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CHANDIGARH, WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 13, 2024; PAGES 12 ₹2



INSIDE

SPORTS 11
DEEPIKA'S BRACE HANDS
INDIA 3-2 WIN OVER
SOUTH KOREA



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Polls on platter, all eyes on Wayanad



Women from the tribal community give a traditional welcome to a polling official before he leaves for his allotted polling station on the eve of the 1st phase of Jharkhand Assembly elections, in Ranchi, Tuesday

some constituencies, the bypolls are being held due to death of the representatives. Congress general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra is making her electoral debut from Wayanad vacated by her sibling Rahul Gandhi who also won from the Rae Bareilly parliamentary constituency. Voting will be held in seven seats in Rajasthan, six in West Bengal, five in Assam, four seats in Bihar, three in Karnataka, two seats in Madhya Pradesh, and one seat each in Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, Kerala and Meghalaya. Votes will be counted on November 23.

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI/RANCHI/WAYANAD

Assembly polls and bypolls is scheduled on November 20 which will see second phase of Jharkhand, single phase Maharashtra and several bypoll Assembly pockets including that in Uttar Pradesh. Counting will be held on November 23, as per the Election Commission dateline. Though these by-elections are not going to have any bearing on the governments, they are seen as a big test for the Congress and the INDIA Bloc which failed to put up a united show in the recent Haryana Assembly polls. Most of these seats fell vacant after the sitting MLAs contested the Lok Sabha elections and won while in

Assemblies in Haryana right after the Lok Sabha polls, a high voltage campaign led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, several Union Ministers and Chief Ministers has set the tone and tenor of the first phase of Assembly elections in Jharkhand, and bypolls in 31 seats spread across 10 states, and the most watched Wayanad Lok Sabha constituency, which will be held on Wednesday amidst tight security arrangements. The second phase of



ED raids multiple locations in Jharkhand, WB

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ RANCHI

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) on Tuesday raided multiple locations in poll-bound Jharkhand apart from West Bengal in a money laundering investigation linked to alleged illegal infiltration of Bangladeshi nationals, official sources said. A total of 17 places are being covered in the two neighbouring states by the Ranchi office of the federal probe agency, a day before the first phase of polling in Jharkhand. Visuals of Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) personnel positioned outside a hotel located on Bariatu Road in Ranchi and a resort in the city were captured by press teams as ED teams scoured for documents, ledger entries and financial records inside. The ED in September filed a case under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) to probe an instance of alleged infiltration and trafficking of some Bangladeshi women into Jharkhand leading to the generation of alleged slush funds. Prime Minister Narendra Modi and other Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leaders have accused the State Government of aiding such infiltration leading to the altering of the demographic landscape of the tribal-dominated areas of Santhal Pargana and Kolhan regions during the recent poll campaign. Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Monday accused the ruling Jharkhand Mukti Morcha-led coalition of converting Jharkhand into a 'dharmashala' for Rohingyas and Bangladeshi infiltrators.

Overaged vehicles choking NCR

One crore end-of-life cars are still running on Delhi's roads

RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

As there is no letup in worsening air pollution in Delhi and its neighbouring region as the air quality index here remains in the 'very poor' category for the past 13 days, the Commission for Air Quality Management (CAQM) directed to launch actions to remove highly polluting end-of-life (EoL) vehicles (petrol vehicles older than 15 years and diesel vehicles older than 10 years) still reported to be plying in Delhi.



Photo: Ranjan Dimri/Pioneer

The National Capital Region (NCR) still has over one 1.06 Crore 'overage' vehicles (End of Life (EoL) running on the roads illegally and adding to the pollution. Of them, only 26,064 vehicles have been seized in 2023 and 6011 till September 2024. In Delhi, the transport sector is the most significant contributor at 15.496 per cent, as per the Decision Support System data by the Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology (IITM). The PM2.5 concentration is currently 40.4 times the World Health Organization (WHO) annual PM2.5 guideline value. Data shows there are 60,14,493 such vehicles in Delhi. Of them, only 24,706 have been impounded so far. A survey by the Delhi government in October estimates there are 15,000-2,00,000 EoL vehicles still on roads. An estimated 1.1 million vehicles enter and exit Delhi daily, further worsening the air quality. The traffic congestion caused by this vehicle influx also intensifies pollution, particularly nitrogen oxides (NOx), which account for 81 per cent of NOx pollution in Delhi. Data shows that during peak traffic hours (5 pm - 9 pm), when average traffic speed drops to 15 km/h, NO2 levels are 2.3 times higher than noon levels (12 pm - 4 pm) when traffic speed averages 21 km/h.

These congestion-related emissions worsen air quality, especially during winter when inversion layers trap pollutants close to the ground. According to the Ministry of Road and Transport, Haryana has over 27.50 lakh while Uttar Pradesh has over 12.38 lakh such vehicles. Rajasthan has 6.06 lakh such vehicles. Transport department Officials said that there are a large number of EoL vehicles plying on the roads, causing traffic snarls here. In an order to Delhi, the Commission has directed that EoL vehicles should be denied fuel at petrol pumps and more importantly, immediate legal action should be taken against such vehicles, including impounding and further disposal in accordance with RVSF Rules, 2021 and other extant policies of the respective State Governments and the GNCT Delhi. "As a deterrent measure, all such EoL vehicles are identified through the Automated Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) camera systems at petrol pumps. Delhi has piloted one such innovative and effective solution which envisages Automated Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) camera systems which are in the process of being installed at all 500+

fueling stations in the capital city". "These cameras, besides capturing and displaying the registration details of all the vehicles that enter the premises of the fueling station, also have a provision of integration with VAHAN database and thus the status of "EoL" vehicles or vehicles without valid Pollution Under Control Certificate "PUCC" can be readily captured by the system. The system further has a provision for an audio message which is relayed in respect of such non-compliant vehicles entering the premises of the fueling station," it said. "In view of the high polluting nature of EoL vehicles and considering that such a large fleet, while de-registered, is still reported to be plying, NCR States / GNCT of Delhi, there is an urgent need to launch / intensify drives against such vehicles. While much more intensified "on-road" drives should be taken up to guard against such overage vehicles plying on roads or parked in public spaces, suitable technological interventions and intelligent solutions also need to be employed towards identification / detection of such EoL vehicles still running in the NCR," it said.



Canada temple cancels event amid protest threats

PTI ■ OTTAWA

The Brampton Triveni temple in Canada has cancelled a consular event after the Canadian police warned them of an "extremely high and imminent" threat level of violent protests. The Life Certificate event, organised by the Consulate General of India, Toronto, was scheduled for November 17 at the temple premises. It was part of the consulate's many camps for issuing Life Certificates for pension purposes. On Monday, the temple authorities said the event was cancelled due to "official intelligence from Peel Regional Police, stating that there is an Extremely High and Imminent Threat Level of violent protests". "...We must make the appropriate decision to cancel to ensure the safety of Brampton Triveni Mandir devotees, community visitors, and the general public," the temple authorities said in a statement. "We are deeply saddened that Canadians now feel unsafe coming to Hindu Temples in Canada," it added. Temple authorities called on Peel Police to address the threats being circulated against the temple and provide security guarantees to the Canadian Hindu community and the general public. The cancellation came almost a week after protestors carrying Khalistani flags clashed with devotees at a Hindu Sabha temple and disrupted an event co-organised by the temple authorities and the Indian Consulate at Brampton. Last week, the Consulate General of India in Toronto said it was cancelling some of its scheduled consular camps after the Canadian security authorities conveyed their inability to provide minimum security protection to its organisers. After the protests at the Hindu Sabha temple in Brampton on November 3, the Ministry of External Affairs said that New Delhi remains "deeply concerned" about the safety and security of Indian nationals in Canada. India condemned the attack with an expectation that those indulging in violence "will be prosecuted". The relations between India and Canada have come under severe strain following Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's allegations in September last year of a "potential" involvement of Indian agents in Khalistan extremist Hardeep Singh Nijjar's killing. New Delhi rejected Trudeau's charges as "absurd." Nijjar, a Canadian citizen, was designated a terrorist by India.

Bodies of two Meitei men recovered

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ IMPHAL

Bodies of two elderly men belonging to the Meitei community were recovered on Tuesday morning in Manipur's Jiribam district where a gunfight between suspected militants and security forces broke out a day before, police said. Operations are underway to trace three women and three children, who have been reported missing since the violence erupted in Jiribam on Monday. IGP (operations) I K Muivah said. The bodies of the two men, Laishram Balen and Maibam Kesho, were found lying in debris during a search operation in the Jakuradorh Karong area where a few shops were set on fire by suspected militants on Monday, another senior officer said. "The two elderly men belonging to the Meitei community died after the insurgents torched a few shops in the Jakuradorh Karong area," he said. The Jiribam district administration imposed prohibitory orders to avoid any untoward incident in the area, the officer said. A



shutdown has been observed since five am on Tuesday in Kuki-Zo majority areas in the hills to protest against killing of suspected insurgents in the gunfight with security personnel, another police officer said. The Kuki-Zo Council called for a total shutdown in the hill areas of the state from 5 am to 6 pm on Tuesday to express their "collective grief and solidarity for those who were brutally shot dead". The police had said 10 suspected militants were killed in the fierce gunfight with security forces on Monday after insurgents in camouflage uniforms, armed with sophisticated weapons, fired indiscriminately at a police station and an adjacent CRPF camp in Jiribam district. However, a senior officer had put the toll at 11.

New entrance exam series in January

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan on Tuesday announced that the Centre is introducing various reforms in the entrance examinations in the country beginning January and appealed to the state governments to extend their support for zero-entrance tests. Pradhan said the Radhakrishnan panel has submitted its report outlining reforms in the National Testing Agency (NTA) and to



implement the recommendations, cooperation of states is essential. "I have appealed to all state government education secretaries. A new entrance exam series for the upcoming year will begin in January. Based on last year's experiences, the government has introduced numerous reforms," he told reporters on the sidelines of a national workshop on higher and technical education attended by secretaries of states and Union territories (UTs). "The Radhakrishnan committee

has submitted its recommendations and to implement it, the states' cooperation is essential. I have appealed to everyone on this matter, especially regarding entrance examinations. "Bringing examinations, especially entrance exams, to zero error is the responsibility of both the Government of India and the state governments. We will work as a team to build confidence in the children of our country," the education minister added.

Retail inflation rises to 6.21 per cent

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Retail inflation rose to 6.21 per cent in October from 5.49 per cent in the preceding month mainly due to higher food prices, breaching the Reserve Bank of India's (RBI's) upper tolerance level, according to official data released on Tuesday. The consumer price index-based inflation was 4.87 per cent in October 2023. The National Statistics Office data showed that inflation in the food basket rose to 10.87 per cent in October from 9.24 per cent in September and 6.61 per cent in the year-ago month. The RBI, which kept the key short-term lending rate unchanged earlier this month, has been tasked by the government to ensure inflation remains at 4 per cent with a margin of 2 per cent on either side.

LET IT SNOW...



Tourists play in the snow at a ski resort after season's first snowfall at Kongdoori area of Gulmarg, in Baramulla district, Jammu and Kashmir, Tuesday

Band, baaja, baraat and... traffic jams

Around 50,000 weddings were celebrated on Tuesday, in Delhi

SAUMYA SHUKLA ■ NEW DELHI

Be ready to encounter loud music, people dancing on the streets, and a general euphoria amongst the masses as wedding season officially began on Tuesday, which marked the auspicious occasion of Dev Uthani Ekadashi, when around 50,000 weddings were celebrated in the National Capital. However, what is 'party mode' for some will be a major headache for the commuters traversing through the roads of Delhi, especially through South Delhi and East Delhi. The sounds of celebration will continue until December 16 with the city witnessing around 4.5 lakh weddings across the different venues in Delhi in a

span of 18 days. The day is also seeing a surge in weddings since the day also marks 'Tulsi Vivah', which is considered a highly auspicious day to get married as Goddess Tulsi married Shaligram, a form of Lord Vishnu. As 'baarats', which are the procession a groom takes out via reaching the venue where the marriage is taking place, the commuters faced hardships as the processions led to traffic woes in the city. Areas like Mahipalpur, Mehrauli, Karnal, and Rohini among others saw congestions due to wedding related activities. It took hours to cross even small stretches, as the weddings added to the already existing problem of persistent traffic congestion in different areas across the Capital.



Many a time vehicles parked around these wedding venues also leave the roads narrower, and normal traffic has to wade through the cramped spaces. Shopping related to wedding events will also create a jam around key market areas. According to Confederation of All India Traders (CAIT)

estimates, this wedding season is expected to generate over Rs 6 lakh Crore in trade. In light of these issues, Special Commissioner of Police (Traffic) Ajay Chaudhary spoke about the special arrangements made to avoid any hassles, and keep the load off of the city roads. He said that in addition to the already existing force of about 4,500 traffic personnel, the police department has deployed an additional staff of 250. Addl/CP (Traffic) Satyaveer Singh Katara added that with a special focus on the traffic congestion resulting from the extra flow due to the ceremonies, they have adjusted the duty timings of the staff in a way that the maximum number of police is on the ground, and managing

the flow at the hours when these celebrations usually take place across the city. Highlighting the issue of unmanaged parking around these venues, Deputy Commissioner of Police (Traffic) Shashank Jaiswal shared that the police has held several meetings with wedding organisers to ensure there is ample place to park the vehicles of the attendees and doesn't lead to cramping the roads. "We are doing our best including motorcycling patrolling and deployment of cranes to remove vehicles amid the festive season. We understand that this traffic can also choke important highways, hence the traffic department is fully ready to tackle it."

Punjab's 'Aam Aadmi Clinics' Set for Rebranding to Secure NHM Funding

MONIKA MALIK ■ CHANDIGARH

Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) led Punjab Government's ambitious project — Aam Aadmi Clinics (AACs) — are set for a transformation as part of an agreement reached with the Centre to unlock nearly Rs 650 crore in withheld National Health Mission (NHM) funds. The change, a result of negotiations between the AAP-led Punjab Government and the BJP-controlled Centre, aimed at harmonizing the state-run healthcare clinics with the Central Government branding norms.

For months, Punjab Government had faced funding obstacles from the Centre, which argued that the AAP Government's rebranding of Ayushman Bharat-Health and Wellness Centres to Aam Aadmi Clinics went against NHM guidelines. Sources revealed that around 400 out of the state's total 870 AACs will soon adopt a co-branded identity, merging elements of the original Ayushman Bharat design with Aam Aadmi Clinic features.

Under the same agreement, the pictures of Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann, prominently displayed on the

AACs' exteriors, will also be removed. In exchange, Punjab expects to receive NHM funds in installments, bringing much-needed support to the state's healthcare infrastructure.

Since early 2023, the Union Government had withheld NHM funding, totaling Rs 650 crore, citing branding conflicts. Additionally, Punjab's requests for a special assistance grant of Rs 1,100 crore also remained stalled due to the branding impasse. The Centre insisted that the clinics conform to the Ayushman Bharat identity, which includes specific colour schemes, logos, and standardized facades.

Sharing information on the sidelines of the 'Punjab Vision 2047' event at Punjab University on Tuesday, Punjab Health and Family Welfare Minister Dr Balbir Singh confirmed that a mutual agreement has now been reached, enabling a joint rebranding strategy that retains the state's autonomy over certain clinics while allowing others to incorporate Ayushman Bharat branding.

Dr Balbir explained, "The clinics set up in state-owned buildings, primarily under the existing healthcare framework, will retain their original name and branding if fully state-funded.

For clinics built in partnership under the NHM's 60:40 funding model, however, a co-branded approach will be adopted."

Punjab Government's journey to establish AACs began shortly after the AAP came to power, emphasizing accessible healthcare. These clinics provide free consultations, 80 'free' diagnostic tests, and essential medications, primarily targeting underserved communities. However, the rapid expansion of AACs led to friction with the Centre, as the AAP Government repurposed existing health centers and updated them with state-centric branding, sparking a funding dispute. Yellow-painted facades featuring Chief Minister Mann's photograph soon became a symbol of AACs' localized healthcare, but they also marked a deviation from the NHM's co-branded design requirements.

While the new co-branded format marks a compromise, it also signaled a significant win for Punjab's administration, which managed to secure both NHM and Ayushman Bharat recognition. These clinics will now prominently display Ayushman Bharat logos and incorporate traditional art and motifs, aligning with the

Centre's stipulations. Remaining clinics, especially those solely state-funded or housed in donated premises, will continue under the original AAC branding.

Sources familiar with the discussions highlighted that the MoU between the Union Health Ministry and the Punjab Government, initially signed in 2021, had mandated strict adherence to Ayushman Bharat guidelines. Clauses outlined co-branding and local language compliance, yet Punjab's AAC transformation had strayed from the mandate, necessitating this recent intervention. Despite these challenges, the AAP Government argued that the clinics' rebranding as AACs enhanced their visibility and encouraged community engagement, supporting the broader mission of equitable healthcare.

With this compromise, Punjab's government expects to receive NHM funds in phased installments, amounting to approximately Rs 650 crore, aimed at scaling healthcare access across the State. Dr Balbir anticipated that the phased release will commence within the fiscal quarter, breathing new life into Punjab's healthcare agenda.

Haryana govt prepares blueprint to provide 2 lakh low-income people 100 s yard plots

PNS ■ CHANDIGARH

The Haryana government is preparing a blueprint of a scheme to provide 100 square yard plots of land to low-income people to help them build homes.

"The dream of 2 lakh people in Haryana to own their homes is set to become a reality soon. In this regard, Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini's government is preparing a blueprint for the scheme," a government statement said on Tuesday. Under the initiative, eligible applicants without land will receive plots of 100 square yards each in villages.

Under the Mukhyamantri Gramin Awaz Yojna, 5,00,000 individuals have applied for plots in the state. All eligible beneficiaries will receive plots of 100 square yards in different phases, with 2 lakh individuals slated to get the benefit soon.

J Ganesan, Director General of the Housing for All Department, held a meeting with department officials to provide essential guidelines. Ganesan stated that the objective of the Chief Minister's Rural Housing Scheme is to provide plots for low-income families in the state who do not have their own homes. This scheme aims to benefit these families, enabling them to construct

their own homes.

"The successful implementation of the scheme will enhance the living standards of poorer families, allowing them to lead safe and dignified lives in their own homes," Ganesan said. In the meeting, he directed officials that all processes associated with the scheme should be expedited to ensure that eligible people can access its benefits as quickly as possible.

Last week, the chief minister held a meeting with senior officials and instructed that in the areas where the 100-square-yard plots will be allocated, all essential facilities like paved roads, electricity, clean drinking water, streetlights, parks and open green spaces should be ensured.

The government has made provisions to assist beneficiaries in constructing houses on these 100-square-yard plots. Financial assistance will also be provided under the Pradhan Mantri Awaz Yojana (Rural) to help beneficiaries build their homes.

Meanwhile, in the meeting held by Ganesan, the officials informed that 6,618 flats built by private developers for the EWS category will soon be allotted to applicants registered under the Mukhyamantri Shehri Awaz Yojana in eight districts as part of the first phase.

Guide Punjab's Farmers Toward Crop Diversification: CM Urges Agri-Experts

PNS ■ LUDHIANA

Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann on Tuesday called upon agricultural scientists and experts from around the world to take the lead in guiding farmers toward crop diversification — a crucial step to safeguarding the future of agriculture in the state.

Mann, speaking at the International Conference on 'Transforming AgriFood Systems in the Face of Climate Change and Energy Transitions' at Punjab Agricultural University (PAU), underscored the urgency of adopting sustainable practices to tackle the growing challenges posed by climate change, particularly in Punjab, which remains highly dependent on rice and wheat production.

With Punjab's agriculture facing increasing vulnerability due to adverse impacts of climate change, Mann highlighted the need for farmers to move beyond traditional crops and diversify into more resilient and sustainable farming practices. Mann stressed that crop diversification could be a game-changer for the state's agricultural future, promoting higher yields, healthier soil, and better adaptability to climatic fluctuations.

"Punjab's farmers have long been the backbone of India's food security, but now it is time for us to evolve," Mann remarked, noting that crop diversification was not just a matter of economic necessity

but also an environmental imperative to protect the state's water resources and agricultural land. The Chief Minister emphasized that it was the responsibility of agri-scientists to develop innovative, resource-efficient solutions that could guide farmers toward adopting these new practices.

In his address, Mann sounded the alarm over the unsustainable water usage for rice cultivation, revealing that growing just one kilogram of rice requires 3,000 liters of water. He pointed out that the state's extensive reliance on groundwater, pumped using energy-intensive motors, had contributed to the depletion of water resources. "This situation is unsustainable and threatens the very foundation of Punjab, a state that is named after five rivers," he said.

To combat this, the Chief Minister advocated for the introduction of alternative water-saving crops, urging scientists to work with farmers to make the transition easier and more viable. "We must adopt proactive measures to address the growing water crisis and ensure that Punjab's agriculture remains sustainable for future generations," he said, adding that failing to act would have dire consequences for both the environment and the agricultural economy.

He emphasized that agriculture is not just an economic activity for the state, but a way of life for millions of its people, and therefore, protecting it must be a top priority.

Punjab CM writes to VP, Seeks Immediate Senate Polls in PU

PNS ■ CHANDIGARH

Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann on Tuesday called for immediate conduct of Senate elections in Punjab University, Chandigarh, and sought the intervention of Vice President of India Jagdeep Dhankhar to resolve the matter. Mann, in a letter to Dhankhar, highlighted the delay in holding the elections, despite the current Senate's term expiring on October 31, 2024.

Mann emphasized the emotional and cultural significance of Punjab University for the state, which was established under the Punjab University Act, 1947, to compensate for the loss of the Lahore University post-partition. He stressed that since the University's inception, elections to the Senate have been held every four years, typically in August or September. However, this year, the elections have yet to be conducted, causing widespread discontent

among stakeholders, including teachers, graduates, and university professionals. The Chief Minister expressed concern over the potential replacement of the democratic election process with nominations — a move he believed would undermine the University's democratic principles and diminish the role of the graduate electorate. He urged the Vice-President to advise the Punjab University administration and the Union Territory of Chandigarh to ensure timely

and proper conduct of the Senate elections, in accordance with university statutes and the principles of good governance.

EC Transfers DSP Amid Allegations of Gangster Influence in Dera Baba Nanak

PNS ■ CHANDIGARH

The Election Commission of India (ECI) has taken swift action in response to serious allegations surrounding the ongoing by-election in the Dera Baba Nanak assembly constituency in Gurdaspur district, transferring the Deputy Superintendent of Police (DSP) Jasbir Singh of Dera Baba Nanak to the Punjab Police headquarters in Chandigarh. The move came after the complaints made by Congress MP Sukhjinder Singh Randhawa, who accused gangster Jaggu Bhagwanpuria, currently incarcerated in Haryana's Kurukshetra Jail, of influencing voters to back the AAP candidate in the November 20 election.

The ECI has approved the name of Joga Singh, Kapurthala DSP, to take over as DSP of Dera Baba Nanak. Randhawa, a former Deputy Chief Minister and the husband of Congress candidate for Dera Baba Nanak Jatinder Kaur, filed a complaint with the Election Commission on Friday, claiming that the "jailed gangster" Jaggu Bhagwanpuria was using video calls from prison to intimidate voters and Congress workers, urging them to vote for the AAP candidate Gurdeep Singh Randhawa.

Randhawa further alleged that Bhagwanpuria's mother, Harjit Kaur, was visiting the homes of Congress-supporting Sarpanches in the constituency, threatening them to support AAP or face the consequences from her son. Despite reporting the matter to local police authorities, Randhawa claimed that no action was taken, suggesting that the gangster was operating with government backing.

Punjab CEO writes to Haryana for Increased Vigilance on 'Gangster'

In response to these allegations, Punjab Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) Sibin C has written to the Haryana Prisons Department, requesting heightened surveillance of Bhagwanpuria in Kurukshetra Jail. The request came after serious concerns were raised by Batala Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Suhail Mir Qasim regarding potential illegal communication by the gangster from prison. The CEO's letter emphasized the importance of immediate action, including a thorough inspection of Bhagwanpuria's jail cell and the

EC ISSUES NOTICES TO MANPREET, WARRING FOR POLL CODE VIOLATION

Setting 24-hour deadline, the Election Commission of India (ECI) has issued notices to former Finance Minister Manpreet Singh Badal — BJP candidate for Gidderbaha assembly bypoll, and Congress MP from Ludhiana Amarinder Singh Raja Warring — husband of Congress candidate Amrita Warring, for allegedly violating the model code of conduct during their respective campaigns. The notices were served late on Monday night, following complaints regarding their campaign activities. Gidderbaha Returning Officer (RO) Jaspal Singh Brar confirmed that both politicians have been given 24 hours to submit their replies.

surrounding area to confiscate any unauthorized communication devices. The CEO has also urged the Haryana Prisons Department to send a report on the findings to the Election Commission for further scrutiny.

Deployment of Paramilitary Forces

In a bid to ensure free and fair elections, the Election Commission has deployed two companies of Central Armed Paramilitary Forces (CAPF) to maintain peace and security in Dera Baba Nanak constituency. Randhawa had earlier requested the deployment of paramilitary forces to safe-

PUNJAB BYPOLLS

guard against the alleged influence of gangsters in the election process. The by-election in Dera Baba Nanak, set for November 20, is crucial for Randhawa, whose wife, Jatinder Kaur, is vying for the seat. The seat became vacant after Sukhjinder Randhawa was elected as the MP for Gurdaspur earlier this year. Despite the gravity of the accusations, a district police official mentioned that no direct evidence had been found to substantiate the claims, as no voters or Congress workers came forward to confirm they had received threatening calls from Bhagwanpuria. Nonetheless, the case has raised significant concerns about the influence of organized crime on the electoral process in Punjab.

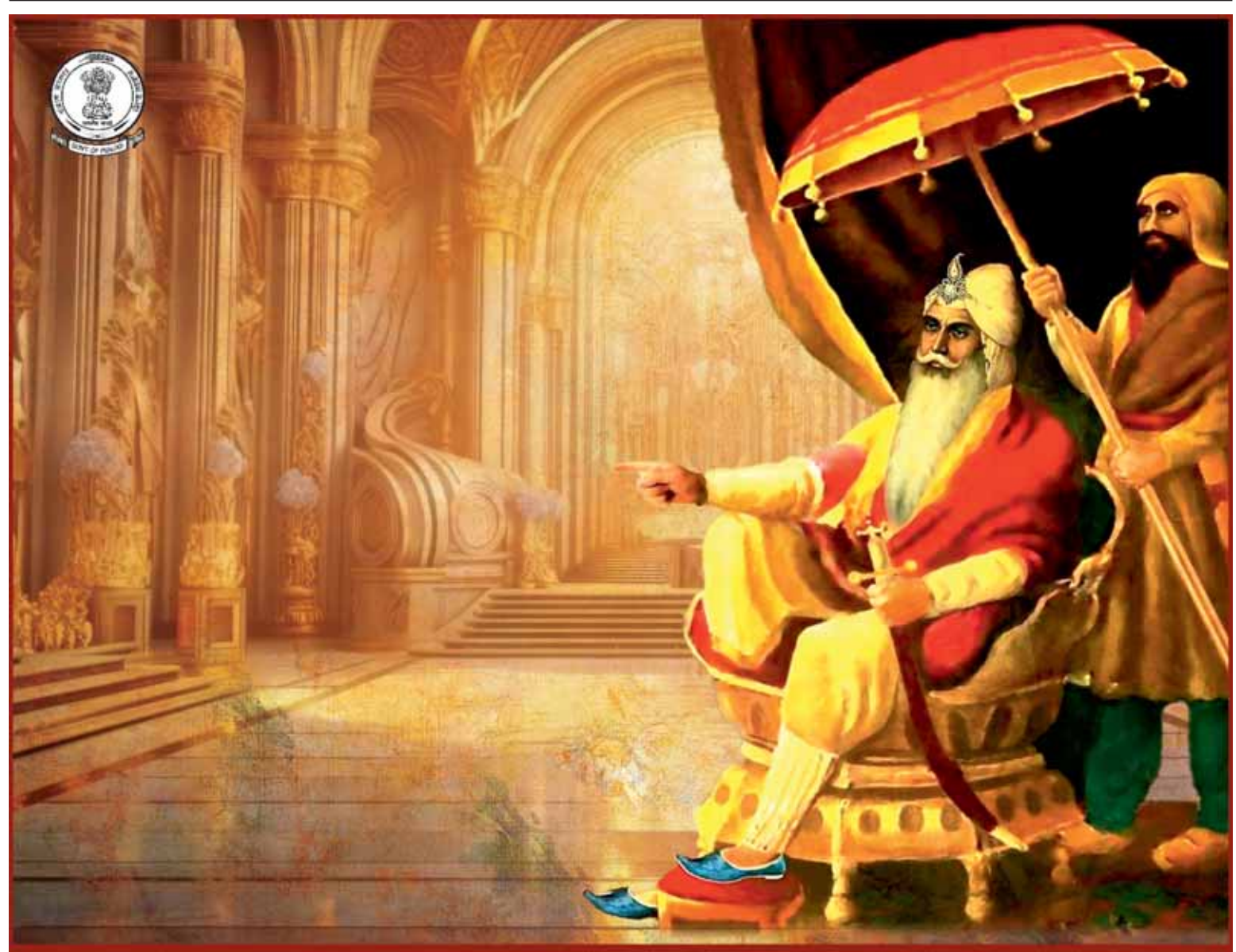
Manpreet Accused of Promising Govt Jobs to Youth

The complaint against BJP candidate Manpreet Singh Badal, who is contesting the Gidderbaha seat for the sixth time, came after a video surfaced on social media. In the video, Manpreet was seen addressing a crowd, claiming

that he could influence job recruitments for local youngsters, particularly in the Punjab Roadways and Indian Railways. The video quickly went viral, prompting the Muktsar District Public Relations Officer to submit a formal complaint to the Election Commission. The allegation was that Manpreet was attempting to sway the rural electorate by promising them government jobs in return for their support. However, the BJP leader clarified the issue on social media, explaining that he was only offering guidance to rural youth regarding job opportunities and suggesting institutions that could help prepare them for the competitive exams required for government positions. Despite the clarification, both Congress and AAP have raised concerns about the potential breach of the model code of conduct.

Warring Accused of Electioneering at Mosque

In another development, Punjab Congress president Warring has been served a notice for allegedly violating the Religious Institutions (Prevention of Misuse) Act. The complaint, lodged by Punjab BJP leaders, stemmed from Warring's visit to a mosque in Gidderbaha on Sunday, where he reportedly addressed a gathering during the campaign in support of his wife Amrita. The issue arose when Warring posted photos of the event on his social media account, showcasing him addressing voters at the mosque. BJP leaders accused him of using religious spaces for political purposes, which they claimed goes against the principles outlined in the Religious Institutions (Prevention of Misuse) Act. Warring later modified the description accompanying the photos, further fueling speculation about the propriety of his actions.



Punjab Government
greet people of State
on the
Birth Anniversary
of
Sher-e-Punjab
MAHARAJA RANJIT SINGH

A great emperor, warrior
and able administrator who created the vast
Sikh Kingdom with unification of
various Misl

Department of Information & Public Relations, Punjab

USP



Dr. Rahul Mehra, National Representative of India for the UNESCO Chair in Global Health & Education, highlighted the opportunity for Haryana to pioneer solutions by implementing robust policy reforms...

US-based scientist Dr. Rahul Mehra shares his work on school health education. Chandigarh: As air quality deteriorates across Northern India, posing serious health risks to children, the urgency for preventive health education has intensified.



Punjab National Bank- Chandigarh donated items to Guru ka Langar Eye Hospital and Mother Teresa Mission of Charity.

Punjab National Bank- Chandigarh donated items to Guru ka Langar Eye Hospital and Mother Teresa Mission of Charity. Chandigarh: Under the Corporate Social Responsibility, the Zonal Office of Punjab National Bank, Sector-17, Chandigarh, presented ten benches to Guru Ka Langar Eye Hospital...



Seminar on Indian Power Market - A Way Forward. SCOPE Convention Centre, Ludhiana, Nov. 12-13, 2024.

SJVN organized a Seminar on 'Indian Power Market - A Way Forward'. Shimla: SJVN organized a seminar on 'Indian Power Market - A Way Forward' today at the SCOPE Convention Center in New Delhi.

Directorate of Punjab State Lotteries. Punjab State Deer 200 on 05.11.2024 by Directorate of Punjab State Lotteries. Monthly lottery scheme draw was conducted in Ludhiana.

Executive Committee of Punjab and Chandigarh Chapter of Bihar Foundation Sets Forth Future Agenda. Chandigarh: The Executive Committee of the Punjab and Chandigarh Chapter of Bihar Foundation was convened on Tuesday to outline strategic priorities and set a future agenda for the organization.

Classifieds

CHANGE OF NAME

I, Chobar Singh S/o Dharampal Singh R/o VPO Goslan, Tehsil Samrala (Ludhiana), have changed my name to Chobar Singh.

I, Paramveer Singh Pannu S/o Gurpreet Singh Pannu R/o Kothi No.77, Kissan Enclave, Khanna (Ludhiana), have changed my name to Paramveer Singh.

I, Noore Aalam Amirpat Jaskaran Singh S/o Rajwint Singh R/o Village Faizullapur, Fatehgarh Sahib (Punjab), have changed my name to Jaskaran Singh.

I, Piara Singh Kaka Randhawa S/o Kartar Singh R/o Village Soidalw (Jalandhar) now at VPO Isru (Ludhiana) have changed my name to Piara Singh Randhawa.

I, Baljinder Singh Siva S/o Dalip Singh R/o Village Balluana Distt. Bathinda have changed my name to Baljinder Singh.

I, Kulwinder Kaur Siva W/o Baljinder Singh R/o Village Balluana Distt. Bathinda have changed my name to Kulwinder Kaur.

I, Ritika Kumar W/O Sandeep Kumar Village Barota Tehsil Mukerian Distt. Hoshiarpur Have Change My Name From Ritika To Ritika Kumar.

I, Rooppalwinder Kaur W/O Amanpreet Singh R/O Village Mannan Tehsil & District Tarn Taran Have Changed My Name From Rooppalwinder Kaur To Roop Palwinder Kaur.

I, Mandeep Singh Sandhu son of Kabal Singh Resident of Village Sabuana Dakhli Langiana Tehsil and District Ferozepur have changed my name to Mandeep Singh.

I, Army No. 14658550F, NK, Jitendra Singh Yadav, of Unit 607 Eme Bn Resident of Village Hinauta Post Laxmangarh District Chandauli State UP Pin 232107 have changed my minor Daughter name from Tamanna Yadav to Tamanna Yadav Vide Affidavit Dated 13 November 2024 before at Notary Ferozepur.

I, Harish Chander Arora, son of Late Natthu Ram, R/O House No. 249B New Prem Nagar, Near Hanuman Mandir, Karnal, declare that I have changed my name from Harish Chand Arora to Harish Chander Arora.

I, Charanpreet S/o Ronki Ram R/o Vill. Rohar Jagir Tehsil Dudhan Sadhan District Patiala have changed my name to Charanpreet Singh.

I, Hari Ram S/o Sukhdev Singh R/o Village Seona, PO: Sidhuwal, Tehsil & Distt. Patiala (Pb.) have changed my name to Hari Singh.

I, Shamma Mahajan Alias Shama W/o Rakesh Mahajan R/O 17/644, Shah Colony, Sali Road, Pathankot, PO- Pathankot, Dist- Pathankot, Punjab -145001, have changed my name to Shama Mahajan.

I, Rakesh Kumar S/o Sardari Lal R/o 17/644, Shah Colony, Sali Road, Pathankot, PO- Pathankot, Dist- Pathankot, Punjab - 145001, have changed my name to Rakesh Mahajan.

I, Kukuma Samal legally Mother of Prasanna Kumar Samal presently residing at VPO -Gholapur, Distt - Cuttack, State - Orissa 754029 have changed my name from Kukuma Samal to Kukum Samal vide Affidavit dated 12 Nov 2024 before Executive Magistrate Jalandhar, (PB).

I, Jitto Kaur legally Mother of Jagjeet Singh presently residing at Baho Yatri, Distt - Bathinda, State - Punjab, PIN - 151001 have changed my name from Jitto Kaur to Jeeto vide Affidavit dated 12 Nov 2024 before Executive Magistrate Jalandhar, (PB).

I, Nohria Singh legally Father of Baldev Singh presently residing at Pandori, Distt - Barnala, State - Punjab, PIN - 148104 have changed my name from Nohria Singh to Noharia Singh vide Affidavit dated 12 Nov 2024 before Executive Magistrate Jalandhar, (PB).

I, Praveen Kaur legally wedded spouse of Sukhdev Singh presently residing at House No. 113, Pir Sohana, SAS Nagar (Mohali), Punjab - 140301 have changed my name from Praveen Kaur to Parveen Kaur vide Affidavit dated 12 Nov 2024 before Executive Magistrate Jalandhar, (PB).

I, Imtinoklu legally Father of Chubanungsang Tzutir presently residing at Vill - Moayimti, PO - Mangkolemba, Tehsil - Mangkolemba, Distt - Mokochung, State - Nagaland have changed my name from Imtinoklu to Imtinoklu AO vide Affidavit dated 12 Nov 2024 before Executive Magistrate Jalandhar, (PB).

I, Kanwaljit Singh legally Father of Gurwinder Singh presently residing at Badawal Kalan Distt - Gurdaspur, State - Punjab, PIN - 143602 have changed my name from Kanwaljit Singh to Kawaljeet Singh vide Affidavit dated 12 Nov 2024 before Executive Magistrate Jalandhar, (PB).

I, Simranjit Kaur legally Mother of Gurwinder Singh presently residing at Badawal Kalan Distt - Gurdaspur, State - Punjab, PIN - 143602 have changed my name from Simranjit Kaur to Simarjit Kaur vide Affidavit dated 12 Nov 2024 before Executive Magistrate Jalandhar, (PB).

I, Ramvati Patel Mother of No.14654849W NK Narendra Kumar Patel resident of Village- Piparwar, Post- Mahmoodpur, Tehsil- Mangwana, District- Rewari, State- Madhya Pradesh, Pin486111, have changed my name from Ramvati Patel to Ramvati Vide affidavit No.IN-PB78917103862086W dated 12 Nov 2024 before notary public Pathankot

I, Ramvati Patel Mother of No.14654849W NK Narendra Kumar Patel resident of Village- Piparwar, Post- Mahmoodpur, Tehsil- Mangwana, District- Rewari, State- Madhya Pradesh, Pin486111, have changed my name from Ramvati Patel to Ramvati Vide affidavit No.IN-PB78916369087771W dated 12 Nov 2024 before notary public Pathankot

I, Yogita Ravinder Salve spouse of No.15496457W DFR Gharate Dinesh Dadaji resident of Village- Samode, Post- Samode, Tehsil- Sakri, District- Dhule, State- Maharashtra, Pin-424306, have changed my name & DOB from Yogita Ravinder Salve to Yogita Dinesh Gharate and date of birth from 23 Oct 1990 to 02 Feb 1989 Vide affidavit No.IN-PB58957838767435W dated 12 Nov 2024 before notary public Pathankot

I, Maya spouse of No.778496Y NB/Sub Mahender resident of Mumtajpur, Post- Nahar, Tehsil- Kosli, District- Rewari, State- Haryana, Pin-123303, have changed my DOB from 25 Feb 1984 to 27 May 1983 Vide affidavit No.IN-PB73521835928236W dated 24 Oct 2024 before notary public Pathankot

I, Ram Shakti Devi Is Mother Of Akhilesh Kumar Presently Resident Of Bhaulpur, Hathin, Kannauj, Uttar Pradesh Pin- 209721. Have Changed My Name From Ram Shakti Devi To Ramsakhi Devi. Vide Affidavit No. In-Pb79040725867795w Dated 12-11-2024 Before Notary District Court Gurdaspur Punjab.

I, No.17000363H HMT Pawan Yadav resident of Village- Salamapura, Post- Mau, Tehsil- Gohad, District- Bhind, State- Madhya Pradesh, Pin-477222, have changed my Daughter name from Pranshi to Pranshi Yadav Vide affidavit No.IN-PB77405940100435W dated 07 Nov 2024 before notary public Pathankot

I, Sangeeta spouse of No.4201361N Hav Satendra Singh resident of House No. C/s 40 Shivaji Nagar, Pali Marwar, State- Rajasthan, Pin-306401, have changed my name from Sangeeta to Sangeeta Kushwah Vide affidavit No.IN-PB79001580303149W dated 12 Nov 2024 before notary public Pathankot

I, Chhakoidi Prasad Father of No.14654849W NK Narendra Kumar Patel resident of Village- Piparwar, Post- Mahmoodpur, Tehsil- Mangwana, District- Rewari, State- Madhya Pradesh, Pin486111, have changed my name from Chhakoidi Prasad to Chhakaudi Patel Vide affidavit No.IN-PB78917103862086W dated 12 Nov 2024 before notary public Pathankot

I, Raj Kumar resident of Village- Behal, Post- Behal, Tehsil- Shri Naina Devi Ji, District- Bilaspur, State- Himachal Pradesh, Pin-174015, have changed my Mother name from Beero Dei to Veer Dei Vide affidavit No.IN-PB79002305263793W dated 12 Nov 2024 before notary public Pathankot

I, Rekha Prakash Chavare spouse of No.14866354A Sep Surse Santosh Shamrav resident of Village- Bhokardan, Post- Bhokardan, Tehsil- Bhokardan, District- Jalna, State- Maharashtra, Pin-431114, have changed my name from Rekha Prakash Chavare to Rekha Santosh Surve Vide affidavit No.IN-PB78915407518886W dated 12 Nov 2024 before notary public Pathankot

I, Balwinder Singh S/O Gurdayal Singh R/O No. 280 Durga Nagar Hissar Road Ambala City declare that I have changed my son's name from Shaurya Sandhu to Shauryaveer Singh and in future he will be called as Shauryaveer Singh Concerned note

I, Army No. 04572919A Rank Nayak Kulljinder S/O Chandgi Ram R/O Raj Nagar Kaithal Road Jind Teh. and Distt. Jind (Hr), declare that My Son name is wrongly mention in my army service record as Anish but My Son correct name is Anish Singh.

PUBLIC NOTICE Under the instruction of Axis bank Limited, I hereby informed the general public that to Ashish Kumar s/o Tirath Singh and Jatinder Kaur w/o Ashish Kumar are absolute owners of Property No 28 min total measuring 100 sq Yds Khasra No. 178/1 min bounded as East-Plot no 28 West-Remaining portion plot no 28 min North-Road South-Ownership of Others Situated at Rakhsikargah Abadi Rishi Vihar (Moon Avenue) Tehsil and Distt. Amritsar.

AND Property no 28 min total measuring 89.16 Sq Yds Khasra No. 178/1 min bounded as East-Plot no 28 West-Remaining portion plot no 28 min North-Road South-Ownership of Others Situated at Rakhsikargah Abadi Rishi Vihar (Moon Avenue) Tehsil and Distt. Amritsar.

AND Property no 28 min total measuring 200 Sq Yds Khasra No. 178/1 min bounded as East-Ownership of Others Situated at Rakhsikargah Abadi Rishi Vihar (Moon Avenue) Tehsil and Distt. Amritsar.

In the Jamabandi for the year 2007/08 Sanjeev s/o Mool Chand is shown as owner for 3 marlas of property which he sold to Rajeev Kumar Seth s/o Shiv Kumar Seth vide sale deed regd dt 16.2.2011 as doc no 15258 of which mutation no 25084 has been sanctioned by the revenue authorities.

In the Jamabandi for the year 2007/08, 2012/13, 2017/18 Jatinder Singh etc are shown as owners for 6.5 marlas of property. Then Jatinder Singh etc sold 200 sq Yds to Shiv Kumar Seth s/o Sham Dass Seth vide sale deed regd dt 12.11.97 as doc no 6423 of which mutation no 36145 has been sanctioned by the revenue authorities.

In the Jamabandi for the year 2007/08, 2012/13, 2017/18 Jatinder Singh etc are shown as owners for 6.5 marlas of property. Then Jatinder Singh etc sold 200 sq Yds to Shiv Kumar Seth s/o Sham Dass Seth vide sale deed regd dt 12.11.97 as doc no 6423 of which mutation no 36145 has been sanctioned by the revenue authorities.

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Table with 5 columns: S No, Name of the Candidate, Name of Constituency, Pending Criminal Cases, Details about cases of conviction for criminal offences. Includes candidate S. Manpreet Badal.

Table with 5 columns: S No, Name of Court/Police Station, Case No. & status of the case(s), Sections of Acts concerned & brief description of offence(s), Details about cases of conviction for criminal offences. Includes candidate S. Manpreet Badal.

Canara Bank Regional Office: Panipat-132103 POSSESSION NOTICE [SECTION 13(4)] (For Immovable property)

Table with 5 columns: Branch Name/Name of Borrower/ Guarantor, Description of Immovable property, Date of demand notice, Date of possession, Amount O/s

ANMOL INDIA LIMITED

Financial results table for ANMOL INDIA LIMITED, Half Year Ended 30th September, 2024. Includes Total Income, Net Profit, and Earnings Per Share.

Financial results table for Molind Engineering Limited, Quarter and Half Year ended 30th September, 2024. Includes Total Income, Net Profit, and Earnings Per Share.

Government of Himachal Pradesh Jal Shakti Vibhag Notice Inviting tender for improvement of D/S of LWSS Khundian in Tehsil Khundian Distt. Kangra (HP)

PUBLIC NOTICE I, Rohit Sharma S/o Om Parkash Sharma R/o 161, Head water works Road, Golden Avenue, Amritsar

नगर निगम रोहताक सार्वजनिक सूचना सर्व साधारण को सूचित किया जाता है कि नगर निगम, रोहताक

Lost & Found I, Nidhi W/o Kapil Kumar Gupta R/o House No. 02 Ward No. 1, Hospital Area, Karnal

The Panipat Urban Co-operative Bank Ltd. (MULTI STATE BANK) Head Off. : Om City Centre, 932-935, Opp. I.B. College, G.T. Road, Panipat

PUNJAB NATIONAL BANK QUEEN'S ROAD (341100), AMRITSAR NOTICE FOR ARREARS OF RENT OF LOCKERS IN BRANCH

SMFG Grihashakti Formerly Fullerton India Home Finance Company Ltd. SALE NOTICE FOR SALE OF IMMOVABLE PROPERTIES

ICICI Bank SYMBOLIC POSSESSION NOTICE The Authorised ICICI Bank Officer under the Securitisation, Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002

सार्वजनिक सूचना सर्व साधारण को सूचित किया जाता है कि डॉ. रामनारायण सोनी आर्थो हस्पताल, कैमरी रोड, हिसार को पिछले 2011 से 2018 तक का रिकार्ड नष्ट किया जा रहा है

LOCKER NOTICE Some locker holders as per list mentioned below did not obey the terms and conditions of locker agreement

LOCKER NOTICE Some locker holders as per list mentioned below did not obey the terms and conditions of locker agreement

Mr. Vijay Kumar, EC. No. 173535, Office Assistant attached at Sector 37-D, Chandigarh Branch, Bank of Baroda, Chandigarh Region

pnb punjab national bank LOCKER NOTICE Some locker holders as per list mentioned below did not obey the terms and conditions of locker agreement

pnb punjab national bank LOCKER NOTICE Some locker holders as per list mentioned below did not obey the terms and conditions of locker agreement

FORM B [Under rule 7(1) of the Insolvency and Bankruptcy (Application to the Adjudicating Authority for Insolvency Resolution Process of Personal Guarantors to Corporate Debtors) Rules, 2019]



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PAPER WITH PASSION

Deliver tangible results

With 2024 set to be the hottest year on record, the stakes for COP29 are higher than ever

The 29th annual UN climate summit, COP29, has officially begun in Baku, Azerbaijan. This year's conference brings together diplomats, climate experts, activists, and political leaders from nearly 200 countries to address critical issues in the fight against climate change. However, the event is already facing challenges, both from the host country's fossil-fuel-centered economy and the re-election of Donald Trump as US President, which could impact future climate commitments from one of the world's largest emitters. COP29 is being held in Azerbaijan's capital, Baku, a decision that has sparked criticism from environmentalists worldwide, with activists like Greta Thunberg referring to the summit as a "greenwash conference." This year's COP has been dubbed the "Finance CoP" due to its focus on securing adequate funding for climate action. Low-and middle-income countries are advocating for significant financial support to help them reduce greenhouse gas emissions and transition to renewable energy. The UN estimates that developing countries, excluding China, need more than \$2 trillion annually by 2030 to make meaningful progress.



The current debate centers on who will finance these initiatives. In 2009, wealthier nations pledged \$100 billion annually in climate financing for developing countries, a goal they only reached two years behind schedule. Now, many of these recipient countries are calling for a new target of at least \$1 trillion per year to effectively address climate challenges. Countries such as China and the UAE, which are still classified as "developing" but are major emitters and fossil-fuel producers, face pressure to contribute more substantially to the climate finance fund. Another core issue at COP29 is the review of Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), the plans each country submits outlining their goals to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. With the next round of NDC updates due in early 2025, this summit is a crucial opportunity to solidify targets that align with the Paris Agreement's goal of limiting global temperature rise to 2 degrees Celsius by 2100. The hope is that countries will commit to more ambitious emission reductions and be transparent about their paths toward net-zero emissions. COP28, held in Dubai in 2023, marked the first time a COP agreement openly called on countries to transition away from fossil fuels. However, progress has been inconsistent. The International Energy Agency's (IEA) tracking tool, established in April 2024, shows mixed results, with many countries struggling to meet their renewable energy targets. COP29 in Azerbaijan faces substantial challenges, from balancing climate goals with fossil fuel interests to addressing the financial needs of developing nations. If COP29 is to be a success, it must result in tangible commitments to climate finance, renewable energy, and unity among nations. This will be essential to ensuring that COP29 is remembered as a turning point in the global response to climate change—not as a missed opportunity.

Students pass by a wall painting depicting a scene from 'Krishna Leela', in Prayagraj

PICTALK



Students pass by a wall painting depicting a scene from 'Krishna Leela', in Prayagraj

Domestic tensions add to Oli's predicament



ASHOK K MEHTA

Amid a mounting internal criticism, Nepal's Prime Minister KP Oli faces daunting challenges, from managing a coalition to dealing with China

My Diwali and Tihar vacation in Nepal is continuing. Here is a flash report from Pokhara. After a turbulent 18-month rule, in which former Prime Minister Prachanda had to seek a vote of confidence five times, the two leading parties Nepali Congress and Unified Marxist Leninist unholy alliance ended CPN(Maoist) kingmaker Prachanda's rule of just 32 seats in a 205-member house. PM KP Oli-led coalition is short of a two thirds majority. They share 4 to 3 in NC's favour in ruling the seven provinces. The promise of Ram-Rajya is unlikely to materialise. Two things stand out: an uneasy stability in government; and Oli's apparent unpopularity. Oli's only claim in his first 100 days is a positive stock market. And breaking the tradition of a Nepalese PM's first overseas visit to India by going first to China from 2 to 6 December, which high profile foreign minister Arzu Rana is organising. India not inviting Oli to become PM is a deliberate omission which was served to late PM Sushil Koirala also a decade ago.

Oli's standing as a leader has diminished because he is a junior partner to NC which is seen favoured by India, and due to his apparent loss of control and power over UML. A front-page report in Kathmandu Post (5 November) illustrates this. But alleged corruption cases against him and his supporters including the super department store chain Bhat Bhateni owner Min Bahadur Gurung have dimmed his reputation. On occasions, he was greeted with the chant "Oli chor, desh chhod". Still, Oli retorted: "wait and watch my party perform during 2027 elections". He is hoping to resuscitate his image from his visit to China. His stock with India is low. While Rana was given a red carpet welcome in India - meeting PM Modi, NSA Ajit Doval and Secretary to Prime Minister PK Misra - Oli's meeting with Modi on the sidelines of UNGA was low-key. The China visit will have the Oli hallmark. He will meet President Xi Jinping, his counterpart Li



Qiang and Foreign Minister Wang Yi. He will try to convert the USD 250m loan from the Exim Bank of China for the China-constructed Pokhara International Airport - a white elephant like Hambantota in Sri Lanka - to grant though China has insisted it is part of the BRI loan. Oli is expected to sign the BRI implementation plan which China has been pressing but so far, Nepal has resisted as Kathmandu wants BRI to come under a grant scheme and not a high-interest loan. The BRI deal has been pending since 2020. Oli during his 2018 China visit had outlined 35 projects which were trimmed to nine projects under BRI. If Oli can persuade China of his 'grant scheme for BRI' or place some of the nine projects under it, he will have made a big breakthrough. Strangely few protest about Chinese intrusions in the north. The Jeevan Bahadur Shahi report which had recently mapped Chinese encroachments, missing border pillars and illegal construction, has been quashed. Nepali leaders willingly oblige Beijing over the One China policy that has ensured the 'Great Wall of China' on the border to prevent Tibetan infiltration and migration to Dharamsala. Only one or two Tibetans slipped through this year. China wants Nepal to sign and ratify 'the Border



OLI'S ONLY CLAIM IN HIS FIRST 100 DAYS IS A POSITIVE STOCK MARKET. AND BREAKING THE TRADITION OF A NEPALESE PM'S FIRST OVERSEAS VISIT TO INDIA BY GOING FIRST TO CHINA FROM 2 TO 6 DECEMBER, WHICH HIGH PROFILE FOREIGN MINISTER ARZU RANA IS ORGANISING

Management System' which Kathmandu has not done so far. But Beijing hopes Oli will. China-Nepal relations were upgraded to Strategic Partnership during Xi's historic 2019 visit. The Xi visit was unique because none of the agreements signed had been implemented. A power trade agreement may be facilitated now after the completion of the 220 KVA transmission line from Rasuwagarhi to Kirung to sell power from Chinese hydro projects. It is in the energy sector that Nepal will eventually prosper. Bangladesh, Nepal and India signed a tripartite agreement for the 40MW sale of Nepal electricity to Bangladesh in the rainy season. India holds the key to the development of Nepal's power sector. Nepal is complaining about the Bureau of Indian Standards withholding certification of exports, especially with Chinese components which will hit Kathmandu, not Beijing. The opposition is in disarray with former Home Minister, once a rising star, Rabi Lamichhane, back in jail for the Pokhara Cooperative fraud. His party and his image have taken a beating though independents like Kathmandu Mayor, Balen Shah and Dharan Mayor, Harka Sampang, are progressing relentlessly to clean politics. While King Gyanendra's pop-

ularity may appear to be rising, a return to constitutional monarchy is unlikely despite his recent visit to Bhutan which triggered unusual speculation. It is India that is making quiet gains, the embassy keeping a low profile, letting PMO Delhi run the show. Lingering negativity about Indian interference has all but vanished. On Agniveer, the feeling among Indian Gorkha ex-servicemen is that Nepal should lift the embargo on it. "Something (even four years service) is better than nothing". Foreign Minister S Jaishankar's remarks in July on Agniveer (relating to Nepal) were clear. "India's foreign policy is determined by its national interest. Not by any other country". The message reportedly conveyed to Arzu Rana in Delhi was: "no change in terms of engagement on Agniveer" even as a review is ongoing. COAS Gen Dwivedi is arriving here on November 21 for a ceremonial appointment as Honorary Chief of Nepal Army which has lost its lustre because not a single Nepali has been recruited in the Indian Army for five years. (The writer, a retired Major General, was Commander, IPKF South, Sri Lanka, and founder member of the Defence Planning Staff, currently the Integrated Defence Staff; the views expressed are personal)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

CHADRACHUD'S IMPACTFUL TENURE

Madam — Apropos your editorial, "A rich legacy," published on November 11. Justice DY Chandrachud's tenure as the CJI of India, which concluded on last Sunday, was marked by transformative rulings and substantial reforms, carving out a unique legacy in the Indian judicial history. The list of judgements penned by him is long and covers almost all aspects of law. They blend scholarship and jurisprudence and are likely to inform both future decisions and how the law is studied. Striking down the Electoral Bonds Scheme and upholding the abrogation of Article 370 are among his influential verdicts that stand pillars of his legacy. His decisions resonate not only within the corridors of the Supreme Court but also in the lives of countless Indians whose rights and freedoms he defended. Through humour, resilience, and an unwavering dedication to constitutional ideals, Chandrachud exemplified judicial leadership. As India's judicial landscape evolves, his tenure will be remembered as a testament to the power of law to uphold equality, integrity, and the spirit of democracy. Ranganathan Sivakumar | Chennai

PRIORITISE MENTAL WELLBEING

Madam—Apropos to "Creating a workplace culture that truly supports mental health," published on November 11. It is good that they chose to focus on mental health in the workplace on Mental Health Day on October 10. Because the way few professionals in both the private and government sectors have taken their lives due to undue work pressure in the last few months is alarming, to say the least. Now a days, whoever is entering the corporate world is expected to be mentally strong to cope with the rising pressure and huge mismatch in work-life balance, but how would we justify the death of a young girl who has done well academically to clear CA and get into one of the top 4 consulting firms in the country and was forced to take her life in Pune? We in India have a very abysmal psychiatrist-patient

A boost to women entrepreneurs



The Finance Minister launched five Nari Shakti branches of Union Bank of India for women entrepreneurs in a step to boost women's power. Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman virtually inaugurated five Nari Shakti branches of Union Bank of India

from Bengaluru. She urged the bank to develop technology-driven, cluster-based schemes specifically tailored to support women, aiming to empower female entrepreneurs and strengthen financial inclusion for women across the country. Furthermore, she encouraged women entrepreneurs to make use of these schemes and contribute to job creation. The Nari Shakti operates with a focus on extending credit to women entrepreneurs. In addition to financing women-owned manufacturing and service units, the bank will also focus on advisory services, workshops on start-ups, skill development programs, mentorship, networking, and collaborations. Union Bank of India has opened Nari Shakti branches in Bengaluru, Chennai, Visakhapatnam and Jaipur. It is a right step in the right direction. Akhilesh Krishnan | Mumbai

ratio. We have 0.75 psychiatrists per 100,000 mental patients against the prescribed 3 psychiatrists. Though things are changing a bit and people are approaching mental health professionals after many celebrities have opened up about this, we still need to cover a long distance in terms of enhancing mental health infrastructure and speak openly about this. Go! would need to go all out to open thousands of mental health education institutes and hospitals to bridge this huge gap and encourage young students to take up this profession. We will have to teach our children about the importance of mental and emotional health and need to bring a drastic change in our society when it comes to talking about mental health issues. There should not be any stigma attached to it. Bal Govind | Noida

SMOKING BAN

Madam — The decision of the Karnataka government to ban smoking and tobacco consumption in government offices

and on its premises, though laudable, boils down to its efficacious implementation. Moreover, the state government circular has said precious little about the punishment for flouting rules. Having said that, the move is indeed praiseworthy because it will send a strong message to all stakeholders about the perils of smoking and chewed tobacco. Furthermore, passive smokers can heave a sigh of relief as they stand to suffer as well from smoke. It is also time the Centre revisits COTPA and contemplates better execution of the Act. By "The Cigarette and Other Tobacco Products (Prohibition of Advertisement and Regulation of Trade and Commerce, Production, Supply and Distribution) Act 2003," also referred to as COTPA, smoking and consumption of other tobacco products in public places is prohibited nationwide. This Act also encompasses other requirements like displaying signage and enforcement. Ganapathi Bhat | Akola

Organic farming: Cultivating a climate-conscious future

Organic farming is emerging as a sustainable agricultural solution, offering an eco-friendly alternative to conventional farming practice

With a growing focus on environmental issues, organic farming has emerged as a powerful ally in the fight against climate change. As global temperatures climb and natural ecosystems deteriorate, there is a shared conviction among scientists, environmental activists and farmers about the pressing need to create sustainable methods for food production. Organic agriculture holds significance not just for cultivating food without synthetic pesticides and fertilisers, but also for fostering farming systems that harmonise with nature. Could organic farming be the answer to the climate crisis? The fundamentals of organic farming lies in its significant potential to greatly diminish greenhouse gas emissions. The production of these, in conjunction with chemical pesticides, demands significant amounts of fossil fuels, whereas organic farms prioritise natural fertilisers and composts that enhance soil health over time. Environmental scientists, states, "Soil in organic farms often contains more carbon



because of the organic matter used." Healthier soil retains more moisture and serves as a carbon sink, effectively capturing CO₂ from the atmosphere. Organic farming promotes a rich variety of life forms. The importance of biodiversity cannot be overstated when it comes to creating resilient ecosystems. Traditional monoculture farming strips the soil of essential nutrients, reduces the diversity of habitats, and leaves crops vulnerable to numerous pests and diseases. Organic farming often embraces a variety of crops, fosters the growth of wild plants in and around the farm, and supports pollinators like bees and butterflies. Organic farms can have as much as 30 per cent greater species richness than conventional farms, allowing for a greater diversity of birds, insects, and other wildlife to flourish alongside agricultural activities. This is similarly true regarding the conservation of water. Organic farms utilise techniques such as mulching and crop rotation to effectively conserve water. These methods enhance the soil's composition and increase its ability to retain moisture. This is why the organic farm is more adept at managing droughts, as numerous regions impacted by climate change are grappling with this issue. Through organic farming, we're cultivating more than just crops; we're fostering a sustainable water cycle. While there are several advantages to consider, some contend that relying solely on organic farming may not suffice to nourish the global population, as it tends to produce lower yields compared to traditional practices. Incorporating organic practices, such as crop rotation and minimising reliance on chemicals, into extensive agricultural operations significantly impacts the fight against climate change. Organic farming may not be a perfect solution, yet its environmental advantages are clear: reducing carbon emissions, conserving water, and boosting biodiversity are integral components of a comprehensive strategy in sustainable agriculture. As consumers, we can contribute by opting for organic products whenever we have the chance. Together, we can achieve significant strides towards a more sustainable world. The path to achieving climate resilience is intricate; nonetheless, by embracing organic farming, we can certainly sow the seeds for a greener future. (The writer is a motivator and a freelance writer; views are personal)



RACHNA LAKHPATRI



FIRST COLUMN BLESSINGS OVER BILLIONS

If we want to be happy, then we should earn blessings which is our real wealth



RAJYOGI BRAHMA KUMAR NIKUNJ JI

We all love money ...don't we? It's a fact that money makes the world go round because it can make the impossible possible and the unimaginable real. Hence, it won't be an exaggeration to say that money can do almost everything. (At least those who have it feel so for sure) There is a famous Hindi film song that says "The whole thing is that ki bhayi Sabse Bada Rupaiya". We all have experienced how money can make people change their moods and colours in a jiffy. Haven't we? It can close the eyes, seal the mouth and deafen the ears wherever needed. We have seen in many scenes of movies how witnesses of crime turn a blind eye and a deaf ear and maintain a stony silence even though they know the truth. Similarly in the world of business, money is the prime force behind the movers and shakers of mega deals, mergers and break-ups. Whether it's sports, entertainment or any other business, money can make cut-throat competitors get into cooperative mode in mutual interest. Money can match the mismatched, miss targets and change roles. At present it is observed that money has a considerable clout even in matters of faith. Like, it can gain you easy access to the holy citadels of godmen who may anoint you as their ardent follower. With money, you can also have a quick darshan of your favourite lord at the temple without having to wait in long queues. The list is unending. In short, money can buy anything and everything under the sun that can be bought. Though money creates this illusion that we are living in paradise money cannot



do any of the following for us. Like, money can buy us a beautiful house but not a happy home; it can buy us delicious food and expensive healthcare but not good health; it can provide us with high security but it cannot guarantee even minimum safety; it can buy us countless things for entertainment but not cheer and joy; it can buy us a comfortable bed but not sound sleep; it can buy name and fame but not real respect; it can buy the best contacts and relations but not true and honest love; it can buy crowns and thrones but not real power; it can buy good education but not intelligence and wisdom & lastly it can bail us out from the worst crimes but it cannot help us escape divine justice & buy us liberation from our sins and sufferings.

So, no matter if money does make the world go round, at the end of all the going round, we reach nowhere and get nothing substantial and real and end up being more impoverished than ever. Since ages, our scriptures and sages have spoken about the vices and virtues. Of all the vices like lust, anger, attachment, greed and ego, the most dangerous and subtle is "Greed". It is said that greed is such a kind of hunger that's never satisfied. Our desire for food ends when our hunger is appeased, our anger also subsides when its purpose is achieved, but! Greed is not satisfied even if we get the kingdom of the whole world. Hence, it is this tendency, which is created by wealth, in a person who possesses it, that leads to corruption at all levels. So, does it mean one should not recognise the importance of money? Not really! Instead, we must understand that money or wealth is merely a tool that has to be used wisely and without greed, attachment or selfishness to create happiness for all. Hence, as long as we use it as a master's, it will bring us benefit and happiness. As soon as we become slaves to it, it will bring loss and misery. An enlightened person would always use money for the maximum good of a maximum number of people, whereas for a spiritually empowered soul, money becomes a tool to create good karma and a good destiny for the self and others. So, the story's moral is that money has never made man permanently happy, nor will it. Hence if we want to be happy, then we should earn blessings which is our real wealth and which would go along with birth after birth. Think about it!

(The writer is a spiritual educator and popular columnist; views are personal)

IFFI 2024: A global stage for cinema, culture and talent



CHAITANYA K PRASAD

This year's edition reaffirms IFFI's role as a powerful force in global cinema, connecting storytellers, industry leaders and audiences in a shared appreciation of the cinema



The 55th International Film Festival of India (IFFI) is set to bring a fresh wave of cinematic celebration to the scenic coast of Goa from November 20th to 28th, 2024. This year's festival promises to be more than just a film showcase; it's a convergence of global cultures, a launchpad for emerging voices, and a profound tribute to India's cinematic legacy. IFFI 2024 is a bold step forward, not only in its evolution but as a distinctive international film festival that celebrates both India's vibrant culture and the art of cinema on a global stage. This year, IFFI spotlights Australia as its "Country of Focus," emphasising the festival's commitment to bridging cultures and fostering international understanding. This section invites Indian audiences to dive into the heart of Australian cinema, exploring a curated selection of films that range from gritty dramas to adventurous comedies and reflective documentaries.

Through this focused lens, audiences will experience the unique and evolving cinematic language of Australia, making IFFI a powerful platform for cross-cultural appreciation and dialogue. In doing so, IFFI 2024 goes beyond traditional film screening to create an immersive experience that positions the festival as a bridge between the stories, people, and cultures of the world. IFFI 2024's newest addition, the "Best Debut Director of Indian Feature Film" award, shines a spotlight on the next generation of Indian filmmakers. This award isn't just a recognition; it's a pivotal moment in a young director's career, marking a path for fresh perspectives in Indian cinema.

By dedicating this category to first-time directors, IFFI signals its commitment to nurturing innovative voices and helping them gain visibility in an increasingly competitive industry. While many international film festivals focus on established talents, IFFI's recognition of debut filmmakers reflects its dedication to fostering growth and embracing the future of Indian cinema. This year's festival also pays homage to four towering icons of Indian cinema: Raj Kapoor,



WITH OVER 200 FILMS FEATURED IN ITS VIEWING ROOM, FILM BAZAAR IS WHERE STORIES FIND INVESTORS, FILMS CONNECT WITH DISTRIBUTORS, AND COLLABORATIONS ARE BORN

Tapan Sinha, Akkineni Nageswara Rao (ANR), and Mohammed Rafi. These legends shaped India's cinematic legacy and captured the hearts of audiences across generations. By featuring restored classics and specially curated presentations, IFFI brings their artistry to life for a new generation and provides international attendees with a meaningful glimpse into India's rich cinematic history. This tribute serves as a reminder of the depth of Indian cinema, its transformative impact on culture, and the enduring relevance of these trailblazers. IFFI's Film Bazaar, now in its 18th year, stands out as a dynamic marketplace that brings together filmmakers, financiers, distributors, and international industry leaders.

With over 200 films featured in its Viewing Room, Film Bazaar is where stories find investors, films connect with distributors and collaborations are born. This dedicated platform sets IFFI apart from other festivals focused solely on screenings by creating opportunities for projects to grow and flourish beyond the festival circuit. For both Indian and international filmmakers, Film Bazaar represents a gateway to global audiences and a rare chance to network and secure support for future projects. The Indian Panorama section of IFFI has become a hallmark of the festival, offering audiences a diverse selection of contemporary Indian cinema. With 25 feature films and 20 non-feature films selected for their cinematic excellence, thematic resonance and aesthetic creativity, Indian Panorama showcases the vibrancy and diversity of Indian storytelling.

For international attendees, it provides an authentic insight into India's socio-cultural landscape, spotlighting everything from regional narratives to avant-garde experiments. This section rein-

forces IFFI's mission to present Indian cinema in all its depth and diversity, making it an invaluable part of the global film conversation. One of IFFI 2024's standout initiatives is "Creative Minds of Tomorrow" (CMOT), a program me by the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting and the National Film Development Corporation (NFDC) dedicated to nurturing young filmmakers. CMOT provides a platform for emerging voices to showcase short films, documentaries and animations, facilitating connections with seasoned industry professionals. Through CMOT, IFFI is not only showcasing young talent but also empowering the next generation of Indian filmmakers with the resources and connections to succeed.

This initiative solidifies IFFI's role as a festival that goes beyond celebration to become a nurturing ground for creativity and growth. In line with the essence of Bharat Parv, which captured the world's attention at Cannes 2024, IFFI brings forth a celebration of India's diverse cultural heritage. Bharat Parv, a campaign highlighting India's rich traditions and unity in diversity, finds its cinematic expression at IFFI, where films, events, and programming reflect India's multifaceted identity. This celebration of Indian culture provides international visitors with an immersive experience and a deeper understanding of India's story, offering a window into its heritage through the powerful lens of cinema.

IFFI 2024 arrives at a transformative moment for Indian cinema, serving as a platform to elevate Indian filmmakers onto the world stage. The festival's emphasis on emerging talent, global collaboration, and cultural exchange aligns with India's aspirations to be a global leader in the arts. IFFI's unique combination of industry

initiatives, recognition of fresh voices and celebration of cinematic heritage enables it to play a pivotal role in the growth of Indian cinema and its reception on the global stage. This year's edition promises to leave an indelible impact on the industry, redefining IFFI as a festival that doesn't just reflect India's cinematic culture but actively shapes its future. For international filmmakers, IFFI 2024 offers an unparalleled opportunity to connect with India's vibrant cinematic landscape.

By providing exposure to a diverse Indian audience, access to Film Bazaar's resources and engagement with sections like the Australian showcase, IFFI offers international filmmakers insights into India's tastes, trends, and opportunities. IFFI's homage to iconic Indian artists also provides a rich cultural context that enables international guests to appreciate the legacy and contributions of Indian cinema. Through these interactions, IFFI creates a unique, collaborative environment that enriches both Indian and global cinema.

The 55th IFFI is a festival that seamlessly merges tradition with forward-thinking innovation, paying tribute to the giants of Indian cinema while embracing the voices of tomorrow. From the spirit of Bharat Parv to the debut of a new award for emerging talent, IFFI 2024 embodies the evolving nature of cinema and celebrates the power of storytelling as a tool for connection. As the festival draws international filmmakers, industry leaders, and audiences together, it positions India as a key player in global cinema and reaffirms IFFI as a festival of lasting impact and vision.

(The writer is former additional DG, DFF and festival director, IFFI; Inputs provided by Zoya Ahmad and Vaishnavi Srinivasan; Views expressed are personal)

Staying grounded: Lessons from the 1984 elections and anti-Sikh riots

Both politicians and journalists risk misjudgment when they distance themselves from the realities on the ground

The 1984 election results were a shock to many. Rajiv Gandhi won a record-breaking 414 seats, toppling major political figures. Veteran leaders like Atal Bihari Vajpayee and Chandra Shekhar faced unexpected defeats—Vajpayee in Gwalior and Chandra Shekhar in Ballia. But this story is less about the triumphs or losses and more about a crucial lesson this journalist learned from an open-hearted conversation with Chandra Shekhar. In an interview, this journalist asked the seasoned leader if he had anticipated the wave that swept away even stalwarts like himself. Chandra Shekhar replied candidly: "To be honest, I had become



MANOJ RAGHUVANSHI

disconnected from the grass roots. I didn't realise there was such a wave." This realisation left a lasting impact on the journalist, shaping their perspective going forward.

The same kind of shock had reverberated through the nation during the 1977 elections, but in the opposite direction. Indira Gandhi was

ousted from power, losing her own seat in Rae Bareilly, while her son Sanjay Gandhi lost in Amethi.

The Congress party was routed, failing to win a single seat in Uttar Pradesh or Bihar. Despite her stature and the counsel of her closest advisors, Indira Gandhi had also become detached from grassroots sentiment. This disconnect was something this journalist later witnessed in the field of journalism itself. During the 1984 anti-Sikh riots, this journalist returned from the field after witnessing the violence firsthand.

His editor, Ayub Syed, was discussing the events with a senior journalist, OP Sabherwal, who was analysing the riots from afar.

Sabherwal likened the situation to 1947, predicting that the riots would continue indefinitely.

The journalist respectfully intervened, sharing what he had observed in RK Puram: a Gurdwara under attack, granthis being rescued by the army, looters scattering when a single soldier raised his hand, and a crowd dispersing with just a shout. He explained to his seniors that the violence was being stoked by the Congress government, with rioters emboldened by police assurances of impunity.

The journalist conveyed that the riots were far from uncontrollable and could be stopped whenever the government chose. And he was proven right; the violence



ceased once the government decided it had gone too far. The lasting lesson? Whether a politician or a journalist, detachment from reality clouds judgment. Without a connection to the ground, even the most obvious forces at play can go unseen.

The 1984 election and subsequent events taught a vital lesson about staying connected to the grassroots. Rajiv Gandhi's landslide victory, which swept aside prominent leaders like Atal Bihari Vajpayee and Chandra Shekhar, highlighted how even seasoned politicians could lose touch with public sentiment.

In a candid interview, Chandra Shekhar admitted his own disconnect from the grassroots, mirroring

the misjudgment that cost Indira Gandhi the 1977 election. This theme resonated again during the 1984 anti-Sikh riots, where a journalist's firsthand observations clashed with distant analyses in the newsroom. The violence, stirred by political agendas, was ultimately controllable when authorities chose to act.

The takeaway? For both politicians and journalists, a disconnect from on-the-ground realities can obscure clear judgment, leaving critical forces unrecognised. Staying rooted is essential to understanding and addressing the true dynamics at play in any situation.

(The writer is a senior journalist; views expressed are personal)

Vistara flies final journey as it merges with Air India

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

After operating for nearly 10 years, full service carrier Vistara flew into the sunset on Tuesday early morning operating its last flight from the national capital to Singapore.

Vistara a joint venture between Tata and Singapore Airlines has now merged with Air India, creating an enlarged entity that is now the country's largest international carrier and second-largest domestic carrier.

UK115 flight from Delhi to Singapore was the last flight of Vistara with the code 'UK' while UK986 from Mumbai to Delhi was the carrier's last domestic flight.

Starting a new chapter in India's fast-growing civil aviation space, the merged entity operated its first flight with the code 'AI2286' from



Doha to Mumbai. In the domestic sector, the integrated entity's first flight AI2984 took off from Mumbai to Delhi. All the four flights landed at their respective destinations early in the morning on Tuesday, according to information available on the flight tracking website

Flightradar24.Com. According to an official, the two airlines have been merged, passengers are being issued Air India boarding passes and check-in counters of Vistara at airports have become that of Air India. The code 'AI2XXX' is being used for Vistara flights that are being operated by Air

India post the merger to help passengers identify the Vistara flight at the time of booking. On Monday, an official said the integrated entity will be operating services on 103 domestic and 71 international routes. With the merger, first announced in November 2022, Singapore

Airlines will have a 25.1 per cent stake in the integrated entity, which will operate more than 5,500 weekly flights on local and international routes.

A formal announcement about the merger is expected later in the day, as the group has led the consolidation wave in Indian aviation with two major mergers in less than two months. AIX Connect was integrated with Air India Express on October 1 and now the merger of Vistara with Air India. Air India, Vistara and AIX Connect together had a domestic market share of little over 29 per cent in September, as per latest official data. Together, the Air India group has an operational fleet of 298 aircraft around 208 with Air India and about 90 with Air India Express.

Nirmala Sitharaman to meet state FMs for pre-Budget

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman is likely to meet her state counterparts on December 21-22 for pre-budget consultations and meeting of the GST Council, an official said. The meeting assumes significance as states finance ministers would present their recommendations for 2025-26 Budget to be unveiled on February 1, 2025. The 55th GST Council meeting would be held during one of these two days in which the much awaited decision on exemption or lower GST rate on health and life insurance would be taken. The Council may also take up some rationalisation exercise and reduce tax rates on a host

of common items from 12 per cent to 5 per cent as per the recommendations of a panel of state ministers. The two-day meeting is slated to take place in Rajasthan, either in Jaipur or Jodhpur, the official added. Last month, the group of ministers (GoM) on health and life insurance GST broadly agreed on exempting insurance premiums paid for term life insurance policies, and senior citizens' health insurance from GST. Also, GST on premiums paid by individuals, other than senior citizens, for health insurance with coverage of up to Rs 5 lakh is proposed to be exempted. However, 18 per cent GST will continue on premiums paid for policies with health insurance cover of over Rs 5 lakh.

The GST Council in its 54th meeting on September 9 had tasked the GoM to finalise the report on GST levy on insurance by October-end. Separately, the GoM on GST rate rationalisation has also suggested that the GST Council re-jig tax rates on a host of goods, including packaged drinking water, bicycles, exercise notebooks, luxury wrist watches, and shoes. This rate re-jig is expected to result in revenue gain of about Rs 22,000 crore. The GoM on rate rationalisation proposed reducing GST on packaged drinking water of 20 litre and above to 5 per cent from 18 per cent. If the GoM's recommendation is accepted by the GST Council, GST on bicycles costing less than Rs 10,000 will be reduced to 5 per cent from 12 per cent.



Majority of Indian businesses invest in AI but only 39 per cent ready to fight ransomware attacks: Report

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Spotlighting a critical vulnerability in the country's cybersecurity landscape, a recent report has said while Indian businesses are actively looking to capitalise on AI and investments are rising, only 39 per cent of them are prepared to survive a prolonged ransomware attack.

Cybersecurity firm Sophos on Tuesday unveiled the "Cybersecurity Playbook for Partners in Asia Pacific and Japan", which stressed the urgent need for enhanced security measures as organisations increasingly face sophisticated cyber threats, especially those augmented by artificial intelligence (AI).

The findings revealed that while 70 per cent of Indian organisations have implemented cloud security strategies and over half of the respondents surveyed are investing in AI-driven security measures, a significant gap remains in overall preparedness.

"Only 49 per cent have established security maturity frameworks and 44 per cent report meeting security standards. Additionally, just 39 per cent feel prepared to withstand a prolonged ransomware attack, underscoring the ongoing need for robust cybersecurity advancements," the report said.

While Indian businesses are embracing AI to enhance operations, they also recognise its dual nature both

as an asset and as a potential security risk, it added.

The research, conducted in July 2024, surveyed 900 companies across India, Australia, Japan, Malaysia, the Philippines, and Singapore, of which 200 were from India.

Commenting on the dual nature of AI in cybersecurity, Sunil Sharma, Vice President of Sales for Sophos in India, said enterprises are taking AI seriously, both as a powerful ally and a potential threat.

"The fact that organisations are significantly boosting their cybersecurity budgets is a great sign that the country is committed to protecting its digital infrastructure. The growing investment in key areas such as threat detection, incident recovery, and data protection not only reflects the proactive stance of Indian businesses but also highlights their readiness to tackle the complex challenges posed by AI-driven cyber risks," he said.

Further, the survey revealed that only 5 per cent of Indian firms depend on a single security vendor, while 71 per cent utilise three or more to handle their cybersecurity demands. Multi-vendor setups are anticipated to increase as businesses look for specialised, adaptable solutions.

The increasing investments in cybersecurity and the preference towards multiple expert vendors present a significant opportunity for MSPs to help enterprises improve their customers' defences with a customised approach, Sharma said.

IndiGo seeks extension of Boeing 777 lease amid rising international demand

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman is working with the civil aviation ministry to explore the possibility of extending the wet lease of wide-body Boeing 777 planes from Turkish Airlines, as the existing lease period is ending this week.

Currently, IndiGo is operating two wet-leased Boeing 777 planes for flights from Delhi and Mumbai to Istanbul. These are also the only two wide-body aircraft that are in the fleet of the airline, which is India's largest carrier with a domestic market share of over 62 per cent.

These aircraft were wet-leased to cater to the rising demand for international travel from

India. IndiGo started operating its first wide-body Boeing 777 aircraft on the Delhi-Istanbul route from February 1, 2023, and began operating the Boeing 777 plane on the Mumbai-Istanbul route from May 17, 2023. Sources in the know said the airline has not received an extension for continuing with the wet lease of the aircraft. When contacted, an IndiGo spokesperson on Monday told PTI that the airline is "working with the ministry to explore solutions to extend the wet lease as our AOG (Aircraft On Ground) related capacity constraints, while improving, are not entirely behind us". The two Boeing 777 planes will be operated by IndiGo till



November 14 for the flights from Delhi and Mumbai to Istanbul.

From November 15, the airline will be deploying A321 aircraft for operating these flights, according to information available on

flight tracking website Flightradar24.Com. Wet lease of an aircraft by an Indian carrier involves the leasing of foreign aircraft, along with crew, maintenance and insurance. The plane is also under the

operational control of the foreign operator (lessor) and subject to regulatory requirements of the foreign civil aviation authority concerned. The safety oversight of such operations is also under the purview of the foreign authority concerned, and the role of Indian carriers is limited to commercial aspects of operations. While announcing the induction of the second Boeing 777 plane into its fleet in May 2023, IndiGo CEO Pieter Elbers said the new aircraft will not only increase capacity on the route but also help keep the fares affordable. The Boeing 777 aircraft has a seating capacity of 400 passengers in a dual-class configuration with 24

business and 376 economy class seats, the airline said. In the wake of Pratt & Whitney engine issues, the airline has grounded many aircraft, impacting its capacity. Last month, IndiGo, which also became India's first airline to have more than 400 aircraft, said the number of grounded aircraft has reduced to the high 60s from the mid-70s and will further come down to the sub-60 level by the year-end. At the end of September, the carrier had a fleet of 410 planes. As part of expanding its international network to long-haul destinations, IndiGo, in May this year, placed a firm order for 30 Airbus A350-900 aircraft.

NSE inks pact with Zomato to empower delivery partners with financial literacy

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The National Stock Exchange of India (NSE) on Tuesday said it has inked a pact with online food delivery platform Zomato to promote financial literacy and investor awareness programmes among the gig economy workers.

This partnership aims to launch an extensive financial literacy and investor awareness drive, specifically designed for Zomato's delivery partners, impacting the lives of over 50,000 gig workers across the country, NSE said in a statement. As a part of the pact, fundamental aspects of personal finance management and the basics of investing will be covered. Topics will include budgeting, saving, investing, debt management, and insurance, among others. To ensure accessibility and inclusivity, the programme will be conducted in multiple regional languages, catering to a diverse audience among the gig workforce. "This partnership with Zomato is a significant step in expanding our outreach to a



critical segment of the workforce that drives the digital economy. By equipping delivery partners with financial skills, we aim to contribute to their financial independence and overall financial well-being," Sriram Krishnan, Chief Business Development Officer, NSE, said. Rakesh Ranjan, CEO, Food Delivery, Zomato, said, this programme has been curated to suit delivery partners' needs to equip them with the right knowledge and skill-set to become financially independent. "Over 2,000 delivery partners have already taken a step toward financial literacy, and we're looking forward to scaling this further in the next few months."

Rupee closes all-time low against US dollar

PTI ■ MUMBAI

The rupee fell 1 paise to a new lifetime low of 84.39 (provisional) against the US dollar on Tuesday as persistent foreign fund outflows and a strengthening greenback against major crosses overseas dented investor sentiments. Forex traders said the rupee is likely to trade between 83.80 and 84.50 in the medium term, with the Reserve Bank of India likely limiting any significant downside, aided by its robust foreign exchange reserves.

At the interbank foreign exchange, the rupee opened at 84.39 against the US dollar. During the session, the local currency touched a high of 84.39 and a low of 84.41. It finally settled at 84.40 (provisional), a decline of just 1 paise against the US currency, registering a loss for the fifth straight session. On Monday, the rupee dropped 1 paise to hit a new lifetime low of 84.38 against the US dollar. In the last five sessions, the local unit has lost 32 paise against the greenback. "The rupee traded weaker as foreign funds continued their selling spree in the Indian market. However, the rupee received some relief from



falling crude and gold prices, as the reduced pace of decline could potentially improve India's import bill in the coming months," said Jateen Trivedi, VP Research Analyst - Commodity and Currency, LKP Securities. Despite this, the dollar index's continued strength above 105 is expected to maintain pressure on the rupee, limiting any significant recovery in the near term. "With resistance near the 84.25-84.30 zone and support is seen lower at 84.55. This week's focus will be on the US CPI data release, which could influence the dollar's trajectory. Additionally, US Fed Chairperson Jerome Powell's upcoming speech is expected to provide insights

that may drive price action in the dollar, currently trading at a four-month high of 105.75," Trivedi said. Meanwhile, the dollar index, which gauges the greenback's strength against a basket of six currencies, was trading 0.06 per cent higher at 105.60. Brent crude, the global oil benchmark, rose 0.60 per cent to USD 72.26 per barrel in futures trade. In the domestic equity market, the 30-share BSE Sensex fell 820.97 points, or 1.03 per cent, to close at 78,675.18 points, while Nifty fell 257.85 points, or 1.07 per cent, to settle at 23,883.45 points. Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) were net sellers in the capital markets on Monday, as they offloaded shares worth Rs 2,306.88 crore, according to exchange data. Meanwhile, an SBI research report on Monday said that the rupee may depreciate 8-10 per cent against the US dollar during the Trump 2.0 regime. The report, titled US Presidential Election 2024: How Trump 2.0 Impacts India's and Global Economy, emphasised that the rupee can have a brief spell of depreciation against the US dollar, followed by appreciation.

Sensex, Nifty slump one per cent



Equity benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty slumped 1 per cent each on Tuesday due to widespread selling pressure amid uninterrupted foreign fund outflows and sluggish global trends. The BSE benchmark Sensex tumbled 820.97 points or 1.03 per cent to settle at 78,675.18. During the day, it plunged 948.31 points or 1.19 per cent to 78,547.84. Falling for the third day running, the NSE Nifty tanked 257.85 points or 1.07 per cent to 23,883.45. From the 30-share Sensex pack, NTPC, Asian Paints, HDFC Bank, State Bank of India, Tata Motors, JSW Steel, Maruti and Power Grid were among the major laggards. On the other hand, Sun Pharma, Infosys and ICICI Bank were the gainers. Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) offloaded equities worth Rs 2,306.88 crore on Monday, while Domestic Institutional Investors (DIIs) infused Rs 2,026.63 crore in shares, according to exchange data. "Two strong factors have been at play in this consolidating market. One, the relentless selling by FIIs has been favouring the bears and pulling the market down. Two, the sustained buying by DIIs has been supporting the market preventing a crash in the market. How the market will trend in the coming days will depend on the relative strength of these two factors," VK Vijayakumar, Chief Investment Strategist, Geojit Financial Services, said. In Asian markets, Seoul, Tokyo, Shanghai and Hong Kong settled in the negative territory. European equity markets were also trading in the red. Wall Street ended higher on Monday.

SEBI extends deadline for comments on proposed specified digital platform

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Markets regulator Sebi on Tuesday extended the deadline for public comments till November 26 on the proposal concerning requirements for recognition as specified digital platforms (SDPs).

Earlier, the comments from the public were sought till November 12.

"Based on the representations received by Sebi from some of the entities/organisations, it has been decided to extend the timeline to submit the public comments on the consultation paper till November 26, 2024," the regulator said in a statement. In its consultation paper, Sebi proposed requirements for recognition as specified digital platforms whereby such platforms should proactively prevent fraud, impersonation, unauthorised claims, and unregistered



entities from operating. The regulator suggested that specified digital platforms use artificial intelligence or machine learning (AI/ML) tools to identify content or ads related to securities, ensuring the entity is Sebi-registered or permitted, no unauthorised advice, recommendations, or performance claims are made.

The platform should ensure that genuine investor education content is allowed and content does not redirect users to other media such as WhatsApp or Telegram for unauthorised activities, Sebi stated. Also, the platform should share data with the regulator when requested and act on its inputs. It should provide badges to

Sebi-registered entities to help users identify authorised participants. The regulator proposed that only Sebi-registered entities, permitted advertisers, or educational content providers can post securities-related content on the platform. Additionally, such platforms can remove fraudulent or non-compliant content and

penalise offenders. On October 22, Sebi provided a three-month window to entities registered with it, and their agents, to terminate their existing contracts with unregistered financial advisors.

This was part of Sebi's move to curb unauthorised financial advice and performance claims in the securities market. The rule restrains intermediaries, their agents, or associated persons from having direct or indirect ties with any entity that provides investment advice or recommendations without being registered or permitted by Sebi or makes performance or return-related claims unless specifically authorised by the regulator to do so. However, if these interactions occur through specified digital platforms, they will not be subject to these restrictions.



Industrial output up in September: Government data

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

India's industrial production expanded by 3.1 per cent in September, mainly due to improvement in the manufacturing sector, according to official data released on Tuesday. The factory output, measured in terms of the Index of Industrial Production (IIP), witnessed a growth of 6.4 per cent in September 2023. However, it was in the negative territory in August 2024 at (-) 0.1 per cent. "The IIP growth rate for the

month of September 2024 is 3.1 per cent which was (-) 0.1 per cent in the month of August 2024," an official statement said. The data released by the National Statistics Office (NSO) showed that the growth in mining, manufacturing and electricity for September 2024 stood at 0.2 per cent, 3.9 per cent and 0.5 per cent, respectively. In April-September this fiscal, the IIP grew 4 per cent against 6.2 per cent in the year-ago period.

Deepika's brace hands India 3-2 win over South Korea

PTI ■ RAJGIR (BIHAR)

Striker Deepika converted a penalty stroke three minutes from the final hooter to lead India to a tense 3-2 win over South Korea in the women's Asian Champions Trophy, here Tuesday.

India raced to a 2-0 lead in the first half through goals from Sangita Kumari (3rd minute) and Deepika (20th, 57th) before Korea mounted a strong comeback in the third quarter and drew parity with goals from Yuri Lee (34th) and skipper Eunbi Cheon (38th).

The match headed for an exciting finish with both teams pushing for that deciding goal and it was Deepika, who scored from the spot to seal India's second consecutive victory in the tournament.

India had defeated Malaysia 4-0 in their tournament-opener on Monday. The hosts will next play Thailand on Thursday.

In the first match of the day, minnows Thailand held Japan to a 1-1 draw, while reigning Olympic silver medalist China defeated Malaysia 5-0 to register their second consecutive win.

The Indians started from where they left on Monday and continued to play attacking hockey from the onset.

India's dominance can be gauged by the fact that the Koreans didn't have a single shot at the Indian goal in the first two quarters.

India, on the other hand, attacked the Korean defence relentlessly and created chances which resulted in two field goals.

It didn't take long for the Indians to surge ahead as they opened the scoring in the third minute through Sangita.



Neha Goyal initiated the move and passed it on to Navneet Kaur, who found Sangita inside the circle. The striker beautifully received the ball, sidestepped her marker and then found the back of the net with a fine reverse hit. India kept up the pressure on the Korean defence and their efforts bore

fruit in the 20th minute when Deepika slammed one home from close range from Beauty Dung Dung's pass from the right flank.

A minute later Preeti Dubey's reverse hit was saved by an outstretched right leg of Korean goalkeeper Seoyeon Lee. In the 24th minute, Sangita came tantalisingly close to scoring her second goal of the day, but her push from a Deepika pass went just wide of the post.

If the first half belonged to India, Korea came out all guns blazing after the change of ends and secured back-to-back penalty corners in the 34th minute and Lee pulled one back for her side from a rebound.

Motivated by the goal, the Koreans put pressure on the Indian defence and four minutes later secured a penalty stroke after an Indian defender unnecessarily brought a Korean striker inside the circle. Skipper Cheon stepped up and made no mistake to level the scores. Penalty corner conversion continued to haunt the Indians as they failed to make use of the eight set pieces they secured in the match -- four consecutively in the 39th minute. In the last match also India earned as many as 11 penalty corners but converted just three.

Held to a 2-2 draw, the Indians decided to throw numbers upfront and mounted raids after raids on the Korean citadel and in the process secured penalty corners in quick succession but they lacked variation from the set pieces and the efforts were mostly one dimensional.

But the Indians got a chance in the 57th minute in the form of a penalty stroke, which Deepika converted with ease.



World's first high-altitude parasports centre to come up in Leh ahead of 2028 Paralympics

PTI ■ LEH (LADAKH)

The world's first high-altitude para sports centre will be established in Leh, Ladakh, aiming to advance the skills and confidence of athletes ahead of the 2028 Paralympics.

A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to this effect was signed by the Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council (LAHDC), Leh, and the Aditya Mehta Foundation (AMF).

"It is a very proud feeling for us that Leh will be establishing the world's first-ever high-altitude centre for para sports. Indian para-athletes have won 29 medals, including seven gold, in the 2024 Paralympics in Paris and it is a testament of the talent we have in our country," said Advocate Tashi Gyalson, Chief Executive Councillor (CEC) of LAHDC.

Till the time the centre is getting completed, the AMF

will identify 15 Children with Special Needs (CWSN) from the Leh-Ladakh UT region and they will undergo screening, counselling and training at their Infinity Parasports Academy and Rehabilitation Centre in Hyderabad.

"The opening of Leh Ladakh as a hub for para sports marks a new era not just for the region, but for India's future in international competitions," said Aditya Mehta, Founder, AMF.

List of Sports to be included: Para Sports: Archery; Athletics; Badminton; Blind Football; Boccia; Canoeing; Cycling; Equestrian; Goalball; Judo; Powerlifting; Rowing; Shooting; Volleyball; Swimming; Table Tennis, Taekwondo; Triathlon; Wheelchair Basketball; Wheelchair Fencing; Wheelchair Rugby and Wheelchair Tennis.

Winter Games: Para Alpine Skiing; Para Biathlon; Para Cross-Country Skiing; Para Ice Hockey; Para Snowboard and Wheelchair Curling.

Alcaraz struggles with stomach issue in loss to Ruud at ATP Finals



AP ■ TURIN (ITALY)

Carlos Alcaraz struggled with a stomach issue and looked far from the player who won two Grand Slams this year while losing to Casper Ruud 6-1, 7-5 at the ATP Finals. It marked Ruud's first victory over Alcaraz in five career meetings, and the result could make it difficult for Alcaraz to advance from the round-robin stage at the season-ending event for the top eight players.

"I didn't feel well on court," Alcaraz said. "A few days before coming here, I got sick at home. ... This morning, I feel uncomfortable in the stomach."

In the same group, Alexander Zverev began his bid for a third ATP Finals title by beating Andrey

Rublev 6-4, 6-4. The top two finishers from each group advance to the semifinals.

On Sunday, top-ranked Jannik Sinner and U.S. Open finalist Taylor Fritz beat Alex de Minaur and Daniil Medvedev, respectively, in the other group.

Alcaraz won the French Open and Wimbledon to boost his career total to four Grand Slam titles. But he also struggled at the Paris Masters recently and dropped behind Zverev to No. 3 in the rankings this week.

"I have no experience playing on indoor courts," Alcaraz said. "I'll be a really good player on indoor courts, I'm sure about it. But I think it's about time, about getting experience. ... A lot of players are better than me on indoor court."

Ruud reached the 2021 semifinals and 2022 final in his first two appearances at the finals. But he has struggled recently, too, losing his first or second match in his last seven events.

"I'm not full of confidence," Ruud said. "A match like today might be able to change it."

Alcaraz was broken when he served for the second set at 5-4. Alcaraz led 25-16 in winners but committed 26 unforced errors to Ruud's 10. Ruud converted all four of his break points while Alcaraz was just one of six in that category.

"I'm tired mentally," Alcaraz said. "Obviously a lot of matches, really tight schedule, really demanding year with not too many days off." ZVEREV ROLLING AFTER

PARIS MASTERS TITLE

Zverev, who won the finals in 2018 in London and 2021 in Turin, extended his winning streak to six matches following a title run at the Paris Masters.

Rublev is making his fifth consecutive appearance at the finals but hasn't won a match at the event since 2022.

Zverev served nine aces and dropped only 10 points on his serve in 10 service games.

"He served wide 220 (kph) on the deuce side," Rublev said. "Normally everybody serves slice and it's 190. He find(s) a way to serve 220 wide on the deuce side. It's not easy."

"Even if you catch the direction, when the flat serve comes 227, slice serve comes 219, 215, it's tough to just see the ball."

SINNER RECEIVES NO. 1 TROPHY

Before the Zverev-Rublev match, Sinner received the trophy for finishing the year at No. 1 in the rankings.

"There's no place better to celebrate this trophy," Sinner said as his mom, Siglinde, looked on in tears. "Thanks for all of your support."

Sinner is playing at home for the first time since it was announced before his U.S. Open title that he tested positive in two separate drug tests this year. A decision to clear Sinner of wrongdoing was appealed by the World Anti-Doping Agency in September.



Sinner awarded trophy for finishing year at No. one in the ATP rankings

AP ■ TURIN (ITALY)

Jannik Sinner was awarded the trophy for finishing the year at No. 1 in the rankings before his home fans at the ATP Finals.

Sinner beat Alex de Minaur in his opening match on Sunday at the year-ending event for the top eight players and meets Taylor Fritz on Tuesday in a rematch of the U.S. Open final.

Sinner is playing at home for the first time since it was announced before his U.S. Open title that he tested positive in two separate drug tests this year.

A decision to clear Sinner of wrongdoing was appealed by the World Anti-Doping Agency in September.

"I think he's the man to beat for a long time," said former No. 1 Boris Becker, who took part in the trophy presentation.

Sinner beat Alex de Minaur in his opening match on Sunday at the year-ending event for the top eight players and meets Taylor Fritz on Tuesday in a rematch of the U.S. Open final.

Sinner is playing at home for the first time since it was announced before his U.S. Open title that he tested positive in two separate drug tests this year.

A decision to clear Sinner of wrongdoing was appealed by the World Anti-Doping Agency in September.

Manassero looks to cap career revival in Dubai as McIlroy eyes season-ending title

AP ■ DUBAI

Matteo Manassero quit golf five years ago at the age of 26, tormented by a sport that gave him so many highs but was no longer making him feel happy. On Sunday, he could punch a ticket to play across the Atlantic on the lucrative PGA Tour and be back in the big time, where so many think his game belongs.

The 31-year-old Italian will look to cap his career revival this week by becoming one of 10 players from the European tour to be eligible to claim dual membership and a PGA Tour card for the 2025 season. The season-ending World Tour Championship starts on Thursday in Dubai and only an unlikely turn of events will deny Rory McIlroy from being crowned as the European tour's best player for a sixth time, leaving him two off Colin Montgomerie's record haul.

There will be more suspense elsewhere, though, notably in that race for those PGA Tour cards — a structural tweak created in 2022 in the wake of the so-called strategic alliance between the European tour and PGA Tour in the face of mounting pressure from the breakaway LIV Golf series.

The presence of Manassero in the 10-man list, as it stands, only elevates the interest levels.

Blessed with a smooth swing and a deft touch, Manassero was a golfing prodigy, winning the British Amateur in 2009, the silver medal at the British Open for low amateur the same year, and also becoming the No. 1 amateur in the world. By 2013, he'd won four events on the European tour — including the BMW PGA Championship, the flagship event on the tour, to move into the world's top 25. Then came the career dip, which plunged him into self-

doubt and ultimately retirement — albeit for only a few months while he assessed where to go with his life.

He eventually decided to give golf another go, beginning his rebuild on the lowly Nordic Golf League and the Alps Tour, which is on the third tier of European golf.

His talent shone through and last year he sealed a return to the European tour with a win at the Jonsson Workwear Open in March being universally celebrated in the golf fraternity.

That helped to put him in a strong position to claim the end-of-season bonus of a PGA Tour card, and he headed to Dubai in fifth place among non-exempt players, behind Thriston Lawrence, Rasmus Hojgaard, Paul Waring — the winner in Abu Dhabi last week — and Niklas Norgaard. Jesper Svensson, Thorbjørn Olesen, Rikuya Hoshino, Sebastian Söderberg and



Jordan Smith make up the list, though the tour says any non-exempt player in the 50-man field can, statistically, break into the top 10.

Robert MacIntyre is living proof of how life-changing that can be. He was one of the 10 to claim a PGA Tour card after last year's World Tour

Championship and he has blossomed, winning two big PGA events — the Canadian Open and the Scottish Open — and rising to a career-high

15th in the world in August. He is No. 16.

"Career-changing, 100%," MacIntyre said on Tuesday. "I've now got to the top level of professional golf, the top 25% of professional golfers."

"You can then pick your schedule and you're in all the major events and you're in all the top events you can play in and you can pick and choose, and that's where you want to be."

"I think," MacIntyre added, "the majority of golfers out here have got that dream, as well."

If Hojgaard secures his PGA Tour card, he will join his twin brother Nicolai in the United States.

McIlroy on brink Lawrence leads that list of PGA Tour hopefuls but has other things on his mind. The South African is the only player who can prevent McIlroy from winning the Race to Dubai title — formerly the Order of Merit

— and join the late Seve Ballesteros on six.

Lawrence has to win — nothing less is good enough — and then needs McIlroy to finish tied for 11th or lower.

"Rory has been an idol for me since growing up as a youngster," the 27-year-old Lawrence said, "and being able to clinch it this week would be the cherry on the cake for myself."

The smart money, however, is on McIlroy, who has shown extraordinary consistency in collecting a win — at the Dubai Desert Classic in January — as well as four runner-up finishes and three more top fives in his 12 European tour events this season.

"Rory is held to a higher standard than pretty much everybody else in the world of golf," Tommy Fleetwood said. "But, I think he's shown amazing golf again this year, and he's shown why he's one of the best to ever do it."

3rd T20I: India eye batting revival against SA at Centurion

PTI ■ CENTURION

Indian batting line-up needs to get its mojo back against a resurgent South Africa to regain the lost ground on rather unfamiliar SuperSport Park conditions when the two teams clash the third T20I here Wednesday. Since 2009, India have played only one T20I at this venue, which they lost by six wickets in 2018 and have only one survivor from that squad in this side -- Hardik Pandya. Along with that unfamiliarity factor, India will also grapple with the ordinary form of their batters, particularly when the pitch here is touted to be similar to the one at Qqeberha -- quick and bouncy. In the second T20I, India batters struggled against South African pacers upfront, getting restricted to 124 for six, and Centurion has similar characteristics. The problem starts from the top -- more precisely with Abhishek Sharma, whose extended lean run with the bat has now snowballed

into a serious concern. He is in desperate need of a good outing here before the management thinks of juggling the combination. Even now, they can think of giving the job of partnering Sanju Samson at the top to Tilak Varma and bring in Ramandeep Singh in the middle to add more muscle to the unit. However, the senior batters like skipper Suryakumar Yadav, Pandya and Rinku Singh too cannot absolve themselves of the blame entirely for India's struggles. Both Suryakumar and Rinku have shown only fleeting images of their prowess here while Pandya made 39 in the second match but he consumed 45 balls for it. In fact, the power-hitter took 28 balls to find his first boundary and, again, could not find the ropes between balls 39 and 45. So, these three batters will have to chip in more to support in the in-form Samson or to carry India to a strong total even when the Kerala man has a vapid day.



Similarly, pacers Arshdeep Singh and Avesh Khan had two contrasting games. Arshdeep returned with figures of 1 for 25 at Durban, but in the second game he had stats of 1 for 41. The left-arm pacer's third and fourth overs which went for 28 runs -- including four fours in an over against Tristan Stubbs -- made a deep impact on the low-scoring match. So, they will be eager to change the script here, unless the management looks at other options such as Yash Dayal or Vysakh Vijaykumar. However, the efforts of Varun Chakravarthy, who bagged a maiden wicket in the previous match, and Ravi Bishnoi over the last two matches have been outstanding and the spinners will be looking for an encore in the third match to hand back the advantage to India. The expected bounce and pace on the pitch here will be an encouraging factor as well for the Indian duo. From a batting perspective, South Africa too face a similar issue as

senior pros skipper Aiden Markram, David Miller and Heinrich Klaasen are yet to fire in this series. They required runs from less-pedigreed batters Tristan Stubbs and Gerald Coetzee to get over the line in the second contest, and the Proteas will certainly cherish a heftier contribution from their veterans, especially against Indian spinners. Teams (from): India: Suryakumar Yadav (c), Abhishek Sharma, Sanju Samson (WK), Rinku Singh, Tilak Varma, Jitesh Sharma (WK), Hardik Pandya, Axar Patel, Ramandeep Singh, Varun Chakravarthy, Ravi Bishnoi, Arshdeep Singh, Vijaykumar Vyshak, Avesh Khan, Yash Dayal. South Africa: Aiden Markram (c), Ottneil Baartman, Gerald Coetzee, Donovan Ferreira, Reeza Hendricks, Marco Jansen, Heinrich Klaasen, Patrick Kruger, Keshav Maharaj, David Miller, Mhlangeni Mpongwana, Nqaba Peter, Ryan Rickelton, Andile Simelane. Lutho Sipamla, Tristan Stubbs.

Perth pitch to have really good pace and bounce: Curator cautions India

PTI ■ PERTH

India will be accorded a tough welcome to Australia as the Optus Stadium pitch for the opening Test of the Border-Gavaskar Trophy has been prepared to offer "good bounce and pace" true to the tradition of the fiery tracks in Perth. India will enter the Perth Test, beginning from November 22, without playing any practice match as the visitors had cancelled an intra-squad side game that was scheduled to be played behind closed doors from November 15 to 17. Now, India will focus on centre-wicket training at the nearby WACA stadium, where Australia will also polish their skills. "This is Australia, this is Perth... I'm setting ourselves up for really good pace, really good bounce and really good carry," Western Australia Cricket head curator Isaac McDonald told ESPNcricinfo.



McDonald is trying to prepare a pitch that has similar traits of the one that he readied for the first Test against Pakistan in December last year. In that match, Pakistan were bundled out for 89 in the second innings as the Aussies celebrated a massive 360-run victory. The pitch too had developed cracks as that match wore on and batters like Marnus Labuschagne copped blows on their hands. Overall, the three Aussie pacers -- Pat Cummins, Josh Hazlewood and Mitchell Starc -- grabbed 12 of the 20 Pakistan wickets. More recently, Pakistan pacers Shaheen Shah

Afridi, Naseem Shah and Haris Rauf tore through Australian line-up, bowling the hosts out for 140 in the third ODI here. McDonald said he is looking to leave some grass on the pitch to make it a bit spicier. "It's (10 mm) a good starting point. Ten millimetres was pretty comfortable with the conditions that we had (last year) and that held the conditions together nicely for the first few days. Live grass on the pitch is speed. "Both bowling units (Australia and Pakistan) were pretty rapid last year and hoping for much the same this year (for India match)," he added.

Australian opener McSweeney braces for 'unique' Bumrah challenge

PTI ■ ADELAIDE

Australia opener Nathan McSweeney, who is set to debut against India in the Border-Gavaskar Trophy, said he has been preparing for the "unique" challenge of facing star pacer Jasprit Bumrah. McSweeney was drafted into the Australia squad after a slew of impressive performances in the Sheffield Shield tournament and in the recent 'A' series against India. The 25-year-old South Australian will partner Usman Khawaja at the top in the series opener in Perth and during the upcoming five-Test series. "There's probably not (much) I can do to replicate how Bumrah bowls. Obviously, he's got a unique action. He's one of the best bowlers in the world." So, it's going to be



hard to mimic that. I'm just looking forward to all of that and I can't wait," McSweeney told SEN. McSweeney, who captained the Australia A side in the 2-0 series win against India A, said he has been watching the bowling clips of Indian quicks

including Bumrah and Mohammed Siraj to be mentally ready for the task. "I'll definitely dive a lot deeper into it when I get to Perth. I've looked at a few clips of what they're bowling attack stacks up like. I'm just trying to visualise how I'm

going to go about it. Facing a new bowler can be a slight challenge to just pick up their action," he said. "I've got a whole week before I head off to Perth, so I can get mentally ready and I guess it starts now in preparation to hopefully start

really well," he added. However, a quiet confidence runs through the young batter ahead of the important series. "In the last month or so I really feel like I'm batting the best I ever have. I think I'm the best I've ever been prepared to take this opportunity, so hopefully I can do that. "No doubt there's plenty of learning and experiences that I haven't experienced yet and I'm looking forward to learning all about the challenges of Test cricket and challenging my game against the very best," he said. McSweeney will step into the shoes of David Warner, who retired from international cricket after the home Test series against Pakistan in January this year, and the Adelaide man realises the enormity of the job.

Blind T20 WC: Indian team eyes clearance from MHA, MEA; Sports Ministry clears travel to Pakistan

PTI ■ NEW DELHI/KARACHI

The Sports Ministry has given NOC, with no cost to the government, to a 17-member Indian cricket team to travel to Pakistan to participate in the T20 World Cup for the Blind, and the side now awaits clearance from Home and External Affairs ministries. The fourth edition of the Blind World Cup, in which India are the reigning champions, is scheduled to be played at

Lahore and Multan from November 22 to December 3. Upon receiving the clearance from the ministries concerned, the squad is scheduled to travel to Pakistan via the Wagah Border on November 21. The development came in the backdrop of the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) informing its Pakistan counterpart that the Men in Blue will not travel to the neighbouring nation for next year's Champions Trophy.



The BCCI sent a mail to the International Cricket Council to that effect, leaving the future of the marquee event in limbo.

Meanwhile, Shailender Yadav, General Secretary of the Cricket Association for Blind in India (CABI) said the 17-member Indian squad for the

T20 WC was picked after 26 players underwent a 12-day selection trials in Gurugram. "The team has been training in Gurugram. The players now await an NOC from the Ministry of External Affairs and remain hopeful for a positive response," said Yadav. Apart from India and Pakistan, the T20 World Cup features teams from Afghanistan, Bangladesh, South Africa, Nepal and Sri Lanka. India won the three previous events,

defeating Pakistan twice and Bangladesh once. Tournament as scheduled: PBCC The Pakistan Blind Cricket Council (PBCC) said the tournament will go ahead on schedule irrespective of India's participation. "Pakistan will be hosting the event on schedule and it makes no difference whether the Indian team comes or not," PBCC chairman Syed Sultan Shah said.

PENSION FUND REGULATORY AND DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
E-500, Tower E, Fifth Floor, World Trade Center, Nauroji Nagar, New Delhi-110029

APPOINTMENT OF ONE TRUSTEE ON THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF NPS TRUST

Applications are invited from Indian Citizens for appointment as Trustee on the Board of Trustee of NPS Trust for a period of three years from the date of appointment with provision of extension for not more than two years. The maximum age limit, beyond which a Trustee shall not function, is seventy years. The Trustees are eligible to receive sitting fees and such other expenses towards travelling, lodging and boarding etc. as are determined by the Authority from time to time.

The detailed notice for appointment, PFRDA (NPS Trust) Regulations, 2015 and guidelines for appointment of Trustees are available on PFRDA's website www.pfrda.org.in

The last date of receipt of application is 12th December 2024.

Sd/-
Chief General Manager
Regulation Department -
Fund Management (NPS Trust)

CBC 15102/12/0002/2425

Players believing in our style of play is the key, says Manolo Márquez

PTI ■ HYDERABAD

Indian football team head coach Manolo Márquez on Tuesday said it is critical for his players to follow a synchronised approach while representing the country, in order to start getting results in the international arena. The Indian senior men's national team began its training camp ahead of the friendly match against Malaysia on November 18 in Hyderabad. With the Indian Super League going into a break with the start of the November FIFA international window, the Blue Tigers checked into the city on Monday and will have a total of six days of training sessions before the match. "We were supposed to play two games last month but due to external reasons, Lebanon couldn't come. For people, more games is better. But it's difficult to train the day before and after the match. We need to train tactically as well. "I feel it's necessary to prepare for not just the game against Malaysia but the official matches which will come in March," Márquez said.



Márquez had a rough start to his coaching stint with the national team as India were held 0-0 by Mauritius in September and beaten 0-3 by Syria in the Intercontinental Cup, also in Hyderabad. His boys put up an improved showing, especially in the second half, against Vietnam in a 1-1 draw last month in Nam D'nh. The Spaniard has continued the trend of calling up new players in each FIFA window so far. This time, Hmingthanmawia Ralte, Vibin Mohanan, Irfan Yadwad and

Thoiba Singh Moirangthem earned their first national team call-ups. The latter was a last-minute arrival after Anirudh Thapa suffered an injury during the match between Mohun Bagan Super Giant and Odisha FC on Sunday. Since taking charge in July, Márquez's priority has been to utilise the friendly matches and training sessions to find the best group of players for the 2027 AFC Asian Cup Qualifiers, scheduled to start in March 2025. "It's true that we want to check some new players. But

obviously it's impossible to change the whole group and call 40 players in March. It's true that we are finding the group. It means that we have maybe 14, 15, 16 players who will be there, but we don't know exactly. And there are a lot of players who can get there," the coach said. "Obviously, it's still four months, and the situation can change with a lot of things unfortunately with injuries and the players' domestic form. But, I repeat again, as a coach you need to find the group which can play the style that we want. "I am fully focussed on the Malaysia match at the moment. In a way, it's a dangerous game because the players are in the middle of the fight for the ISL and this is just one friendly game in November, and the next camp will be in four months. "But I am very confident in this group and I feel we will have a good performance next Monday," said Márquez. Still awaiting his first win with India, Márquez remains patient. For now, the key is to find the groove with the right bunch and get results where they matter the most.

AU SMALL FINANCE BANK LIMITED
(A SCHEDULED COMMERCIAL BANK)
Regd. Office: 19-A, Dhuleshwar Garden, Ajmer Road, Jaipur - 302001 (CIN:L36911R1996PLC011381)

APPENDIX IV [SEE RULE 8(I)] POSSESSION NOTICE

Whereas, The undersigned being the Authorized Officer of the AU Small Finance Bank Limited (A Scheduled Commercial Bank) under the "Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest (Act, 2002 (54 of 2002)) and in exercise of powers conferred under section 13 (12) read with rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued demand notice on the date as mentioned below calling upon the borrowers to repay the amount mentioned in the said notice within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice as per the details given in below table:

Name of Borrower/Co-Borrower/ Mortgagee/Guarantor / Loan A/c No.	13(2) Notice Date & Amount	Description of Mortgaged Property	Date of Possession Taken
(A/c No.) L9001060720732793 Balaji Shiksha Samiti (Borrower), Jai Kishan Vats (Co-Borrower), Smt. Sumitra Vats (Co-Borrower)	23-Aug-24 Rs. 3976113/- Rs. Thirty-Nine Lac Seventy-Six Thousand One Hundred Thirteen Only 23-Aug-24	(1) All that part and parcel of residential/commercial property Land/ Building/ Structure and fixtures Property Situated At Property Plot No 9, Northern Part, Khasra No746, 748, 749, & 750, Mouza- Rohtak, Near Kodhi Colony, Dist -Rohtak, Haryana Admeasuring 80 Sqyds (2) All that part and parcel of residential/commercial property Land/ Building/ Structure and fixtures Property Situated At Property Plot No 9 Southern Part, Khasra No746, 748, 749, & 750, Mouza- Rohtak, Near Kodhi Colony, Dist -Rohtak, Haryana Admeasuring 120 Sqyds (3) All that part and parcel of residential/commercial property Land/ Building/ Structure and fixtures Property Situated At Property Plot No 8 Eastn Part, Khasra No746, 748, 749, & 750, Mouza- Rohtak, Near Kodhi Colony, Dist -Rohtak, Haryana Admeasuring 100 Sqyds (4) All that part and parcel of residential/commercial property Land/ Building/ Structure and fixtures Property Situated At Property Ahata No 6, Northern Part, Khasra No747, 760, 761, 762, 763, 764, 765, 771, 812, 813, 814, Mouza- Rohtak, Near Kodhi Colony, Dist - Rohtak, Haryana Admeasuring 200 Sqyds	08-Nov-24
(A/c No.) L9001060718171833 Devi Kasturi Mills Repose Private Limited Through it's Director Omkar Dutt (Borrower), Smt. Dharamwati (Co-Borrower), Omkar Dutt (Co-Borrower), Lekh Ram (Co-Borrower)	08-Jul-24 Rs. 7763112/- Rs. Seventy-Seven Lac Sixty-Three Thousand One Hundred Twelve Only 08-Jul-24	(1) All that part and parcel of residential/commercial property Land/ Building/ Structure and fixtures Property Situated At: Khewati/ Khata No. 4350/5023, Plot No. 5/2, Mu No 134, Kila No 19 (9-12), Rajiv Nagar, Nagar Parishad- Palwal, Te. & Dist- Palwal, Haryana, Bounded As East - Road, West - Property Of Rajesh Sharma, North - Property Of Jagdish, South - Property Of Dharmwati Admeasuring 94.5 Sqyds (2) All that part and parcel of residential/commercial property Land/ Building/ Structure and fixtures Property Situated At: Khewati/ Khata No. 4349/5022, Plot No 5/1, Mu No. 134, Kila No. 12/1(7-0), Rajiv Nagar, Nagar Parishad- Palwal, Te. & Dist- Palwal, Haryana, Bounded As East - Road, West - Property Of Rajesh Sharma, North - Property Of Jagdish, South - Property Of Dharmwati Admeasuring 94.5 Sq.Yds (3) All that part and parcel of residential/commercial property Land/ Building/ Structure and fixtures Property Situated At Khasra No. 134/19(8-3), Mouza Palwal, Te. & Dist- Palwal, Haryana Admeasuring 189.1 Sq.Yds	09-Nov-24
(A/c No.) L9001060721647996 S S Cloth House (Borrower), Sonu (Co-Borrower), Smt. Ranjana Devi (Co-Borrower)	14-May-24 Rs. 1395562/- Rs. Thirteen Lac Ninety-Five Thousand Five Hundred Sixty-Two Only 13-May-24	All that part and parcel of residential/commercial property Land/ Building/ Structure and fixtures Property Situated At Freehold - Municipal Limit Metro And Urban House No 5935, Ward No 16, House Tax No 5935, Mohalla Khasapura, Dist-Rewari, Haryana Admeasuring 103.36 Sqyds	11-Nov-24

The borrower having failed to repay the amount, therefore notice is hereby given to the borrower and the public in general that the undersigned has taken possession of the property described herein above mentioned table in exercise of powers conferred on him/her under section 13(4) of the said (Act-2002) read with Rule 8 of the said rule on the date mentioned in the above table. The borrower's attention is invited to provisions of sub section (8) of section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available, to redeem the secured assets. The borrower in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of the AU Small Finance Bank Limited (A Scheduled Commercial Bank) for the amount and interest thereon mentioned in the above table.

-sd-
Place: HARYANA Date: 12 November 2024
Authorised Officer AU Small Finance Bank Limited