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INSIDE

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



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Polls on platter, all eyes on Wayanad



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

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

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI/RANCHI/WAYANAD

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

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ED raids multiple locations in Jharkhand, WB

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ RANCHI

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

Overaged vehicles choking NCR

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

RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

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



Photo: Ranjan Dimri/Pioneer

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

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

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



Canada temple cancels event amid protest threats

PTI ■ OTTAWA

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

Bodies of two Meitei men recovered

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ IMPHAL

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



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

New entrance exam series in January

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

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



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

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

Retail inflation rises to 6.21 per cent

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

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



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

Band, baaja, baraat and... traffic jams

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

SAUMYA SHUKLA ■ NEW DELHI

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

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



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

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

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

Voting to start at 7 am, 1,913 polling stations for 18,73,589 voters

PNS : JAMSHEDPUR

The stage is set for the first phase of Assembly Election 2024, with voting set to commence at 7:00 AM on Wednesday. Polling parties were dispatched today from two central dispatch centers under the careful supervision of District Election Officer Ananya Mittal and Senior Superintendent of Police Kishore Kaushal.



Polling parties assigned to the Baharagora, Ghatshila, and Potka constituencies assembled at LBSM College, while those responsible for Jugsalai, Jamshedpur East, and Jamshedpur West received their assignments from Jamshedpur Cooperative College. These polling teams were provided with all necessary electoral materials, including Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs), Voter Verifiable Paper Audit Trails (VVPATs), control units, and essential forms, and dispatched to their respective polling stations across the district.

Election Officer Mittal stressed the district administration's commitment to upholding electoral integrity, free from any external influence or intimidation. "Our focus is on delivering a free, transparent, and seamless voting process, enabling every eligible voter to cast their vote without fear," he said.

The District Election Officer, alongside sector officers and police officials, conducted a joint briefing for the polling personnel, detailing critical aspects of election conduct, safety protocols, and procedures for emergency

decision-making. Teams were instructed to maintain close coordination and adhere to established protocols to ensure smooth voting. Instructions emphasized that any issues encountered at polling stations should be promptly communicated to higher authorities, underscoring a proactive approach to problem-solving.

Security measures are also in place to safeguard the polling locations, with law enforcement and election officials working together to provide a safe environment. Sector Police Officers are sta-

tioned to assist with any law-and-order concerns and are prepared to respond swiftly to unforeseen events.

12 alternative photo documents can be used for voting

JAMSHEDPUR : In the Assembly elections, voters in East Singhbhum district will have flexibility in providing identification at polling stations. While the voter photo identity card (EPIC) remains the primary identification required, voters who are unable to present their EPIC can still cast their votes by showing one of twelve alternative photo

documents. The Election Commission has confirmed that any of the following alternative photo IDs will be accepted: a passport, driving license, photo service identity card issued by state or central government public sector undertakings or public limited companies to employees, photo passbook from a bank or post office, PAN

card, National Population Register (NPR) card, MNREGA job card, health insurance smart card (issued by the Ministry of Labor), photo pension document, Aadhaar card, identity card issued to Members of Parliament (MP), Members of Legislative Assembly (MLA), councilors, and the unique disability identity card (UDID).

Jamshedpur East, and Jamshedpur West—exercise their voting rights.

At both dispatch centers, comprehensive arrangements were made to ensure polling teams had easy access to voting materials, such as EVMs, forms, and all essential supplies. By providing polling personnel with adequate facilities, the district administration aimed to prevent any logistical issues, supporting a seamless handover of materials and equipment. Authorities also ensured the teams' timely departure to polling stations, affirming

their commitment to a smooth electoral process.

Polling workers displayed palpable enthusiasm and dedication as they prepared to depart for their stations. For many, participating in the electoral process was a source of pride and honor. One polling official shared, "Being part of this election is incredibly meaningful. We are excited to facilitate this great festival of democracy and ensure that every vote counts. Now, we look forward to seeing the people of our district come out in record numbers to cast their votes."

Candidates make last-minute push to win voters

PNS : JAMSHEDPUR

With just a few hours left before the first phase of the Assembly election, the relentless sounds of campaign speakers that filled Jamshedpur for the past weeks finally went silent as the official campaign period came to an end.



Candidates across the district seized every final moment to connect with voters and make their cases heard, each hoping their efforts would resonate on Election Day.

For Congress candidate Dr. Ajoy Kumar, the quieter day offered a chance to reconnect with the community in a more personal way. Early Tuesday morning, Dr. Ajoy caught up on the headlines, something he hadn't had time for during the campaign's intense pace. Then, in a gesture of relatability, he took his motorbike and set off for Telco, where he spent time with locals at a tea stall. Over a simple cup of tea, he listened to residents' thoughts, engaged in casual discussions, and walked through Telco Colony, greeting familiar faces and enjoying moments with the people he hoped to represent.

Upon returning home, Dr. Ajoy met with campaign workers who had come by to strategize and share their hopes for the final stretch. Many local residents also stopped by to show their support, with several congratulating him in advance, confident in his chances of winning.

Compared to the high-energy days of the campaign, Dr. Ajoy's day was calm and grounded, a reminder of his commitment to staying connected with the community even after the campaign fervor. For Jamshedpur's residents, the quiet day marked the end of campaign noise and the beginning of anticipation as they prepared to

head to the polls. Jamshedpur West Congress candidate Banna Gupta met with party workers and attended a few private events. "I have been following a strict routine ever since the campaigning started. I used to leave home early and return late in the evening. Today I am enjoying the much-needed break," said Gupta.

Saryu Roy, who is contesting from Jamshedpur West, took time off to know what has come out in newspapers. "Saryuji rises early. He took a little rest today and also read newspapers. Also spoke to us about polling day," an aide said. He met his confidantes to discuss polling.

Biranchi promises airport in Bokaro within 100 days of BJP Govt

PNS : BOKARO

BJP candidate and sitting MLA, Biranchi Narayan, has promised that if the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) comes to power in Jharkhand, Bokaro will have air connectivity within 100 days. Narayan made this statement while engaging in a door-to-door outreach campaign in various villages,

urging people to vote for the BJP on November 20.

During the public interaction, Narayan highlighted the commitment of BJP to accelerate development projects in the region. He mentioned Prime Minister Narendra Modi's address at the Vijay Sankalp Sabha in Chandipur, where PM Modi discussed several infrastructure initiatives for Bokaro,

including plans for an ONGC plant, a new railway station, a town hall, and a medical college.

Narayan took the opportunity to criticize the current administration, pointing out a widespread sentiment of disappointment and frustration among the people due to what he labeled as unfulfilled promises by state government.

Inauguration of Upgraded Crèche at BSL's Ispat Bhavan

R SHARMA : BOKARO

Female employees of Bokaro Steel Limited (BSL) can now access enhanced facilities at the crèche, "Kilkari," located in BSL's Ispat Bhavan. The revamped crèche was inaugurated on November 12 by BSL's Director-in-Charge, Birendra Kumar Tiwari, in a ceremony attended by key executives, including Executive Director (Projects) C.R. Mahapatra, Executive Director (Finance & Accounts) Suresh Rangani, Executive Director (HR) Rajan Prasad, Executive Director (Mines) Jaydeep Dasgupta, and other senior officials, as well as female employees of BSL.



children. The crèche offers live-streaming for parents to monitor their children and prioritizes security measures. The facility also includes recreational and fun activities to ensure children have a stimulating environment, while the crèche building and premises have been attractively decorated.

This crèche is available to BSL's female employees with children aged six months to six years and will operate from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. on working days, Monday to Saturday. Interested employees can apply for enrollment under circular BSL/PERS/RR-39/2015-385, dated March 14, 2015.

UP CM Yogi Adityanath to hold rally in Bokaro on Nov 14

PNS : BOKARO

NDA candidate Biranchi Narayan, intensified door-to-door engagements in Bokaro constituency areas, including Chas Block's Chora, Bhanga Bazaar, Madhu Tand, Bagdega, and many more. Narayan encouraged residents to vote for BJP in the upcoming election on November 20.

During the campaign, Narayan highlighted that Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath would address a mass gathering at Pustakalaya Maidan in Sector 5, Bokaro, on November 14. He urged residents to attend the rally and listen to Yogi Adityanath's message.

Expressing frustration with the state government, Narayan criticized it for alleged broken promises, corruption, and mismanagement, claiming that widespread public dissatisfaction has set in.

Narayan assured Bokaro's residents that a BJP government would revive stalled public projects and provide essential rights and services to the people, fostering growth and development. He also emphasized his decade-long commitment to fulfilling the promises made to constituents and pledged to continue working tirelessly for their welfare.



Lohardaga ready for safe and peaceful voting: DC

VINOD PRASAD : LOHARDAGA

District Election Officer-cum-Deputy Commissioner Dr. Waghmare Prasad Krishna said that the district administration is fully prepared for peaceful and safe voting. On Tuesday, all the polling parties have been sent safely to conduct the voting. Voting will be held in 48 booths of 72-Lohardaga (ST) assembly constituency from 7 am to 4 pm and in 276 polling stations from 7 am to 5 pm. 69- Voting will be held in 83 polling stations of Bishunpur (Ansh) from 7 am to 5 pm and in 21 polling stations from 7 am to 4 pm. 72- A total of 1331 officials including 324 presiding officers, 324 first polling officers, 359 second polling officers and 324 third polling officers will conduct the voting for all 324 booths of Lohardaga (ST) assembly constituency. There are 260 reserves. The Deputy Commissioner said that all Block Development Officers/Zonal Officers have been instructed to provide necessary facilities at the polling centers in their areas. Arrangements for accommodation, drinking water, electricity and toilets at polling stations/clusters have been made by the concerned AERO/BDO/CO.

FORMAT C-2							
(For political party to publish in website, newspapers tv)							
Declaration about criminal Antecedents of candidates set up by the party							
(As per the judgement dated 25th September, 2018 of Hon'ble Supreme Court in WP (Civil) No, 536 of 2011 (Public Interest Foundation & Ors. Vs. Union of India & Anr.)							
Name of Political Party : JHARKHAND MUKTI MORCHA							
Name of Election : LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF JHARKHAND STATE, 2024							
Name of State: JHARKHAND							
Sl. No.	Name of Constituency	Name of Candidate	(A) Pending criminal cases		(A) Details of about cases conviction for criminal offences		
	03 BARHAIT (ST)	HEMANT SOREN	Name of the court, Case No. & status of the case(s)	Section of the Acts Concerned & brief description of offence(s)	Name of court & date(s) of order(s)	Description of offence (s) & punishment imposed	Maximum punishment imposed
1.			Smt. Supriya Rani Tigga, Jamshedpur, Adityapur P.S. Case No.- 418/2014, corresponding to G.R. Case No.- 858/2021, Charge sheet filed; charge framed on 08.07.2019. The Hon'ble High Court stayed the trial by the order dated 09.01.2024 passed in W.P. (Cr.) No.- 805/2023	Offence u/s 188, 171F of I.P.C. and 25 Representation Act.	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable
2.			Yogesh Kumar AJC cum Special Judge P.M.L.A. Ranchi, ECIR 6/2023 arising out of ECIR RNZO/25/2023, Charge sheet not filed	Section 3 PML Act.	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable
3.			Sri Sarthak Sharma Special Judge MP/MLA Court, Ranchi. MP/MLA Case No.-02/2024 rising out of Complain No.- 3952/2024. Cognizance has taken	Under Section 174 I.P.C.	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable
4.			Sri D.N. Shukla Judicial Magistrate, 1 st Class, Ranchi, Sadar (Ranchi) P.S. Case No.- 272/2023 Charge sheet not filed.	Under section 465, 466, 467, 468, 469, 471, 420, 379, 474 of I.P.C.	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable
5.			Hon'ble Lokpal of Indian, New Delhi, Complain Case No.-38/2020, Not registered The Hon'ble Lokpal of Indian, New Delhi directed the D.S.P.E./C.B.I. to investigate the respect of matter under section 20(3)(a) of the Lokpal and Lokayukt Act 2013.	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable



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PAPER WITH PASSION

Deliver tangible results

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

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



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

PICTALK



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

Domestic tensions add to Oli's predicament



ASHOK K MEHTA

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

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

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



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



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

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

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

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

CHADRACHUD'S IMPACTFUL TENURE

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

PRIORITISE MENTAL WELLBEING

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

A boost to women entrepreneurs



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

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

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

SMOKING BAN

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

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

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

Organic farming: Cultivating a climate-conscious future

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

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



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



RACHNA LAKHPATRI



FIRST COLUMN

BLESSINGS OVER BILLIONS

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



RAJYOGI BRAHMA KUMAR NIKUNJ JI

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



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

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

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

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



CHAITANYA K PRASAD

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



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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



MANOJ RAGHUVANSHI

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

Trump taps Rubio as Secretary of State

US President-elect Donald Trump has tapped Florida Senator Marco Rubio as his Secretary of State and Congressman Mike Waltz as his National Security Advisor. Rubio, 53, is considered to be a friend of India and has been an advocate of the India-US relationship, while Waltz, 50, is an old-India hand and has been co-chair of the Congressional Caucus for India and Indian Americans for years.

ly in Latin America, as he represents the United States with dignity and courage! Florida Senator Rick Scott said. Scott is seeking to be the Senate Majority Leader, which is currently being held by Democratic Senator Chuck Schumer. "I am thrilled that President Trump has chosen Rep. Mike Waltz to serve as his National Security Adviser. There is no one more capable or qualified for this crucial role," said Congressman Mike Rogers, Chairman of the House Armed Services Committee, "As a Green Beret, Rep. Waltz bravely fought to defend our nation. As a leader on the House

Developing countries must not leave Baku empty-handed: UN Secretary-General

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres Tuesday urged world leaders to ensure that COP29 must tear down the walls of climate finance, warning that "developing countries must not leave Baku empty-handed". Addressing the opening ceremony of the World Leaders Climate Action Summit at COP29 here, Guterres sought urgent measures to support developing nations, which are bearing the brunt of climate-fuelled catastrophes despite contributing relatively little to global emissions. "The rich cause the problem, the poor pay the highest price," Guterres said, pointing out that developing nations face disproportionate impacts from climate change, such as food insecurity, infrastructure damage, and biodiversity loss. "Developing countries must not leave Baku empty-handed. A deal is a must and I'm confident it will be reached," he said. With 2024 on track to be the hottest year on record, he described climate change as a "masterclass" in destruction, devastating communities and driving up global food and energy prices. In his address, Guterres out-



lined three priorities essential to achieving climate goals, particularly stressing the role of developed nations in ensuring that developing countries have the necessary resources to adapt and transition to cleaner energy. He called for developed countries to lead emissions reductions by providing emerging economies with technology and financial aid to enable climate action. Guterres highlighted the staggering financial gap in adaptation financing, which could reach \$359 billion annually by 2030, and urged developed countries to fulfil promises to double adaptation funding by 2025. "These missing dollars are not abstractions on a balance sheet: they are lives taken, harvests lost, and development denied," he said, advocating for rapid progress in establishing effective finance solutions for vulnerable nations. The UN Secretary-General further advocated a new climate finance structure to ensure developing countries receive

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ADITYA BIRLA CAPITAL. PROTECTING INVESTING FINANCING ADVISING. ADITYA BIRLA FINANCE LIMITED. Registered Office: Indian Rayon Compound, Veraval, Gujarat-362266. Branch Office: 2nd Floor, Vijaya Building, 17, Barakhamba Road, New Delhi-110001. APPEXND IV Rule 8(1) POSSESSION NOTICE (FOR IMMOVABLE PROPERTY). Whereas, the undersigned being the authorized officer of M/S ADITYA BIRLA FINANCE LIMITED under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Asset and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 (S4 of 2002) and in exercise of powers conferred under section 13(12) read with rule 3 of the Security Interest Enforcement Rules, 2002 issued a demand notice Dated 19-06-2024 calling upon the borrower M/s. Empire Furniture Co. Through Proprietor, Mr. Gurpreet Singh Bhatia, M/s. B J Corporation, Through Proprietor, Mrs. Sonia Bhatia, Loan Account No. ABND_LAP0000604092 to repay the amount mentioned in the notice being Rs. 6,56,29,368/- (Rupees Six Crore Fifty Six Lakh Twenty Nine Thousand Three Hundred Sixty Eight Only) as on 14-06-2024 within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said Notice.

KOVALAM INVESTMENT AND TRADING CO. LIMITED. Regd. Office: Premises Oswal Woolen Mills Limited G.T. Road, Shergur, Ludhiana-141003 PB. CIN:L65910PB1981PLC023055. Ph: +91-161-5066605. Website: www.ovmahar.com/kovalam, Email:kovalam@ovmahar.com. Statement of Unaudited Financial Results for the Quarter/Half Year Ended 30/09/2024 (Rs in Lakhs, unless otherwise stated).

NOTICE. Notice is hereby given that the original share certificate bearing No. 510255, 510256, 510257, 718012, 718013 & 718014 of 150 shares with Folio No: ESC0130639 of ESCORTS KUBOTA LIMITED. Standing in the name of Pravinaben Vinubhai Patel & Vinubhai Vithalbai Patel have been lost or misplaced and undersigned have applied to company to issue duplicate certificates in lieu thereof. Any person who has a claim in respect of said shares should lodge such claim with company at its Administrative Office at ESCORTS KUBOTA LIMITED Company Address : 15/5, Mathura Road, Faridabad, Haryana - 121001 within 21 days from this date, else the company will proceed to issue duplicate share certificate.

MANIBHAVNAM HOME FINANCE INDIA PRIVATE LIMITED. REGISTERED OFFICE:- Farm No. 10, Tropical Drive, Ghitorni, M.G Road, New Delhi - 110030. Mob-9310100001. Email: customercare@manibhavnam.com. PUBLIC NOTICE. This is to inform the public in general, and the customers in particular, that the management of the Company has decided to close the following branch:

Table with 4 columns: Sr. No., Particulars, Quarter Ended (30.09.2024, 30.06.2024, 30.09.2023), Half Year Ended (30.09.2024, 30.09.2023), Year Ended (31.03.2024, 31.03.2023). Rows include Total Income from operations, Net Profit/Loss for the period, Total Comprehensive Income/Loss, Equity share capital, Reserves, Earnings per share.

Table with 5 columns: Sr. No., Particulars, 6 Months Ended on (30.09.2024, 30.09.2023, 31.03.2024, 31.03.2023), Year Ended (31.03.2024, 31.03.2023). Rows include Total Income from Operations, Net Profit/Loss for the period, Total Comprehensive Income for the period, Equity Share Capital, Reserves, Earning per Share.

Emaar India Limited. Regd. Office: 306-308, Square One, C-2, District Centre, Saket, New Delhi - 110017. CIN - U45201DL200PLC133161. Email ID - bharat.garg@emaar.ae Website - www.in.emaar.com. STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL RESULTS FOR THE HALF YEAR ENDED SEPTEMBER 30, 2024 (Rs. in million).

ROTOGRAPHICS (INDIA) LIMITED. Regd. Off.: Unit No 8, Ground Floor, Pocket M, Sarita Vihar, New Delhi 110076. Telephone: 011-47366800. E-mail: info@rotoidia.com in Website: www.rotoidia.com in. Extract of Statement of Standalone Un-audited Financial Result For The Quarter And Half Year Ended 30th September, 2024.

SAR Televature Limited (Formerly SAR Televature Private Limited). Regd. Off.: Plot No. 346 A, 2nd Floor, Udyog Vihar, Phase-4, Gurugram-122016 Haryana. Contact: +91-8587050050, Email: info@sartelevature.com. EXTRACT OF STATEMENT OF STANDALONE UNAUDITED FINANCIAL RESULTS FOR THE HALF YEAR ENDED 30.09.2024.

Amsterdam police warn of fresh unrest a day after rioters torch tram

AP ■ THE HAGUE A senior police officer warned Tuesday of calls for more rioting in Amsterdam, after dozens of people armed with sticks and firecrackers set a tram on fire Monday night as the city faces tensions following violence last week targeting fans of an Israeli soccer club.



In this image taken from video, police officers patrol in riot gear on the streets of Amsterdam as the city is facing tensions following violence last week.

Police noted the tense atmosphere since five people were treated in the hospital and dozens detained Thursday following a Maccabi Tel Aviv-Ajax match. Youths on scooters and on foot went in search of Israeli fans, punching and kicking them and then fleeing to evade

arrested last week would remain in custody while the investigation continues. Two of those are minors, a 16-year old and a 17-year old from Amsterdam. The other two men are from Amsterdam and a nearby city. Police said they have identified over 170 witnesses and have taken forensic evidence from dozens. Prime Minister Dick Schoof said they were also examining videos posted to social media. Schoof was meeting with community leaders Tuesday afternoon to discuss antisemitism.

UK supports India for permanent UNSC seat

PTI ■ LONDON The UK has reiterated its support for permanent membership for India in the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) as part of an expansion of the international panel to ensure it can continue to rise to the pressing challenges faced by the world.

“We continue to support an expansion in both the permanent and non-permanent categories of membership to a total in the mid-twenties. We want to see permanent African representation, and permanent seats for Brazil, Germany, India and Japan,” he said. Reflecting on the 2023 Security Council reform agenda at the UN General Assembly, Britain’s UN representative recalled the perilous and dangerous state of the world at the time and the challenge this posed to the multilateral system.

Haiti’s main airport shuts down as gang violence surges

AP ■ PORT-AU-PRINCE Haiti’s international airport shut down on Monday after gangs opened fire at a commercial flight landing in Port-Au-Prince, prompting some airlines to temporarily suspend operations as the country swore in a new interim prime minister who promised to restore peace.

au-Prince which may include armed violence, and disruptions to roads, ports, and airports.” Spirit, JetBlue and American Airlines said Monday they were cancelling flights to and from Haiti. In other parts of Haiti’s capital, firefights between gangs and police broke out. Rounds of gunfire echoed through the streets as heavily armed officers ducked behind walls and civilians ran in terror.

Mauritius Opposition gets landslide win in polls

AP ■ JOHANNESBURG Mauritius’ opposition coalition has won the country’s election by a landslide, taking all seats in the country’s 21 constituencies. The Alliance for Change coalition’s win will see the return of Navin Ramgoolam as the country’s prime minister.

before all results were announced, saying his Militant Socialist Movement coalition was headed for a huge defeat as it became clear that the opposition was winning in all of the country’s 21 constituencies. The Alliance for Change coalition’s win will see the return of Navin Ramgoolam as the country’s prime minister. He served as prime minister from 1995 to 2000 and again from 2005 to 2014.

सार्वजनिक सूचना
सर्वसामान्य को सूचित किया जाता है कि निचे नाम आकाश कार्ड नं 991010259338 पर सर्वोच्च प्रदाय सर्वोत्तम रूप से...

PUBLIC NOTICE
It is hereby notified for general public that my client, Shri Anshul Goel S/o Chandan Mohan Goel, has severed all his relations with his wife...

THROUGH SLEEPER RENEWAL WORKS
E-Tender Notice No. 88/W-2/APDJ Dated: 06-11-2024. E-Tenders are invited by the undersigned for the following works: Tender No. 39-AP-I-2024.

EXECUTION, USING CONTRACTOR'S PQRS MACHINE
E-Tender Notice No. 98/W-2/APDJ Dated: 08-11-2024. E-Tenders are invited by the undersigned for the following works: Tender No. 45-AP-I-2024.

सार्वजनिक सूचना
सर्वसामान्य को सूचित किया जाता है कि निचे नाम आकाश कार्ड नं 658847853000 पर सर्वोच्च प्रदाय सर्वोत्तम रूप से...

PUBLIC NOTICE
It is to inform to the public at large that Mr. Prem Shankar Mishra had acquired Plot No. 105/B, area measuring 37.5 Sq. yds. out of khasra no. 24/20, situated at Village Dabri, Block C, Dabri Ext. New Delhi vide GPA Dt. 28.01.1983...

DRM (W), Alipurduar Jn. NORTHEAST FRONTIER RAILWAY
DRM (W), Alipurduar Jn. NORTHEAST FRONTIER RAILWAY

DRM (W), Alipurduar Jn. NORTHEAST FRONTIER RAILWAY
DRM (W), Alipurduar Jn. NORTHEAST FRONTIER RAILWAY

PUBLIC NOTICE
General public is hereby informed that I/We SH. DHEERAJ TANDON am/are filing application in L&DO for substitution / mutation of the property no.231 Front side Bharat Nagar, Ashok Vihar, North West Delhi-110052 in the name of late SH.DARSHAN LAL TANDON on the grounds of LEGAL HEIR...

THE PIONEER CLASSIFIEDS
CHANGE OF NAME
I, Manoj Kumar Singla S/o Suresh Chand and F/o Sameer Singla R/o 137/3 Patparganj, Village Ghronda Neem Ka Bangar Delhi-110091, solemnly affirm and declare that Manoj Kumar Singla and Manoj Kumar is one and same person.

FORM NO. NCLT 3A
Advertising Detailing Petition BEFORE THE NATIONAL COMPANY LAW TRIBUNAL BENCH-II NEW DELHI
In the matter of the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code, 2016 And In the Matter of Section 7 of the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code, 2016 read with rule 4 of the insolvency and Bankruptcy Rules, 2016

ENGINEERING WORKS
E-TENDER NOTICE NO. 34 of 2024; Date: 08-11-2024. E-tenders are invited by the undersigned for the following works: Tender No.: DCESTMLG-24-2024.

I, Manoj Kumar Singla S/o Suresh Chand and F/o Sameer Singla R/o 137/3 Patparganj, Village Ghronda Neem Ka Bangar Delhi-110091, solemnly affirm and declare that Manoj Kumar Singla and Manoj Kumar is one and same person.

FORM NO. NCLT 3A
Advertising Detailing Petition BEFORE THE NATIONAL COMPANY LAW TRIBUNAL BENCH-II NEW DELHI
In the matter of the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code, 2016 And In the Matter of Section 7 of the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code, 2016 read with rule 4 of the insolvency and Bankruptcy Rules, 2016

PUBLIC NOTICE table with columns: Sl. No., VILLAGE NAME, Sy. No., EXTENT (in Guntas). Lists land parcels with details for public notice.

ReNew Wind Energy (JAMB) Private Limited financial statement table with columns: Particulars, Quarter ended 30 September 2024, Quarter ended 30 June 2024, Quarter ended 30 September 2023, Half Year ended 30 September 2024, Half Year ended 30 September 2023, Year ended 31 March 2024.

Vistara flies final journey as it merges with Air India

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

After operating for nearly 10 years, full service carrier Vistara flew into the sunset on Tuesday early morning operating its last flight from the national capital to Singapore. Vistara a joint venture between Tata and Singapore Airlines has now merged with Air India, creating an enlarged entity that is now the country's largest international carrier and second-largest domestic carrier.

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

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



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

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

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

Airlines will have a 25.1 per cent stake in the integrated entity, which will operate more than 5,500 weekly flights on local and international routes. A formal announcement about the merger is expected later in the day, as the group has led the consolidation wave in Indian aviation with two major mergers in less than two months. AIX Connect was integrated with Air India Express on October 1 and now the merger of Vistara with Air India. Air India, Vistara and AIX Connect together had a domestic market share of little over 29 per cent in September, as per latest official data. Together, the Air India group has an operational fleet of 298 aircraft around 208 with Air India and about 90 with Air India Express.

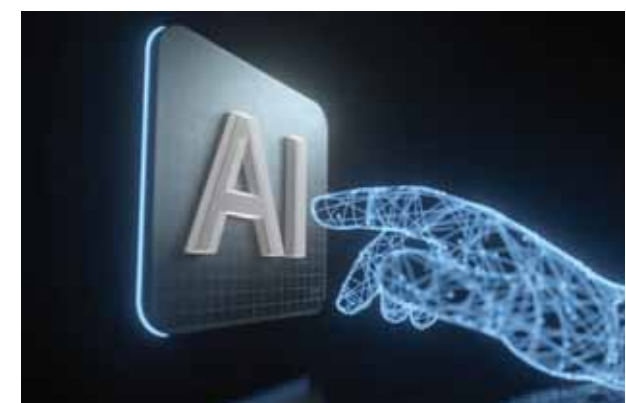
Nirmala Sitharaman to meet state FMs for pre-Budget

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

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

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

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



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

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Spotlighting a critical vulnerability in the country's cybersecurity landscape, a recent report has said while Indian businesses are actively looking to capitalise on AI and investments are rising, only 39 per cent of them are prepared to survive a prolonged ransomware attack. Cybersecurity firm Sophos on Tuesday unveiled the "Cybersecurity Playbook for Partners in Asia Pacific and Japan", which stressed the urgent need for enhanced security measures as organisations increasingly face sophisticated cyber threats, especially those augmented by artificial intelligence (AI). The findings revealed that while 70 per cent of Indian organisations have implemented cloud security strategies and over half of the respondents surveyed are investing in AI-driven security measures, a significant gap remains in overall preparedness. "Only 49 per cent have established security maturity frameworks and 44 per cent report meeting security standards. Additionally, just 39 per cent feel prepared to withstand a prolonged ransomware attack, underscoring the ongoing need for robust cybersecurity advancements," the report said. While Indian businesses are embracing AI to enhance operations, they also recognise its dual nature both

as an asset and as a potential security risk, it added. The research, conducted in July 2024, surveyed 900 companies across India, Australia, Japan, Malaysia, the Philippines, and Singapore, of which 200 were from India. Commenting on the dual nature of AI in cybersecurity, Sunil Sharma, Vice President of Sales for Sophos in India, said enterprises are taking AI seriously, both as a powerful ally and a potential threat. "The fact that organisations are significantly boosting their cybersecurity budgets is a great sign that the country is committed to protecting its digital infrastructure. The growing investment in key areas such as threat detection, incident recovery, and data protection not only reflects the proactive stance of Indian businesses but also highlights their readiness to tackle the complex challenges posed by AI-driven cyber risks," he said. Further, the survey revealed that only 5 per cent of Indian firms depend on a single security vendor, while 71 per cent utilise three or more to handle their cybersecurity demands. Multi-vendor setups are anticipated to increase as businesses look for specialised, adaptable solutions. The increasing investments in cybersecurity and the preference towards multiple expert vendors present a significant opportunity for MSPs to help enterprises improve their customers' defences with a customised approach, Sharma said.

IndiGo seeks extension of Boeing 777 lease amid rising international demand

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman is working with the civil aviation ministry to explore the possibility of extending the wet lease of wide-body Boeing 777 planes from Turkish Airlines, as the existing lease period is ending this week. Currently, IndiGo is operating two wet-leased Boeing 777 planes for flights from Delhi and Mumbai to Istanbul. These are also the only two wide-body aircraft that are in the fleet of the airline, which is India's largest carrier with a domestic market share of over 62 per cent. These aircraft were wet-leased to cater to the rising demand for international travel from

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



November 14 for the flights from Delhi and Mumbai to Istanbul. From November 15, the airline will be deploying A321 aircraft for operating these flights, according to information available on

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

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

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

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

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

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



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

Rupee closes all-time low against US dollar

PTI ■ MUMBAI

The rupee fell 1 paise to a new lifetime low of 84.39 (provisional) against the US dollar on Tuesday as persistent foreign fund outflows and a strengthening greenback against major crosses overseas dented investor sentiments. Forex traders said the rupee is likely to trade between 83.80 and 84.50 in the medium term, with the Reserve Bank of India likely limiting any significant downside, aided by its robust foreign exchange reserves. At the interbank foreign exchange, the rupee opened at 84.39 against the US dollar. During the session, the local currency touched a high of 84.39 and a low of 84.41. It finally settled at 84.40 (provisional), a decline of just 1 paise against the US currency, registering a loss for the fifth straight session. On Monday, the rupee dropped 1 paise to hit a new lifetime low of 84.38 against the US dollar. In the last five sessions, the local unit has lost 32 paise against the greenback. "The rupee traded weaker as foreign funds continued their selling spree in the Indian market. However, the rupee received some relief from



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

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

Sensex, Nifty slump one per cent



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

SEBI extends deadline for comments on proposed specified digital platform

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Markets regulator Sebi on Tuesday extended the deadline for public comments till November 26 on the proposal concerning requirements for recognition as specified digital platforms (SDPs). Earlier, the comments from the public were sought till November 12. "Based on the representations received by Sebi from some of the entities/organisations, it has been decided to extend the timeline to submit the public comments on the consultation paper till November 26, 2024," the regulator said in a statement. In its consultation paper, Sebi proposed requirements for recognition as specified digital platforms whereby such platforms should proactively prevent fraud, impersonation, unauthorised claims, and unregistered



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

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

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

penalise offenders. On October 22, Sebi provided a three-month window to entities registered with it, and their agents, to terminate their existing contracts with unregistered financial advisors. This was part of Sebi's move to curb unauthorised financial advice and performance claims in the securities market. The rule restrains intermediaries, their agents, or associated persons from having direct or indirect ties with any entity that provides investment advice or recommendations without being registered or permitted by Sebi or makes performance or return-related claims unless specifically authorised by the regulator to do so. However, if these interactions occur through specified digital platforms, they will not be subject to these restrictions.



Industrial output up in September: Government data

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

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

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

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

PTI ■ RAJGIR (BIHAR)

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

PTI ■ LEH (LADAKH)

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

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

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

Till the time the centre is getting completed, the AMF

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

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

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

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

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



AP ■ TURIN (ITALY)

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

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

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

On Sunday, top-ranked Jannik Sinner and U.S. Open finalist Taylor Fritz beat Alex de Minaur and Daniil Medvedev, respectively, in the other group. Alcaraz won the French Open and Wimbledon to boost his career total to four Grand Slam titles. But he also struggled at the Paris Masters recently and dropped behind Zverev to No. 3 in the rankings this week.

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

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

"I'm not full of confidence," Ruud said. "A match like today might be able to change it." Alcaraz was broken when he served for the second set at 5-4. Alcaraz led 25-16 in winners but committed 26 unforced errors to Ruud's 10. Ruud converted all four of his break points while Alcaraz was just one of six in that category.

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

PARIS MASTERS TITLE

Zverev, who won the finals in 2018 in London and 2021 in Turin, extended his winning streak to six matches following a title run at the Paris Masters. Rublev is making his fifth consecutive appearance at the finals but hasn't won a match at the event since 2022.

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

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

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

SINNER RECEIVES NO. 1 TROPHY

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

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

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



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

AP ■ TURIN (ITALY)

Jannik Sinner was awarded the trophy for finishing the year at No. 1 in the rankings before his home fans at the ATP Finals. Sinner beat Alex de Minaur in his opening match on Sunday at the year-ending event for the top eight players and meets Taylor Fritz on Tuesday in a rematch of the U.S. Open final.

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

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

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

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

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

AP ■ DUBAI

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

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

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

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

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

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

He eventually decided to give golf another go, beginning his rebuild on the lowly Nordic Golf League and the Alps Tour, which is on the third tier of European golf. His talent shone through and last year he sealed a return to the European tour with a win at the Jonsson Workwear Open in March being universally celebrated in the golf fraternity.

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

— and join the late Seve Ballesteros on six.

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

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

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

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

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

PTI ■ CENTURION

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

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



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

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

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

PTI ■ PERTH

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



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

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

Australian opener McSweeney braces for 'unique' Bumrah challenge

PTI ■ ADELAIDE

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



the Australia A side in the 2-0 series win against India A, said he has been watching the bowling clips of Indian quicks including Bumrah and Mohammed Siraj to be mentally ready for the task. "I'll definitely dive a lot deeper into it when I get to Perth. I've looked at a few clips of what they're bowling

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

really well," he added. However, a quiet confidence runs through the young batter ahead of the important series. "In the last month or so I really feel like I'm batting the best I ever have. I think I'm the best I've ever been prepared to take this opportunity, so hopefully I

can do that. "No doubt there's plenty of learning and experiences that I haven't experienced yet and I'm looking forward to learning all about the challenges of Test cricket and challenging my game against the very best," he said. McSweeney will step into the shoes of David Warner, who retired from international cricket after the home Test series against Pakistan in January this year, and the Adelaide man realises the enormity of the job. The right-hander has a plan for it. "Being an opening batter, it's making sure I'm leaving the ball well and making the bowlers are bowling to me. Then being ready and positive to score when they miss is as simple as I want to make it. "If I'm reacting well and doing those things well, hopefully, it equates to me spending time in the middle and chipping away at the scoreboard," he said.

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

PTI ■ NEW DELHI/KARACHI

The Sports Ministry has given NOC, with no cost to the government, to a 17-member Indian cricket team to travel to Pakistan to participate in the T20 World Cup for the Blind, and the side now awaits clearance from Home and External Affairs ministries. The fourth edition of the Blind World Cup, in which India are the reigning champions, is scheduled to be played at Lahore and Multan from November 22 to December 3. Upon receiving the clearance from the ministries concerned, the squad is scheduled to travel to Pakistan via the Wagah Border on November 21. The development came in the backdrop of the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) informing its Pakistan counterpart that the Men in Blue will not travel to the neighbouring nation for next year's Champions Trophy. The BCCI sent a mail to the International Cricket Council to that



effect, leaving the future of the marquee event in limbo. Meanwhile, Shailender Yadav, General Secretary of the Cricket Association for Blind in India (CABI) said the 17-member Indian squad for the T20 WC was picked after 26 players underwent a 12-day selection trials in Gurugram. "The team has been training in

Gurugram. The players now await an NOC from the Ministry of External Affairs and remain hopeful for a positive response," said Yadav. Apart from India and Pakistan, the T20 World Cup features teams from Afghanistan, Bangladesh, South Africa, Nepal and Sri Lanka. India won the three previous events, defeating

Pakistan twice and Bangladesh once. Tournament as scheduled: PBCC The Pakistan Blind Cricket Council (PBCC) said the tournament will go ahead on schedule irrespective of India's participation. "Pakistan will be hosting the event on schedule and it makes no difference whether the Indian team comes or not," PBCC chairman Syed Sultan Shah said. Shah said arrangements for hosting the World Cup had been completed by the PBCC. "All the other teams in the event have also sent confirmation that they have no issues playing in Pakistan," he said. Indian team for T20 Blind WC: Ajay Kumar Reddy, Debaraj Behera, Nareshbhai Tumda, Nilesh Yadav, Sanjay Kumar Shah, Praveen Kumar Sharma, Venkateswara Rao, Pankaj Bhue, Loksha, Rambir Singh, Irfan Diwan, Durga Rao Tompaki, Sunil Ramesh, Sukhrum Majhi, Ravi Amiti, Dineshbhai Rathva, Dhingar Gopu.

Mohammad Nabi to retire from ODIs after 2025 Champions Trophy

PTI ■ SHARJAH

Afghanistan all-rounder Mohammad Nabi has announced that he will retire from One-Day Internationals after next year's Champions Trophy in Pakistan. After Afghanistan's 2-1 series win over Bangladesh here on Monday, the 39-year-old said he had been pondering about quitting the format since last year's ODI World Cup. "In my mind, from the last World Cup, I was retired. But then, we qualified for the Champions Trophy, and I felt if I could play that, it would be great," he told the official broadcaster after being adjudged the Player-of-the-Series.



Nabi has featured in 167 ODIs since 2009, scoring 3,600 runs in 147 innings at an average of 27.48 and a strike rate of 86.99, including two centuries and 17 fifties, with a top score of 136. With the ball in hand, he has bagged 172 wickets in 161 innings at an average of 32.47 and an economy of 4.27, including four four-

wicket hauls and a fifer (5/17). Afghanistan qualified for the Champions Trophy, thanks to their sixth-place finish during last year's World Cup. It would also be Afghanistan's first-ever appearance in the eight-team competition scheduled to be held in Pakistan in February next year.

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

PTI ■ HYDERABAD

Indian football team head coach Manolo Márquez on Tuesday said it is critical for his players to follow a synchronised approach while representing the country, in order to start getting results in the international arena. The Indian senior men's national team began its training camp ahead of the friendly match against Malaysia on November 18 in Hyderabad. With the Indian Super League going into a break with the start of the November FIFA international window, the Blue Tigers checked into the city on Monday and will have a total of six days of training sessions before the match. "We were supposed to play two

games last month but due to external reasons, Lebanon couldn't come. For people, more games is better. But it's difficult to train the day before and after the match. We need to train tactically as well. "I feel it's necessary to prepare for not just the game against Malaysia but the official matches which will come in March," Márquez said. Márquez had a rough start to his coaching stint with the national team as India were held 0-0 by Mauritius in September and beaten 0-3 by Syria in the Intercontinental Cup, also in Hyderabad. His boys put up an improved showing, especially in the second half, against Vietnam in a 1-1 draw last month in Nam Ð?nh. The Spaniard has continued the trend of calling up new players in

each FIFA window so far. This time, Hmingthanmawia Ralte, Vibin Mohanan, Irfan Yadav and Thoiba Singh Moirangthem earned their first national team call-ups. The latter was a last-minute arrival after Anirudh Thapa suffered an injury during the match between Mohun Bagan Super Giant and Odisha FC on Sunday. Since taking charge in July, Márquez's priority has been to utilise the friendly matches and training sessions to find the best group of players for the 2027 AFC Asian Cup Qualifiers, scheduled to start in March 2025. "It's true that we want to check some new players. But obviously it's impossible to change the whole group and call 40 players in March.



It's true that we are finding the group. It means that we have maybe 14, 15, 16 players who will be there, but we don't know exactly. And there are a lot of players who can get there," the coach said. "Obviously, it's still four months, and the situation can change with a lot of things unfortunately with injuries and the players' domestic form. But, I repeat again, as a coach you need to find the group which can play the style that we want. "I am fully focussed on the Malaysia match at the moment. In a way, it's a dangerous game because the players are in the middle of the fight for the ISL and this is just one friendly game in November, and the next camp will be in four months. "But I am very confident in this

group and I feel we will have a good performance next Monday," said Márquez. Still awaiting his first win with India, Márquez remains patient. For now, the key is to find the groove with the right bunch and get results where they matter the most. "Obviously everyone wants to win every game. But the feeling we got after the draw with Vietnam was completely different from what we got after drawing with Mauritius or losing to Syria. "In some moments, we played superb. The one key thing is that the players have to believe in our style of play. I want to win every game and even every training session. The Malaysia game is the last friendly window before the official games."

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