80 per cent of men, and this proportion has not increased since 1990.

India is presently realising a demographic dividend, with the largest number of the young working population in the age group of 15-34. The above trend in women's labour market participation has serious implications for the economy, indicating a need for transition.

The Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) conducted by the Ministry of Statistics & Programme Implementation (MoSPI), presents a slightly optimistic



KAJLEEN KAUR

picture, where women's participation in the labour force has notably increased to 37 per cent from 23.3 per cent in 2017-18. Although growing, these figures are disgracefully low compared to 69 per cent in China and 57 per cent in Bangladesh. A similar comparison of female literacy rate in India with Sri Lanka, China, South Africa and Russia between 2011-2021

shows a remarkable growth from 59.28 per cent to 69 per cent for India, but it is way below all other countries where the figure is greater than 90 per cent, due to their dedicated efforts to female literacy.

The female labour supply traces a U-shaped curve to economic growth in many developed countries implying an initial fall in the supply with an increase in the GDP of the country, but later showing a positive trend. However, in India, this upward trend is not realised implying that economic growth has not generated adequate jobs for women.

According to the OECD report (2019), women in India spend on average 352

minutes a day on unpaid work as against 52 minutes by men. The division emphasises that a woman's "appropriate" role may be dominated by patriarchal structures, societal expectations, and traditional bias, and are restricted to caregivers and homemakers.

There is also a considerable gender-based wage gap of about INR 4,014. On average, men earn INR 12,048 per month while women earn INR 8,034, or about 33 per cent less than men.

This illustrates the stereotypes and gender biases that affect employment decisions, promotions, and wage negotiations. Recently, Indian policymakers and government have undertaken several initiatives and schemes



to raise the status of women with better access, eliminating barriers, and gender parity in the educational system.

Programmes like Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, Beti Bachao-Beti Padhao, and the National Programme for Education of Girls at

Elementary Level (NPEGEL) aim to combat gender bias, guarantee inclusive education, and improve access to education for all.

The Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) also introduced the "Udaan Scheme" in 2022 to encourage and facilitate female students to pursue higher education in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) fields.

This is relevant as the Indian global compatibility centres (GCCs) show only 6.7 per cent of women in executive roles and 5.1 per cent in deep tech organisations. According to the World Economic Forum's annual Gender Gap Report 2023, India ranks 127 out of 146

countries in terms of gender parity, an improvement of eight places from 2022. The underutilised talents and unrealised potential and skills of women are crucial for redeeming the benefits of demographic dividend. A comprehensive strategy including education beyond secondary schooling with a focus on skill development can design a long-term employment-oriented development strategy, acting as a catalyst in achieving goals as set under United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals.

(Kajleen is an assistant professor at Sri Guru Gobind Singh College of Commerce, Delhi University; Views are personal)

Israel-Hamas war death toll passes 44k

AP ■ DEIR-AL-BALAH

The death toll in the Gaza Strip from the 13-month-old war between Israel and Hamas has surpassed 44,000, local health officials said Thursday. The Gaza Health Ministry does not distinguish between civilians and combatants in its count, but it has said that more than half of the fatalities are women and children. The Israeli military says it has killed over 17,000 militants, without providing evidence. The Health Ministry said 44,056 people have been killed and 104,268 wounded since the start of the war. It has said the real toll is higher because thousands of bodies are buried under rubble or in areas that medics cannot access. The war began when Hamas-led militants stormed into southern Israel on Oct 7, 2023, killing some 1,200 people, mostly civilians, and abducting another 250. Around 100 hostages are still inside Gaza, at least a third of whom are believed to be dead. Most of the rest were released during a cease-fire last year.

ICC issues arrest warrants for Netanyahu

The Hague (AP): The International Criminal Court issued arrest warrants on Thursday for Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, his former defence minister and Hamas officials, accusing them of war crimes and crimes against humanity over the war in Gaza and the October 2023 attacks that triggered Israel's offensive in the Palestinian territory. The decision turns Netanyahu and the others into internationally wanted suspects and is likely to further isolate them and complicate efforts to negotiate a cease-fire to end the 13-month conflict. But its practical implications could be limited since Israel and its major ally, the United States, are not members of the court and several of the Hamas officials have been subsequently killed in the conflict. Netanyahu and other Israeli leaders have condemned ICC Chief Prosecutor Karim Khan's request for warrants as disgraceful and antisemitic.

US President Joe Biden also blasted the prosecutor and expressed support for Israel's right to defend itself against Hamas. Hamas also slammed the request. "The Chamber considered that there are reasonable grounds to believe that both individuals intentionally and knowingly deprived the civilian population in Gaza of objects indispensable to their survival, including food, water, and medicine and medical supplies, as well as fuel and electricity," the three-judge panel wrote in its unanimous decision to issue warrants for Netanyahu and his former defence minister Yoav Gallant. The court also issued a warrant for the arrest of Mohammed Deif, one of the leaders of Hamas. The ICC chief prosecutor had also sought warrants for two other senior Hamas figures, Yahya Sinwar and Ismail Haniyeh, but they were both killed in the conflict. The Israeli Foreign Ministry said in September that it had

submitted two legal briefs challenging the ICC's jurisdiction and arguing that the court did not provide Israel the opportunity to investigate the allegations itself before requesting the warrants. "No other democracy with an independent and respected legal system like that which exists in Israel has been treated in this prejudicial manner by the Prosecutor," Foreign Ministry spokesperson Oren Marmorstein wrote on X. He said Israel remained "steadfast in its commitment to the rule of law and justice" and would continue to protect its citizens against militancy. The ICC is a court of last resort that only prosecutes cases when domestic law enforcement authorities cannot or will not investigate. Israel is not a member state of the court. The country has struggled to investigate itself in the past, rights groups say. Despite the warrants, none of the suspects is likely to face judges in The Hague any time soon.

The court itself has no police to enforce warrants, instead relying on cooperation from its member states. Even so, the threat of arrest could make it difficult for Netanyahu and Gallant to travel abroad, although Russian President Vladimir Putin, who is wanted on an ICC warrant for alleged war crimes in Ukraine, recently showed he could still visit an ally when he traveled to Mongolia, one of the court's member states, and was not arrested. Khan sought warrants in May, accusing Netanyahu and Gallant of crimes including murder, intentionally attacking civilians, and persecution. In a statement at the time, Khan alleged that Israel "has intentionally and systematically deprived the civilian population in all parts of Gaza of objects indispensable to human survival" by closing border crossings into the territory and restricting essential supplies including food and medicine.



Smoke rises after an Israeli airstrike on Dahiyeh, in the southern suburb of Beirut, Lebanon, Thursday. AP/PTI

Aus tourist dies after drinking tainted alcohol in Laos, raising toll to four

AP ■ VIENTIANE

An Australian teenager died after drinking tainted alcohol in Laos in what Australia's prime minister on Thursday called every parent's nightmare. An American and two Danish tourists also died, officials said after reports that multiple people had been sickened in town popular with backpackers. Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese told Parliament that 19-year-old Bianca Jones had died after being evacuated from Vang Vieng, Laos for treatment in

a Thai hospital. Her friend, also 19, remains hospitalised in neighbouring Thailand. "This is every parent's worst fear and a nightmare that no one should have to endure," Albanese said. "We also take this moment to say that we're thinking of Bianca's friend Holly Bowles who is fighting for her life." They are believed to have consumed drinks tainted with methanol, which is sometimes added to mixed-drinks at disreputable bars as a cheaper alternative to ethanol, but can cause severe poisoning or death. Telephone numbers listed for Laos' Health Ministry did

not work and police refused to comment on the incident. Australia said "several foreign nationals" had also been victims of methanol poisoning. The US State Department confirmed that an American had also died in Vang Vieng, and Denmark's Foreign Ministry said two of its citizens had also died in "the incident in Laos," but neither would comment directly on a link to the methanol poisoning that killed Jones. Shaun Bowles told reporters outside Bangkok Hospital on Wednesday that his daughter remained in critical condi-

tion and on life support. "We just like to thank everyone from back home for all of the support and love that we're receiving," he said. "But we'd also like the people to appreciate right now, we just need privacy so we can spend as much time as we can with Holly." In a statement to the Melbourne Herald Sun newspaper, Jones' family asked for privacy in their grief. "She was surrounded by love, and we are comforted by the knowledge that her incredible spirit touched so many lives during her time with us," the family wrote.

COP29 produces streamlined climate finance draft, but key issues remain

PTI ■ BAKU (AZERBAIJAN)

After an all-nighter, a draft text on the new climate finance package for the developing world finally dropped Thursday morning — shrunk from 25 pages to 10, but the major sticking points remain. With less than two days left for the UN climate conference to close, negotiators face a gargantuan task to hammer it out. A quick glance at the text shows developed countries are still dodging a key question: How much climate finance are they ready to give developing countries every year starting in 2025? This has led to significant frustration among developing countries, who have repeatedly said they need at least USD 1.3 trillion to tackle the escalating challenges. "The revised draft text, while more streamlined, presents a spectrum of options — some good, some bad, and some outright ugly," said Harjeet Singh, a climate activist and Global Engagement Director for the Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty Initiative. He said it acknowledges the need for public funds from developed countries but dodges the key question of how much finance is

needed, shifting the burden onto developing countries to raise more domestic funds. The veteran COP watcher also said the text fails to set clear financial targets for mitigation, adaptation, and losses and damages from climate impacts — areas with growing needs and limited resources. "A real, just transition from fossil fuels requires strong public finance, not empty promises," Singh said. Vaibhav Chaturvedi from Delhi-based think tank Council on Energy, Environment and Water said it is great that the structure is streamlined, but there is no high-level number from the developed world. David Waskow, the Director of WRI's International Climate Initiative, said the text leaves a lot of work to be done. "Time is very tight, and to get to bridging texts, even bridging texts with options, is going to take quite a lot of work, and the presidency and the ministerial pair and parties above all, are going to need to really work hard over the next 48 to 72 hours to reach a conclusion," he said. Developing countries' perspective in the text is that the new climate finance package should be in trillions and be given by developed countries every year from 2025.

'Failure is not an option'

Baku (PTI): UN climate chief Simon Stiell on Thursday issued a strong call for global unity and ambition to secure a groundbreaking finance goal to support climate action in the developing world, saying, "Failure is not an option." As negotiators raced against time to resolve outstanding issues related to the critical objective of COP29, Stiell said a major push was needed to bring discussions to the finishing line. "It might jeopardise both near-term action, and ambition in the preparation of the new national climate action plans, with potential devastating impacts as irreversible tipping points are getting closer," he said. On draft climate finance text released earlier in the morning, the UN climate chief said that despite areas of convergence, significant differences remain. "A surge in finance is essential: To ensure all parties can deliver new national plans aligned with 1.5

degrees — as they must," he said. Stiell warned that delays at COP29 could complicate the road to COP30 in Brazil next year. "This COP must deliver justice in the face of climate catastrophe," he urged. Stiell asked countries to come together, soften hard lines, and navigate a path through their differences. "Keep your eyes on the bigger picture. Never forget what is at stake," he said. The COP29 presidency issued a draft text on the new climate finance package for the developing world on Thursday morning. It has shrunk from 25 pages to 10, but the major sticking points remain. With less than one and a half days left for the UN climate conference to close, negotiators face a gargantuan task to hammer out a deal. The text shows developed countries are still dodging a key question: how much climate finance they are ready to provide developing countries every year starting in 2025.

Shalimar Bagh Branch, BH -29, Ground Floor, East Shalimar Bagh, Delhi-110088, India. Phone: 011-27492896, 27472837, Fax: 011-27472837, E-mail: shadel@bankofbaroda.com

NOTICE TO BORROWER (UNDER SUB-SECTION (2) OF SECTION 13 OF THE SARFAESI ACT, 2002)
Date: 28/10/2024
M/s. Credence Whole Foods Pvt. Ltd., Plot no 74, Sector-8, IMT Manesar, Gurugram, Haryana-122052. M-991049039, 7359617555 Email ID: CREDECENCEWHOLEFOODS.AJAY@GMAIL.COM
Re: Various Credit facilities with our Shalimar Bagh Branch, Delhi-110088.

1. We refer to our sanction letter no. SMELF/DMR-I/ND/2017-18 dated 04/10/2017, BR/Shadel/ADV/2017-18 dated 09/03/2018, BR/Shadel/ADV/2018-19/05/47 dated 29/09/2018, BR/Shadel/ADV/2020-21/05/47 dated 17/04/2020, BR/Shadel/ADV/2020-21/05/47 dated 22/05/2020 and one-time restructuring sanction letter no. DNCC-1/N2/2020-21/15 dated 30/03/2021 conveying sanction of credit facilities and the terms of sanction. Pursuant to the above sanction you have availed and started utilising the credit facilities after providing security for the same, as hereinafter started. The present outstanding in various loan/credit facility accounts and the security interest created for such facility are as under:

S. No.	Nature and type of facility	Limit (in Rs.)	Rate of interest	On Balance as on 26.10.2024 (in Rs.)	Security agreement with brief description of securities
1.	Working Capital (Cash Credit) - 27440500000047	3,72,00,00,000/-	BRRLLR + 2.25 % i.e. 11.35% p.a. Plus Penal Interest of 2% p.a. from the date of default	1,69,27,438/- plus Future interest and charges incurred thereon.	Primary: (i) Hypothecation to stock comprising of milk and milk products etc located at Khata no 49 & 51 Khata no 353 & 354, Vill-Masoori, Tehsil-Khekra, Dist-Bagpat (UP)-250101. (ii) Hypothecation of plant and machinery comprised of factory Plant and machinery at Khata no 49 & 51 Khata no 353 & 354, Vill-Masoori, Tehsil-Khekra Dist-Bagpat (UP)-250101. (iii) Commercial vehicle consisting of 03 Mahindra Bolero Pick Up FC CNG BS 4 1. Registration no- DL1AA3967. Engine no- EPJ1B19028. Chassis no- MA1ZNPZPKJH26138. 2. Registration no- DL1AA4351. Engine no- EPJ1B19055. Chassis no- MA1ZNPZPKJH26138. 3. Registration no DL1AA5096. Engine No EPJ1B19027. Chassis No MA1ZNPZPKJH26138. 4. Registration no DL1AA3263. Collateral: 1) All the part and parcel of factory land and building situated at Khata no 049 and 051, Khata no 353 and 354, village Hasanpur masoori, P.O. Khekra, Bagpat, Uttar Pradesh 250101, total land measuring 1.1790 Hectare in the name of Mr. Dhani Ram Yadav S/o. Sh. Bhim Singh, Mr. Mahendra Yadav S/o. Sh. Bhim Singh and Mr. Mahabir Yadav S/o. Sh. Bhim Singh. Censal Asset ID: 200024832963 Security Interest ID: 40002483301
2.	Term Loan 1 - 27440600001394	75,00,00,000/-	BRRLLR + 2.25 % i.e. 11.35% p.a. Plus Penal Interest of 2% p.a. from the date of default	55,51,332/- plus Future interest and charges incurred thereon.	(i) Hypothecation of plant and machinery comprised of factory Plant and machinery at Khata no 49 & 51 Khata no 353 & 354, Vill-Masoori, Tehsil-Khekra Dist-Bagpat (UP)-250101. (ii) Commercial vehicle consisting of 03 Mahindra Bolero Pick Up FC CNG BS 4 1. Registration no- DL1AA3967. Engine no- EPJ1B19028. Chassis no- MA1ZNPZPKJH26138. 2. Registration no- DL1AA4351. Engine no- EPJ1B19055. Chassis no- MA1ZNPZPKJH26138. 3. Registration no DL1AA5096. Engine No EPJ1B19027. Chassis No MA1ZNPZPKJH26138. 4. Registration no DL1AA3263. Collateral: 1) All the part and parcel of factory land and building situated at Khata no 049 and 051, Khata no 353 and 354, village Hasanpur masoori, P.O. Khekra, Bagpat, Uttar Pradesh 250101, total land measuring 1.1790 Hectare in the name of Mr. Dhani Ram Yadav S/o. Sh. Bhim Singh, Mr. Mahendra Yadav S/o. Sh. Bhim Singh and Mr. Mahabir Yadav S/o. Sh. Bhim Singh. Censal Asset ID: 200024832963 Security Interest ID: 40002483301
3.	Term Loan 2 - 27440600001418	26,00,00,000/-	BRRLLR + 2.25 % i.e. 11.35% p.a. Plus Penal Interest of 2% p.a. from the date of default	13,31,996/- plus Future interest and charges incurred thereon.	(i) Hypothecation of plant and machinery comprised of factory Plant and machinery at Khata no 49 & 51 Khata no 353 & 354, Vill-Masoori, Tehsil-Khekra Dist-Bagpat (UP)-250101. (ii) Commercial vehicle consisting of 03 Mahindra Bolero Pick Up FC CNG BS 4 1. Registration no- DL1AA3967. Engine no- EPJ1B19028. Chassis no- MA1ZNPZPKJH26138. 2. Registration no- DL1AA4351. Engine no- EPJ1B19055. Chassis no- MA1ZNPZPKJH26138. 3. Registration no DL1AA5096. Engine No EPJ1B19027. Chassis No MA1ZNPZPKJH26138. 4. Registration no DL1AA3263. Collateral: 1) All the part and parcel of factory land and building situated at Khata no 049 and 051, Khata no 353 and 354, village Hasanpur masoori, P.O. Khekra, Bagpat, Uttar Pradesh 250101, total land measuring 1.1790 Hectare in the name of Mr. Dhani Ram Yadav S/o. Sh. Bhim Singh, Mr. Mahendra Yadav S/o. Sh. Bhim Singh and Mr. Mahabir Yadav S/o. Sh. Bhim Singh. Censal Asset ID: 200024832963 Security Interest ID: 40002483301
4.	Term Loan 3 - 27440600001500	1,50,00,00,000/-	BRRLLR + 2.25 % i.e. 11.35% p.a. Plus Penal Interest of 2% p.a. from the date of default	1,35,34,981/- plus Future interest and charges incurred thereon.	(i) Hypothecation of plant and machinery comprised of factory Plant and machinery at Khata no 49 & 51 Khata no 353 & 354, Vill-Masoori, Tehsil-Khekra Dist-Bagpat (UP)-250101. (ii) Commercial vehicle consisting of 03 Mahindra Bolero Pick Up FC CNG BS 4 1. Registration no- DL1AA3967. Engine no- EPJ1B19028. Chassis no- MA1ZNPZPKJH26138. 2. Registration no- DL1AA4351. Engine no- EPJ1B19055. Chassis no- MA1ZNPZPKJH26138. 3. Registration no DL1AA5096. Engine No EPJ1B19027. Chassis No MA1ZNPZPKJH26138. 4. Registration no DL1AA3263. Collateral: 1) All the part and parcel of factory land and building situated at Khata no 049 and 051, Khata no 353 and 354, village Hasanpur masoori, P.O. Khekra, Bagpat, Uttar Pradesh 250101, total land measuring 1.1790 Hectare in the name of Mr. Dhani Ram Yadav S/o. Sh. Bhim Singh, Mr. Mahendra Yadav S/o. Sh. Bhim Singh and Mr. Mahabir Yadav S/o. Sh. Bhim Singh. Censal Asset ID: 200024832963 Security Interest ID: 40002483301
5.	Term Loan 4 - 27440600001703	65,00,00,000/-	BRRLLR + 2.25 % i.e. 11.35% p.a. Plus Penal Interest of 2% p.a. from the date of default	67,95,348/- plus Future interest and charges incurred thereon.	(i) Hypothecation of plant and machinery comprised of factory Plant and machinery at Khata no 49 & 51 Khata no 353 & 354, Vill-Masoori, Tehsil-Khekra Dist-Bagpat (UP)-250101. (ii) Commercial vehicle consisting of 03 Mahindra Bolero Pick Up FC CNG BS 4 1. Registration no- DL1AA3967. Engine no- EPJ1B19028. Chassis no- MA1ZNPZPKJH26138. 2. Registration no- DL1AA4351. Engine no- EPJ1B19055. Chassis no- MA1ZNPZPKJH26138. 3. Registration no DL1AA5096. Engine No EPJ1B19027. Chassis No MA1ZNPZPKJH26138. 4. Registration no DL1AA3263. Collateral: 1) All the part and parcel of factory land and building situated at Khata no 049 and 051, Khata no 353 and 354, village Hasanpur masoori, P.O. Khekra, Bagpat, Uttar Pradesh 250101, total land measuring 1.1790 Hectare in the name of Mr. Dhani Ram Yadav S/o. Sh. Bhim Singh, Mr. Mahendra Yadav S/o. Sh. Bhim Singh and Mr. Mahabir Yadav S/o. Sh. Bhim Singh. Censal Asset ID: 200024832963 Security Interest ID: 40002483301
6.	BDOECLS Term Loan - 27440600002242	1,20,00,00,000/-	BRRLLR + 1.00% i.e. 10.15% p.a. Plus Penal Interest of 2% p.a. from the date of default	94,88,835/- plus Future interest and charges incurred thereon.	(i) Hypothecation of plant and machinery comprised of factory Plant and machinery at Khata no 49 & 51 Khata no 353 & 354, Vill-Masoori, Tehsil-Khekra Dist-Bagpat (UP)-250101. (ii) Commercial vehicle consisting of 03 Mahindra Bolero Pick Up FC CNG BS 4 1. Registration no- DL1AA3967. Engine no- EPJ1B19028. Chassis no- MA1ZNPZPKJH26138. 2. Registration no- DL1AA4351. Engine no- EPJ1B19055. Chassis no- MA1ZNPZPKJH26138. 3. Registration no DL1AA5096. Engine No EPJ1B19027. Chassis No MA1ZNPZPKJH26138. 4. Registration no DL1AA3263. Collateral: 1) All the part and parcel of factory land and building situated at Khata no 049 and 051, Khata no 353 and 354, village Hasanpur masoori, P.O. Khekra, Bagpat, Uttar Pradesh 250101, total land measuring 1.1790 Hectare in the name of Mr. Dhani Ram Yadav S/o. Sh. Bhim Singh, Mr. Mahendra Yadav S/o. Sh. Bhim Singh and Mr. Mahabir Yadav S/o. Sh. Bhim Singh. Censal Asset ID: 200024832963 Security Interest ID: 40002483301
7.	WCLT 1 - 27440600002402	2,78,00,00,000/-	BRRLLR + 1.25 % i.e. 10.40% p.a. Plus Penal Interest of 2% p.a. from the date of default	3,13,51,831/- plus Future interest and charges incurred thereon.	(i) Hypothecation of plant and machinery comprised of factory Plant and machinery at Khata no 49 & 51 Khata no 353 & 354, Vill-Masoori, Tehsil-Khekra Dist-Bagpat (UP)-250101. (ii) Commercial vehicle consisting of 03 Mahindra Bolero Pick Up FC CNG BS 4 1. Registration no- DL1AA3967. Engine no- EPJ1B19028. Chassis no- MA1ZNPZPKJH26138. 2. Registration no- DL1AA4351. Engine no- EPJ1B19055. Chassis no- MA1ZNPZPKJH26138. 3. Registration no DL1AA5096. Engine No EPJ1B19027. Chassis No MA1ZNPZPKJH26138. 4. Registration no DL1AA3263. Collateral: 1) All the part and parcel of factory land and building situated at Khata no 049 and 051, Khata no 353 and 354, village Hasanpur masoori, P.O. Khekra, Bagpat, Uttar Pradesh 250101, total land measuring 1.1790 Hectare in the name of Mr. Dhani Ram Yadav S/o. Sh. Bhim Singh, Mr. Mahendra Yadav S/o. Sh. Bhim Singh and Mr. Mahabir Yadav S/o. Sh. Bhim Singh. Censal Asset ID: 200024832963 Security Interest ID: 40002483301
8.	WCLT 2 - 27440600002403	4,44,00,00,000/-	BRRLLR + 1.25 % i.e. 10.40% p.a. Plus Penal Interest of 2% p.a. from the date of default	3,99,883/- plus Future interest and charges incurred thereon.	(i) Hypothecation of plant and machinery comprised of factory Plant and machinery at Khata no 49 & 51 Khata no 353 & 354, Vill-Masoori, Tehsil-Khekra Dist-Bagpat (UP)-250101. (ii) Commercial vehicle consisting of 03 Mahindra Bolero Pick Up FC CNG BS 4 1. Registration no- DL1AA3967. Engine no- EPJ1B19028. Chassis no- MA1ZNPZPKJH26138. 2. Registration no- DL1AA4351. Engine no- EPJ1B19055. Chassis no- MA1ZNPZPKJH26138. 3. Registration no DL1AA5096. Engine No EPJ1B19027. Chassis No MA1ZNPZPKJH26138. 4. Registration no DL1AA3263. Collateral: 1) All the part and parcel of factory land and building situated at Khata no 049 and 051, Khata no 353 and 354, village Hasanpur masoori, P.O. Khekra, Bagpat, Uttar Pradesh 250101, total land measuring 1.1790 Hectare in the name of Mr. Dhani Ram Yadav S/o. Sh. Bhim Singh, Mr. Mahendra Yadav S/o. Sh. Bhim Singh and Mr. Mahabir Yadav S/o. Sh. Bhim Singh. Censal Asset ID: 200024832963 Security Interest ID: 40002483301
9.	FITL - 27440600002404	11,14,00,00,000/-	BRRLLR + 0.75 % i.e. 9.65 % p.a. Plus Penal Interest of 2% p.a. from the date of default	9,94,018/- plus Future interest and charges incurred thereon.	(i) Hypothecation of plant and machinery comprised of factory Plant and machinery at Khata no 49 & 51 Khata no 353 & 354, Vill-Masoori, Tehsil-Khekra Dist-Bagpat (UP)-250101. (ii) Commercial vehicle consisting of 03 Mahindra Bolero Pick Up FC CNG BS 4 1. Registration no- DL1AA3967. Engine no- EPJ1B19028. Chassis no- MA1ZNPZPKJH26138. 2. Registration no- DL1AA4351. Engine no- EPJ1B19055. Chassis no- MA1ZNPZPKJH26138. 3. Registration no DL1AA5096. Engine No EPJ1B19027. Chassis No MA1ZNPZPKJH26138. 4. Registration no DL1AA3263. Collateral: 1) All the part and parcel of factory land and building situated at Khata no 049 and 051, Khata no 353 and 354, village Hasanpur masoori, P.O. Khekra, Bagpat, Uttar Pradesh 250101, total land measuring 1.1790 Hectare in the name of Mr. Dhani Ram Yadav S/o. Sh. Bhim Singh, Mr. Mahendra Yadav S/o. Sh. Bhim Singh and Mr. Mahabir Yadav S/o. Sh. Bhim Singh. Censal Asset ID: 200024832963 Security Interest ID: 40002483301
TOTAL OUTSTANDING AMOUNT		11,01,58,00,000/-		8,63,75,062/- plus Future interest and charges incurred thereon.	

2. In the Letter of Acknowledgment of Debt dated 11-09-2020, you have acknowledged your liability to the bank to the tune of Rs. 918.65 Lakhs as on 10-09-2020.
3. As you are aware, you have committed default in payment of instalments of term loan/demand loans which have fallen due for payment on November 2022 and thereafter.
4. Consequently upon the defaults committed by you, your loan account has been classified as non-performing asset on 01-02-2023 in accordance with Reserve Bank of India directives and guidelines. In spite of our repeated requests and demands you have not repaid the overdue loans including interest thereon.
5. Having regard to your inability to meet your liabilities in respect of the credit facilities duly secured by various securities mentioned in para 1 above, and classification of your account as a non-performing asset, we hereby give you notice under sub-section (2) of section 13 of the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002, and call upon you to pay in full and discharge your liabilities to the Bank aggregating Rs. 8,63,75,062/- (Rupees Eight Crores Sixty Three Lakhs Seventy Five Thousand Six Hundred Sixty Two Only) as on 26/10/2024 plus Future Interest and Charges incurred thereon, as stated in para 1 above, within 60 days from the date of this notice. We further give you notice that failing payment of the above amount with interest till date of payment, we shall be free to exercise all or any of the rights under sub-section (4) of the section 13 of the said Act, which please note.
6. Please note that, interest will continue to accrue at the rates specified in para 1 above for each credit facility until payment in full.
7. We invite your attention to sub-section 13 of section 13 of the said Act in terms of which you are barred from transferring any of the secured assets referred to in para 1 above by way of sale, lease or otherwise (other than in the ordinary course of business), without obtaining our prior written consent. We may add that non-compliance with the above provision contained in section 13(13) of the said Act, is an offence punishable under section 29 of the Act.
8. We further invite your attention to sub-section (8) of section 13 of the said Act in terms of which you may redeem the secured assets, if the amount of dues together with all costs, charges and expenses incurred by the Bank is tendered by you, at any time before the date of publication of notice for public auction/inviting quotations/tender/private treaty. Please note that after publication of the notice as above, your right to redeem the secured assets will not be available.
9. Please note that this demand notice is without prejudice to and shall not be construed as waiver of any other rights or remedies which we may have, including without limitation, the right to make further demands in respect of sums owing to us.

(Brajesh Mohan) Authorised Officer Chief Manager
Place: Delhi

Punjab & Sind Bank
(A Govt. of India Undertaking)
ZONAL OFFICE GURUGRAM
Sector-44, Gurugram-122003
Phone: 011-27492896, 27472837
E-mail: gurgam@psb.co.in

E-Tender for Solar Plant
Bank invites e-tenders, under two bid system i.e. Technical Bid & Commercial Bid, from eligible Contractor for the Design, Engineering, Supply, Installation, Testing & Commissioning of 80 Kwp Roof Top Solar PV System at Punjab & Sind Bank, Zonal Office Gurugram. Tender documents and further information are available on the Bank's website <https://psb.eproc.in> ZONAL MANAGER

Shalimar Bagh Branch, BH -29, Ground Floor, East Shalimar Bagh, Delhi-110088, India. Phone: 011-27492896, 27472837, Fax: 011-27472837, E-mail: shadel@bankofbaroda.com

NOTICE TO BORROWER (UNDER SUB-SECTION (2) OF SECTION 13 OF THE SARFAESI ACT, 2002)
Date: 28/10/2024
M/s. Credence Whole Foods Pvt. Ltd., Registered Office: Plot No. 82-A Saraswati Kunj, Golf Course Road, Opposite Vatsika Tower, Sector- 53, Gurugram, Haryana- 122002, M-991049039, 7359617555. Email ID: credencewholefoods.ajay@gmail.com
M/s. Credence Whole Foods Pvt. Ltd., Khata No 49 & 51, Khassra No. 353 & 354, Village Hasanpur Masoori, Tehsil-Khekra, Dist-Bagpat (UP)-250101.
M/s. Credence Whole Foods Pvt. Ltd., Plot no 74, Sector-8, IMT Manesar, Gurugram, Haryana - 122052, M. 991049039, 7359617555. Email ID: credencewholefoods.ajay@gmail.com
Mr. Mahabir Singh Yadav, R/o. 1791, Sector 12, Sonapat, Haryana-131001, M-8059658024

Re: Intimation of withdrawal of Notice issued u/s 13(2) of the SARFAESI Act and all subsequent SARFAESI proceedings.
In order to provide adequate Notice to the Legal heirs of the deceased Guarantor Late Sh. Dhani Ram Yadav, the Bank has taken steps to issue a fresh Notice under Section 13(2) of the SARFAESI Act, 2002 and the Rules made thereunder.
The notice that the abovesigned fresh Notice supersedes all previous Notices issued by the bank under section 13(2) of the SARFAESI Act, 2002 and the Rules made thereunder.
In view of the issue of fresh Notice dated 28/10/2024, all previous Notice(s) and SARFAESI actions initiated hitherto before stands withdrawn.
Copy of Fresh Notice dated 28/10/2024 issued u/s 13(2) of the SARFAESI Act, 2002 is also enclosed with Letters for necessary information.

(Brajesh Mohan) Authorised Officer Chief Manager
Place: Delhi

Shalimar Bagh Branch, BH -29, Ground Floor, East Shalimar Bagh, Delhi-110088, India. Phone: 011-27492896, 27472837, Fax: 011-27472837, E-mail: shadel@bankofbaroda.com

NOTICE TO GUARANTOR (UNDER SUB-SECTION (2) OF SECTION 13 OF THE SARFAESI ACT, 2002)
Date: 28/10/2024
Mr. Mahabir Singh Yadav R/o. 1791, Sector 12, Sonapat, Haryana-131001, M-8059658024
Dear Sir,
Re: Your guarantee for Credit facilities sanctioned to M/s Credence Whole Foods Pvt Ltd.
As you are aware, you have by a guarantee dated 23-09-2020 and subsequent Guarantee dated 31-03-2021 guaranteed payment on demand of all monies and discharge all obligations and liabilities then or at any time thereafter owing or incurred to us by M/s. Credence Whole Foods Pvt. Ltd., for aggregate credit limits of Rs. 1101.58 Lakhs with interest thereon more particularly set out in the said guarantee document. To secure the guarantee obligation you have also provided following securities to us:
By way of Mortgage of Property: All the part and parcel of Factory land and building situated at Khata no 049 and 051, Khassra nos 353 and 354, Village-Hasanpur masoori, Khekra, Bagpat, Uttar Pradesh 250101, Total land measuring 1.1790 Hectare in the name of Mr. Dhani Ram Yadav S/o. Sh. Bhim Singh, Mr. Mahendra Yadav S/o. Sh. Bhim Singh and Mr. Mahabir Yadav S/o. Sh. Bhim Singh.

1. We have to inform you that the borrower has committed defaults in payment of his liabilities and consequently his account has been classified as non-performing asset. A copy of the notice dated 28/10/2024 under section 13(2) of the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 sent by us to the borrower is enclosed. Since the borrower has committed defaults, in terms of the guarantee you have become liable to pay to us the outstanding amount of loan/credit facilities aggregating Rs. 8,63,75,062/- (Rupees Eight Crores Sixty Three Lakhs Seventy Five Thousand Sixty Two Only) as on 26/10/2024 plus Future Interest and Charges incurred thereon and we hereby invoke the guarantee and call upon you to pay the said amount within 60 days from the date of this notice. Please note that interest will continue to accrue at the rates specified in para 1 of the notice dated 28/10/2024 served on the borrower (copy enclosed).
2. We further wish to inform you that in regard to the security provided by you to secure your guarantee obligations for the due repayment of the loans and advances by the borrower, this notice of 60 days may please be treated as notice under sub-section (2) of section 13 of the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002. We further give you notice that failing payment of the above amount with interest up to the date of payment, we shall be at liberty to exercise all or any of the rights under sub-section (4) of section 13 of the said Act, which please note.
3. We invite your attention to sub-section (13) of section 13 of the said Act in terms of which you are barred from transferring any of the secured assets referred to in para 1 above by way of sale, lease or otherwise (other than in the ordinary course of business), without obtaining our prior written consent. We may add that non-compliance with the above provision contained in section 13(13) of the said Act, is an offence punishable under section 29 of the Act.
4. We further invite your attention to sub-section (8) of section 13 of the said Act in terms of which you may redeem the secured assets, if the amount of dues together with all costs, charges and expenses incurred by the Bank is tendered by you, at any time before the date of publication of notice for public auction/inviting quotations/tender/private treaty. Please note that after publication of the notice as above, your right to redeem the secured assets will not be available.
5. Please note that this demand notice is without prejudice to and shall not be construed as waiver of any other rights or remedies which we may have, including without limitation, the right to make further demands in respect of sums owing to us.

(Brajesh Mohan) Authorised Officer Chief Manager
Place: Delhi

Australia's parl considers legislation banning social media for under 16s

AP ■ MELBOURNE

Australia's communications minister introduced a world-first law into Parliament on Thursday that would ban children under 16 from social media, saying online safety was one of parents' toughest challenges. Michelle Rowland said TikTok, Facebook, Snapchat, Reddit, X and Instagram were among the platforms that would face fines of up to 50 million Australian dollars (\$33 million) for systemic failures to prevent

50 killed, 20 injured in Pak's Khyber Pakhtunkhwa ambush

At least 50 people were killed and 20 others injured when several vehicles carrying passengers were targeted by militants in northwest Pakistan on Thursday, officials said.

Pak court grants 5-day physical remand of Imran Khan

An anti-terrorism court in Pakistan on Thursday granted a five-day physical remand of former prime minister Imran Khan, who was arrested formally by police hours after his bail in a corruption case was accepted.

A team has been tasked to probe the charges. The charges include violations of the Anti-Terrorism Act, defying the government ban on public gatherings, obstructing police duty, damaging police vehicles and endangering public safety.

attorney general presented a report to the court, stating that 62 cases had been registered against Khan by the Islamabad police. After going through the report, Justice Farooq Haider turned down the request, observing that bail petitions must be filed personally by the suspect.

“worked out in consultation with concerned stakeholders”, while the date of de-requisitioning of troops would be decided after mutually consulting all relevant stakeholders.

Pakhtunkhwa ambush

Gen Munir urges people to prioritise nation over ‘personal interests’

Karachi (PTI): Pakistan's Army Chief General Asim Munir has said that “nothing, including politics”, was above the country and urged people to prioritise the nation over “personal interests”.

Gen Munir also warned that unrestricted freedom of speech was “leading to the degradation of moral values in all societies.” Earlier meeting with the business leaders in Karachi, he said everyone needed to understand the importance of putting the country above everything else.

Sri Lanka Prez backs IMF package despite pre-poll rhetoric

Sri Lankan President Anura Kumara Dissanayake Thursday backed an International Monetary Fund bailout package despite pre-presidential election rhetoric to renegotiate with the global lender to water down tough conditions laid down for the recovery.

N Korea, Russia agree to expand eco cooperation

North Korea and Russia reached a new agreement for expanding economic cooperation following high-level talks in Pyongyang this week, the North's state media said Thursday, as they continue to align in the face of their confrontations with Washington.

Jong Un and his top economic official, Premier Kim Tok Hun, before returning home on Wednesday, KCNA said. During Kozlov's visit, Russian President Vladimir Putin's gifted Pyongyang's Central Zoo with more than 70 animals, including lions, bears and several species of birds, according to Tass, in another display of the countries' growing ties.

break out of international isolation and strengthen his footing, actively supporting Putin's war on Ukraine while portraying the North as a player in a united front against Washington. Kim has yet to directly acknowledge that he has been providing military equipment and troops to Russia to support its fighting against Ukraine.

that an estimated 11,000 North Korean soldiers in late October were moved to Russia's Kursk region, where Ukrainian troops seized parts of its territory this year, following their training in Russia's northeast.

Public Notice

Notice is hereby given to the Public at large that LATE SARABJI KAUR BALI W/o. D.S. Bali (DAVIDINDER SINGH BALI) is the owner of 100% share of Flat No. 206/...

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NOTICE INVITING E-TENDER

The Mission Director, Samagra Shiksha, Assam, invites bids from registered appropriate class of contractor for building works in different schools as per the detailed notice inviting tender which can be downloaded from the website https://www.assamtenders.gov.in.

Public Notice

Notice is hereby given to the General Public that of Mrs. Parul Rawal D/o. Mr. Swatantra Bhabhan Rawal is the owner of Residential One Storey House Area Measuring 70 Sq. Yds. i.e. 85.52 Sq. Meter. Situated at Old Abadi Village, Dhoom Manikpur, Pargana & Tehsil: Dadri, Dist. Gautam Budh Nagar (L.P.), by virtue of Registered Gift Deed Dated: 03.02.2024, regd. as Doc. No. 6470, executed by Mr. Swatantra Bhabhan Rawal and the Original Registered Sale Deed dated 18.05.2012, regd. as Doc. No. 9190, pertaining to the said property has been lost. FIR of the same has been registered with Badliapur Police Station, same to be financed by Muthoo. Honec India Ltd. General public hereby informed that if anybody has any charge/interest in the said property or any kind of dispute kindly inform the undersigned in writing on the below mentioned address within 07 days of the present. Rahul Raj Pathak, Advocate SC, Associates (Law Firm) FF-18, Lotus Poad Plaza, Vaidya Khanda, Indrapuram, Ghaziabad (U.P.) Email: sgpatil@scps@gmail.com, Ph: 7011127264, 01204440390

Public Notice

It is to inform to the public at large that Mr. Azhar Zaidi had acquired Plot bearing No. 95-B, area measuring 50 sq. yds., out of Kharsa No. 18/B, situated in the area of Village Razaapur Khurd Delhi colony known as R-II, Mohan Garden, Uttam Nagar New Delhi vide Regd. GA. Dt. 04.08.2006 along with AFS and will executed by Mr. Asgar Ali and Now Mr. Azhar Zaidi is the undisputed owner of the said property. OR Any person / firm / institution / company having any claim or right in respect of the said property by way of inheritance, share, sale, agreement, lease, license, gift, possession, legal heirs, partners or co-ownership however or otherwise is hereby required to intimate in writing to the undersigned within 07 days from the date of publication of this notice of his/her share or claim, if any, with all supporting documents at below mentioned address. After expiration of notice period, the claims, if any of such person shall be treated null and void and also treated as waived and not binding on our client. Ajay Kumar Giri (Advocate) H No. 26/161, Basement, Vikram Vihar, Lajpat Nagar 4, New Delhi - 110024

Public Notice

My client Mrs. Sonia Saini w/o Mr. Kapil Saini is the owner of freehold Residential Plot No. 35 area measuring 50 sq. yds. out of total area measuring 100 sq. yds. out of Kharsa No. 42/9, 10 & 11 situated in the Wazirpur Majra, Saran, Tehsil & District Faridabad through Registered Sale Deed Dated 22.08.2024 executed by Mr. Nandu Kumar Gaur in favour of Mrs. Sonia Saini w/o Mr. Kapil Saini vide Reg. No. 3831 at SR-SADKHAL Faridabad Haryana the above mentioned property is going to be mortgage with fed Bank Financial Services Limited. If any person / bank / financial institution having any claim / right, lien, any objection whatsoever in regard to the above property, should notified to the undersigned/Adv. Vishal Mehlan, E-713, Karkardooma Court, Delhi-110092 along with documentary evidence under address through registered within 7 days from the date of publication of this notice failing which any claim, lien or objection shall be deemed to have been waived. Adv. Vishal Mehlan, E-713, Karkardooma Court, Delhi-110092, Mobile No. 9811215181

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GOVERNMENT OF HARYANA TENDER NOTICE

Table with columns: SR. No., NAME OF BOARD/CORP./AUTH, NAME OF WORK NOTICE TENDER, OPENING DATE, CLOSING DATE, AMOUNT / END (APPROX.) IN RUPEES, WEBSITE OF THE BOARD CORP./AUTH, NODAL OFFICER/CONTACT DETAILS/EMAIL

Public Notice

Under the circumstances, notice is hereby given to the General Public, Bank/Financial institutions or other persons, organizations, companies, government authorities, having any claim, rights, title, or any interest of any nature whatsoever into or upon the said property, is hereby called upon to make the same known, in writing with documentary evidence by registered AD Post to the undersigned at the address mentioned below before the date of publication of this notice and in the event no response having been received to the notice, the title of Kunal Oberoi & Mayank Gambhir to the said property shall be deemed to be clear of any claim, charge or encumbrance of any nature whatsoever and any subsequent claim shall not bind our client in any manner whatsoever. Kumar Abhishek Advocate Legal Access 132A, Anarkali Complex, Jhandewalan Ext. New Delhi

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GOVERNMENT OF HARYANA TENDER NOTICE

Table with columns: SR. No., NAME OF BOARD/CORP./AUTH, NAME OF WORK NOTICE TENDER, OPENING DATE, CLOSING DATE, AMOUNT / END (APPROX.) IN RUPEES, WEBSITE OF THE BOARD CORP./AUTH, NODAL OFFICER/CONTACT DETAILS/EMAIL

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Adani Group MCAP plunges by Rs 2.19 Lakh Crore after bribery charges in US

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The combined market valuation of all 10 listed Adani group firms fell by Rs 2.19 lakh crore on Thursday, more than double of what the conglomerate lost when the US short seller Hindenburg brought out a damning report in January 2023. Shares of Adani group firms fell sharply as billionaire Gautam Adani was charged by US prosecutors for allegedly being part of a scheme to pay USD 265 million (about Rs 2,200 crore) bribe to Indian officials in exchange for favourable terms for solar power contracts. The stock of the group's flagship firm, Adani Enterprises, plunged 22.61 per cent, Adani Energy Solutions tanked 20 per cent, Adani Green Energy plummeted 18.80 per cent, Adani Ports dived 13.53 per cent, Ambuja Cements cracked 11.98 per cent, and Adani Total Gas tumbled 10.40 per cent on the BSE. Shares of Adani Wilmar declined 9.98 per cent, Adani Power slumped 9.15 per cent, ACC fell 7.29 per cent, and NDTV dipped 0.06 per cent. Some of the group firms also hit their lowest trading permissible limit for the day during the day.



The combined market capitalisation (MCAP) of all 10 listed firms eroded by Rs 2,19,878.35 crore. In the equity market, the BSE benchmark Sensex tanked 422.59 points or 0.54 per cent to 77,155.79, and the NSE Nifty declined 168.60 points or 0.72 per cent to 23,349.90. "While the market is in the midst of a bear hug for the

past few weeks, today's fall can also be attributed to the news of Adani group facing bribery charges, which triggered a massive sell-off in its group stocks," Prashanth Tapse, Senior VP (Research), Mehta Equities Ltd. Adani, India's second-richest man, and seven others, including his nephew Sagar, have been charged with

paying bribes to unidentified officials of state governments in Andhra Pradesh and Odisha to buy expensive solar power, earning more than USD 2 billion over 20 years. Adani group on Thursday denied charges of paying bribes to secure favourable terms for power contracts, saying the allegations by US prosecutors are baseless and

the conglomerate is compliant with all laws. It said all possible legal recourse will be sought. "The allegations made by the US Department of Justice and the US Securities and Exchange Commission against directors of Adani Green are baseless and denied," the group spokesperson said in a statement.

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Equity benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty tumbled on Thursday amid a sharp fall in Adani group stocks after billionaire industrialist Gautam Adani was charged in the US for alleged bribery and fraud. Besides, unabated foreign fund outflows and weak trends in Asian and European peers also dragged benchmark indices lower. The BSE benchmark Sensex tanked 422.59 points or 0.54 per cent to settle at 77,155.79. During the day, it lost 775.65 points or 0.99 per cent to 76,802.73. The NSE Nifty slumped 168.60 points or 0.72 per cent to 23,349.90. From the 30-share Sensex pack, Adani Ports tumbled

over 13 per cent after Gautam Adani was charged by US prosecutors over his role in an alleged years-long scheme to pay USD 250 million bribe to Indian officials in exchange for favourable terms for solar power contracts. All other Adani group stocks, including Adani Enterprises, Adani Energy Solutions, Adani Ports and Adani Green Energy, fell sharply by up to nearly 23 per cent. State Bank of India, NTPC, ITC, Asian Paints, Bajaj Finance and Bajaj Finserv were also among the major laggards. In contrast, Power Grid, UltraTech Cement, HCL Technologies and Axis Bank were among the gainers. Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) offloaded equities worth Rs 3,411.73

crore on Tuesday, according to exchange data. The Indian stock markets were closed on Wednesday due to assembly elections in Maharashtra. In Asian markets, Seoul, Tokyo and Hong Kong settled lower, while Shanghai ended higher. European markets were trading in the negative territory. The US markets ended mostly in the positive zone. Global oil benchmark Brent crude jumped 1.13 per cent to USD 73.71 a barrel. Snapping its four days of decline, the BSE benchmark Sensex had climbed 239.37 points or 0.31 per cent to settle at 77,578.38 on Tuesday. The Nifty also bounced back on Tuesday after falling in the past seven trading days.

US regulators seek to break up Google, force sale of Chrome browser

AP ■ WASHINGTON

US regulators want a federal judge to break up Google to prevent the company from continuing to squash competition through its dominant search engine after a court found it had maintained an abusive monopoly over the past decade. The proposed breakup floated in a 23-page document filed late Wednesday by the US Department of Justice calls for sweeping punishments that would include a sale of Google's industry-leading Chrome web browser and impose restrictions to prevent Android from favouring its own search engine. A sale of Chrome "will permanently stop Google's control of this critical search access point and allow rival search engines the ability to access the browser that for many users is a gateway to the internet," justice department lawyers argued in their filing. Although regulators stopped short of demanding Google sell Android too, they asserted the judge should make it clear the company could still be required to divest its smartphone operating system if its oversight committee continues to see evidence of misconduct. The broad scope of the recommended penalties underscores how severely regulators operating under president Joe Biden's administration believe Google should be punished following an August ruling by US District Judge Amit Mehta that branded the company as a monopolist. The justice department decision-makers who will inherit the case after president-elect Donald Trump takes office next year might not be as strident. The Washington, DC court hearings on Google's punishment are scheduled to begin in April and Mehta is

aiming to issue his final decision before the Labour Day. If Mehta embraces the government's recommendations, Google would be forced to sell its 16-year-old Chrome browser within six months of the final ruling. But the company certainly would appeal any punishment, potentially prolonging a legal tussle, which has dragged on for more than four years. Besides seeking a Chrome spinoff and a corraling of the Android software, the justice department wants the judge to ban Google from forging multibillion-dollar deals to lock in its dominant search engine as the default option on Apple's iPhone and other devices. It would also ban Google from favouring its own services, such as YouTube or its recently launched artificial intelligence platform, Gemini. Regulators also want Google to license the search index data it collects from people's queries to its rivals, giving them a better chance at competing with the tech giant. On the commercial side of its search engine, Google would be required to provide more transparency into how it sets the prices that advertisers pay to be listed near the top of some targeted search results. Kent Walker, Google's chief legal officer, lashed out at the justice department for pursuing "a radical interventionist agenda that would harm Americans and America's global technology." In a blog post, Walker warned the overly broad proposal would threaten personal privacy while undermining Google's early leadership in artificial intelligence, "perhaps the most important innovation of our time." Wary of Google's increasing use of artificial intelligence in its search results, regulators also advised Mehta to ensure websites will be able to shield their content from Google's

AI training techniques. The measures, if they are ordered, threaten to upend a business expected to generate more than \$300 billion in revenue this year. "The playing field is not level because of Google's conduct, and Google's quality reflects the ill-gotten gains of an advantage illegally acquired," the Justice Department asserted in its recommendations. "The remedy must close this gap and deprive Google of these advantages." It's still possible that the Justice Department could ease off attempts to break up Google, especially if Trump takes the widely expected step of replacing Assistant Attorney General Jonathan Kanter, who was appointed by Biden to oversee the agency's antitrust division. Although the case targeting Google was originally filed during the final months of Trump's first term in office, Kanter oversaw the high-profile trial that culminated in Mehta's ruling against Google. Working in tandem with Federal Trade Commission Chair Lina Khan, Kanter took a get-tough stance against Big Tech that triggered other attempted crackdowns on industry powerhouses such as Apple and discouraged many business deals from getting done during the past four years. Trump recently expressed concerns that a breakup might destroy Google but didn't elaborate on alternative penalties he might have in mind. "What you can do without breaking it up is make sure it's more fair," Trump said last month. Matt Gaetz, the former Republican congressman that Trump nominated to be the next US Attorney General, has previously called for the breakup of Big Tech companies. Gaetz faces a tough confirmation hearing.

Domestic fleet to touch 1,400 in five years

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Vumlungmang Vualnam, civil aviation secretary, on Thursday said the number of planes with domestic airlines will increase to 1,400 in the next five years as he highlighted the growth potential of the country's aviation space. Currently, the fleet is around 800 aircraft and leading carriers, IndiGo and Air India, have placed significant plane orders.

At a function in the national Capital, the secretary also mentioned about the opportunities for women in the aviation sector, including in the drone segment. In the last 10 years, the number of airports has more than doubled from 74 to 157, Vualnam said. He also said the number of passengers has doubled to around 22 crore from 11 crore. The secretary was speaking at the 'Giving Wings to Dreams Awards 2024' hosted by

Women in Aviation India in collaboration with the civil aviation ministry. According to him, the Rs 120-crore Production Linked Incentive (PLI) scheme was successful and that beneficiary companies have seen their overall turnover rise to Rs 1,400 crore. The first PLI scheme for drones, introduced in 2021 with an outlay of Rs 120 crore for three financial years starting from 2021-22, has ended.

Steelmakers need to collaborate with IISc and IITs: Minister



PTI ■ BENGALURU

Union Steel Minister HD Kumaraswamy has said that steelmakers need to collaborate with leading institutions such as the Indian Institute of Science (IISc) and the Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) to create a globally-competitive and technologically-advanced steel industry. He said India's steel sector stands as the backbone of its industrial strength and a cornerstone of nation-building. "From skyscrapers to highways, railways to defence, steel powers our progress and fuels our ambitions," he said. Speaking on the occasion of the National Metallurgists Awards ceremony in Bengaluru on Wednesday, he said, "To create a globally-competitive and

technologically-advanced steel industry, our steelmakers need to collaborate with leading institutions like IISc and IITs (Indian Institutes of Technology) for research." Specialty steel, Kumaraswamy said, is also a crucial sector where research and innovation is the need of the hour. The minister said that under the leadership Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the country is on a path towards becoming a USD five trillion economy, and steel will remain at the heart of this transformation, showcasing India's resilience and reinforcing its leadership on the global stage. "Yet, challenges persist - volatile markets, sustainability imperatives and the need for innovation," he noted.

Belrise Industries files papers to raise Rs 2,150 crore via IPO

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Automotive component maker Belrise Industries has filed preliminary papers with capital markets regulator Sebi to raise Rs 2,150 crore through an initial public offering (IPO). The IPO is entirely a fresh issue of equity shares with no offer for sale (OFS) component, according to the draft red herring prospectus (DRHP). The company may consider raising up to Rs 430 crore through a pre-IPO placement. If this is carried out, the issue size will be reduced. As per the draft papers filed on Tuesday, the company intends to utilise proceeds worth Rs 1,618 crore for payment of debt. The company has a borrowing of Rs 2,463 crore in its books as of June 2024. Belrise Industries is an



automotive component manufacturing company based in India offering a diverse range of safety critical systems and other engineering solutions for two-wheelers, three-wheelers, four-wheelers, commercial vehicles and agri-vehicles. As of June 2024, it marketed its products both domestically and internationally, with operations extending to several markets, including Austria, Slovakia, the UK,

Japan and Thailand. The company has a long-standing relationship with customers, including prominent multinational OEMs (Original Equipment Manufacturers) such as Bajaj Auto, Honda Motorcycle and Scooter India, Hero MotoCorp, Jaguar Land Rover and Royal Enfield Motors. It has 15 manufacturing facilities in eight states as of June 30, 2024.

KS Murthy sworn in as new CAG



PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Former higher education secretary, K Sanjay Murthy, was sworn in as the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) of India by President Droupadi Murmu on Thursday. Murthy, a 1989 batch Indian Administrative Service (IAS) officer of the Himachal Pradesh cadre, succeeds Girish Chandra Murmu. Murthy was named the new CAG by the Centre on Monday. Girish Chandra Murmu completed his tenure as the CAG on Wednesday.

KMF enters Delhi-NCR with competitive pricing on Nandini products

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on Thursday launched the Karnataka Milk Federation's (KMF) Nandini brand milk products in the Delhi-NCR market, pricing them marginally lower than competitors to gain a foothold in the region. The cooperative will retail four cow milk variants, curd, and buttermilk from Friday, with competitive pricing that undercuts established players like Mother Dairy and Amul. Cow milk will be sold at Rs 56 per litre, full cream milk at Rs 67 per litre, standardised milk at Rs 61 per litre, toned milk at Rs 55 per litre, and curd at Rs 74 per kg. "We have surplus milk in the state. KMF along with Mandya Milk Union will market surplus milk of 3-4 lakh litres per day in Delhi-NCR," Siddaramaiah told reporters after launching the



products. The federation currently collects 100 lakh litres of milk

daily, with local consumption at 60 lakh litres, leaving a surplus of 40 lakh litres

for expansion into new markets. However, the Chief Minister

acknowledged the challenges of transporting milk over 2,500 km, which takes 50-54 hours. There is a need to find new markets for surplus milk and gradually the KMF should be able to sell 5-6 lakh litres per day in Delhi-NCR, he added. KMF Chairman LBP Bheemanaik assured that milk quality would be maintained during transit. The federation has already partnered with 40 dealers in the Delhi-NCR region to facilitate sales, he added. With a robust infrastructure of 26.76 lakh milk producers, 15,737 dairy cooperative societies, and 15 district milk unions, KMF has a turnover of Rs 25,000 crore and exports dairy products to over 25 countries. State Animal Husbandry Minister K Venkatesh and Agriculture Minister N Cheluvarayaswamy were present at the product launch.

INBRIEF

55TH FOUNDATION DAY CELEBRATIONS AT GURU NANAK DEV UNIVERSITY

AMRITSAR: Guru Nanak Dev University is all set to celebrate its 55th Foundation Day on November 24, 2024 (Sunday), with a series of events lined up across various venues within the University Campus. Prof. Karanjeet Singh Kahlon, Registrar, said the highlight of the Foundation Day will be the Academic Lectures delivered by esteemed scholars, taking place at 11:00 AM in the Sri Guru Granth Sahib Bhawan Auditorium.



GURU NANAK DEV UNIVERSITY RE-POSTPONES EXAM SCHEDULE

AMRITSAR: Guru Nanak Dev University has announced the Re-postponement of all annual and semester (theory) examinations. These examinations were postponed on December 01 from November 20. But now due to administrative reasons, again, these examinations will be held on December 28, 2024 (Saturday).

GURU NANAK DEV UNIVERSITY ORGANISED PROF IS GROVER MEMORIAL LECTURESHIP AWARD

AMRATSAR: The Department of Botanical and Environmental Sciences of Guru Nanak Dev University organised Prof IS Grover Memorial Lectureship Award on November 13 which has been instituted under MoU between Guru Nanak Dev University and Dr. Avinash Kaur (Professor Retd.). She apprised that this award was instituted in the name of Late Prof. I.S. Grover, Founder Head, Department of Botany and Dean, Faculty of Life Sciences of the University, to pay tribute to all her teachers.



A YEAR OF POLITICAL RESURGENCE



In 2024, Donald Trump made a surprising return to the White House, defying expectations after his 2020 loss. His victory, alongside Modi's re-election, marked a pivotal moment in global politics, says **KUMAR CHELLAPPAN**

The year 2024 will be remembered by political historians for two major developments: the re-election of Narendra Modi as Prime Minister of India for a third term and that of Donald Trump as President of the United States. Modi's victory was as expected, but Trump's victory, having lost his re-election bid in 2020, was not so certain. The left-leaning media had written off Trump after his 2020 defeat, and it is rare for a defeated president to stage a comeback. However, Trump, a master at making the impossible possible, won a landslide in the 2024 election, defeating the entire left-liberal establishment. He proved that hard work is often the key to success.

You may either love or loathe Trump, depending on your political views, but the truth is, he can never be ignored. He first became President in 2016 when the US economy was struggling, and the country's global image was tarnished. The infrastructure was in decline, and the US had become an industrial

wasteland. "My mission is to make America great again. We have to retrieve the lost ground and make the people happy and content," Trump declared during his campaign speeches.

Despite relentless attacks from Hillary Clinton, Trump held firm and focused on his mission. His dedication earned him significant support from voters. When he was declared the winner by a substantial margin, Washington and other major cities saw rioting by anti-Trump forces. The media quickly pointed the finger at Trump's followers for the unrest.

The period between 2016 and 2020 saw the US recover from economic stagnation and terrorism-related challenges. For Trump, America remained his top priority, and he aimed to keep the US out of foreign conflicts. His main goal was to ensure no more coffins with US soldiers' remains were returned from Asia and Africa. Under Trump, illegal immigration from Mexico and Latin America came to a halt, as he warned against job theft by outsiders. Drug trafficking from

Colombia and Mexico, which had been a major issue, was also reduced, strengthening the US social security system. Like a soldier guarding his nation's borders, Trump, at the helm of a major business empire, defended the social fabric of America. However, many in the US and abroad resented Trump's patriotism and worked to oust him from the White House. It seemed a foregone conclusion that Trump would easily win re-election in 2020.

However, overconfidence led to his defeat by a narrow margin. Bob Woodward, a two-time Pulitzer Prize winner, had predicted in his book *Rage* (2020) that Trump was likely to lose. Despite strong economic performance, record-low unemployment, and the US staying out of international conflicts, Trump lost due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Woodward claimed that Trump was warned about the virus as early as January 2020, but he ignored the threat and paid the price for his inaction.

Other factors also played a role. The 2020 election was marred by allegations



ABOUT THE BOOK

Book: WAR
by Bob Woodward
Publisher: Simon & Schuster
Price: ₹999

of fraud, with many believing it was manipulated by Trump's rivals and hostile forces. Shiv Ayyadurai, an Indian-origin computer scientist credited with inventing email, raised concerns about the election's integrity. According to Ayyadurai, the mail-in ballots used in Arizona had mismatched signatures, which were overlooked by election officials. Despite Ayyadurai's efforts to prove these discrepancies, little attention was given to the alleged fraud. In his book *War*, Woodward examines Joe Biden's presidency and highlights three major failures during his four-year tenure. Biden's inability to deal with Ukraine, Russian President Vladimir Putin, and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is central to the critique. Woodward argues that Biden's handling of the Ukraine crisis, in particular, was ineffective, and his approach to the Jewish state was also disappointing. The brutal 2023 Hamas attack on Israel, which resulted in widespread death and destruction, will remain a painful memory for humanity. Protests in India, where groups like

Hamas and Hezbollah have influence, added to the turmoil.

Woodward also reveals that US intelligence agencies had warned Biden in October 2021 about Putin's plans to attack Ukraine. Yet, Biden seemed reluctant to take decisive action. The cause for his hesitation may lie in his son Hunter Biden's involvement with Burisma, a major Ukrainian energy company, potentially jeopardising his ability to challenge Russia.

As I write this review, TV channels are reporting that President-elect Trump has issued a stern warning for all illegal immigrants to leave the US within two months. This is one of the promises he made during his campaign, and he seems determined to see it through. The Democrats and liberals have already expressed their opposition to this move. The next four years will be filled with action, and it will be fascinating to see how Trump's administration navigates issues like Iran, Hamas, West Asia, Russia, and Ukraine. Woodward will no doubt continue to provide in-depth coverage of these developments.

NEW RELEASE

Discover India Beyond the Metros

The High Commissioner of Brunei Darussalam, H.E. Dato Paduka HJ Alaihuddin Mohd Taha, recently launched "India Beyond Metros: Dekho Apna Bharat", a travelogue by Varun Soni. The book highlights India's lesser-known Tier 2 and Tier 3 cities, offering readers a fresh perspective on the country's hidden gems beyond the metropolitan hubs, writes **SAKSHI PRIYA**

"India Beyond Metros: Dekho Apna Bharat", authored by Varun Soni, is a captivating travelogue that takes readers on a journey through the lesser-known cities of India. In this, his fifth book, Soni explores around 50 Tier 2 and Tier 3 cities across the country, offering an in-depth look at small-town India and the vibrant culture that often goes unnoticed by mainstream tourism.

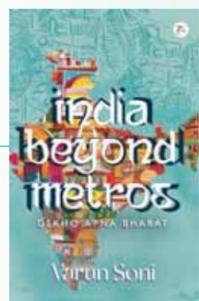
Unlike typical travel guides that focus on major metropolitan destinations such as Delhi, Mumbai, and Bengaluru, Soni's book highlights cities such as Jabalpur, Gorakhpur, Hubballi, Kollam, Rajkot, and others. These places, though not typically featured in popular travel literature, offer a wealth of untapped history, culture, and natural beauty. Each chapter of the book is dedicated to one city, providing practical insights on what to see, where to stay, how to get there, and even what to shop for.

The book fills a significant gap in Indian travel literature by encouraging people to venture beyond the typical tourist hotspots and explore the rich diversity of India's smaller towns and rural areas. It showcases the hidden gems of the Indian hinterland, offering readers a chance to experience



the authentic essence of Bharat (India).

At the launch event, the High Commissioner of Brunei Darussalam, H.E. Dato Paduka HJ Alaihuddin Mohd Taha, expressed his admiration for the book. At the book launch, He expressed his excitement, stating, "I am very glad to be here to launch a book on a topic that is a passion with me. After travelling across various parts of India, I can vouch that the hinterland has much more to offer than just the metropolitan areas. This book will serve as a helpful guide for those keen to explore these lesser-known regions." As an avid traveller, he shared his own experiences of exploring various regions of India, including Punjab, Himachal Pradesh, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, and Nagaland. He



ABOUT THE BOOK

Book: India beyond metros by Varun Soni
Publisher: ZORBA BOOKS
Price: ₹299
Pages: 172

highlighted that these lesser-explored areas of India offer a different, yet equally rich, experience compared to the well-known metropolitan cities. Author Varun Soni added, "It is time to look inward, into Bharat. This book highlights the hidden treasures in our smaller cities and towns, showcasing not only historical monuments but also the natural beauty that often goes unnoticed in mainstream travel guides." Soni, in his address, discussed the book's purpose of shedding light on the lesser-visited cities and towns of India. He spoke about the country's ancient civilisation, its countless monuments and temples, and the natural beauty found in these regions. Soni's aim with "India Beyond Metros: Dekho Apna Bharat" is to inspire readers to look inward and discover the treasures hidden in the smaller cities and villages that often go unnoticed.

Soni's literary career spans more than 15 years, with works that include books on celebrity homes, luxury resorts, and fiction. With this latest offering, he continues his mission to share the lesser-known aspects of India, bringing attention to the often-overlooked parts of the country that are full of untold stories and cultural richness.

A Spellbinding Adventure

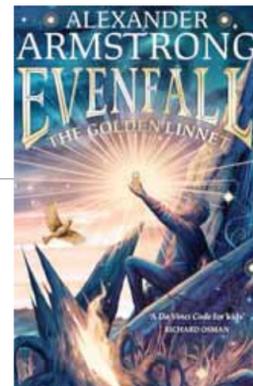
Alexander Armstrong's 'Evenfall: The Golden Linnet', is a captivating fantasy adventure that whisks readers away to a world of magic and mystery. With stunning world-building, unforgettable characters, and a thrilling plot, Armstrong's novel is a must-read for fans of fantasy and storytelling alike, says **ABHI SINGHAL**

In *Evenfall: The Golden Linnet*, Alexander Armstrong crafts a mesmerising portal into a world of magic and the enduring power of storytelling. A tale of courage, friendship, and family in his debut novel is destined to become a modern fantasy classic which weaves ancient lore with the challenges of life.

The story centres on 13-year-old Sam, a relatable and sympathetic protagonist of the novel whose life has been marked by tragedy. Caring for his grieving, unwell father after his mother's untimely death, Sam grapples with the complexities of loss, love, and responsibility. His life takes a thrilling and dangerous turn when he discovers his hidden heritage as part of The Order of the Evening, a secret society devoted to protecting the world through storytelling.

Armstrong's plot is rich, combining elements of historical mystery with the fantastical quest for magical artefacts that makes it happen and sparks out curiosity. Sam's mission to uncover the truth about his parents and his destiny introduces readers to a lush, danger-laden world where trust is scarce, alliances are fragile, and malevolent forces threaten humanity. The inclusion of supporting characters like Sam's loyal friend Ish and the enigmatic Goz brings depth and warmth to the narrative.

Their camaraderie highlights the strength of friendship amid the gravest of challenges, providing



ABOUT THE BOOK

Book: Evenfall: The Golden Linnet
by Alexander Armstrong
Publisher: Farshore
Price: ₹499
Pages: 352

balance to the story's darker themes. The vivid setting of Durham, steeped in British folklore and cultural heritage, serves in perfect form for this battle between good and evil. Armstrong's talent for description shines as he immerses readers in both the modern cityscape and the mystical locations that form the heart of the Order's secrets. As a well-known TV and radio personality, Alexander Armstrong has a knack for storytelling that

translates seamlessly into his writing. Widely recognised as a comedian, quiz show host, and singer, Armstrong's foray into children's literature reveals another layer of his creative versatility. With a nod to the timeless appeal of authors like Philip Pullman and J.K. Rowling, Armstrong builds a world that feels both familiar and extraordinary.

At nearly 400 pages, the novel is a longer read, yet its pacing ensures readers remain hooked. Suspense builds steadily as Sam uncovers his latent powers, battles sinister forces, and learns that the fate of the world may rest in his hands. Tom Roberts' striking black-and-white illustrations further elevate the reading experience, giving visual depth to Armstrong's vivid prose.

What sets *Evenfall: The Golden Linnet* apart is its heart. Beneath the magic and danger lies a story about grief, hope, and the lengths we go to for those we love. The imperfections in Sam's relationships – with his friends, his father, and even himself – are portrayed with sensitivity, making his journey feel deeply authentic.

This debut novel, brimming with excitement and emotion, is an absolute treat for readers aged 10 and up. Whether you're a lifelong fantasy enthusiast or new to the genre, *Evenfall: The Golden Linnet* promises a compelling, immersive adventure – and with its final pages hinting at more to come, Alexander Armstrong's literary journey is one to watch.

It's going to get more attritional: Pat Cummins

PTI ■ PERTH
Australian captain Pat Cummins expects the Border-Gavaskar Trophy against arch-foes India to be more "attritional" as the two heavyweights of world cricket spar over five Test matches instead of the traditional four games. And given the enormity of the series, Cummins believes players would not have the time to be distracted by the IPL auction that would take place in Jeddah on Sunday, the third day of the match. The blockbuster series will be a survival of the fittest as Australia look to avenge successive losses on home soil when they go head-to-head from Friday. "The Border-Gavaskar Trophy has always been very tight every series, five Test-match series gets really attritional, it's a big one really," Cummins said at the pre-match press conference here on Thursday. Australia will be without their assistant coach Daniel Vettori, who was granted permission to leave the Perth Test and be at the two-day auction with his IPL franchise SunRisers Hyderabad. "Yeah, I think he is there in the auction. I don't think so (it will be a distraction). Dan has



flowed over there, but he has been here for the whole prep. Done all the meetings, done all the chats, watching it. We came to know that anyway," Cummins said. "So, for the players, I don't think so. Most of these guys have been there in the auctions before. They know they can't really do anything. "You are a sitting duck and seeing whether you get selected or not. It doesn't. Doesn't make a difference to how we go about the first two days. It is not a distraction as far as I can see it," he added. The Australia captain admitted there will be pressure on the home team, especially after it lost the last four Test series against India, including the two humiliating reverses on own soil. "There will always be pressure when you are playing at home. India are a very talented side and it will be a good challenge. But we are not looking too far ahead," Cummins said. "It would be great to win the Border-Gavaskar Trophy. India are a great side but we are well prepared." The leading pacer also said that newcomer Nathan McSweeney should not try to imitate David Warner, the

legendary opener who retired from international cricket earlier this year. "He should play his natural game. He shouldn't try to imitate David Warner. That's not his game. As long as he makes the bowlers bowl again and again, that's his game," Cummins said of the man who is going to be handed his Test debut at Optus Stadium. Asked about India's talented all-rounder Nitish Reddy, Cummins said they shared the dressing room for IPL franchise SunRisers Hyderabad and praised the 21-year-old. "He is an impressive youngster. Didn't bowl much for SRH. He can swing the ball and is a really talented kid." Interestingly, both Australia and India will be led by fast bowling captains, a rarity in international cricket. While Cummins will lead Australia, Jasprit Bumrah will be in charge of the Indian team as regular skipper Rohit Sharma is currently on a paternity leave. "It should happen more (pacers leading teams)," Cummins said. In the past four series between the two teams, India have won on all four occasions, including back-to-back away Test series wins in 2018-19 and 2020-21.



We are not carrying baggage from New Zealand series, says Jasprit Bumrah

PTI ■ PERTH
India's stand-in skipper Jasprit Bumrah on Thursday insisted that his team is not carrying any baggage from the unprecedented 0-3 defeat at home against New Zealand as it embarks on a challenging Test series against fierce rivals Australia. The five-match Test series starts here on Friday. "When you win you start from zero but when you lose, then also you also start from zero. We are not carrying any baggage from India. Yes, we have our learnings from New Zealand series but those were different conditions and our results here have been different," said Bumrah, who is leading in the opening Test in the absence of Rohit Sharma, who is on paternity leave. Bumrah also said that the team has finalised its playing XI although he will reveal it only at the toss. "We have finalised our playing XI and you will get to know tomorrow morning before the start of the match," the skipper said.

Pujara backs KL Rahul at No. 3, believes Jaiswal can do a Warner



PTI ■ PERTH
Cheteshwar Pujara, who knows a thing or two about grinding the Australian attack in their den, on Thursday backed KL Rahul to bat at the vital number three slot in the Border-Gavaskar Trophy, and said the swashbuckling Yashasvi Jaiswal is capable of doing what David Warner did in his prime. The five-match Test series begins here on Friday. "I don't know the batting order. I would prefer him (Rahul) at No. 3 because he has the experience to bat there," Pujara said in Star Sports press room. Rahul, however, is expected to open with youngster Yashasvi Jaiswal, while Karnataka's Devdutt Padikkal is being considered for No. 3 to maintain a left-right combination. "It seems the team is preferring Devdutt (Padikkal) at No. 3 for the left-right combination. He has batted at 5-6 and in the middle order. It will be easier to bat at No. 3 than opening. If he can bat at No. 3, it will be good." Pujara, currently sidelined from the Test set-up, praised Jaiswal and compared his batting with that of Australian great David Warner. "One of the most talented cricketers India has produced.... I'm very confident that going forward, he has a lot to prove. I know he will play a key role in this series if we have to win. "His role would be one of the most important ones. He can play a role similar to what David Warner used to do for the Australian team. "Being an opener, he holds the key. He's mentally tough. He loves batting, hits a number of balls. He has a long way to go across the formats."

Pujara said the youngsters must play with self-confidence and without the fear of failure. "I will tell them the first battle is a mental battle. Self-confidence and belief are needed to make runs in these conditions. When there is pace and bounce, there is a chance of the ball hitting the body. You have to come out of that fear," Pujara said. On tackling short-pitch deliveries in Australian conditions, Pujara said the batters will have to identify the deliveries they should leave. "As a batter, you need to understand your strengths. We often end up playing hook shots we aren't quite capable of. On Indian pitches, most short-pitched deliveries are below shoulder level. But in Australia, they're often above shoulder height. "As a batter, you need to identify which balls to leave and which to play. Those below the shoulders are the ones you can pull, but you need to be in control of the shot. Sometimes you leave the ball, and sometimes you pull. You can't have a set rule -- you just need to look at the ball and play according to the situation. Be in the present moment," he said. **Kohli needs a start** Virat Kohli may be going through a lean patch but Pujara believes his past success in Australia will help him to turn things around. "There is a lot of expectation of him. The number of matches he's playing and the athlete Virat is, he doesn't get enough breaks in between. That is why sometimes, when you're not getting enough breaks, your body and confidence go down a bit. That's normal. "He has got some break. He's at a place where he likes to compete. If someone is

having a go at him, he would like to give it back to the bowlers -- that's how he started his journey. "He has set high standards for himself. He has that awareness. He has been a leader and is probably the best in the circuit. He's aware of what's expected of him and how many runs he has to make." Under Kohli's captaincy on the 2017-18 tour of Australia, Pujara aggregated over 500 runs and played a significant role in India's historic Test series triumph. "I'm confident that once he gets going, he needs to spend some time in the game. He's capable of doing all things. Always leading from the front, it's about getting a 50-60-70. If he gets a hundred, then he will have a great series ahead," Pujara said of Kohli. "In every match, he is motivated, whatever the format. Definitely, he has worked on it. It's about getting that start and spending time at the crease." **Pant 2.0 a lot smarter** Rishabh Pant has been the architect of their epic triumph in the 2020-21 series, and the wicketkeeper-batter has returned after surviving a horrific car accident two years ago. Pujara feels the left-hander is a lot smarter now and will be one to watch out for. Australian bowlers struggle a bit to bowl to lefties. There's a different kind of enjoyment watching him. He's an attacking player who puts pressure on the bowlers. It becomes easy for me to play my natural game as they try to stop runs. "Whoever bats with Rishabh in that partnership, it will be crucial. Batting at No. 5-6, with the ball a bit old, he plays attacking cricket. He can change the entire match in one session. "Freedom is very important; he should be in his zone. He has developed that smartness, picking and choosing bowlers -- whom to attack and whom to rotate the strike against. I'm sure he will have a successful tour this time. He's a lot smarter over a period of time." Australia favourites Pujara further said Australia are favourites this time to reclaim the Border-Gavaskar Trophy from India, who are reeling from an unprecedented 0-3 home series defeat to New Zealand recently. "Realistically, looking at the balance Australia have the edge on home conditions. Injuries and Rohit being not there have disrupted our balance.

Spanish star Juan Mata joins ownership group of MLS expansion franchise San Diego FC

AP ■ SAN DIEGO
Spanish star and World Cup champion Juan Mata has joined the expansion San Diego FC's ownership group, making him the first active international soccer player to hold an ownership stake in Major League Soccer. Mata joins David Beckham as only the second international player to be involved in MLS ownership. "Joining San Diego FC as a partner is an exciting opportunity to help build something truly special in a city and league that are experiencing incredible growth," Mata said in a statement. He added that the commitment to the community by both the club and the Right to Dream Academy "aligns perfectly with my own values. I look forward to contributing my experience and passion for the game and

working alongside everyone here to build a club that inspires both on and off the pitch." He has been with the Western Sydney Wanderers of the Australian A-League since September. Mata has been a big name in international soccer for years. He won club honors in England, Spain, Turkey and Japan, and was a key player in the golden era of the Spanish men's national team which won the 2010 World Cup and the 2012 UEFA European Championship. A product of Real Madrid's youth academy, Mata began his professional



career with Real Madrid Castilla before transferring to Valencia CF in 2007, where he won the Copa del Rey the following year. Mata signed with Chelsea FC in 2011, where he was pivotal in helping the London club capture the UEFA Champions League, FA Cup, and UEFA Europa League titles, earning Chelsea's Player of the Year honors twice in that span. He joined Manchester United in 2014, winning the FA Cup, Europa League and EFL Cup in nine seasons. He joined Turkish side Galatasaray in 2022, where he celebrated his first league title, before signing with Japan's Vissel Kobe in 2023, where he won the league again. Mata founded the Common Goal initiative, pledging 1 per cent of his salary to social causes.

Liga Deportiva Alajuelense threatens FIFA with legal action in bid for spot at Club World Cup

AP ■ SAN JOSE
The winningest team in Costa Rica is asking FIFA for a spot in next summer's Club World Cup and is willing to take legal action if denied. Liga Deportiva Alajuelense, which has won 30 league titles, wants FIFA to enforce the rule that forbids clubs from the same ownership to participate in the tournament. "The claim is based on the principles of eligibility set in the rules of the tournament," the club said in a press release. Team spokesman Marco Vazquez noted that Mexican clubs Leon and Pachuca belong to the same owner, Jesus Martinez, of Grupo

Pachuca. "Those are the rules that FIFA established -- there cannot be multi-ownership," Vazquez said Wednesday. "There are two Mexican clubs from the same owner and the rulebook is clear. What we are asking is to review what FIFA itself established." The FIFA-run competition has been expanded from seven teams to 32 and will be staged in the United States from June to July next year. "We hired a law firm in Spain, and they have all the details," Vazquez said of potential legal action. FIFA has not publicly reacted to the team's announcement and didn't immediately answer a request for comment.

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER
RWS&S DIVISION, JAGATSIINGHUR
mail-rwsjaspur@gmail.com
e-Procurement Notice
Bid identification No. 22 of 2024-25

The Superintending Engineer, RWS&S Division, Jagatsinghpur on behalf of Governor of Odisha invites P1/Lump sump composite bids in single system in online mode for Execution of building works from eligible Class of contractors.

- Name of work : Building work
- No. of work : 02 Nos
- Estimated Cost : Rs. 16,82,618/- & Rs.46,41,622/-
- Cost of Tender paper : Rs.6,000/-Each
- Class of contractor : 'D', 'C' & 'B'
- Availability of Tender in website : 26.11.2024 to 05.12.2024
- Submission of Bid in online : 26.11.2024 to 05.12.2024
- Date of seeking clarification : 26.11.2024 to 03.12.2024
- Date of opening of bids : 06.12.2024 (11.00 A.M)
- Name and address of O.I.T. : Superintending Engineer, RWS&S Division, Jagatsinghpur
- All other details can be seen from the web site : www.tendersorissa.gov.in
- Bid cost and Bid security should be submitted in online mode.
- Subsequent Corrigendum/addendum if required shall only be appeared in above website.

Superintending Engineer
RWS&S Dive. Jagatsinghpur
OIPR-2502411/0008/2425

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA DEPARTMENT OF P.R & D.W i-303
INVITATION FOR BIDS (IFB)
IDENTIFICATION No. - AGLB-02 / 2024-25 E-mail address: - ori-bangul@nic.in

1. The Block Development Officer, Argul on behalf of the Governor of Orissa invites Percentage rate civil bid in single cover system for the works as detailed in the table, from the class of eligible contractors as mentioned in Col.4 (four), registered with the State Government and contractors of equivalent grade / Class registered with Central Government/ MES / Railway, to be eventually drawn up in PWD P-1 form, for execution of Building (Civil Work). The proof of registration from the appropriate authority shall be enclosed along with the bid. If successful, the bidder who has not registered under State Government has to register under the State PWD in appropriate class of eligibility before signing the agreement. Bidders may submit bids for any or all the following works.

Sl. No.	Name of works	Approx. Value of work. (Rs. In lakhs)	Class of contractor	Bid Security (Rs.)	Cost of documents (Non-refundable)	Period of completion
1	Construction of Additional Class Room at Bantala Primary School, GP-Bantala	11.51	'C' or 'D'	11505.00	Rs.10,000/- (Only be downloaded from www.angul.odisha.gov.in)	Six Calendar months
2	Construction of Additional Class Room at Mundiasahi Primary School, GP-Kangula Bentapur	11.51	'C' or 'D'	11505.00		Six Calendar months
3	Construction of Additional Class Room at Khalarai High School, GP-Khalarai	12.61	'C or 'D'	12611.00		Six Calendar months

For detailed information, please visit the website <https://www.angul.odisha.gov.in>. Sd/- 18.11.2024 Block Development Officer Angul
OIPR: 19073/11/0002/2425

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF CONSTRUCTION ENGINEER
PHULBANI (R&B) CIRCLE, PHULBANI
Phone: - 06842 254004 / Email: sembholpani@qmail.com
INVITATION FOR BIDS (IFB)
Bid identification No. CCE_R and B..PLB..07 of 2024_25
NO. 1820 Dated. 19.11.2024

1	The Chief Construction Engineer, Phulbani (R&B) Circle, Phulbani on behalf of the Governor of Odisha invites percentage rate bid in double cover system in ONLINE MODE for construction of the Building work as detailed in the table below from eligible contractors.	
2	Nature of work	-: Building Work
3	No. of tenders	-: One No.
4	Tender cost	-: Rs. 10,000/- (through online) only.
5	Class of Contractor	-: B & A class
6	Date & Time of sale & receipt of bids	-: 10.00 AM of 27.11.2024 to 5.00 PM of 11.12.2024
7	Date of Opening of bid	-: 11.00 AM of 12.12.2024
8	The Bidders shall have to participate in online bidding only. Further details can be seen from the website https://tendersodisha.gov.in . Any addendum / Corrigendum / Cancellation of tender can also be seen in the said website. The authority reserves the right to reject any or all bids without assigning any reason.	

OIPR: 34129/11/0009/2425 Sd/- Chief Construction Engineer, Phulbani r&b Circle, Phulbani

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA, "e"-PROCUREMENT NOTICE
OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER, NAYAGARH (R&B) DIVISION, NAYAGARH WORKS DEPARTMENT
Tender call Notice
E-mail: pwdoffngd34@gmail.com

Bid Identification No. S.E-Nayagarh (R&B) Division- Online 08/2024-25

The Superintending Engineer, Nayagarh (R&B) Division, Nayagarh on behalf of Governor of Odisha inviting percentage rate bid in Double/Single cover system in ONLINE MODE from eligible contractors for construction of Building work as detailed in the table below:

1.	Nature of work	: Building & Electrical Works.
2.	No of Work	: 7 Nos
3.	Tender Cost & EMD	: To be remitted online through a process as mentioned in DTCN.
4.	Class of Contractor	: As mentioned in DTCN
5.	Available of Bid Document in the Website	: From Dt. 27.11.2024 11.00 AM to Dt. 07.12.2024 Up to 5.00 pm .
6.	Date of opening of Bid	: Dt. 09.12.2024 at 11.00 AM
7.	The have to participate in ONLINE bidding only. Further details can be seen from the Website: https://tenderodisha.gov.in . Any Addendum / Corrigendum / Cancellation of tender can also be seen in the said website.	

Superintending Engineer,
Nayagarh (R&B) Division, Nayagarh
OIPR-34138/11/0008/2425

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA, "e"-PROCUREMENT NOTICE
OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER, NAYAGARH (R&B) DIVISION, NAYAGARH WORKS DEPARTMENT
Tender call Notice
E-mail: pwdoffngd34@gmail.com

Bid Identification No. S.E-Nayagarh (R&B) Division- Online 08/2024-25

The Superintending Engineer, Nayagarh (R&B) Division, Nayagarh on behalf of Governor of Odisha inviting percentage rate bid in Double/Single cover system in ONLINE MODE from eligible contractors for construction of Building work as detailed in the table below:

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Superintending Engineer,
Nayagarh (R&B) Division, Nayagarh
OIPR-34138/11/0008/2425