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InSIDE

SPORTS
KIRAN GEORGE ENTERS
SEMIFINALS OF KOREA
MASTERS



FORGIVE ME IF I EVER HURT ANYONE OF YOU: CJI



PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

With folded hands and teary eyes, Chief Justice DY Chandrachud, on his last working day as the 50th head of the Indian judiciary on Friday, sought forgiveness if he had hurt anyone. "If I ever hurt anyone of you, I would like to just say please forgive me for something which I didn't intend to ever say or do which may have hurt you," he said. Heading a four-judge ceremonial Bench, also comprising CJI-designate Sanjiv Khanna, Justices JB Pardiwala and Manoj Misra, which assembled to bid him farewell, the CJI expressed a deep sense of fulfilment, not only for the work accomplished but for the opportunity to serve the country. Justice Chandrachud stepped into the shoes of his illustrious father YV

LANDMARK JUDGEMENTS

- Right to Privacy declared a Fundamental Right
- Homosexuality decriminalised
- Ayodhya Judgment, paved the way for Ram Mandir construction
- Gave Abortion Rights to unmarried women
- Cancelled Electoral Bond Scheme
- Upheld the scrapping of Article 370



Chandrachud, who served as the longest CJI between 1978 and 1985, on November 9, 2022 and will be demitting office on November 10, a Sunday. Later in the evening, speaking at the farewell function organised for him by the Supreme Court Bar Association (SCBA), the outgoing CJI said that he might perhaps be the most troled judge but that does not deter him and he respects

his opponents. "I hope you know the amount of trolling I have received. I am probably the most troled judge across the system. I will only say a shayari - Mukhalif se meri shakhsyat sanwarti hai. Mein dushmano ka bada chhtarim karta hu [Opposition makes my personality better, I respect my enemies very much]," he said, adding that the trolls will be unemployed from Monday next week.

Rich tributes were paid to him by CJI-designate Khanna and Bar leaders, including the Attorney General, the Solicitor General, SCBA president Kapil Sibal and others to mark the pivotal moment in India's judicial history. "You asked me what keeps me going. It is this court which has kept me going, because there is not a single day when you feel that you have not learned something, that you have not had an opportunity to serve the society. "And there is no greater feeling than being able to serve those in need and the people you would never meet, people you possibly do not even know, people whose lives you have the ability to affect without ever having seen them," a visibly emotional CJI said. In his address, CJI Chandrachud recounted his journey, from sitting in the last row of the court as a young law student to his time on the revered corridors of the SC.

He reflected on the immense privilege of serving the country, emphasising that each day spent in the court was an opportunity to learn and grow in both legal knowledge and personal insight. "I was always aware of the overpowering presence of the greats of this court and the responsibility that came with sitting in this chair. But at the end of the day, it is not about the individual, it is about the institution and the cause of justice we uphold here," the CJI said.

He spoke with admiration for his colleagues, particularly highlighting his time on the bench with Justices Pardiwala and Misra, noting the camaraderie and diversity of perspectives that enriched their collective work. The CJI also expressed his confidence in the future of the court, reassuring the legal community that his successor, Justice Khanna, whom he described as "dignified, stable and deeply committed to justice", would lead the court with equal dedication and vision. In a heartfelt conclusion, CJI Chandrachud expressed his gratitude to everyone who contributed to his journey, senior advocates, juniors, officers and staff, acknowledging that each one of them played a role in shaping his understanding of the law and life.

Justice Khanna wished good luck to the CJI, saying, "He has made my task easy and tough. Easy because of the revolutions ushered in and tough because I cannot walk up to him. He will be sorely missed. His youthfulness is not known here only but also abroad. In Australia, there were so many who came to me and asked what his age was."

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Representational Image

NSCN (IM) threatens to break ceasefire agreement

PTI ■ DIMAPUR

Naga insurgent group National Socialist Council of Nagaland (Isak-Muivah) NSCN (IM) has threatened to break its 27-year-old ceasefire agreement with the government and return to its "armed struggle" if its demands for a separate "national flag and constitution" are not met.

The group, which carried out a violent insurgency in Nagaland soon after India's independence in 1947, entered into a ceasefire pact in 1997 before starting prolonged peace talks with the government's interlocutors. On August 3, 2015, the NSCN(IM) signed a framework agreement with the government in presence of Prime Minister Narendra Modi to find a permanent solution.

In a statement released on Friday, general secretary of the group and chief political negotiator Thuingaleng Muivah said he and former chairman, late Isak Chishi Swu, went to the negotiating table for the resolution of the conflict through peaceful negotiation and also honouring the commitment of former prime ministers PV Narasimha Rao, HD Deve Gowda, Atal Bihari Vajpayee and others to resolve the issue through peaceful

political negotiation, leaving aside armed movement.

Accordingly, the political negotiations began on August 1, 1997 and since then more than 600 rounds of talks had been held without any pre-conditions both in India and abroad, leading to the signing of the framework agreement of August 3, 2015, he said. Muivah alleged that authorities and the leadership in the government have "deliberately betrayed" the letter and spirit of the framework agreement by refusing to recognise and acknowledged the Naga "sovereignty national flag and sovereign national constitution". He said the benchmark for a political agreement between the government and the NSCN must be according to the letter and spirit of the framework agreement wherein among others, the Naga "sovereign national flag and Naga sovereign national constitution" must be an integral part of the political agreement.

Muivah said today or tomorrow, Naga's "unique history, sovereignty and freedom, sovereign territory, sovereign national flag and sovereign national constitution are non-negotiable".

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J and K has had 10 terror attacks since October 16

MOHIT KANDHARI ■ JAMMU

The merciless killing of two Village Defence Group (VDG) members in the higher reaches of the Kishtwar district in the Jammu region has shaken the top brass of the security establishment, close on the heels of multiple attacks on the security forces and migrant workers since the formation of Omar Abdullah led popular government in the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir. So far a total number

of 10 incidents of terrorist violence have been reported across different areas of Jammu and Kashmir since October 16. Meanwhile, the dead bodies of two VDGs killed by terrorists were recovered on Friday from near a rivulet in the Pondgware area in the Keshwan belt. "Two VDG members, Nazir Ahmed and Kuldeep Kumar from Ohli-Kuntwara, went missing in the upper reaches while grazing livestock," a police spokesperson said. "My brother and Nazir were abducted and killed by terrorists. They were village defence guards and had gone to graze cattle as usual," Kuldeep Kumar's brother Prithvi, told a news agency. These VDGs form the backbone of the security grid in the entire Jammu region. By targeting them, terrorist handlers aim to demotivate them against participating in the ongoing anti-terrorist operations launched in the region to flush them out of



their safe hideouts. According to official sources, over 4,100 VDGs and 32,000 SPOs were engaged in Jammu and Kashmir, with different responsibilities for the protection of civilians and anti-terrorist operations under the direct supervision of district Superintendents of Police (SP). A massive cordon-and-search operation is also underway in Kishtwar to track down the terrorists responsible for the killings. The operation is concentrated in the Kuntwara,

Ohli, and Munzla Dhar hilly areas of Kishtwar. Director General J and K Police Nalin Prabhat and Additional Director General of Police Jammu Anand Jain visited Kishtwar to review ongoing operations on Friday. White Knight Corps Commander Lieutenant General Navin Sachdeva also landed in Kishtwar and held a meeting with the Director General J and K Police to chalk out their counter strategy.

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Israeli soccer fans attacked, five hospitalised, 62 detained

AP ■ AMSTERDAM

Israeli fans and protesters clashed overnight after a soccer match in Amsterdam, leaving five people hospitalised and 62 arrested, police said Friday. Dutch authorities said attackers systematically targeted Israeli fans.

It was not clear how the violence began. Dutch and Israeli leaders denounced the violence as antisemitic. Video also showed Israeli fans chanting anti-Arab slogans in the streets at some point. Amsterdam Mayor Femke Halsema told reporters Friday that the Dutch counter-terror watchdog said there was no concrete threat to Israeli soccer fans before the game. Peter Holla, the city's acting police chief, said at the news conference that the fans were "willfully attacked."

Condemnation of the violence poured in from Jewish groups. Israel's foreign minister left on an urgent diplomatic trip to the Netherlands. Security concerns have shrouded matches with Israeli teams in multiple countries over the past year because of global tensions linked to the wars in the Middle East. The Amsterdam police said in a post on social media platform X that they have started a major investigation into multiple violent incidents. The post did not provide further details about those injured or detained in Thursday night's violence following the Europa League match between Ajax and Maccabi Tel Aviv.

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India faced 255 days of extreme weather this year

RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

India faced 93 percent days of extreme weather from January to September this year. Of the 255 days out of 274, India experienced extreme weather events marked by heat and cold waves, cyclones, lightning, heavy rain, floods and landslides, almost every day in the first nine months of this year which claimed to 3,200 lives, affected 3.2 million hectare (mha) of crops, destroyed 235,862 houses and buildings, and killed approximately 9,457 livestock. The report titled "Climate India 2024: An Assessment of Extreme Weather Events" by the Centre for Science and Environment (CSE), based on the India Meteorological Department (IMD) data has come days ahead of the 2024 United



Nations Climate Change Conference or Conference of the Parties (COP29) in Azerbaijan's Baku from November 11 to 22. Compared to this, the first nine months of 2023 recorded extreme weather on 235 of 273 days, with 2,923 deaths, 1.84 mha of crops affected, 80,293 houses damaged, and 92,519 animal deaths. The year

2024 also set several climate records. January was India's ninth driest since 1901. In February, the country recorded its second-highest minimum temperature in 123 years. May saw the fourth-highest mean temperature on record, and July, August and September all registered their highest minimum

temperatures since 1901. In the Northwest, January was the second driest, and July recorded the region's second-highest minimum temperature. The Southern Peninsula saw its hottest February ever, followed by exceptionally hot and dry March and April, but with a 36.5 percent surplus in July rainfall and the second-highest minimum temperature in August. According to the report, extreme weather events spanned 50 days, a sharp rise from 38 days in 2022 and 28 in 2023. Cold days and cold waves dominated, occurring on 38 days-a 17-day increase from the previous year. Additionally, lightning and storms were recorded on 17 days, up from 5 days last year.

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Make Congress 'Yuvraj' speak in praise of Savarkar: PM Modi

T N RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

Seeking to drive a wedge among the Opposition Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) constituents over their ideological differences, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday dared the MVA leaders to get Congress leader Rahul Gandhi speak in praise of the contributions made to the country by Veer Savarkar and Balasaheb Thackeray.

Kick-starting his campaign for the State Assembly polls from north Maharashtra where he addressed election rallies at Nashik and Dhule, PM Modi played the "Maharashtra self-respect and pride card", when he slammed the Congress leaders for denigrating Savarkar and the Shiv Sena (UBT) — which considered Savarkar as its icon — for allying



with the grand-old party. Taking pot shots at both the Congress and Shiv Sena (UBT), the PM said: "In Maharashtra, Savarkar is a source of inspiration... They [Congress leaders] never allowed Marathi language to get the classical language status. But they abuse Savarkar regularly."

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HARVESTING HISTORY

Shahjahanpur farmer unearths cache of 1857 Revolt-era weapons

BISWAJEET BANERJEE ■ SHAHJAHANPUR

A farmer in Shahjahanpur, Uttar Pradesh, uncovered a surprising find while plowing his field - a hidden cache of historical weapons believed to date back to the 1857 Indian Rebellion. District authorities have secured the weapons, which are now stored in a safe repository, and have reached out to the Archaeological Department for further examination. District Magistrate Dharmendra Pratap Singh shared the details on Friday, "Babu Ram, a farmer from Dakhia Parvezpur in Nigohi police station area, was plowing his field recently when he discovered an

iron sword-like object beneath the soil. As he continued digging, he uncovered several more weapons buried underground." According to Singh, as the excavation continued, more weapons emerged from the soil. In total, the field yielded 23 swords, remnants of 12 matchlock rifles, one spear, and a dagger. The rifles discovered are heavily deteriorated, with only the barrels and some metal fragments intact, suggesting that termites may have consumed the wooden parts over time. Given the style of the gun barrels, experts believe they are indeed matchlock rifles. Upon learning of the discovery, district authorities dispatched a team led by the sub-divisional



magistrate to the site. The recovered weapons have since been moved to the Nigohi police station for safekeeping. Dr. Vikas Khurana, Head of the History Department at Swami Shukdevanand College in Shahjahanpur, suggested that the weapons may be linked to the 1857 Indian Rebellion. "These weapons appear to have characteristics of Rohilla culture. It is possible that when the British forces advanced after defeating the rebels in 1857, the freedom fighters retreated to the forest and may have buried their weapons to avoid capture," Dr. Khurana explained. "Victorious armies typically do not hide their weapons, so it is likely these were hidden by the

revolutionaries who were in retreat." Experts believe this discovery could provide valuable insights into the local history of the 1857 rebellion. Dr. Khurana further said: "If confirmed, these weapons could serve as a crucial link to the area's involvement in the first war of Indian independence. They offer a tangible connection to the courage and struggle of those who fought in the 1857 revolt." The district administration has written to the Archaeological Department to initiate a detailed analysis of the artifacts, which could confirm their historical significance and possibly shed light on the events of the 1857 rebellion in the region.

Girl 'kidnapped' from apartment complex

Residents concerned over 'illegal' hotels

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Unidentified accused allegedly kidnapped a girl by forcefully bundling her into their car in the Sushant Golf City area of Lucknow. The incident took place at an apartment complex in the area on Wednesday evening. According to residents, when they challenged the youths, they were told that the girl was being taken to a de-addiction centre. The accused warned the onlookers to stay out of the situation, threatening them with serious consequences. When the security guard tried to close the gate to prevent their exit, the miscreants pointed their weapons at him. Eyewitnesses claimed that the miscreants forcibly made the girl sit in the car while she screamed for help. All the windows of the car were

closed, and the girl continued to scream inside. They further alleged that several houses in the area were being used to run illegal hotels, which they believed might be linked to the incident. As the youths were taking the girl away, some onlookers managed to record a video. The 59-second video, which was later handed over to the police, shows the girl being forcibly made to sit in the car while she screams and struggles to get out. On Thursday morning, residents submitted a formal complaint with the police. They alleged that illegal hotels were being operated in some of the houses within the colony. They also stated that they had previously reported suspicious activities in the area but that the police had not taken any action. One office-bearer of the Resident Welfare Society of the

apartment complex said that despite the colony being a purely residential area, some houses were being used for illegal hotel operations. "Outsiders often come here and engage in suspicious activities. Foreigners are frequently seen visiting these illegal establishments. We have made several complaints to the authorities concerned, including the LDA vice-chairman and police, but no action has been taken," the residents said. They further alleged that after notices were issued to the owners of these properties, the LDA officials did not follow up on the matter. "The authorities have washed their hands of the issue after serving the notices," they claimed. Inspector, Sushant Golf City, Anjani Kumar Mishra confirmed that a complaint had been received and that the matter was under investigation.

Lured into investment in trading, woman defrauded of ₹3.88 lakh

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

A woman was allegedly defrauded of Rs 3.88 lakh by some accused who lured her into investing in online trading in the Sarojini Nagar police station area. The victim, Trisha Tiwari, a resident of Devlok Gauri in Sarojini Nagar, filed a police complaint in this regard. According to the victim, she received trading messages on her mobile phone from a Telegram group. Initially, the accused gained her trust by promising returns and encouraged her to invest more. They assured her that if she sent more money, her funds, along with her initial investment, would be returned. Gradually, the fraudsters convinced her that her account had been frozen and that she would need to send additional funds to unlock it. Believing this, the victim borrowed money and transferred it to various accounts. She transferred a total of Rs 3.88 lakh from Bank of Baroda, IDFC, ICICI, IndusInd and HDFC banks to the accused. Despite sending the money, she did not receive

any returns, and the accused also severed contact with her. The victim stated that she initially sent Rs 98,000, followed by another Rs 60,000 in five separate transactions. Subsequently, instalments of Rs 1.1 lakh, Rs 95,000, and Rs 25,000 were transferred. The fraud occurred between October 26 and 27.

JOB SEEKER LOSES MONEY IN CYBER FRAUD
In another case, a job seeker from Mahanagar was allegedly duped by cyber fraudsters. The victim, Apurv Khanna, a resident of Virman Presidency Apartment in the area, had uploaded his CV on a job portal after completing his graduation. In his complaint, he stated that he received a call from the human resources team of Vistara Airlines and was interviewed for a position. After the interview, he was handed a job offer letter, but money was requested in exchange for the offer. Apurv realised he had been cheated when further demands for money were made. The case is currently under investigation. "There were several rounds of

interviews, and then I was told I had been selected for the job. The fraudsters told me I needed to deposit Rs 4,000 as part of the process, so I immediately transferred the money via UPI. I was then informed that the joining letter and other office-related documents would be delivered to my home address by post," Apurv explained in his complaint. The truth came to light when Apurv called the airline's toll-free number. The caller then told him that an insurance premium of Rs 40,000 had to be paid before the job could proceed. After transferring this amount, he was provided with a fake insurance letter. Shortly after, another demand for Rs 27,000 was made. Suspicious of the situation, Apurv called Vistara's toll-free number again, only to discover that he had been subjected to cyber fraud. Apurv reported the incident to the cyber cell, after which the account into which the money had been transferred was frozen. Inspector, Mahanagar, confirmed that a case has been registered, and investigations are ongoing.

Rape accused threatens to rape victim again

Lucknow (PNS) A rape accused allegedly threatened to rape the victim again and kill her parents if she did not withdraw the complaint which she filed at the Para police station. The incident came to light on Friday after the victim narrated her ordeal to her parents, who filed another complaint with the police. As per reports, the girl from Thakurganj had filed a rape case against the accused, Lalit Gautam of Ahirankheda, Roshanabad Colony, Balaganj, in Para police station on July 6. The police arrested the accused and sent him to jail. However, he came out on bail on October 1. In her recent complaint, the victim alleged that after getting bail, Lalit started forcing her to withdraw the rape case. She

also suspected that some policemen might have helped him in getting her contact number. As per reports, she was returning home from her workplace at around 8 pm on November 4 when Lalit stopped her and started behaving indecently. The accused allegedly threatened to rape her again if she did not withdraw her police complaint. She also alleged that during the scuffle with the accused, her clothes were torn. As the accused saw some policemen, he fled the scene, threatening to kill the victim and her parents. Inspector, Thakurganj, Srikanth Rai said that a case had been registered and search was underway for the accused.

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Short Term E-Tenders are invited for the purchase of Calendering Machines, Computer Color Matching System, Single Color Roto Flat Printing Machine, Garment Design Software, Lab Coating Machine, Pad Thermo Fixation Range, Universal Testing Machine, High Performance Liquid Chromatography (HPLC), Archery Equipments, Fencing Equipments and Sports Training Facility be submitted online latest by 23/11/2024 upto 4:00 p.m. Detailed information can be obtained from website www.eproc.punjab.gov.in. Any corrigendum/Addendum related to these e-tender will be uploaded, if required, on Punjab Govt. website: eproc.punjab.gov.in

Director of Research
NA/12/28181/2023/38844 Dated CHD - 11/8/2024

CM to inaugurate 9-day Gomti Book Fair today

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath will inaugurate the third edition of the Gomti Book Fair in Lucknow on Saturday. The event is being organised by the National Book Trust (NBT) in association with the district administration. Addressing mediapersons, Divisional Commissioner Roshan Jacob said that Lucknow, known for its heritage and intellectual culture, was an ideal venue for the book fair. "Over 1,000 publishers are participating, with more than 200 stalls set up, and over 50 well-known writers will take part in the festival. This will provide a valuable opportunity for young people to engage with literature," she said. Jacob also highlighted the addition of an International Film Festival, which is being organised for the first time this year. "The district administration

has facilitated all the necessary coordination, and the Lucknow Municipal Corporation has ensured the provision of required amenities," she added. District Magistrate Surya Pal Gangwar expressed pride in Lucknow being chosen as the venue for the festival. "Books are essential for all age groups, especially in today's world where distractions from social media and the internet are so prevalent. Books provide guidance and help shape young minds," he said. NBT director Yuvraj Malik outlined the details of the festival, which will conclude on November 17. "The Gomti Book Festival is a nine-day celebration featuring innovative sessions, interactive literary discussions, children's activities, and cultural performances. It serves as a unique platform to promote a culture of reading, especially among the youth," he said. Malik explained that more than 150 stalls and booksellers

from across India will bring their latest releases, bestsellers, and timeless classics to the fair. "More than 1,000 publishers will participate, and the festival will run from 11 am to 8 pm daily," he said. "NBT has expanded its book fairs into holistic festivals, which promote reading through children's events, literary sessions, and cultural programmes. The festival will showcase diverse art forms, including dance, drama, poetry, and creative writing, celebrating storytelling in multiple formats. This year, we have partnered with the AICFF to bring a visual dimension to the festival, with screenings of award-winning children's films from around the world," Malik elaborated. In addition to books, the fair will feature literary sessions aimed at enriching the experience for both readers and authors. These sessions will provide an engaging platform for authors, readers, and the broader literary world.

DM discusses action plan to deal with air pollution

Lucknow (PNS): A review meeting was presided over by District Magistrate Surya Pal Gangwar on Friday to discuss the implementation of the action plan, developed by the Uttar Pradesh Pollution Control Board (UPPCB) to tackle the growing problem of air pollution and smog during the winter months. The DM instructed the departments concerned to ensure the continuous use of all available pollution control equipment, such as water sprinklers, anti-smoke guns, and mechanical sweepers. Personnel were directed to operate these tools on a shift basis, ensuring 24-hour coverage. The district magistrate directed that construction waste be sent directly to the Construction and Demolition (C&D) Waste Plant run by the municipal corporation, rather than being scattered across construction sites. Schools were instructed to

stagger their opening and closing times to avoid traffic congestion, with the district inspector of schools and basic education officer overseeing the implementation. The district agriculture officer was tasked with raising awareness among farmers to prevent stubble burning, while the municipal corporation was asked to address the issue of unpaved roads at congested intersections by paving them and spraying water to control dust pollution. The municipal corporation was also instructed to collect garbage daily to discourage open burning, which contributes to air pollution. Industries near the Air Quality Monitoring Station (AQMS) at Talkatora were asked to stagger their operating hours for the next 15 days, based on the Air Quality Index (AQI), and to adopt this approach regularly if it improves air quality.

Chef Qurayshi brings authentic Awadhi flavours to Oudhyana

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Velvety pieces of chicken in korma melt in your mouth in seconds, while the subtle flavours of mutton nalli nihari settle on your tongue with just one mouthful. Dahi kebabs crumble into delicious bites, and the mutton biryani, layered in rich mutton stock, satisfies your taste buds. The mastermind behind these flavours is Chef Mohammed Shameem Qurayshi, the new culinary talent at Oudhyana, Taj Mahal Hotel. Chef Shameem, from the renowned Qurayshi family, brings his expertise to Oudhyana, where he plans to update the menu with secret family recipes infused with more Lucknowi flavours. Speaking at a press conference held at the Taj Mahal Hotel in Lucknow on Friday, Qurayshi revealed his vision. A seasoned culinary expert with 13 years of experience, Qurayshi hails from Lucknow and specialises

in Awadhi cuisine, a cooking tradition heavily influenced by Mughal techniques. "Awadhi cooking is known for its delicate flavours and masterful techniques. It celebrates slow-cooked dishes, aromatic spices, and intricate presentations," he explained. Signature dishes like Lucknowi gosht galawat, Kakori seekh kebab, and Awadhi gosht nalli nihari showcase Qurayshi's knowledge of traditional flavours and techniques. These include dum cooking, which locks in the essence of spices like saffron, cardamom, and rose petals. Qurayshi said he is keen on highlighting Lucknow's culinary heritage, emphasising the importance of "secret recipes". He said he plans to introduce unique ingredients like potli masala, nihari masala, and baghare baingan masala into his dishes. "These spices, which I learned from my family, will offer our guests a unique culinary experience," he said. New additions to the menu will include pasanda, subz nawabi kofta (a rich mix of vegetables and dried fruits), and heeng hari matar kebabs. He shared the secrets behind his dishes, noting that his jhinga dum nisha (dum prawns) incorporates eight spices, his five-time minced galawati kebabs blend 18 spices, and his nalli nihari features 24 spices. "The key to great cooking is the



perfect combination and proportion of spices," he said, adding: "Knowing when to add each spice is what brings out the true flavour." Qurayshi praised Lucknowi cuisine for its refinement, which avoids the use of whole spices that need to be removed after cooking, unlike many other regional styles. "Instead, we use star anise, cinnamon, shahi cumin, green cardamom, and stone flowers

to create unique combinations," he explained. His culinary skills are grounded in a rich family tradition of cooking, with his family serving some of Lucknow's most prominent political figures for nearly 70 years. "I learned the secrets of Awadhi cooking by helping renowned chefs in my family and under the guidance of my mother," he said. "Our recipes date back to the era when Nawabs preferred flavoursome, tender mutton that was easy to chew," he said. At Taj Mahal, Lucknow, Qurayshi said, he is committed to elevating the region's culinary legacy. His creations, blending subtle flavours with exquisite presentations, are a tribute to the royal kitchens of Lucknow. Nitin Singh, sales manager at Taj Mahal, Lucknow, remarked, "Chef Qurayshi's expertise will offer a richer dining experience, with his secret recipes bringing a fresh perspective to Awadhi cuisine."

CITYBRIEFS



CAREER COUNSELLING
A career counselling session was organised by the Commerce department, Navyug Kanya Mahavidyalaya, in association with The Institute of Cost Accountants of India, Lucknow chapter. They made the students aware about CMA course that can be pursued by students of any stream of study after Class XII. The expert speaker was Satish Singh, along with Neera Yadav, who talked about all the related branches of study in detail. The curriculum of study included management start ups, risk management, financial accounting, digital financing, decision making, cyber security, financial derivatives, tax management. An MCom student, Trisha

Agarwal, who has cleared CMA intermediate, also shared her experience with the students.

ANNUAL CONFERENCE
The 11th Annual Conference of the UP state chapter of the Association of Gynaecologic Oncologists of India (UGO) will be held at Sangay Gandhi Postgraduate Institute of Medical Sciences (SGPGI) on Saturday. The focus will be on gynaecological cancers in women. "Gynaecological cancers are among the most common cancers in women, and their numbers are rising. This is a major public health issue. In countries like India, many women are diagnosed at advanced stages due to lack of awareness, limited screening, and varying pathology. This affects outcomes," a senior doctor said. The theme for this year is "Closing the Gap in Women's Health". Top oncologists from across India, including experts from Mumbai, Delhi, Hyderabad, and Gwalior, will attend it. International faculty from Canada will also share their insights.

Immortal voices of poets to resonate at Maha Kumbh

PNS ■ PRAYAGRAJ

With the dedicated efforts of Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath's government, this Maha Kumbh is set to be the most magnificent and spiritually enriching event yet. Among the remarkable initiatives planned, one stands out as truly unique: the Allahabad Museum in Prayagraj will unveil a renovated gallery dedicated to India's renowned Hindi literary figures, marking the first gallery of its kind in the world. For the first time, pilgrims and tourists will be able to listen to and see the works of Sumitranandan Pant, Maithili Sharan Gupta, Mahadevi Verma, Ramdhari Singh Dinkar, and Agyeya, in their original voices. Extensive preparations are underway to bring this experience to life. This gallery, showcasing the legacies of these iconic Hindi poets and writers, is expected to become a major attraction for visitors from across the globe. Allahabad Museum, under the guidance

of Deputy Curator Dr Rajesh Mishra, is making swift progress to honour the government's vision of making the world's largest cultural gathering truly unforgettable. Even before the Maha Kumbh, construction was well underway on this tribute to India's literary greats, allowing people not only to view exhibits dedicated to Pant, Gupta, Mahadevi Verma, Dinkar and Agyeya but also to hear their poetry in their voices. These original recordings, coupled with rare videos of the poets reciting their works, promise an immersive experience for all visitors. Dr Rajesh Mishra said, "Witnessing these luminaries recite their poetry will be an extraordinary experience in itself. To ensure devotees can fully appreciate the poetry of these literary giants during Maha Kumbh, Allahabad Museum is collaborating with the Films Division, Doordarshan and Akashvani. A comprehensive selection of works from these esteemed poets has been compiled to create an unparalleled experience for visitors."

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Loan Account Number	Customer Name	Branch Name
145966915	AMAN YADAV	GORAKHPUR BRANCH

Auction will be conducted online through <https://egold.auctiontiger.net> on 19/11/2024 from 12:00 pm to 3:00 pm. By way of this publication the concerned borrower are hereby given final notice and last opportunity to pay the facility recalled amount, with all interest and charges before the schedule auction date failing which the jewellery will be auctioned. Please note that, if the auction does not get completed on the same day due to time limit the bank will auction the pledged gold ornaments within next 7 days on the same terms and conditions. If the customer is deceased all the conditions pertaining to auction will be applicable to his legal heirs.
Date:09.11.2024 Place: GORAKHPUR

IDFC FIRST Bank Limited
(erstwhile Capital First Limited and amalgamated with IDFC Bank Limited)
CIN : L65110TN2014PLC097792
Registered Office: KRM Towers, 8 Floor, Harrington Road, Chetpet, Chennai - 600031.
TEL: +91 44 4564 4000 | FAX: +91 44 4564 4022.

PUBLIC NOTICE
GOLD AUCTION CUM INVITATION NOTICE

The Below mentioned borrower has been issued notices to pay the outstanding amount towards the credit facility against Gold ornament savailed by him from IDFC FIRST Bank Limited. Since the borrower has failed to repay the dues under the facility. We are constrained to conduct an auction of the pledged Gold ornaments on 19/11/2024. In the event any surplus amount is realized from this auction, the same will be returned to the concerned borrower and if there is any deficit post the auction, the balance amount shall be recovered from the borrower through appropriate legal proceedings. IDFC FIRST Bank has the authority to remove the following account from the auction without prior intimation. Further IDFC FIRST Bank reserves the right to change the Auction Date without any prior notice.

Loan Account Number	Customer Name	Branch Name
151126627	RANJEET SINGH	PRAYAGRAJ BRANCH
151951186	RAJESHWARI PRASAD PANDEY	PRAYAGRAJ BRANCH

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Date:09.11.2024 Place: PRAYAGRAJ

Wherever SP men are seen, daughters get scared: Yogi

PTI ■ MUZAFFARNAGAR/MORADABAD/GHAZIABAD

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath kicked off his campaign for the Uttar Pradesh assembly by-elections on Friday, holding rallies in support of the National Democratic Alliance (Rashtriya Lok Dal) candidate in Mirapur and the Bharatiya Janata Party candidate in Kundarki-Ghaziabad. Targeting the Samajwadi Party and Congress, Chief Minister Yogi took a sharp jab, remarking, "Jahan dikhe Sapayi, wahan bitiya ghabrayi" (Wherever SP is seen, daughters feel afraid). He hinted that the Samajwadi Party, which allied with 'khatakhatakhatakhata' (Congress) in the Lok Sabha elections, needs to be decisively defeated. Chief Minister Yogi urged people to vote for the ruling party candidates, assuring them that the government would take full responsibility for development and security. Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, recalling the slogan from the 2012-17 period, stated, "Back then, it was said, 'Jis gaadi par Sapa ka jhanda, Samjho baitha hai koi gunda' (A car with an SP flag means a goon is riding it)." He continued with a pointed remark: "Today, 'Jahan dikhe Sapayi, wahan bitiya ghabrayi' (wherever SP members are seen, daughters feel scared)." Referring to incidents in

Ayodhya and Kannauj, he commented on the "new brand of SP", criticising their lack of regard for public decency. "If they are not corrected with kicks, how else will they learn?" he asserted. Chief Minister Yogi went on to say, "We have always believed that the sisters and daughters of the village are everyone's responsibility. But SP has shattered this trust. Their true values are exposed on the social media handles of the SP media cell, where they engage in distasteful and offensive talk." Chief Minister Yogi stated that the Election Commission of India extended the election date from November 13 to November 20 in response to public faith. "The SP is troubled by every good initiative, because if society is filled with good people and good work, then the undesirable elements will be filtered out. They are uncomfortable seeing people celebrate festivals in peace," he remarked. He added that when the moon is not visible, the date of Eid is often adjusted, and the government declares a holiday accordingly without any objections. Yet, when a constitutional body rescheduled the election date, respecting the significance of a festival that holds deep meaning for the Hindu community, it caused discomfort to the SP. Criticising the alliance between the SP and Congress, Chief Minister Yogi stated that a "divorce" is underway between



Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath during a bypoll rally in Muzaffarnagar on Friday

the two parties. "During the Lok Sabha elections, they had boasted about 'khatakhatakhatakhata' but gained nothing. Now, cracks are forming in their alliance. Congress and SP misled the public with false promises about the Constitution and reservations. Now is the chance to wipe out the Samajwadi Party," he said. Yogi further remarked, "In Haryana, Congress warned SP to stay within its limits, saying they would handle them if they left UP. In Maharashtra, the message was similar: stay

within bounds, or lose whatever influence remains. In UP, SP has shown Congress the door. There is tension between them because deceit is in SP's nature." Chief Minister Yogi remarked that under the SP government, western UP endured the impact of forced migration. He stated that the SP was dividing society for the sake of power. However, since the NDA government has been in power in UP for seven and a half years, the situation has transformed. "Now, everyone understands the consequences of violating

the honour of sisters and daughters, stealing from farmers, and inciting riots. Today, there are no riots in western UP, and migration has ceased in Kairana. Rapid Rail now connects Meerut to Delhi, and Muzaffarnagar will soon benefit from this facility as well." He highlighted the increase in support to sugarcane farmers, pointing out that between 1995 and 2017 (22 years), the total sugarcane payment was far less than the Rs 2.53 lakh crore disbursed in the last seven years alone. Since March 2023,

private tubewell farmers no longer have to bear irrigation costs, as the government covers this payment. Additionally, the government has revived sugar mills, creating new opportunities for western UP's youth, who now secure government jobs without discrimination. Chief Minister Yogi announced that by the end of this month, the results of 60,200 police recruitments will be released. He emphasised that youth from districts like Shamli, Muzaffarnagar, Meerut, Baghat and Bulandshahr now have access to government jobs based purely on merit, ending the former 'Saifai list' system. He noted that 20 per cent of these positions are reserved for girls, who will be empowered to defend against any misbehavior from SP members. The UP government, he added, also supports athletes who win medals in major competitions by providing financial rewards and jobs. A sports university dedicated to Major Dhyan Chand is being established, offering facilities that match European standards, enabling UP athletes to train locally in Meerut and Muzaffarnagar. Chief Minister Yogi stated that while Prime Minister Narendra Modi is building a unified and strong 'Ek Bharat-Shrestha Bharat', the opposition's INDI Alliance is leading the country toward division. Referring to a recent resolution by the Jammu and Kashmir Assembly advocating for the reinstatement of Article 370, he questioned, "Why are Congress and SP silent on this resolution? And why are those who express sorrow for Palestine and Pakistan quiet about Jammu and Kashmir?" He added that their ideals are leaders like Chaudhary Charan Singh, Dhan Singh Kotwal, and the martyrs who sacrificed everything for the nation. Referring to the Muzaffarnagar riots, Chief Minister Yogi recalled that a large cache of weapons had been recovered during the violence, and criticised the SP leadership for honouring the rioters. "We will destroy those stockpiles of weapons that fueled the 2013 riots," he affirmed. The chief minister urged the public to support Mithilesh Pal, saying, "To teach a lesson to the masterminds behind the riots and to extinguish their 'gunpowder' with 'hand pump' water, we must ensure Mithilesh Pal's victory." Chief Minister Yogi emphasised that every caste and community should have the freedom to celebrate their festivals with joy. "If Holi and Diwali can be celebrated happily, there should be no hindrance in celebrating Eid, but cooperation is needed from all sides," he remarked, adding that those who manipulate faith are loyal to no one. Speaking in Kundarki, he highlighted the revival of Moradabad's brass industry,

which was struggling before 2017. "When we removed the obstacles, Moradabad's exports soared to Rs 16,000 crore. This industry is open to all, not just Hindus; anyone with skill and determination is welcome to join," Chief Minister Yogi noted. Yogi criticised the Samajwadi Party, stating that they oppose development, youth, women, businesses, and public faith. "The largest mafias, criminals and goons in every district are linked to SP. Mentioning their name alone feels like a sin," he remarked, urging people to keep a distance from them for greater welfare. He added that during the SP's terms in 2003-07 and 2012-17, incidents of oppression against Scheduled Castes were at their highest, and that SP had repeatedly insulted revered leaders. Highlighting development in Ghaziabad, Chief Minister Yogi noted significant projects, such as the Dudheshwar Temple Corridor and an AIIMS satellite centre, which aim to provide Ghaziabad and western UP with top-tier healthcare facilities. He appealed for the election of a BJP MLA from Ghaziabad to continue advancing these initiatives. Yogi appealed to ensure victory for NDA (RLD) candidate Mithilesh Pal from Mirapur seat of Muzaffarnagar, BJP candidate Ramveer Singh Thakur from Kundarki and Sanjeev Sharma from Ghaziabad in the by-elections.

SCW says men should not tailor women's clothes or cut their hair

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Men should not tailor clothes for women or cut a woman's hair either, the Uttar Pradesh State Commission for Women has proposed to protect women from "bad touch" and stymie the ill intentions of men. The proposal suggests that men should not be involved in tailoring women's clothes or cutting their hair. It also includes measures like banning men from taking women's measurements and installing CCTV cameras in relevant spaces. These suggestions came after a meeting held on October 28, 2024, and reflect the State Women Commission's concerns about safety of women in these settings. The Uttar Pradesh State Commission for Women, led by its Chairperson Babita Chauhan, proposed that men

should no longer be involved in tailoring women's clothes or providing haircuts to women, Himani Agarwal, a member of the Women's Commission said on Friday. She claimed that in a meeting of the Women's Commission on October 28 last, a proposal was floated that only female tailors should take the measurement of stitched clothes worn by women and that CCTVs should be installed in these areas. "We have also said that in salons, it should only be female barbers who should attend to female customers," she disclosed. She said, "We are of the view that because of men being involved in such professions, women are molested. They (men) try to indulge in bad touch." Agarwal further clarified that the proposal does not imply that all men in these professions have bad intentions,

but rather acknowledges that some men may take advantage of their role to harass or molest women. "The intention of some of the men is also not good," she said, before adding, "Not that all the men have bad intentions." Agarwal explained that the proposal was introduced by Babita Chauhan, Chairperson of the State Commission for Women, and it received support from the members present at the meeting. She also clarified that this is currently just a proposal, and the Women's Commission plans to request the state government to consider enacting laws based on these recommendations. While the intention behind the proposal is to protect women from harm, the broader question of whether gender-specific restrictions are the best solution to the problem of harassment remains open.

UP assembly spl secy dies in road mishap

Lucknow (PNS): Uttar Pradesh assembly's special secretary Brij Bhushan Dubey lost his life in a road accident early Friday morning. The 52-year-old special secretary met with an accident near Ayodhya on way to Lucknow with his son, Krishna Dubey, who was driving the car. According to police reports, the accident took place around 1:30 am when Krishna attempted to overtake another vehicle. The car lost control, crashed into the road divider, overturned and veered into the opposite lane, where it collided with an oncoming truck. The local residents quickly alerted the authorities and emergency service personnel arrived to transport Dubey and his son to hospital. Unfortunately, Dubey succumbed to his injuries, while Krishna sustained minor injuries and was discharged after treatment. The impact of the crash left the car extensively damaged. CO Ashish Nagar confirmed that Dubey's body had been sent for autopsy and the family had been informed. Brij Bhushan Dubey previously served in the state's Information department before his appointment as special secretary in the Vidhan Sabha. In 2021, he was honoured with the Atal Ratna award for his dedication to public service.

Comprehensive victory for minority rights: AMU fraternity on SC ruling

Aligarh (PTI): The Aligarh Muslim University (AMU) fraternity on Friday welcomed the Supreme Court's ruling on the institute's minority status, saying it reaffirms the foundation principles on which the varsity was established. Prof Faizan Mustafa, a constitutional law expert and former registrar of AMU who had filed this case in the Supreme Court in his ex-officio position, told PTI, "It is a comprehensive win for minority rights in general and AMU in particular." Reacting to the Supreme Court's verdict, former Vice-Chancellor of AMU, Lt Gen (Retd) Zameeruddin Shah told PTI, "By overturning the earlier judgement in the Azeez Basha case, the Supreme Court has responded to the aspirations and hopes of a large segment of India's population." He also asserted, "This judgement should serve as a lesson for us and should also ensure that the AMU should not just remain a beacon light for us but should also pave the path for lighting many more beacons of hope for the entire country." Earlier in the day, the Supreme Court

deferred the question of AMU's minority status to a new bench and overruled the 1967 judgement that said the university cannot be considered a minority institution since it was created by a central law. Rahat Abrar, historian and former director of AMU's Urdu Academy who played a prominent role in providing vital historical documents to legal experts in the case, said the judgement has validated the claims of the AMU community which had always maintained that the case should be decided based on historical evidence on the identity of those organizations and individuals who had envisaged the idea behind this institution and worked for its establishment. Secretary of the AMU Teachers Association (AMUTA) Mohammad Obaid Siddiqui said the judgement reaffirms the idea behind the establishment of the institution for fulfilling educational aspirations, while also maintaining its commitment to an inclusive environment serving all sections of society. In a majority verdict headed by Chief Justice of India (CJI)

D Y Chandrachud, the bench laid down tests for considering the issue of AMU's minority status. The 4:3 majority judgment authored by CJI Chandrachud, also on behalf of Justices Sanjiv Khanna, J B Pardiwala and Manoj Misra, said, "The view taken in Azeez Basha (1967 verdict) that an educational institution is not established by minority if it derives its legal character through a statute, is overruled." A five-judge Constitution bench in the S Azeez Basha v. Union of India in 1967 said AMU was a central university and couldn't be considered a minority institution. "The question of whether AMU is a minority educational institution must be decided based on the principles laid down in this judgement," the CJI said. Prof Aftab Alam, chairman in the Department of Strategic and Security Studies at AMU and a noted scholar in the field of international human rights law, told PTI, "It is a historic judgement, which has overruled the earlier 1967's judgement which had denied minority status to AMU."

Girl killed for family 'honour'

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

In a suspected case of 'honour' killing, a girl was found shot dead in Khatauli area of Muzaffarnagar on Friday morning. The relatives of the deceased were later found to be absconding. The police have registered a case and launched a hunt for her relatives. According to reports, a girl's body with bullet wounds was found in an abandoned car in Khatauli area of Muzaffarnagar on Friday morning. The victim was identified as a native of Bahsuma in Meerut. The circle officer of Khatauli said that on Friday morning, the local police received information about the murder of a girl who was living with her maternal uncle, in Rasulpur Kelora village under Khatauli police station. On receiving the information, Superintendent of Police (City) Satyanarayan Prajapat and Khatauli police reached the spot and found the body lying in an abandoned car near the village. Station House Officer of Khatauli, Inspector Brijesh Sharma, said that Himanshi, daughter of Anil of village Mohammadpur Shaikst under Hastinapur police station of Meerut district, was shot dead in Rasulpur village and her body was found lying in a car near the village. She was shot twice. The maternal uncle and his sons have been accused of murder. They all have fled from home. Two women of the family were taken into custody and questioned. It is said that Himanshi was originally a native of Mohammadpur village of Hastinapur. Her father had died when she was a child. For the last seven-eight years, Himanshi was staying at her maternal uncle's house and receiving education. She was studying in Mawana. During this time, she fell in love with Vineet, son of Balraj resident of nearby village Sadarpur. Himanshi and Vineet were studying together. Her maternal uncle and his family were opposed to their love affair but both got married in court on October 10. They were set to get married formally on November 12 as per social rituals. Annoyed with the move, her relatives shot her dead on Friday morning. Vineet claimed that Himanshi's mother had 32 bigha agricultural land, out of which 22 bigha land was sold by Himanshi's brother and nephews. Himanshi had also opposed this. Further investigations are on.

Govt initiative to boost higher education of OBC students

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

The Yogi Adityanath government has made significant strides in education, starting the second phase of the timetable of the pre-matric and post-matric scholarship schemes for Other Backward Classes students for the 2024-25 financial year. This initiative aims to support OBC students by easing their financial burden and promoting their pursuit of higher education. Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Backward Classes Welfare and Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities, Narendra Kashyap, announced that the scholarship schemes for students from classes 9 to 12 and higher levels are now available. He added, "Through an online application process, the scheme provides timely financial assistance to ensure that OBC students can continue their studies without financial hindrance." Backward Classes Welfare Director Dr Vandana Verma highlighted that the application process is now fully digitised for enhanced transparency and efficient disbursement. She added, "OBC stu-

dents can apply via the official portal (<https://scholarship.up.gov.in>). According to the schedule, all educational institutions must be registered in the master data by December 31, 2024, with fee verifications completed by universities, affiliating agencies and district school inspectors by January 5, 2025. Applications for the pre-matric scholarship for class 9-10 students and the post-matric scholarship for class 11-12 students can be submitted until January 15, 2025. Educational institutions are instructed to verify and forward these applications by January 18, 2025, ensuring timely financial support for students so their studies are uninterrupted. The government has mandated that the scholarship amount be transferred directly to students' bank accounts through direct benefit transfer (DBT). By February 25, 2025, all eligible students will receive their funds via the Public Financial Management System (PFMS), expediting support for educational advancement in the state. Dr Vandana Verma shared that the Yogi government is committed to advancing education for backward-class students.

Akhilesh attacks BJP on demon anniversary

Lucknow (PTI): Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav on Friday attacked the ruling BJP on the eighth anniversary of demonetisation, alleging the party has destroyed the country's economy through its policies and programmes. "Rupee hit a new all-time low against the dollar yesterday, a day before the eighth anniversary of demonetisation. People are asking whether this happened due to the failure of demonetisation or the negative policies of the BJP," he said in a post on X in Hindi. He wondered if the BJP would give it a spin and say that it's not rupee that has fallen but the dollar which has gained strength. "The BJP turned the 'arthvyavstha' into 'anarthvyavstha'," he said, accusing the ruling party of ill-managing and ruining the country's economy. He said the falling rupee has caused resentment among people against the BJP.

L-0 devices of 35,000 BC Sakhis reactivated

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath's prompt intervention has resolved a critical issue affecting over 35,000 BC Sakhis in Uttar Pradesh. The Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI) had ordered the shutdown of L-0 devices, which are essential for fingerprint sensing, without providing an alternative solution. This decision affected over three crore people, including the 35,000 BC Sakhis who rely on these devices for their work. Upon learning of the issue, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath immediately instructed officials to engage with UIDAI and find a resolution. Following his direction, senior officials swiftly contacted senior UIDAI representatives, leading to the reactivation of the devices. This quick action has ensured

the continuity of services for the affected individuals, underscoring Chief Minister Yogi's sensitivity towards the welfare of the state's citizens. According to Chief Secretary Manoj Kumar Singh, over 35,000 BC Sakhis are part of the National Rural Livelihood Mission, handling daily financial transactions worth over Rs 40 crore. These BC Sakhis use L-0 fingerprint devices provided by UIDAI to authenticate Aadhaar-based transactions. However, on October 31, UIDAI ordered the suspension of 19 models of L-0 devices from 10 companies, affecting the BC Sakhis' ability to carry out their work. The UIDAI also mandated the use of L-1 devices instead, but no training was provided for their use. As a result, the work of more than 35,000 BC Sakhis was disrupted.

On the instructions of Chief Minister Yogi, Chief Secretary Manoj Kumar Singh contacted UIDAI officials to address the disruption caused by the sudden suspension of L-0 devices used by BC Sakhis for financial transactions. Singh explained that the training for using the replacement L-1 devices had not been provided, and since BC Sakhis could not afford to buy new machines, their work was severely affected. He requested the reactivation of the old L-0 devices. Recognising the urgency of the issue, UIDAI officials promptly agreed to restart the L-0 devices on November 6. Following this, BC Sakhis were able to resume their transactions. The BC Sakhis expressed their gratitude to Chief Minister Yogi, thanking him for his timely intervention.

60.17L rural families linked with employment opportunities

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

In a determined drive toward rural uplift, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath's administration is steering the villages of Uttar Pradesh onto a fast track of development. Through the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) scheme, the government has implemented significant measures to generate employment, empower women and enhance essential rural infrastructure. In the current financial year, 2024-25, the Yogi government has successfully connected 60.17 lakh rural families with employment opportunities

in Uttar Pradesh. Basti district has secured the top spot in UP for employment generation under the MGNREGA scheme. So far, 1,95,714 families in Basti have been provided employment, against the target of 1,95,717, resulting in the creation of 79,40,929 man-days. This achievement has earned Basti the first position in the state, with Azamgarh and Jaunpur following in second and third places. Chief Minister Yogi has emphasised the importance of creating maximum man-days under MGNREGA to ensure that people in rural areas can find work in their own villages.

Commissioner, Rural Development, GS Priyadarshi, has instructed officials to improve the implementation of MGNREGA schemes, aiming to create more employment opportunities for rural communities. Under the leadership of Chief Minister Yogi, the MGNREGA scheme has become a powerful tool for both employment generation and the overall development of rural areas in Uttar Pradesh. The scheme covers a wide range of initiatives, including employment, housing, drinking water, women empowerment, irrigation, road construction and plantation. The main goal of these efforts is to

improve the quality of life in rural areas and enhance the living standards of the people. The Yogi government has made MGNREGA a key driver of rural progress. Beyond providing employment, it is strengthening the very infrastructure of Uttar Pradesh's villages. The combination of job creation, better access to basic amenities and a focus on empowerment is helping rural areas reach new heights. A key aspect of MGNREGA's success is its role in women empowerment. Women in rural Uttar Pradesh are benefiting not only from employment opportunities but also from gaining economic

independence. The government has created special opportunities for women to become self-reliant, allowing them to contribute financially to their households. Employment under MGNREGA is bringing transformative changes to the lives of rural women, empowering them in ways that will last for generations. This year, more than one lakh families in Uttar Pradesh have achieved economic stability through the MGNREGA scheme by receiving 100 days of employment. A total of 1,00,371 families have secured consistent work, providing them with the opportunity to support their livelihoods and ensure financial security.

The Yogi government is committed to expanding this initiative, aiming to provide 100 days of employment to even more families in the future, enhancing their economic security. This historic effort is transforming the lives of rural people, helping them build a more stable and prosperous future. The government is closely monitoring the effective implementation of the MGNREGA schemes to ensure its benefits reach as many people as possible. On the instructions of the chief minister, district officials have been entrusted with the responsibility of ensuring the successful rollout of the scheme in every corner of the state.

Four-day Chhath Puja celebrations conclude



Devotees gather at Assi Ghat to offer arghya during sunrise in Varanasi on Friday.

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

Lakhs of devotees thronged various ghats of Ganga and Varuna rivers apart from leading ponds, including Surya Sarovar in Banaras Locomotive Works (BLW) here on Friday morning to offer 'arghya' to Surya Bhagwan (Sun God) at the time of sunrise. With this, the four-day Surya Shasthi festival, popularly known as Enda Chhath Puja, came to an end. Elaborate security arrangements were made at various

ghats and ponds. Several traffic restrictions were imposed, especially in the central city area of Dashashwamedh, southern part of Assi and Bhaissasur in the northern part near Rajghat. Right from wee hours the devotees started thronging various ghats of Ganga and Varuna rivers to secure space at the stairs. The ghats like Dashashwamedh, Rajendra Prasad, Ahliyabai, Man Mandir, Assi, Sheeta, Scindia, Panchganga, Nagwa,

Bhaissasur, Rajghat, Narad, Kedar, Hanuman, Ravidas and Tulsi Ghat witnessed gathering of huge number of devotees. Rush was also seen at different ghats of Ramnagar, including Shastri and Balua ghats. Besides, devotees were also seen at Shastri and other ghats of Varuna river apart from various ponds. After 5 am the vrati (fasting) women started taking bath and standing in the water, carrying 'dauras' (baskets made of bamboo sticks) of 'prasad' in

their hands. They stood for almost an hour to wait for sunrise. As soon as the sunrise was seen, the women started offering arghya. The family members also did the same and sought the blessings of the vratis. At that time, traditional songs of Chhathi Maiya kept resonating at the ghats. Thousands of vratis in view of heavy rush at ghats and ponds preferred to celebrate the festivals in their homes.

At famous Surya Sarovar in BLW, thousands of devotees completed their fast by offering arghya to the rising sun and with this, the festival of Chhath Puja ended with grandeur and religious fervour. The personnel of UP Police, Railway Protection Force (RPF), NDRF and volunteers of St John's Ambulance Brigade, Civil Defence and District Bharat Scout Guide were deployed to ensure security at the venue. The members of the Puja Committee also actively cooperated and contributed to making the event successful, including distribution of prasad. President of BLW Chhath Puja Committee CK Ojha and general secretary Ajay R and other officials expressed their gratitude to all the departments concerned, including public relations, security forces and committee members for conducting the event peacefully and smoothly.

Devotion marks festival



PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ PRAYAGRAJ

The last day of Chhath Puja was celebrated with enthusiasm and devotion in IFFCO township, Ghiyanagar. According to traditional customs, the festival ended with a large number of devotees offering arghya to the rising sun. Devotees gathered at the pond built in the township premises since early morning. In this puja dedicated to Chhathi Maiya and Lord Surya, fasting women dressed in traditional costumes offered raw milk, coconut etc besides various fruits to the Sun God.

On the occasion prominent IFFCO officers including Vineeta Kudesia, Arun Kumar, Satish Singh, CB Singh, Kapil Dev, Murali Dhar Mishra, Pankaj Pandey, Vijay Yadav, Anurag Tiwari, Robin Ranjan, Dharmendra Singh, Rama Kant Singh, Jaishankar Yadav, VK Verma besides Ashok Manoj Tiwari, Swayam Prakash and his family were present who greeted the devotees and appreciated the success of the event. This unique and traditional celebration of Chhath Puja at IFFCO township, Ghiyanagar united all the devotees and gave a message of mutual harmony and devotion.

Asst teacher's body found

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ PRAYAGRAJ

The body of an assistant teacher of primary school was found floating in the canal in Bashaara village under Meja police station area on Friday. He was missing since Thursday and his family was searching for him. On getting information police reached the spot. They alleged that he was murdered.

Sunil Kumar Gaur (32) of Kauwa village under Karchana police station area, was posted as an assistant teacher in Primary School Semari of Kaundhiara block. He was missing since Thursday. On Friday his body was found floating in the canal in Lalai Ka

Pura hamlet of Bashaara village. On information of passersby police reached the spot. He was identified on the basis of the identity card found in his pocket. On the information of the police family members also reached the spot. His wife Ragini Gaur is inconsolable. She said one person from Koraon had borrowed Rs 2 lakh from Sunil. Even after a long time, he was not returning the money. Sunil was having a dispute with him regarding it. Meja Station House Officer (SHO) Rajesh Upadhyay that prima facie it appears to be a case of murder. However, investigation is being done. A case will be registered after receiving the complaint.

Cong hails SC decision

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

Uttar Pradesh Congress Committee (UPCC) secretary Fasahat Hussain Babu and state general secretary of party's minority cell Hasan Mehndi Kabban hailed the decision of the Supreme Court (SC) to uphold the minority institution status of Aligarh Muslim University (AMU). In a joint press release issued here on Friday, they said that the SC in its decision stated the AMU is a minority institution and it is entitled to minority status under the Constitution. The Congress leaders alleged that since 2014, the Modi gov-

ernment at the centre has been making huge cuts in the annual budget of AMU and the Congress Minority Cell under the leadership of its state president Shahnawaz Alam, has been continuously opposing and fighting for its rights. They said that this decision of the SC has brought relief to all minority educational institutions, including AMU. They said that as the Indian Constitution ensures the rights of all, the minorities have the right to establish and run educational institutions of their choice but for the past few years our constitutional rights are being continuously challenged.

Ayushman cards distributed to beneficiaries



PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

Continuing the process of making Ayushman cards for the elderly, 1,436 cards were made in the entire district during the day to rank first in the state. In this direction, Varanasi Cantt MLA Saurabh Srivastava distributed Ayushman cards to the beneficiaries at Swami Vivekananda Memorial (SVM) Government Hospital, Bhelupur, on Friday in a special camp for the elderly above 70 years of age in the district. Speaking on this occasion, the MLA said the beneficiaries will be able to avail free treatment facility of up to ₹5 lakh under this scheme by getting admitted to any registered hospital. During this, he inspired the people present in the community to make Ayushman card themselves. He appealed that the beneficiaries should make their Ayushman card themselves from mobile. He said that the only eligibility criterion for getting the benefit under this scheme is that the age of the person should be 70 years or more. This has been determined on the basis of age recorded in Aadhaar. Aadhaar will be the only document for enrolment. Chief Medical

Officer (CMO) Dr Sandeep Chaudhary said such camps will continue to be conducted in the coming days so that the maximum number of elderly people can get the benefit. He said Android mobile users will be able to download this app from Play Store and iPhone users will be able to open it from HSTP site. Apart from this, such elderly people can now get their Ayushman card made through self-registration from Ayushman Mitra or Panchayat Sahayak in Jan Seva Kendra, Panchayat Secretariat or through CHO, kotedars and ASHA workers in Ayushman Arogya Mandir. Additional Chief Medical Officer and nodal officer Dr SS Kanauja said Ayushman cards of 102 elderly people have been made in the camp during the day and 1,436 cards have been made in the entire district. He said Aadhaar-based e-KYC will be mandatory for issuing enrolment of Ayushman card for eligible senior citizens of both existing and new families. An additional shared top-up cover of up to ₹5 lakh per year will be provided for senior citizens aged 70 years and above in families already covered under AB PM-JAY.

CV Raman lecture series organised

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

Like every year, this year as well, the Faculty of Science at Banaras Hindu University (BHU) organised the grand Sir CV Raman Lecture Series on Thursday in honour of the birth centenary of Sir CV Raman. This lecture series was based on the 2024 Nobel Prize winners in Physics, Chemistry, and Medicine and their scientific discoveries. The event began with the garlanding of the statues of Mahamana Madan Mohan Malaviya and Sir CV Raman, followed by the university kulgeet. The series commenced with a lecture by Prof Chandan Das Gupta from the Physics Department of IISc Bangalore. He discussed the theories of this year's Nobel Prize winners in Physics. This year, John H Hopfield and Geoffrey E Hinton were awarded the Nobel Prize in Physics for their work on foundational discoveries and inventions that enable machine learning with artificial neural networks. Prof Chandan Das Gupta elaborated on the Hopfield model, which is based on artificial neural networks. In the field of Chemistry, this year's Nobel Prize was awarded to three scientists: David Baker, Demis Hassabis, and John M Jumper. Prof Nishant N Nair from the Chemistry Department of IIT-Kanpur was present to deliver a lecture on their work. In his lecture, he spoke about computer-based protein design and protein structure prediction, explaining that this discovery could lead to the development of new drugs for human welfare. Prof SC Lakhotia from the Zoology Department of BHU presented an exposition on the Nobel Prize winners in Medicine, Victor Ambros and Gary Ruvkun, and their discoveries.

'NTPC's 50-year journey a living example of duty towards excellence'



CGM NTPC Auraiya Jaideo Parida cutting the cake to mark the 50th Foundation Day celebrations

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

On the occasion of 50th Foundation Day, NTPC Auraiya Project hoisted the NTPC flag and organised a cake cutting ceremony on Thursday. Chief General Manager (CGM) Jaideo Parida hoisted the NTPC flag in front of the Administrative Building to mark the opening of the Foundation Day ceremony. Highlighting the achievements of NTPC Limited and its Auraiya Project, CGM Jaideo Parida said, "the 50-year journey of NTPC was a living example of duty towards excellence, innovation and society. NTPC has been playing a pivotal role in its journey. This was all only due to our united efforts which drove us to reach such an historical milestone". Expressing happiness, he said NTPC's present installed capacity had reached up to 76,476 MW which was a matter of pride for us. Hinting towards the future targets, he said the company was rapidly heading towards achieving 130 GW capacity with the special contribution of renewable energy. He also discussed the social welfare works done by NTPC Auraiya. He said during past one year, the Project had made important

contribution in the fields of education for the girls of affected villages, health and environment protection. Its contribution was still continuing by organising girls empowerment campaigns, health camps and cleanliness drives for the development of the society. Congratulating all the officers, employees and their family members, CGM Jaideo Parida said, "we all unitedly made this Project attain glorious heights and hope that NTPC Auraiya will continue to make similar achievements in future also". Thereafter, he along with the chairperson, Jagriti Mahila Mandal, Sanghmitra Parida, Additional General Manager (Operation and Maintenance) Sanjay Kumar Balyan; AGM (contract and materials) Ved Prakash Pandey, Chief Medical Officer (Health Centre) Dr Vijay Nayak, AGM (human resources) Tanmay Dutta, Assistant Commandant CISF Unit; HoDs, senior officers, office-bearers of union/association; members and employees of Jagriti Mahila Mandal celebrated the occasion by cutting a cake. It was followed by watching the live telecast of CMD NTPC's address for employees from New Delhi headquarters.

DRM conducts safety inspection

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

Divisional Railway Manager (DRM) of Varanasi Division of North Eastern Railway (NER) Vineet Kumar Srivastava conducted a window trailing safety inspection of Varanasi-Chhapra, Chhapra-Siwan, Siwan-Bhatni rail sections and inspected Chhath Mela stations on Thursday. During his inspection, the DRM inspected all arrangements made for the management of Chhath pilgrims at Siwan railway station. During the inspection he thoroughly inspected the holding area (passenger rest house) made for Chhath passengers, control room made for Chhath Puja, CCTV monitoring room and barricading for crowd management, information board, platform clearance, foot over bridge clearance, circulating area, entry and exit route, temporary passenger waiting room, additional reserved/unreserved ticket counters, fire fighting equipment, cleanliness of the station, availability of drinking water at water booths and pay and use toilets and all the arrangements related to the safety of passengers at the station. During this, he also took details



of Chhath special trains passing through Siwan station and passengers travelling from Siwan during Chhath festival. Apart from regular trains, 18 to 24 special trains are running daily from Siwan. He said the Varanasi Division of NER has taken many steps, including crowd management in view of the extra crowd of passengers on Chhath Mahaparv. "Railway Protection Force (RPF) are constantly keeping a vigil at the stations to ensure that there is no lapse in passenger safety. Taking extra caution, RPF personnel have been deployed along with a dog squad at some major stations", he said. Srivastava said adequate number of RPF and GRP personnel have been deployed at stations and in trains with special atten-

tion on foot over bridges/platforms and circulating areas. To avoid jostling while boarding general coaches of long distance trains, RPF and GRP have made arrangements for boarding of passengers in a queue in general coaches of more crowded trains. In view of this, security forces are being deployed at all such places for security and surveillance. During this time, trains passing through these places are being run at controlled speed. On the occasion Assistant Divisional Signal and Telecommunication Engineer Ashok Kumar, Assistant Security Commissioner of RPF Mukesh Pawar, Divisional Mechanical Engineer (Train Set) Abhishek Kumar along with senior supervisors and station staff were also present.

Motorcyclist killed in mishap

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

A motorcyclist was killed while his friend seriously injured when an unidentified vehicle hit them near Madar Nagar under Bangermau Kotwali police station area of Unnao on Friday morning. The injured was undergoing treatment at the Trauma Centre in Lucknow. Police carried out a probe and initiated action in the matter. According to a report received here, Vikas Pal of Kachhiyanpurwa under Bangermau Kotwali area, had left with his friend Sunil Pal on a bike for some work. As soon as they reached near Madar

Nagar, the speeding unidentified vehicle hit them due to which they fell on the road and were seriously injured. Police took them to the community health centre (CHC), Bangermau. After the first aid, doctors referred them to Lucknow Trauma Centre where Vikas Pal succumbed to his injury during treatment. Sumit Pal is undergoing treatment there. Police have started a probe in the incident and launched raids in search of the absconding unidentified vehicle. Inspector Bangermau Rajesh Pathak said on receipt of complaint, further action will be initiated.

In another incident a woman labourer was killed while her colleague injured when a speeding bus hit them in Sadar Kotwali police area of Unnao on Thursday. During treatment, one of them died late night while her colleague is undergoing treatment at the hospital. Police sent the body for an autopsy. Meanwhile a newborn baby girl was recovered from a pile of garbage in Ashok Nagar locality on Friday morning. While cleaning the street, a safai karmchhari heard the baby crying and informed the police which rushed to spot and carried out investigation.

Poem highlights daughters as blessings

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KANPUR

A Kavi Sammelan was held aboard Kanpur Metro train in collaboration with the 'Vikasika' organisation. The poets expressed their gratitude to Kanpur Metro for creating this platform to celebrate poetry and connect with the city's literary community. The 'Kavita Ke Rang Metro Ke Sang' Kavi Sammelan held during a Metro ride, kicked off around 3:00 pm. The event began with veteran poet Surendra Gupt Sikar's heartfelt recital of the poem 'Zindagi Ki Rail Chalti Jaaye Re...'. His moving words set the tone for the session. Another poignant moment came with the poem 'Beti Hai Mangal Kalash', which highlighted daughters as blessings and conveyed a positive social message. Poet Vinod Srivastava captivated the audience with his song 'Ghar Mein Chhote Bade Nahi Hote, Jaante To Lade Nahi Hote'. Om Prakash Pathak's touching song 'Main To Har Pal Tera Naam Ratta Raha' moved the listeners. Poet Irshad



Poets taking part in Kavi Sammelan organised aboard a Kanpur Metro train.

Kanupri's 'Ek Tere Na Hone Se Yeh Ghar, Ghar Nahi Lagta' paid tribute to family life, further enriching the experience. The session was not just filled with emotion, but also humour, with Shravan Shukla's witty line 'Marji Ko Anaesthesia Se Nahin, Kavita Se

Behosh Karna Hai' which had the audience in splits. President of 'Vikasika' organisation, KK Awasthi, extended heartfelt congratulations to the founder of the organisation, Dr Vinod Tripathi, on his birthday, and expressed gratitude to Kanpur Metro for hosting such a unique event. The gathering also saw the presence of senior poets and literary figures, including Durga Vajpayee, Suresh Sahni, Akshat Vyom, Shashi Shukla, Uma Vishwakarma and others. Kanpur Metro has been actively hosting literary events at its stations and on its trains in collaboration with various organisations. The Gate No. 2 of Motijheel Metro Station has become a popular hub for book lovers, regularly featuring book fairs throughout the year. This year, in celebration of International Women's Day, a pre-launch event for the book 'Metro Ka Pehla Dibba' was also held at Motijheel Metro Station. These initiatives have received strong support from both book enthusiasts and metro passengers further enriching the cultural fabric of the city.

Boy killed as car collides with truck

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ PRAYAGRAJ

A 10-year-old boy was killed while several others were seriously injured after the car in which they were going to Ayodhya collided with a truck in Mauaima area on Friday. The accident occurred when Phoolchand Gupta was going with his family from Madhya Pradesh to Ayodhya to for darshan of Lord Ram. The family of Phoolchand Gupta lives in Govindpur Galla Mandi in Rewa district of MP. The driver dozed off on reaching Saraiyalauddin, Jogapur and the car collided with a truck parked on the side of the road. As a result all family members were seriously injured. On receiving information, the police sent the injured to SRN Hospital here. Phoolchand's son Shivanshu died during treatment. The other injured are undergoing treatment. SHO Mauaima Virendra Kumar Mishra said the injured included Sezal Gupta, Kamlesh Gupta, Phoolchand Gupta, Khushi Gupta, Tanu Gupta, Pinky Gupta and Shailesh Kumar. They are being treated at the SRN Hospital. The doctor treating them told the police that the condition of Tanu Gupta and Pinky Gupta is precarious.

Buddhist scholar describes Kashi as eternal city

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

A three-day international seminar titled 'Kashi Vaibhav: A Historical Discourse' was inaugurated at the Centre for Vedic Sciences, BHU, here on Friday under the auspices of the Department of History at Banaras Hindu University (BHU). Dr K Siri Suredh Theru, President of the Sri Lanka International Buddhist Association, Sarnath, graced the event as the chief guest, along with numerous scholars and researchers from around the world. A commemorative booklet related to the seminar was also released, containing abstracts from over 150 researchers and scholars. In his inaugural address, the Buddhist scholar highlighted the historical ties between Kashi and Lord Buddha, describing Kashi as the 'City of Earning, Learning and

Burning' whose grandeur has persisted through various times and contexts. Dr Thero also mentioned that the next Buddha (Bodhisattva) will be born in Kashi, and at that time, Kashi will be known as 'Ketumati'. He described Kashi as an eternal city whose significance cannot be understated. The keynote speaker, Prof Maruti Nandan Tiwari, emphasised that Kashi is more than just a city; it is an infinite sentiment. He described Kashi as the abode of Shiva, where Shiva's presence can be felt in every corner. "Shiva, revered as both a divine and folk deity, embodies the spirit of universal welfare", he said and also highlighted the Ganga ghats of Kashi as a series that reflects a blend of cultural unity in diversity. Prof Tiwari expressed concern over the growing individualistic and superficial culture in modern society, which, he felt, was

harming Kashi's spirit. He urged everyone to strive to live genuinely to preserve Kashi's spiritual essence. Earlier, Prof Ghanshyam, Head of the Department of History, introduced the audience to the rich heritage and illustrious legacy of BHU's Department of History in his welcome speech. He emphasised the diversity within academic history. Dean of the Faculty of Social Sciences Prof Binda Paranjape discussed various cultural aspects of Kashi, highlighting its historical and religious significance. The seminar conveners Dr Satyapal Yadav and Dr Seema Mishra announced that on the following day, researchers from India and abroad would present their papers on Kashi. Additionally, discussions would be held on various aspects of the life of Babu Jagat Singh of Banaras.

AMU minority status: SC defers question to new bench, overturns earlier judgment

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court (SC) on Friday in 4:3 majority judgment deferred the question of Aligarh Muslim University's (AMU) minority status to a new three-judge bench and overruled the 1967 judgment that said the university cannot be considered a minority institution since it was created by a Central law. The majority judgment authored by CJI DY Chandrachud, also on behalf of Justices Sanjiv Khanna, JB Pardiwala and Manoj Misra, said, "The view taken in Azeez Basha (1967 verdict) that an educational institution is not established by minority if it derives its legal character through a statute, is overruled." Before pronouncing the judgment by bench, CJI Chandrachud said there were four separate opinions, including three dissenting verdicts. The majority verdict headed by the CJI laid down tests for considering the issue of AMU's minority status. The outgoing CJI asked the case's judicial records to be placed before the regular bench, after receiving instructions from the new CJI on the administrative side, for



deciding the issue on the minority status besides adjudicating appeals against a 2006 verdict of the Allahabad High Court. In his dissent, Justice Surya Kant opined the reference of the matter to a seven-judge bench by a division bench of the SC was incorrect. Justice Dipankar Datta too echoed a similar sentiment saying it might set a "dangerous precedent". "A two-judge bench tomorrow may say I doubt the basic structure (Kesavananda Bharati verdict). I refer it to a 15-judge bench. This is what would happen if we accept the majority opinion. Can it be done?" asked Justice Datta. Justice Datta in the concluding part of his verdict

wrote, "In terms of clause 5 of Article 145, it is my firm opinion that not only do the references do not require an answer, it is also declared that AMU is not a minority educational institution and that the appeals seeking minority status for it should fail." Pronouncing a separate opinion on the matter, Justice Satish Chandra Sharma agreed with the two other dissenting judges on the point of reference. "The establishment of an institution by the minority is necessary for the said minority to claim right of administration under Article 30 (of the Constitution)," he opined. Article 30 of the Constitution deals with right of minorities to establish and

administer educational institutions. "I would like to make it very clear that my judgement is neither an assenting nor a dissenting judgement. It is my personal opinion based upon the law, the judgements cited and the arguments and the facts on the subject," clarified Justice Sharma. The issue of AMU's minority status has been caught in a legal maze for the last several decades. The SC had on February 12, 2019, referred to a seven-judge bench the contentious issue. A similar reference was made in 1981. The fabled institution, however, got back its minority status when the Parliament passed the AMU (Amendment) Act in 1981.

The Congress-led UPA government at the Centre had moved in appeal against the Allahabad High Court's 2006 verdict. The university filed a separate petition against it. The BJP-led NDA government informed the SC in 2016 that it would withdraw the appeal filed by the erstwhile UPA government. It had cited the apex court's 1967 judgment in the Basha case to claim that AMU was not a minority institution since it was a central university funded by the government. In 1967, a five-judge Constitution Bench in the S Azeez Basha Vs. Union of India said AMU was a Central university and couldn't be considered a minority institution.

President Murmu bats for prompt legal action against corrupt



PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Asserting that delay or weak action encourages unethical people, President Droupadi Murmu on Friday said prompt legal action against corrupt is extremely important. Addressing the vigilance awareness week function of the Central Vigilance Commission (CVC), she said properties worth over USD 12 billion have been seized in the last ten years under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA). President Murmu said trust is the foundation of social life and the source of unity. "Public trust in the government's work and welfare schemes is the source of power for governance. Corruption is not only an obstacle to economic progress, it also reduces trust in society. It adversely affects the feelings of fraternity among people. It also has a widespread impact on the country's unity and integrity," the president said. She said every year on Sardar Patel's birth anniversary on October 31, "we take a pledge to keep the country's unity and integrity intact." "This is not just a ritual. It is a pledge to be taken seriously. We all have a collective responsibility to fulfill it," the president said. Murmu said prompt legal action against the corrupt is extremely important. "Delay in action or weak action encourages unethical persons. But it is also necessary that every action and person should not be viewed with suspicion. We should avoid this. Keeping in mind the dignity of the person, no

action should be motivated by malice. The objective of any action should be to establish justice and equality in the society," she said. President Murmu said a comprehensive approach will have to be adopted to eradicate corruption. "We will have to go to the root of this disease. It will not be effective to cure it only through symptoms. The eternal values of the Indian society like integrity, ethics, compassion and transparency have to be strengthened. There is a need for strengthening of these life values," she said. Citing Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) and e-tendering, she said the Centre has taken several measures to check corruption. President Murmu said if any work is done with the right spirit and determination, success is certain. "Some people considered uncleanliness to be the destiny of our country. But strong leadership, political will and contribution of citizens have brought good results in the field of cleanliness. Similarly, to consider the elimination of corruption as impossible is a pessimistic attitude of some people, which is not right," the president said. She expressed confidence that the government of India's policy of 'zero tolerance against corruption' will eradicate the roots of this malice. President Murmu said that morality is the ideal of Indian society. "When some people start considering accumulation of things, money or property the standard of a good life, then they deviate from this ideal

and resort to corrupt activities. Happiness lies in living life with self-respect by fulfilling the basic needs," she said. The president said in "our society, integrity and discipline are considered the ideals of life". About 2,300 years ago, Megasthenes (ancient Greek historian) wrote about Indian people that they dislike indiscipline and follow the law, she said. "There is simplicity and austerity in their lives. Similar mentions have been made by Fa-Hien about our ancestors. In this context, this year's theme of CVC 'Culture of Integrity for Nation's Prosperity' is very apt," President Murmu said. Probity watchdog CVC observed the vigilance awareness week from October 28 to November three, this year. Along with the vigilance awareness week, the commission organises a three-month campaign on preventive vigilance which has been undertaken by the ministries, departments, organisations of the Central government from August 16 and will continue till November 15. The five focus areas of the campaign are capacity building, identification and implementation of systemic improvement, up-dation of circulars, guidelines, manuals, disposal of complaints received before June 30, 2024 and dynamic digital presence. Central Vigilance Commissioner Praveen Kumar Srivastava and Vigilance Commissioner A S Rajeev, among others, were present at the event.

Rahul congratulates Trump



PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi has written to US President-elect Donald Trump, congratulating him on his victory and expressed confidence that under his leadership, the two nations will further deepen cooperation in areas of mutual interest. "I wish you the very best during your second term as President of the United States of America," Rahul Gandhi wrote. Trump, 78, won the race to the White House, trouncing his Democratic rival Kamala Harris. The Republican leader has also served as the 45th President of the US after his first victory in 2016. Rahul Gandhi has also written to outgoing US vice president Kamala Harris congratulating her on her spirited presidential campaign and said her unifying message of hope will continue to inspire many.

mutual interest. I also hope that we will continue to work towards expanding avenues and opportunities for both Indians and Americans," the former Congress chief wrote in his letter to Trump, dated November 7. "I wish you the very best during your second term as President of the United States of America," Rahul Gandhi wrote. Trump, 78, won the race to the White House, trouncing his Democratic rival Kamala Harris. The Republican leader has also served as the 45th President of the US after his first victory in 2016. Rahul Gandhi has also written to outgoing US vice president Kamala Harris congratulating her on her spirited presidential campaign and said her unifying message of hope will continue to inspire many.

LK Advani turns 97, PM Modi extends greetings



PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Veteran BJP leader LK Advani, who as the party president crafted its rise to become a central force in national politics, turned 97 on Friday, with Prime Minister Narendra Modi lauding him as one of India's most admired

statesmen who devoted himself to furthering the country's development. Modi said this year is even more special because Advani was conferred the Bharat Ratna for his outstanding service to the nation. "Among India's most admired statesmen, he has devoted himself to furthering India's development. He has always

been respected for his intellect and rich insights. I am fortunate to have received his guidance for many years. I pray for his long and healthy life," the prime minister said in a social media post. Former president Ram Nath Kovind, also greeted Advani at the latter's residence and described him as a statesman.

Manipur violence: Fresh arson, attacks in Jiribam

PTI ■ IMPHAL

At least six houses were torched and residents of a tribal village were attacked by a group of armed militants in ethnic strife-torn Manipur's Jiribam district, police said on Friday. The incident occurred on Thursday evening in Zairon Hmar village after the group of militants set the houses on fire, a senior officer said. "Preliminary reports suggested that several villagers managed to flee during the attack and took shelter in nearby forest. At least six houses were severely damaged due to the arson. An investigation is underway," he said. Kuki-Zo organisations claimed that a woman, a resident of the village, was killed during the attack but the report of death has not been confirmed by the district police. Manipur has been rocked by ethnic violence since May last year and over 200 people were killed. The violence erupted on May 3 after a 'Tribal Solidarity March' was organised in the hill districts to protest against the Meitei community's demand for Scheduled Tribe (ST) status.

India, Australia hold military exercise AustrA Hind in Pune



PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The third edition of joint military exercise between India and Australia named AustrA Hind commenced at Foreign Training Node, Pune on Friday, defence ministry said here. The exercise will end on November 21. Giving details, officials said the exercise is an annual event conducted alternatively in India and Australia. Last edition of the same exercise was conducted in Australia in December 2023. The Indian contingent comprising 140 personnel will be represented mainly by a battalion of the Dogra Regiment and 14 personnel from the Indian Air Force. The Australian Army contingent comprising 120 personnel will be represented by the 13th Light Horse Regiment of the 10th Brigade of 2nd Division. Aim of the is to promote

military cooperation between India and Australia through enhancement of interoperability in conduct of joint sub conventional operations in semi-urban environment and semi-desert terrain under Chapter VII of the UN mandate. The exercise will focus on physical fitness, joint planning and joint tactical drills. The exercise will be conducted in two phases - combat conditioning and tactical training phase, and validation phase. Drills aspects to be rehearsed during the exercise will include response to a terrorist action of capturing a defined territory; establishment of a Joint Operations Centre; conduct of joint counter terrorism operations like Raid and Search and Destroy Missions; securing of a helipad; employment of drones and counter drone measures and Special Heli Borne Operations.

Military museums to be digitally linked soon: CDS

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) General Anil Chauhan on Friday said work is underway to virtually link the various military museums to one e-platform under a project that aims to spread awareness about India's glorious military heritage. In his keynote address at the inaugural ceremony of the second edition of the Indian Military Heritage Festival here, the CDS also pitched for creating military fiction work that combines literary fiction with military events of the past to make them more accessible to the masses. "We, in the armed forces, with an intent to spread awareness of our glorious history and heritage, have initiated a project of e-linking of our military museums. We already e-linked about eighteen of these military museums, and shortly we are going to e-link all 47-48 military museums. So, they will be available at one site, you need not have to go there," General Chauhan said. The CDS said, "We are also thinking of e-linking all the war museums" to a national platform, so that it would be available to people, who wish to visit these sites virtually. Similarly, to familiarise people with military valour, a hybrid model has been adopted for "battlefield



tourism", he added. "This includes online links of various battlefields where the armed forces have fought, and actual field tours of those battlefields will also be organised for those wanting further information on the exploits of the Indians armed forces in these theatres of war," the CDS said. The event also witnessed the launch of Project Shaurya Gatha which is an initiative of the Department of Military Affairs and think-tank USI. The project aims to conserve and promote India's military heritage through education and tourism, it said. The festival aims to engage

global and Indian think-tanks, corporations, public and private sector undertakings, non-profit organisations, academicians, and research scholars focusing on India's national security, foreign policy, military history and military heritage. The CDS, underscoring the importance of art in war said, the British not only practised the art of war but also patronised art works related to war. Sir Stanley Spencer served as an official war artist in World War 1 and World War 2. His works depicted daily lives of soldiers and emotional toils of

the war," he said. The British in India had also developed a company school of painting that depicted daily and military lives. The CDS also recalled the contribution made by Colonel Arul Raj, whose paintings adorn the walls of military establishments from the South Block to Manekshaw Centre. Perhaps, there is a need to create a catalogue or organise a retrospective exhibition of his art works, he said. The CDS further emphasised that military literature plays a significant role in preserving and interpreting experiences, values and ethos of the

military. Poetry and prose, each offer a unique insight into the military experience, he said. "What I think is missing is the military fiction or the art fiction part of it. When I was very young, I remember authors like Manohar Malgaonkar and his books like 'Distant Drum', 'A Combat of Shadows', 'Spy in Amber', where he combines military historical events along with fiction to make it easily readable for the ordinary audience, or the citizens. That I think is missing in the Indian context and we need to do more about it," the CDS said.



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PAPER WITH PASSION

Rape capital

Despite countless promises and policies, the capital continues to fall short on women's safety

In yet another harrowing incident that highlights Delhi's persistent reputation as the "rape capital" of India, a young woman was allegedly gang-raped by three men near the busy ITO Chowk. On October 10, 2024, the survivor, a community leader and researcher from Puri, Odisha, was assaulted and then abandoned near the Sarai Kale Khan area. It would take more than three weeks for Delhi Police to apprehend the suspects in what was an elaborate and challenging investigation. This case, though one among many, casts an intense spotlight on Delhi's persistent challenges with women's safety. Despite widespread public outrage, nationwide protests, and even legislative reforms spurred by the 2012 Nirbhaya case, the city remains one of the most dangerous places for women. This incident underscores the gaps in ensuring safety, accountability, and justice for women, despite heightened scrutiny and the promises made over the years. In the wake of the Nirbhaya gang rape, public demands for justice led to significant legal reforms, including amendments to the Criminal Law in 2013. These included harsher punishments for sexual offenders and the establishment of fast-track courts. The Delhi Police increased surveillance, deployed women patrol teams, and set up additional helplines. However, cases like this illustrate that systemic changes alone haven't proven sufficient to curb these crimes. Although police presence has increased, patrols are often sparse in secluded areas where many such crimes occur.



There are also challenges with delayed response times and gaps in the training and sensitivity of law enforcement officials towards victims of sexual violence.

Crimes against women are frequently dismissed or downplayed, especially in cases where victims are perceived as "easy targets." The perpetrators in this case allegedly targeted the survivor believing she was mentally unwell. Many survivors face severe trauma, which impacts their ability to recount details of the assault or pursue legal recourse effectively. While authorities in this case took extraordinary steps to support the survivor, such efforts are still rare. Establishing accessible and widespread trauma-informed support systems is crucial for the safety and wellbeing of survivors. This horrific incident should prompt a critical examination of the measures that have failed Delhi's women. Reforms need to extend beyond legal frameworks and involve deeper societal and systemic changes. Expanding surveillance to cover secluded areas, introducing real-time monitoring could enhance response times and deter potential offenders. Law enforcement must receive adequate training in trauma-informed approaches, victim sensitivity, and rigorous investigative procedures. Transforming societal attitudes towards women and sexual violence is critical. Public campaigns and educational programmes that challenge stereotypes and promote empathy can help change the culture that enables such violence.

PICTALK



A Rajasthani nomad vendor waits for customers, in Pushkar

PTI

India's AI dilemma: Balancing innovation with job security

As AI transforms industries globally, it also raises concerns about job displacement in India, especially within sectors like IT, management and creative fields

Artificial intelligence (AI) is reshaping industries across the globe and India is no exception. The introduction of AI promises growth opportunities, new business models, and enhanced competitiveness in the global market. However, it also raises significant concerns, especially around job security. This is particularly true for workers in sectors perceived as more susceptible to automation, such as IT, management, writing, and entertainment. The duality of optimism for AI's potential and anxieties over job displacement is a pressing issue for India as it seeks to balance these perspectives.



and efficiency, but at the potential cost of middle-management jobs. Similarly, the creative industries are feeling the impact of AI. Fields such as modeling, advertising, voice acting, and content creation face increasing competition from AI-generated graphics, videos, and written content. AI models are now advanced enough to produce realistic images, draft coherent articles, and even mimic human voices, reducing the need for human involvement in creative tasks. This shift leaves specialists in these areas concerned about future employment prospects. The challenge lies in adapting to these changes, harnessing the benefits of AI while mitigating job loss. The Indian government recognises the implications of

AI on job creation and is actively working to address these challenges. One of its main strategies is to focus on human capital development and workforce preparedness. Initiatives like the Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojna (PMKVY) aim to upskill a significant portion of the population, emphasising AI, machine learning, and robotics. These initiatives intend to create new job opportunities in AI while managing its impact on the workforce. The private sector is also contributing to this effort. Major Indian IT firms, such as Infosys, Wipro, and Tata Consultancy Services (TCS), have launched extensive upskilling programmes to prepare their employees for the digital future. Infosys, for instance, has developed a global training initiative to help its workforce keep pace with advancements in AI and other emerging technologies. These transformation-focused programs prioritise skills in AI, cloud computing, and data science, equipping workers to stay relevant in a rapidly evolving job market. Some companies are also

finding ways to integrate AI that enhance, rather than replace, human productivity. Transitioning to an AI-driven economy has its benefits and challenges. On one hand, AI is expected to spur economic growth and innovation, creating new opportunities. On the other hand, it raises concerns about job security and the redistribution of work. Addressing these challenges requires a collaborative effort among workers, businesses, and the government. For workers, adaptability is key, requiring a willingness to acquire new skills and embrace evolving work environments. For businesses and policymakers, there is a shared responsibility to invest in reskilling initiatives and create jobs that align with AI-driven changes. By prioritising human capital and fostering a proactive approach to workforce development, India can position itself to benefit from AI while minimising the risk of widespread job displacement. (The writer is faculty-emerging technologies, Wadhvani Centre for Government Digital Transformation; views are personal)



ABHAYA AGRAWAL

India awaits 2047 as it aspires to become one of the developed nations, and obviously, that would mean striving, sincerely and collectively for the welfare of each of its citizens. Hopefully, in the Viksit Bharat, none would need a free ration, and freebies doled out as allurement for votes would become history. It would also unhindered availability of potable water, clean air, an all-weather roof over their heads, and freedom from a 'no-work-to-do' situation. Hunger, ill health and malnutrition would become history! India would have a system of education that would ensure equality of access and success at the same level' for the children of the Lutyens zone and those in the Jhabua Village!

Education shall no longer remain a 'necessary utopia'! Moving in this direction necessitates getting rid of communal disharmony and socio-cultural exclusion of every kind. We expect a nation that no longer suffers the minority-majority concerns! Having seriously studied various aspects of social cohesion and religious amity - or social and religious cohesion and amity - in India, there is no escape from acknowledging that it is a very complex conundrum of communal curvatures that are resistant to various well-intentioned initiatives to smoothen it out.

There are human values that are common to every religion, and these could become the ground for cementing comradeship without in any way interfering with the ways of faith and religious practices. The global rise of fundamentalism, terrorism, and fanaticism, and the consequent expansion of distrust, oppression and seclusion are certainly not conducive to a better life for the people, no matter how many more gadgets are made available in their homes.

Sadly enough, it was very clear at the turn of the millennium that in days ahead, things would get tougher for leadership to handle, and the very survival of the human race would be at stake. In the third decade of the 21st century, humanity and the planet Earth confront the challenges

posed by climate change, a sharp deterioration of man-nature relationships, and ever-increasing violence in various forms and formats. The futility of the peace-making efforts by those whose economic interests require greater production of lethal weapons, and their sale and consumption is no longer a hidden secret. The tensions, turmoil and anxiety that all of this creates are now being experienced everywhere, particularly in the West, which accepted the refugees and intruders with open arms, many of them are now repenting their policies of the past! The rise of distrust and apprehension constitutes greater danger than sporadic violence the instances of which are increasing in European nations.

These examples give some indications of the world before the young of today, and those who would wield power tomorrow! India is a major Asian nation that suffers from a huge influx of illegal migrants, and most of them get support from several political parties. It is clear that this support is based purely on communal considerations, and is certainly not in the national interest. It adds to the fragile relationship that has existed all along, was fuelled during the freedom struggle and led to the partition of

India 2047: Towards a unified developed nation



J S RAJPUT

Achieving 'Viksit Bharat' will demand a collective effort to foster religious harmony, address environmental threats and navigate global tensions



THERE ARE HUMAN VALUES THAT ARE COMMON TO EVERY RELIGION, AND THESE COULD BECOME THE GROUND FOR CEMENTING COMRADERY WITHOUT IN ANY WAY INTERFERING WITH THE WAYS OF FAITH AND RELIGIOUS PRACTICES

India, the possibility of achieving social cohesion and religious amity remained elusive. The two-nation theory was elaborated in an oft-quoted speech of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan in his Meerut speech delivered in March 1888, his view of the scenario that may emerge after the British leave: "Is it possible that under these circumstances two nations - the Mohammedans and the Hindus - could sit on the same throne and remain equal in power? Most certainly not." Sir Syed was one of the most respected and admired of the leaders of the Muslim community who had opened the doors of modern education for them, and hence, the enlightened Muslim youth adored him. The essence of the above represented the prevailing sentiments of the Muslim community, and these were perpetuated by others, particularly by those who opposed the views of Sir Syed on modern education. They, however, grabbed the idea of two nations! Subsequently, in the same lecture, Sir Syed elaborates his views further: the principle of a representative government is 'that it is government by a nation, and that the nation in question rules over its own people and own land.' It is as simple as that: there could be no possibility of any representative government elected by

Hindus and Muslims together ever ruling over India consisting not only of the nations of Hindus and Muslims but others who should also constitute nations of their own. Indian democracy establishes that communal harmony is possible, and the two communities are equally enlightened to work together.

While Sir Syed deserves and gets praise for his futuristic outlook on modern education and its dire need to uplift the Muslims, it would certainly remain a matter of serious debate whether his definition of two nations did create a lasting impact on the psyche of the community that persists even today.

The doctrine of the two-nation theory finally got buried with the formation of Bangladesh, and emerging multi-religious societies in Europe. If there is one nation that could present a functional model of religious unity it is India, the Hindus and the Muslims of India. Nowhere else, the equality of all religions is so deep-rooted in thought and deed as in the ancient Indian culture. It could be revived by the hereditary dialogical tradition which has excelled historically.

(Professor Rajput works in education, social cohesion and religious amity. He is an Atal Fellow in the PMML, New Delhi; views are personal)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

SC UPHOLDS MADARSA ACT

Madam — Recently, the Supreme Court, in its landmark judgement has upheld the constitutional validity of Uttar Pradesh Board of Madarsa Education Act 2004, reversing an Allahabad High Court ruling that "it was unconstitutional." The Madarsa Act provides a legal framework for these institutions in UP. The Allahabad High Court had said in its judgement that the Act made it compulsory for students to study Islam and more modern subjects were made optional, which is a violation of the right to free compulsory education under Article 21A of the Constitution.

By upholding the educational rights of minority communities in Uttar Pradesh, the Supreme Court has now confirmed the state can regulate the madarsa education board to ensure standards of excellence. Also, SC observed that though minorities have a right under Article 30 of the Constitution to establish and administer madarsa to impart religious or secular education, the right is not absolute. SC has also said that so long as the regulation is reasonable and rational, states can regulate aspects of education in minority institutions without violating their rights to handle the administration. At the same time, in a significant move, SC has struck down a part of the Madarsa Act's section 9 which allows the Board to grant degrees as it is against UGC norms. In general, the SC verdict not only safeguards the right of madarsa students to pursue education but also affirms the constitutional principles that protect religious minorities and their educational institutions.

P Victor Selvaraj | Tirunelveli

TRUMP'S HISTORIC WIN

Madam— Apropos to "Trump wins hands down" published on November 7. Someone who has so many serious cases against him that even his candidature was not confirmed, and from that situation to secure candidature, surviving two

Gambling's global impact



Gambling, casinos, and betting, once limited and far less accessible, have now become available 24 hours a day through social media, mobile phones, and gambling apps. In the past, individuals had to travel and stand in queues to participate in such activi-

ties. This easy access has significantly accelerated the harmful impact of gambling. To date, an estimated 450 million people worldwide have faced negative consequences, including severe financial losses, deteriorating physical and mental health, broken family relationships, and, tragically, suicide.

These alarming trends paint a grim and toxic picture of our global future. The issue doesn't spare any age group. Research shows that 15.8 per cent of adults are addicted to gambling, with an even higher rate of 26.4 per cent among adolescents. Given the severity of the situation, it is imperative for the world to introduce and implement comprehensive strategies to address this crisis. Learning from the past, it must act decisively to safeguard future generations and build a healthier, safer society.

Jakir Hussain | Kanpur

assassination attempts and becoming President again is a massive turnaround and achievement, and it would be an understatement to call Trump a proverbial phoenix. He is now the oldest person in US history to be elected president. He may have been out of power from 2020 to 2024, but he was never away from America's psyche. Either you love him or hate him, but he is here to stay. His main poll planks were reviving the US economy, vanishing inflation, and illegal immigration, and all these seem to have resonated with US voters. Moreover, this verdict cannot be construed against Kamala Harris, it is more against the Joe Biden administration. She hardly had 100 days to prepare, campaign, and fight. The world would hope that Trump walks the talk and plays a big role in ending the war in Ukraine-Russia.

Trump's policies would be keenly watched because if he follows America's first policy, then Indian exporters in textiles, pharma and automobiles may feel the pinch and H1-B rules could further

be tightened, which could mean Indian IT professionals and companies will be adversely impacted.

Bal Govind | Noida

DELHI CONGRESS NYAY YATRA

Madam — The Delhi Congress commenced a month-long 'Nyay Yatra' on November 8, with the goal of tending to residents' concerns and advocating for governmental action. Senior leaders such as Mallikarjun Kharge, Rahul Gandhi, and K C Venugopal have been invited to spearhead the troop, which will traverse all 70 Vidhan Sabha constituencies. This was disclosed by state unit chief Devender Yadav. Congress workers will engage with locals to listen to their concerns and collect suggestions. Running until December 4, the campaign will showcase a variety of community members and act as a precursor to the upcoming Assembly elections.

Neha Tomar | Ujjain

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com



FIRST COLUMN

TRUMP 2.0:
IMPACT ON INDIA

Trump's return could offer India a pivotal role in global tech and manufacturing



KUMARDEEP BANERJEE

The third time is a charm, as the saying goes and we are not talking about PM Modi coming back to power for three consecutive terms, but his close friend, the 47th President of the US, Donald Trump. Having successfully dodged a couple of bullets (quite literally), impeachments, and felony charges, President Trump, triumphed over the collective choice of the most powerful economy in the world the United States of America. While the right-wingers across the globe, including in India celebrated his victory, as a literal victory for the "RIGHT" and what they saw as the tyranny of the so-called "left" liberals, President Trump 2.0 is most likely to be more nuanced than his version one. What it means for India is a mixed box of chocolates which can be bitter or boldly sweet depending on the pick.

President-elect Trump is known to be a hard negotiator, particularly on trade topics and he has famously described India as one of the highest offenders on this front. He is a businessman with decades of experience and has a transactional approach to trade, something not alien to Indian politicians particularly, from the Western regions. Trump's presidency 1.0 and the humungous growth in India-US bilateral commercial relations, plus a business-oriented Indian government at the centre, for now over a decade, has also served as a training ground for several tough negotiators to emerge from the bureaucratic class in India. Therefore, while officials in the government are aware of the tough negotiations ahead with the US on trade-related matters or import tariffs or say restrictions, they are hopeful, of finding a middle path given their familiarity with the President's style of functioning.



The dragon in the room would be cagey, as President-elect Trump in the run-up to the elections has vowed to impose stiff tariffs on imports from China. This may be great news for India, especially with the current government's focus being on making Bharat the manufacturing hub for electronics hardware, at least for the region.

Indian bureaucrats pushing the manufacturing envelope are deeply aware, that developing India into a hub, is a long-term game that may outlive the current regimes in DC and Delhi. They are also acutely aware that, by allowing friendshoring to India, by large US companies in the China plus one model, Trump will have an advantage. He could negotiate this card by pressuring India to buy perhaps more hydrocarbons or defence technology from the US. While the technology partnership was not primarily the centrepiece of India US bilateral relationship under Trump 1.0, his successor Joe Biden created a delectable topping with cooperation on critical and emerging technologies as an important element of the partnership. Initiatives such as ICET (initiative for critical and emerging technologies) which are directly monitored by the heads of both countries have put an unwavering sanctity to the tech partnership between the two democracies.

President Trump could either encourage US tech to keep fulfilling India's avowed target of being the next global electronics manufacturing hub while holding it as a bargaining chip, or, he may find a creative solution to persuade some of these companies to shift back some of their factories to domestic shores. The latter possibility seems unlikely as Donald Trump has, traditionally been a huge supporter of creating more jobs for Americans in the old manufacturing sectors. Much of President Trump's technology policy is likely to be curated by his biggest donor and tech czar Elon Musk. Elon Musk has business interests in China where he has some of his largest Tesla factories, besides, he has been trying to enter the Indian automobile market with little success. His other business interests including satellite-based telecommunication services, have struggled to start beaming in India. Many of these factors would determine the crucial next four years of the Modi-Trump era.

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

Trump's return: A radical shift in US foreign policy



K S TOMAR

As Donald Trump returns to the White House, he may redefine the boundaries of American leadership and influence in an increasingly multipolar world

Trump's return to the White House in 2024 sparks a torrent of questions about the future of NATO, the American economy, relationships with allies, and the trajectory of the Ukraine war. Trump's previous tenure exhibited a strong tilt toward "America First" policies, frequently challenging long-standing global alliances and multilateral commitments. A Trump-led presidency, therefore, could dramatically shift the geopolitical landscape, leaving allies like NATO in uncertainty, reorienting America's economic policies, testing India's balancing act, and redefining China relations.

The Future of NATO: Endurance or Erosion? NATO, the cornerstone of Western defence since 1949, stands as a central topic of speculation with Trump's return. During his presidency, Trump questioned the alliance's relevance, particularly its financial obligations, going as far as to imply a possible US withdrawal if members didn't contribute "their fair share." This stance generated unease among NATO allies, who rely on the US for critical defence resources, particularly amid heightened Russian aggression. As Trump resumes office, his approach to NATO could undergo even bolder recalibration. The European defence structure, largely dependent on the US, might face significant strategic and funding shifts, possibly prompting European powers to take on more defence responsibilities. A reduction in US military and financial support for NATO might embolden adversarial actors, especially Russia. A scaled-back US commitment could mean vulnerabilities for Eastern European countries like Poland and the Baltic states, which depend on NATO's security umbrella to counter Russian expansionism. The impact on NATO, therefore, hinges heavily on Trump's strategic decisions regarding alliance burden-sharing and his capacity to persuade European allies to increase their defence expenditures.

The Global Stakes: A Pivotal Crossroads The implications of Trump's return extend far beyond America's borders. With China's rise and Russia's ambitions continuing to shape global security dynamics, Trump's foreign policy choices will carry weighty consequences. His transactional approach to alliances, "America First" economics, and unpredictable stance on defence alliances could reshape international relationships, with traditional allies rethinking their reliance on US support. His handling of NATO's commitments, the Ukraine war, and relations with global powers like India and China will determine the future stability of Western influence and the global balance of power.

China and India: Competing powers: Under Trump, the US-China relationship could revert to one defined by rivalry, as he has consistently advocated a tough stance on China's trade practices and global ambitions. Trump may reassert his strict tariffs on Chinese goods and impose even tighter restrictions on Chinese companies operating in the US, aiming to curb China's influence in areas like technology and manufacturing. For India, Trump's return poses a mix of opportunities and challenges. His administration was notably warm toward India, fostering stronger economic and defence ties through agreements such as the "2+2" Dialogue. A renewed focus on countering China could make India a key strategic partner, particularly in the Indo-Pacific. Trump might offer India more defence cooperation or



A RENEWED FOCUS ON COUNTERING CHINA COULD MAKE INDIA A KEY STRATEGIC PARTNER, PARTICULARLY IN THE INDO-PACIFIC. TRUMP MIGHT OFFER INDIA MORE DEFENCE COOPERATION OR TECHNOLOGY TRANSFERS, POTENTIALLY STRENGTHENING INDIA'S MILITARY AND ECONOMIC POSITIONING IN ASIA

technology transfers, potentially strengthening India's military and economic positioning in Asia. However, India's balancing act between the US and Russia—given India's defence ties with Moscow—could be complicated if Trump takes a firm stance against the Ukraine conflict. India's careful neutrality on the Russia-Ukraine issue might attract scrutiny, with Trump possibly expecting more alignment with US strategic priorities.

Economic Fallout-America's Financial Future: Trump's economic approach has traditionally leaned toward protectionism, focusing on restoring jobs, renegotiating trade deals, and limiting dependence on foreign supply chains. This economic philosophy could be reinvigorated if he returns to the Oval Office, with potential implications for trade, inflation, and employment in the US. One possible outcome is the continuation or even intensification of tariffs on China, aimed at reducing the US trade deficit. However, these tariffs historically contributed to increased costs for American consumers and businesses, raising prices on imported goods and creating inflationary pressures.

Another protectionist push could have similar consequences, forcing Americans to pay more for everyday products as companies pass on tariff costs. Trump's "America First" approach could also mean tax reforms or incentives for companies to manufacture domestically. This reshoring could create jobs but would also drive up production costs due to higher wages, potentially making US goods less competitive internationally. Furthermore, a rigid stance on trade could strain relations with economically integrated allies,

with Trump demanding trade terms perceived as fair to the US., which could disrupt existing agreements and introduce new economic tensions globally.

Allies under Pressure: A Reshaped Global Order?

The Trump administration's approach to alliances was often unpredictable, blending close relationships with some leaders while alienating others. His "transactional" foreign policy style prioritised immediate gains over long-standing partnerships, which led to fractures with allies. Now Trump's return could mean intensified pressure on allies to prioritise bilateral deals over multilateral cooperation, transforming relationships with the EU, Japan, South Korea, and other allies. Trump's policies toward Europe might manifest in demands for favourable trade deals or concessions on defence spending.

For Japan and South Korea, his re-emergence could signal heightened pressure to contribute more to their defence arrangements, potentially testing their security alliances with the US. Even Middle Eastern allies, like Saudi Arabia, could face new expectations under a Trump administration more interested in specific, tangible returns on US support rather than abstract commitments.

The Ukraine War: A Fractured Consensus?

Trump's return to the White House could introduce an alternative perspective on the Ukraine conflict, deviating from the largely unified Western support for Ukraine. Trump has openly criticised high US financial aid to Ukraine, signalling his belief that European countries should shoulder more of the burden.

With the conflict consuming billions of dollars in American aid, he

may choose to reduce US involvement, putting pressure on European allies to increase their support and potentially compelling Ukraine to consider negotiations. A Trump-led administration might seek to avoid confrontation with Russia, which could weaken Ukraine's position on the battlefield. Trump's emphasis on diplomacy over confrontation with Moscow could affect NATO's cohesion, with some members potentially favouring a stronger stance against Russia while the US takes a more hands-off approach. This scenario could embolden Russia, who might see a shift in US leadership as a chance to pursue more aggressive tactics in Ukraine or even attempt to influence other former Soviet territories.

The fate of the Ukraine war, therefore, would depend largely on Trump's approach—whether he chooses to maintain US support for Kyiv or pivot toward encouraging negotiations, potentially shifting the course of the conflict and signalling a new era of US-Russia dynamics. In many ways, Trump's presidency would signify a recalibration of American foreign policy, returning to his brand of nationalism mixed with pragmatism.

However, this approach could generate friction with allies, alter the global economy, and challenge existing diplomatic norms. Whether this path will foster a stronger, more self-reliant US or an isolated and fragmented world order remains to be seen. As Trump is poised to start second term, his return promises to redefine the boundaries of American leadership and influence in an increasingly multipolar world.

(The writer is strategic affairs analyst and political analyst based in Shimla; views are personal)

Expanding healthcare for India's elderly: A new phase for PM-JAY

Comprehensive healthcare needs of India's rapidly growing elderly population require further policy evolution, aiming for a holistic, sustainable healthcare system for the aging citizens

India is home to a significant elderly population, with approximately 138 million people aged 60 and above, including more than 10 crore individuals over the age of 70. This segment of the population has unique and pressing healthcare needs. As people age, they are increasingly susceptible to multiple chronic conditions that require specialised care and consistent medical attention. According to the Longitudinal Ageing Study of India (LASI), every fourth Indian over 60 years and every fifth Indian over 45 years reports poor health. Additionally, 75 per cent of the elderly have one or more chronic diseases, and 40 per cent experience disabilities. 1 in 4 elderly individuals has



ASHISH PANGHAL

multi-morbidity, with diabetes and cancer rates rising, particularly in urban areas. As per the Global Health Estimates data of 2019, non-communicable diseases such as ischemic heart diseases, stroke, and diabetes are leading causes of disability-adjusted life years (DALYs) lost among individuals over 60. This highlights the growing need for specialised treatments and consistent

medical attention for age-related disorders. The rising prevalence of hypertension, heart disease, and respiratory issues among the elderly increases the need for hospitalisation and specialised care, placing immense pressure on healthcare providers and overwhelming the elderly and their families. The financial burden associated with recurrent hospital visits and treatments is a significant challenge.

Also, India's current medical inflation rate, standing at approximately 14 per cent which worsens the healthcare difficulties confronting the elderly. Escalating medical costs, including those for hospitalisation, doctor consultations, and medications, make it increasingly chal-

lenging for this vulnerable population to access necessary care. Inflation, coupled with the high cost of living, leaves many elderly individuals struggling to afford even basic healthcare services. Additionally, as medical inflation continues to rise, insurance companies are compelled to cover higher expenses for medical procedures and treatments. This, in turn, results in increased premiums for policyholders. For many elderly individuals, these higher insurance costs compound the financial burden, deepening the overall healthcare affordability crisis.

While the expansion of the Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana



(AB PM-JAY) is a significant step towards improving healthcare access, covering an additional 6 crore individuals from 4.5 crore families, and focusing on seniors aged 70 and above, several challenges persist in the insurance market. Current insurance products are limited, particularly for individuals over the age of 70. Pre-existing diseases (PED) such

as diabetes, cardiovascular conditions, and cancer often result in waiting periods or outright denial of coverage. Furthermore, insurance premiums for senior citizens are substantially higher due to the associated health risks, making insurance unaffordable for many. Denial of insurance based on PED, combined with exorbitant premiums, often forces elderly individuals to rely on personal savings or government schemes, leaving them without adequate financial protection against serious illnesses.

According to the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), India's elderly population is projected to nearly triple by 2050, reaching 320 million. This demo-

graphic shift will necessitate more comprehensive solutions to safeguard the well-being of the nation's senior citizens. While the expansion of PM-JAY is a welcome development, it does not fully address the broader geriatric needs of India's aging population.

AB PM-JAY is largely limited to inpatient care. The scheme does not cover outpatient services, which make up a considerable portion of healthcare costs. Research published in the International Journal of Preventive Medicine shows that outpatient care accounts for 40-80 per cent of health expenditures in India. Consequently, even with the enhanced insurance coverage, many individuals may

continue to face out-of-pocket expenses for treatments that do not require hospitalisation.

There is an urgent need to expand coverage to include services such as long-term care, outpatient services, mental health support, palliative care, and rehabilitation, which are essential for ensuring the well-being of the elderly.

Additionally, the government must focus on reducing financial barriers to healthcare, such as high insurance premiums, and ensuring the inclusion of PED coverage without long waiting periods.

(The writer is senior consultant at Enira Consulting; views are personal)

Haryana minister refutes Opposition parties' claims of shortage of DAP fertiliser supply

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ CHANDIGARH

Refuting opposition parties' claims that there was a shortage of Diammonium Phosphate (DAP) fertiliser in the state, Haryana minister Shyam Singh Rana said the government has taken proactive steps to ensure adequate supply to farmers.

Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare Minister Rana accused opposition leaders of spreading misinformation on the supply of DAP fertilisers in the state to "mislead the farming community".

The Haryana government is committed to maintaining an uninterrupted DAP supply to support a successful Rabi season, he said.

On Thursday, senior Congress leader Randeep Singh Surjewala blamed the BJP for the shortage of DAP fertilisers, saying the crisis was caused by a reduction in the fertilisers' import and stock, as well as slashing subsidies on it.

In a statement, Rana said contrary to Surjewala's assertions, the Haryana government has already released 2.38 lakh metric tonnes (MT) of DAP, meeting a significant portion of the



total 3.48 lakh MT required for the ongoing Rabi season, which runs from September 24 to March 25.

The minister said wheat and mustard crops, covering approximately 24 lakh hectares and 10 lakh hectares respectively across the state, have been well-supported with fertiliser stocks so far.

The agriculture minister referred to departmental data, emphasising that the state's DAP supply is on track with last year's requirements.

During the previous Rabi season, 2,29,086 MT of DAP was consumed. As of November 7 this year, Haryana has received 1,71,002 MT which includes releasing stocks of 53,970 MT of fertilisers till October 1, he said.

Currently, 26,497 MT of DAP is available in various districts, with an additional 14,574 MT expected to arrive by November 11, Rana said.

Rana also highlighted that apart from DAP, farmers use a range of fertilisers,

including NPK and single superphosphate (SSP). Haryana has received 65,200 MT of NPK and currently holds a stock of 26,041 MT. SSP supplies are also abundant, with a current stock of 71,380 MT across districts, the minister said.

He also denied Surjewala's allegations that there was any police action against farmers in Uchana and rubbished claims of unrest among farmers in Narwana, Guhla Cheeka and Kaithal.

No such incidents occurred as per ground reports and no police involvement against farmers was reported, Rana claimed.

Rana also dismissed baseless accusations that DAP was being distributed through police stations in Bhiwani, Charkhi Dadri and Narnaul. He emphasised that local officials in these areas have reassured farmers of sufficient DAP stock while efforts were underway to address any concerns. "For example, between October 1 and November 7, Sirsa district received 15,794 MT of DAP, with 1,573 MT still in stock. An additional 2,419 MT is expected to arrive shortly to meet local demand," he added.

Eyes on OBC votes, Rahul Gandhi backs Wadettiwar's OBC reservation pitch in Vidarbha

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NAGPUR

In what can be termed a significant outreach effort to galvanise the cadre, with an eye on OBC-SC-ST votes in the Vidarbha region, Congress MP Rahul Gandhi on Wednesday addressed a Samvidhan Samman Sannelan here, in presence of hundreds of delegates and workers from the community. It was Rahul's first major campaign program in the state of Maharashtra and beginning his campaign trail in Nagpur, the original turf of the Rashtriya Swayamsewak Sangh (RSS), is being seen as a strategic move by pollsters. The Leader of opposition in Lok Sabha, Rahul Gandhi, spoke at length about equal opportunities to people irrespective of their caste and also advocated giving powers to people as per their population in the region & state. The caste census also took centre stage during his speech.

Interestingly, this comes at a time when Maharashtra is witnessing a slew of protests and demands by various caste groups, including the SC and



OBC groups.

The event, part of a series organised nationwide, brings together activists and leaders focused on OBC-SC-ST issues through panel discussions. Vidarbha, where a close contest unfolds in 34 seats between INC and BJP, has seen an intense focus on the OBC vote. INC leaders have intensified outreach efforts, with LoP in Maharashtra Vidhan Sabha Vijay Wadettiwar advocating for a 50% reservation ceiling raise to address demands from diverse communities and emphasising the importance of a caste census for equitable representation. This stance echoes Rahul Gandhi's position and resonates strongly in light of recent movements

such as the Maratha reservation demands, OBC responses, and the Dhangar community's push for ST status.

Adding to the INC's focus on OBC engagement, Wadettiwar and MPCC President Nana Patole, both prominent OBC leaders, are actively working in the region. Patole has been holding meetings with OBC youth, while Wadettiwar, a well-regarded figure in the OBC community, is facilitating the Sannelan through the OBC Yuva Adhikar Manch. Meanwhile, BJP has launched the Ghar Ghar Samvidhan campaign, underlining its commitment to the Constitution and attempting to counter INC's influence. Rahul Gandhi's participation in the Sannelan is expected to amplify INC's message, with his advocacy for a caste census and dedication to constitutional principles resonating strongly among Vidarbha voters, building on the momentum that previously boosted INC's success in the region.

The state of Maharashtra goes to polls on November 20, with counting of votes scheduled for November 23.

Israeli soccer fans attacked, five hospitalised, 62 detained

From page 1

Authorities said extra police would patrol Amsterdam in coming days, and security will be beefed up at Jewish institutions in the city that has a large Jewish community and was home to Jewish World War II diarist Anne Frank and her family as they hid from Nazi occupiers. Earlier, a statement issued by the Dutch capital's municipality, police and prosecution office said that the night "was very turbulent with several incidents of violence aimed at Maccabi supporters after antisemitic rioters actively sought out Israeli supporters to attack and assault them". It was not immediately clear when and where violence erupted after the match.

"In several places in the city, supporters were attacked. The police had to intervene several times, protect Israeli supporters and escort them to hotels. Despite the massive police presence in the city, Israeli supporters have been injured," the Amsterdam statement said. "This outburst of violence toward Israeli supporters is unacceptable and cannot be defended in any way. There is no excuse for the antisemitic behaviour exhibited last night," it added.

The violence erupted despite a ban on a pro-Palestinian demonstration near the soccer stadium imposed by Amsterdam Mayor Femke Halsema, who had feared that clashes would break out between protesters and supporters of the Israeli soccer club.

There were also incidents involving fans ahead of the match. Dutch broadcaster NOS reported that a Palestinian flag was ripped off a building in the centre of the city and riot police blocked pro-Palestinian supporters trying to march toward the Johan Cruyff Arena stadium where the match was being played.

Israel initially ordered that two planes be sent to the

Dutch capital to bring the Israeli home, but later the prime minister's office said it would work on "providing civil aviation solutions for the return of our citizens". A statement from Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's office said that "the harsh pictures of the assault on our citizens in Amsterdam will not be overlooked," and that Netanyahu "views the horrifying incident with utmost gravity."

He demanded that the Dutch government take "vigorous and swift action" against those involved. Netanyahu's office added that he had called for increased security for the Jewish community in the Netherlands.

Dutch Prime Minister Dick Schoof said on X that he followed reports of the violence "with horror." "Completely unacceptable antisemitic attacks on Israelis. I am in close contact with everyone involved," he added, saying that he had spoken to Netanyahu and "emphasised that the perpetrators will be tracked down and prosecuted. It is now quiet in the capital."

Security issues around hosting games against visiting Israeli teams led the Belgian soccer federation to decline to stage a men's Nations League game in September. That game against Israel was played in Hungary with no fans in the stadium.

The violence in Amsterdam will no doubt lead to a review of security at upcoming matches involving Israeli teams. European soccer body UEFA announced already on Monday that Maccabi's next Europa League match, scheduled in Istanbul on November 28 against Turkish team Besiktas, would be moved to a yet-to-be-decided neutral venue "following a decision by the Turkish authorities." Meanwhile, Israel's national team is scheduled to play France in Paris next Thursday in the Nations League.

NSCN (IM) threatens to...

From page 1

"Nevertheless, even if the odds are against Nagas and the NSCN, we shall take whatever steps that is necessary according to the decision mandated by Nagas and the Naga people will protect and defend the Naga unique history, sovereignty and freedom, sovereign territory, sovereign national flag and sovereign national constitution, by whatever means including armed struggle," he said in the statement.

Officials said in New Delhi that the peace talks with the NSCN-IM is currently going nowhere as the group has been insisting for a separate Naga flag and constitution, a demand rejected by the central government. Separately, the government is also holding peace parleys with splinter groups of the NSCN after entering into ceasefire agreements. The groups which have entered into ceasefire agreements are: NSCN-NK, NSCN-R, NSCN K-Khang and NSCN-K-Niki.

J and K has had 10 terror attacks since...

From page 1

On ground zero, tension prevailed in the Kishtwar district as many residents including women joined protest demonstrations during the day-long bandh call given by the Sanatan Dharam Sabha. People in various areas of Kishtwar took to the streets to protest against the killings. The protesters demanded "immediate elimination" of the terrorists involved in the killings to restore confidence among the local population. Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha, Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, and leaders from the People's Democratic Party, Congress, and the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) condemned the VDG members' killing. Meanwhile, in Kashmir, a joint team of security forces Friday eliminated two more terrorists in the Sopore area of North Kashmir's Baramulla district in an

overnight operation. The police authorities are yet to ascertain the identity of the slain terrorists.

Senior Superintendent of Police, Sopore Divya D said, "Last night we received information about the presence of terrorists in the Panipura area of Sopore. We immediately launched a cordon and search operation along with the Indian army. To prevent any collateral damage we shifted the local villagers to safer locations. During searches in the area, suspicious activity was observed by vigilant troops, and on being challenged terrorists opened indiscriminate fire.

The operation was halted at night and resumed with the first light early Friday morning. In the ensuing firefight, two terrorists were eliminated. The security forces recovered a huge quantity of arms and ammunition from the encounter site."

FORGIVE ME IF I EVER HURT ANYONE OF YOU: CJJ

From page 1

Born on November 11, 1959, Justice Chandrachud has had a distinguished career in the judiciary. His passion for cricket dates back to his childhood, when he reportedly played the sport in the backyard of his father's residence in Lutyens' Delhi. He was designated as a senior advocate by the Bombay High Court in June 1998 and served as the additional solicitor general, before being appointed a judge of the Bombay High Court on March 29, 2000. He later became the chief justice of the Allahabad High Court on October 31, 2013. Justice Chandrachud holds a BA degree in Economics from Delhi's St Stephen's College, an LLB from the Delhi University's Campus Law Centre and an LLM and a Doctorate in Juridical Sciences (SJD) from the Harvard Law School.

Bhujbal's claim he switched to BJP-led camp over ED prosecution threat sparks row

T N RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

Amid the ongoing election-cleaning for the Maharashtra Assembly polls, a massive controversy broke out on Friday over NCP (AP) leader Chhagan Bhujbal's claim in a just-published book that he switched over from the Opposition to the BJP-led MahaYuti because of his possible prosecution by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) in an alleged money laundering case.

In his book '2024: The Election that Surprised India', Journalist Rajdeep Sardesai has quoted Bhujbal, who is the State's Food, Civil Supplies and Consumer Protection Minister, as saying that he left the Sharad Pawar camp and joined Rebel leader Ajit Pawar to become part of the BJP-led Maha Yuti (NDA) because of a fresh ED notice he had received. In the book, Sardesai writes: "...Just a few days earlier, he had received yet another notice from the ED in an alleged money laundering case. The original case had been filed in 2016, and the matter had been dragging on ever since. Accused, along with his son and nephew, of irregularities in awarding contracts worth over Rs 100 crore to a Mumbai developer, Bhujbal had already spent two and a half years in jail before he was granted bail..."

Cashing in on the revelations made by Bhujbal in Rajdeep Sardesai's book, the opposition Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) -- comprising Congress, Sharad Pawar-led NCP (SP) and Uddhav Thackeray-led Shiv Sena (UBT) -- slammed the ruling BJP for "misuse" of central investigation agencies - Income Tax, Central Bureau of Investigations and Enforcement Directorate for political reasons. Speaking on the issue, the NCP (SP) working president and MP Supriya Sule said: "I have told this many times...I have said in the Parliament...the BJP is misus-

ing ICE to target political opponents...IT, CBI and ED," said Supriya Sule, the NCP (SP) Working President and Lok Sabha MP from Baramati. Shiv Sena (UBT) Rajya Sabha member Sanjay RaUT said that BJP has misused central agencies and he himself had been a victim. "I did not bow down...I went to jail (and now I am on bail)...there are several others who feared the central agencies and switched over to the NDA camp," he said. NCP (SP) chief spokesperson Mahesh Tapase said: "It is appalling to see senior leaders openly confessing to joining the ruling party to evade investigation. Such admissions only reinforce the belief that the BJP operates as a 'washing machine' where corrupt leaders enter and emerge spotless. This culture undermines the spirit of democracy and threatens to weaken public trust in the country's legal and judicial systems," Tapase said.

Bhujbal threatens to sue Rajdeep Sardesai

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ MUMBAI

Finding himself at the centre of the controversy over the revelations made in Rajdeep Sardesai's book '2024: The Election that Surprised India', Maharashtra's senior NCP (AP) minister Bhujbal on Friday threatened to initiate legal action against the author of the book.

Talking to media persons at Nashik, Bhujbal said: "Right now elections are happening...we are tied up. I have not read it...I don't know what is written and not...once the elections are over, I will surely read it...I will also seek legal advice...my lawyers would take a call"

Make Congress 'Yuvraj' speak in praise of Savarkar: PM Modi

From page 1

In view of the elections, a senior MVA leader asked the Congress 'yuvraj' to stop disrespecting Savarkar. Ironically, those who consider Savarkar as an icon are with the Congress."

In an unmistakable reference to Sena Sena (UBT) chief Uddhav Thackeray, PM Modi said, "I want to challenge the MVA leaders to make the Congress' yuvraj speak for 15 minutes in praise of Savarkar and his sacrifices for the country. Similarly, the yuvraj should also be asked to speak in praise of late Balasaheb Thackeray. Today is November 8... and I will wait for their response". PM Modi's dare to the Shiv Sena (UBT) should be seen

in context of the manner in which Rahul Gandhi's criticism of late Savarkar during his initial phase of his "Bharat Jodo Yatra". It may be recalled that on November 18, 2022, the then united Shiv Sena's MP Sanjay Raut had said that Rahul Gandhi's remarks on Veer Savarkar were "unwarranted" and that his party did not agree with the latter's stand. However, Congress leader Jairam Ramesh clarified the matter saying that Rahul did not target Savarkar but had only stated a "historical fact". On his part, Rahul himself refrained from talking about the Hindutva ideologue.

Terming the Congress as a Modi as a "parjivi" which was dependent on other parties to survive, the Prime

Minister said that the grand old party wanted to weaken and divide the OBCs, because as a united community would ensure that it would not return to power again.

"The Congress is no longer an All-India party... It is parjivi (parasite) which is alive on crutches... In most of the states, the Congress can fight elections only with the help of other parties, and therefore to save itself, it has resorted to weakening the unity of the SC, ST and OBC in the country. Be it Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar or Jharkhand and in most states, Congress is in a position to contest elections only with the support of other parties," PM Modi said. "The Congress is unable to

digest that Narendra Modi, who is from the OBC, has become the Prime Minister for the third time after 60 years... The Congress can't come to terms with this truth. The truth is that Congress hates OBCs. The Congress has lost its sleep. Its leaders are venting their anger on the OBCs," the PM said. Heaping praise on the BJP-led MahaYuti government in Maharashtra, the PM said: "under the Mahayuti government, Maharashtra is setting new records of development. We are a government which works for the poor. When the poor people prosper, the country also prospers. During the last 10 years, the Modi government at the Centre has brought 25 crore

people above the poverty line... 50 lakh women have benefited because of the Ujjwala scheme and free LPG. More than a crore households have got tap water. As many as 7 crore people would be given free ration every month. Similarly poor people have benefited due to the PM Awaas yojana." The PM exhorted the people to bring MahaYuti to power as it would provide a "double engine government" which would ensure speedy development and people-friendly schemes. "If the MahaYuti is voted back to power, the benefit to farmers under the Krishi Samman Yojana for farmers will increase from Rs 12,000 to Rs 15,000," he said. Ridiculing the promises

made by the rival MVA, the PM said: "The people of Maharashtra know the reality. On one side there is the manifesto of MahaYuti, while on the other side there is the 'scam letter' of MVA. Wherever Congress and its allies are in power, there will be scams. These people announce such schemes in which maximum corruption can take place."

Alleging that the Congress had opened a "jhoot ki dukan" (shop of falsehood) in Maharashtra on the lines of Karnataka and Telangana, Modi said that the people have seen in the other two states, where the Congress had failed to fulfil its promises after the polls. Averring that in the Congress-ruled states, the governments have no money

even to pay the salaries of their employees, the PM said that if the Congress and its allies were voted to power, they would put brakes on the state's growth. He said that the MVA would scrap welfare and development schemes brought out by the Eknath Shinde-led Mahayuti government in the state.

"Be aware of the Congress and its allies which are against development and bent on putting brakes on the state's growth," said the PM. "I appeal to you to vote for the Mahayuti so that it will take the progress of Maharashtra to new heights in the next five years. Only the Mahayuti government can provide the good governance that Maharashtra needs. On the

other hand, the Maha Vikas Aghadi vehicle has neither wheels nor brakes and there is a fight even for sitting on the driver's seat. The Mahayuti government, which has taken several decisions to speed up development, will continue to boost the state's growth and also promote the development of various sections," he said. Slamming the Congress for its pro-Pakistan agenda, the Prime Minister ruled out the possibility of restoration of Article 370 in Jammu and Kashmir. "No force in the world can restore Article 370...let me assure only Babasaheb's Constitution would be followed everywhere in India," PM Modi said addressing a rally in Dhule district.

New law allows Israel to deport kin of attackers

Experts expect it to be struck down

AP ■ JERUSALEM

Israel's parliament passed a law early Thursday that would allow it to deport family members of Palestinian attackers, including the country's own citizens, to the war-ravaged Gaza Strip or other locations. The law, which was championed by members of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's Likud party and his far-right allies, passed with a 61-41 vote. However, legal experts said that any attempt to implement the legislation would likely lead to it being struck down by Israeli courts. The law would apply to Palestinian citizens of Israel and residents of annexed east Jerusalem who knew about their family members' attacks beforehand or who "express support or identification with the act of terrorism." They would be deported, either to the Gaza Strip or another location, for a period of seven to 20 years. The Israel-Hamas

war is still raging in Gaza, where tens of thousands have been killed and most of the population has been internally displaced, often multiple times. It was unclear if the law would apply in the occupied West Bank, where Israel already has a long-standing policy of demolishing family homes of attackers, which critics decry as collective punishment. Palestinians have carried out scores of stabbing, shooting and car-ramming attacks against Israelis in recent years. Oded Feller, a legal adviser to the Association for Civil Rights in Israel, dismissed the law as "populist nonsense." He said it was unlikely to be applied, because there is no legal way for the Interior Ministry to send an Israeli citizen to another country or to Gaza. His organisation doesn't plan to challenge the law unless authorities try to enforce it, in which case he expects any court challenge to succeed. Eran Shamir-Borer, a senior

researcher at the Israel Democracy Institute and a former international law expert for the Israeli military, agreed that the law was likely to be struck down by the Supreme Court. He said that if a resident of east Jerusalem was deported under the law, it could be seen by many in the international community as a violation of the Fourth Geneva Convention, because they view the area as occupied territory, although Israel does not. The deportation of an Israeli citizen could be seen not only as a violation of their constitutional rights under Israeli law, but also as a breach of their human rights under international law, he said. The law could also be seen as a form of collective punishment and as discriminatory, because it appears to only apply to Arab citizens and residents, and not to family members of Jews convicted under terrorism laws. "The bottom line is this is completely unconstitutional and a

clear conflict to Israel's core values," Shamir-Borer said. Israel's national security minister, Itamar Ben-Gvir, a Jewish West Bank settler leader who was himself convicted of terrorism crimes as a political activist years ago, praised the new law, noting that a member of his Jewish Power party was among the sponsors. "Jewish Power is making history!" he wrote on X. Israel captured Gaza, the West Bank and east Jerusalem in the 1967 Middle East war — territories the Palestinians want for their future state. It withdrew settlers and soldiers from Gaza in 2005, but has reoccupied parts of the territory since Hamas' attack on October 7, 2023 triggered the war. Israel annexed east Jerusalem in a move not recognised by most of the international community. Palestinians there have permanent residency and are allowed to apply for citizenship, but most choose not to, and those who do face a series of obstacles.

Palestinians living in Israel make up around 20 per cent of the country's population. They have citizenship and the right to vote but face widespread discrimination. Many also have close family ties to those in the territories and most sympathize with the Palestinian cause. A second law that was passed Thursday allows minors between the ages of 12 and 14 to be sentenced to prison for murder or attempted murder under terrorism laws, though they must be held in a secure facility before being transferred to prison at age 14. Previously, minors of those ages were not allowed to be sentenced to prison, according to Adalah, a legal advocacy group. It claimed the law was motivated by "revenge" and said it would affect Palestinian citizens of Israel and residents of east Jerusalem. Palestinians in the occupied West Bank can already be sentenced from age 12 under Israeli military laws in the territory, Adalah said.

Israeli police, French consulate staff clash at Jerusalem church

AP ■ JERUSALEM

Armed Israeli police forced their way into a French-owned church compound in the contested city of Jerusalem on Thursday, the French foreign ministry said, briefly detaining two consulate employees and prompting the top French diplomat to abandon his planned visit to the site. The unusual incident threatened to further strain relations between Israel and France weeks after French President Emmanuel Macron's call for an arms embargo on Israel prompted a backlash from right-wing Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. The French Foreign Ministry said it would summon the Israeli ambassador in protest in the coming days. A strongly worded statement from France said Israeli security forces had intruded on the courtyard of the Church of the Pater Noster, angering French Foreign Minister Jean-Noël Barrot and prompting him to abandon his scheduled visit

there. The ministry said Israeli police detained two staff members of the French Consulate in Jerusalem despite their diplomatic status, adding that the employees were released only after Barrot intervened. "This attack on the integrity of a domain placed under the responsibility of France is likely to weaken the bonds I have, in fact, come to cultivate with Israel at a time when we all need to make progress in the region on the road to peace," Barrot told reporters in Jerusalem. Barrot was meeting with Israeli officials Thursday in the city, where he pleaded for a cease-fire to stop the Israeli bombardment of Gaza and called for a diplomatic solution in Lebanon — a former French protectorate that Israel invaded last month in its broadening military campaign against the Iran-backed Hezbollah militant group. "These actions are unacceptable," the French Foreign Ministry statement said of Thursday's fracas between Israeli security forces and French diplo-

matic staffers. "France condemns (these actions) all the more vigorously as they come at a time when it is doing everything it can to work towards de-escalating the violence in the region." Israeli police portrayed the controversy as a misunderstanding, saying that two church workers who declined to identify themselves had refused entry to Israeli security guards accompanying Minister Barrot on his church visit. Israeli police said they held the men for some 20 minutes and released them once they were identified as employees of the French Consulate in Jerusalem, which is the protector of French religious communities and four holy sites in the city. The Israeli police said all foreign ministers on official visits to Israel are assigned Israeli security guards for their trips. It said the logistics of Barrot's visit were worked out beforehand with the French Embassy in Israel, warning the public against contributing to "misleading narratives" about the altercation.

India deserves to be in list of global superpowers: Putin

PTI ■ MOSCOW

India deserves to be included in the list of global superpowers as its economy is currently growing faster than in any other country, Russian President Vladimir Putin has said. Addressing the plenary session of the Valdai Discussion Club in Sochi on Thursday, Putin also said Russia is developing relations with India in all directions and there is a great degree of trust in bilateral ties. "India should undoubtedly be added to the list of superpowers, with its billion-and-a-half population, the fastest growth among all economies in the world, ancient culture and very good prospects for further growth," he said. Calling India a great country, Putin said: "We are developing relations with India in all direc-

tions. India is a great country, now the largest in terms of population: 1.5 billion people, plus 10 million every year. He said India is leading the world in economic growth. "Our vision of where and at what pace our relations will develop is based on today's realities. The volume of our cooperation is increasing many times over, every year," Putin was quoted by Russian news agency Tass as saying. Putin added that the contacts between India and Russia in the security and defence sphere are developing. "Look at how many types of Russian military equipment are in service with the Indian armed forces. There is a great degree of trust in this relationship. We don't just sell our weapons to India; we design them jointly," he said. Putin named the BrahMos

cruise missile project as an example. "In fact, we made it [the missile] fit for use in three environments - in air, in sea and on land. These projects, conducted for the benefit of India's security, are ongoing," he said. "This is widely known and no one has issues with that, but these projects demonstrate a high level of mutual trust and cooperation. So this what we will keep doing in the near term, and, I hope, will continue to do in the more distant future," he said. Putin acknowledged certain difficulties on the border between India and China, the agency reported. However, he said wise and competent people who keep the future of their nations in mind, are searching for compromises and will eventually find them.

"If this approach continues to gain momentum, compromises can be found, and they will be found," Putin said. The ties between India and China nosedived following a fierce clash in the Galwan Valley in June 2020 that marked the most serious military conflict between the two sides in decades. On October 21, Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri said in New Delhi that an agreement had been finalised between India and China following negotiations over the past several weeks and that it would lead to a resolution of the issues that arose in 2020. The agreement was firming up on patrolling and disengagement of troops along the Line of Actual Control in eastern Ladakh, a breakthrough to end the over four-year standoff.

Putin greets Trump on poll victory

AP ■ MOSCOW

Russian President Vladimir Putin on Thursday congratulated Donald Trump on his election victory in his first public comment on the US vote, and he praised the president-elect's courage during the July assassination attempt. "His behaviour at the moment of an attempt on his life left an impression on me. He turned out to be a brave man," Putin said at an international forum following a speech in the Black Sea resort of Sochi. "He manifested himself in the very correct way, bravely as a man," he added. Putin also said that what Trump has said "about the desire to restore relations with Russia, to help end the Ukrainian crisis, in my opinion, deserves attention at least." The Kremlin earlier welcomed Trump's claim that he could negotiate an end to the conflict in Ukraine "in 24 hours" but emphasised that it will wait for concrete policy steps. "I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate him on his election as president of the United States of America," Putin said in a question-and-answer session at the conference. As to what he expects from a second Trump administration, Putin said, "I don't know what will happen now. I have no idea." "For him, this is still his last presidential term. What he will do is his matter," Putin said. Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said Thursday the Kremlin is not ruling out the possibility of contact between Putin and Trump before the inauguration, given that Trump "said he would call Putin before the inauguration." Peskov has emphasised that Moscow views the US as an "unfriendly" country that is directly involved in the Ukrainian conflict. He dismissed arguments that Putin's failure to reach out quickly to Trump could hurt future ties, saying that Moscow's relations with Washington already are at the "lowest point in history" and arguing that it will be up to the new US leadership to change the situation.

Philippine president signs new laws to secure sea territory

AP ■ MANILA (PHILIPPINES)

Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos Jr signed two laws on Friday reaffirming the extent of his country's maritime territories and right to resources, including in the South China Sea, where the new laws clash with Beijing's extensive territorial claims. The move angered Beijing, and China's foreign ministry said it summoned the Philippines ambassador to China to lodge a "stern protest." The ministry condemned the move as an attempt to "solidify the illegal ruling of the South China Sea arbitration case through domestic legislation." Confrontations between Chinese and Philippine coast guard and naval forces in the disputed sea passage have spiked alarmingly since last year. That has sparked fears that the United States — Manila's longtime treaty ally

— may get drawn in a major conflict. The laws, called the Philippine Maritime Zones act and the Philippine Archipelagic Sea Lanes act, were signed by Marcos in a nationally televised ceremony attended by top military and national security officials. They further cement Manila's rejection of China's claims to virtually the entire sea passage, and stipulate jail terms and stiff fines for violators. "These signal our resolve to protect our maritime resources, preserve our rich biodiversity and ensure that our waters remain a source of life and livelihood for all Filipinos," Marcos said. Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Mao Ning said the move "seriously infringes on China's territorial sovereignty and maritime rights and interests in the South China Sea." "China strongly condemns and firmly opposes it," she

said. In a new national map it released last year, the Chinese government demarcated its claim to virtually the entire South China Sea with vague dash lines that drew protests and rejections from rival coastal states and government, including Malaysia, Vietnam, Taiwan, Indonesia and the Philippines. The maritime zones act demarcates key parts of the Philippine archipelago's territory and outlying waters where it has full sovereignty and sovereign rights under international law and the 1982 UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), Philippine officials said. Those zones include the country's Exclusive Economic Zone, a 200-nautical-mile (370-kilometer) stretch of water, where a coastal state like the Philippines has exclusive rights to tap energy and other resources.



A firefighter battling the Mountain Fire watches flames from a firing operation burn off vegetation around Swanhill Farms in Moorpark, Calif.

AP/PTI

China approves \$840b plan to boost slowing economy

AP ■ BEIJING

China on Friday approved a 6 trillion yuan (\$839 billion) plan to help local governments refinance their mountains of debt, in the latest push to rev up growth in the world's second largest economy. The plan will be implemented over the next three years, Xu Hongcai, vice-chairman of the National People's Congress's financial and economic committee, said at a news conference Friday. Finance minister Lan Foa'an estimated that the hidden debt of local governments was 14.3 trillion yuan (\$2 trillion) at the end of 2023. Hidden debt refers to debt that has not been disclosed publicly. Lan said 2 trillion yuan would be allocated each year from

2024 to 2026 to help local governments resolve their debts. He estimated that the amount of hidden debt will drop to 2.3 trillion yuan (\$320.9 billion) by the end of 2028. Officials also said Friday that the ceiling to issue special bonds will be raised to 35.52 trillion yuan (\$4.96 billion) from 29.52 trillion yuan (\$4.12 billion) for local governments. Lan said that the implementation of such a large-scale replacement measure indicates a "fundamental shift" in China's approach to debt restructuring and said that the China's government debt risk was "controllable." Analysts have called for bold, multi-trillion-yuan measures to reinvigorate the world's second largest economy, which has yet to bounce back fully from the COVID-19

pandemic. Local government debts have ballooned partly due to high spending and low tax revenues during the pandemic, but also due to a downturn in the property industry, since sales of land use rights, a key source of local government revenue, have sagged. The central bank loosened restrictions on borrowing in late September, sparking a stock market rally, but economists say the government needs to do more to ignite a sustained recovery. Government officials have indicated that could come at this week's meeting of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress, which must give official approval to any new spending. The economy has shown signs of life in the past two months.

Indian Americans welcome Trump's electoral victory

PTI ■ NEW YORK

Members of the Indian-American community welcomed Donald Trump's victory in the US presidential election, saying the country needs a "strong leader" like him who will deliver on his promises to tame inflation and curtail illegal immigration. In a historic election, Trump defeated his Democratic rival Vice President Kamala Harris and was elected the 47th President of the United States, becoming only the second commander-in-chief in over a century to win two nonconsecutive presidential terms. Before Trump, it was Grover Cleveland who had served two nonconsecutive terms as President from 1885-1889 and 1893-1897. With his electoral victory, Trump also became the first convicted felon and twice-impeached to be elected

President. However, Trump's criminal cases, his rhetoric or baggage from his previous tenure as President, including the January 6, 2021 riots at the US Capitol, had little impact on voters' decision to rally behind him and give him a second stint in the White House. The support for Trump was evident among members of the Indian-American community. "Trump is a strong leader. The country needs strong leadership," prominent Indian-American cardiologist and community leader Dr Avinash Gupta told PTI. "We have seen what Trump did for four years, and then we saw the Biden-Harris administration for four years. The difference was very clear," Gupta said. Gupta highlighted that during Trump's first presidency, the economy was in good shape, there were no new wars, he was

good for India-US friendship and the borders were secure. Gupta added that because of the wars going on in Ukraine and in the Middle East, "we need a strong leader who can put an end to all these wars and achieve global peace. We know that Trump is not a typical politician, so only he will be able to achieve this." Earlier this year, Trump had pledged to end Ukraine's war with Russia after its President Volodymyr Zelenskyy reached out to the former US president to congratulate him on his Republican presidential nomination. "... I, as your next President of the United States, will bring peace to the world and end the war that has cost so many lives and devastated countless innocent families. Both sides will be able to come together and negotiate a deal that ends the violence and paves a path forward to prosperity," Trump

had said. "Definitely, I think if somebody can stop the war, Trump can stop the war," Gupta said. Trump had also vowed that if he returns to the White House, "inflation will vanish completely." Deepa, an Indian-American small business owner in the White Plains area of New York, said she voted for Trump in the election. Outlining her reasoning behind her support for Trump, Deepa, who requested that only her first name be used, said that Trump has served as President before and "knows what should be done for the country. He is the right person." "Everyone has their personal choice. I think Trump is better," she said. When asked about Harris, who could have been the first woman President of the country, Deepa said: "Her being a woman does not matter. (The Democrats) never deliver on

their promises. They say they will do something but they don't. Trump is not like that. He does what he says," Deepa, who lives with her young family in the Long Island area, said. A New Jersey-based businessman, who did not wish to be identified, said that business owners are facing extremely difficult times due to high prices and the current state of the economy. "Businesses are hurting. It is becoming unsustainable," he said. With pressing domestic issues like inflation and illegal immigration hurting the country as well as impacts of global conflicts such as the wars in Ukraine and the Middle East, what the US needs is a leader like Trump to tackle these challenges, he added. There was also unanimity among members of the Indian-American community about who would be a better

leader in the White House for further strengthening India-US relations. "Trump, of course," they say when asked who between Harris and Trump would be a better leader for bilateral ties between Washington and Delhi. "Especially when Trump tweeted on Diwali about Bangladeshi Hindus, that sent a very clear message that he is for Hindus all over the world," Gupta said. In a message on Diwali, Trump posted on X that he "strongly" condemns the "barbaric violence against Hindus, Christians, and other minorities who are getting attacked and looted by mobs in Bangladesh, which remains in a total state of chaos. "It would have never happened on my watch. Kamala and Joe have ignored Hindu across the world and in America. They have been a disaster from Israel to Ukraine

to our own Southern Border, but we will Make America Strong Again and bring back Peace through Strength!" "We will also protect Hindu Americans against the anti-religion agenda of the radical left. We will fight for your freedom. Under my administration, we will also strengthen our great partnership with India and my good friend, Prime Minister Modi" Trump had said. Gupta further said that his patients complain about drug prices, and high inflation and worry that they cannot afford life-saving medication. "Some of them have just stopped (buying medicines) because they say we have to buy groceries and feed our families." Massachusetts-based entrepreneur Mohan Nannapaneni said that as a small business owner, he likes Trump's policies "because his policies are very clear and are definitely

helpful for small businesses." On the current state of the economy, he said that "everybody is feeling the pain" and Trump's promises will definitely help improve the economy and the job market. Nannapaneni, who is also the founder of the volunteer-based nonprofit organisation TEAM Aid, added that the issue of illegal immigrants was of significant concern to voters in the election. "The issue of illegal immigrants, open borders, letting people in without any screening is creating a lot of insecurity in people's minds." Nannapaneni added that Harris's policies on these issues were not clear. "Bring back America is a great slogan. Everybody wants to see how America was in the past. Trump has said he is going to stop the wars. He is focused on the main issues that are affecting every American."



Marking 50 Years of Artistic Expression

Geeta Chandran is a true icon of Bharatanatyam, celebrating fifty years of remarkable contributions to this classical dance. At a recent festival in New Delhi, her legacy shone brightly, showcasing her innovative spirit and deep passion for the art, says **SAKSHI PRIYA**



Photos: Pankaj Kumar

In the world of Indian classical dance, few names resonate with the passion and innovation of Geeta Chandran. As she marks her 50th year of performing Bharatanatyam, her influence goes beyond the mastery of movement, it's a legacy of reimagining and rejuvenating an ancient art form for the contemporary stage. Celebrated with a two-day festival at New Delhi's Kamani Auditorium, Chandran's golden jubilee was a journey that began with her Arangatram at age 12 and has flourished through decades of performance, teaching and cultural advocacy. Organised by Natya Vriksha, her beloved dance institution, the event became a dynamic expression of Bharatanatyam's enduring power, where tradition met innovation and art met life.

DAY ONE: PRAVAHATI – THE FORWARD FORCE

The first day's performance, titled Pravahati, was both meditative and exhilarating. Having seen Geeta Chandran perform numerous times, Pravahati offered something deeply personal and expansive - it was as though the dance itself became a vessel of her mastery and message. The programme began with an evocative Mallari in praise of Shiva, drawing the audience into a space of contemplation as Chandran and her collective invoked the deity through precise footwork, graceful arms and powerful expressions. The performance felt timeless, a moment where past and present intertwined. The journey continued with Varsha

Ritu, where Chandran brought to life Kalidasa's monsoon verses from Ritusamhara. It was a celebration of Bharatanatyam's storytelling power, capturing both the gentleness and force of nature. Watching her, it was as though each movement held a mirror to nature's dance, immersing us fully in its changing rhythms.

Then came Vahati, a piece that celebrated tradition as a dynamic, flowing stream, one that carries the past forward while moving into the future. Chandran's steps seemed to reimagine Bharatanatyam, presenting it as a continuously evolving art. This piece struck a powerful chord, a reminder that Bharatanatyam is not static but ever relevant. Finally, the evening closed with an exuberant Tillana, which radiated pure joy and the applause stayed long after she took her bow.

Throughout, Pravahati felt like more than a dance performance. It was a powerful statement on the evolving nature of art and the artist's role in pushing the boundaries of tradition. Chandran's words echoed through the performance: "Dance, much like life, should not be limited by tradition; it must evolve and be reinterpreted through the artist's unique perspective."

DAY TWO: A SOLO PERFORMANCE BY VIDUSHI GEETA CHANDRAN

The second day offered a more intimate experience with a solo performance by Chandran herself. Accompanied by an ensemble of musicians, Varun Rajasekharan on Nattuvangam, Smt. Sudha Raghuraman on vocals, Manohar Balachandirane



on mridangam, G. Raghavendra Prasath on violin and G. Raghuraman on flute, she brought Bharatanatyam's most intricate expressions to life. Each musician's skill beautifully complemented her dance, amplifying the emotion and story she conveyed.

In these solo pieces, Chandran laid bare the depth of her devotion to Bharatanatyam. The abhinaya or expressive storytelling, was stunning, transforming familiar narratives into powerful, moving moments. In one piece, she portrayed a waiting heroine and her portrayal struck a delicate balance between anticipation and longing, vividly capturing the subtle tension between presence and absence. Her gestures and expressions spoke of a deep connection to the emotions within the dance, giving the audience an experience that went beyond mere observation.

After the performance, Chandran spoke about her journey, saying, "As I approach this milestone of completing five decades of dancing since my Arangatram, I pay tribute to my Gurus who shared this invaluable art with me, and also gave me the freedom to question and reinterpret it." These words reflected her approach to Bharatanatyam: a constant, respectful re-exploration of tradition that brings new life into ancient forms.

GEETA CHANDRAN'S IMPACT ON BHARATANATYAM GOES WELL BEYOND HER DAZZLING PERFORMANCES. AS THE FOUNDER-PRESIDENT OF NATYA VRIKSHA, SHE HAS CREATED A STRONG CONNECTION BETWEEN DANCE AND SOCIAL CAUSES, EDUCATION, AND CULTURAL CONVERSATIONS

GEETA CHANDRAN'S LEGACY: MORE THAN JUST DANCE

Geeta Chandran's impact on Bharatanatyam goes well beyond her dazzling performances. As the Founder-President of Natya Vriksha, she has created a strong connection between dance and social causes, education, and cultural conversations. Her commitment to nurturing young talent and engaging with diverse communities is evident in her outreach programmes. Chandran's numerous accolades, such as the Padma Shri and the Central Sangeet Natak Akademi Award speak volumes about her standing in the classical dance community.

Yet, for those fortunate enough to witness her anniversary celebration, her most significant achievement lies in her ability to breathe life into Bharatanatyam, ensuring it remains not just relevant but profoundly impactful. Her performances are not just technical showcases; they are deeply immersive experiences that offer insights into the human condition.

As the curtains fell on her 50th-anniversary celebration, the audience erupted in applause, many visibly moved by her lifelong dedication to this art form. This event was not just a milestone; it was a tribute to a life defined by resilience, passion and grace. Geeta Chandran is more than a dancer or teacher; she is a torchbearer, lighting the way forward while remaining deeply connected to the essence of Bharatanatyam. Her legacy will undoubtedly inspire future generations to explore, honour and expand the possibilities of this beautiful, enduring art.



The Four: The Legacy of Innovation and Expression

The art exhibition, 'The Four' is the living tribute to the legacy of the masters of modern Indian art, writes **ABHI SINGHAL**

The art galleries escalate your thoughts when you see artists painting their thoughts in the liveliest way possible. All the canvases depict a different story, a different world of emotions, and a different language. The same canvases are interpreted by the viewers in their own way, their own thoughts and that's the beauty of art. The art communicates without words, leading people to find words in patterns and strokes. 'The Four' exhibition presented by the Progressive Art Gallery in collaboration with The Raza Foundation celebrated the birth centenary of four icons of modern Indian art.

The Four exhibitions was the celebration of all the four legendary artists namely, Francis Newton Souza, K. G. Subramanyan, Ram Kumar, and Vasudev S. Gaitonde. The guests explored the historic and remarkable legacy of the four artists. The common ground of all the celebrated artists is that they were all born in 1924. The exhibition is opened at Triveni Kala Sangam, New Delhi commemorating the 100 years since the birth of these modern masters. The Goan artist, Francis Newton Souza oil on canvas paintings Still Life, Profile of a Man are an exemplary notion that



drew people to his distinctive style evolved into a more expressive and abstract approach, using vibrant colours and bold

brushstrokes. Being in name for exploration of human figures, often depicted in a raw and unfiltered manner, F.N. Souza's painting Profile of a Man is an example of the same. Souza's style was characterised by strong lines, distorted forms and a dark

palette, which he used to explore human emotion, social hypocrisy and religious paradoxes. K.G. Subramanyan known for his polymorphic works made in diverse media ranging from paintings, water colours and reverse painting on glass to murals

is showcased in his work of Ragini Vibhas and Peacock Throne displayed at the Progressive Art Gallery. Inspired through his travels from Varanasi, Ram Kumar depicts human figures to capture the inner essence and spirituality

of landscapes. The untitled paintings of Kumar are an example of the same. The fourth but not the least V.S. Gaitonde's

paintings assume no shape and form and evoke nothing other than themselves and beautiful patterns. He represents a dynamic force in modern Indian painting, capturing the essence of an independent nation and its cultural awakening. The show is curated by art historian Yashodhara Dalmia, and was inaugurated by H.E. Dr. Philipp Ackermann, Ambassador of Germany to India. It is on public view till November 10, 2024. Together the birth centenary of these four artistry icons is all about diverse thoughts and mindful thinking. 'The Four' exhibition honours these artists but also celebrates the strength and originality of Indian art over the past century.

Ageing Kohli, Rohit must rekindle youthful mindset to rediscover lost glory: Greg Chappell

PTI ■ MELBOURNE

As Virat Kohli and Rohit Sharma prepare for one of their career's defining challenges in Australia in the upcoming Test series, former India head coach Greg Chappell believes the two stalwarts can "rekindle" the energy and focus of their youth to rediscover their lost glory. Wounded by an unprecedented 0-3 home series defeat to New Zealand, India will look to defend the Border-Gavaskar Trophy in the marquee five-match Test series in Australia beginning on November 22. According to Chappell, the ageing Sharma and Kohli must summon the same drive and focus that once marked their prime years if India hopes to reclaim its form on foreign soil. Reflecting on a conversation with Indian legend Sachin Tendulkar in 2005, Chappell shared insights into the hurdles players face as they age. Tendulkar had sought Chappell's perspective and asked "Greg, why does batting become harder as you get older? Surely it should get easier?" "I explained to him that the mental demands of batting intensify with age," Chappell wrote in a column for 'Sydney Morning Herald'. "Batting gets harder because you realise how hard it is to make runs at this level and how difficult it is to maintain the mental focus that is



required to be successful," the Australian batting legend wrote. He said "it's not the eyesight or the reflexes that drop off" when a player starts ageing but "it's the intense focus that is required that becomes harder to sustain." "When one is younger, the mind is focused on making runs. As you age, the opposition has put work into finding your weaknesses, and you are more aware of the conditions and the situation of the game.

"As a young player, you don't worry about the conditions or the situation of the game, you only see the ball and how to make runs," Chappell wrote, describing Rohit, Kohli and Australian batting stalwart Steve Smith as the "giants" of current times. "If you want to play like you did as a younger player, you have to rekindle the attitude and the thought processes that you had as a younger player. That is the greatest challenge for the ageing player," Chappell had

explained to Tendulkar. Chappell said the upcoming five-match Test series in Australia "will be as much a battle of wits and endurance as it will be of skill, with each player needing to summon the drive and adaptability of their younger selves." "This sentiment captures what Sharma, Kohli and (Steve) Smith will confront this series. They know that opposition teams have scrutinised their techniques, studied their weaknesses and developed

strategies specifically to exploit even minor chinks." Against New Zealand, Kohli endured his lowest-ever aggregate in a home Test series where he batted at least six times, scoring only 93 runs at an average of 15.50, with one half-century. This poor run has lowered his Test average to 47.83 from a peak of 55.10 in October 2019 -- the first time it has dipped below 48 since November 2016. He has dropped out of top-20 batters in ICC Test rankings

for the first time in a decade. Kohli dropped eight spots to 22nd in the rankings while Rohit slipped to 26th. "For Kohli, the task is one of rejuvenation. Known for his unmatched intensity, passion and high standards, Kohli's recent travails will have annoyed him," Chappell wrote. "The aggressive mindset that propelled him to greatness must now coexist with patience and focus. He enters this series hungry to reiterate his authority as India's most formidable batsman of his generation." For Rohit, according to Chappell, the challenge lies in balancing his aggressive instincts with the calculated caution that Test cricket demands. "As captain, he must maintain his own form while shouldering the pressure of leadership -- a delicate balance he'll need to master if India is to thrive. "This Test series, then, is more than just another chapter in cricket; it is a testament to the challenges that father time presents to even the most skilled players. "Each player is more than a celebrated cricketer; they are icons of the determination and skill that defines our game. This series will be a defining chapter in their legacies. "For Sharma, Kohli, and (Steve) Smith, the true battle is not against their opponents but against time itself," Chappell wrote.

KL Rahul's horror run continues as India A suffer another top-order collapse



PTI ■ MELBOURNE

KL Rahul's horror run with the bat continued as he got out in a bizarre fashion to leave India A at a shaky 73 for five on the second day of the second unofficial Test against Australia A here on Friday. Seeking to open the batting for India in case skipper Rohit Sharma skips the first Test against Australia in Perth, Rahul endured a disastrous outing in the tune-up to the Border-Gavaskar Trophy and managed just 14 runs across two innings, having got out for 10 in India A's second innings. Abhimanyu Easwaran's struggles against the moving ball also did not help India A's cause as they led by only 11 runs with half the side back in the dressing room in their second innings. After bowling out India A for 161 on the opening day, Australia A managed 223, not a total the home team had hoped for, but it still gave them a substantial first-innings lead of 62 runs. Coming out to bat for the second time in the game, the Indian top-order disappointed again as the Australian bowlers struck some vital blows to help their team inch closer to a series sweep. Australia A won the opening match by seven wickets. Looking completely out of sorts, Rahul was bowled in a bizarre fashion after facing 44 balls at the Melbourne Cricket Ground. Rahul misjudged a tossed up delivery and offered no shot as the ball ricocheted off his pads to hit the stumps, leaving the batter embarrassed while he walked back to the dressing room. Getting bowled between the legs has compounded his woes ahead of the blockbuster series. Abhimanyu, who was picked as a backup opener for the upcoming five-match rubber

Down Under, also failed to deliver, following his first-innings duck with a 17 from 31 balls. The Indian top-order struggled against quality spin and pace, leaving them at 56/5 early in the second innings. Wicketkeeper-batter Dhruv Jurel (19 batting) and Nitish Kumar Reddy (9 batting) ensured there was no further setback by negotiating the remaining overs before the stumps were drawn for the day. Earlier, India A's pace attack, spearheaded by Prasidh Krishna's four-wicket burst and Mukesh Kumar's three-wicket haul, dominated the Australian batting, dismissing them for 223 in 62.1 overs. Marcus Harris was the standout batter for Australia A, scoring a gritty 74 off 138 balls, while lower-order batter Rocchiccioli provided late fireworks, hitting 35 off 28 balls, including two sixes and three fours. In response, India A lost openers Abhimanyu and Sai Sudharsan cheaply to disciplined bowling from Nathan McAndrew and Beau Webster. Abhimanyu's misreading of McAndrew's pace led to his dismissal at gully, adding to the team's concerns. Devdutt Padikkal (1) also fell cheaply, as both Webster (2/14) and McAndrew (2/22) tore through India's batting lineup. However, Jurel and Reddy then held firm. Resuming the day on 53/2, Harris translated his overnight score of 26 into a well-constructed innings, showing resilience against a sharp Indian pace attack. Brief Scores: India A 161 and 73/5 in 31 overs (Dhruv Jurel 19 batting; Nathan McAndrew 2/22, Beau Webster 2/14). Australia A 1st innings: 223 all out in 62.1 (Marcus Harris 74; Prasidh Krishna 4/50, Mukesh Kumar 3/41, Khaleel Ahmed 2/56).

Rauf and Ayub star in Pakistan's resounding nine wicket win over Australia

AP ■ ADELAIDE (AUSTRALIA)

Fast bowler Haris Rauf took 5-29 and Saim Ayub scored 82 runs as Pakistan defeated Australia by nine wickets in the second one-day international on Friday. Australia was 163 all out in 35 overs against Rauf's relentless pace and left-hander Ayub smashed six sixes and five fours as Pakistan cruised to 169-1 in 26.3 overs to level the three-match series. Former captain Babar Azam (15 not out) clinched the victory with a pulled six off Adam Zampa with Abdullah Shafique staying unbeaten on better than run-a-ball 64 which featured four boundaries and three sixes. The series decider will be played at Perth on Sunday with Australia resting five frontline players to prepare for the five-match home test series against India, starting from Nov. 22 at Perth. The opening pair of Ayub and Shafique had been criticized for run of low scores in test matches, but both blunted the Australian pace with a match-winning stand of 137 runs after Pakistan kept faith on the duo in the white-ball format. Ayub took his time against Hazlewood and Mitchell Starc before he grew in confidence



and flicked Pat Cummins, Starc and Aaron Hardie for sixes and also smashed Zampa for two big hits. The left-hander, who made his ODI debut at the Melbourne Cricket Ground on Monday, got a reprieve just before reaching a half century when Zampa dropped a sitter at third man, but he offered a tame catch at short third man just when he looked set for a century. Earlier, Rauf, who nearly pulled off a victory for Pakistan in the first game, found the outside edges of the bats consistently by hitting the right lengths.

Captain Mohammad Rizwan took five catches -- four off Rauf's bowling -- and could have had a sixth had he not dropped a top-edge off Zampa (18) before Australia was dismissed after Pakistan won the toss and elected to field on a lively Adelaide wicket. Shaheen Shah Afridi (3-26) provided the breakthrough inside the first power play. Jake Fraser-McGurk hit three crisp boundaries on the off side in Naseem Shah's first over to get Australia rolling before Afridi's twin strike pushed back Australia. Afridi dropped Matt Short at

deep fine leg when the ball burst through his hands to the boundary but the left-arm fast bowler made amends when he had Short caught at covers after trapping Fraser-McGurk plumb leg before wicket. Afridi ended Australia's below-par innings when Zampa played a full ball back onto his stumps. Zampa flicked Naseem Shah for a six and a four in an over which enabled the home team to cross the 150-run mark. Rauf sliced through the middle-order with only Steve Smith scoring 35 off 48 balls before he too chased a wide short ball of Mohammad Hasnain and edged behind the wicket. Fast bowler Josh Hazlewood replaced Sean Abbott in the only change Australia made from the team which edged Pakistan in the first game. Starc, Smith, Marnus Labuschagne, Cummins and Hazlewood all will be rested for the final game of the series on Sunday. Wicketkeeper-batter Josh Inglis was named interim captain for the last ODI at Perth. Inglis will also lead the side in next week's three T20s against Pakistan with Mitchell Marsh and Travis Head away on paternity leave.

Kiran George enters semifinals of Korea Masters



PTI ■ IKSAN CITY (KOREA)

India's Kiran George continued his spectacular run in the Korea Masters badminton tournament as he stormed into the men's singles semifinals with a straight-game win over fifth seed Takuma Obayashi of Japan here on Friday. The 24-year-old, ranked 41st, beat world number 34 Obayashi 21-14 21-16 in just 39 minutes to register yet another upset win in the BWF World Tour Super 300 event. George runs into Thailand's top seed and world number five Kunlavut Vitidsarn -- who won 21-15 21-11 against Liu Liang of China -- in the semifinals on Saturday. The Indian had beaten third seed Chi Yu Jen of Chinese Taipei in the pre-

quarterfinals. George, the lone Indian shuttler competing in the tournament, was in control of the match throughout. After 1-1 scoreline, he was always in the lead in the first game. When George zoomed to 15-6 lead, Obayashi made a brief resistance, closing down the gap to 12-16. But that was all the Japanese could do as George notched four straight points to take the first game. The second game was a much closer affair as the duo breathed down each other's neck. George was initially 7-3 ahead but Obayashi fought back to make it 8-8. After that, it was a neck-and-neck contest. But from 17-16, George grabbed four straight points to seal the second game and the match.

Man United ends winless run in Europe and Osimhen scores two as Galatasaray beats Tottenham

AP ■ MANCHESTER (ENGLAND)

Manchester United secured its first win in Europe for more than a year by beating PAOK 2-0 in the Europa League. Two second-half goals from Amad Diallo sealed the victory at Old Trafford on Thursday and boosted United's hopes of progressing in the competition, while Tottenham's 100% start was ended by a 3-2 loss at Galatasaray. United's last win in Europe was against Copenhagen in the Champions League on Oct. 24 last year. "We addressed that in the dressing room and it was time to change that, so we did," United interim head coach Ruud van Nistelrooy said.

Diallo's looping header beat PAOK goalkeeper Dominik Kotarski in the 50th minute and he followed that up with a deflected shot from outside the area that nestled into the bottom corner in the 77th. It's two wins from three games for United under Van Nistelrooy, who has one more match -- against Leicester on Sunday -- before handing over to Ruben Amorim. It is not clear if there will be a role for the Dutchman after his temporary reign, but he is doing what he can to ensure that United is in the best possible position for when Amorim takes charge. Erik ten Hag was fired last week after a woeful start to the campaign left the team in 14th place in the Premier League and without a win in Europe's secondary

competition the Europa League. Amorim was quickly hired in his place, but it has been left to Van Nistelrooy to fill the gap while the Portuguese serves a notice period at Sporting Lisbon. He has delivered wins in the English League Cup and the Europa League either side of a draw with Chelsea in the league. Osimhen double Earlier, Victor Osimhen scored twice in eight minutes to help Galatasaray beat Tottenham 3-2 in Turkey. Osimhen scored his first goal in Europe for Galatasaray after his transfer from Napoli with a precise low shot inside the right post to give the host a 2-1 lead in the 31st minute and added his second eight minutes later by heading home a curled cross from the



right by Dries Mertens. It was Tottenham's first loss in the competition after three wins. Galatasaray remains unbeaten with three wins and a draw. Every game on Thursday was preceded by a moment of silence to honor the victims of the devastating flooding in Spain. In Istanbul, Yunus

Akgün put Galatasaray ahead in the sixth minute when Spurs failed to properly clear a free kick by Mertens and the midfielder volleyed home from outside the area past goalkeeper Fraser Forster. Tottenham equalized in the 19th minute through Will Lankshear, who made only his second senior appearance

for the London club and netted from close range after a cross from Brennan Johnson. However, Lankshear was later sent off for a second yellow card on the hour mark. Substitute Dominic Solanke pulled a goal back for Tottenham with a backheel finish in the 69th. Lazio perfect Lazio is the only team to maintain a perfect record with four wins after Pedro Rodriguez scored in injury time to secure a 2-1 victory over Porto. Ajax had five different goal scorers in a 5-0 rout of Maccabi Tel-Aviv while three substitutes netted for Alkmaar in its 3-1 victory over Fenerbahce, the first loss of the competition for Jose Mourinho's team. Latvia's RFS salvaged a 1-1 draw with Anderlecht with a stoppage-time equalizer as

the Belgian side dropped points for the first time. Earlier, Eintracht Frankfurt beat Slavia Prague 1-0 thanks to Omar Marmoush's second-half goal, while Roma was held to a 1-1 draw at Union Saint-Gilloise, another disappointing result after a 3-2 loss to Hellas Verona in Serie A over the weekend. Rangers held last year's Conference League champion Olympiacos to a 1-1 draw in Greece. Athletic Bilbao beat Ludogorets 2-1 to stay unbeaten with three wins and a draw, while Qarabag upset Bodø/Glimt 3-1 in Norway to earn its first points. Nice drew 2-2 with Twente with both teams finishing the game reduced to 10 men. Conference League Chelsea demolished

Armenian club Noah 8-0 to set a record for the biggest victory in the third-tier Conference League. Chelsea took a 6-0 lead in the first half on two goals from João Félix, and one a piece from Tosin Adarabioyo, Marc Guiu, Axel Disasi and Mykhailo Mudryk. Christopher Nkunku added two more in the second half, the second from the spot. Nordström had the previous record, beating Ludogorets 7-1 last season. Chelsea is one of six teams with three wins after three games. Vitória beat Mladá Boleslav 2-1, Jagellonia defeated Molde 3-0 and Heidenheim won 2-0 at Hearts. Earlier, Legia Warsaw routed Dinamo Minsk 4-0 and SK Rapid eased past Petrocub 3-0.

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