

Cong 'tampered' with Preamble, 'strangled' Constitution: Yogi

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

In a sharp critique of the Congress on Tuesday, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath accused the party of tampering with the Preamble and "strangling" the Constitution.

Extending his congratulations to the people on the occasion, Yogi emphasised the significance of Constitution Day in reminding citizens of the greatness of India's democracy and Constitution.

Praising India's democracy, Yogi highlighted that the Indian Constitution ensures equal voting rights for individuals of every caste, opinion, and religion. He noted that while other democracies around the world were grappling with discrimination, India had already granted universal suffrage to all adult citizens in its general elections, a testament to the foresight of Dr Ambedkar and the Constituent Assembly.



Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath pays tribute to a portrait of Dr BR Ambedkar on Constitution Day at Lok Bhawan on Tuesday

pered with the Indian Constitution. He emphasised the importance of exposing those who mislead the people of the country.

values," he said. Reflecting on past and present actions, the CM pointed out, "Whether it was during the Emergency in 1975 or now, their attempts to deprive socially marginalised and extremely backward caste groups of the constitutional rights granted by Dr BR Ambedkar are evident. Their remarks, both within

India and abroad, speak volumes about their intentions." He underscored the significance of the Indian Constitution, calling it the legacy of Dr Ambedkar, which unites the entire nation and its 140 crore citizens in a bond of unity.

guard this Constitution. By adhering to the fundamental duties enshrined in it, we pay the trust tribute to Baba Saheb Ambedkar, the architects of the Constitution, and the great freedom fighters of India." The chief minister highlighted India's progressive approach to women's empowerment, stating that India granted voting rights to women before many countries, considered the pioneers of modern democracy.

Referring to the special session on civic duties held in the Uttar Pradesh Legislative Assembly and Legislative Council in 2019, Yogi emphasised that both civil rights and duties are fundamental pillars of democracy. He stated, "It is not enough to only talk about rights; it is equally important to adhere to the civic duties enshrined in the Constitution."

Criminal justice, not punishment, essence of 3 new laws, says CM

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath emphasised that the essence of three newly implemented laws lies in delivering justice, rather than focusing solely on crime and punishment.



CM Yogi also inaugurated a new auditorium at the Forensic Institute and distributed certificates to students for various courses. He marked the importance of November 26, 1949, as a pivotal day in Indian history, saying, "On this day, India adopted the Constitution crafted by Babasaheb Dr Bhrmrao Ambedkar, a proud son of Bharat Mata, 75 years ago.

He warned against neglecting technology, adding, "If those with positive intentions shy away from technology, it allows negative elements to dominate. We must not let that happen."

state's history, the land of this institute was occupied by the notorious land mafia. Action was taken against these elements, the land was reclaimed, and today, a grand institute stands on it, offering various educational courses.

Projects worth over ₹238 cr to be inaugurated in Prayagraj today

PNS ■ PRAYAGRAJ

During his visit to Prayagraj on Wednesday, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath will review the ongoing preparations for Maha Kumbh 2025 with a focus on cleanliness and security.

Under the Swachh Kumbh Fund, over 15,000 personnel—including 10,000 workers, 3,000 boatmen, and others—will be linked to more than five schemes aimed at improving their welfare.

'It will be Digital Kumbh' in 2025'

Lucknow (PNS): Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Tuesday emphasised that the upcoming Maha Kumbh 2025 in Prayagraj will not only see new benchmarks in cleanliness but will also embrace technology to present a 'Digital Kumbh'.

While attending a programme here on Tuesday, Yogi extended greetings on Constitution Day, emphasising that the three foundational pillars of the Indian Constitution are rooted in 'samvad' (dialogue and communication).

UP procures 7.28 lakh metric tonnes of paddy

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Government agencies have procured over 7.28 lakh metric tonnes of paddy under the Kharif procurement season for 2024-25. During the previous season, by November 25, 2023, agencies had procured 5.79 lakh MT of paddy.

inspections of the procurement centres, with headquarters also monitoring the process. In western Uttar Pradesh, paddy procurement began on October 1 and will continue until January 31, 2025.

Dedicated area for 7 Akharas established

Prayagraj (PNS): A dedicated area for seven Akharas has been established, while the construction of nine police stations and five outposts is nearing completion to ensure seamless security.

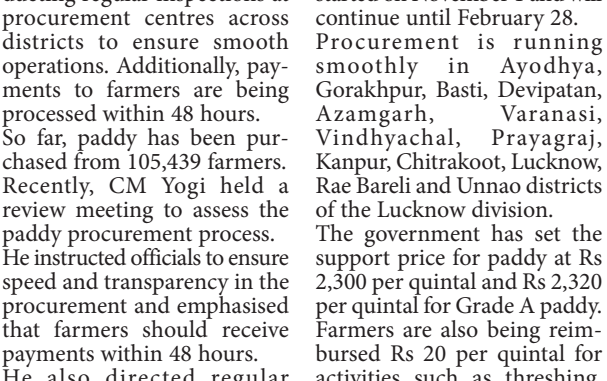
across the country and abroad are expected to attend the Maha Kumbh. Officials are working round the clock to ensure preparations are completed on time.

with three newly built police stations. The work at the Jhansi police line is also progressing fast. Once completed, the fair area will shine with new developments in sectors stretching from Samudrakooop to Sadhu Kuti.

DIGITAL MAHA KUMBH EXPERIENCE CENTRE A Digital Maha Kumbh Experience Centre is being built to convey the mythological and spiritual legacy of the grant event. This centre will offer a digital journey of the Maha Kumbh, using advanced technolo-

gies like virtual reality (VR), holograms, and digital projections to bring the mythological traditions and rich saga of the Maha Kumbh to life. The experience will allow the new generation to connect with the spiritual and cultural significance of the Maha Kumbh, Triveni Sangam, and the history of Prayagraj.

Portion of British-era bridge collapses



Unnao (PTI): A portion of a historic bridge on the Ganga connecting Kanpur and Unnao, built during the British period, fell into the river in the early hours of Tuesday, locals said.

Another local, Panda Raju, said the bridge was closed in 2021 after cracks appeared. "At that time, it was known through the media that deep cracks were found in rooms 2, 10, 17 and 22 from the Kanpur side, due to which the administration completely closed the bridge on April 5, 2021," he added.

said. Locals claimed that the bridge near the Ganga ghat was built in 1874 by the Avadh and Rohilkhand Railway Limited Company in the Shuklaganj area of Unnao district.

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Executive, Legislature, Judiciary should work together to make life of common people better: President Murmu

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

President Droupadi Murmu on Tuesday said here it is the responsibility of the executive, legislature and the judiciary to work together to make the lives of common people better in accordance with the spirit of the Constitution.

A commemorative coin and stamp were released on the occasion. Books titled "Making of the Constitution of India: A Glimpse", "Making of the Constitution of India and its Glorious Journey" and a booklet dedicated to the illustration in the Constitution were also released.



India's Constitution is a living and progressive document and the country's farsighted Constitution-makers provided for a system of adopting new ideas, according to the needs of the changing times, she said.

India in the comity of nations and the Constitution-makers had given a directive for India to play an important role in promotion of international peace and security, the president said.

celebrate the 75th anniversary of the republic and such celebrations provide the country with opportunities to take stock of the journey so far and plan better for the journey ahead, President Murmu said.

freedom struggle. The celebrations of Samvidhan Divas every year since 2015 have helped increase awareness among the youth about India's founding document, President Murmu highlighted.

national sovereignty, fostering unity, prioritising national interests, and safeguarding our environment". Citing Ambedkar's last address in the Constituent Assembly on November 25, 1949, Dhanekar said, "What perturbs me greatly is the fact that not only India has once before lost her independence but she lost it by the infidelity and treachery of some of her own people. Will history repeat itself?"

must be determined to defend our independence with the last drop of our blood," he further said, citing Ambedkar. Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla urged members to follow the tradition of constructive and dignified debates set by the Constituent Assembly while deliberating upon the Constitution that was adopted 75 years ago.

Bypolls to six RS vacancies across four States to be held on Dec 20: EC

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Bypolls to six vacancies in Rajya Sabha across four states will be held on December 20, the Election Commission announced on Tuesday.



April 2, 2026. Jawhar Sircar of the TMC had resigned in April following the rape-murder of a woman doctor in Kolkata, creating a vacancy in the state. He was otherwise to retire in April 2026.

Following his election as an MLA in the recent state polls. After the recent assembly polls, TDP in Andhra Pradesh and BJP in Odisha will have an upper hand in the Rajya Sabha bypolls.

PM Modi, RSS strengthening wall obstructing path of SCs, STs, OBCs: Rahul Gandhi

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Tuesday alleged that Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the RSS were strengthening the wall obstructing the path of Dalits, Adivasis and OBCs, even as he acknowledged that the efforts of the UPA government to bring down that wall were not sufficient.



ing any "constitutional integrity or federal character" and alleged that the party was undoing everything that BR Ambedkar and other members of the Constituent Assembly did through the Constitution. Rahul Gandhi said the coun-

food...Those were ways to weaken that wall. Today, when I look back, I can say the UPA government did not weaken the wall to the extent it should have, it did not do it as strongly as it should have," he said.

compound fracture... We will get data by caste census," he said. The day this data comes into the hands of a Congress government, that day the whole paradigm of development will change, Gandhi asserted.

Chouhan inaugurates 227 new Gender Resource Centres

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Union Minister of Rural Development, Shivraj Singh Chouhan, on Tuesday inaugurated 227 new Gender Resource Centres (GRCs) across 13 states, designed to provide survivors of gender-based violence (GBV) with safe spaces, access to vital information, legal support, and a network to report incidents.



During his address, Chouhan emphasised that the government has undertaken multiple initiatives for the social and economic development of women, stressing that GBV is prevalent not only in rural areas but also in urban spaces, said a statement here.

hananahi campaign, which calls for collective action against GBV. She highlighted the role of 10 crore Self-Help Group (SHG) women and the 49 government schemes dedicated to supporting gender equality. These include 24/7 national helplines, One-Stop Centres, and initiatives for fast-track justice.

icated, and all women should have equal opportunities for participation in economic, social, and political spheres. Other leaders, including Dr. Chandraraj Pemmasani, Minister of State for Rural Development, and Shri Kamlesh Paswan, Minister of State for Rural Development, highlighted the importance of a whole-of-society approach to end gender-based violence.

Building on this success, the month-long Nayi Chetna 3.0 focuses on the theme 'Ek Saath Ek Awaaz - Hinsa Ke Khilaf', encouraging collective action against violence, fostering safe and inclusive spaces, and breaking the barriers of inequality, the statement added.

India's milk production rises 4 per cent, meat production rises 5 per cent in 2023-24

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

India's milk production rose nearly 4 per cent annually to 239.3 million tonnes in 2023-24 on better productivity, even as milk output of buffaloes declined 16 per cent annually. On the other hand, meat production rose nearly 5 per cent to 10.25 million tonnes in the last fiscal.



per cent) as compared to the previous year. In an official statement, the ministry said that the total meat production in the country is estimated as 10.25 million tonnes during 2023-24 and registered a growth of 4.85 per cent over the past 10 years as compared to the estimates of 6.69 million tonnes in 2014-15.

duction increased annually by 3.18 per cent during 2023-24 over the preceding fiscal. The major contribution in the total egg production comes from Andhra Pradesh with a share of 17.85 per cent of total egg production, followed by Tamil Nadu (15.64 per cent), Telangana (12.88 per cent), West Bengal (11.37 per cent) and Karnataka (6.63 per cent).

Opposition demands debate on Constitution in both houses of Parliament

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Opposition leaders on Tuesday demanded a debate on the Constitution in both Houses of Parliament. Leader of Opposition in Rajya Sabha Mallikarjun Kharge said he and Lok Sabha Leader of Opposition Rahul Gandhi have written to the Chair in the two Houses requesting that a discussion should be held on the Constitution for two days in both Houses.



tioned if it is being implemented in letter and spirit. "Are people getting justice, liberty? Is there freedom of expression? Where is fraternity? Only bowing to the Constitution will not lead to it being followed," he said.

Minister, follow what you are saying. Practice before you preach". "Incidents like Sambhal are repeatedly occurring. I am surprised that even Supreme Court judges and our retired Justice Chandrachud overlook the laws of this country and state that surveys are permitted as it is a matter of faith... Every individual in this country has equal rights to practice their religion and faith. The growing disharmony is a threat to the nation," Singh said.

India, Tanzania review bilateral defence ties at third JDCC meet in Goa

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

India and Tanzania on Tuesday reviewed entire gamut of their bilateral defence ties during the third edition of Joint Defence Cooperation Committee (JDCC) meeting in Goa, defence ministry said here.

from the Ministry of Defence and the Armed Forces. The High Commissioner of India to Tanzania Bishwadip Dey also attended the meeting. The Tanzanian delegation was led by Land Forces Commander Major General Fadhil Omary Nondo.



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PAPER WITH PASSION

Yet another flashpoint

All stakeholders must demonstrate utmost restraint to prevent any escalation of communal tensions in Sambhal

The town of Sambhal in Uttar Pradesh has become the epicentre of intense communal tension following a violent confrontation over a court-mandated survey of the historic Shahi Jama Masjid. The incident, which unfolded on Sunday, has claimed three lives, injured numerous others and raised pressing concerns about the fragile communal harmony in the region.



The petition sought ASI intervention and public access to the site, accusing the mosque administrators of obstructing entry and the ASI of negligence in protecting the monument. The legal dispute led the Court of Civil Judge (Senior Division) in Sambhal to order a survey of the mosque, with a report due by November 29.

lives were lost, and several were injured, including police officers and administrative personnel. The violence has since been condemned across the political spectrum, though it has also sparked a heated debate over the motivations behind the survey and its handling.

PICTALK



People buy groundnut during the inauguration of the 'Kadalekai Parishes', in Bengaluru

Prasar Bharati unveils WAVES app amid criticism and challenges

Prasar Bharati launched its much-anticipated app, WAVES touted as a strategic leap for India's national broadcaster

In a vibrant ceremony during the 55th International Film Festival of India (IFFI) in Goa, Prasar Bharati unveiled its long-awaited app, WAVES. Marking a strategic step forward for India's national broadcaster, the launch was graced by Goa Chief Minister Pramod Sawant.



between Prasar Bharati and Doordarshan, adding to the confusion about accessing the app.

Delays and Controversies The WAVES launch comes after multiple postponements, with its original debut planned for August 15.

Observers have highlighted internal issues, including allegations of favouritism and mismanagement. Notably, the consultancy hired to guide WAVES has faced criticism for lacking expertise in the OTT domain and allegedly sidelining experienced officials in key roles.

Adding to these challenges are unresolved trademark issues surrounding the name "WAVES," which could further complicate the app's rollout. Private broadcasters, wary of potential regulatory challenges, have shown reluctance to collaborate with the platform.

Content and Vision Despite the hurdles, WAVES aims to differentiate itself in the competitive Indian media landscape.

Operating on a revenue-sharing model, WAVES aspires to empower creators while ensuring the protection of intellectual property. However, stand-

ing out against global giants like Netflix and Amazon Prime Video, known for their vast libraries and advanced technology, presents a formidable challenge.

The Road Ahead The launch of WAVES is a critical juncture for Prasar Bharati, offering a chance to redefine public broadcasting in the digital era. However, success will hinge on resolving internal discord, addressing operational concerns, and crafting a user experience that resonates with audiences.

As WAVES ventures into the competitive digital media space, its journey will be closely watched. For Prasar Bharati, the app represents both a bold opportunity and a test of its capacity to adapt and thrive in an evolving media ecosystem.

(The writer is a journalist; views are personal)



AMIT KR ROY

K P Sharma Oli walks a tightrope on China

Will Oli's stance on the BRI and his decision to prioritise China over India define his political legacy or deepen Nepal's internal divides?



ASHOK K MEHTA

In Kathmandu, I observed that Nepal Prime Minister KP Oli's visit to China has become a hot potato in the chilly Kathmandu valley. The China visit is being portrayed by his Unified Marxist Leninist Party (UML)-led coalition government as a bold initiative by Oli to resolve the long-pending BRI Implementation plan.

Several delegations from both countries have interacted over the BRI Implementation plan for a long but the plan has not been signed.

Oli last visited China in 2016 after the Indian blockade and signed several agreements including energy trade but almost none has materialised. China is insisting that BRI projects that were truncated at Beijing's request from 35 to 9 be under loan whereas Nepal, especially Nepali Congress, the senior coalition partner, wants them under grant.

During the annual Kantipur Conclave in Kathmandu this month, he clarified that as a sovereign nation, a PM can visit any country first. He compared the 'first visit India or China conundrum' to visiting Nizamuddin or Ajmer Sharif first.

For Nepal maintaining balance between India and China is a vital strategic mission that the founding father of Nepal,



Pushpa Kamal Dahal (Prachanda) - all others on becoming PM have first gone to New Delhi. Prachanda had clarified that his was not a state visit to China but he had gone for the Beijing Olympics.

For Nepal maintaining balance between India and China is a vital strategic mission that the founding father of Nepal,



OLI LAST VISITED CHINA IN 2016 AFTER THE INDIAN BLOCKADE AND SIGNED SEVERAL AGREEMENTS INCLUDING ENERGY TRADE BUT ALMOST NONE HAS MATERIALISED

Prithvi Narayan Shah had described as a yam between two boulders. Geography and social and cultural factors have favoured India. The dethroned Maoist leader and four-time PM Prachanda, Oli's erstwhile short-term partner, accused him in an interview with an Indian journalist who had come for the Kantipur Conclave, of playing the China card.

He asserted he had made a direct assault on corruption - the no 1 bane of Nepal - and put many corrupt leaders including members of his party, and those who had supported his government in jail.

On which jail he should be lodged in, due to massive protests by his supporters. They took him to the Terai towns but not to his citadel in Chitwan and brought him back to Pokhara as they were unable to present him before a Kathmandu court to avoid creating law and order issues.

Oli was cool about Rabi, saying at the Kantipur Conclave that he had 'once given Rabi a job (in Nepal Television)' but did not know much about his case. The parliamentary probe that was ordered on him as demanded by the Nepali Congress was at the behest of PM Prachanda and Rabi himself who was the Home Minister in the coalition government. He added: "let law take its course".

(The writer, a retired Major General, was Commander, IPKF South, Sri Lanka, and founder member of the Defence Planning Staff, currently the Integrated Defence Staff; views are personal)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

HISTORIC WIN AT PERTH

Madam — Apropos to the news headline "Team India rises like a phoenix at Perth" (November 26). Kudos to Team India! After the drubbing from the Kiwis in our own backyard 0-3, India dominated the first Test in Perth, crushing Australia by a massive 295 runs.

While Yashasvi Jaiswal, Virat Kohli and KL Rahul will be among the heroes with their solid second innings batting performances, it was the stand-in skipper Jasprit Bumrah's unbelievable skill set and self-belief during Australia's first innings rout that formed the cornerstone of India's win.

Bidyut Kumar Chatterjee | Faridabad

HOUSE ADJOURNED OVER ADANI

Madam— On the first day of the winter session, i.e., Monday, the House was adjourned due to the demand for a discussion on Adani. Now it does not seem that much work or meaningful discussion will be done in this session.

SC rejects plea challenging Preamble



In a landmark ruling, the Supreme Court has dismissed a batch of petitions challenging the inclusion of the terms 'Socialist and Secular' in the Preamble to the Constitution as per the 42nd Amendment passed in 1976.

Gautam Adani and his entire team in America, it is obvious that the Opposition of the country will raise its voice on it. Now our Prime Minister wants to defeat every solid allegation through his electoral victory (Maharashtra). That is why when the House was not functioning on Monday, he told the Opposition that "those who have been rejected by the people are indulging in hooliganism in the House."

tain the unity and integrity of the nation. The Preamble is considered the soul and spirit of the Constitution. It still plays an important role when there is ambiguity in Articles' provisions or when an interpretation of the Constitution becomes confusing.

The Preamble, which highlights guiding principles and some fundamental values of the bases of which the Indian Constitution was written, will become invalid and insignificant when important terms 'Sovereign, Socialist, Secular' are removed from the Preamble. Knowing the importance of the Preamble, in 1973, in the Kesavananda Bharati case, a 13-judge bench of the Supreme Court declared that the Preamble would be considered as part of the Constitution.

P Victor Selvaraj | Tirunelveli

India and hide this information from investors while raising capital in America. *Jang Bahadur Singh | Jamshedpur*

SAMBHAL MOSQUE DISPUTE

Madam — The horrific incident that occurred in Sambhal highlights the authorities' alarming reaction, where, without conducting a proper hearing or trial, they initiated a survey within just two hours.

The assertion of replacing a mosque with a temple is intensifying over time, threatening the diversity and unity of our nation. Mohan Bhagwat's statement should be taken into account: it is not right to dig beneath every mosque in search of a Shilving and claim it as a temple.

Jakir Hussain | Kanpur

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

FIRST COLUMN
LESSONS IN HUMILITY AND FAITH

Are we ready to confront the truth of our smallness in the grand scheme of existence?



AJIT KUMAR BISHNOI

Have we realised that we are intrinsically small souls? That we only play small roles, yes, of different levels, but always small. I will cite many examples to substantiate this fact in this article. The only big is God, who is omnipresent, omnipotent and omniscient. He controls everything. We shouldn't be surprised by the reality of us being small. What did we expect? There are billions of us and all interdependent.

We cannot exist without the support of others right from our birth. Ravana was puffed up because he thought that he was big, having defeated important entities. But he was made to bite the dust and he accepted that his highly bloated ego was his undoing. Hitler thought that he was big and was going to control the world. What happened? He committed suicide having realised his smallness. Nixon was President of the USA – a large and prosperous nation. He was forced to resign, because of his underhanded activities. Napoleon was similarly humiliated when he was banished from his country to live in Elba – an Italian island, away from his dear country France.

Smallness is only one of our handicaps; ignorance is another. Despite the vast knowledge Ravana possessed, he was ignorant like most of us; he ignored the reality of God. Only the most fortunate like



Sant Tulsidas transcend the barrier of ignorance. What will you call Kansa? He kept on trying to kill the child Krishna without realising that the Lord cannot be killed. Ultimately, Lord Krishna had to kill him. Duryodhana saw so much of Lord Krishna, but somehow it didn't sink in that the Lord was different; He was God. He saw how the Lord protected Draupadi from being disrobed; how Arjuna was protected by bringing back sunlight; and many such instances. His ignorance was quite deep-seated. What will you call persons, who outwardly pretend to be servants of God, but molest unsuspecting children?

Their depth of darkness, which engulfs their consciousness does not let them see that punishment is coming. Only after they are hit with severe punishments they realise that they are quite helpless really. Draupadi realised it and cried for the Lord's help, which the merciful Lord provided. Arjuna knew in his heart that he was enjoying the protection of the Lord. That is how he was able to triumph over very powerful adversaries. In the modern era, famous film stars have committed suicide.

We become very impressed by the fame they enjoy but little do we realise that they are just as helpless as we are. Wealthy people are no better when they are hit with mental trauma as a result of extraordinarily stressful events, which shatter their sense of security, making them feel insecure in this dangerous world we live in. Yes, this world is a place of misery (The Bhagavad-Geeta 8.15), as long as one does not take shelter from God. Both external and internal dangers exist. Demonic forces are out there to harm us in order to gain some pecuniary advantage like by stealing from us. Then, one does not know what is in store due to our past sinful acts. The smart thing is to come under the protection of God. So, what do I do? Having done my duty, I try to leave it to my Lord. Believe me, He takes care of me better than I could have imagined. It sounds like a fairy tale, but I am one of millions, who are benefiting in the present and have benefited thus in the past.

(The writer is a spiritual teacher; views are personal)

Realigning India's economic strategy



ATUL SEHGAL

Achieving the ambitious goal of becoming a developed nation by 2047 demands a decisive overhaul of current economic policies



The world is undergoing rapid political changes. With these geopolitical changes underway, it becomes imperative to relook at the current strategy for economic development to meet the declared target of achieving a developed nation status by 2047. It becomes necessary to realign and readjust the policy points with the changing circumstances. Countries become rich by producing and selling globally valuable and value-added products. India's share in global trade has to grow rapidly from the present mealy 1.8 per cent in goods exports and 2.8 per cent in goods imports. In the service sector too, India needs to enhance its share of delivered services upwards from the present 6 per cent. How will this happen? We need to take quantum measures and hard steps without caring for internal political expediency. Global political scenario may affect the choice of strategic steps but it can have, at best, limited effect if we as a nation are determined, focused and forthright.



THE GOVERNMENT BUCKLED UNDER THE FAKE PROTESTS BY AGRO MARKET MIDDLEMEN MASQUERADING AS FARMERS WHO CREATED A FALSE SHOW OF PROTESTS TO PUT SPOKES IN THE WHEEL OF THE BILLS AND SABOTAGE THEM

Nothing can come in the way if we act united and our government performs its actions without fear or favour. The government's backtracking on the Agriculture and Farm Bills of 2019 was an unfortunate incident. Such incidents should not recur. The government buckled under the fake protests by agro market middlemen masquerading as farmers who created a false show of protests to put spokes in the wheel of the Bills and sabotage them. The government, under fear of burgeoning vandalism by anti-national elements to prevent the promulgation of Bills, backed by foreign enemy countries capitulated and rolled back the Bills. This should not have happened. The country paid a heavy price for this as agriculture is still the mainstay of India's economy. If only those important Bills had been passed, we would have witnessed an economic growth rate increase of at least 2 per cent over the existing. Let our government bring back those Bills at the earliest appropriate time to provide a vital booster to our economy. The other important area

that needs the urgent attention of the government is the MSME sector which continues to lie stagnant. This sector is the prime driver of employment growth and needs steps to facilitate the establishment of new units and expansion of the existing ones. These steps are—bureaucratic reforms to cut red tape and reduce unnecessary regulatory compliances that engender corruption and impede growth. To boost Indigenous manufacturing and increase the share of manufacturing in the national GDP from 16 per cent (almost stagnant since 2015) to upwards of 20 per cent, rebooting the entire Make in India program is needed. The blueprint of this otherwise visionary plan was, alas, not implemented seriously.

Too much dependence on foreign capital and FDI was never forthcoming and efforts should have been made to utilise domestic capital. The central sector and state sector Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs) should have taken the initiative in enhancing domestic manufacturing. Also, Make in India should have emphasised Make by India. Bureaucratic reforms, an increase in domestic manufacturing especially by PSUs by increasing import tariffs and further increasing fiscal concessions are some of the steps needed. Good work has been done in the area of defence and space in this context by encouraging and promoting startups.

This should be extended to other sectors of the economy. Value-added manufacturing in agriculture, food, healthcare and education will go a long way in boosting indigenous manufacturing and even exports. It is quite a pity that in spite of the wonderful success of the BJP government in the cleanup of the Banks, its benefit has not percolated to domestic manufacturing. Why out of the

100 smart cities conceived in 2014, only about 20 have seen the light of the day and that too partially? The establishment of special economic zones and specialised product production zones was blueprinted but its implementation has also got stuck in the legislative and bureaucratic quagmires. Bureaucratic reforms, I reiterate, are an emergent necessity. Large imports from China over the last ten years have indeed prevented the growth of MSMEs in the country. Many pre-existing factories faced closure and many manufacturers turned traders. India's exports to China in 2023-24 were USD 16.65 billion, while imports stood at USD 101.75 billion, leaving a trade deficit of more than USD 85 billion. Efforts were made by the ruling NDA government to contain Chinese imports. But most of the curtailment took place in lower-end consumer goods and less dent could be made in import of industrial goods. Irrespective of government policy, if our countrymen had decided to boycott Chinese goods that can be produced in India, we would have made a huge dent in Chinese imports and facilitated the growth of the domestic manufacturing industry. But this did not happen. The land acquisition Amendment Bill was presented in Parliament on 10 March 2015 but could not be passed due to opposition by non-BJP lawmakers in the Rajya Sabha where the ruling NDA lacked a clear majority in numbers. The opposition party MPs called the proposed amendments anti-farmer and anti-poor. The proposed amendments sought to remove requirements for approval from farmers to proceed with land acquisition under five broad categories of projects. Its passage continues to hang fire. It is the foundational base of the Make in India program. When will it be

passed? Political expediency has been truly the bane of our country and the main impediment to our fast-track economic progress. In the above context, it would be appropriate to mention that strongly nationalistic citizens can collectively create conditions conducive to the growth of the domestic industry. The economic resurgence of Germany and Japan post World War 2 are case in point. Though the USA lent economic support to these countries, their citizens were patriotically driven to establish their domestic manufacturing base and the countries developed into major industrial and economic powers in a period of barely two decades following their defeat and total devastation in 1945, the end year of the war. Both these countries lay stress on manufacturing, innovation and technology development. Their emphasis was on production and value-added exports. A similar strategy is needed. India has been the world's major economic power for millennia and in keeping with its inherent potential; it is capable of a long-term economic growth rate of 12 per cent. For this to happen, the aforesaid steps brook no delay. In the destiny of nations, there are some phases when it becomes necessary to take bold steps in line with progressive principles of economic development rather than get bogged down by over-strategising and political expediency. Our revered political and economic scholar Chanakya had stated that Dharma (righteousness) should take precedence over everything else in governance and even strategy should be aligned with universal divine Dharma. We need to proceed further in our economic journey accordingly.

(The author is a management consultant based in New Delhi; views are personal)

Reaping our demographic dividend: Can skilling be the secret sauce?

With coordinated action, innovative strategies and a commitment to scalable skill development, India can emerge as a global economic and workforce leader

With a staggering 1.44 billion people 68 per cent of them between the ages of 15 and 64, India stands to gain from an immense, globally unmatched, demographic dividend that presents an unprecedented opportunity for economic growth amidst global challenges of declining birth rates and labour shortages. The vast labour force positions India to realise the government's vision of becoming the world's third-largest economy and the skills capital of the world. This, coupled with the global shift towards diversifying talent supply chains – particularly to countries like India – can significantly enhance our geopolitical standing. East Asia offers compelling evidence of



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reaping the demographic dividend. UNFPA reported that Korea saw its per-capita gross domestic product grow about 2,200 per cent between 1950 and 2008, and Thailand's GDP grew 970 per cent. The pressing question now is whether India can fully capitalise on this demographic dividend, and can the skills ecosystem be the key to unlocking this potential. The

Challenge Effectively leveraging the demographic dividend requires addressing several critical challenges. The primary challenge is the need to create sufficient job opportunities to absorb the increasing number of young people entering the workforce.

Another key challenge is to bridge the 'skills gap' – the discrepancy between the skills that job seekers possess and the skills that employers require, thereby creating opportunities for meaningful employment. This must be achieved on a large scale as the country is already home to 103 million youth categorised as NEET (not in education, employment or training) and millions of youth enter working age annually. Crafting Scalable Solutions To leverage India's demograph-

ic dividend effectively, scalable solutions for skill development are imperative. This involves creating an ecosystem – support large-scale skill enhancement initiatives. Firstly, systemic change cannot occur in isolation; therefore, it is vital for government bodies and private companies to collaborate and pool resources, expertise and funding. Therefore, fostering public-private partnerships (PPPs) is essential for expanding skill development initiatives. It is important to align training programs with market demands, focus on outcome-based skilling, leverage technology and design effective, replicable, and adaptable programs. This collaboration can significantly contribute to cre-



ating a more resilient and practical skill development ecosystem. Several initiatives in the realm of skill development highlight the transformative impact of targeted training and strategic partnerships. One such initiative is Project AMBER, a unique public-private partnership (PPP) where each stakeholder—government, training partners, and the pri-

private sector (philanthropy)—contributes to the model. This initiative aims to enhance overall employment and retention outcomes by prioritising the quality of training, mentoring, and retention. Such initiatives not only help achieve success at an individual level but also lay the groundwork for broader systemic changes that can redefine the impact of the skilling ecosystem. Secondly, aligning skilling programs with market demand is crucial. Collaborating with businesses provides valuable input on course content which ensures that learners are trained on skill sets that are relevant for the industry. Employer feedback mechanisms enable continuous adjustments to training programs, which are in sync with

industry requirements. This approach addresses the skills gap by equipping learners with relevant skills, helping them adapt effectively to the workplace. Ultimately, this strategy offers a solution to talent scarcity and unemployment by bridging the gap between workforce skills and market demands. To ensure training programmes remain dynamic, it's important to integrate data-driven insights to evaluate the progress of the trainees. Thirdly, focusing on outcome-based skilling is essential as it prioritises employment and retention rather than just training. Outcome-based skilling is an approach to training that focuses on achieving specific, measurable outcomes rather than merely completing a set

curriculum or an instructional programme. Finally, with the right use of technology, we can design skill development programmes that are both effective and scalable and create significant impact. Technology can greatly expand the reach and accessibility of these programmes through online learning platforms, virtual classrooms, and mobile-friendly resources, even in remote areas. At the same time, standardised models like 'train-the-trainer' programmes ensure that rapid expansion does not come at the cost of quality, maintaining consistency across different regions. *(The writer is CEO, Generation India Foundation with inputs from Sourabh Anand, views are personal)*

US goalkeeper Alyssa Naehler retires from international soccer

AP ■ WASHINGTON

US women's national team goalkeeper Alyssa Naehler, known for her unflappable demeanor in the face of pressure, is retiring from international soccer. Naehler was on the team's roster for a pair of upcoming matches in Europe but those games will be her last after a full 11 years playing for the United States. Naehler was the starting goalkeeper for the U.S. Team that won the Women's World Cup in 2019 and the gold medal at this year's Olympics in France. She's the only U.S. Goalkeeper to earn a shutout in both a World Cup and an Olympic final. She made a key one-handed save in stoppage time to preserve the Americans' 1-0 victory over Brazil in the

Olympic final. Mallory Swanson, who scored the only goal, ran down the length of the field to embrace Naehler at the final whistle. Naehler announced her retirement on social media Monday. "Every tear shed in the challenging times and disappointments made every smile and celebration in the moments of success that much more joyful. This has been a special team to be a part of and I am beyond proud of what we have achieved both on and off the field," she wrote. "The memories I have made over the years will last me a lifetime." Naehler has been known throughout her career for her calm and steady leadership. She is one of just three goalkeepers to make more than 100 appearances for the



United States. Naehler made her debut with the national team in 2014 and was a backup to Hope Solo at the 2015 World Cup, which the United States won. She became the team's regular starter following the 2016 Rio de Janeiro Olympics and was on the squad that repeated as World Cup winners in 2019. For her career, Naehler has appeared 113 games with 110 starts, 88 wins and 68 shutouts. She had four shutouts over the course of the Olympic tournament in France. In all, she was on the U.S. Roster for three World Cups and three Olympic teams. The 36-year-old has also played for the Chicago Red Stars in the National Women's Soccer League since 2016. She plans to play for Chicago next season.

The United States is headed to Europe for a match against England at Wembley Stadium on Saturday and on Dec. 3 against Netherlands in The Hague. In addition to her save at the Olympics, Naehler has had many other memorable moments. In the 2019 Women's World Cup semifinals against England, she stopped Steph Houghton's penalty kick in the 83rd minute. The Americans won 2-1 before downing the Netherlands 2-0 in the final. Earlier this year in the semifinals of the CONCACAF Women's Gold Cup, Naehler made three saves during a penalty shootout with Canada and also converted a penalty kick herself — tucking the ball neatly into the corner of the net.



ISL: Mohammedan SC hunt for maiden home win against upbeat Bengaluru FC

PTI ■ KOLKATA

Mohammedan SC will be desperate to register their maiden home win of the season when they host Bengaluru FC in the Indian Super League here on Wednesday. The 12th-placed MSC, competing in their debut ISL season, has suffered three defeats in their previous five matches, along with a success and a draw each. On the other hand, BFC has been on a solid ride this season, winning five games and drawing twice. They have collected 17 points from eight contests and sit second in the standings. Bengaluru is in a close battle with table leaders and defending champions Mohun Bagan Super Giant, who also possesses a similar tally — 17 points from eight fixtures. While The Blues look like the favourite for this tie, the Black Panthers, coming off a goalless draw to city rival East Bengal FC, would want to ride that momentum and go a step further to eventually triumph in a home outing. No side to date has failed to grab a win in its five home meetings, a record that

Andrey Chernyshov and co will be desperate to avoid. The only consolation they can attain is that Bengaluru's only loss this season came in an away match — versus FC Goa. MSC tend to take some time to settle into the proceedings, having conceded four goals in the opening 15 minutes of the contests this ISL — the highest by any side this season. The hosts will have to hold their ground early, especially since BFC has also scored on four occasions in this phase of the ongoing campaign. Meanwhile, success in this fixture will mark only the second time The Blues would bag 20-plus points after their opening nine engagements in an ISL season (23 points in 2018-19). They have performed as a cohesive unit under Gerard Zaragoza this season, netting 13 goals and conceding just six, thus maintaining a sufficient stronghold over most clashes. Also, Bengaluru has drawn and lost twice in its previous five outings while facing a side for the first time in the event. With this being the maiden

encounter between the two in the tournament, The Blues will be hoping to change that record with a victory here. Ahead of the meeting, MSC head coach Chernyshov heralded BFC and its dominant style of play this season. "We will play against one of the best teams at the moment. They are very strong and have started the season perfectly. Their style of football makes them one of the best teams in the ISL," Chernyshov said. Zaragoza, meanwhile, highlighted his players' hard work on their technical and tactical movements, especially during the international break. "The break was good. We prefer playing matches but breaks help us look at things technically and tactically. The good thing is that we had the whole squad training with us this week," Zaragoza noted. Bengaluru's Sunil Chhetri holds an impeccable record of netting against each of the 14 sides he has faced in the competition. Scoring versus the Black Panthers will make him the first player in the ISL's history to do so against 15 different opponents.

Tiger Woods to skip his holiday tournament in the Bahamas

AP ■ WASHINGTON

Tiger Woods won't be playing in the Bahamas next week at the Hero World Challenge as he recovers from a sixth back surgery he had in September. In announcing Monday on social media he won't be playing, Woods said the 20-man field for his holiday tournament will be filled out by Justin Thomas, Nick Dunlap and Jason Day. Scottie Scheffler is the defending champion. Woods was unlikely to play in the Bahamas since disclosing Sept. 13 he had yet another surgery on his lower back — his sixth in 10 years — that he hoped would relieve some of the spasms he had experienced this year. He described it as a microdecompression



surgery of the lumbar spine for nerve impingement, and the recovery time typically is eight to 12 weeks. Woods said while he was disappointed not to play, he looked forward to his role as the tournament host. Woods finished 18th in the 20-man field a year ago. Thomas is a two-time PGA champion whose wife gave

birth to their first child a week ago, a daughter they named Molly Grace. He has played only once since the Tour Championship. The newcomer to the unofficial event — its gets world ranking points but not official money — is Dunlap, who won a PGA Tour event as an amateur, left Alabama to turn pro and picked up a

Iceland coach Áge Hareide resigns ahead of 2026 World Cup qualifying

AP ■ REYKJAVIK (ICELAND)

Veteran coach Áge Hareide has resigned from the Iceland national team ahead of the start of World Cup qualifying, and said he plans to retire. The Icelandic soccer federation announced the 71-year-old Hareide's decision to leave in a statement late Monday. "I have enjoyed my time with the Icelandic national team, but I believe that now is the right time to retire," Hareide was quoted as saying in the federation statement. He added that there are "exciting times ahead" for a team with emerging young leaders. The next coach's first games are against Kosovo in March in a promotion-relegation playoff in the Nations League where the winner advances to the second tier in the next edition of the tournament. Iceland will be in the pot of third-seeded teams when FIFA makes the draw for World Cup qualifying groups for Europe on December 13. Only group winners advance directly to the 2026 tournament being co-hosted by the United States, Canada and Mexico. Iceland has played at one World Cup, in 2018 in Russia, becoming the smallest nation ever to qualify. An international defender for Norway, Hareide coached the Norwegian national team for five years through 2008. He later took Denmark to the 2018 World Cup — losing to eventual finalist Croatia in a penalty shootout in the round of 16 — and helped it qualify for the European Championship played in 2021. Hareide joined Iceland for the Euro 2024 qualifying program and the team was one game from the tournament, losing a playoff final against Ukraine in March.

West Ham surprise Newcastle with 2-0 away win at St James' Park

AP ■ NEWCASTLE

Newcastle's winning run in the English Premier League came to an abrupt end when goals from Thomas Soucek and Aaron Wan-Bissaka gave West Ham a surprise 2-0 win at St. James' Park. The Hammers rose into 14th place and the pressure on coach Julen Lopetegui was eased. The London club has been inconsistent all season and Monday's win was just its fourth in 12 league games. West Ham was worth it in the end but the three points came courtesy of slack defending by the home side. Emerson whipped in an out-swinging corner after 10 minutes and, with Newcastle defenders rooted to the spot, Soucek stole in to nod home the opener. Then eight minutes into the second half, captain Jarrod Bowen found Wan-Bissaka in the penalty box and he was left unchallenged and had time to fire an angled drive past Nick Pope. "The second goal... If you settle on a



lead it can come back to haunt you," Bowen said. Newcastle brought on Harvey Barnes, and then Callum Wilson returned from a long-term back injury to make his first appearance of the season, but to no avail. "I said we needed a performance and we did that," Bowen said. "Newcastle

always score at home so to keep them to a clean sheet and score twice... It's a tough place to come to. We did that perfectly." The defeat ended a three-game winning streak for Newcastle and left the Saudi Arabia-owned club in ninth place, four points outside the top four.

F1 expands grid to add General Motors' Cadillac brand, new American team for 2026 season

AP ■ LAS VEGAS

Formula 1 at last said it will expand its grid in 2026 to make room for an American team that is partnered with General Motors. "As the pinnacle of motorsports, F1 demands boundary-pushing innovation and excellence. It's an honor for General Motors and Cadillac to join the world's premier racing series, and we're committed to competing with passion and integrity to elevate the sport for race fans around the world," GM President Mark Reuss said. "This is a global stage for us to demonstrate GM's engineering expertise and technology leadership at an entirely new level." The approval ends years of wrangling that launched a U.S. Justice Department investigation into why Colorado-based Liberty Media, the commercial rights holder of F1, would not approve the team initially started by Michael Andretti.

Walter. The team will use Ferrari engines its first two years until GM has a Cadillac engine built for competition in time for the 2028 season. Towriss is the CEO and president of Group 1001 and entered motorsports via Andretti's IndyCar team when he signed on financial savings platform Gainbridge as a sponsor. Towriss is now a major part of the motorsports scene with ownership stakes in both Spire Motorsports' NASCAR team and Wayne Taylor Racing's sports car team. Walter is the chief executive of financial services firm Guggenheim Partners and the controlling owner of both the World Series champion Los Angeles Dodgers and Premier League club Chelsea. "We're excited to partner with General Motors in bringing a dynamic presence to Formula 1," Towriss said. "Together, we're assembling a world-class team that will embody American innovation and deliver unforgettable moments to race fans around the world." Michael Andretti, the 1978 F1 world champion, will have an



ambassador role with Cadillac F1. But his son, Michael, will have no official position with the organization now that he has scaled back his involvement with Andretti Global. "The Cadillac F1 Team is made up of a strong group of people that have worked tirelessly to build an American works team," Michael

Andretti posted on social media. "I'm very proud of the hard work they have put in and congratulate all involved on this momentous next step. I will be cheering for you!" The approval has been in works for weeks but was held until after last weekend's Las Vegas Grand Prix to not overshadow the showcase

event of the Liberty Media portfolio. Max Verstappen won his fourth consecutive championship in Saturday night's race, the third and final stop in the United States for the top motorsports series in the world. Grid expansion in F1 is both infrequent and often unsuccessful. Four teams were granted entries in

2010 that should have pushed the grid to 13 teams and 26 cars for the first time since 1995. One team never made it to the grid and the other three had vanished by 2017. There is only one American team on the current F1 grid — owned by California businessman Gene Haas — but it is not particularly competitive and does not field American drivers. Andretti's dream was to field a truly American team with American drivers. The fight to add this team has been going on for three-plus years and F1 initially denied the application despite approval from F1 sanctioning body FIA. The existing 10 teams, who have no voice in the matter, also largely opposed expansion because of the dilution in prize money and the billions of dollars they've already invested in the series. Andretti in 2020 tried and failed to buy the existing Sauber team. From there, he applied for grid expansion and partnered with GM, the top-selling manufacturer in the United States. The inclusion of GM was championed by the FIA and president Mohammed Ben Sulayem, who said Michael

Andretti's application was the only one of seven applicants to meet all the required criteria to expand F1's current grid. "General Motors is a huge global brand and powerhouse in the OEM world and is working with impressive partners," Ben Sulayem said Monday. "I am fully supportive of the efforts made by the FIA, Formula 1, GM and the team to maintain dialogue and work towards this outcome of an agreement in principle to progress this application." Despite the FIA's acceptance of Andretti and General Motors from the start, F1 wasn't interested in Andretti — but did want GM. At one point, F1 asked GM to find another team to partner with besides Andretti. GM refused and F1 said it would revisit the Andretti application if and when Cadillac had an engine ready to compete. "Formula 1 has maintained a dialogue with General Motors, and its partners at TWG Global, regarding the viability of an entry following the commercial assessment and decision made by Formula 1 in January 2024," F1 said in a statement.

