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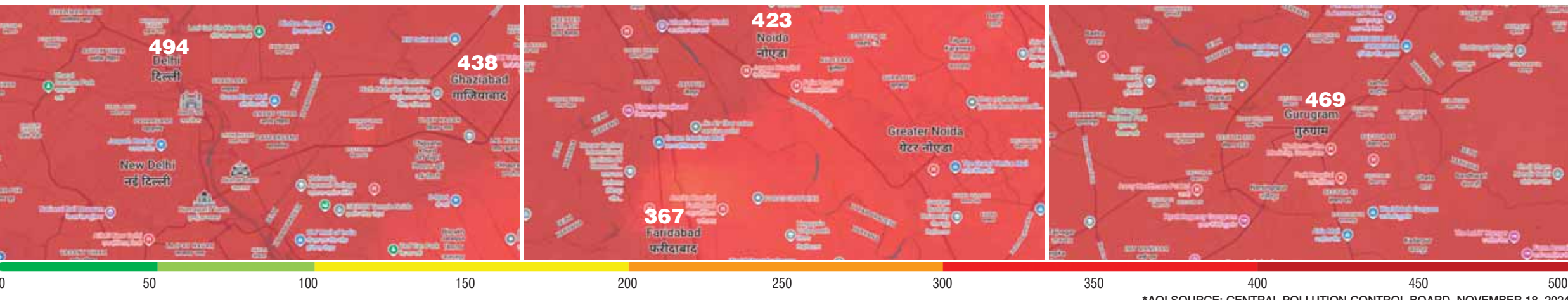
Inside

WORLD 8
BIDEN AUTHORISES UKRAINE TO USE US MISSILES FOR STRIKES INSIDE RUSSIA

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What is the real AQI?

RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

Confusion prevails over the accuracy of the Air Quality Index (AQI) as Delhiites gasp for breath. While the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) on Monday recorded the Delhi AQI at 486 at 6 am marking the worst of the season, another platform, IQAir, a Swiss air quality technology company, showed Delhi's AQI around 1,697 at 12.30 pm. It recorded 2,314 AQI at Vivek Vihar C block station, which is beyond severe, in the National Capital. An official statement issued by the Delhi Development Authority (DDA) which comes under the Lieutenant Governor Vinai Kumar Saxena also cited the AQI at 1000.

According to IQAir, the National Capital ranked at the top of the list of most polluted cities in the world. The PM2.5 concentration is recorded at 907.5 µg/m that is 182.5 times the World Health Organization (WHO) annual PM2.5 guideline value.

Another platform, AQICN.Org, shared real time data that showed AQI at 874 in the hazardous category. The India Meteorological Department has issued an Orange Alert due to dense fog in the city. With the city shrouded in dense fog and visibility severely reduced, flight and train operations have been disrupted, leading to delays.

As several platforms showing AQI at

hazardous levels beyond the severe, the Commission for Air Quality Management (CAQM) issued a communique urging to refer only to the SAMEER App or the CPCB Official Website for accurate and reliable data. "These are the authorised platforms for relaying the air quality index. Please avoid relying on unofficial or unreliable sources to ensure that correct information is alone disseminated to the public," it added.

The Air Quality Index, is a numerical scale that measures certain pollutants and their concentration to communicate the quality of air in a specific area. It also provides information on how these numbers can affect human health and the environment. When asked officials say some platforms, like IQAir, provide real-time data, while others, like the CPCB, provide a single reading for a day. One of the reasons why the data collected by different platforms is varied is due to access to air quality monitoring stations. Since IQAir is an aggregator, it uses information from government-run sensors, which are also used by the CPCB. It also uses privately operated sensors, which may provide more localised readings. Platforms such as IQAir update the AQI of a city and its different regions much faster with real-time data, while the CPCB gives one reading which applies to the region for a day.

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Enforce GRAP IV strictly: SC

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Noting the alarming rise in population and delays in implementation of stricter measures, the Supreme Court (SC) on Monday asked the Delhi-NCR States to immediately set up teams to enforce GRAP 4 restrictions, and said it will remain in effect even if the AQI is below 450. The SC also ordered that physical classes for all school students up to Class 12 be suspended in Delhi NCR for the time being.

A Bench of Justices Abhay S Oka and Augustine George Masih said it is the constitutional duty of all States to ensure all citizens live in a pollution-free environment. "We direct restrictions under stage 4 of GRAP to continue even if AQI level falls below 450," the Bench said.

The Supreme Court asked all National Capital Region States to immediately take a call on conducting physical classes up to Class 12 and directed the setting up of a mechanism where complaints can be made for violation of restrictions under stage 4 of the Graded Response Action Plan (GRAP). The Bench questioned the Delhi Government and the Commission for Air Quality Management (CAQM) over the delay in invoking pollution preventive measures under GRAP stages. "GRAP stages should be implemented immediately the moment the AQI level

touches alarming levels. Some sense of urgency needs to be there," the Bench said, after the counsel for the Delhi Government informed the Bench that stage 4 of GRAP has been implemented from Monday and heavy vehicles have been banned from entering the national Capital. "The moment the AQI reaches between 300 and 400, stage 4 has to be invoked. How can you take risk in these matters by delaying applicability of stage 4 of GRAP," the Bench told the counsel.

The Judges said that the CAQM waited for improvement in weather conditions instead of implementing different stages of GRAP over alarming rising pollution levels. Asking the Delhi Government and neighbouring NCR States - Uttar Pradesh and Haryana - to file their compliance affidavit by November 22 on the implementation of preventive measures to check pollution, the Bench said steps may be taken besides those suggested under GRAP.

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Delhi facing medical emergency: CM Atishi

RAJESH KUMAR/SAUMYA SHUKLA ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Chief Minister Atishi on Monday raised an alarm over the severe air pollution engulfing a large swathe of North India, describing the situation as a "medical emergency" caused by rampant stubble burning in several "Bharatiya Janata Party-ruled" states. Experts have advised citizens to reduce outdoor activities, minimise exposure, wear N95 masks when outside, and decrease vehicular emissions, to minimise the impact of pollution in their day-to-day lives. Meanwhile, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) issued a warning for dense to very dense fog, saying road, train and flight services may get affected.

Fifteen flights were diverted, and around 200 were delayed at the Delhi airport on Monday as visibility reduces to 150 metres due to unfavourable weather conditions in the National Capital. Flight operations in Delhi faced disruptions on Monday as thick smog reduced visibility significantly at Indira Gandhi International Airport (IGIA). According to Flightradar24, over 200 flights, 118 departures and 43 arrivals, at Delhi Airport experienced delays due to the low visibility till 8.30 am. More than 100 flights have been rescheduled. Out of the 15 flights, 13 were diverted to Jaipur and 1 to Dehradun, the official said and added that the diversions happened

between 8.30 am and 3 pm. Some of the pilots were not trained for CAT III operations due to which flights had to be diverted.

Complying with the measures enforced under GRAP Stage IV, the Delhi traffic police imposed a total of 4,852 challans and 4,472 challans on the non-possession of Pollution Under Control (PUC) certificates on November 15 and 17 respectively. It also imposed 138 and 155 challans on End of Life Vehicles (ELVs) on November 15 and 17 respectively.

The police also diverted 423 non-destined trucks on November 15 while the numbers were higher for November 17 as 545 such trucks were diverted in Delhi. In adherence to the measures, the police also imposed challans on 514 Light Motor Vehicles (LMVs) (BS III petrol and BS IV diesel) on November 15. The numbers rose about 100 per cent on November 17 as 1,130 such LMVs were issued challans.

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People gather outside the emergency ward after a fire broke out in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) of the Maharani Laxmi Bai Medical College, in Jhansi district. File photo: PTI

No FIR filed 72-hours after Jhansi fire tragedy

BISWAJEET BANERJEE ■ JHANSIA

Even 72-hours after a devastating fire in the Special Newborn Care Unit (SNCU) of Rani Laxmibai Medical College claimed the lives of 12 newborns, no FIR has been registered, and accountability remains undetermined. The tragedy, which occurred on Friday night, left 10 newborns dead on the spot, and two more succumbed to their injuries on Sunday, and Monday.

While a preliminary investigation by the Divisional Commissioner has been completed and a report submitted to the state government, no concrete action has been taken against any staff member or official. A high-level team led by the Director General of Health Services began its probe on Monday, but legal and disciplinary actions remain pending. The inaction has fueled political outrage, with

Kailash Gahlot goes to BJP, Somesh Shoukeen comes to AAP

RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi's former Transport Minister Kailash Gahlot, who called himself Arvind Kejriwal's "Hanuman" till Sunday, and was one of the ruling Aam Aadmi Party's senior-most leaders, jumped the fence on Monday morning to join the rival Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), a day after quitting the party. After joining the BJP, Gahlot clarified that he didn't quit Delhi's ruling party because of pressure from the Enforcement Directorate (ED) and Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI). He alleged that efforts are being made to build a false narrative that his decision to quit the AAP was the result of probe agencies pressure while AAP convener said Gahlot was free to make his choice. Speaking to reporters, he said, "He is free; he can go wherever he wants." Similarly, former Congress MLA from Matiala, Somesh Shoukeen joined the AAP in the presence of Arvind Kejriwal. This comes a day after the AAP suffered a blow with its Jat leader Kailash Gahlot resigning from the party.

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MHA rushes 5,000 paramilitary troops to Manipur

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI / IMPHAL

Union Home Ministry on Monday rushed 5,000 paramilitary troops to Manipur to assist the State Government in handling the current volatile situation. While 35 units will be drawn from the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF), the rest will be from the Border Security Force (BSF). Home Minister Amit Shah reviewed the prevailing security situation and deployment of troops for the second consecutive day and directed top officials to focus on restoring peace and order there as early as possible.

A total of 218 Central Armed Police Forces (CAPF) companies are now present in the State, which has been reeling from ethnic strife since May last year. The Home Minister took stock of the deployment of central forces there and directed the officials to restore peace and order there as early as possible, said officials. The situation in the Northeastern state, which has been reeling from ethnic strife since May last year, has been volatile following protests and violence after the recovery of bodies of women and children.



Assam Rifles officers at Laliohphai in Churachandpur district, Manipur. PTI

Meanwhile, in Imphal, defying curfew orders, a group of people led by members of the Coordinating Committee on Manipur Integrity (COCOMI) on Monday locked the front doors of several government offices in Imphal West district to protest the recent killing of three women and three children in Jiribam, officials said. The COCOMI is an influential organisation of the Meitei community, the majority ethnic group in the Imphal Valley region that comprises five districts including Imphal West.

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Campaigning draws to a close, high-stake polls next

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ MUMBAI/RANCHI/LUCKNOW

Campaigning for the high-stakes single phase Assembly elections in Maharashtra, and second and final phase of Jharkhand Assembly elections ended on Monday evening, for the November 20 elections. Besides intense campaigning for the nine Assembly by-elections in Uttar Pradesh too concluded on Monday evening for the scheduled voting on November 20. Results for the polls scheduled on November 13 and 20 including, Wayanad Lok Sabha are set to be declared on November 23. The election campaign for the Maharashtra Assembly polls ended on Monday, with the ruling BJP-led Mahayuti

alliance vying to retain power and the Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) combine hoping for a strong comeback. Polling will be held in all the 288 Assembly seats for which the campaign saw prominent leaders like Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Home Minister Amit Shah, Congress leaders Rahul Gandhi, Priyanka Gandhi and many Union ministers crisscrossing the state to garner votes for their candidates. The Mahayuti, comprising the BJP, Shiv Sena led by

'One Earth One Family One Future' theme still relevant: PM Modi

PTI ■ RIO DE JANEIRO

The countries of the Global South are most adversely impacted by the food, fuel and fertilizer crisis caused by global conflicts and G20 must focus on addressing it, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on Monday.

In an address at a session at the G20 summit, Modi said India's G20 theme of "One Earth, One Family, One Future" is as relevant at the ongoing summit as it was last year. "I would like to say that countries of the Global South are most adversely impacted by the food, fuel and fertilizer crisis caused by global conflicts," he said. "So our discussions can only be successful when we keep in mind the challenges and priorities of the Global South," he added. The PM made the remarks at the G20 session on 'Social Inclusion and the Fight Against Hunger and Poverty'.

Modi also called for reform of the institutions of global governance. "And just as we amplified the voice of the Global South by granting permanent membership of G20 to the African Union during the New Delhi summit, we will reform institutions of global governance," he said.

The PM said India supports Brazil's initiative for a global alliance against hunger and poverty. "The people-centric decisions taken at the G20



Prime Minister Narendra Modi being welcomed by President of Brazil Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva upon his arrival to attend the G20 Summit, in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. PTI

India is 'top sender' of students to America

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

With more than 3.3 lakh Indians studying in the United States, it has become the "top sender" of international students for the first time in 15 years, according to the Open Doors Report 2024 released on Monday. In the academic year 2022-23, the leading "source country" for international students in the US was China followed by India. According to the latest Open Doors Report, the number of Indian students studying in the US in the academic year 2023-24 is at an "all-

time high" at 3,31,602, a rise of 23 per cent from 2022-23 when the number stood at 2,68,923. "India is now the leading country of origin for international students in the United States, accounting for 29 per cent of the total international student population," according to a note shared by the US Embassy on the Open Doors Report 2024.

According to official data associated with the latest report, the top five source countries for international students in the US for 2023-24 are: India, China (2,77,398), South Korea (43,149), Canada (28,998) and Taiwan

United States. The number of Indian students is at an all-time high," the US Embassy's note read. Normally, the academic year in the US begins in September and runs through May.

India also "remained the largest sender" of international graduate (masters and PhD level) students to the US for the second year. The number of Indian graduate students increased by 19 per cent to reach 1,96,567, it said.

The number of undergraduate students from India also increased by 13 per cent to 36,053 while the number of non-degree students experienced a 28 per cent decline

to 1,426 students, according to the report. The release of the Open Doors Report marked the beginning of International Education Week (IEW), which celebrates the benefits of international education and exchange worldwide. The report is published by the Institute of International Education. The IIE has been conducting an annual statistical survey on international students in the US since its founding in 1919 and in partnership with the US Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs since 1972.

Summit in New Delhi have been taken forward during Brazil's Presidency," he said. "It is a matter of great satisfaction that we prioritised SDG (sustainable development goals). We focused on Inclusive development, women-led development, and youth power," he said.

"And gave wings to the hopes and aspirations of the Global South. It is clear that One Earth One Family One Future is as relevant at this summit as it was last year," he added. The theme of India's G20 presidency is drawn from the ancient Sanskrit text of Maha Upanishad.

Lawrence Bishnoi's brother detained in the US

PNS ■ MUMBAI
Jailed gangster Lawrence Bishnoi's brother Anmol, wanted for the murder of NCP leader Baba Siddique and firing outside actor Salman Khan's Mumbai home, has been detained in the United States, Mumbai police sources said on Monday.
Anmol, who was believed to be living in Canada and making regular travels to the US, is the younger brother of Lawrence Bishnoi, accused of running a global criminal syndicate despite being in jail. Anmol Bishnoi is wanted in connection with several criminal cases, including the murder of NCP leader and former Maharashtra minister Siddique on October 12 in Mumbai's Bandra area. He was also allegedly behind the firing outside Bollywood actor Salman Khan's home, located in the Bandra area, on April 14 this year, according to the sources. A Red Corner Notice was issued by global law enforcement agency Interpol. Bishnoi, from Punjab's Fazilka, was earlier believed to be in Canada after fleeing India on a fake passport. He also faces two cases filed by the National Investigation Agency.

Rahul links PM Modi's slogans to Adani



TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI
Holding that the contest in Maharashtra was between one or two billionaires and the poor people, Congress leader Rahul Gandhi said here on Monday that Prime Minister Narendra Modi was bent on handing over the Rs 1 lakh crore worth Dharavi land to industrialist Gautam Adani, while the Opposition Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) was all for supporting the poor, youth and unemployed people in the state. Addressing a news conference on the final day of the campaigning for the

November 20 Maharashtra Assembly polls, "On one side, Adani is eying Dharavi land, while on the other side are our workers, and youth - betrayed by the MahaYuti government are aspiring for a better life". Linking Modi's much-discussed slogan Ek-hai-toh safe-hai to Adani, Rahul said: "The real intention behind PM Modi's slogan Ek-hai-toh-safe-hai is to hand over Dharavi land to Adani. For PM Modi, it means 'Adani-ek-hai-toh-safe-hai'". "A billionaire like Adani wants Mumbai's land, estimated to be worth around Rs 1 lakh crore. But our focus

is on supporting Maharashtra's poor, youth, and unemployed," the Congress leader said. Displaying posters that showed a safe (a treasury box) with photographs of Modi and Adani on it and the Dharavi redevelopment map, Rahul said, "Adani is worried about the real safe (treasury box). Without the PM's support, he cannot take away the Dharavi land from its people". "The real issue in the election is whether the wealth of Maharashtra should be given to the people of Maharashtra or to one person," Rahul said.

MVA-MahaYuti in neck and neck contest as campaign ends

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

A high-pitch campaigning for the Maharashtra Assembly polls ended on Monday evening, as the feuding Shiv Sena leaders Eknath Shinde and Uddhav Thackeray traded charges over the legacy of late Bal Thackeray while the Bharatiya Janata party (BJP) president, JP Nadda, defended the prime minister's divisive slogans by saying that the country was safe in Narendra Modi's hand. Slogans such as Ek-hai-toh safe-hai and batenge-tokatenge and vote-jihad coined by the BJP leaders, the Opposition Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA)'s criticism about the Modi-Adani link, diversion of projects to Gujarat, threat to the Constitution, stress on Maharashtra asmita, the guarantees by the MVA, and schemes of the BJP-led MahaYuti, the fight between the two Senas over the legacy of late Balasaheb Thackeray and the continued tussle between Sharad Pawar and Ajit Pawar dominated the four-week-long campaign. In the last phase of the four-week-long campaign, the contentious issues of agrarian distress, farmers' suicides and lack of remunerative prices for agricultural produce, particularly Soya bean and cotton, figured prominently in the high-voltage campaigning witnessed in Vidarbha region, which sends a maximum of 62 MLAs to the 288-member Maharashtra Assembly. Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who led the charge for the BJP, addressed as many as

11 rallies across the state. Prior to the declaration of the schedule for the state Assembly polls, he had four forays into the state to inaugurate various projects and used these occasion to reach out to the people ahead of the Assembly polls. Union Minister for Home Affairs Amit Shah, who addressed 20-odd rallies, UP Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, who tried to polarise voters through his rhetoric, and BJP president JP Nadda were other BJP's national campaigners. Deputy Chief minister Devendra Fadnis and Union minister Nitin Gadkari addressed 80 and 50-odd rallies respectively across the state. From the Opposition MVA side, Mallikarjun Kharge, Rahul Gandhi and his sister Priyanka Gandhi-Vadra were on the front of the Congress' campaign. Kharge addressed nine rallies, while Rahul and Priyanka addressed seven and three rallies respectively.

including P Chidambaram, Ramesh Chennithala, KC Venugopal, Jairam Ramesh, Randeep S. Surjewala and more, plus INDIA bloc allies from Samajwadi Party, CPI, CPI(M), PWP and AAP joined the campaign in Maharashtra. As expected, Modi and Yogi were shrill in their campaign, while Congress leaders, particularly Kharge and Rahul, combated the BJP's vicious campaign effectively. Sena (UBT) president Uddhav Thackeray was a crowd puller, while veteran leader Sharad Pawar reached out to people effectively. On the last day of the campaigning, feuding Shiv Sena leaders Eknath Shinde and Uddhav Thackeray trained guns at each other over the legacy of late Balasaheb Thackeray. Sena (UBT) chief Uddhav, whose party symbol is flaming torch, said: "My party was stolen. The name (Shiv Sena) was stolen. They (Shinde and his men) stole our (bow and arrow) symbol. Now they have stolen the photo of Balasaheb," Uddhav said, as he slammed the Shinde Sena for using the photographs of late Thackeray. "You know how our government was stolen. It has been two-and-a-half-years, I have been waiting for justice. Justice delayed is justice denied. They stole everything but they could not steal your blessings and love," Uddhav said. Hitting back at Uddhav, Shinde said that his party was carrying forward the legacy of late Balasaheb. "We are

Balasaheb's soldiers. We were in power. Why did we have to revolt even though we were ministers? This will be the first time that ministers in power have come out. The reason for this has been stated many times before. If it was not so, I would not have been able to remain as Chief Minister even for a day," Shinde said. In a related development, BJP national president JP Nadda hit back at Rahul Gandhi for attacking PM Modi and industrialist Gautam Adani. Defending Modi and his ek-hai-toh-safe-hain, Nadda said: "Modi's ek-hai-toh-safe-hain slogan means that if there is unity in the country, everyone is safe in the country. The country is safe under Modi's leadership. Modi is taking along everyone in the country". "Rahul Gandhi is alone even at press conferences. Even his MVA colleagues are not with him because he is safe only when he is alone," Nadda said. Slamming Rahul for displaying pocket-sized version of the Constitution of India at his rallies, Nadda said: "Now Gandhi roams around carrying the book of Constitution. He has not read the Constitution because Babasaheb Ambedkar has written in the Constitution that reservation cannot be given on the basis of religion. Meanwhile, more than 9.50 crore voters comprising 5,00,22,739 males, 4,69,96,279 females, 6,101 transgenders, will exercise their franchise on Wednesday to elect 288 representatives to the Maharashtra Assembly.

Campaigning draws to a close, high-stake polls next

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Not all the BJP allies supported these slogans. Ajit Pawar, distanced himself from them. Deputy Chief Minister Devendra Fadnis attempted to clarify the meaning of the slogans, leading to confusion within the ruling alliance. The MVA alliance countered the ruling combine's rhetoric by focusing on issues like caste-based census, social justice, and protecting the Constitution. The Opposition aimed to appeal to voters who felt neglected by the government. The BJP is contesting the November 20 elections in 149 seats, Shiv Sena is in the fray in 81 seats, and the Ajit Pawar-led NCP has fielded candidates in 59 constituencies. Congress has fielded 101 candidates, Shiv Sena (UBT) 95, and NCP (SP) has put up 86 candidates. Rebels are in the fray in over 150

constituencies, with candidates from the Mahayuti and MVA contesting against their party's official nominees. Campaigning for the high-stakes second and final phase of Jharkhand Assembly elections also ended on Monday evening to decide the fate of candidates across 38 constituencies. These include 18 seats from Santhal Pargana, another 18 from North Chotanagpur, and two from South Chotanagpur divisions. Out of these 38 seats, eight are reserved for Scheduled Tribes (STs), three for Scheduled Castes (SCs), and the remaining 27 are general category seats. Prominent candidates in the fray include Chief Minister Hemant Soren (JMM) contesting from Barhait, state BJP president and former CM Babulal Marandi from Dhanwar, and JMM star campaigner Kalpana Soren from Gandey.

Other notable contenders include Assembly Speaker Rabintra Nath Mahato (JMM) from Nala, Leader of Opposition Amar Bauri from Chandankiyari, Congress leaders Deepika Pandey Singh in Mahagama, Irfan Ansari in Jamtara, and Hafizul Hasan in Madhupur. All Jharkhand Students Union (JASU) Party chief Sudesh Mahto will contest from Silli, while Hemant Soren's brother, Basant Soren, is contesting from Dumka. In the 2019 elections, the JMM had won the maximum number of seats, 13, in these constituencies, followed by BJP with 12. The Congress secured eight seats, while Jharkhand Vikas Morcha and JASU Party won two each, and the CPI-ML secured one seat. Due to security concerns, 31 polling stations have been classified as highly sensitive and will operate from 7 am to 4 pm, while other polling stations will remain open until

5 pm. On the final day of campaigning, high-profile leaders from both the BJP-National Democratic Alliance (NDA) and INDIA Bloc held over 20 public meetings. Key figures included Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, Union Ministers Shivraj Singh Chouhan and Chirag Paswan, Assam CM Himanta Biswa Sarma, alongside opposition leaders Rahul Gandhi, Hemant Soren, and Kalpana Soren. The by-elections in Uttar Pradesh too have become a crucial test for both major parties. For the BJP, a strong performance would reaffirm its dominance and help it recover from recent electoral setbacks. For the SP, retaining its seats would strengthen its position as a formidable opposition force. As the stage is set for polling on November 20, the political stakes in Uttar Pradesh have rarely been higher.

What is the real AQI?

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Due to this, the AQI in IQAir will always seem to be fluctuating as it is reacting to changes over an hourly basis. Typically, AQI is calculated based on certain pollutants, such as PM2.5 (particulate matter less than 2.5 microns), PM10 (particulate matter less than 10 microns), ozone, nitrogen dioxide, sulphur dioxide, carbon dioxide, and a few others. According to IQAir, Delhi's

AQI stood at 2314 in VV Block C Station, 2047 in Najafgarh, 2019 in Sonia Vihar, 1967 in Dwarka, Sector-8, 1919 in Punjabi Bagh, 1882 in Mundka, 1794 in Pooth Khurd, Bawana, 1758 in Najafgarh DPCC, Dwarka, Sector -8 at 1702, Rohini at 1672 and 1672 in Narela. As real time data by AQICN.org, the AQI stood 999 at Satyawati College; 408 at Vasundhara, Ghaziabad, 809 at Delhi Institute of Tool Engineering, Wazirpur, 999 at

ITI Jahangirpuri, 936 at Sonia Vihar Water Treatment Plant DJB, 999 at DITE Okhla, 769 at Rohini, 699 at Sri Aurobindo Marg, 725 at Srinivasapuri, 810 at Anand Vihar, 696 at Pooth Kalan, 620 at Mandir Marg. On the other hand, the Central CPCB monitoring stations data showed the AQI in Anand Vihar is at 487, Alipur at 475, Ashok Vihar at 495, Bawana at 495, Burari crossing at 461, Chandni Chowk at 441, DTU at 446, Dwarka 499, Dilshad Garden

at 463, Jahangirpuri at 484, Wazirpur at 490, Vivek Vihar at 485, Rohini at 491, Pusa at 482, Patparganj at 485, Punjabi Bagh at 493, Narela at 479, Mundka at 495, and Lodhi Road at 469. As per CPCB data Noida experienced 'very poor' air quality, with the latest AQI at 384, while Faridabad registered in the 'poor' category with an AQI of 320. Ghaziabad and Gurugram reported 'severe' air pollution levels, with AQIs of 400 and 446, respectively.

No FIR filed 72-hours after Jhansi fire tragedy

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The fire not only claimed innocent lives but also caused extensive damage to critical medical equipment worth Rs 2 Crore. Ventilators, bubble CPAP machines, HFNC machines, and 18 cradles, all essential for treating critically ill newborns, were destroyed. In response, the hospital has set up a temporary neonatal intensive care unit (NICU) in Ward No. 5, where 16 babies have been shifted for treatment. However, the loss of infrastructure has severely hampered the hospital's ability to provide care. The incident has drawn widespread criticism, with opposition leaders accusing the government of systemic negligence. "This is not just a

tragedy but a clear case of administrative failure," said Akhilesh Yadav, national President of Samajwadi Party. "Despite prior warnings, the government ignored the glaring safety lapses." The lack of swift action has raised serious questions about governance and systemic inefficiencies in ensuring the safety of critical medical facilities. The bereaved families continue to await justice, while the medical college remains under scrutiny for its failure to address long-standing safety concerns. The government has though announced compensation for the victims' families but is yet to announce an action plan to prevent such tragedies in the future.

MHA rushes 5,000 paramilitary...

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The Manipur Government, on Monday, also extended the suspension of internet services by two more days till Wednesday in seven districts of the northeastern state. Raising slogans demanding justice for the victims and their families killed by suspected tribal militants in Jiribam district, the protesters stormed into the office complex of the Chief Electoral Officer at Lamphelpat and locked its main entrance door with chains and locks, officials said. The main office doors of the Institute of Bioresources and Sustainable Development (IBSD) at Takyel, and the Directorate of Economics and Statistics located a few hundred metres from the CEO's office were also locked by the protesters. Meanwhile,

the indefinite sit-in staged by COCOMI at Khwairamband market in Imphal demanding a military crackdown against "Kuki Zehmar" militants in the state entered its third day. Manipur has seen a fresh wave of protests after six people went missing from a camp for displaced persons in Jiribam on November 11, following a gunfight between armed men and security forces that resulted in the deaths of 10 Kuki youths. On Sunday, the bodies of two persons, believed to be among the six missing people from Jiribam, were found floating in the Barak river in neighbouring Cachar district of Assam. More than 200 people have been killed and thousands rendered homeless in ethnic violence between Imphal Valley-based Meiteis and adjoining hills-based Kukis in Manipur since May last year.

Delhi facing medical emergency: CM Atishi

From page 1

Monday reported 1,251 fresh farm fire cases, the single-day highest this season, taking the state's total count of such cases to 9,655, Punjab Remote Sensing Centre data showed. "North India is choking because of the Modi government's inaction. Stubble burning incidents have escalated in BJP-ruled states like Haryana, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, and Madhya Pradesh, while AAP-governed Punjab has registered a decline," Atishi said. She pointed to official data and claimed that the reduction in incidents of stubble burning in AAP-ruled Punjab demonstrates effective governance, unlike the approach seen in states governed by the BJP. Atishi criticised the central government's handling of the situation, stating, "The people of Delhi are struggling to breathe, with the elderly and children needing medical support due to the severe pollution. Instead of taking action, the central government is busy playing

politics, pushing the entire region towards a health crisis." She questioned why the central government had not taken steps similar to those implemented in Punjab. "If the Punjab government can reduce stubble burning, why can't BJP-ruled states do the same? The rising pollution levels across North India highlight the failure of the central government's policies," Atishi added. In a separate press conference, Environment Minister Gopal Rai said the Delhi government has directed the health department to form a special task force at LNJP Hospital to handle medical emergencies related to the pollution. "I have directed the health department to form a special task force at LNJP Hospital to address medical emergencies," Rai said. "If the central government had collaborated and acted in a timely manner, people in Delhi wouldn't have to face these hazardous conditions," he said. Meanwhile, Municipal

Corporation of Delhi (MCD) school teachers accused the administration of neglecting their health by forcing them to come to school to take online classes amid deteriorating air quality. Delhi Environment Minister Gopal Rai said the government is taking all necessary measures to tackle air pollution and will implement additional steps, including the odd-even vehicle rationing scheme, based on expert advice and requirements. In response to a question about the odd-even scheme, Rai said: "From our side, the Delhi government is taking all the necessary steps at our level. We are monitoring everything closely and making decisions on a daily basis. We will consult experts and take all required measures." Vehicles with registration numbers ending in even digits (0, 2, 4, 6, 8) are allowed on the roads on even dates, while those with registration numbers ending in odd digits (1, 3, 5, 7, 9) are permitted on odd dates.

Kailash Gahlot goes to BJP, Somesh Shoukeen comes to AAP

From page 1

Gahlot joined the BJP at its headquarters in the presence of Union Ministers Manohar Lal Khattar and Harsh Malhotra, Delhi unit president Virendra Sachdeva, party vice president Baijayant Jay Panda and national media head Anil Baluni among others. "Some people must be thinking that this decision was taken overnight and under someone's pressure. I want to tell them that I have never done anything under anyone's pressure to date... I am hearing that an attempt is

being made to build a narrative that it was done under the pressure of the Enforcement Directorate and the Central Bureau of Investigation... all this is wrong," he said, adding "The fact is that the AAP compromised its values". He claimed that he has never acted under anyone's pressure. Gahlot said "maintaining good relations with the Centre is essential for Delhi's development", as he accused the AAP government of constantly being in a fight with the central government led by the BJP. "Be it the

Chief Minister or ministers, they were picking fights with the Centre over smallest of issues all the time," he alleged, claiming that he maintained good relations with the Central government, including the Lieutenant Governor Gahlot said people like him joined the AAP not out of personal ambitions but for Delhi's development and that he has joined the BJP for the same reason. Gahlot praised Prime Minister Narendra Modi's leadership and agenda. He accused the AAP of compromising the values which attracted people in

large numbers to its fold following its birth as a political party after the Anna Hazare-led anti-corruption movement. People saw hope in a person, an apparent reference to AAP convener Arvind Kejriwal, and the party's ideology but those values were compromised. They have become "khas" (special) from "aam" (ordinary), Gahlot claimed. The BJP is hopeful that Gahlot's induction into the party will boost its prospects in the upcoming assembly polls as it looks to wrest power from the AAP. Sachdeva said Gahlot, a two-

term MLA and an advocate, is a leader known for his good work. Meanwhile, AAP National Convener Arvind Kejriwal reacted to Delhi Minister Kailash Gahlot's resignation and defection to the BJP, stating that Gahlot was free to make his choice. Speaking to reporters, he said, "He is free; he can go wherever he wants". On the other hand, former Matiala MLA from Congress, Somesh Shoukeen joined the AAP, a day after Gahlot resigned from the party. Welcoming Shoukeen to the AAP fold, Kejriwal said his joining will not only give a

boost to the party in rural Delhi but also in other parts of the National Capital. Kejriwal is hopeful that Shoukeen, known as a 'Delhi-dehat' leader may help to influence the traditional Jat dominated seats here. Before the AAP came to power, the people living in Delhi-Dehat were neglected and cut off from the main city, Kejriwal said. The AAP government improved connectivity, opened schools, hospitals, mohalla clinics and stadiums, and provided other facilities in outer Delhi areas, bringing them at par with other parts of the city, he said.

Enforce GRAP IV strictly: SC

From page 1

First implemented in 2017, GRAP is a set of anti-air pollution measures followed in the Capital and its vicinity according to the severity of the situation. It classifies the air quality in the Delhi-NCR under four different stages: Stage 1 - 'poor' (AQI 201-300), Stage 2 - 'very poor' (AQI 301-400), Stage 3 - 'severe' (AQI 401-450) and Stage 4 - 'severe plus' (AQI above 450). On Sunday, the CAQM announced stricter pollution control measures for the Delhi-NCR under GRAP-4, effective from 8 am on Monday, including a ban on

truck entry and a temporary halt on construction at public projects. The CAQM issued the order as Delhi's Air Quality Index (AQI) worsened, reaching 441 at 4 pm and rising to 457 by 7 pm due to unfavourable weather conditions. According to the order, no trucks would be allowed into Delhi except for those carrying essential items or using clean fuel (LNG/CNG/BS-VI diesel/electric). Non-essential light commercial vehicles registered outside Delhi will also be prohibited, except for EVs and CNG and BS-VI diesel ones.

Amid GRAP-IV implementation, 10,000 challans issued for non-possession of PUC

SAUMYA SHUKLA ■ NEW DELHI

Amid the implementation of Graded Response Action Plan (GRAP) Stage IV, the Delhi Police has issued about 10,000 challans for non-possession of Pollution Under Control (PUC) on vehicular owners and about 1,000 non-destined trucks have been diverted in two days in a bid to ensure strict action on the roads against those flouting measures to keep the Air Quality Index (AQI) in the national Capital from worsening.

On November 15, the Delhi traffic Police department issued a total of 4,852 challans against violators for non-possession of PUCs while on November 15, these numbers were 4,474. These violations were highest in the Western range on both dates including a total of 1,235 and 1,024 on November 15 and 17 respectively.

For End of Life Vehicles, which creates more pollution on the roads, the department also imposed 138 and 155 challans on November 15 and 17 respectively. No vehicle which is older than 15 years is allowed to operate on Delhi



roads, according to orders issued by the National Green Tribunal (2015) and the Supreme Court (2018). For diesel vehicles, this time period is 10 years. A day before, according to the Centre's Decision Support System for Air Quality Management, vehicles contributed 15.8 per cent of Delhi's air pollution. In light of the rising air pollution, Special Commissioner of Police (Traffic) Ajay Chaudhary said that the traffic department is ensuring that tough measures are implemented on the roads in light of GRAP-IV. The police also diverted 423 non-destined trucks on November 15 while the numbers were higher for November 17 as 545 such trucks were diverted in Delhi.

In adherence to the measures, the police also imposed challans on 514 Light Motor Vehicles (LMVs) (BS III petrol and BS IV diesel) on November 15. The numbers rose about 100 per cent on November 17 as 1,130 such LMVs were issued challans. Addl/CP (Traffic) Satyaveer Singh Katara added that the police will continue its drive and ensure that violations are reduced. "We are doing the best we can to take strict actions against violators and help to ensure that these do not make the aqi better in the national Capital. We are continuously carrying drives and deploying extra personnels to manage traffic."

The police also booked four vehicles for carrying uncovered construction and waste material on November 15 while it issued five challans on November 17. It also decongested 14 traffic points on November 15. Deputy Commissioner of Police (Traffic) Shashank Jaiswal shared, "We are doing our best including motorcycling patrolling and deployment of cranes to remove vehicles amid the rising air quality index."

MCD issues challans worth more than Rs 3 crore in six months

SAUMYA SHUKLA ■ NEW DELHI

In a bid to tackle with the rising air pollution in the national Capital, the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) has sprung to action and issued challans worth more than Rs 3 crores in a period of six months for violations at construction and demolition (C&D) sites apart from constituting 372 surveillance teams in Delhi to implement the Winter Action Plan 2024-25.

At a time when the citizens are reeling with the health hazards associated with the worsening AQI, an official data by the MCD reveals that a total of 1,372 challans amounting to Rs 2,69,10,000 for violations at C&D sites for the period April to October in this year has been issued and a total of 16,85,000 has been realized while there has been no challan issued for open burning. The maximum challan has been issued in October (398), followed by August (195), April (176), September (173), May (159), July (152) and June (119).



The surveillance teams consist of a total of 1,295 officers to check the open burning, illegal C&D waste dumping, checking of C&D sites and dust on roads under its jurisdiction. In this, for inspection of C&D waste, a total of 75 teams consisting of 301 personnel are deployed in day and 71 teams consisting 261 personnel are deployed at night. For inspecting open or biomass burning, 113 teams

consisting of 350 personnel are deployed in day and 113 teams consisting 383 personnel are deployed at night. An official data of the MCD also revealed that a total of 10,953 End of Life Vehicles (ELVs) have been impounded during the period April 2023 to September 2024 and further action of doing so has been expedited at zonal level. Earlier, Delhi Pollution Control Committee (DPCC)

had identified various micro sources of air pollution related to different agencies for 13 hotspots (Narela, Bawana, Mundka, Wazirpur, Rohini, R.K. Puram, Okhla, Jahangirpuri, Anand Vihar, Vivek Vihar, Punjabi Bagh, Ashok Vihar and Dwarka). Accordingly, the MCD, to combat air pollution in the vicinity of hotspots, has appointed Nodal Officers (Deputy Commissioner of Zones).

"In order to strengthen ground level implementation, Monitoring Committee of each revenue District (11 Districts) has been constituted by Department of Environment, GNCTD, to coordinate all the specific measures for mitigation of air pollution during winter months to implement GRAP guidelines, conduct field visits and gap analysis of shortcomings," a senior official of MCD stated, adding that 1,74,166 trees and 2,21,426 shrubs have been planted in the civic body's jurisdiction for the period April 2024 to October 2024 against the tar-

get 2,36,000 trees and 3,83,000 shrubs. It has a fleet of 195 Water Sprinklers or Jetting machines and 30 mobile Anti-smog gun (ASGs) which have been deployed on various roads to abate dust pollution. "The frequency of water sprinklers deployment has been increased in the hotspots area as per the various stages of GRAP" the officer said. Further, the MCD has installed 20 ASGs at its various facilities, 15 AGSs at identified High Rise Buildings of MCD in compliance with the direction of Lieutenant Governor Vinai Kumar Saxena, and 95 ASGs at 32 construction sites. To mitigate pollution occurring from the dust particles due to the broken roads, the MCD has repaired roads in a length of 90 km during the period from April to October, 2024. A senior official also said that MCD has repaired approximately 11,398 potholes covering an area of 34,853 square meter from April to October.

BJP holds symbolic mask distribution campaign

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi BJP on Monday held a symbolic mask distribution campaign held at the Krishi Bhawan Gate of the Central Secretariat Metro Station in a bid to initiate public discussions on the Delhi government's inaction regarding rising pollution levels.

With the AQI level in the national Capital surpassing 475, the campaign aimed to raise public awareness about the necessity of wearing masks which was led by Delhi BJP President Virendra Sachdeva.

Addressing the media, he stated that Delhiites are being forced to breathe toxic air as the pollution levels have reached an AQI of 475. He criticized the Delhi government's performance over the past decade, blaming it for the health issues faced by the public, such as coughs and colds.

He posed a direct question to the Delhi government, pointing out that even the imposition of GRAP-4 hasn't



reduced pollution. "Rather than imposing restrictions, efforts should focus on reducing dust in Delhi and address-

ing stubble burning in Punjab, a matter on which the AAP leadership remains silent," he said.

He also referred to a recent letter by the former Delhi Minister Kailash Gahlot, who was inducted in the BJP on

Monday, discussing pollution, terming it a strong rebuttal to Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal's claims of numerous measures to combat pollution.

"Managing events will not resolve pollution; consistent work throughout the year is required," he claimed. South Delhi BJP MP Ramvir Singh Bidhuri highlighted that the World Health Organization (WHO) has declared Delhi the most polluted capital in the world. He held Arvind Kejriwal solely responsible, citing the failure to improve public transport over the past decade.

"While there were 7,000 buses in 2013, the number has now reduced to 3,500," Bidhuri said, mentioning the Supreme Court's acknowledgment of Delhi's poorly maintained roads as a significant contributor to pollution. He claimed that additionally, incidents of stubble burning in Punjab have reportedly tripled, turning Delhi into a gas chamber.

LG Saxena monitors trial run of anti smog spray in Dwarka

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Lt Governor V K Saxena on Monday monitored the trial run of anti smog spray in Dwarka as the city is reeling under severe pollution and AQIs levels averaging around 1,000, a Delhi Development Authority (DDA) press statement said. This innovative project represents Delhi's first static anti-smog drive, underscoring the DDA's commitment, under the guidance of Lt Governor Saxena, to implementing cutting-edge environmental solutions.

A strategically chosen 550-meter stretch along Road No. 224, extending from the junction of Road No. 201-224 to Sector 6 Marg, has been designated for this pilot initiative. The installation features 14 existing electric poles, each outfitted with 30 misting nozzles positioned at a height of three meters. This comprehensive setup is designed to maximize pollutant reduction and enhance air quality in the



area. Supporting the misting operations, four large water tanks, each with a capacity of 5,000 liters, have been installed. These tanks supply RO-treated water to ensure the effectiveness and purity of the mist generated. Additionally, the system incorporates sustainable practices by utilizing the resulting wastewater for roadside plantation efforts, thereby contributing to the region's greenery and environmental health. To evaluate the efficacy of this anti-smog system, NEERI has been requested to conduct an

in-depth study to assess the impact of the misting technology on ambient air quality, providing valuable data to inform future environmental strategies and expansions across Delhi. "In light of the severe air quality index readings in Delhi, it is crucial that we adopt innovative and sustainable measures to protect the health and well-being of our residents," Saxena said during the inauguration ceremony. "This anti-smog misting system is a significant step forward in our ongoing efforts to mitigate pollution and create a healthier living environment for all," he said.

AAP Government inducts Nangloi MLA Raghuvinder Shokeen in Delhi Cabinet

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

In a bid to woo Jat voters, the AAP government on Monday inducted Nangloi MLA Raghuvinder Shokeen into the Delhi cabinet, a day after transport minister Kailash Gahlot quit the party. Shokeen is a prominent face in Nangloi, which is Jat dominated constituency. The move is being seen as to intact the Jat electorate.

At a press conference, senior AAP leader and former deputy chief minister Manish Sisodia said AAP supremo Arvind Kejriwal has decided that Shokeen will be the Cabinet minister in Delhi government. The 57 year old leader, who is a civil engineer, has served as the Member of Legislative Assembly (MLA) for two terms from Nangloi Jat. Prior to that, he was elected as a councillor for two terms.

"As it is often said about the AAP, it is a party of educated people. Arvind Kejriwal himself is highly educated, and so



is his team. Raghuvinder Shokeen has also been a Civil Engineer. He has served as an MLA twice from Nangloi Jat and before that, he was a councillor twice. He has contributed to various sectors under the Delhi government at different times and has been actively engaged in politics in rural Delhi," Sisodia said, expressing confidence that Shokeen will serve the people of Delhi and will fulfill all the responsibilities assigned to him with utmost dedication. "Additionally, he will emerge as the voice of rural Delhi, the area he represents," he asserted. Further, Shokeen said the AAP has always taken all communities together. "First of all,

I want to thank all senior leaders of the party, including Kejriwal and Sisodia, that they have given me this opportunity. The AAP has always taken all the communities together, while the BJP has always worked against Jats be it farmers' protest, wrestlers' issue, or Haryana election," Shokeen alleged.

When asked about Gahlot's induction into the BJP, Sisodia said, "It is up to him. He has been with us for a long time. If he wants to work with BJP, that is his decision." Meanwhile, expressing his gratitude to the party and Arvind Kejriwal, Raghuvinder Shokeen said, "I thank Arvind Kejriwal, Manish Sisodia, and the entire top leadership of the party for giving me this opportunity. The AAP has always worked by including every section of society, while the BJP has consistently worked against the Jat community, whether it was during the farmers' protest, the issue of wrestlers, or the Haryana elections."

CSS body makes slew of demands to mitigate health impact of severe pollution levels

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Highlighting the alarming deterioration in Delhi's air quality, a body representing the Central Secretariat Service (CSS) officers on Monday demanded work-from-home, staggered working hours and air purifiers in all office buildings to mitigate the health impact of the severe pollution levels.

In a letter to the Secretary of the Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT), the association said that poor air quality has also had a noticeable effect on workplace productivity with employees experiencing symptoms such as respiratory issues, eye irritation, fatigue and general discomfort. "It has become imperative to take urgent measures to ensure the well-being of all, particularly those engaged in government services," said the letter by the CSS Forum.

It said continuous exposure to hazardous air quality is lead-

ing to a surge in respiratory ailments and other health issues among employees and their families. "The discomfort caused by poor air quality is affecting the efficiency and output of the workforce," the CSS Forum said. The association said that alarming deterioration in air quality, with the Air Quality Index (AQI) persistently hovering around hazardous levels, especially to those with pre-existing conditions, the elderly and the children.

It has significantly impacted the day-to-day lives of residents and employees working in the capital, said the letter written by Ashutosh Misra, the General Secretary of the CSS Forum. It suggested workplace adjustments like implementing work-from-home policies or staggered office timings till the situation eases out. The CSS officers association also sought provisions of air purifiers in all central gov-

ernment office buildings to improve indoor air quality. "Ensure that employees are provided with N95 masks and other necessary protective equipment," Misra said. The CSS Forum is an association of CSS officers who form the backbone of the central secretariat working. He also asked the DoPT Secretary to issue comprehensive guidelines for all central government offices on measures to combat air pollution and safeguard employees' health.

The association also suggested carpooling, use of public transport and adopt energy efficient office operations. People complained of itchy and watery eyes as a dense layer of smog continued to envelop the national capital. Delhi's AQI was recorded at 484, the worst this season, at 8 am on Monday. The AQI worsened further to 491 at two pm, according to the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB).

Cops book 17,400 first time offenders in city till September 15

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Police have booked 17,400 first-time offenders in three districts and two units of the national capital this year till September 15. In a reply to RTI, the Delhi Police said that a total of 17,404 people were booked for the first time in North Delhi, Rohini, West Delhi Railway and Delhi Metro. According to official data, 3,486 people were booked for the first time in North Delhi, 5,089 people were booked for the first time in Rohini, 8,123 in the west district, 420 in Delhi Metro and 286 in Railways.

The police said that more than 1.50 lakh people were nabbed in 2023 who were first-time offenders and over 1.49 lakh people were nabbed in 2022. "The first-time offenders usually begin with minor offenses like selling liquor, drugs, fights and other petty crimes. However, these crimes can escalate to more serious crimes

in many cases," a senior police officer said.

"We have interrogated many first-time offenders who are either hired by criminal gangs or are influenced by movies where they see the lavish lifestyle of criminals. Such first-time offenders also want to lead sumptuous lives," the officer added.

He said that many youths are also involved in cyber crimes and they harass people by making fake IDs. "Police teams arrested many youths, who are first-time offenders and they were lured into cyber criminal gangs after looking at the lifestyle the gang members are leading," the officer stated.

Many young men start defrauding people just to purchase super-bikes, cars and expensive shoes. Such people are totally unaware that police work round the clock to nab them and put them behind the bars, said the officer. Another police officer said that parenting is an important factor.

Dalit student alleges casteist slurs, assault by principal at DU college

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

A Dalit student at Delhi University's Shaheed Bhagat Singh College filed a police complaint alleging that its principal hurled casteist slurs and assaulted him after he was falsely accused of sending obscene messages on the official WhatsApp group of his department.

However, Principal Arun Kumar Attri denied the allegations, claiming the student was being manipulated by a faculty member against whom an inquiry is underway for taking appointment and promotion on fake and fabricat-

ed experience certificate. The allegations by the student have sparked protests by student groups. Students from other universities like JNU gathered at the college on Monday demanding the principal's resignation. The student, a third-year BA Hindi Honours student, claimed the incident caused him mental trauma and defamation. He has also written to the University Vice-Chancellor and the National Commission for Scheduled Castes, seeking action against those involved. In his complaint, the student detailed the events, stating

that on October 24, a classmate's phone was allegedly hacked, and objectionable content, including links to obscene videos, was shared in the department's WhatsApp group. He claimed to have helped fix the classmate's phone to prevent further misuse. However, during a preliminary investigation initiated by the principal he was accused by some students of sending the messages. "Despite my full cooperation, I was subjected to intense scrutiny, including having my phone searched without my consent, which violated my right to privacy,"



he stated in the letter. The student alleged that some teachers pressured him to admit to the allegations and threatened him with expulsion. "When I refused to accept the false charges, Principal Arun Kumar Attri physically assaulted me. He also made casteist remarks, asking why I disclosed my Dalit identity and threatened to expel me if I spoke about the incident," the letter claimed.

The student added that he faced severe humiliation when he returned to college, with peers treating him as a criminal, which affected his

mental health. "These actions have hurt my self-esteem. I am under immense mental tension and have even had suicidal thoughts," he wrote, requesting urgent legal action. However, Principal Attri said the allegations are "completely false" and the complaint is an attempt to malign him and the college. "The allegations of casteist slurs and assault are completely false. The student was found guilty by a disciplinary committee of sending obscene messages and hacking WhatsApp accounts. However, to protect his career, the college refrained from filing a cyber cell complaint

and instead counselled him, warning him for the future. This complaint is an attempt to malign me and the college," Attri told PTI. Furthermore, the All India Students Association (AISA) unit of JNU and DU gheraoed the principal's office on Monday in Shaheed Bhagat Singh College demanding action.

The protests reportedly disrupted classes, prompting the college to announce a shift to online teaching. In a notification, the administration cited "deteriorating air pollution" as the reason for the move.

BJP's 'chota popat' jibe at Rahul after he mocks PM Modi's slogan

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

After Rahul Gandhi's swipe at Prime Minister Narendra Modi's 'Ek hai toh safe hai' slogan, the BJP hit back at the Congress leader on Monday, calling him "chota popat" which it claimed was coined by Shiv Sena founder Bal Thackeray to mock him. The party also slammed Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge over his "poisonous snakes should be killed" barb, saying it shows the party's Emergency mindset which likens rivals to snakes and incites violence against them. Earlier in the day, claiming a link between the BJP's slogan and the Dharavi redevelopment project being given to the Adani Group, Rahul Gandhi pulled out two posters from a safe he had brought to his press conference in Mumbai -- one featuring a picture of industrialist Gautam Adani and



Prime Minister Modi along with the caption "Ek hai toh Safe hai" and another showing a map of the project. "It was a very low-level press conference. Bringing a safe and creating drama around it, holding of this kind of press conference by the so-called top leader of the so-called national party does not suit Rahul Gandhi and the Congress," BJP MP and national spokesperson Sambit Patra said reacting to Rahul Gandhi's jibe.

"Today I say this from this platform and in Rahul Gandhi's language that 'Chota popat ne kiya hei Congress ko chauhat' (he has ruined the Congress). His name is Rahul Gandhi," the BJP leader said. "I saw an interview of Bal Thackeray where he referred to Rahul Gandhi as chota popat. From today onwards, Rahul Gandhi's name is going to be 'chota popat'. This name will now be there on every child's lips in Maharashtra," he said.

The BJP also criticised Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge. Addressing a rally in Sangli on the penultimate day before the campaigning for the Maharashtra assembly polls concluded, Kharge used the "killing the poisonous snake" analogy in his speech. "If there is anything which is politically the most dangerous in India is the BJP and RSS. They are like poison. If a snake bites, the person (who is bitten) dies. Such a poisonous snake should be killed," said Kharge. Flaying Kharge over his remarks, Patra said, "The BJP condemns it." "It is the mindset of Emergency because of which you liken your rivals with snakes and incite violence by calling for killing them," he said, asserting that Rahul Gandhi and the Congress will get a befitting reply from people on November 23, when election results in Maharashtra and Jharkhand assembly polls will be declared.

Farmers' bodies announce Delhi march on December six to press Centre to accept their demands

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ CHANDIGARH/NEW DELHI

The Samyukta Kisan Morcha (Non-Political) and the Kisan Mazdoor Morcha on Monday announced that farmers will march towards Delhi on December six to press the Centre to accept their various demands, including a legal guarantee of MSP for crops. The decision was taken at a meeting of farmer leaders in Chandigarh. The protesting farmers have been camping at Shambhu and Khanauri border points between Punjab and Haryana since February 13, when their 'Delhi Chalo' march, spearheaded by the SKM (Non-Political) and the KMM, was stopped by security forces. Addressing the media in Chandigarh, KMM leader Sarwan Singh Pandher said after a long wait, they have decided to head towards Delhi. "We will move towards Delhi on December 6," he said. Pandher charged the Centre with not holding any talks with the farmers to discuss



their demands. "We have been left with no option. We waited peacefully for the government (to reach out) for nine months. But now we will head towards Delhi," he added. The farmers will move towards the national capital in batches from the Shambhu border. Tejveer Singh of the Bharatiya Kisan Union (Shaheed Bhagat Singh) said they have been camping at the two border

points for 280 days and the Centre has not held any talks with them since February 18. Last week, the farmers announced that they would intensify their agitation and start a fast unto death from November 26. Farmer leader Jagjit Singh Dallewal will observe the fast. Besides a legal guarantee of minimum support price (MSP) for crops, the farmers

are demanding a farm debt waiver, pension for farmers and farm labourers, no hike in electricity tariff, withdrawal of police cases and "justice" for the victims of the 2021 Lakhimpur Kheri violence, reinstatement of the Land Acquisition Act, 2013, and compensation to the families of the farmers who died during a previous agitation in 2020-21.

UK is committed to foster deeper cooperation with India: British Govt

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The UK is committed to foster deeper cooperation with India as it is a "vital" partner and one of the fastest growing economies in the world, British Minister for Indo-Pacific Catherine West said on Monday as she embarked on a two-day visit to the country. West will continue to unlock the full potential of the UK-India partnership and drive forward greater growth for both countries building upon the ambitions set out by Foreign Secretary David Lammy during his visit to New Delhi in July, a British government readout said. She will also reiterate that the UK remains committed to negotiating a mutually beneficial free trade agreement and bilateral investment treaty, it added. "I am delighted to be visiting India for the first time as Minister for the Indo-Pacific," West said. "As one of the fastest growing economies in the



world, India is a vital partner," she said. Minister West's visit will include a meeting at the Ministry of External Affairs where she will reinforce the UK's commitment to a stronger partnership and the importance of the enduring links between people of the two nations, the readout noted. The two sides are expected to review the overall situation in the Indo-Pacific and explore ways to bolster cooperation in the region during West's visit to India. During an education roundtable at the British Council, the Minister will learn more about the unique "living bridge" between the UK and India, rep-

resenting the 1.7 million people in the UK with Indian heritage and connecting our two countries, it said. The British minister is also scheduled to visit the Jama Masjid where she will learn about its history and architecture, it said. West's visit to New Delhi comes nearly four months after India and the UK firmed up a mega technology security initiative that sets out a bold new approach for collaboration in a range of "priority" sectors including telecom, critical minerals, semiconductors and artificial intelligence. The initiative was firmed up during Lammy's trip in July. In 2021, India and the UK adopted the 10-year roadmap to expand ties in the key areas of trade and economy, defence and security, climate change and people-to-people connections among others. West's visit to India follows a two-day trip to Bangladesh, where she reaffirmed UK support for the interim government's work to build a more prosperous and democratic future for the country.

BJP, Congress seek seven days from EC to respond to poll code violation complaints

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The Congress and the BJP have sought seven days from the Election Commission (EC) to respond to poll code violation complaints filed by them against each other in Jharkhand and Maharashtra, sources said Monday. In the wake of the BJP and the Congress lodging complaints against each other with the EC for poll code violations, the election panel on Saturday had asked the presidents of the two parties to comment on the charges levelled against their leaders. The EC wrote separate letters to Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) president J P Nadra and Congress chief Mallikarjun Kharge, asking them to comment on the complaint of the other. The Commission exchanged the complaints between the two parties while seeking their responses. The EC has sought formal responses from both the party



presidents by 1 pm on Monday (November 18). Now the two parties have sought from the EC seven more days to send their respective responses. While the Congress had accused Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Home Minister Amit Shah of violating the poll code, the BJP had lodged complaint against Congress leader Rahul Gandhi. While seeking their com-

ments, the poll panel had reminded them of the Commission's earlier advisory to them during the Lok Sabha election to keep star campaigners and leaders under check so that public decorum is not flouted and the model code is followed in its letter and spirit during campaigning. Top leaders of the two parties are campaigning in Jharkhand and Maharashtra for the ongoing Assembly polls.

SC hold order to President's Secretary on Rajoana mercy plea

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Monday put on hold its order directing President Droupadi Murmu's Secretary to place before her the mercy petition of death row convict Balwant Singh Rajoana, convicted in the 1995 assassination case of then Punjab chief minister Beant Singh, for consideration. After the order was passed in the morning, Solicitor General Tushar Mehta argued that it should not be given effect as there are "sensitivities" involved in the issue and that it be heard on Friday. Mehta told the bench that the file is with the Home Ministry and not the President. The bench agreed to the SG's request and posted the matter for hearing on Monday. Earlier in the day, a bench of Justices BR Gavai, PK Mishra and KV Viswanathan requested the President to consider the plea within two weeks. "In spite of the matter being specifically kept today none appeared for Union



of India. The bench assembled only for this case," the bench said, by holding the earlier order directing Secretary to take a decision by President in two weeks. The then Punjab Chief Minister and 16 others were killed in a blast at the entrance of the Civil Secretariat in Chandigarh on August 31, 1995. A special court sentenced Rajoana to death in July 2007. Rajoana has said that a mercy petition under Article 72 of the Constitution was moved by the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee (SGPC) on his behalf in March 2012. On May 3 last year, the SC had refused to commute his death sentence and said the competent authority could deal with his mercy plea.

RSS urges Govt to resolve Manipur conflict 'sincerely'

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) has condemned the latest violence in Manipur and demanded the government, both at the Centre and the state, that they "sincerely" resolve the conflict. "It is unfortunate that 19 months old violence in Manipur starting from May 3, 2023 has remained unresolved. Due to the ongoing violence, innocent people have immensely suffered," the Manipur unit of the RSS said in a statement on Sunday. "The RSS Manipur prant' strongly condemns the 'inhuman, brutal and merciless acts of killing of women and children,' the statement said. "The act is cowardly and is against the principles of humanity and co-existence," it said, adding, "The central and state government should sincerely resolve the ongoing conflict at the earliest." The English version of the statement, originally issued in Manipuri, was released by the Manipur unit of the Vishva Samvad Kendra, the RSS' media wing, on Facebook. The Manipur unit of the Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad (ABVP), the RSS' youth wing, also condemned the violence and said both the Centre and the state government have "failed to ensure the safety and normalcy" in the state. "The ongoing violence in Manipur since May 3, 2023 has plummeted to unprecedented depths with the heinous abduction and murder of six innocent civilians, including three women and three children, among them a seven-months-



old infant," it said in a statement on Monday. "The ABVP Manipur vehemently condemns the brutal killings of the six abducted individuals, the burning of houses by armed militants, attacks on police and CRPF personnel in Ziribam," it added. The RSS youth wing further said the destruction of properties belonging to democratically elected leaders by "enraged mobs" was deeply disturbing. "We believe timely intervention could have saved the six lives lost. The concerned authorities have failed in their duties, and both state and central governments have failed to ensure the safety and normalcy in Manipur," it said. "The ABVP Manipur demands immediate action for restoration of peace and order, protection for innocent civilians and accountability for the failed response," it added. The RSS affiliate called for "patience and peace" as it appealed to the people to stand together against violence and work towards building "a harmonious Manipur." "The ABVP Manipur stands in solidarity with the affected families and demands swift action to prevent further unrest," it added.

Delhi HC seeks CBI's stand on Chidambaram's plea in INX media case

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court on Monday sought the stand of the CBI on pleas by former Union Minister P Chidambaram and his son Karti Chidambaram seeking to defer arguments on framing of charges in the INX media case. Justice Manoj Kumar Ohri issued notice to the investigating agency on the petitions and said "let response be filed". The Congress leaders argued that the arguments on framing of charges ought not to commence before the trial court as the investigation was still pending. CBI's counsel said there was sufficient material to show

"demand of bribe" and framing of charges should not be stopped on account of any pending investigation. The CBI had registered its case on May 15, 2017, alleging irregularities in a Foreign Investment Promotion Board (FIPB) clearance granted to the INX Media group for receiving overseas funds of Rs 305 crore in 2007 during P Chidambaram's tenure as Finance Minister. The accused and bribe give Indrani Mukerjea had already confessed that she had paid bribe to Karti to save from Income Tax notice for illegally bringing FDI in the TV channel. She is already turned as Approver in the case. In the pleas before the high court, Chidambaram and Karti,



who were represented by senior advocate Sidharth Luthra and advocate Akshat Gupta, have asked a trial court order refusing to defer the arguments of charge. Luthra said the chargesheet filed by the CBI in the case was incomplete and the accused persons were

yet to be given access to all the material collected by the agency as probe on certain aspects was going on. "You have been doing investigation since 2017. If you choose to be lackadaisical, should I proceed to argue on charge? It can't be an unfair battle," he

CJI Khanna recuses himself from hearing pleas in case related to illegal felling of trees in Delhi Ridge area

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Chief Justice of India Sanjiv Khanna on Monday recused himself from hearing pleas related to the case on illegal felling of several hundred trees in the Delhi Ridge area. Earlier, a bench headed by the then CJI DY Chandrachud, since retired, had sought a personal affidavit of Delhi Lieutenant Governor VK Saxena in the case which had also sought initiation of contempt proceedings against certain DDA officials. The CJI, who was sitting on the bench with Justice Sanjay Kumar, said, "One thing I would like to point out that when I was the NALSA chairman, I had gone to Patna and with Delhi LG had toured jails there. So, it will not be appro-



priate for me to hear the plea...". The bench ordered the listing of the pleas before a bench of which the CJI is not part in the week commencing November 27. A lawyer pointed out that there were orders passed by two other benches. "We know," the CJI responded. On November 7, the top court had asked the Delhi Development Authority (DDA) about the measures undertaken to restore the

Delhi Ridge area, where several hundred trees were allegedly felled illegally, and sought the extent of plantation done by the authorities. The bench had said it would introduce a monitoring system to ensure planted trees were surviving. It had wondered if any independent mechanism was in place to ascertain the number of trees planted. The bench had asked the DDA counsel and the petitioner to inform it about the status of trees felled, consequential actions and the monitoring mechanism. However, the then CJI-led bench did not pass any order on November 8, the last working day of Justice Chandrachud. The ridge is an extension of Aravalli Hill range in Delhi and is a rocky, hilly and forested area.

ICG to host largest National Maritime Search and Rescue Exercise at Kochi

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The Indian Coast Guard (ICG) will host the largest National Maritime Search and Rescue Exercise (SAREX-24) ever held alongside the 22nd National Maritime Search and Rescue (NMSAR) Board Meeting at Kochi, Kerala for two days starting November 28, ICG said here on Monday. Giving details, officials said here this prestigious event themed "Enhancing SAR Capabilities Through Regional Collaboration," is set to redefine maritime safety standard across the region and beyond. The two-day event will feature largest ever real-time simulations aimed at honing the skills required for effective Search and Rescue (SAR) operations, collaborative efforts among regional and international mar-



itime stakeholders. This gathering of maritime expertise will not only enhance SAR capabilities but also strengthen SAR linkages with the participation of more than 40 international observers from partner nations, the event will underscore the essentials of global cooperation in safeguarding lives at sea and advancing maritime security standards. The exercise highlights India's proactive stance in fostering

stronger regional coordination for maritime safety. This initiative demonstrates India's commitment to not only bolstering its own SAR capabilities but also contributing to global maritime safety standards. The event will showcase India's leadership in enhancing operational readiness and establishing stronger regional coordination in maritime safety. The workshop will serve as a crucial platform for sharing best practices and strengthening ties with friendly nations. This increased engagement in international cooperation is pivotal for addressing the complexities of modern maritime challenges. The event's emphasis on regional collaboration reflects India's strategic approach to ensuring comprehensive maritime security and operational excellence.

Yogi repeats Bangladeshi infiltrators script in poll bound Jharkhand

PTI ■ RAJMAHAL (SAHIBGANJ)

Yogi Adityanath, chief minister (CM) of Uttar Pradesh (UP), on Monday launched a strong attack on the Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (JMM)-led coalition in Jharkhand, alleging that under the latter's patronage pockets of the state were converted into hubs of illegal activities by Rohingyas and Bangladeshi infiltrators.

"After the election results on November 23, these infiltrators will be kicked out of Jharkhand, and the JMM-led coalition leaders who looted funds meant for the people will be held accountable," Adityanath said.

He added, "Areas like Rajmahal and Sahibganj have become centres for illegal activities run by Bangladeshi infiltrators and Rohingyas. The JMM-led coalition leaders, who are their rahnuma ('protectors'), will not be spared. Infiltrators will be expelled as soon as the NDA government is formed



in Jharkhand." Addressing a poll rally at Rajmahal in Sahibganj, Adityanath urged the people to be wary of politicians who divide society along caste lines, calling them the enemies of society and the country.

The Uttar UP CM also criticised the JMM-RJD-Congress alliance for undermining the vision of

former prime minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee, who dreamed of a prosperous Jharkhand.

Despite the state's rich natural resources, he pointed out that the people remain poor. Adityanath promised that, under an NDA government, at least 1.5 lakh youth would be provided jobs.

Referring to India's historical divisions, Adityanath said, "When Hindus were divided, they faced slavery and humiliation in Ayodhya, Kashi, and Mathura. Now, it's time for ek rahenge, safe rahenge, na batenge, na katenge (Safe when united, we will not be wiped out if united)."

He asserted that trends indicated the NDA would form the government in Jharkhand with over a two-thirds majority.

"Only a double-engine government, like in Uttar Pradesh, is the solution to issues like infiltration, cow slaughter, and atrocities against women in Jharkhand," Adityanath added.



Punjab reports 1,251 farm fires in a day

PTI ■ CHANDIGARH

Punjab on Monday reported 1,251 fresh farm fire cases, the single-day highest this season, taking the state's total count of such cases to 9,655, according to Punjab Remote Sensing Centre data.

On November 8, Punjab reported 730 farm fire incidents, which was the

highest in a day this season till Monday. Muktsar district on Monday reported 247 stubble burning incidents, the most in the state, followed by Moga (149), Ferozepur (130), Bathinda (129), Fazilka (94) and Faridkot (88).

On the same day in 2022 and 2023, the state reported 701 and 637 active farm fire cases, respectively, as per data.

From September 15 till November 18, Punjab witnessed 9,655 stubble burning incidents, registering around 71 per cent dip in burnings in comparison to the figures reported in the corresponding period of the previous year.

Punjab saw 48,489 and 33,719 farm fire cases during the same period in 2022 and 2023,

respectively. Stubble burning in Punjab and Haryana is often blamed for the rise in air pollution in Delhi-NCR after the harvesting of paddy in October-November. As the window for the Rabi crop -- wheat -- is very short after paddy harvest, some farmers set their fields on fire to quickly clear the crop residue for sowing new crop.

15 booked for ragging, death of student in Gujarat college

PTI ■ PATAN

Police have registered an FIR against 15 students of a medical college in Gujarat's Patan district following the death of an 18-year-old student who was allegedly ragged by them, officials said on Monday. The accused, all second-year MBBS students, allegedly made some juniors, including the victim, stand in a hostel room for more than three hours on Saturday night and subjected them to mental and physical torture, as per the FIR. They were booked for culpable homicide not amounting to murder and other offences. The accused have been suspended from their hostel and college until further orders, said officials from the GMERS Medical College and Hospital in Patan. The victim, Anil Methaniya, a first-year MBBS student, fell unconscious and died allegedly after being made to stand for three hours while being ragged by his seniors in college hostel on Saturday night.

Telangana to acquire 280 acres for Warangal airport

PTI ■ HYDERABAD

The Telangana government has issued orders sanctioning Rs 205 crore for acquiring over 280 acres of land for the development of Mamnoon Airport at Warangal, after GMR Group which manages Hyderabad Airport issued No Objection certificate for operation of the aerodrome. According to the GO issued on Sunday, the Airports Authority of India (AAI) in July 2022, informed the state government that it is ready to develop Warangal Airport for A-320 type of aircraft for IFR (instrument flight rules) operations and is ready to bear the infrastructure cost, operational and maintenance of the proposed airport. A master plan has been prepared for the operation of A-320 type of aircraft for which an additional land measuring 253 acres is required from the state of Telangana, free of cost and free from all encumbrances.

The AAI also wanted the state government to expedite handing over of the required land to the airports body and no objection certificate from Hyderabad International Airport Ltd. As per the concession agreement between GMR Group, which manages Rajiv Gandhi International Airport, and the Ministry of Civil Aviation no new or existing airport shall be permitted by the GoI to be developed as, improved or upgraded into, a domestic or international airport within an aerial distance of 150 km of the Hyderabad Airport before the 25th anniversary of the opening date. Mamnoon is located about 175 km from Hyderabad Airport by road. Telangana Minister Komatireddy Venkat Reddy held at least half a dozen meetings with GMR officials.

Three elephants electrocuted



PTI ■ SAMBALPUR

Three elephants, including a calf, were electrocuted to death after coming in contact with a power line in Odisha's Sambalpur district, a forest official said on Monday.

Divisional Forest Officer (DFO), Rairakhol division, Arabinda Mohanty told PTI that two female adult elephants and a calf died in the incident that took place on Sunday night in Naktideul

area of Sambalpur district. Prima facie, it seems that the elephants came in contact with a live power line laid by poachers to trap wild boars to protect crops, he said.

A special team of forest officials rushed to the spot for an inquiry. Further details about the incident can be known after completion of the probe, the DFO said. The carcasses have been seized. A team of veterinarians would conduct the post-mortem, he added.

UNESCO honour for Indian agricultural scientist

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ KOCHI

Professor Kailash Chander Bansal, a Haryana-born plant biotechnologist and former director of the National Bureau of Plant Genetic Resources under the Indian Council of Agricultural Research, has been honored by the UNESCO by elevating him as a Fellow of the World Academy of Sciences. Prof Bansal is the eighth Indian agricultural scientist who has been accorded this position during the last 45 years.

The fellowship, effective from January 2025, is in recognition of the path breaking work by Prof Bansal in plant biotechnology, including developing genetically modified crops for drought and salt stress tolerance. He has been credited with developing salt resistant paddy variety, which can be grown in arid regions as well as places vulnerable to drought.

Prof Bansal, is expected to advise countries in Africa and

Asia in the promotion of multi-disciplinary sciences for agricultural development and creating policy related issues for sustainable agriculture.

As a plant genetic scientist, Prof Bansal spearheaded the evaluation of 22,000 wheat germplasm accessions at the Indian National Genebank, identifying critical trait-specific reference sets. He also led the National Transgenic Crop Network, advancing India's capabilities in crop improvement.

Prof Bansal earned his doctorate with a gold medal from the Indian Agricultural Research Institute (IARI) and conducted advanced research at the Harvard University under Prof Lawrence Bogorad. He has published over 150 papers in high-impact journals, including Nature Biotechnology and PNAS. One of his unique achievements was the development of genetically modified tomato breed with almost three fold shelf life period.

Campaign ends for high stakes UP Assembly by-poll



BISWAJEET BANERJEE ■ LUCKNOW

The campaign for the nine Assembly by-elections in Uttar Pradesh (UP) concluded on Monday. The election, scheduled for November 20 from 7 am to 6 pm, are regarded as a precursor to the 2027 state Assembly election. Results will be declared on November 23. For Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, the by polls have turned into a matter of prestige following the Bharatiya Janata Party's (BJP) lackluster performance in the recent Lok Sabha Election in the state.

These elections are seen as an opportunity for the BJP to demonstrate its resilience and rebuild its image ahead of the next Assembly election. The BJP is focusing on countering the narrative propagated by the Opposition regarding the abrogation of constitutional provisions and reservations.

The Samajwadi Party (SP) also faces significant pressure in these elections. Having achieved a remarkable performance in the Lok Sabha Election, where it secured 37 seats compared to just five in 2019, the SP now faces the challenge of retaining its momentum. The by-polls are

a crucial test of the party's strategy and its claims of forming the next government in UP. A poor performance could dent the party's credibility and weaken its position in the run-up to the 2027 state elections.

While the INDIA alliance remains intact, its key constituent, the Congress has chosen not to field candidates in the by-polls, instead extending its support to the SP. The Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) has opted to contest all nine seats, despite its recent poor performance in the Lok Sabha Election. The BSP's participation is expected to influence the results by attracting a section of Dalit voters, potentially affecting the prospects of both the BJP and the SP.

Yogi Adityanath has been at the forefront of the Bharatiya Janata Party's (BJP) campaign, visiting each constituency at least twice, holding road shows to galvanise voter support. The BJP has intensified its efforts to wrest key SP-held seats such as Karhal and Katehari while also focusing on retaining its strongholds such as Ghaziabad, Khair, and Phulpur. The saffron party is leaving no stone unturned in its bid to reclaim the

Meerapur seat, which was earlier with the Rashtriya Lok Dal (RLD) before the party switched its alliance to the BJP. Similarly, the BJP has fielded a candidate in Majhwan, previously held by its ally Nishad Party, and is aggressively targeting SP-dominated constituencies such as Kundarki in Moradabad and Sisamau in Kanpur.

The SP led by Akhilesh Yadav, has concentrated its campaign efforts on retaining its hold over key constituencies while countering the BJP's push. Of the nine seats, four were held by the SP, three by the BJP, one by the BJP's ally Nishad Party, and one by the RLD. Eight seats fell vacant after their MLAs were elected to the Lok Sabha earlier this year. The Sisamau seat is the exception, where a bypoll is being held following the disqualification of SP MLA Irfan Solanki after his conviction in a criminal case. The by-elections have become a crucial test for both major parties. For the BJP, a strong performance would reaffirm its dominance and help it recover from recent electoral setbacks. For the SP, retaining its seats would strengthen its position as a formidable opposition force.

Fertilizer shortage causes Farmer unrest in MP

GIRISH SHARMA ■ BHOPAL

A severe fertilizer shortage in Madhya Pradesh (MP) has led to the harassment of farmers across the state. Farmers are coming on the streets protesting against the growing shortage of fertilizers, while there have been reports of farmers committing suicide in want for fertilizers.

One such incident was reported in Guna district on Sunday, the deceased Bhagwati Kirar from Jhagar village, before taking this extreme step, made a video narrating his ordeal he faced with the shortage of fertilizers

and blackmarketing of fertilizers in the market. Even in this situation, the state government is a mute spectator, instead of taking action towards solving the problem, the government has been busy in the by-polls. At present, Chief Minister Mohan Yadav is busy in electioneering in Maharashtra and Jharkhand. The farmers are facing problems due to blackmarketing of fertilizers as sowing has started for wheat, chana, masoor and other crops of Rabi season. The MP Congress has been raising this problems. Leader of the Opposition in the state

Assembly Umang Singhwar wrote a letter to the CM requesting to solve the problem but to no avail. Last month, former CM Digvijay Singh and PCC Chief Jitu Patwari had in a press conference alleged that the state government is doing nothing on the shortage of fertilizers in the State.

In a ridiculous statement, MP Agriculture Minister Endal Singh Kansana said that Russia-Ukraine war is the reason behind shortage of fertilizers in the State. However, he had assured that the State government would bit let this problem continue for long.

Kerala replaces school marks with emojis



PTI ■ KOCHI

Gone are the days when progress cards and grades measured student performance. Instead, emojis and stars will now be used to assess students in their early education stages.

Emojis and stars have already replaced marks or grades for Pre-KG to Class 2 students in many CBSE schools in Kochi, according to school authorities. Starting this academic year, many schools in Kochi have introduced a system of awarding emojis and stars to students from kindergarten to Class 2.

This new programme focuses on evaluating children based on their activities, moving away from the written exams. Traditionally, students receive

marks or grades for their performance. "Imagine the added excitement if these were replaced with emojis like clapping hands, a star, or even a trophy. Such visual cues can have a strong impact, making the feedback more memorable and motivating for students," said a teacher with a CBSE school in Kochi. She added that the new evaluation system has received positive feedback. "Early intervention can help develop social skills in students while also alleviating the pressure of grades. This is the highlight of the new system," she said.

TP Ibrahim Khan, president of the CBSE Management Association, also stated, "This will enhance the students'

skills." According to him, the new system focuses on developing skills such as communication, active learning, and overall health and well-being. "This is part of the New Education Policy (NEP)," Khan claimed.

The pre-kindergarten and two kindergartens, Class 1 and Class 2, have been included in the foundation stage in the policy, he added. Hence, a pattern has been stipulated for these classes, he said. According to Khan, the CBSE has not been officially directed to implement the system in all schools so far. To facilitate a smooth transition, schools held meetings for teachers and developed integrated assessments, said school authorities.



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PAPER WITH PASSION

G20: Delhi to Rio

It is yet another crucial opportunity for world leaders to bridge divides and collaborate on creating a better future

Prime Minister is in Rio de Janeiro to attend the G20 Summit, which is one of the biggest platforms for the world leaders to make collective decisions for the betterment of the world and address the issues confronting the humanity. The 19th G20 Summit brings together world leaders to address some of the most pressing global challenges. Hosted by Brazil, this year's Summit builds on India's successful presidency, which left a lasting impact by inducting the African Union as a permanent member and fostering consensus on divisive issues such as the Ukraine conflict. The summit will feature prominent leaders, including Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, US President Joe Biden and Chinese President Xi Jinping. In Brazil, Modi attends the summit as a member of the G20 Troika, alongside Brazil and South Africa, reflecting India's continued influence in shaping global discourse. The summit's agenda is wide-ranging, reflecting the multifaceted challenges the world faces today. Economic recovery remains a critical priority as nations grapple with the lingering effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and global geopolitical tensions. Issues such as inflation, debt crises and financing for sustainable development are likely to dominate discussions. Simultaneously, climate action will take centre stage, with a focus on enhancing climate financing, accelerating the transition to renewable energy, and achieving the commitments of the Paris Agreement. The geopolitical landscape, particularly the ongoing Ukraine conflict is another focal point. While the issue remains divisive, leaders will seek to find common ground on mitigating its impacts on global food and energy security. The summit is also likely to explore the role of technology in bridging development gaps, emphasising responsible use of artificial intelligence and fostering digital cooperation. For India, the summit is an opportunity to reinforce its leadership on the global stage. As part of the G20 Troika, Modi brings India's vision of "One Earth, One Family, One Future" to the table, advocating for greater inclusivity and collaboration. His interactions with leaders such as Joe Biden and Xi Jinping on sidelines are expected to address key issues like trade, defence partnerships and technology sharing, furthering India's bilateral and multilateral engagements. India's presidency last year emphasised the importance of representing the Global South, a theme that Brazil is expected to continue. This focus on equitable development resonates with nations across Africa, Asia and Latin America, underscoring the need for a more balanced global governance system. For India and Prime Minister Modi, it is a moment to showcase the nation's growing influence and commitment to global solutions, setting the tone for the future of multilateral cooperation. This is one of the big opportunity to bring about meaningful change, hope it is not wasted.



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PICTALK



Riders take part in the MRF MOGRIP Supercross Championship 2024, in Bengaluru

New tentacles of international terrorism



SUDHIR HINDWAN

Proactive leadership is crucial for implementing strategic plans, while swift judicial reforms are needed to handle terrorism cases more effectively

The recent wave of terrorist attacks in Jammu and Kashmir, following the formation of a new state government, has reignited concerns over transnational terrorism. These incidents, marked by escalating violence in vulnerable areas, highlight a disturbing evolution in militant strategies. This resurgence is rooted in multiple factors, each revealing the complexities of the situation.

Firstly, the attacks aim to signal that despite the abrogation of Article 370 and the central government's efforts to stabilise the region, Jammu and Kashmir remain unstable. Secondly, Jammu's expansive forested terrains have become a haven for militants, offering natural cover for guerrilla warfare and hindering security forces. Thirdly, the improved law and order in Kashmir has shifted insurgent focus to Jammu, where vulnerabilities are being exploited. Fourthly, while terrorist activities were temporarily subdued, the resurgence of militancy underscores the persistence of deep-rooted threats.

Lastly, despite the successful Assembly elections and the formation of Omar Abdullah's government, the region continues to grapple with relentless attacks. The situation in Jammu and Kashmir resonates with broader developments in the West Asia. Recent events, such as the targeting of an Israeli ship by Iran-backed Houthi groups in the Red Sea and subsequent retaliatory strikes by Israel, the UK and the US on Houthi positions in Yemen, have heightened regional tensions. The involvement of Hamas and Hezbollah in supporting the Houthis underscores a dangerous convergence of terrorist alliances. The killing of prominent figures like IRGC General Sayyed Razi Mousavi and Hamas Deputy Leader Saleh-al-Arouri has added to the volatility, while Houthi leader Abdul-Malik al-Houthi's aggressive strategies have intensified attacks.

Adding to these concerns are the January 3, 2024, twin blasts in Karman, southern Iran, which left over 85 dead and hundreds injured. This violence has spread



to Lebanon and Syria, where terror networks have previously used locations like Sana, Yemen, as bases for planting explosives in international airports. These incidents reveal two critical trends: the increasing potential for transnational terrorism and the extension of terror operations into global trade routes and economies. Modern terrorist networks demonstrate an unsettling capacity for precision in choosing targets and timings. The persistence of global terrorism is not new. Tragic events, from the Oklahoma City bombing that claimed over 200 lives to the Tokyo subway gas attack, which killed 12 and hospitalised thousands, reveal its devastating history. Other instances, such as the long-running insurgency of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam in Sri Lanka, have inflicted severe casualties and losses. Nations worldwide-be it Russia, Spain, the UK, Italy, Israel, or China-face the unrelenting specter of terrorist violence.

Social inequities, global economic disparities and historical grievances contribute to the conditions that foster extremism. The post-Cold War global order, shaped by power dynamics of major nations, has exacerbated these tensions. For instance, the power network established by the US and its allies in West Asia has sparked resistance in



THE PERSISTENCE OF GLOBAL TERRORISM IS NOT NEW. TRAGIC EVENTS, FROM THE OKLAHOMA CITY BOMBING THAT CLAIMED OVER 200 LIVES TO THE TOKYO SUBWAY GAS ATTACK, WHICH KILLED 12 AND HOSPITALISED THOUSANDS, REVEAL ITS DEVASTATING HISTORY

many regions, deepening conflicts and animosities. In an interconnected world, socio-economic conditions in one region influence those in another, creating a fertile ground for transnational grievances. The rapid dissemination of advanced weaponry and transportation networks has further facilitated the expansion of terrorist activities. Suicide squads and other modern militant tactics have left security apparatuses reeling. It is imperative to reject narratives that romanticise terrorists as freedom fighters and foster cooperation between local communities and law enforcement to dismantle these networks.

A diversified approach, integrating technical expertise and on-the-ground insights, is essential. Specialised training programmes for security personnel to anticipate and respond to emerging threats are crucial. Countering terrorism requires a multifaceted approach, beginning with detailed analysis of major incidents to formulate actionable strategies. Advanced communication networks must be established to intercept terrorist communications effectively, while enhanced intelligence gathering, supported by strengthened local sources, is essential for generating actionable insights. Investment in cutting-edge technology for maintaining secrecy and secu-

ity, along with training specialists in counter-terrorism tactics, is vital to address evolving threats. Dedicated think tanks should be created to develop innovative solutions, and comprehensive training programs for police, intelligence, and military personnel must be prioritised. Proactive leadership among security officials is crucial for implementing strategic plans, while swift judicial reforms are needed to handle terrorism cases more effectively.

These measures must be accompanied by the political will to enforce them effectively. Public awareness and grassroots support play pivotal roles in countering terrorism. Localised insights should inform security measures to ensure they are contextually appropriate and effective. Ultimately, combating terrorism requires a coordinated global effort.

Nations must share intelligence, align strategies, and foster international cooperation to address this pervasive menace. Time is of the essence, as modern terrorists continuously adapt their tactics. Without addressing the underlying socio-political and economic factors that nurture terrorism, efforts will only provide superficial relief.

(Author, a Bharat Gaurav Award recipient, is a professor, HOD, and expert on strategic affairs; views are personal)

Turning missteps and misjudgments into growth

Our capacity for introspection determines the kind of individuals we become. Our personal blunders and societal faux pas can shape us

I believe that we are a sum total of experiences. While most are pleasant, a few leave us red-faced at the very best. It is for us to make the choice to introspect and evolve into a better person. My wife and I gingerly stepped out of the confines of our home after the restrictions imposed during the difficult COVID times had been relatively relaxed.

We thought we had crossed the hurdle. Our optimism was misplaced. We observed many vigilantes hanging out on their balconies to catch the hapless walkers at any time of the day or night and call the PCR. The police would necessarily have to come since a complaint had been raised and then go back, irritated at the complainant. We were still terrified enough to wear a mask. However, a few had to be nudged. My wife would good-naturedly point at her mask as a request to those not wearing one. We encountered a young lady walking with no mask, not even one dangling around her ears. The sensibilities of my wife aroused, she stopped the lady and requested her to comply with the regulations.



My wife was rudely brushed aside. The lady stopped us during the next round, to let us know that she was a doctor who spent long hours in the hospital with a mask on, and her lungs needed fresh air, uninterrupted by a mask. Unaware of a different set of rules for medical professionals, I inquired from a few doctor friends. They were unequivocal in their judgement, the lady in question is an idiot. We have all been guilty of an occasional faux pas at some time or the other. I attended a literature festival at a university, a few days before the lockdown, to speak about my book.

I made a point that communication amongst people should never stop, even if it means communicating on

social media, be it Facebook, Instagram or Tinder. The audience erupted in loud laughter and I preened with pride at my oratory skills. My jubilation was short-lived. I found out over the net during the train back that Tinder was a dating platform. I may choose to call this a blunder, but the simple fact is that it was stupid of me to speak of something about which I did not know.

This foot-in-the-mouth syndrome is nothing new, particularly amongst a certain section of society, who are supposed to be beacons of the good and should be upholding values. A minister in one of the states defended the decision of a medical college to ask the female candidates to declare their virginity in the



SANJAY CHANDRA

admission form because, "Virgin, as per the dictionary, means an unmarried and pure girl. So, all these words are not objectionable." A senior leader observed that electricity must be provided in all villages so that people spend more time watching television than procreating. Another leader mentioned that crimes against women are happening in urban India and not in the villages since we are losing our culture in the cities. The anecdotes narrated above may appear disjointed at a cursory glance. The common thread I detect is the misplaced value system of authority: "My word is supreme."

Nothing gives one the right to dispense half-baked wisdom, not follow the rules, or make discriminatory statements. Our experiences should evolve us. Brazilian educator and philosopher, Paulo Freire, has said aptly, "No one is born fully-formed; it is through self-experience in the world that we become what we are." (The author is an electrical engineer with the Indian Railways and conducts classes in creative writing; views are personal)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

CLOUDS OF WAR

Madam — Apropos of the article 'US-Iran tensions: War clouds over West Asia' (November 16), the analysis of the geopolitics, particularly in the West Asian context, shows warmongering in West Asia in a long-distant future. Beyond doubt, US-Iran tensions are extremely deep-rooted, and no solutions are visible in the near future. The advent of Donald Trump in his second tenure may be seen as intolerant of any terrorism-oriented politics of West Asian countries where Iran, Pakistan, Iraq, Afghanistan, Lebanon, Syria, Palestine, etc., with hundreds of militia, deep state forces, and terrorist organisations, who have no obligations of following or adhering to any international, UNO, or multilateral treaties, conventions, agreements, norms and regulations. Bangladesh is the new entrant of the explosive block.

Such organisations have tacit financial, army and logistic support from these nations while their regular armies execute and control their plans, attacks, hijacks and other disruptive, destabilising and assassination activities. The USA is not solely to blame for West Asian problems and war-ridden Islamic governments rattling guns and bombs as their mainstream administration and geopolitical politics. Obviously, all these countries are devastated and ruined by the compelling influx of illegal immigration from these countries in all European countries, the US, and also India. While Hamas carried out the most sinister attacks on Israel on Oct 7, 2023, the self-annihilation of Hamas and its supportive Hezbollah was on the cards. But the truth is that such organisations supported by their sponsoring governments will never be extinct. These are the façades of the regular armies. It may be seen in European countries that unrest over illegal immigrants is growing. US-Iran enmity is only one of the factors. The world is smarting under the threats of terrorism

Chaos in Imphal



Manipur's Imphal Valley relapsed into chaos after unconfirmed reports that the bodies of all six persons, believed to be women and children missing since November 11, had been recovered from a river along the State's boundary with Assam. As protesters took to the streets, setting vehicles ablaze and attacking the residences of several MLAs in the State capital, Imphal, the

and fighting against it tooth and nail. Vinod Johri | Delhi

BLAME GAME

Madam — Farmers' issues continue to haunt the Government and the fallout from the UPA government's time continues. Blame games are played just to find an escape route for decades. Instead of punishing farmers, the government should find ways of empowering them so that they can explore alternative ways of destroying stubble. High pollution levels affect the locals. Stubble burning is environmentally hazardous, and it should be prevented. The Supreme Court seems to think that if stubble-burning is halted, the air quality in Delhi would improve dramatically. It has asked the neighbouring states to take appropriate action to prevent it. True, there are safer ways of disposing of stubble, but they are costly. The farmers do not have the financial capacity to pluck out the stubble and bury it in the fields where it will become part of the soil. Yet, the sad fact is that the poor

government suspended Internet and mobile data services in seven affected districts of the valley, which is dominated by the non-tribal Meiteis and the surrounding hills, where the tribal Kuki-Zos are in a majority. A curfew was clamped in the three valley districts of Imphal East, Imphal West and Bishnupur. Among the houses of the MLAs targeted was that of Rajkumar Imo Singh, the son-in-law of Chief Minister Nongthombam Biren Singh, whose personal residence on the outskirts of Imphal was also reportedly attacked by a mob on Saturday night. Large groups of people went about asking MLAs to quit if the government was unable to ensure peace and punish killers of women and children.

Dorai Ramani Suresh | Ghaziabad

farmers of Punjab, Uttar Pradesh, Haryana, and Rajasthan are blamed for the poor air quality in Delhi. C K Subramaniam | Chennai

SANJU'S CENTURY STREAK

Madam — Sanju Samson has etched his name in the record books by becoming the first player to score three T20I centuries in a calendar year. This remarkable achievement cements his status as one of the most explosive batters in the shortest format of the game. Samson's stellar run began with his maiden T20I hundred against Bangladesh in Hyderabad on October 12. He reached the century mark in just 40 balls, the second-fastest hundred by an Indian in T20I cricket. His innings was a masterclass in power-hitting, as he smashed 111 off 47 balls, including 11 boundaries and 8 sixes, dismantling the Bangladeshi bowlers.

Jayanthy S Manaiam | Mumbai

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FIRST COLUMN

SEPHORA KIDS SYNDROME

By promoting safe practices, the parents and society can ensure that this trend benefits rather than exploits



SHAINY SHARMA

The beauty industry is continuously evolving, with brands adapting to trends, demographics and consumer behaviour. A notable trend is the rising interest in skincare and beauty among younger audiences, including children and pre-teens, popularly referred to as 'Sephora Kids'. While Sephora does not have a specific kids line, the term reflects a cultural shift as children become active participants in the beauty and skincare market.

The idea of 'Sephora Kids' is tied to the increasing exposure of children to social media, beauty tutorials and influencers. Platforms like TikTok and YouTube have normalised beauty routines for younger audiences, making skincare and makeup accessible and aspirational. Pre-teens, often labelled as "Generation Alpha," are drawn to the beauty industry as a way of self-expression and social connection.

Parents too play a role in this trend, with some encouraging early skincare habits to prevent future issues like acne. Additionally, brands targeting this demographic such as Bubble and Florence by Mills, offer gentle, age-appropriate skincare, further validating the interest of young consumers? Beauty brands have now recognised the buying power of younger audiences and their families.

Marketing campaigns often focus on inclusivity, fun packaging and social media visibility to attract children and pre-teens. For instance, kid influencers and beauty creators promote skincare routines and products, dri-



ving trends among their peers while brands like Bubble and BTWN emphasise safe, dermatologist-approved products for younger skin. Moreover, platforms like TikTok and Instagram amplify the trend by showcasing beauty routines and promoting luxury brands. This has contributed to an increase in spending among tweens and teens on beauty products, with estimates showing annual expenditures ranging from \$119 to \$140 per child for skincare and makeup.

Not only this, but many parents also express concerns about the safety of children using advanced skincare products with potent ingredients like retinol and acids, which may not be suitable for young skin. Dermatologists report an increase in skin issues, such as irritations and allergic reactions, linked to these products. Parents too worry about the psychological impact, such as the pressure to conform to unrealistic beauty standards and premature exposure to consumer culture?

They note that participating in beauty routines can boost their children's confidence and serve as a creative outlet. However, the same comes with the risk of adopting harmful skincare habits, overspending and feeling pressured by societal beauty ideals? The rise of Sephora Kids raises ethical questions about how much influence the beauty industry should exert over children. On one hand, critics argue that marketing beauty products to young audiences exploits their impressionability and perpetuates consumerism while on the other hand, advocates believe that when managed responsibly, it can foster creativity and self-care. Brands and regulators must emphasise transparency, safety and age-appropriate messaging.

Parents, too at times must guide their children in understanding the importance of moderation and self-acceptance. There is no denying that the concept of 'Sephora Kids' symbolises a cultural and generational shift in the beauty industry. While it opens doors to creativity and self-expression for younger audiences, it also demands careful navigation of ethical and developmental implications. By promoting safe practices and fostering positive self-images, the beauty industry, parents and society can ensure that this trend benefits rather than exploits young consumers.

(The write is an educator; views expressed are personal)

Redesigning education for real-world skills



VINAYSHIL GAUTAM

By integrating practical lessons on earning, saving and managing money, education can better prepare students for real-world challenges



It is a truism to state that the world is becoming an increasingly complex proposition to deal with and the methods of coping with it need to be structured and understood. This alone will avoid increasing grief and bewilderment on the way matters are working in the world one is surrounded by. An illustration from the area of finance may illustrate the situation. It is an obvious matter to point out that everyone needs finance to survive and finance has to be obtained if not earned from somewhere. This business of understanding finance or earning requires the ability to understand what finance is and how it can be earned.

Finance comes in many shapes and colours. A common factor in all finance is that it is putting a monetary value to one's effort and it is compensation for what one does to keep a system going. Finance sets the equation between effort and its compensation and finance in turn becomes a tool for both purchasing and obtaining the needs of life beyond purchase. To do so, one needs to understand currency, its equivalence and how currency is measured in effort.

It is one of the enigmas of our prevailing school and college system that these matters are rarely explained through a curriculum or, for that matter, in a formal situation. Much is learned about finance through observation and the domestic environment in which one has grown, that is converted into transactions in operational life and early enough in one's life one learns that one needs to have capabilities to earn money and therefore deal with finance. Each system has its methods of equivalence between efforts and compensation and the forces that determine it are very often referred to as market forces. This by itself is an art that life teaches



FINANCE COMES IN MANY SHAPES AND COLOURS. A COMMON FACTOR IN ALL FINANCE IS THAT IT IS PUTTING A MONETARY VALUE TO ONE'S EFFORT AND IT IS COMPENSATION FOR WHAT ONE DOES TO KEEP A SYSTEM GOING

sometimes simply and frequently through trial and error. Thus, it is that finance is not only tricky, but it leads to comprehend and yet it remains one of the cornerstones of anyone's life. Taking the conversation further, it needs to be realised that finance has some basic constituents like earning, saving, investing, converting into tangible assets and more. Each area has over time become a specialised field of learning and indeed happiness or otherwise of one's existence.

There are forces in finance in the higher classes of the school where certain basic concepts are explained and certain essential foundational ideas on finance are shared. What is needed is giving it a practical orientation and teaching people through fieldwork, the value of finance and its central role in human life. Most classrooms have not graduated to that stage of thinking, or in that way of thinking which means very simply that most people pass through the completion of their schooling without getting the correlation between the essentials of finance and the foundation of living.

A situation becomes more complex when one graduate from the college or university level and then unless one is doing a specific course in finance, one may never learn anything beyond what one has learned in school about finance.

This is a loss because, as enumerated above, what is taught in school about finance does not go very far in the practice of finance. What everyone needs to know is the correlation between one's

worth in handling skills and information and how this is compensated in financial terms by the environment.

This by itself is a tricky proposition and, as suggested earlier, needs fieldwork. Then there are final areas of finance that cannot be learned unless exposed to the practical world and that is not a matter that can be brought into the classroom. Also, in a normal education system, there are again gaps where this learning goes by default and people are left to pay for themselves through trial and error.

This causes not only immense problems but complications of one variety or another. One can be shortchanged or one may not know that services cannot, in many cases, be provided without some type of compensation and that compensation very often has to be in terms of money. It will be a worthwhile approach to explain to people the relationship between money, finance and effort.

Such a perspective will help make the curriculum of not only the schools but also the colleges worthwhile and more practical in one's own life. As matters stand, if one specialises in physics, chemistry, history, psychology, geography, or whatever else, one hardly realises that beyond the so-called specialisation, there is a general education one needs.

This general education can be in behaviour concerning others, management of self, understanding income, understanding expenditure, understanding savings, and so on. Putting it simply, there is a need

to also focus on the range of learning before one crosses into adulthood and becomes a financially viable entity. As indicated earlier, much of this is happening through trial and error, embracing a method; that works in certain cases but not in others. There is a clear need to reduce the treasury for adjustment to actual life through formal inputs before one graduates into adulthood and is thrown into the open sea - as it were to take care of oneself.

The time has come to establish a philosophy of education, self-formation, and teaching that can stand on its feet and be related to the requirements of life.

The time is right for some fundamental thinking on such matters, and the sooner it's done, the better. Similarly, similar reflections are needed in making him a person through his childhood, teenage, and other phases of his life about the nature and content of what is technology.

This is so because technology touches every aspect of our lives, from not just the glasses that one may have to wear to correct one's sight but to everything else that has become such an essential part of one's livelihood and existence. Including and understanding the basic nature of technology in the curriculum of schools and colleges also needs attention. However, that may be a subject matter that needs to be treated separately and independently.

(The writer is a well-known management consultant of international repute. The views expressed are personal.)

Cloud seeding, urbanisation, global warming: Where is the world headed?

Amid the climate challenges plaguing urban life, innovative approaches like cloud seeding offer promising solutions for a better future

The impact of global warming and pollution is transforming urban life, turning once vibrant towns into places that are becoming less and less livable.

Across the globe, urban landscapes, particularly in India, are evolving into concrete jungles, where the struggle for survival frequently resembles an arduous challenge. Once viewed as a shining example of culture and a centre for economic pursuits, Delhi and Mumbai now display AQI scores that seem almost staggering.

Heavy with contaminants, the noxious air has transformed into an environmental concern, leaving inhabitants struggling to breathe



RACHNA LAKHPATRI

while suffering from respiratory conditions. Have these cities become uninhabitable? In Delhi, pollution levels frequently fall into the "severe" category, with AQI readings often exceeding 400.

The outcomes are dire: children attending school only part-time; elderly individuals confined indoors; and hospitals inundated with

cases of asthma, bronchitis and various other respiratory ailments. In Mumbai, the oppressive humidity intensifies the situation, transforming the already polluted air into a dangerous mix for its 20-million-strong populace. Economic growth challenges the conventional use of various facilities and personal vehicles: although development fosters prosperity, it comes with significant expenses. Alongside factories and vehicles, construction sites contribute to the GDP; however, they also transform cities into perilous environments.

The alarming rise in disease cases compels us to confront a difficult reality: does the cost of progress come at the expense of the health and

wellbeing of the populace? Now, comes cloud seeding, a game changer in this catastrophic scenario. The practice of introducing particles like silver iodide or salt into the atmosphere to encourage rainfall can be celebrated for its potential to cleanse the air and replenish water resources through cloud seeding.

Thus, it could indeed be the virtue that aids in easing the challenges faced by cities: pollution and water scarcity. Countries such as China and the United Arab Emirates have been exploring this technology, while India has intermittently implemented it during severe droughts. Nonetheless, its use as a means to reduce pollution



remains largely uncharted. Is cloud seeding the answer to the escalating air quality crisis in India? Some argue that cloud seeding is not an extraordinary solution. It comes with a hefty price tag, and the long-term effects on the environ-

ment remain uncertain. What truly matters is that addressing pollution at its source—minimising industrial emissions, promoting sustainable urban growth, and shifting to clean energy—continues to be the primary goal. As cities like

Delhi struggle and suffocate under the weight of toxic air, these short-term measures, like cloud seeding, may provide a fleeting but vital relief. The entire conversation regarding urban development requires a complete transformation.

Advancement must not jeopardise the wellbeing of the local population. It is essential for those in positions of authority to champion sustainable practices and enforce rigorous pollution controls to achieve a harmonious relationship between advancement and environmental stewardship. The stakes have never been higher.

The choice before us is stark: continue on a path that suffocates our cities or embrace

innovation and sustainability to breathe life back into urban spaces. The future of millions depends on the decisions we make today.

Conclusion: The intersection of urbanisation, global warming, and pollution demands urgent action. Short-term fixes like cloud seeding can offer relief, but true progress requires systemic change—curbing emissions, adopting clean energy, and prioritising sustainable urban growth. The future of our cities and the well-being of millions depend on decisive, forward-thinking measures taken today.

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

Biden authorises Ukraine to use US missiles for strikes inside Russia

AP ■ MANAUS (BRAZIL)

President Joe Biden has authorised Ukraine to use US-supplied missiles to strike deeper inside Russia, easing limitations on the longer range weapons as Russia deploys thousands of North Korean troops to reinforce its war, according to a US official and three other people familiar with the matter. The decision allowing Kyiv to use the Army Tactical Missile System, or ATACMS, for attacks farther inside Russia comes as President Vladimir Putin positions North Korean troops along Ukraine's northern border to try to reclaim hundreds of miles of territory seized by Ukrainian forces. Biden's move also follows the presidential election victory of Donald Trump, who has said he would bring about a swift end to the war and raised uncertainty about whether his administration would continue the United States' vital military support for Ukraine. The official and the others knowledgeable about the matter were not authorized to discuss the US decision publicly and spoke on condition of anonymity. President Volodymyr Zelenskyy's reaction Sunday was notably restrained. "Strikes are not made with words," he said during his

nightly video address. "Such things are not announced. The missiles will speak for themselves." Zelenskyy and many of his Western supporters have been pressing Biden for months to allow Ukraine to strike military targets deeper inside Russia with Western-supplied missiles, saying the US ban had made it impossible for Ukraine to try to stop Russian attacks on its cities and electrical grids. Zelenskyy's statement came shortly after he posted a message of condolence on Telegram following a Russian attack on a nine-story building that killed at least eight people in the northern city of Sumy, 40 kilometers (24 miles) from the border with Russia. Russia also launched a massive drone and missile attack, described by officials as the largest in recent months, targeting energy infrastructure and killing civilians. The attack came as fears are mounting about Moscow's intentions to devastate Ukraine's power generation capacity before the winter. "And this is the answer to everyone who tried to achieve something with Putin through talks, phone calls, hugs and appeasement," Zelenskyy said. The comment appeared to be a dig at German Chancellor Olaf Scholz, who spoke Friday with Putin in the first such call with a sitting head of a major

Western power in nearly two years. Some supporters have argued that the limitation and other U.S. constraints could cost Ukraine the war. The debate has become a source of disagreement among Ukraine's NATO allies. Biden had remained opposed, determined to hold the line against any escalation that he felt could draw the US and other NATO members into direct conflict with nuclear-armed Russia. Putin has warned that Moscow could provide long-range weapons to others to strike Western targets if NATO allies allow Ukraine to use their arms to attack Russian territory. News of Biden's decision followed meetings over the last two days with the leaders of South Korea, Japan and China. The addition of North Korean troops was central to the talks, which took place on the sidelines of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation summit in Peru. Biden did not mention the decision during a speech at a stop in the Amazon rainforest in Brazil on his way to the Group of 20 summit. Asked about the decision, UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres told reporters that the UN position is "to avoid a permanent deterioration of the war in Ukraine."

"We want peace, we want fair peace," Guterres said Sunday before the summit in Rio de Janeiro. He didn't elaborate. The longer-range missiles are likely to be used in response to North Korea's decision to support Putin's invasion of Ukraine, according to one of the people familiar with the development. The overall supply of ATACMS missiles is short, so US officials in the past have questioned whether they could give Ukraine enough to make a difference. Some supporters of Ukraine say that even a few strikes deeper inside Russia would force its military to change deployments and expend more of its resources. North Korea has provided thousands of troops to Russia to help Moscow try to claw back land in the Kursk border region that Ukraine seized this year. The introduction of North Korean troops to the conflict comes as Moscow has seen a favorable shift in momentum. Trump has signaled that he could push Ukraine to agree to give up some land seized by Russia to find an end to the conflict. As many as 12,000 North Korean troops have been sent to Russia, according to US, South Korean and Ukrainian assessments. US and South Korean intelligence officials say North Korea also has provided Russia with significant

amounts of munitions to replenish its dwindling weapons stockpiles. Trump, who takes office in January, spoke for months as a candidate about wanting Russia's war in Ukraine to be over, but he mostly ducked questions about whether he wanted U.S. ally Ukraine to win. He also repeatedly slammed the Biden administration for giving Kyiv tens of billions of dollars in aid. His victory has Ukraine's international backers worrying that any rushed settlement would mostly benefit Putin. America is Ukraine's most valuable ally in the war, providing more than \$56.2 billion in security assistance since Russian forces invaded in February 2022. Worried about Russia's response, however, the Biden administration repeatedly has delayed providing some specific advanced weapons sought by Ukraine, agreeing only under pressure from Kyiv, its supporters and in consultation with allies. That includes initially refusing Zelenskyy's pleas for advanced tanks, Patriot air defense systems and F-16 fighter jets, among other systems. The White House agreed in May to allow Ukraine to use US-provided weaponry for limited strikes just across the border with Russia.

Russia chides US over nod to hit its soil with long-range weapons

AP ■ MANAUS (BRAZIL)

President Joe Biden's decision to let Ukraine strike targets inside Russia with US-supplied long-range missiles was met with ominous warnings from Moscow, a hint of menace from Kyiv and nods of approval from some Western allies. Biden's shift in policy added an uncertain and potentially crucial new factor to the war on the eve of its 1,000-day milestone. News of Biden's change came on the day a Russian ballistic missile with cluster munitions struck a residential area of Sumy, a city in northern Ukraine, killing 11 people, including two children, and injuring 84 others. On Monday, another Russian missile attack started fires in two apartment blocks in Odesa, in southern Ukraine. At least eight people were killed and many more were injured, Ukrainian lawmaker Oleksii Honcharenko said in a video he posted on Telegram from the site of the attack. Washington is easing limits on what Ukraine can strike with US-made weaponry, US officials told The Associated Press on Sunday, after months of ruling out such a move over fears of escalating the conflict and bringing about a direct confrontation between Russia and NATO. The scope of the new firing guidelines isn't clear. But the

change came after the US, South Korea and NATO said recently that North Korean troops are in Russia and apparently are being deployed to help the Russian army drive Ukrainian troops out of Russia's Kursk border region. Russia is also slowly pushing Ukraine's outnumbered army backward in the eastern Donetsk region. It has also conducted a devastating and deadly aerial campaign against civilian areas in Ukraine. Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov on Monday referred journalists to a statement made by Russian President Vladimir Putin in September, in which he said allowing Ukraine to target Russia would significantly raise the stakes in the conflict. It would change "the very nature of the conflict dramatically," Putin said at the time. "This will mean that NATO countries - the United States and European countries - are at war with Russia." Peskov claimed that Western countries supplying long-range weapons also provide targeting services to Kyiv. "This fundamentally changes the modality of their involvement in the conflict," Peskov said. Last June, Putin warned that Russia could provide long-range weapons to others to strike Western targets in response to NATO allies allowing Ukraine to use their arms to attack Russian territory. He also reaffirmed Moscow's

readiness to use nuclear weapons if it sees a threat to its sovereignty. President-elect Donald Trump, who takes office in about two months' time, has raised uncertainty about whether his administration would continue the United States' vital military support for Ukraine. He has also vowed to quickly end the war. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy gave a muted response to the approval that he and his government have been requesting of Biden for more than a year. "Today, much is being said in the media about us receiving permission for the relevant actions," Zelenskyy said in his nightly video address Sunday. "But strikes are not made with words. Such things are not announced. The missiles will speak for themselves," he said. The foreign minister of NATO member Lithuania, Gabrielius Landsbergis, said he's not "opening the champagne" yet as it remains unclear exactly what restrictions have been lifted and whether Ukraine has enough of the US weapons to make a difference. Margus Tsahkna, the foreign minister of Estonia which is another Baltic country that fears a military threat from Russia, said easing restrictions on Ukraine was "a good thing."

Children, parents among 8 killed in Israeli strikes in Gaza, officials say

AP ■ JERUSALEM

Israeli strikes in the Gaza Strip killed eight people, including two children aged 7 and 9 and their parents, Palestinian officials said Monday. A third child, 10 years old, was wounded in an overnight strike on a tent where displaced people were sheltering in the southern city of Khan Younis, according to the Civil Defence, first responders who operate under the Hamas-run government. An Associated Press reporter saw the children's bodies at nearby Nasser Hospital. A separate strike early Monday killed four people, including a woman and a child, in the built-up Nuseirat refugee camp, according to nearby Al-Aqsa

Martyrs Hospital. The Israeli military blames civilian deaths on Hamas, accusing militants of hiding among civilians and fighting from residential areas. It rarely comments on individual strikes, which often kill women and children. The war began when Hamas stormed into Israel on Oct 7, 2023, killing some 1,200 people, mostly civilians, and abducting around 250. Some 100 hostages are still inside Gaza, a third of whom are believed to be dead. Israel's retaliatory offensive has killed over 43,800 Palestinians, according to local health authorities. They do not distinguish between militants and civilians but say most of those killed are women and children.

The fighting has left some 76 people dead in Israel, including 31 soldiers. Meanwhile, a government minister close to Hezbollah says Lebanon will convey its "positive position" on a United States-backed cease-fire proposal this week. The Biden administration is trying to halt the war between Israel and the militant group after months of sputtering cease-fire efforts. Lebanon's Parliament Speaker Nabih Berri, a Hezbollah ally who is mediating for the militants, is expected to meet with US envoy Amos Hochstein in the Lebanese capital on Tuesday. Labour Minister Mostafa Bayram, who met with Berri on Monday, said Hezbollah's func-

tion "is to make sure the (Israeli) aggression fails to achieve its goals, while negotiation is for the state and the government". A Western diplomat familiar with the talks told The Associated Press there is a sense of "cautious optimism". "Diplomatic efforts are converging towards a cease-fire, but it's still in the hands and heads of key players to decide if it's in their interest or not to stop things right now," said the diplomat, who was not authorized to brief media and so spoke on condition of anonymity. The efforts are aimed at reestablishing a UN buffer zone in southern Lebanon established after the 2006 Israel-Hezbollah war.



Lebanese policemen stand in front of destroyed shops that were hit Sunday evening in an Israeli airstrike in central Beirut, Lebanon on Monday. AP/PTI

N Korean leader calls for expanding N-forces in face of alleged US threats

AP ■ SEOUL

North Korean leader Kim Jong Un renewed his call for a "limitless" expansion of his military nuclear program to counter US-led threats in comments reported Monday that were his first direct criticism toward Washington since Donald Trump's win in the US presidential election. At a conference with army officials on Friday, Kim condemned the United States for updating its nuclear deterrence strategies with South Korea and solidifying three-way military cooperation involving Japan, which he portrayed as an "Asian NATO" that was escalating tensions and instability in the region. Kim also criticized the

United States over its support of Ukraine against a prolonged Russian invasion. He insisted that Washington and its Western allies were using Ukraine as their "shock troops" to wage a war against Moscow and expand the scope of US military influence, the North's official Korean Central News Agency said. Kim has prioritized his country's ties to Russia in recent months, embracing the idea of a "new Cold War" and displaying a united front in Russian President Vladimir Putin's broader conflicts with the West. He has used Russia's war on Ukraine as a distraction to accelerate the development of his nuclear-armed military, which now has various nuclear-

capable systems targeting South Korea and intercontinental ballistic missiles that can potentially reach the US mainland. Kim has yet to directly acknowledge that he has been providing military equipment and troops to Russia to support its war against Ukraine and the KCNA's report didn't mention whether Kim made any comments toward Trump, whose election win has yet to be reported in the North's state media. Kim met Trump three times in 2018 and 2019 in Trump's first presidency, but their diplomacy quickly collapsed over disagreements in exchanging the release of US-led sanctions and North Korean steps to wind down its nuclear and missile program.

North Korea has since suspended any meaningful talks with Washington and Seoul as Kim ramped up his testing activity and military demonstrations in the face of what he portrayed as "gangster-like US threats." There's concern in Seoul that Kim in exchange for his military support of Russia would receive Russian technology in return to further develop his arsenal. Trump's election win has touched off speculation about a resumption of a summit-driven diplomacy with Kim, which was described by critics as a "bromance." But some experts say a quick return to 2018 is highly unlikely, as too much has changed about the regional security situation and broader geopolitics since then.

Trial to begin in human smuggling case after deaths of Indian family at Canada-US border

AP ■ FERGUS FALLS (US)

A criminal network stretching from India to Canada made money smuggling families seeking better lives in the United States, including a man who died holding his 3-year-old son in gusting snow and bone-chilling temperatures two years ago, federal prosecutors plan to argue at a trial starting Monday in Minnesota. Prosecutors have accused Indian national Harshkumar Ramanlal Patel, 29, of running the scheme and Steve Shand, 50, of Florida of waiting in a truck for 11 migrants, including the couple and two children who died after they tried to walk across the border to the US. Prosecutors say Patel

recruited Shand at a casino near their homes in Deltona, Florida, just north of Orlando. Jagdish Patel, 39, died along with his wife, Vaishaliben, who was in her mid-30s, and with their 11-year-old daughter, Vihangi and their 3-year-old son Dharmik. Patel is a common Indian surname and the victims were not related to Harshkumar Patel, who has pleaded not guilty, as has Shand. The family, from the village of Dingucha in Gujarat state, is believed to have spent hours wandering fields in blizzard conditions as the wind chill reached minus 36 Fahrenheit (minus 38 Celsius). Canadian authorities found the Patels' frozen bodies on the morning of Jan. 19, 2022. Jagdish Patel

was holding Dharmik, who was wrapped in a blanket. Federal prosecutors say Patel and Shand were part of an operation that scouted clients in India, got them Canadian student visas, arranged transportation and smuggled them into the US, mostly through Washington state or Minnesota. The US Border Patrol arrested more than 14,000 Indians on the Canadian border in the year ending Sept. 30. By 2022, the Pew Research Center estimates there were more than 725,000 Indians living illegally in the US, behind only Mexicans and El Salvadorans. Harshkumar Patel's attorney, Thomas Leinenweber, told The Associated Press that his client came to America to escape

poverty and build a better life for himself and now "stands unjustly accused of participating in this horrible crime. He has faith in the justice system of his adopted country and believes that the truth will come out at the trial." Attorneys for Shand did not return messages. Court documents filed by prosecutors show Patel was in the US illegally after being refused a US visa at least five times. Over a five-week period, court documents say, Patel and Shand often communicated about the bitter cold as they smuggled five groups of Indians over a quiet stretch of border. One night in December 2021, Shand messaged Patel that it was "cold as hell" while waiting to pick up one group, the documents say.

Canadian PM admits his govt made 'mistakes' in immigration policy

PTI ■ OTTAWA

Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau has admitted that his government made "mistakes" in its immigration policy which led to "bad actors" like "fake colleges" and big corporations exploiting the system for their vested interests. Trudeau's statement on Sunday came amidst his Liberal Party's denting popularity ahead of the 2025 general election in Canada. The prime minister is facing intense public criticism due to his policies leading to housing shortage, inflation, and deteriorating health and transport systems in the country. The opposition Conservative Party has also been accusing his government of mismanagement and failure to prioritise Canadian citizens'

needs. In a video message posted on his YouTube channel, Trudeau said, "In the last two years, our population has grown really fast, like a baby boom...Increasingly bad actors like fake colleges and big chain corporations have been exploiting our immigration system for their own interests." To combat this, "we are reducing the number of immigrants who are coming to Canada for the next three years," he said. "We made some mistakes and that's why we are taking this big turn," he said, justifying his government's action. Outlining the government's latest immigration strategy, Immigration Minister Marc Miller said last month that Canada will admit approximately 3,95,000 permanent res-

idents in 2025, marking a drop of nearly 20 per cent from the 4,85,000 expected this year. The plan also sets a target for temporary immigrants, including international students and foreign workers. Their numbers are expected to drop to about 4,46,000 in 2025 and 2026, down from roughly 8,00,000 this year. By 2027, Canada will accept just 17,400 new non-permanent residents, the new policy suggested. Canada also ended the popular fast track study visa programme, SDS, a major policy decision that is likely to impact scores of international students, including from India. According to the Indian High Commission here, India is the largest source country of for-

eign students with an estimated 4,27,000 Indian students studying in Canada. Trudeau said for years, Canada's immigration system only focussed on Permanent Immigration where people come with family to settle in Canada and the government decides the number of permanent residents that it wants to admit each year. However, in doing so, it missed "the other pathway — the temporary immigration", which involves international students, temporary workers and so on. "After the (coronavirus) pandemic, our economy came roaring back quickly. We wanted more workers fast. We were in the midst of a huge labour shortage. Temporary foreign workers became such a signif-

icant part of our workforce...So, we brought in more workers," he said. And it was the right choice and it worked, Trudeau emphasised. "Our economy grew. Restaurants and stores reopened, businesses kept running, but most importantly, in spite of lots of economists' predictions, we avoided the worst-case scenario — a recession," he said. However, the prime minister said, some saw that as an opportunity to profit, to game the system. "We have seen way too many large corporations doing this. Far too many colleges and universities used international students to raise their bottom line, because they could charge these students tens of thou-

sands of dollars more for the same degree. "And then there are really bad actors who outright exploit people who target vulnerable immigrants with promises of jobs, diplomas and easy pathways to citizenship promises that would never come true," he said. "Looking back when the post pandemic boom cooled and the businesses no longer needed the additional workforce, as a federal team, we could have acted quicker and turned off the taps faster," Trudeau admitted. Canada's new immigration plan is "straightforward — lower the number of immigrants — both permanent and temporary," he said, adding that the government is prioritising permanent residents with the skills it

needs like healthcare and construction workers. Trudeau said the cut on the cap on immigrants coming to Canada was necessary to address its housing crisis and cost-of-living issues. "The goal is to help stabilise population growth while housing stocks catch up, and then to consider gradually increasing immigration rates once again," he said, adding that this pause is going to "give our economy and our communities the chance to catch up with things like our plan to build more homes." "Some temporary residents may turn to our asylum system when their visa expires...Those claims will be analysed and processed, and if their claim fails, they'll be sent home,"

Trudeau said. India-Canada ties remain deeply troubled over the North American country's alleged support to Khalistani separatists and its accusation of India's involvement in the killing of Hardeep Singh Nijjar, a Canadian citizen who has been designated a terrorist by India. India rejected Trudeau's charges as "absurd" and expelled six Canadian diplomats. India also withdrew its High Commissioner in Canada Sanjay Kumar Verma after dismissing Ottawa's allegations. India has been maintaining that the main issue between the two countries is that of Canada giving space to pro-Khalistan elements operating from Canadian soil with impunity.

Finish probe against Sheikh Hasina by next month, investigators told

AP ■ DHAKA

A special tribunal in Bangladesh on Monday told investigators they have one month to complete their work on ousted former Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and her close aides who face charges of crimes against humanity after hundreds of people were killed in a mass uprising this summer.



Bangladesh's former social welfare minister Dipu Moni is taken to the International Crimes Tribunal in Dhaka, Bangladesh on Monday.

Hasina has been living in exile in India since Aug 5 when she fled the country amid the student-led protests. The Dhaka-based International Crimes Tribunal on Oct 17 issued arrest warrants for Hasina and 45 others including former

Cabinet ministers, advisors and military and civil officials. The country is now being run by an interim government headed by Nobel Peace laureate Muhammad Yunus. At least 13 people, including a

former law minister and a businessman who was Hasina's private-sector advisor, appeared before the tribunal on Monday, said BM Sultan Mahmud, a prosecutor at the tribunal. One former Cabinet minister

was not brought to the tribunal as he was in custody for police interrogation in a separate case. Another six people will appear on Wednesday, tribunal officials said. At least 20 suspects have been arrested in the case. The tribunal will also seek updates from police on their progress in arresting the other suspects, including Hasina. The chief prosecutor of the tribunal has already sought help from Interpol through the country's police chief to arrest Hasina. On Sunday, Yunus said in an address to the nation that his administration would seek Hasina's extradition from India. Authorities say hundreds of people were killed during the uprising in July and August mainly by security agents seeking to quell the initial protests over government jobs. The violence intensified as the protests morphed into an anti-government movement with more bloodshed, ending Hasina's 15-year rule. Hasina had also earlier sought an investigation into the killings.

US, Philippines sign pact to secure shared military intelligence, weapons technology

AP ■ MANILA

The United States and the Philippines signed an agreement on Monday to secure the exchange of highly confidential military intelligence and technology in key weapons the US would provide to Manila. Defence Secretary Lloyd Austin and his Philippine counterpart, Gilberto Teodoro, signed the legally binding General Security of Military Information Agreement in Manila at a time when the longtime treaty allies have boosted their defense and military engagements, including large-scale joint combat drills, largely in response to China's increasingly aggressive actions in Asia. The outgoing Biden administration has taken steps to strengthen an arc of military alliances across the Indo-Pacific region to better counter China, including in any future confrontation over Taiwan or at the disputed South China Sea, which Beijing has claimed

almost in its entirety. That has dovetailed with Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos Jr's thrust to strengthen his country's external defenses given an alarming escalation of territorial confrontations between Chinese and Filipino forces in the South China Sea. The Department of National Defense in Manila said the agreement aims to ensure the security of classified military information that would be exchanged between the U.S. and the Philippines. It will "allow the Philippines access to higher capabilities and big-ticket items from the United States," the Philippine defense department said. Neither side provided more details or released a copy of the agreement. Two Philippine security officials, however, have told The Associated Press that such an agreement, similar to ones Washington has signed with other allied countries, would allow the U.S. to provide the Philippines with higher-level

intelligence and more sophisticated weapons, including missile systems. It would also provide the Philippine military access to US satellite and drone surveillance systems with an assurance that such intelligence and details about sophisticated weapons would be kept highly secure to prevent possible leaks, the two Philippine officials said on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to discuss the sensitive issue publicly. Philippine efforts to obtain sophisticated weapons from the US military in the past have been hampered by a lack of such an intelligence deal, including when Filipino forces were scrambling to fight a 2017 siege by Filipino and foreign militants aligned with the Islamic State group in southern Marawi city, Philippine forces, backed by US and Australian spy planes, quelled the uprising after five months. Austin and Teodoro also attended a groundbreaking ceremony for a center where the

US and Philippine militaries would coordinate future joint operations, including the exchange of information. Austin said the center "will be a place where our forces can work side-by-side to respond to regional challenges." Austin renewed the US commitment to the Philippines as an ally and told Teodoro that "we are more than allies. We are family." The coordinating center, Teodoro said, would provide "a unified picture of the shared areas of responsibility and common approaches to threats against both our securities." "I'm sure it will benefit future generations of both our peoples to come because although we may change people, the values don't change," Teodoro said. The Philippine defense chief reiterated the crucial need for the US security presence in the region, citing Marcos's repeated statements that such a presence "is essential for maintaining peace and stability in this region."

Sri Lanka President opts for smaller Cabinet with fresh faces

PTI ■ COLOMBO

Sri Lankan President Anura Kumara Dissanayake on Monday appointed a 21-member Cabinet in the new NPP government, keeping with his pre-election promise to streamline the governance system and ease the burden on taxpayers. The National People's Power (NPP) has been advocating a smaller government to reduce costs for the public. Since the NPP won the presidential election in September, the government functioned with just 3 ministers, including the President. As per the island nation's Constitution, there is a provision for appointing a 30-member Cabinet. Dissanayake retained the

finance and defence portfolios, while appointing 12 new parliament members to key positions and entrusting eight veteran members, who have served since 2000, with significant responsibilities. Among the fresh faces in the Cabinet are five academic professors. Prime Minister Harini Amarasinghe who holds the education portfolio and Saroja Savithri Paulraj who has the women's and child affairs portfolio are the two women members in the Cabinet. Paulraj, a minority Tamil from the Sinhala majority south, was involved in the party's long struggle. A significant feature of the swearing-in ceremony was the fisheries minister Ramalingam Chandrasekaran, who took his

oath in Tamil, highlighting the representation of the minority community in the new government. The new parliament will convene on Thursday. The NPP led by Dissanayake swept the parliamentary elections held on Thursday by winning a two-thirds majority. It also dominated the Jaffna electoral district - the heartland of the nation's Tamil minority. The NPP won a near 62 per cent of the vote 2/3rd majority of 159 seats in the 225-member assembly, a feat which has no parallels since 1989.

PUBLIC NOTICE: Since Mrs. Suman Devi seeking a Home Loan from Can Fin Homes Ltd. for the property i.e. Property area measuring 80 sq yds part of Khawal no/ Khatla No. 12/1122 situated at Village Farrukhnagar Tehsil Farrukhnagar & District Guergaon Haryana; That, Mrs. Suman Devi has made us to understand that previous owners Mr. Mukesh has lost of misplaced earlier Sale Deed no 1440 dated 08/09/2016 in favour of Mr. Lalit having LR no: 132270412401204 somewhere, which are not traceable or cannot be found. Now, I would like to announce to general public that any person who is having any right, title or interest against that property/share or documents may come to our Delhi office within seven days and render their claim with documentary valid evidence. If any, else the same would be treated as unclaimed and unrebutted and moved forth accordingly.

PUBLIC NOTICE: NOTICE is hereby given on behalf of CHARANJIT SINGH, who is owner of the ENTIRE SECOND FLOOR WITHOUT TERRACE ROOF RIGHTS AREA MEASURING 464.38 SQ.MTR, PROPERTY BEARING No.2/3, SITUATED AT WEST PATEL NAGAR, NEW DELHI-110028; who has owned the same by virtue of Gift Deed dated 16.07.2018 bearing Document no.2024/22/19451, Book no.1, Volume no.28685, pages 157-188, dated 16.07.2024 SRO-I West Patel Nagar, from Mr. Narinder Singh and intend to mortgage against the financial assistance from Aditya Birla Housing Finance Limited, that Original Sale deed dated 03.02.2024 executed by (1) Mr. Vishal Jain (44% Share), (2) Mr. Rajeev Chauchary (44% Share) and (3) Mr. Rohit Chadha (12% share) in favour of Mr. Narinder Singh with respect to the subject floor, vide Document No.2024/22/1371, Book no.1, Volume no.27897, pages 149-184, dated 03.02.2024, SRO-I, Delhi is null and void. I, the undersigned, do hereby comply the requirements of BANK/NBFC, give this public notice that if any person having any type of claim right/title/interest/creating mortgage over the said property, may inform in writing, at the address mentioned below, before the expiry of 7 days from today, failing which it shall be deemed to be satisfied/accepted/forfeited in favour of Encumbrances, i.e.etc. Leagal Lucral LLP Plot No.136, (Basement) Uday Nagar, New Delhi-110049>Contact No: 911-40046516

PUBLIC NOTICE: NOTICE is hereby given that Mr. Mahabir Prasad GUPTA (hereinafter referred to as the said Mortgagee/Borrower) purchasing Entire Second Floor, Plot No. 33, adm. 200.28 Sq. Yds. Under Enclave, Paschim Vihar, Rohtak Road, Delhi 110087 (hereinafter referred to as the said property) from Mr. Vipin Garg, who is its absolute owner vide Conveyance Deed dated 27.06.2011 bearing Doc. No. 1141, Reimbursement Deed dated 07.08.2015 bearing Doc. No. 3615 read with Deed of Partition dated 24.03.2023 bearing Doc. No. 1969. Any person, body, individual, institution having any claim and/or objection in respect of the said property by way of sale, exchange, lease, lien, mortgage, charge, encumbrance, gift, trust, easement, maintenance, inheritance, testamentary disposition or otherwise or having in their custody any title documents pertaining to the said property shall communicate the same to the undersigned at our address within 10 days from the publication of this notice with documentary evidence in support thereof, failing which all the claim, of such person shall be considered to have been waived and abandoned. Any objections raised after the completion of the 10 days shall not be binding upon the said property or its owner.

Central Coalfields Limited (A Subsidiary of Coal India Limited) NOTICE: All the tenders issued by CIL and its Subsidiaries for procurement of Goods, Works and Services are available on website of Coal India Ltd. www.coalindia.in / respective Subsidiary Company (CCL, www.centralcoalfields.in). CIL e-procurement portal https://coalindiatenders.nic.in and Central Public Procurement Portal https://eprocure.gov.in in addition, procurement is also done through GeM portal https://gem.gov.in

NEW OKHLA INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY Main Administrative Building, Sector-6, Noida, G.B. Nagar (U.P.) Website : www.noidaauthorityonline.in E-TENDER NOTICE: E-Tenders are invited from firms/contractors registered with UPLC Lucknow for the following jobs against which bids can be uploaded and same shall be opened/downloaded as per schedule mentioned. The details and conditions of all tenders are available on Noida Authority's official website: www.noidaauthorityonline.in & https://etender.up.nic.in. Please ensure to see these websites for any changes/amendments/corrigendum etc.

CORRIGENDUM-1 AGAINST TENDER NOTICE NO. CON/2024/OCT/02 DATED: 22-10-2024: Corrigendum-1 has been issued against Tender No. CE/CON/MP/ROB/2024/02. For details please visit www.ireps.gov.in

PUBLIC NOTICE: This is to inform all concerned that Sh. Bhoop Singh son of Sh. Nanwa, R/o Village-Ilhababas, Dabri, Sector-86, Phase-II, Noida, had executed a WILL on Dt.13.02.2024 in respect of Residential Plot No. SU-11, Sector-145, Noida, Distt. Gautam Budh Nagar-U.P. area measuring 127.0 Sq.Mtrs., duly allotted by the Noida Authority against 5% Village Quota against Khet No.193 & 310, Village-Suthiana, Noida, Distt. Gautam Budh Nagar-U.P., in our favour which is as follows. Whereas Sh. Bhoop Singh died on 26.05.2024 and after his death We, Manvir S/o Sh. Ramu, R/o 158, Vill. Beholpur, Sector-65, Noida & Kirti Bhati S/o Sh. Dinesh Bhati, R/o 7118, Vill. Shadara. Sector-141, Noida, want to get mutation of the said property on the basis of WILL in our favour. If anyone has any objection, he/she will submit his/her objection in the Residential (Plot) Deptt. of Noida Authority within 30 days of the publication of this notice. MANVIR & KIRTI BHATI

PROVISION OF 1000 KWP GRID CONNECTED ROOFTOP SOLAR POWER PLANT: E-Tenders are invited by the undersigned for the following works: Tender No. AP/EL/28/24-25. Name of work: At Alipurduar Division: Provision of 1000 Kwp grid connected rooftop solar power plant at Dalgao, Hasimara, Binmaguri, New Alipurduar & Kamakhayuri station. Tender Value: ₹5,50,52,506.60 Earnest Money: ₹4,25,300/- Date & Time of Closing of Tender: 15.00 hrs. of 06-12-2024 & opening at 15.30 hrs. of 06-12-2024 at DRM/Elect (G), Alipurduar Jn. office. The complete information with tender documents of above e-tender will be available in website www.ireps.gov.in. Sr.DEE/G.Chg. Alipurduar Jn. NORTHEAST FRONTIER RAILWAY

PROVISION OF 1200 KWP GRID CONNECTED ROOFTOP SOLAR POWER PLANT: Tender Notice No.: AP/EL/21/24-25, Dated: 11-11-2024, E-Tender are invited by the undersigned for the following work: Tender No.: AP/EL/21/24-25; Name of Work : At Alipurduar Jn. Division - Provision of 1200 Kwp grid connected rooftop solar power plant at Kokrajhar, Fakiragram Jn., Dhubri, Gossagaon Hat, Gauripur Station. Advertised Tender Value: ₹5,39,39,506.60/- Earnest Money : ₹4,69,700/- Date & times of closing of tender at 15:00 hrs. and opening at 15:30 hrs. on 06-12-2024. The complete information with the tender document of above e-tender will be available in the website www.ireps.gov.in. DRM/Elect.(G), Alipurduar Jn. NORTHEAST FRONTIER RAILWAY

PUBLIC NOTICE: NOTICE is hereby given to the General Public that Mr. Ramesh Kumar S/o Mr. Sh. Babu Lal through Sale Deed dated 06.03.2017 is the owner of property bearing address Freehold Residential Plot No. 8-B1, measuring area 25 sq. yds. (20.90 sq.mtr.) of falling under Kharsa No. 427 situated at Pushti Nagar, Village-Sadulabadi, Pergana & Tehsil Loni, Distt.-Ghazabad (U.P.). A registered General Power of Attorney dated on 05.03.2021 was executed by Mr. Ramesh Kumar in favour of Mr. Sanli Rastogi S/o Mr. Ajay Kumar Rastogi. Further, another General Power of Attorney dated 28.01.2022 was issued by Mr. Sanli Rastogi in favour of Mr. Durgesh Kumar Ch. Mr. Prakash and the property is now being sold to Mr. Satish Chand (Intending borrower) and the same is being financed by SMFG India Home Finance Co. Ltd. General Public/Intender informed that if anybody has any charge/interest/lien in the said property or any kind of dispute kindly inform the undersigned in writing on the below mentioned address within 07 days of the present.

PUBLIC NOTICE: Information is given to general public at large that Mrs. Pooja Kuman who is/are purchasing the Third Floor with roof rights of property bearing No. WZ-277, 8-B1, measuring area 25 sq. yds. (20.90 sq.mtr.) of falling under Kharsa No. 427 situated at Pushti Nagar, Village-Sadulabadi, Pergana & Tehsil Loni, Distt.-Ghazabad (U.P.). A registered General Power of Attorney dated on 05.03.2021 was executed by Mr. Ramesh Kumar in favour of Mr. Sanli Rastogi S/o Mr. Ajay Kumar Rastogi. Further, another General Power of Attorney dated 28.01.2022 was issued by Mr. Sanli Rastogi in favour of Mr. Durgesh Kumar Ch. Mr. Prakash and the property is now being sold to Mr. Satish Chand (Intending borrower) and the same is being financed by SMFG India Home Finance Co. Ltd. General Public/Intender informed that if anybody has any charge/interest/lien in the said property or any kind of dispute kindly inform the undersigned in writing on the below mentioned address within 07 days of the present.

Which can be uploaded by date 02.12.2024 up to 5.00 PM. Pre-qualification shall be opened / downloaded on date 03.12.2024 at 11.00 AM. (B) 1. 27/S.M.(JAL)-I/E.T./2024-25, Water Chlorination (Two Year Operation, Running and Maintenance of Chlorination Plant at UGR-20/62, 22/62, UGR-63, UGR-119, UGR-151 and UGR Baholpur), Noida. Cost Rs. 96.05 Lacs 2. 29/S.M.(JAL)-I/E.T./2024-25, M/o W/s (Two Year Repairing V.T. Motor, Transformer, Starter, TPMO and Other allied Electrical Work in Sector-1 to 7 and Village Harola) Noida, Cost Rs. 41.89 Lacs 3. 20/S.M.(JAL)-I/E.T./2024-25, M/o Sewerage (Two Years Maintenance and R/o 50, 75 and 90 HP Submersible Motor, Starter and R/o Transformer in Networks Sector-106 and 110 Sumpwell and SPS), Noida Rs. 41.29 Lacs

CORRIGENDUM NO. 02 AGAINST TENDER NOTICE NO. : CPM-MLG-HQ-GC-2024-01: The following changes have been made in Tender Notice No. CPM-MLG-HQ-GC-2024-01; Date: 14-11-2024:- Name of work: Request for Proposal (RFP) for appointment of General Consultant for N.F. Railway, Gati Shakti Unit. Approx. value: ₹14,88,08,535.16/- E-tender will be closed at 15:00 hrs. on 09-12-2024 and will be opened at 15:30 hrs. on 09-12-2024. For details please visit www.ireps.gov.in. All other terms & conditions of above tender will remain unchanged. CPM/GSU/Maligaon NORTHEAST FRONTIER RAILWAY

PROVISION OF ROOFTOP SOLAR POWER PLANT: E-Tender Notice No.: AP/EL/22/24-25. E-Tenders are invited by the undersigned for the following work: Sl. No.1; Tender No.: AP/EL/22/24-25; Name of work: Provision of 1300 Kwp grid connected rooftop solar power plant at Dhurguri, Jalpaiguri Road, Falakata, Dinhatra & New Mal. Jn. station. Advertised Tender Value: ₹6,84,90,106.60. Earnest Money: ₹4,92,500.00. E-tender will be closed at 15:00 hrs. on 06-12-2024 and will be opened on 06-12-2024 at 15:30 hrs. at DRM/Elect. (G)/Alipurduar Jn.'s office. The complete information with the tender document of above e-tender will be available in website www.ireps.gov.in. DRM/ Elect(G)/ Alipurduar Jn. NORTHEAST FRONTIER RAILWAY

PUBLIC NOTICE: This is to inform the general public that the Bank of Baroda, Opposite RICO Office, ZEZ Building, RICO Industrial Area, Boranada, Rajasthan intends to accept the undermentioned property standing in the name of Sh. Ram Kishan Purohit S/o A.R. Purohit, as a security for loan/credit facility requested by M/s Marucol World Pvt Ltd. If anyone has any right/title/interest/claims over the undermentioned property, they are advised to approach the Bank within 10 days along with necessary proof to substantiate the claim. If no response is received within 10 days, it is presumed that the property is free from any charge/claim/encumbrance, and the Bank shall proceed with the mortgage. Details of the Property: Leasehold Industrial Property No. 458, an area measuring 1000 Sq. Mtrs., Block-F, and the structure thereon, situated in Sector-63, Noida, Distt. Gautam Budh Nagar, (U.P.). Boundary/Survey No./Reg./No./Extent: Regd. Lease Deed dated 10/02/2006, executed by New Okhla Industrial Development Authority in favour of Sh. Ram Kishan Purohit S/o A.R. Purohit R/o C-34, Sec-11, Noida, in respect of said property, duly registered in the office of Sub-Registrar-II, Noida, in Book No. 1, Volume No. 1352, Page No. 301 to 330, as Document No. 1128, Musanna No. 1129, dated 10/02/2006. Boundaries: East: Plot No. 457/63, West: Plot No. 459/63, North: 12 Mtrs. wide Road, South: Plot No. 457/63 Branch Details/Contact No.: Mr. Devendra Gehlot, Branch Head Contact: +91-94617 60093, Bank of Baroda, Opposite RICO Office, ZEZ Building, RICO Industrial Area, Boranada, Rajasthan. Advocate Details/Contact: Deepak Singh, Delhi High Court, Contact: 9999170066

PUBLIC NOTICE: Be it known to all, that my clients Mr. Rajinder Singh, S/o Shri Sardar Singh, and Shri Arjun Bhardwaj, son of Shri Vinayak Bhardwaj, jointly intend to purchase the property being Freehold residential 50% undivided share in the said Basement of freehold built-up property bearing No. 10/18, Kalkaji Extension, New Delhi-110019, measuring 200 Sq. Yards, and 35% share in still area from its present Owner Mr. Aditya Bhutani, S/o late Shri Hans Raj Bhutani. That the present owner has informed my clients that the said property is free from all encumbrances. However, the public at large, Financial Institutions or if any party has interest, right, title, encumbrance, mortgage, lien or any other claim over the said property, the same shall be informed to the undersigned within a period of Seven (7) days from today failing which it shall be presumed that the party, if any, will be left with no interest, right, title, encumbrance, mortgage, lien over the said property.

STORES E-PROCUREMENT: Tender Notice No.: S/66/014/24-25; Dated: 08-11-2024. E-Tenders are invited by the undersigned for the following works:- SN. 1: Tender No. NJ245041A; Closing/Opening Date: 02-12-2024. Brief Description: Qty: MAIN TRANSFORMER 7775 KVA for WAP-7 & WAP-5 LOCC. Specn CLW/ES/3/0660 Rev. D or latest & STR No. CLW/C-D-82/STR/001 REV.0 or latest. Tank Spec. No. CLW/ES/3/0507 AIT. Nil or Latest. Conservator Tank Spec. No. CLW/ES/3/0508 AIT-Nil or Latest & STR No. RDSO/2013/EL/STR/0079 Rev. 0 or latest; Consignee: - SSE/D/Siliguri Jn.,NFR; Qty: 2 Nos. NOTE:- For full details of Tender notice and tender documents, tenderer may log on to the website (www.ireps.gov.in) prospective bidder who intend to participate in above tenders are required to log in themselves with the above website and submit their offer electronically, if they are already registered with IREPS. In case they are not registered with IREPS, they are advised to obtain Class-III Digital Signature Certificate from the certifying agencies under Govt. of India IT Act 2000 and participate in the above tenders. Dy. CMM/ New Jalpaiguri

“महत्वपूर्ण सूचना- नवीन ओखला औद्योगिक विकास प्राधिकरण के अधिसूचित क्षेत्र में शासन से स्वीकृत मास्टर प्लान एवं उत्तर प्रदेश औद्योगिक क्षेत्र विकास अधिनियम, 1976 के विषय में प्लॉटिंग या किसी भी प्रकार का अन्य निर्माण पूरी तरह अवैध है। जनसामान्य को आगाह किया जाता है कि इस प्रकार की अवैध कॉलोनीयों एवं अवैध निर्मित सवनों में सूखण्डों/ अपार्टमेंट/ दुकान/ गोडाऊन/ फार्महाउस की खरीद-फरोख्त से पूर्णतः रुकते रहें तथा कॉलोनीआइजर के सुमावने एवं भ्रामक विज्ञापनों से बचें। साथ ही नौएडा अधिसूचित क्षेत्र के हिन्दन एवं यमुना नदियों के डूब क्षेत्र (Flood Plain Zone) में अनधिकृत/अवैध प्लॉट एवं फार्म हाउसों के कारोबार में संलग्न भूमिकाओं के चंगुल में न फँसे।” General Manager (Jal) NOIDA

CHANGE OF NAME: I hitherto known as SARITA alias RAJNI AWASTHI D/o Ramnaresh Chaturvedi W/o Brijesh Kumar Awasthi R/o H.No.-59, Uttam Vihar, Kherha Dharampura, Chhapraula, Gautam Buddha Nagar, UP-201009 have changed my name and shall hereafter be known as RAJNI AWASTHI. PD(942)C I, Ram Lal, S/o, Shri Ram Chandar Yadav, R/o. E - 865, E - Block, Jahangirpuri Delhi 33 have changed my name to Ram Lal Yadav for all purposes. PD(943)C

PROVISION OF 1733 KWP GRID CONNECTED ROOFTOP SOLAR POWER PLANT: E-Tender Notice No. Dy.CEE/PS/MLG/HQ/35/24-25 Dated: 14-11-2024. E-Tenders are invited by the undersigned for the following works: Name of work: At Maligaon (HQ) Division - (Part A) Provision of 1733 Kwp Grid connected rooftop Solar Power plant including 5 years AMC/ CAMC at rooftop of Service buildings & residential buildings in Goshala & Nambari Area. Tender Value: ₹9,21,77,460.92/- Earnest Money: ₹6,10,900/- Date & Time of Closing of E-Tender: 15.00 hrs. of 06-12-2024. The complete information with tender documents of above e-tender will be available in website www.ireps.gov.in. Dy.CEE/PS/Maligaon/HQ NORTHEAST FRONTIER RAILWAY

MANSOOR ANSARI (Advocate) B-43A, Kalkaji, New Delhi-110019 Mobile: 9711177423

PUBLIC NOTICE: This is to inform the general public that the Bank of Baroda, S.S.I. Noida Branch, Sector-18, Noida, (U.P.), intends to accept the undermentioned properties standing in the name of M/s Roots Cooling System Pvt Ltd, Leasehold Industrial Property No. 53 at Noida, Gautam Budh Nagar, UP hereinafter referred to as Details of Property-1, and Sh. Anoop Kumar Saxena and Sh. Rajeev Kumar Saxena, having freehold Property bearing No. B-20, Kailash Colony, New Delhi, hereinafter referred to as Details of Property-2, as a security for loan/credit facility requested by M/s Roots Cooling System Pvt Ltd., has its office at S-164, Greater Kailash-I, New Delhi. If anyone has any right/title/interest/claims over the undermentioned property, they are advised to approach the Bank within 10 days along with necessary proof to substantiate their claim. If no response is received within 10 days, it is presumed that the property is free from any charge/claim/encumbrance, and the Bank shall proceed with the mortgage. Details of Property-1: Leasehold Industrial Property No. 53, area 1950 square meters, Block B, Sector Phase II Extension, Noida, Gautam Budh Nagar, UP. Boundary/Survey No./Reg./No./Extent: Regd. Lease Deed duly registered in the office of Sub-Registrar, Ghazabad, in Book No. 1, Volume No. 2178, on Pages 71 to 82 Dated 15.11.2000 in the Office of the Sub-Registrar V, New Delhi. Boundaries: East: EAST Plot No. B-19, West: Plot No. B-20A, North: Plot No. 53 at Noida, South: Plot No. 53 at Noida. Branch Details/Contact No.: Mr. Anurag Singh, Branch Head Contact: +91-965717865 Bank of Baroda, S.S.I. Noida Branch, Sector-18, Noida, (U.P.). Advocate Details/Contact: - Deepak Singh, Delhi High Court, Contact: 9999170066

Form No. INC-26 (Pursuant to rule 30 of the Companies (Incorporation) Rules, 2014) Advertisement to be published in the newspaper for change of Registered office of the company from one state to another Before the Central Government Northern Region: In the matter of sub-section (4) of Section 13 of Companies Act, 2013 and clause (a) of sub-rule (5) of rule 30 of the Companies (Incorporation) Rules, 2014 AND In the matter of M/S CENTRE FOR SUSTAINABILITY AND RESPONSIBILITY INC PRIVATE LIMITED having its registered office at: WZ-8A/5, 2ND FLOOR, GALLI NO. 2 NEW MAHAVIR NAGAR, New Delhi, Delhi, India, 110018. Petitioner: Notice is hereby given to the General Public that the company proposes to make application to the Central Government under section 13 of the Companies Act, 2013 seeking confirmation of alteration of the Memorandum of Association of the company in terms of the special resolution passed at the Annual General Meeting/Extra ordinary general meeting held on 29/10/2024 WZ-8A/5, 2ND FLOOR, GALLI NO. 2 NEW MAHAVIR NAGAR, New Delhi, Delhi, India, 110018 to enable the company to change its Registered Office Shifted from the Union Territory Of Delhi, ROC- Delhi Shifted to the State of Haryana, ROC- Delhi. Any person whose interest is likely to be affected by the proposed change of the registered office of the company may deliver either on the MCA-21 portal (www.mca21.gov.in) by filing investor complaint form or cause to be delivered or send by registered post of his/her objections supported by an affidavit stating the nature of his/her interest and grounds of opposition to the Northern Regional Director at the address B-2 wing, 2nd Floor, Parvayaraan Bhawan, CGO Complex, New Delhi-110003, Delhi within fourteen days of the date of publication of this notice with a copy to the applicant company with a copy of the applicant company at its registered office at the address mentioned below. For and on behalf of the CENTRE FOR SUSTAINABILITY AND RESPONSIBILITY INC PRIVATE LIMITED SUDHIR KUMAR SINHA REENA SINHA (07425114) Director

STORES E-PROCUREMENT: E-procurement Tender Notice No. S/66/015/24-25 Dated: 13-11-2024. E-Tenders are invited by the undersigned for the following works. Tender No. NJ245095 Closing/Opening date: 06-12-2024. Brief Description: Water cooled air compressor to emd part no. 40017843 & DLW Part No. 17480012 suitable for HHP locomotives. Consignee:- SSE/D/Siliguri Jn., NFR Qty: 3 Nos. Tender No. NJ245096 Closing/Opening date: 06-12-2024. Brief Description: Radiator assy set consisting of radiator right & left DLW Part No. 17455017. Consignee:- SSE/D/Siliguri Jn., NFR Qty: 3 Set. Tender No. NJ245097 Closing/Opening date: 06-12-2024. Brief Description: Cooling fan assembly 52 inch. Consignee:- SSE/D/Siliguri Jn., NFR Qty: 4 Nos. Note: For full details of tender notice and tender documents, tenderer may log on to the website (www.ireps.gov.in). Prospective bidder who intend to participate in above tender are required to log on themselves with the above website and submit their offer electronically, if they are already registered with IREPS. In case they are not registered with IREPS, they are advised to obtain Class-III Digital Signature Certificate from the certifying agencies under Govt. of India IT Act 2000 and participate in the above tenders. Dy. CMM/ New Jalpaiguri

U GRO Capital Limited 4th Floor, Tower 3, Equinox Business Park, LBS Road, Kuria, Mumbai 400070 SALE NOTICE FOR SALE OF IMMOVABLE PROPERTIES E-AUCTION SALE NOTICE OF 30 DAYS FOR SALE OF IMMOVABLE ASSET(S) ("SECURED ASSET(S)" UNDER THE SECURITIZATION AND RECONSTRUCTION OF FINANCIAL ASSETS AND ENFORCEMENT OF SECURITY INTEREST ACT, 2002 READ WITH PROVISO TO RULE 8 AND 9 OF THE SECURITY INTEREST (ENFORCEMENT) RULES, 2002. Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower(s) and Guarantor(s) that the below described Secured Asset(s) mortgaged / charged to U GRO Capital Limited ("Secured Creditor"), the possession of which has been taken by the authorised officer of Secured Creditor, will be sold on "As is what is" and "As is where is" and "Whatever there is" on the date and time mentioned herein below, for recovery of the due mentioned herein below and further interest and other expenses thereon till the date of realization of amount, due to Secured Creditor from the Borrower(s) and Guarantor(s) mentioned herein below. The Reserve Price, Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) and last date of EMD deposit is also mentioned herein below.

Table with columns: Details of Borrower(s) / Guarantor(s), Details of Demand Notice, Details of Auction. Row 1: Dawesco LLP, 2. Neel Dawes Bhutani, 3. Raemon Dawes Bhutani, Date of Notice: 10-06-2024, Reserve Price: ₹ 1,11,52,350/-, EMD: ₹ 1,11,235/-, Last date of EMD Deposit: 24-12-2024, Outstanding Amount: Rs. 85,66,772/-, Date of Auction: 26-12-2024, Time of Auction: 11 AM to 01 PM, Incremental Value: ₹s. 1,00,000/-

RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das urges banks to strengthen governance to curb unethical practices

PTI ■ MUMBAI
RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das on Monday asked bank boards to strengthen internal governance framework to curb unethical practices, such as mis-selling of products or opening of accounts without proper KYC verification. Das also said that the incentives for bank staff should be carefully structured so as not to encourage them to indulge in unethical practices. "While such practices may yield short-term gains, they ultimately expose the bank to significant long-term risks, including reputational damage, supervisory scrutiny



and financial penalties," he said in a keynote address at the Conference of Directors of Private Sector Banks here. Das further said that the Indian banking sector is

transitioning through a time which is replete with opportunities as well as risks and challenges. "The banking sector remains strong and stable. All the financial indicators have improved since we met in May last year, reflecting the efforts of the various participants of the banking sector, including their management and boards," he said. To keep the resilience of the banking system intact, the governor emphasised that strong fundamentals ought to be leveraged to reinforce and fortify the defences. "Good times, after all, are the best times to reinforce resilience and grow sustainably," he added. Das also said that in the rapidly evolving and technology-driven environment, organisations face significant challenges and risks. Factors like technological advancements, the rise of new-age fintech entities, third-party dependencies and climate change are reshaping the economic landscape, he added. Amid these shifting tides, bank boards should serve as a lighthouse for lenders and provide steady guidance to help navigate these challenges and steer towards safe and prosperous shores, he said.

SC issues notice to Centre over vacancies in 11 Debt Recovery Tribunals

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI



The Supreme Court on Monday sought a response from the Ministry of Finance on a PIL highlighting critical vacancies in 11 Debt Recovery Tribunals (DRTs) across India. The DRTs are set up under the Recovery of Dues to Banks and Financial Institutions Act of 1993 to enable banks and financial institutions recover bad debts from borrowers. "Eleven DRTs remain unmanned which is creating issues. In view of the grant of additional charges and also the complications, notice be served including 'dasti', counter affidavits (reply) be filed in five weeks and the rejoinder to be filed within three weeks after the response," said a bench comprising Chief Justice Sanjiv Khanna and Justice Sanjay Kumar. The PIL, filed by Ghaziabad resident Nishchay Chaudhary, was argued by senior advocate K B Sounder Rajan along with lawyer Sudarshan Rajan. According to the PIL, as of September 30, 2024, 11 DRTs are without presiding officers, severely impacting their ability to resolve cases efficiently. The PIL raised concerns that nearly one-third of the 39 DRTs in the country are currently non-functional due to the absence of presiding officers, undermining their core objective of expediting debt recovery for banks and financial institutions. The petitioner argues that

this inaction frustrates the purpose of the 1993 law, which was enacted to ensure timely adjudication and recovery of debts. The plea said various DRTs at Jaipur, Chennai, Mumbai, Aurangabad, Ahmedabad, Coimbatore, Ranchi, Bengaluru and Lucknow have vacancies. The PIL also emphasises that speedy justice is a fundamental right under Articles 14 and 21 of the Constitution, as recognised by the Supreme Court in the case of District Bar Association Dehradun vs Ishwar Shandilya in 2020. The PIL sought a direction to the Ministry of Finance to produce records relating to the selection and appointment of presiding officers in DRTs to evaluate the government's seriousness in addressing these vacancies. It also sought a direction to the Centre to mandate the timely filling up of existing vacancies and establish mechanisms to prevent delays in future appointments. As interim measures, it sought a direction that the powers of non-functional DRTs are vested in other tribunals to prevent

Rupee recovers from all-time low to settle six paise higher at 84.40 against US Dollar



PTI ■ MUMBAI
The rupee recovered from its all-time low level and settled with a gain of 6 paise at 84.40 (provisional) against the US dollar on Monday, backed by a retreating American currency. Forex traders said, the recovery in the local unit was capped by the unabated withdrawal of foreign funds amid lacklustre sentiment in the domestic equity markets as well as an upward movement in crude oil prices. At the interbank foreign exchange, the rupee opened at 84.42 and touched the intra-day high of 84.37 against the greenback during the session. It finally settled at 84.40 (provisional) against the dollar, up 6 paise from its previous close. On Thursday, the rupee fell 7 paise to settle at its all-time low of 84.46 against the US dollar. The Forex market was closed on Friday on account of Guru Nanak Jayanti. "This minor support for the rupee was further aided by a reduction in FII selling activity in recent days, with expectations that sell-off pressure will remain limited

due to the upcoming state elections in Maharashtra. "The rupee is expected to find support in the 84.45-84.52 range, while resistance is projected around 84.25-84.30," said Jateen Trivedi, VP Research Analyst - Commodity and Currency, LKP Securities. Meanwhile, the dollar index, which gauges the greenback's strength against a basket of six currencies, was trading lower by 0.06 per cent at 106.55. Brent crude, the global oil benchmark, rose by 0.79 per cent to USD 71.60 per barrel in futures trade. In the domestic equity market, the 30-share BSE Sensex declined 241.30 points, or 0.31 per cent, to close at 77,339.01 points, while Nifty fell 78.90 points, or 0.34 per cent, to settle at 23,453.80 points. Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) were net sellers in the capital markets on Thursday, as they offloaded shares worth Rs 1,849.87 crore, according to exchange data. On the domestic macroeconomic front, India's merchandise exports in October rose by an impressive 17.25 per cent year-on-year, highest in over two years, to USD 39.2 billion, while the trade deficit widened to USD 27.14 billion on a sequential basis, according to the latest government data released on Thursday. Meanwhile, the country's forex reserves dropped by USD 6.477 billion to USD 675.653 billion for the week ended November 8, the Reserve Bank of India said on Friday.

SBI to open 500 more branches in FY25, take overall network to 23,000: Finance Minister

PTI ■ MUMBAI
Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Monday said SBI will open another 500 branches to take its overall network to 23,000 by the end of FY25. Speaking at an event to mark the 100th anniversary of the state-owned lender's main branch in Mumbai, Sitharaman recalled that the size of the bank has increased substantially since 1921 when three presidency banks merged to form the Imperial Bank of India (IBI). The government passed an Act of Parliament to form SBI in 1955 out of what used to be

customers. Sitharaman said the digital investments are "robust" at the bank, and it can handle up to 20 crore UPI transactions a day. This is a long way from the objective of the merger of three presidency banks in 1921, Sitharaman said, pointing out that one of the stated aims of the century-old consolidation move was to extend banking services to people. The Mumbai main branch is housed in a heritage building inaugurated in 1924 and currently handles nearly a fourth of all the deposits in the country. IBI, and what was a network of 250 branches in 1921 has grown to 22,500 now, she said. "SBI today has grown to become 22,500 branches, and I understand that another 500 branches are going to be opened in FY25. So, 23,000 branches," Sitharaman said. The finance minister said this growth of SBI should be a "global record", particularly in the context of India being repeatedly "taunted" for income disparities. She said SBI commands a 22.4 per cent share in the overall deposits in the country, nearly one-fifth in advance and serves over 50 crore

Gold and silver prices rebound because of ongoing wedding season buying, global cues

PTI ■ NEW DELHI
Gold and silver prices rebounded on Monday in the national capital mainly on the back of ongoing wedding season buying by jewellers and retailers as well as strong global trend, according to the All India Sarafa Association. Snapping a four-day losing streak, gold of 99.9 per cent purity rose by Rs 400 to Rs 77,450 per 10 grams in the local markets. The precious metal had closed at Rs 77,050 per 10 grams on Thursday. Silver also climbed Rs 1,810 to reclaim the Rs 92,000 per kg-mark against the previous close of Rs 90,190 per kg on Thursday. Price of gold of 99.5 per cent



purity jumped Rs 400 to Rs 77,050 per 10 grams. The yellow metal had settled at Rs 76,650 per 10 grams. Traders said besides wedding season demand from jewellers and retailers, a strong global trend for gold influenced the precious metal prices. On Friday, the local bullion markets were closed on account of Guru Nanak Jayanti. In futures trade on the MCX, gold contracts for

December delivery jumped Rs 621 or 0.84 per cent to trade at Rs 74,567 per 10 grams. During the day, the precious metal had climbed Rs 732 or 0.99 per cent to Rs 74,678 per 10 grams on the exchange. "Gold traded strongly positive due to heightened geopolitical tensions between Russia and Ukraine. This geopolitical risk bolstered gold prices as investors turned to safe-haven assets," Jateen Trivedi, VP Research Analyst - Commodity and Currency, LKP Securities, said. Silver contracts for December delivery also bounced by Rs 879 or 0.99 per cent to Rs 89,300 per kg

on the Multi Commodity Exchange (MCX). In the Asian trading hours, Comex gold futures rose USD 25.20 per ounce or 0.98 per cent to USD 2,595.30 per ounce. "Geopolitical developments over the weekend fuelled some haven flows, allowing the precious metal to start trading on a positive note," Saumil Gandhi, Senior Analyst - Commodities, HDFC Securities, said. Meanwhile, retail demand in India is likely to improve due to the ongoing wedding season, Gandhi said. According to Rahul Kalantri, VP Commodities, Mehta Equities Ltd, last week, gold and silver prices extended their decline, reaching two-month lows in international markets. This sharp drop was primarily driven by the strong performance of Bitcoin and the US dollar following Donald Trump's victory in the US presidential election, reducing the safe-haven appeal of precious metals, Kalantri said. Silver traded 1.23 per cent higher at USD 30.81 per ounce in the international markets. "Focus this week will be on the preliminary Manufacturing and Services PMI data from major economies along with Fed officials comments," Manav Modi, analyst, Commodity Research, Motilal Oswal Financial Services Ltd, said. The commentary from the officials will chart a path for the policy interest rates.

Sensex down 241 points, Nifty falls for seventh day as FPI selling spree



PTI ■ MUMBAI
Benchmark stock indices Sensex and Nifty continued their decline on Monday owing to unabated foreign fund outflows, selling in IT stocks and weak leads from the US markets. The 30-share BSE Sensex dropped by 241.30 points or 0.31 per cent to settle at 77,339.01 and registering its fourth day of decline. During the day, it fell 615.25 points or 0.79 per cent to 76,965.06. Falling for the seventh day in a row, the NSE Nifty dipped 78.90 points or 0.34 per cent to 23,453.80. From the 30-share Sensex pack, the Tata Consultancy

Services, Infosys, NTPC, HCL Technologies, Axis Bank, Tech Mahindra, Bajaj Finserv, Sun Pharma, IndusInd Bank and Reliance Industries were the major laggards. Tata Steel, Hindustan Unilever, Mahindra & Mahindra, Nestle and State Bank of India were among the gainers. Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) offloaded equities worth Rs 1,849.87 crore on Thursday, according to exchange data. Foreign investors have pulled out Rs 22,420 crore from the Indian equity markets so far this month, owing to high domestic stock valuations, increasing allocations to China, and

the rising US dollar as well as Treasury yields. With this sell-off, Foreign Portfolio Investors (FPIs) have recorded a total outflow of Rs 15,827 crore in 2024 so far. Equity markets were closed on Friday for Guru Nanak Jayanti. "Consolidation continued in the market, a slowdown in earnings growth and a weak rupee due to inflation impacted the sentiment. IT stocks reacted negatively today due to a reduced expectation of a Fed rate cut in December, which may pose a delay in spending in the BFSI segment," Vinod Nair, Head of Research, Geojit Financial Services, said. In Asian markets, Seoul and Hong Kong settled higher while Tokyo and Shanghai ended lower. European markets were trading in the negative territory. The US markets ended lower on Friday. Global oil benchmark Brent crude climbed 0.49 per cent to USD 71.39 a barrel. The BSE benchmark Sensex dropped 110.64 points or 0.14 per cent to settle at 77,580.31 on Thursday. The Nifty declined by 26.35 points or 0.11 per cent to 23,532.70.

Bajaj Finance FD book rises 21 per cent to ₹ 66,131 Crore

PTI ■ CHANDIGARH
Bajaj Finance Ltd (BFL), part of Bajaj Finserv Ltd, has reported a growth of 21 per cent in its Fixed Deposit (FD) book to Rs 66,131 crore as on September 30, 2024, a senior company official has said. The company's total customer franchise stood at 92.09 million as of September 30, 2024 and net users on its App platform stood at 61.67 million. "The Bajaj Group's century-old legacy of trust resonates across generations of Indian



families. Bajaj Finserv is founded on the business philosophy of the Bajaj Group, which has encouraged people across

demographics to choose its FDs," Sachin Sikka, Executive Vice President Deposits, Investments, Rewards and EMI Cards, Bajaj Finance,

is driving us to continuously transform savers' experience through digital journeys, competitive interest rates and a safe investing platform," Sikka said. Bajaj Finance has emerged as India's largest deposit-taking NBFC. It presents an opportunity for savers to secure stable and better returns in prevailing market conditions. Bajaj Finance Ltd maintains the highest domestic credit rating of AAA/Stable from CRISIL and ICRA for its Fixed Deposit program.

Emerging India Focus Funds settles FPIs violation case with Sebi, pays ₹ 64.35 Lakh

PTI ■ NEW DELHI
Emerging India Focus Funds on Monday settled a case concerning the alleged violations of Foreign Portfolio Investor (FPI) rules with markets regulator Sebi on payment of Rs 64.35 lakh towards settlement charges. This came after the applicant filed an application with Sebi proposing to settle the proceedings initiated against it, "without admitting or denying the findings of facts and conclusions of law" through a settlement order. The Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) initiated adjudication proceedings against the applicant and issued a



showcase notice in February for the alleged violations of FPI Regulations and Intermediaries Regulations. Pending adjudication proceedings, Emerging India Focus Funds filed an application with Sebi and shelled out Rs 64.35 lakh on November 13 to settle the

alleged violations. "In view of the acceptance of the settlement terms and the receipt of settlement amount by Sebi, the instant adjudication proceedings initiated against applicant vide SCN (showcase notice) dated February 29, 2024, is disposed of," Sebi said in its order.

INBRIEF

GURU NANAK DEV UNIVERSITY POSTPONES EXAMS SCHEDULED FOR NOVEMBER 20

GURUGRAM: Guru Nanak Dev University has announced the postponement of all annual and semester (theory) examinations initially set to take place on Wednesday, November 20, 2024. Prof. Shalini Bahel, Professor Incharge (Examinations) said that the exams will now be rescheduled for Sunday, December 1, 2024, at their originally designated times and examination centers.

SRM INSTITUTE OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY CELEBRATES 20TH (SPECIAL) CONVOCATION.

KATTANKULATHUR: The 20th (special) Convocation of SRM Institute of Science and Technology (SRMIST) was held on 15th November 2024 at the Kattankulathur campus. A total of 10,848 students including undergraduate (UG), postgraduate (PG), and doctoral (PhD) programs in Science and Humanities, Medicine and Health Sciences, Management, Law, and Agricultural Sciences, were awarded their degrees.



India look to play to their strength, start as favourites against Japan

PTI ■ RAJGIR (BIHAR)

Confident and unbeaten India will back their strategy of attack and defense at appropriate times when they take on Japan in the semifinal of the women's Asian Champions Trophy hockey tournament here Tuesday.

Hosts and defending champions India will undoubtedly enter the semifinal as clear favourites against a side which they trounced 3-0 in their final league game.

World number nine India have registered five wins from as many games, including 3-0 victory over Olympic silver medallist and world number six China.

India's chief coach Harendra Singh also emphasised on the need to continue in the same vein in the tournament.

"We know what are their strengths and weaknesses. For us, this tournament is about working on our strengths and build a formidable style of play for Indian women's hockey team. It's a mixture of attacking and defensive," Harendra said.

"So far the girls have executed really well. I am satisfied with their decision making but semifinal will be a different ball game."

The Indians must guard against complacency, as a single mistake could shatter their dreams of retaining the crown.

The top four sides qualified for the semifinals of the six-team continental tournament. In the other



semifinal China will be up against Malaysia.

The Indians might have defeated Japan hands down in the league stage, but Harendra is in no mood to take their opponents lightly in the knock-out match.

"Of course we are expecting a tough fight from Japan because the training game and pool matches are different. It's a semifinal and every team prepares according to their plans.

"We are going to face some resistance from Japan for sure. They have a good side but we have to do our homework. We need to focus on how we want to play rather than focussing on the opponent," he said.

After a cagey start, India quickly found their rhythm, elevating their performance dramatically and excelling in every aspect of the game.

One of the most encouraging aspects of India's success here has been the stellar performance of their backbone, led brilliantly by Uditia, Sushila Chanu, and Vaishnavi Vitthal Phalke.

The Indian defense has been so solid that goalkeepers Savita Punia and Bichu Devi Karibam have hardly been tested in the tournament thus far.

In the first part of the tournament,

the Indians were guilty of rushing the play and failing to identify the right options inside the opposition circle, a shortcoming acknowledged by Harendra.

But it seems the hosts have gotten over that bad habit in the last few matches. Not only have they managed to play full press hockey, but they've also displayed improved decision-making inside the circle, resulting in some fine field goals.

Penalty corner conversion was also an area of concern but over the last few games, the likes of Deepika and Manisha Chauhan have risen to the occasion on that front.

India have got a fine striker and a fierce dragflicker in young Deepika. Her exploits in the tournament can be gauged from the fact that she is leading the goal scorers chart with 10 strike which includes four field goals, five penalty corner conversions and one from the spot.

Other Indian forwards like Sharmila Devi, Sangita Kumari Preeti Dubey and Lalaremsiami have also contributed immensely in the home team's campaign so far.

Skipper Salima Tete has been the centre point of the Indian midfield in the company of Neha Goyal, vice-captain Navneet Kaur and Beauty Dung Dung.

The only concern going into the business end of the tournament for chief coach Harendra would be the lack of action of his goalkeepers Savita and Bichu as they hardly were seen in action, given the performance of the defenders.



Nelly Korda rallies in Florida for her seventh LPGA win of the year

AP ■ BELLEAIR (US)

Nelly Korda was back to competition for the first time in nearly two months and didn't miss a beat. She ran off five straight birdies on the back nine to stage another comeback, closing with a 3-under 67 to win The Annika for her seventh LPGA Tour title this year.

Korda had a rough start and said she didn't have many happy thoughts when she made the turn at 2 over for the day, two shots behind Charley Hull. Starting with a birdie on No. 11, she made five in a row on her way to a three-shot victory.

The only big surprise was seeing her younger brother, Sebastian, who has been charting his own career in tennis that kept him from seeing his sister win until Sunday at Pelican Golf Club.

Korda, who earlier this year tied an LPGA record with five straight victories, became the first player to win seven times in a season since Yani Tseng in 2011. No other American had won seven times in a season since Beth Daniel in 1990.

Korda now has won four times this year when trailing going into the final round.

Hull, going for a wire-to-wire win, simply couldn't keep up with Korda's birdie blitz. Coming off her first

win worldwide two weeks ago in Saudi Arabia, Hull closed with a 1-over 71 and tied for second with LPGA rookie Jin Hee Im (68) and Weiwei Zhang (70).

Zhang moved up 24 spots to No. 82 in the Race to CME Globe to keep her card for next year. The top 60 advance to the CME Group Tour Championship next week in Naples, where the winner gets \$4 million.

Carlotta Ciganda moved up three places to secure the final spot.

Korda last played Sept. 22 in Ohio. She was planning to play twice during the Asian swing until a minor neck injury kept her at home. She was eager to get back in time to play Pelican, where she had won two of the previous three years.

"After taking some time off with an injury, it feels great to be back out here," Korda said. "Nothing like being in the hunt, the adrenaline feeling on the back nine, and being in contention. I love it so much."

The victory puts her over \$4 million for the year, and she can nearly match that with a win next week at Tiburon Golf Club. The ranking does not matter for the season finale — all 60 players have the same shot at one of the biggest prizes in women's sports.



Omkar Salvi named RCB's bowling coach

PTI ■ BENGALURU

Challengers Bengaluru on Monday announced the appointment of Omkar Salvi as the IPL franchise's bowling coach, a reward for guiding Mumbai to Ranji Trophy and Irani Trophy titles last season.

A well-known name on the domestic circuit, Omkar has in the past worked as assistant coach with Kolkata Knight Riders.

"Omkar Salvi, current Head Coach of Mumbai, has been appointed as RCB's Bowling Coach," the franchise tweeted.

"Omkar, who has won the Ranji Trophy, Irani Trophy and the IPL in the last 8 months, is excited to join us in time for #IPL2025, after completion of his Indian domestic season duties."

He is expected to join RCB after the end of the ongoing Ranji season, which will resume on January 23.

In between, he will also oversee Mumbai's campaign in the Syed Mushtaq Ali T20 tournament.

Omkar, who is the younger brother of former India player Avishkar Salvi, has played just one List-A game for Railways in 2005. He is contracted with the Mumbai Cricket Association (MCA) until March 2025.

This will be Salvi's second IPL stint after his tenure at KKR.

RCB have never won an IPL title despite participating in it since the tournament's inaugural edition way back in 2008.

Britain knocks out defending champion Canada to advance to Billie Jean King Cup semifinals against Slovakia

AP ■ MALAGA (SPAIN)

Britain kept alive its hopes of winning the Billie Jean King Cup for the first time by defeating defending champion Canada in the quarterfinals in Malaga.

Katie Boulter clinched the 2-0 victory with a 6-2, 6-4 win over Leylah Fernandez after Emma Raducanu defeated Rebecca Marino 6-0, 7-5 in the first singles match of the tie.

"I think we have got a great team. We've always got a great chance," Boulter said. "I think every single day anything can happen. We're just going to keep believing, keep trusting it, and just keep enjoying it. I think that's really important. It's worked so well for us so far."

Four-time finalist Britain is yet to win the title, though it's the second time in three years that it has made it to the last four. Canada clinched its first title last year.

"You know what? We can't win them all, and I think credit to Team Great Britain, because I

China Masters: Satwik-Chirag return to action in BWF World Tour

PTI ■ SHENZHEN (CHINA)

India's premier men's doubles pair of Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty will make a highly-anticipated return to action at the China Masters Super 750 badminton tournament, starting here on Tuesday, following a disappointing Paris Olympics campaign.

The former world number one duo had been sidelined from competitive action post the Paris Olympics due to Satwik's shoulder injury.

Their absence from the circuit led them to miss several high-profile tournaments, including the Arctic Open, Denmark Open, and China Open.

Fresh off a lengthy recovery, Satwik and his Asian Games gold medal-winning partner Chirag will aim to regain their momentum, despite having

without a coach since Mathias Boe's departure in August.

Satwik and Chirag, who finished runner-up in the last editions, will start their campaign against Chinese Taipei's Yang Po-Hsuan and Lee Jhe-Huei in the opening round.

Elsewhere, P V Sindhu and Lakshya Sen will look to overcome their recent struggles and aim for improved performances as they continue their quest for consistency and form.

Both the players, who took a long break after their campaign at the Paris Games ended in early August without a medal, have struggled to regain their best form since the Olympics.

Since his semifinal loss in Paris, Lakshya has endured

early exits at the Arctic Open Super 500 and Denmark Open, and the trend continued last week, with the young shuttler making another first-round exit from the Kumamoto Masters Japan. He will kick off his campaign against seventh-seeded Malaysian Lee Zii Jia.

The 23-year-old possesses the ability to beat any opponent, but his mental toughness has been questioned following his agonising near-miss at the Tokyo Olympics, where he slipped from a medal position in a heartbreaking loss.

Two-time Olympic medallist Sindhu bounced back from her shock opening-round loss to Canada's Michelle Li in Finland, reaching the quarterfinals in Odense. However, Li proved to be a hurdle once again, defeating Sindhu in the round of 16 last week.

The unseeded Indian begins her campaign against Thailand's Supanida Katethong, whom she leads 5-4 on head-to-head record.

Also competing in the women's singles event will be promising young talents Aakarshi Kashyap and Malvika Bansod.

Aakarsi will face Tomoka Miyazaki of Japan in her opener while Malvika will take on Line Højmark Kjaersfeldt in the first round.

The women's doubles team of Treesa Jolly and Gayatri Gopichand, that made a first round exit from the Kumamoto Masters Japan, will also be in action. The Indian duo will square up against the second seeded Chinese combination of Liu Sheng Shu and Tan Ning.

B Sumeeth Reddy will partner Sikki Reddy in the mixed doubles event.

Sinner opens up about his doping case after winning ATP Finals trophy before his home fans

AP ■ TURIN (ITALY)

Sleepless nights. Constant thoughts of what went wrong — and how it could have been prevented.

Jannik Sinner opened up about his ongoing doping case after beating U.S. Open runner-up Taylor Fritz 6-4, 6-4 on Sunday for the ATP Finals trophy before his home fans.

Sinner tested positive in two separate drug tests in March and a decision to clear him of wrongdoing was appealed by the World Anti-Doping Agency in September. A final ruling is expected from the Court of Arbitration for Sport early next year.

Sinner's explanation was that the banned performance-enhancer entered his system unintentionally through a massage from his physiotherapist, who had used a spray containing the steroid to treat his own cut finger.

"I've kept on thinking about where we went wrong and what we could have done



better," Sinner said in Italian. "I had days where I wasn't feeling great; nights when I didn't sleep well.

"But when I put my hat on, I don't think about what's going on beyond the court," Sinner added. "I'm fortunate to have people around me who keep me stable. Thanks to them we've continued to work hard every day like there's no tomorrow and we've even improved in this period."

SINNER'S PERFORMANCE HAS APPROACHED DOMINATION LATELY

Sinner's victory in Turin was the latest big achievement in a year full of them following his first two Grand Slam titles at the Australian Open and U.S. Open and clinching the year-end No. 1 ranking.

Sinner has won 26 of his last 27 matches and ends the ATP season with eight titles and an overall record of 70-6.

"The work will never stop. We know we still have room for improvement," Sinner said. "But it's been an incredible season and there's

no better place to finish the season than here."

SINNER ALSO BEAT FRITZ IN THE US OPEN FINAL AND THE GROUP STAGE

Sinner maintained his recent mastery over Fritz, having also beaten the American in the U.S. Open final in September and in the group stage this week at the elite event for the year's top eight players.

By sweeping all five of his matches en route to the trophy, Sinner earned \$4.8 million — the largest winner's prize on the men's tour.

Sinner became the first Italian to win the finals and he went one step further than last year, when he lost the championship match to Novak Djokovic, who withdrew this time. And he did so without dropping a set — which was last accomplished by Ivan Lendl in 1986.

"I just tried to understand whatever works best for each opponent," Sinner said. "It was a very high-level tournament from my side. At

times, I couldn't play better."

THE CROWD WAS DECKED OUT IN ORANGE — SINNER'S THEME COLOR

The crowd inside Inalpi Arena included multiple clusters of fans wearing orange — a tribute to Sinner's red- and orange-colored hair,

and how he once ate carrots during a match. There were orange carrot costumes, orange wigs, orange hats, jackets and plenty of other orange items, too.

Some fans even had carrots in their mouths.

The crowd broke into its customary chant of "Ole, Ole, Ole; Sin-ner, Sin-ner" when Sinner produced a drop-shot winner to break for a 4-3 lead in the first set.

Sinner faced a break point while serving for the first set but saved it with a big serve out wide that Fritz couldn't return. Then he served an ace — his 10th of the set — to

close it out.

Another break by Sinner early in the second and the match was virtually over.

SINNER LED 14-8 IN ACES AND GAVE FRITZ HARDLY ANY CHANCES

Sinner served better than he had all week, leading 14-8 in aces without any double-faults.

"He served absolutely lights out. So many lines," Fritz said. "He placed the serve great. He took a lot of risk on the second serve as well. I think that was probably one of his main game plans, to not let me attack his second serve."

FRITZ WILL STILL RISE TO A CAREER-HIGH NO. 4

Fritz was attempting to become the event's first American champion since Pete Sampras beat Andre Agassi in the title match 25 years ago.

Still, Fritz will rise to a career-high No. 4 in the rankings on Monday after beating No. 2 Alexander Zverev in a third-set tiebreaker in the semifinals on Saturday. That

will make him the highest-ranked American man since Andy Roddick was No. 4 in August 2007.

It's the latest in a series of achievements for Fritz, whose run in New York made him the first American man to reach a Grand Slam singles final since Roddick lost to Roger Federer at Wimbledon in 2009.

"I feel like I've gone up a level and I'm much more confident in my game," Fritz said.

At the start of the week, Fritz told The Associated Press that his "career has always been a very steady progression and just improving a little bit each year."

DAVIS CUP AND NADAL'S RETIREMENT ARE NEXT

Both Sinner and Fritz will conclude their seasons representing defending champion Italy and the United States, respectively, in the Davis Cup finals, which start Tuesday in Malaga, Spain, and which will also mark Rafael Nadal's retirement.

'Hungry' Virat's record in Australia will give him confidence: Gavaskar

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Virat Kohli will be "very, very hungry" for runs following his lean patch against New Zealand, according to former Indian captain Sunil Gavaskar, who feels the veteran batter's strong track record Down Under will boost his confidence heading into the upcoming Test series against Australia.

Kohli has faced a challenging patch in all formats over the past few months. In his last 60 Test innings, he has managed just two centuries and 11 half-centuries.

This year, he has averaged only 22.72 across six Tests, and in the three games against New Zealand, he could manage only 93 runs.

"Because he hasn't scored runs against New Zealand, he'll be very, very hungry," Gavaskar told Star Sports.

"Even in that Adelaide Test, where India was bowled out for 36 in the second innings, Kohli scored 70-plus runs in the first innings before being run out," he added.

Despite these recent struggles, Kohli has an outstanding record in Australia. The right-hander, who has been part of four tours Down Under, averages a stellar 54.08.



Gavaskar believes these stats will provide a significant confidence boost as Kohli prepares for the upcoming five-match series, starting with the first Test in Perth on Friday.

"He has consistently performed in Adelaide, a ground he knows well. Before Adelaide, it's Perth, where Kohli played one of his finest Test centuries in the 2018-19 series — a terrific hundred."

"Having performed on these grounds, he'll feel an extra bit of confidence. Of course, you need a bit of luck at the start, but if he gets off to a good beginning, he will score big runs," Gavaskar added.

As the series approaches, all eyes will be on Kohli, who will look to bounce back with his trademark resilience and continue his fine record in Australia.

Kohli knows what's coming: Manjrekar.

Former India cricketer Sanjay Manjrekar also weighed in on how Australia might target Kohli.

"I think Virat knows exactly what's coming," Manjrekar said.

"They'll start with a line outside the off stump to assess his mindset. These days, he often leaves balls outside off and looks to drive anything pitched up. Australia may try to cramp him for room and attack his body, especially since he likes to get forward. New Zealand used this tactic effectively."

Manjrekar continued, "If he's focused on balls outside off stump, bowlers like Josh Hazlewood could target the middle-stump line, much like Vernon Philander used to do. Australia will experiment with different strategies, and Virat Kohli is well aware of that."



Sri Lanka beats New Zealand in 2nd ODI to win another home series

AP ■ PALLEKELE (SRI LANKA)

Mendis and carried the team home.

Earlier, Sri Lanka grassed a few hard chances but Avishka Fernando took three spectacular catches after Asalanka won the toss and elected to field.

Mark Chapman ended his struggling batting form with 76 off 81 balls, but his dismissal in the 37th over would see New Zealand lose its last six wickets for 36 runs. Mitchell Hay made a well composed 49 off 62 balls and shared a 75-run stand with Chapman. Hay was the last man to be dismissed.

New Zealand struggled against a four-pronged spin attack with Theekshana (3-31) and Jeffrey Vandersay (3-46) sharing six wickets. Left-arm spinner Dunitz Wellalage, the only change Sri Lanka made from the team which won the first game, and Asalanka took one wicket each.

Bracewell mopped up the top order but Mendis stood firm as he completed his half century off 84 balls with four boundaries. He added 39 runs with Janith Liyanage and another 31 with Wellalage, who struck three successive boundaries in his 18-run knock against Nathan Smith before holing out at mid-on to give Bracewell his fourth wicket.

But Theekshana showed some aggression against pace, slicing fast bowler Jacob Duffy for the only six in the Sri Lanka chase and also struck two boundaries.

"It is always a challenge when you are defending a low score," New Zealand captain Mitchell Santner said. "Kusal played the situation very well ... that partnership (between Kusal and Theekshana) at the end took it away, but we also left a few runs out there."

Kusal Mendis hit a patient 74 not out as Sri Lanka beat New Zealand by three wickets under the DLS method with six balls remaining in the rain-hit second ODI.

Sri Lanka took an unassailable 2-0 lead in the three-match series with the final game also at Pallekele on Tuesday. Sri Lanka won the first one-day international by 45 runs — also by DLS — after rain disrupted that game at Dambulla.

It was Sri Lanka's fifth ODI series win at home in 2024 after it had beaten Zimbabwe, Afghanistan, India and West Indies. Sri Lanka couldn't qualify for next year's Champions Trophy after finishing ninth at last year's 50-over World Cup in India, but has since then lost just one ODI series in Bangladesh while winning five at home.

"It is really tough for batters to score runs here," Sri Lanka captain Charith Asalanka said. "This is just another series. As a team, we are moving towards a big goal and we have to achieve that, this is a process."

Mendis followed his career-best 143 in the series opener with a determined 102-ball knock as Sri Lanka reached 210-7 in 46 overs.

The match was cut to 47 overs-a-side after two rain interruptions when New Zealand batted and was bowled out for 209 in 45.1 overs. Sri Lanka was set a target of 210.

Michael Bracewell's first four-wicket ODI haul (4-36) gave New Zealand a sniff when Sri Lanka slipped to 163-7 before Maheesh Theekshana (27 not out) shared a match-winning 47-run stand with



Vaughan shocked by India's call to skip warm-up matches ahead of Australia series

PTI ■ SYDNEY

Baffled by India's decision to head into the high-profile Border-Gavaskar Trophy against Australia without a proper warm-up game, former England captain Michael Vaughan has raised concerns about how the tourists would get into a "competitive mindset" without match practice.

India decided against playing a match against an Australian domestic side in the run up to the five-match Test series, starting in Perth from November 22, marking a departure from their approach on the previous two tours of Australia.

"I can't get my head around a team like India only wanting to play an intra-squad game leading into a series against Australia in their own backyard," Vaughan told Fox Cricket.

"I just can't see how you get yourself in that competitive mindset of consequence by playing an intra-squad game. Time will tell."

But India have also called off their scheduled three-day intra-squad match with their 'A' team. They have instead opted to focus on centre-wicket training at the WACA in Perth. The Indian think tank believed that the bounce of the WACA centre strip closely mirrors that of



the Perth Stadium pitch. As a result, they felt it would be beneficial for all top-order batters to spend more time in the middle.

"I'm surprised that this Indian side didn't want at least one game of cricket, and the WACA's the perfect venue because it's a similar pitch to Optus (Stadium), so you get used to the bounce," Vaughan said.

Australia had also skipped warm-up matches before last year's Test tours of India and England, citing issues with scheduling and a lack of trust in local curators as contributing factors.

"These players have a different kind of mindset to what we had, whereas we probably needed more games," Vaughan continued.

"They're playing 12 months of the year and get straight into it, but it'll be intriguing to see how both sets of players settle on that first day when they're playing the longer form."

"The modern player maybe believes that they don't need (tour matches). They think they get enough cricket throughout the year and they can react and just adapt. I just like to see teams win and stick a marker down," he added.

India name 20-member team for men's Junior Asia Cup

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Defender Amir Ali will lead a 20-member Indian squad in the men's Junior Asia Cup hockey tournament starting in Muscat from November 26.

India have won this tournament for a record four times, including 2004, 2008, 2015 and 2023. They beat nemesis Pakistan 2-1 in the final last year to lift the title.

This year, the event will have 10 teams from the continent divided into two pools with India, Chinese Taipei, Japan, Korea and Thailand clubbed in pool A.

Bangladesh, Malaysia, China, Oman and Pakistan are in Pool B.

The tournament is also a qualifying event for next year's FIH Junior World Cup and India have automatically qualified for it by virtue of being hosts.

However under the guidance of coach PR Sreejesh, the team will be looking to build on its recent success at the Sultan of Johor Cup.

Rohit will serve as Amir Ali's deputy.

"The Sultan of Johor Cup was a first-time experience for

many of the players, yet they showed great spirit in doing well and I am quite pleased with how they performed," Sreejesh said in a media release.

The team will be taking confidence from that performance and will be working towards a successful outing in the Junior Asia Cup.

"The players have been putting in a lot of hard work at the ongoing national camp in SAI, Bengaluru and we have made certain changes to our game to be more effective in defence and efficient in converting goals," he added.

Squad:

Goalkeepers: Princedeep Singh, Bikramjit Singh

Defenders: Amir Ali (C), Talem Priyobarta, Shardanand Tiwari, Yogender Rawat, Anmol Ekka, Rohit (VC).

Midfielders: Ankit Pal, Manmeet Singh, Rosan Kujur, Mukesh Toppo, Thokchom Kingson Singh.

Forwards: Gurjot Singh, Sourabh Anand Kushwaha, Dilraj Singh, Arshdeep Singh and Arajjeet Singh Hundal.

Alternate Players: Sukhvinder and Chandan Yadav.

IOA gets involved as India host first Kho Kho World Cup from January 13-19

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Indian Olympic Association (IOA) on Monday confirmed its partnership with the Kho Kho Federation of India as the country gets ready to host the first-ever Kho Kho World Cup, to be held here from January 13 to 19.

The IOA has pledged its "unwavering support" for the event to be organised at the IGI Stadium.

In a statement to KKFI chief Sudhanshu Mittal, IOA president PT Usha expressed the association's strong commitment to elevating indigenous sports like Kho Kho.

Usha said, "We recognise the

significance of this event in celebrating our cultural heritage and promoting traditional sports, and we look forward to collaborating with Kho Kho Federation of India to ensure the success of the tournament.

"Together, we aim to make this event memorable and impactful, encouraging the spirit of sportsmanship among participants and fostering a deeper appreciation for Kho Kho worldwide."

Mittal said the partnership between IOA and KKFI will be a "game-changer" for Kho Kho.

"The support of the IOA, led by President PT Usha, is a game-changer for Kho Kho. This



collaboration is pivotal in putting Kho Kho on the global map, and we're thrilled to be hosting the first-ever Kho Kho World Cup, a truly historic event for the sport," Mittal said.

The World Cup will feature both men's and women's teams, with 25 countries from six continents set to compete.

Teams from Asia, including hosts India, Bangladesh, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka, will face off alongside competitors from Africa, Europe, North America, South America, and Oceania.

Nations like Ghana, Kenya, England, Germany, Brazil and Australia will be among the participants.

Ashwin, an incredibly smart bowler, has taught me a lot: Nathan Lyon

PTI ■ PERTH

Veteran Australian spinner Nathan Lyon believes that rival players often serve as the "best coaches", acknowledging that his Indian counterpart Ravichandran Ashwin has "taught" him a great deal through their faceoffs since 2011-12.

Having made their Test debuts in the same year, Lyon and Ashwin will face each other for the eighth time in the longest format during the Border-Gavaskar Trophy five-Test series beginning in Perth on November 22.

"Ash (Ashwin) is an incredible bowler. I've gone head-to-head with him for basically my whole career, so I've learned a lot from Ash," Lyon told Fox Cricket.

"He's an incredibly smart bowler, and he's able to learn and adapt very quickly, and I think the best bowlers in the world are able to do that. He used his skills to benefit himself and his team.

"So, you've got to give credit where credit's due, he was the best bowler (in 2020/21), as he usually is. So, hats off to Ash."

It will be Ashwin's fifth Test tour of Australia, where he has claimed 39 wickets in 10 Tests at an average of 42.15.

Lyon further admitted to having studied Ashwin's bowling closely, especially before Australia toured India in the last few years.

"He's taught me a lot," Lyon said. "I'm a big believer in the players that you play against are your best coaches that you eventually come



across."

"I've watched a lot of his footage heading over to India, the way he goes about it here in Australia, see if I can pick up anything.

"The way I look at cricket is that I've never met anyone who has conquered the game, never played

against or with anyone who's conquered the game.

"There's so much to learn in this great game, and there's so much for me to learn from Ash. He's a world-class bowler. He's taken over 500 Test match wickets, and he should be extremely proud of that."

Ashwin (21.76) outshines Lyon (30.81) in terms of having the best Test bowling average in Asia. However, the Australian has better bowling figures outside Asia -- Lyon: 30.09, Ashwin: 33.14.

Asked if they could face again post this tour, Lyon reckoned, "Spin bowling is a craft that the older you get, the better you get with age."

"There's definitely no limit for me, and I don't think there should be a

limit for us as well. He's absolutely world-class, and there's a series in a couple of years' time. So, who knows?"

Asked the secret of his success on non-spinning tracks, Lyon quipped: "I know Jadeja reads all of this stuff, so I can't really share all my secrets."

"My big thing is spinning up the back of the ball and getting bounce, but it's a hard craft to be able to do that in Australia. Your size for error is extremely small," he said. They may not have won a Test series against India in nearly a decade, but Lyon feels their World Test Championship final triumph last year would give them the edge.

"India's got the wood over us in the past few series, but if you're looking at the World Test

Championship (final) in England, we were able to beat them there, and I know that should give us a bit of confidence heading into (this summer)," Lyon said.

"We understand that we're coming up against a world-class side, but we can take a lot of confidence out of where we are at as an Australian cricket team.

"I feel like we're on the journey to becoming a great team. We're not there yet. There's a bit of work to do, but we have the opportunity to do something pretty special this summer."

India are reeling from an unprecedented 0-3 home defeat against New Zealand, a result Lyon believes will make the second-ranked team even more determined.