



**OPINION 6**  
WALKING THROUGH THE WOODS IN UK

**WORLD 8**  
I PLEADED GUILTY TO JOURNALISM FOR FREEDOM: ASSANGE

**MONEY 10**  
CAR SALES FLUCTUATE IN SEPTEMBER

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MANE LEADS AIR RIFLE DOMINANCE WITH DOUBLE GOLD 11 SPORTS

**Mahanga double murder**

## HC gives clean chit to Pratap Jena

PNS ■ CUTTACK



The Orissa High Court on Tuesday gave a clean chit to former Minister Pratap Jena in the sensational double murder case at Mahanga in Cuttack district in 2021.

Hearing the petition filed by Jena, the High Court set aside the verdict of the lower court. Jena had moved the High Court against the Salepur Judicial Magistrate First Class (JMFC)'s order. Jena was the accused number 13 in the case. As his name was missing from the charge-sheet, the Salepur JMFC Court had directed for a reinvestigation. Later, police added his name. The court had taken cognisance of the offences

against Jena as an accused in the case. Then, Jena had moved the High Court challenging the lower court's taking cognisance of the charge against him. In his petition, he prayed for quashing the order of JMFC, Salepur. "The court said the entire criminal proceedings against Pratap Jena have been quashed," said Jena's advocate Anshuman Ray. On January 2, 2021, BJP leader Kulamani Baral (74), who was the Block Chairman

of Mahanga and his associate Dibyasingha Baral, (82) were brutally killed by unidentified miscreants near Jankoti village under Mahanga block while they were returning home on a motorbike. Later, the prime accused in the case, Prafulla Biswal was found dead under mysterious circumstances. The family of the deceased alleged that both Kulamani and Dibyasingha were murdered on the instructions of Jena.

**State to launch Gopabandhu Jan Arogya scheme**

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

An Ayushman Bharat-Gopabandhu Jan Arogya Health Insurance Yojana is going to be launched soon in Odisha, said Health Minister Mukesh Mahaling on Tuesday. Once implemented, around 3.5 crore people of one crore families would get health services at around 27,000 hospitals across the country, informed the minister. "As per our estimation, a health card will be issued to around 3.5 crore people individually. With this common card, people will be able to get cashless services at around 27,000 empanelled hospitals across the country," he said. Notably, in the old insurance scheme, only people were getting facilities at 950 hospitals. As per sources, as many as 67 lakh families will be included under the Ayushman Bharat Yojana and the rest 33 lakh families will be under the Gopabandhu Jan Arogya Health Insurance Yojana. In this new Yojana, male and female members will receive insurance coverage of Rs 5 lakh and Rs 10 lakh, respectively.

**Sambalpur Zoo welcomes rescued leopard**



**Enhances display facilities**

NIMAI CHARAN SAHU ■ SAMBALPUR

A male leopard, responsible for two human deaths and injury to a person in Nuapada district in 2023, had been captured on November 5, 2023 and relocated to the Sambalpur Zoo's Rescue Centre under the Hirakud Wildlife Division on November 8, 2023. The rescued leopard, aged seven to eight years, has now been paired with a female leopard in the Sambalpur Zoo. On September 9, 2024, the male leopard was introduced into the night house, where the

female, aged six years, has been residing. The display to the public began on October 1, 2024, but for the time being, the two leopards will be displayed alternately with separate public viewing times. The Central Zoo Authority (CZA) approved this pairing through its 111th Technical Committee after the Principal Chief Conservator of Forests (PCCF) for Wildlife in Odisha sent a recommendation for the leopard to be displayed. Before the leopards can fully cohabit, the Sambalpur Zoo is taking precautions to ensure compatibility. The leopards are housed in separate chambers within the same night house, allowing them to become acquainted

over time. The zoo plans to closely observe their behaviour for the next two to three months before deciding if they can be released together. CCTV cameras have been installed throughout the enclosure and chambers providing 24/7 surveillance of both leopards. A dedicated team is also monitoring them around the clock to ensure their safety and wellbeing. This year, a glass viewing facility was added to the enclosure, offering visitors an improved experience. In addition, the zoo has introduced hammocks in the leopard and bear enclosures, creating better environments to ensure the animals' comfort and wellbeing.

**In Sambalpur Man gets death penalty for rape, murder of minor girl**

NIMAI CHARAN SAHU ■ SAMBALPUR

The Special POC SO Court in Sambalpur on Tuesday awarded death sentence to a person involved in the rape and murder of a minor girl, considering the heinous nature of crime. The convict was identified as Prasanta Baghar (40) from a village under the Jamankira police station in Sambalpur district. The incident took place on March 25, 2022 when the

eight-year-old girl had gone to attend nature's call to a field in her village. Prasanta raped her and later beheaded her with an axe and came to the village, roaming around with the severed head in one hand and the axe in the other. Prasanta then walked up to a tube-well where he washed the severed head. On seeing this, the villagers hid in their houses out of fear. But Prasanta's wife confronted him for the heinous act which led to a scuffle between the couple. Later, being informed

by the villagers, police reached the spot and nabbed Prasanta. The girl's father lodged a complaint with police and the accused was arrested. Eventually, following the investigation, the then Jamankira IIC filed a charge-sheet under Section 302, 376 of the IPC besides Section 6 of POC SO Act. During the trial, the court examined 25 witnesses and found the accused guilty of all offences. In view of the circumstances of the case, the court ordered the convict to be hanged till death. The court

also asked him to pay a penalty of Rs 1 lakh. The judgement was delivered by Special Judge (POCSO) Abhilash Senapati. On behalf of the victim, the case was represented by Special Prosecutor Santosh Panda. "There may have been previous enmity involved in this case. The case will now be referred to the Orissa High Court for a review. The High Court's judgment will determine the final outcome, which will come into effect thereafter," said Panda.

DADLS-35

ସବିତ୍ର ଗାନ୍ଧୀ ଜୟନ୍ତୀ ଅବସରରେ ମାନ୍ୟବର ରାଜ୍ୟପାଳଙ୍କ ବାର୍ତ୍ତା

ସବିତ୍ର ଗାନ୍ଧୀ ଜୟନ୍ତୀ ଅବସରରେ ଜାତିର ଜନକ ମହାତ୍ମା ଗାନ୍ଧୀଙ୍କ ଉଦ୍ଦେଶ୍ୟରେ ଭକ୍ତିପୂର୍ଣ୍ଣ ଶ୍ରଦ୍ଧାଞ୍ଜଳି ଅର୍ପଣ କରୁଛି । ଆସନ୍ତୁ, ଗାନ୍ଧିଜୀଙ୍କ ଆଦର୍ଶରେ ଅନୁପ୍ରାଣିତ ହୋଇ ବିକଶିତ ଓଡ଼ିଶା ଓ ବିକଶିତ ଭାରତ ନିର୍ମାଣରେ ନିଜକୁ ସମର୍ପିତ କରିବା ପାଇଁ ସଂକଳ୍ପବଦ୍ଧ ହେବା ।

(ରଘୁବର ଦାସ)

ଓଡ଼ିଶା ସରକାର

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(ମୋହନ ଚରଣ ମାଝୀ)  
ମୁଖ୍ୟମନ୍ତ୍ରୀ, ଓଡ଼ିଶା

# Performance is key factor: City police chief Puri 'Arpan' rice to be auctioned

**CCTV installation to be reviewed**

**PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR**  
Twin City Commissioner of Police S Devdatta Singh on Tuesday said police would work as per the mandate of the government and performance would be the key factor for officers.

Singh assured that a review of the overstaying officers at a particular place would also be conducted. The government has given clear instructions that all people get round-the-clock assistance and justice. At police stations, there are staffs to handle emergency situa-



that might crop up at any time. "I will conduct a review on how long the officers are

Singh. One of the important criteria is performance. Apart from this, honesty, integrity and delivering justice to people are also expected from the officers, said he.

"The process of installation of CCTV cameras at police stations had started as per Supreme Court orders. But after the construction of new police stations, we have to depend on the agencies installing those to remove and re-install the old equipments," said Singh.

"We are preparing a list of existing CCTV cameras at police stations, strategic locations and how many of them are functional and other issues," he added.

**Committee formed; tender process soon**

**PNS ■ PURI**  
In a major development, the Puri district administration has revealed that the remaining 'Arpan rice' which has become stale and unfit for use for Mahaprasad will be auctioned.

The administration further informed that the rice will be sold to either to any individual or millers through a tender process. Individuals and millers can buy Arpan rice by making a spot visit. The money will go to the Shri Jagannath Temple Administration.



A committee headed by the Sub-Collector has been formed to look after the tender process. The decision has been taken by the State Government after discussions with various departmental authorities. Before the inauguration of

the Srimandir Heritage Corridor Project, Arpan rice and betel nuts were collected from devotees across the State and brought to Puri. It was then decided to use the rice for preparing Mahaprasad for free distribution among devotees. The administration had

handed over a huge amount of Arpan rice to the Suar and Mahasuar Nijog to prepare Mahaprasad. Later, the Suar and Mahasuar Nijog informed that the rice worthy for preparing Mahaprasad had been used and the rest of the rice was not suitable for it.

## Samanta gets Mahatma Award

**PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR**  
The prestigious Mahatma Award was conferred upon founder of KIIT and KISS Dr Achyuta Samanta on the eve of Gandhi Jayanti in New Delhi on Tuesday.



The award, presented by the Aditya Birla Group, honours individuals who have made remarkable contributions to education and social service. Dr Samanta received the award in recognition of his significant efforts in these fields.

The Mahatma Award, initiated by renowned CSR activist Amit Sachdeva, has been awarded since 2016 to distinguished individuals and organisations contributing to societal development. The previous recipients include luminaries such as Ratan Tata, Azim Premji, Bindeshwar Pathak and Shabana Azmi.

Dr Samanta, who has dedicated over 33 years to education and social work, has focused on uplifting marginalised and tribal communities through the KISS, aligning with Mahatma Gandhi's vision of eradicating inequality.

## BJP slams Naveen over communal riots

**NALINI SAHU ■ BHUBANESWAR**

Politics has intensified over the recent communal clashes in Bhadrak over an alleged objectionable social media post. The BJP on Tuesday came down heavily on Leader of Opposition (LoP) and former CM Naveen Patnaik over his recent remarks on the incident.

Naveen alleged that four incidents of communal unrest during the initial three months

of the new BJP government have raised questions on its efficiency apart from tarnishing the image of Odisha. The BJP posed several questions regarding the BJD's governance under Naveen in the last 24 years.

The BJP asked: Naveen should answer who was the Chief Minister during the Kandhamal riots?

Who was the CM during the riots in Bhadrak during Ram Navami in 2017? Which party was ruling the

State during the riots during Hanuman Jayanti in Sambalpur in 2021?

The BJP in its tweets further alleged that there are photographs of those arrested for the Bhadrak communal clashes with BJD MLAs. The accused are active and frontline members of BJD.

The BJP also alleged that Naveen gave Rajya Sabha ticket to the main conspirator of the Kandhamal riots and made him an MP. It pointed out that as per

the data of the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB), Odisha was ranked third in the country in terms of communal violence in 2017. As per the NCRB data of 2022, there were more than 15 communal riots in Odisha in just one year.

BJP spokesperson Anil Biswal also asked why Naveen was silent when a former BJD MLA gave protection to Raja Khan, a gangster and an accused of communal riot in Uttar Pradesh.

## DGP reviews situation in Bhadrak



**Urges people to remain vigilant about social media**

**PNS ■ BHADRAK**  
Director General of Police (DGP) YB Khurania on Tuesday appealed to people to refrain from commenting on objectionable social media posts and to remain calm as a lot of misinformation is still being shared on it.

Rather, people should inform the matter to the local police station, said the DGP after reviewing the Bhadrak district law and order situation at Dhamnagar.

The DGP further stated that there is nothing to panic as adequate measures have been taken to restore normalcy. "On September 27, an inci-

dent took place in Dhamnagar; five cases have been registered; and several persons have been arrested. I have interacted with senior police and district administration officials. The situation is almost normalised and regular patrolling by police and RAF is on. The situation is likely to get back to normalcy in the next two to three days," said Khurania. So far, 27 persons, including 10 from Bhadrak and 17 from Dhamnagar, have been arrested in connection with the violence. Mobile internet services are still suspended and 16 platoons of police force and one company of Rapid Action Force (RAF) have been deployed in Bhadrak to maintain law and order. Similarly, six platoons of police force have been deployed at Dhamnagar.

## Spl battalion for security of Puri temple proposed

**PNS ■ PURI**

The Odisha Legislative Assembly Standing Committee-1 visited the Jagannath Temple here on Tuesday and initiated discussions about various issues with the Chief Administrator of Shree Jagannath Temple Administration (SJTA).

The committee members elaborately discussed about the development and security of the Srimandir and how to make the darshan arrangement for the devotees more disciplined and streamlined.

The committee also deliberated about various developmental works around the temple with the officials of the Archaeological Survey of In-

dia (ASI). Discussion was also held about the compensation amount to be provided to the Daitapati servitors for not allowing entry of devotees atop the chariots during Rath Yatra.

The committee also enquired about the money spent under the Kotha Bhoga Dhana Yojna and had discussions with the SJTA about the steps taken for the smooth management of Srimandir.

"Mainly discussion was held about the security of Srimandir. A proposal has also been given for a special battalion for the security arrangement of the temple," said Legislative Assembly Standing Committee-1 Chairman Siddhant Mohapatra

## 'Enhance ESI wage limit to cover all workers'

**Union leaders demand after minimum wages revised**

**PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR**

While the Union Government has enhanced the minimum wages for contractual workers for the welfare of the nation's workforce, many trade union leaders expressed concern over it, as it will lead to many workers losing their eligibility for ESI Health Insurance due to exceeding the current wage limit set by the ESIC. The calculated monthly salaries based on the new minimum wages are Rs 20,358, Rs 22,568, Rs 24,804, Rs 26,910 for unskilled, semi-skilled, skilled and highly skilled workers respectively.

Writing a letter to the Prime Minister and the Union Minister for Labour and Employment, INTUC national

organising secretary, vice president Odisha and ESIC Regional Board member MM Dhal demanded for enhancement of ESI wage limit from Rs 21,000 to Rs 35,000 to enable coverage for debarred insured persons.

The recent wage enhancement set will take effect on October 1. The increase will unfortunately lead to many workers losing their eligibility for ESI Health Insurance due to exceeding the current wage limit set by the ESIC. The calculated monthly salaries based on the new minimum wages are Rs 20,358, Rs 22,568, Rs 24,804, Rs 26,910 for unskilled, semi-skilled, skilled and highly skilled workers respectively.

As outlined, semi-skilled to

highly skilled workers will already exceed the limit, resulting in immediate debarment from the ESIC coverage. Additionally, many organisations offer various allowances, which will push even unskilled workers over the limit, further denying them essential healthcare.

"The scenario poses a serious threat to the health and well-being of contract workers, violating their fundamental right to health as enshrined in Article 21 of the Constitution of India," told Dhal

While the Ayushman Bharat Yojana provides crucial health coverage, it remains inaccessible to all the contractual workers, whose incomes exceed the scheme's annual income ceiling.

The recent wage enhancement is a necessary response to rising living costs, but if it leads to the withdrawal of ESI coverage, it may result in dire consequences for the health of workers and their families.

However a committee has been established by the Ministry of Labour and Employment to assess and recommend enhancement to the ESI wage limit, which has not been updated since 2017. In this context, Dhal demanded immediate action to ensure continued healthcare access for these workers.

Dhal urged the Government to enhance the maximum basic wage limit to Rs 35,000, ensuring that the workers retain their eligibility for ESIC health insurance.

# Gandhian approach to industrialisation is ideal

Today marks the 155th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi, who was born on October 2, 1869 during the peak of British Raj in India. Gandhi is revered the world over for his non-violence philosophy of passive resistance and as the greatest leader of the Indian independence movement. His approach to a new world order, peace, harmony, development, industrialisation and ecology made him the most iconic leader of the world.



**BINAYA BHUSAN JENA**

Gandhi had signalled the world, much before any modern-day environmentalist, about the unmindful adoption of large-scale industrialisation. He visualised that mechanisation would not only lead to industrialisation resulting in massive destruction of local economic and social system but would also lead to massive destruction of environment, evident in many of his writings. The Gandhian approach appears to be more relevant today when sustainability has become the cornerstone of any developmental model.

Gandhi's emphasis on production

justice. He was not against industrialisation or mechanisation. His views were very much contextual as he believed large-scale industrialisation would not only break the Indian traditional economic base but could also be violent against its own people.

India was predominantly an agrarian economy during the British rule. More than 75% of the Indian population was dependent directly on agriculture and the rest were from different non-farm community-based occupations from weavers to carpenters. There is no doubt that the wonders of industrialisation have been incredibly gainful for many countries from Britain, the USA, France, Germany, Belgium, Japan, South Korea in the colonial and post-colonial periods, but their socio-economic-cultural fabric was completely different than from India. Hence, Gandhiji was of the opinion that mechanisation is good when the hands are few but evil when there are more hands than are required for the work like in India. In the context of the West-

ern industrial society, Gandhiji aptly remarked that 'one man's food is another man's poison'. It further strengthens his views towards large-scale industrialisation in India. When Charlie Chaplin met Gandhiji during his visit to London for the Round Table Conference in 1931, he wanted to know why Gandhi was opposing machines. In response, Gandhi clarified, "I am not against machines, but I cannot bear it when these very machines take away a man's work from him." This was the fundamental apprehension of Gandhi about large-scale modern industrialisation. Gandhi said that returning to hand spinning does not mean a rejection of machine. Instead, it is a rejection of the exploitative and dominating economic and political system in which textile manufacturing had been enmeshed in colonial India. He chose to remain a minimalist. He adopted the traditional loincloth as a symbolic respect to the costume of the people of India and a strategic refutation of Western cloth, a symbol of industrialisation

and colonisation. Gandhiji saw the spirit of India living in its 700,000+ villages. For him, India to prosper, these villages must flourish. Handloom and Khadi were so dear to Gandhi representing through the Charkha or spinning wheel used as a metaphor of 'ancient work ethics' and as a symbol of economic and social emancipation from the British Raj. But unfortunately, the Nehruvian policies did not do justice to this Gandhian ethos in the Independent India. For Nehru, Indian village economy was a sheer site of backwardness, but for Gandhi, the village was a symbol of self-reliance and authenticity. These differing views of Jawaharlal Nehru translated into action in the economic and industrial policies after India's Independence. The early economic policies favoured mechanised heavy industries, often neglecting the traditional and handloom sector. Handloom products faced several challenges with the proliferation of cheaper mill-made synthetic fabrics. The already-marginalised weavers

were further destabilised due to lack of market access, which limited their ability to sustain their craft. Lack of financial support, access to resources and competition with mill-made cheap garments further marginalised the artisan community. While some initiatives were introduced to support weavers, they were often insufficient or poorly implemented.

In the early 20th century, around 70%-80% of India's population was engaged in agriculture. At the same time, according to many estimates, approximately 10%-15% of the rural population in India was involved in handloom weaving and various handicrafts. This indicates the importance of these sectors in providing livelihoods and their contribution to the economy during that period. One can make out how Indian industrial policies marginalised the Gandhian approach and the traditional sector in the Independent India. The government in Independent India did not even bother to know the status of weavers for so many years. The first handloom census was initiated

in 1985 and a full-fledged Ministry of Textiles was established only in 1989 despite the fact that the textile sector was the second largest employer in the country after agriculture. More than the British, the Nehruvian policies further marginalised the handloom and handicrafts sector. The focus on large-scale industrial production led to a decline in traditional handloom weaving. The growth of power looms and mechanised textile mills made it difficult for handloom weavers to compete both in terms of price and production speed. Despite this, the solid socio-cultural fabric of India continued supporting the rich heritage of handloom and the legacy continues even today as a mark of respect to the Gandhian thought and values. When the world is facing an ever-rising ecological and economic crisis, Gandhi's philosophy has evidently stood the test of time. (Prof Dr Jena is a Professor and Chairperson of Department of Fashion Management Studies (FMS) at National Institute of Fashion Technology)

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# K'pada ASI axed for thrashing shopkeeper

**PNS ■ KENDRAPADA**  
Kendrapada SP Siddharth Kataria on Monday suspended Rajanagar police station ASI Narendra Kumar Singh, for his involvement in police excess by misusing his power to a person.  
A case has also been registered against the errant ASI whereas departmental proceeding has been initiated against him.  
According to SP Kataria, a



police case bearing Rajnagar PS case no -377, dated 29/9/24 under Sections

296,115(2),351(2) BNS ,2023 has been registered against ASI Singh. Rajnagar police have started an inquiry on the alleged matter.  
According to police sources, a 43-year-old shopkeeper Pramod Biswal of Hansuagula village under Rajnagar police station had lodged an FIR at Rajnagar police station alleging that on September 28 at about 9.30 pm while he was present at his shop, ASI Singh arrived

there in police vehicle and asked him where is Adaitya Biswal's shop. Later, the police officer asked him about the house of Adaitya Biswal. After getting the address, the police officer left the shop with the van. However, sometimes later, ASI Singh again arrived in front of Pramod's shop, started abusing him with filthy language, assaulted him brutally and threatened him of dire consequences.

# In Kendrapada Food Safety Officer held taking bribe

**PNS ■ KENDRAPADA**  
The Vigilance police on Tuesday caught Bibhas Mazumdar, Food Safety Officer of Kendrapada CDMO office, while accepting a bribe of Rs 5,000 from a person.  
Mazumdar had demanded the illegal gratification to issue a licence to the complainant to run his business.  
Mazumdar conducted a surprise raid at his shop on July 30 and instructed him to apply for a licence. Accordingly,

the complainant applied for licence on August 8 but was not issued one. When he requested Mazumdar to initiate the process, the latter demanded Rs 5,000.  
Finding no alternative, he agreed to his demand and also lodged a complaint with the Vigilance. Following the trap, simultaneous searches were ongoing at two locations linked to Mazumdar to ascertain whether he has accumulated assets disproportionate to his know sources of income.

# 'Safe abortion is essential healthcare'



Rally held in Bolagarh

**PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR**  
As part of observation of the International Safe Abortion Day on September 28, voluntary organisation SAKAR in association with Common Health held an awareness camp among women and men aged between 18 to 50 years at Bolagarh Gram Panchayat, Khurda in which around 45 persons participated.  
The participants were ASHA, Anganwadi workers, Krushi Mitras, Prani Mitras, Cluster Resource Persons, Master Book Keepers, Bank Mitras, pregnant women, house makers and unmarried girls etc.  
Dr Amya Bala Mishra Gynecologist in Begunia CHC, Dr Susama Meher, Medical

Officer in Bolgarh CHC, Sanjukta Mahapatro, Abhijit Sahoo, Deepak Kumar Behera, Priyanka Nayak and SK Ashik addressed the participants.  
Dr Amyabala Mishra gave details including termination of unwanted pregnancy and tools available. However, she emphasized the need to take guidance of a qualified medical professional.  
Dr Amya Bala, Dr Swarna and Swarupa answered some questions raised by the participants and said to stand up for safe abortion. They emphasized the right to safe abortion is an essential healthcare.  
The participants raised slogans by holding placards and expressed their solidarity with the cause. The meeting ended with vote of thanks by Abhijit Sahoo.

# Andhra diverts canal water from Rayagada

**PNS ■ RAYAGADA**  
Farmers in Rayagada district face severe agricultural distress due to Andhra Pradesh allegedly diverting water from two check dams built by the Odisha Government. This has left hundreds of acres barren and forced many farmers into daily wage labour.  
The Odisha Government had spent lakhs of rupees in the construction of the two check dams in a bid to help farmers of Kundum, Gaudakundum and other villages in the Odisha-Andhra border in Rayagada district in 2016-17.  
However, the purpose of the check dams remains unfulfilled as all the water is being di-



verted to Andhra.  
"Andhra Pradesh government has constructed the check dam for us. We are able to grow all kinds of crops like paddy, pulses and vegetables. The water supply has come as a boon for us," an Andhra citizen said. When contacted, Engineer D Sudhakar Kumar

said, "These check dams were constructed for lift irrigation facilities for farmers. However, the agricultural fields are above the check dams, due to which there is no water supply to the fields. We will have to look into whether the check dams are built in our region or Andhra's land."

# Student dies of diptheria in M'giri; several others affected

**PNS ■ MALKANGIRI**  
A student of an Ashram school died of diptheria in Malkangiri district, prompting the Health and Family Welfare Department to send a special medical team to visit the area.  
The samples were collected from the students of Chitrangapalli and Tangaguda Sevashramas and they have been sent for laboratory tests.  
The move comes after several students from Chitrangapalli Upper Primary

School and Tangaguda Residential School showed symptoms of diptheria.  
The affected students have been admitted to Kalimela CHC and are being administered appropriate medications.  
"A few students of Chitrangapalli Residential School were showing symptoms of diptheria. Our surveillance is going on and we had collected throat samples of the students. Two of them have tested positive for diptheria," informed Tapas Kumar Patra, a member of the medical team.  
"We have admitted a few students who had symptoms to Kalimela CHC. 10 students are under observation now. One of them was referred to Koraput as his condition deteriorated.

His condition is normal after treatment, and hopefully he will recover soon. Till now, the infection has not spread much. Our effort is to limit the spread of the infection and provide best of treatment to the students," he added.  
When contacted, Headmaster of Chitrangapalli Residential School Krishan Prasad Mandal said, "One student tested positive for diptheria and has been referred to Koraput Medical College and Hospital. Two other students have been discharged after recovery. A State medical team is here to inquire the health condition of other students and collect blood samples for lab testing. They have also prescribed necessary medicines."

# Meet discusses key demands for S Odisha dev

**Attended by people's representatives, various outfits**  
**RAJEEV RATHAN ■ BRAHMAMPUR**  
In a significant move towards addressing the longstanding neglect of south Odisha, various organisations, intellectuals and public representatives convened a meeting to discuss strategies for the region's holistic development on Sunday here.  
Held under the leadership social activist Sushanta Kumar

Sabat, the meeting emphasized that south Odisha has been overlooked in key sectors due to a combination of weak leadership, lack of coordination among local organisations, and limited public mobilisation.  
The discussion centered around several key demands aimed at ensuring the development of south Odisha, including the expansion of railway infrastructure, introduction of more train services, port and airport development, improvement in healthcare through better medical college facilities and construction of

an indoor stadium in Brahmampur.  
The meeting also emphasized the need for reforms in the education policies of Berhampur University and Khallikote Cluster University and stressed the importance of ancillary development in these institutions.  
Other demands put forward were the construction of the Digha-Gopalpur Coastal Corridor, linking Kandhamal's Phulbani and Baliguda and Gajapati's Mohana with the railway network, establishment of cold storage facilities to support agriculture, and



improved drinking water supply systems. Additionally, there were discussions on developing tourist spots in south Odisha to promote regional tourism, Sabat stated.  
Tejeswar Rao provided the initial briefing where it was resolved that a comprehensive draft would soon be prepared. The draft would unite various stakeholders, including organisations, public representatives, and intellectuals from across south Odisha, in a summit. The aim of the summit would be to present these demands collectively to both the Union and State Govern-

ments.  
Among the prominent participants were Sudhir Sabat, Bighneswar Sahu, Suresh Tripathy, Namita Rani Raut, Pushpanjali Mahapatra, Jagannath Rao, Shaktidhar Rajguru, Rajendra Panda, Aditya Natya Rath, Dr Subrat Kumar Sahu, Ranjan Kumar Sahu, Bhishma Charya Chaudhury, Ashok Kumar Dalai, Manoj Kumar Mahapatra, Mahendra Kumar Behera, Pranab Panda, KN Senapati, Dilip Mahapatra, Dr Sobhagya Priya Darshani, Dr Mohan Rao and Gadadhar Raul.

DSPL-132

ଓଡ଼ିଶା ସହକାର

ବନ୍ୟପ୍ରାଣୀ ସଂରକ୍ଷଣ ୨୦୨୪ ପାଇଁ ଉପଲକ୍ଷେ ମାନ୍ୟବର ମୁଖ୍ୟମନ୍ତ୍ରୀଙ୍କ ବାର୍ତ୍ତା

ଶାନ୍ତି ଓ ଅହିଂସାର ଉପାସକ ମହାତ୍ମା ଗାନ୍ଧୀଙ୍କର ପୁଣ୍ୟ ଜନ୍ମତିଥି ଅବସରରେ ଅକ୍ଟୋବର ୨ ତାରିଖରୁ ୮ ତାରିଖ ପର୍ଯ୍ୟନ୍ତ ବନ୍ୟପ୍ରାଣୀ ସଂରକ୍ଷଣ ଦେଶରେ ପ୍ରତିବର୍ଷ ପାଳିତ ହୋଇଆସୁଅଛି । ବନ୍ୟପ୍ରାଣୀମାନଙ୍କୁ ସୁରକ୍ଷା ଦେବା ଏବଂ ସେମାନଙ୍କ ଆବାସସ୍ଥଳୀର ସୁରକ୍ଷା ଓ ସଂରକ୍ଷଣ ପାଇଁ ସଚେତନତା ସୃଷ୍ଟି କରିବା ବନ୍ୟପ୍ରାଣୀ ସଂରକ୍ଷଣ ପାଇଁ ନିମନ୍ତେ ।

'ଜୀବେ ଦୟା' ଆମ ସଂସ୍କୃତି ଓ ପରମ୍ପରାର ମୂଳ ମନ୍ତ୍ର । ମାନ୍ୟ ସମାଜ ତିଷ୍ଠି ରହିବା ପାଇଁ ପ୍ରାକୃତିକ ଭାରସାମ୍ୟ ଅପରିହାର୍ଯ୍ୟ । ଏଥି ପାଇଁ ବନ୍ୟପ୍ରାଣୀଙ୍କର ଅବଦାନ ଗୁରୁତ୍ୱପୂର୍ଣ୍ଣ ଅଟେ । ଏହି ଅବସରରେ ବନ୍ୟପ୍ରାଣୀ ତଥା ସେମାନଙ୍କ ଆବାସସ୍ଥଳୀର ସୁରକ୍ଷା, ସଂରକ୍ଷଣ ଓ ଅଭିବୃଦ୍ଧି ନିମନ୍ତେ ମୁଁ ସ୍ଥାନୀୟ ଅଧିକାରୀ, ସ୍ୱେଚ୍ଛାସେବୀ ତଥା ଜନସାଧାରଣଙ୍କର ସକ୍ରିୟ ସହଯୋଗ କାମନା କରୁଛି ।

ସୋହନ ମହାନ୍ତି  
(ମୋହନ ଚରଣ ମାଝୀ)  
ମୁଖ୍ୟମନ୍ତ୍ରୀ, ଓଡ଼ିଶା

ଓଡ଼ିଶା ସହକାର

ବନ୍ୟପ୍ରାଣୀ ସଂରକ୍ଷଣ ୨୦୨୪ ପାଇଁ ଉପଲକ୍ଷେ ମାନ୍ୟବର ଜଜ୍ଜଳ, ପରିବେଶ ଓ ଜଳବାୟୁ ପରିବର୍ତ୍ତନ ମନ୍ତ୍ରୀଙ୍କ ବାର୍ତ୍ତା

ପ୍ରତିବର୍ଷ ଭଲ ଜାତିର ଜନକ ମହାତ୍ମାଗାନ୍ଧୀଙ୍କ ପୁଣ୍ୟ ଜନ୍ମତିଥି ଅବସରରେ ଅକ୍ଟୋବର ୦୨ରୁ ୦୮ ତାରିଖ ପର୍ଯ୍ୟନ୍ତ ସାରା ଦେଶ ତଥା ଆମ ରାଜ୍ୟରେ ଚଳିତ ବର୍ଷ ବନ୍ୟପ୍ରାଣୀ ସଂରକ୍ଷଣ ପାଇଁ କରାଯାଉଅଛି । ମାନ୍ୟ ସମାଜ ଓ ବନ୍ୟପ୍ରାଣୀ ଅଜ୍ଞାଅଜ୍ଞାତାବେ ଜଡ଼ିତ । ଆମ ପରିବେଶକୁ ସୁସ୍ଥ, ସଜ୍ଜଳିତ ଓ ସମୃଦ୍ଧ ରଖିବାପାଇଁ ବନ୍ୟପ୍ରାଣୀ ଓ ସେମାନଙ୍କ ଆବାସସ୍ଥଳୀର ସୁରକ୍ଷା ନିତ୍ୟାନ୍ତ ଆବଶ୍ୟକ ।

ବନ୍ୟପ୍ରାଣୀ ସଂରକ୍ଷଣ ପାଇଁ ଅବସରରେ, ବନ୍ୟପ୍ରାଣୀ ଓ ସେମାନଙ୍କ ଆବାସସ୍ଥଳୀର ସୁରକ୍ଷା, ସଂରକ୍ଷଣ ଓ ଅଭିବୃଦ୍ଧି ନିମନ୍ତେ ମୁଁ ଜନସାଧାରଣଙ୍କ ଆନ୍ତରିକ ସହଯୋଗ କାମନା କରୁଅଛି । ଏହି ପ୍ରକ୍ରିୟା ସହ ଆମ ପରମ୍ପରା ଓ ସଂସ୍କୃତିକୁ ସମ୍ମାନ ଜଣାଇବାର ଏକ ମହତ୍ତ୍ୱପୂର୍ଣ୍ଣ ପ୍ରଚେଷ୍ଟା ।

ଗଣେଶ ରାମ ସିଂହୁଡ଼ିଆ  
(ଗଣେଶ ରାମ ସିଂହୁଡ଼ିଆ)  
ରାଷ୍ଟ୍ରମନ୍ତ୍ରୀ (ସାଧାରଣ)  
ଜଜ୍ଜଳ, ପରିବେଶ ଓ ଜଳବାୟୁ ପରିବର୍ତ୍ତନ, ଶ୍ରମ ଓ କର୍ମଚାରୀ ରାଜ୍ୟ ବାମା, ଓଡ଼ିଶା

# LAC situation stable but sensitive amid India-China standoff: Army Chief

**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI**

The situation along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in eastern Ladakh is stable but not normal and remains sensitive, Army chief General Upendra Dwivedi said here on Tuesday. His remarks came in the backdrop of continuing standoff between Indian and Chinese militaries in the region. Though a "positive signalling" is coming out from the diplomatic talks between the two sides, the execution of any plan depends on the military commanders on the ground, he said.

In the entire gamut, the "trust" has become the "biggest casualty", General Dwivedi said at a curtain raiser event on Chanakya Defence Dialogue. "The situation is stable, but it is not normal and it's sensitive. If that be the case what are we wanting. We are wanting that the situation that was there pre April 2020 should be restored," he added. The military standoff between the two sides began in early May of 2020.

The full resolution of the border row has not yet been achieved though the two sides have disengaged from a number of friction points. "Till the time the situation is not restored, as far as we are concerned, the situation will remain sensitive, and we are fully operationally prepared to face any kind of a contingency," the Army Chief said.

He listed several pending issues such as troops on ground, buffer zones along the LAC and resumption of patrolling by troops as planned. General Dwivedi also briefly touched upon the Indian military's overall approach towards China. "As far as China is concerned, it has been intriguing our minds for quite some time. And I have been saying that with China, you have to compete, you have to cooperate, you have to coexist, you have to confront and contest," he said.

India and China held two rounds of diplomatic talks in July and August with an aim to find early resolution of outstanding issues in their standoff on the LAC in



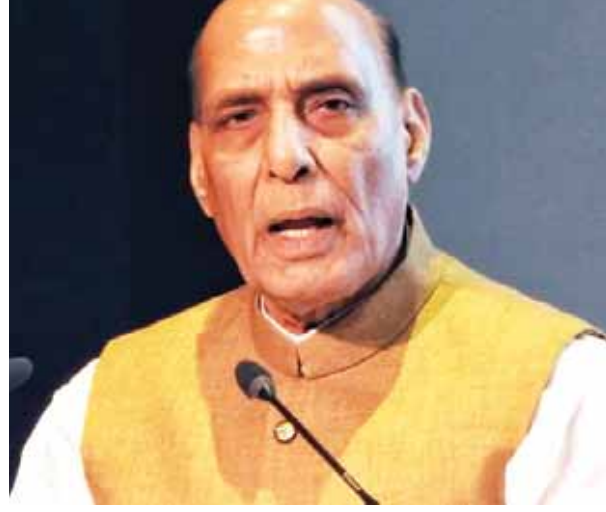
eastern Ladakh. "The positive signalling is coming from the diplomatic side, but what we need to understand (is that) the diplomatic side gives options and possibilities," General Dwivedi said. "But when it comes to the execution on ground, when it relates to ground per se; it is dependent on the military commanders on both sides to take those decisions," he said,

responding to a question. The Army chief also referred to disputes in Depsang and Demchok and said all the pending issues are on the table. "Whatever one can imagine is on the table along the northern front and that includes Depsang and Demchok," he said. Asked about China's construction of villages along the frontier with India, the

Army Chief said that country is carrying out "artificial immigration" and "settlements". "No problem, it is their country," he said, adding India is also having "model villages" in border areas. "But more importantly, now the state governments have been empowered to put in those resources and this is the time when the army, state governments and supervision by the central government are all coming together," he said. The model villages that are being built now will be even better, the Army Chief said. He said there is no Chinese population close to the LAC and that is the reason Beijing is carrying out the "artificial immigration".

The Army Chief also cited how the Chinese fishermen first came to the South China Sea and then the military arrived. Last month, National Security Advisor Ajit Doval and Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi held talks in the Russian city of St Petersburg with a focus on finding an early resolution to the row. In the talks held on the sidelines of a conclave of

# 30 lakh defence pensioners linked to SPARSH: Rajnath Singh



**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI**

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Tuesday said here out of a total of 32 lakh defence pensioners, 30 lakh have been successfully linked to the SPARSH (System for Pension Administration (Raksha)) portal. He made this observation during the 277th Annual Day celebrations of Defence Accounts Department (DAD) at Bharat Mandapam.

While commending DAD's focus on technology adoption, the defence minister asserted that despite numerous challenges, the department has been successful in the implementation of this web-based system, which processes pension claims and credits the pension directly into bank accounts of defence pensioners without any external intermediary. He commended the efforts of DAD towards modernisation and strengthening of the country's defence ecosystem through optimum utilisation of resources, efficiency and transparency in accounting and adoption of latest technologies. He lauded the department for focusing on every little detail, which leads to necessary improvements in defence related policies and proposals. Reflecting on the progress achieved in the defence sector in the last few years,

Rajnath Singh stated that there was a time when acquisitions were mainly dependent on imports, and the positive impact of defence expenditure on the economy was very limited. He added that due to Prime Minister Narendra Modi-led Government's efforts to attain self-reliance, India is today seen as a defence exporter.

The defence minister urged the DAD to prepare a roadmap to make the department a 'Centre of Excellence' in the field of defence finance and economics. He also batted for establishing a robust and comprehensive data management system that gives analytical reports to the government on the impact of defence expenditure on the country's economy, such as the contribution of defence vendors in revenue generation and employment generation. This will prove to be helpful in establishing a holistic policy regime, which would develop a sense of 'Whole of the Government approach', he added.

Tracing its roots to the appointment of the Military Pay Master in 1747, the DAD has continuously re-invented itself to provide exemplary services to the Armed Forces, and in turn to the Nation, in the fields of Internal Audit, Accounting, Financial Advice and Defence Pensions Management.

# Arti Sarin appointed first woman DG of AFMS

**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI**

Surgeon Vice Admiral Arti Sarin, on Tuesday became the first woman officer to take over as the Director General, Armed Forces Medical Services (DGAfMS). The DGAfMS is directly responsible to the Ministry of Defence for overall medical policy matters which relate to the Armed Forces, defence ministry said here.

Prior to assuming the appointment of 46th DGAfMS, the Flag Officer held the coveted appointments of DG Medical Services (Navy), DG Medical Services (Air) and Director and Commandant of Armed Forces Medical College (AFMC), Pune.

She is an alumna of AFMC, Pune and was commissioned into the Armed Forces Medical Services in December 1985. She is an



MD in Radiodiagnosis from AFMC, Pune and Diplomate National Board in Radiation Oncology from Tata Memorial Hospital, Mumbai, complemented with training in Gamma Knife Surgery from University of Pittsburgh.

In a career spanning 38 years, the Flag Officer has held prestigious academic and administrative appointments including Professor and Head, Radiation Oncology, Army Hospital (R&R) and Command Hospital

(Southern Command)/AFMC Pune, Commanding Officer, INHS Asvini, Command Medical Officer in the Indian Navy's Southern and Western Naval Commands. The Flag Officer has the rare distinction of serving in all three branches of the Indian Armed Forces, having served as Lieutenant to Captain in the Indian Army, from Surgeon Lieutenant to Surgeon Vice Admiral in the Indian Navy and as an Air Marshal in the Indian Air Force. The Flag Officer has been recently appointed as a member of the National Task Force by the Supreme Court to formulate safe working conditions and protocols for medical professionals. She has been at the forefront of motivating young women to join the Armed Forces and is a shining icon for the Nari Shakti initiative of the Government.

# PM sends birthday greetings to former president Kovind



**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI**

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday greeted former president Ram Nath Kovind on his birthday, and said he is widely respected for his service to society and con-

tribution to national progress. Kovind, who served as the President from July 2017 to July 2022, turned 79 on Tuesday. "Birthday greetings to our former President, Shri Ram Nath Kovind Ji. He is widely respected for his

service to society and contribution to national progress," Modi said in a social media post. "His insights into various subjects are also very enriching. Praying for his long and healthy life," the prime minister said.

# India to support Jamaica's development in key sectors: PM



Prime Minister Narendra Modi with his Jamaican counterpart Andrew Holness prior to their meeting at Hyderabad House, in New Delhi on Tuesday. Photo By: Ranjan Dimri/The Pioneer

**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI**

India has been a "trusted partner" in Jamaica's development journey and it is ready to share expertise in a range of areas, including digital public infrastructure, biofuel, innovation and health with the Caribbean nation, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said here on Tuesday.

He made the remarks after holding wide-ranging talks with Jamaican Prime Minister Andrew Holness.

In his media statement, Modi said he and Holness also discussed regional and global issues and agreed that all tensions and disputes should be resolved through talks and that both sides will continue to work towards ensuring global peace and security.

India and Jamaica are unanimous that reform of all global institutions, including the UN Security Council, is necessary, he said.

Modi said India has been a "trusted and committed" development partner in Jamaica's growth journey and it will remain so.

"We are ready to share our experience with Jamaica in areas of digital public infrastructure, biofuel, innovation, health, education and agriculture," he said.

In the defence sphere, we will move forward on imparting training and capacity building of Jamaica's armed forces, Modi said.

The prime minister also identified organised crime, drug trafficking, terrorism as common challenges facing both nations. India-Jamaica relations are based on shared history, democratic values and strong people-to-people ties, he added. Holness arrived here on Monday. It is the first ever bilateral visit of a prime minister of Jamaica to India.

# Experts urge NAT to enhance blood donation safety

**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI**

As India grapples with a persistent blood donation deficit, experts have advocated for the mandatory implementation of Nucleic Acid Testing (NAT) to enhance the safety of patients in need given that the rate of infections is higher in replacement donors.

NAT is an additional blood safety measure in addition to ELISA screening method as it directly detects the genetic material (RNA & DNA) of the infecting organism or viruses namely HIV, Hepatitis B and Hepatitis C in reducing their window periods.

On the National Voluntary

Blood Donation Day marked on October 1, the experts also stressed on an urgent call to raise awareness about the importance of blood donation and the pressing need for voluntary contributions.

"Voluntary blood donation has seen growth, yet we still have a significant gap in meeting national demand," said Dr RishiRaj Sinha, Transfusion Medicine Specialist at AIIMS Delhi. Anubha Taneja Mukherjee, Member Secretary of the Thalassemia Patient Advocacy Group, emphasised that many people are unaware of the urgent need for blood, which affects their motivation to donate.



Despite a potential donor base of 402 million people, India consistently falls short of the World Health Organization's (WHO) recommendation of 1 per cent of the population donating blood.

India requires approximately 14.6 million units of blood annually but faces a shortfall of around one million units. This gap is attributed largely to myths and misconceptions about blood donation, particularly concerns over

contracting infections like HIV, as well as a general lack of awareness about the needs of patients requiring regular transfusions, said the medics. To address the safety concerns surrounding blood supply, especially for patients needing frequent transfusions like those suffering with blood disorders such as hemophilia and thalassemia, experts favoured the NAT. For instance, thalassemia patients often need transfusions every 15 to 20 days. "This (NAT) highly sensitive testing method can detect even minute amounts of viruses in donated blood, significantly improving the

safety of transfusions," said Dr Sinha. He explained that while all donated blood undergoes testing, NAT offers a crucial enhancement by reducing the risk of transmitting infections such as HIV, Hepatitis B, and Hepatitis C through early detection.

VK Khanna, Director of the Institute of Child Health Preeti Tuli Thalassemia Unit at Sir Ganga Ram Hospital, Delhi too agreed that implementing NAT testing would particularly benefit patients with conditions requiring regular transfusions, such as thalassemia, sickle cell disease, and cancer.

# Defence Minister flags off car rally to celebrate IAF's 92nd anniversary

**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI**

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Tuesday here flagged off 'Vayu Veer Vijeta' car rally from the National War Memorial to mark the 92nd anniversary of the Indian Air Force (IAF). With the send-off, over 50 air warriors, including women, have left for Thoise in Ladakh, from where they will undertake an expedition to Tawang in Arunachal Pradesh, covering a total of 7,000 kms across nine States/Union Territories (UTs). The rally will also witness the participation of former Air Force Chiefs in different legs.

Speaking on the occasion, the defence minister lauded the air warriors for serving the motherland in difficult circumstances with bravery, dedication and patriotism. "IAF has achieved significant feats in its bid to protect the country and its people. It is

capable of giving a befitting reply to the country's enemies by striking them deep into their territory. Under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, we are committed to equip IAF with most advanced aircraft/platforms and make them more capable through the 'Aatmanirbhar Bharat' initiative," he said.

The defence minister extended his best wishes to the air warriors, who will be part of the rally that would traverse through tough and varied terrains. The formal flag-off will take place on October eight from Thoise, which is one of the world's highest altitude air force station at 3,068m above mean sea level. The air warriors will halt at Leh, Kargil, Srinagar, Jammu, Chandigarh, Dehradun, Agra, Lucknow, Gorakhpur, Darbhanga, Bagdogra, Hasimara, Guwahati, Tezpur and Dirang, before concluding the rally in Tawang on October 29, 2024.

The aim of the rally is to raise awareness among the people about the glorious history of IAF; the deeds of valour of the air warriors in different wars and rescue operations and attract the youth to serve the motherland. The defence minister stated that during the car rally, the air warriors will hold interactions with the youth at schools and colleges in various States/UTs, exuding confidence that the exchanges would motivate the young ignited minds to join the Armed Forces and lead the life of pride and honour.

Chief of the Air Staff Air Chief Marshal AP Singh, former Chiefs RKS Bhadauria (Retired) and A Y Tipnis (Retired) and other senior officials of IAF were present on the occasion.

The rally has been organised by IAF in coordination with the veterans of Uttarakhand War Memorial. The Adventure Cell of IAF is leading and coordinating the rally.

# IIT Madras innovates laser heating for retinal drug delivery

**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI**

In a ray of hope for millions suffering from retinal disorders in the country, researchers at IIT Madras have developed a groundbreaking method to enhance drug delivery directly to the retina by utilising mild laser heating. The innovative approach promises to significantly improve the efficacy of treatments administered through eye injections.

Published in the peer-reviewed Wiley Heat Transfer journal, the research focuses on overcoming the challenges posed by the gel-like vitreous humour in the eye, which is often replaced by less viscous fluids after retinal laser surgery.

Traditional methods of drug delivery rely on slow natural diffusion, which can take hours or even days for drugs to reach effective levels at the target site.

Prof. Arun Narasimhan, Department of Mechanical Engineering, IIT Madras, designed an experiment using



a glass eye mimic geometrically similar to the human eye, water, and silicone oil for the vitreous liquid and a heater to simulate laser heating. The researchers injected a dye as a drug mimic at specific points in the vitreous region of the eye, and measured concentrations at different retinal locations with and without heating the vitreous liquid. Remarkably, while natural diffusion alone took 12 hours to achieve effective concentration, the application of mild heating reduced this time to just 12 minutes. "While with natural diffusion alone, the drug mimic took 12 hours to achieve effective concentration at the target region of the retina, heating

the vitreous liquid reduced it to just 12 minutes," said Shirinvas Vibuthu, Graduate Student, at IIT Madras. This research is particularly vital for the estimated 11 million individuals in India affected by retinal disorders. Since the retina is the region of the eye that contains blood vessels and nerves, such treatments must be performed carefully and with precision, the team said. "Using glass-eye experiments and bioheat simulations to analyse invasive treatments in the human eye, we have shown that mild targeted heating can enhance drug delivery to the retina. The medical community needs to take this further and implement it in treatments of retinal diseases," Narasimhan said.

# Doctors resume cease work following threats, attacks

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

Junior doctors of Bengal demanding "justice for Abhaya" --- the lady doctor who was on August 9 raped and murdered inside the RG Kar Medical College and Hospital --- and better security in Government hospitals resumed cease work from Tuesday alleging the promises made earlier by the State in support of their demands had not been fulfilled.

The second phase of cease work begins barely within a fortnight of the first phase when the agitating doctors called off their strike following talks with Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee who reportedly assured them of all cooperation that included creating right kind of working environment inside the hospitals. The resumption of cease work comes after attacks over the past one week on junior doctors

in three State-run medical colleges.

"We were hopeful that after our talks with the Chief Minister and following that the Chief Secretary concrete measures would be taken to ensure safety and security of the doctors inside the hospitals ... but while the Government is claiming in the Supreme Court that major steps have been taken things seem to be running in a snail's pace ... our colleague in RG Kar Medical College was raped and murdered due to this slack security system ... despite such a big incident and words given by the Government there has been three to four attacks at Sagor Dutta Medical College, CNM Medical College, Rampurhat Medical College and today at Burdwan Medical College ... whereas the Government is indifferent ... so we had no other way but to return to the cease work," said Dr Kinjal Nanda one of the



leaders of the Joint Platform of Junior Doctors. Doctor Debashis Haldar said one of the leaders of the movement also said how "we were left with no option but to cease work as despite assurances given by the Chief Minister we

are being attacked whereas the administration is sitting idle ... if this continues then how far away is a second RG Kar like incident." When asked about the removal of senior officers including the former Kolkata Police Commissioner and two

Directors of Health following talks with the Chief Minister, Dr Aniket said that "those were not the entire list of demands ... they were only some preliminary steps that we had asked for." He also pointed out at how

senior politicians and MLAs like Humayun Kabir of Murshidabad were publicly threatening the doctors with dire consequences everyday should they not stop their agitation, saying "we have come to treat and serve people ... we have come to learn as junior doctors and not to die at the hands of hoodlums." A list of ten demands presented by the doctors read:

1. Abhaya's demand for justice should be addressed without delay, avoiding any extended judicial proceedings, The Health Ministry needs to be held accountable for administrative failures and corruption, and should promptly remove the Health Secretary from their role.
2. A state-wide centralised referral system must be swiftly introduced in all hospitals and medical institutions.
3. Each medical college and hospital should implement a

4. digital system to monitor bed vacancies.
5. Task forces, with elected junior doctor representatives, must be established in all hospitals and medical colleges to oversee the installation of CCTVs, on-call rooms, and bathroom facilities.
6. Police presence in hospitals should be strengthened by hiring permanent male and female officers, rather than relying on civic volunteers.
7. Immediate action is needed to fill all vacant positions for doctors, nurses, and healthcare workers in hospitals.
8. Investigative committees must be set up in each medical college to probe individuals involved in threat activities, with a state-level inquiry committee also formed.
9. Student council elections must be conducted in all medical colleges without delay, with recognition of RDAs and elected student and junior doctor

representation in decision-making bodies.

10. Immediate investigation is required into the widespread corruption and disorder within the West Bengal Medical Council (WBMC) and the West Bengal Health Recruitment Board (WBHRB). While there was no immediate response from the Chief Minister senior TMC leader Kunal Ghosh said that he hoped "good sense will prevail and the doctors will return to work as they also do not want people to die ... by resuming their cease work they will only harm the common people and none else."

Meanwhile, the joint forum of doctors have called for a Mahamichi or a Grand rally on Mahalaya day --- or the day when Devi Paksha sets in according to the Hindu calendar --- in demand for Justice for Abhaya or the RGKMCH victim.

## Cyber attacks have emerged as major threat to national security: President Murmu

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

President Droupadi Murmu on Tuesday said here cyber attacks have emerged as a major threat to the national security and the civil services and armed forces must join hands to create a secure nationwide system capable of thwarting them.

She said the country's security concerns extend beyond preservation of territorial integrity and encompass other areas of national well-being such as economic, environmental, energy security, and cyber security related issues. "Addressing these concerns requires intensive research, and calls for a holistic approach in dealing with these wide-ranging issues," the president said addressing faculty and course members of 64th National Defence College course, who had called on her at the Rashtrapati Bhavan.

President Murmu said cyber attacks have emerged as a major threat to the national security. Dealing with and countering cyber attacks requires high-end technological intervention as well as robust digital infrastructure



along with a well-trained and specialised human resource, she said.

"It is an issue that affects the entire governance framework of the country across all sectors. This is one of the areas where our civil services and armed forces must join hands to create a secure nationwide system capable of thwarting such attacks," the President said.

She said huge amounts of data and sensitive information are available in the governance systems "which cannot be left unsecured" and urged them to understand

the gravity of this issue besides taking concrete measures to address it.

President Murmu said the role of the armed forces has expanded far beyond traditional military matters and that the future conflicts will require a multi-state, multi-agency approach. "One of the major bottlenecks in achieving the goals is that various organisations and departments work in silos. On one hand, achieving the larger goals become difficult while on the other hand, similar jobs are performed by different departments thus creat-

ing a resource crunch," the president said.

She said it has also been observed that officers working in the same department also keep performing overlapping tasks due to systemic gaps or lack of clear delineation of jobs.

"This course, therefore, makes an important contribution in preparing the officers for enhancing cooperation to perform efficiently," President Murmu told the faculty and course members.

The NDC course is aimed at providing a holistic view of contemporary economic, political and related aspects with particular emphasis on security issues to the participants drawn from different disciplines -- including those from Indian Administrative Service (IAS) and Indian Police Service (IPS) officers among others.

Visits to important military stations and frontier posts and some foreign countries form an integral part of the course curriculum.

She said the dynamic global geo-political environment poses numerous challenges. "The fast pace at which events have unfolded in the recent past, could not have been foreseen perhaps a decade earlier.

Thus, all officers, whether from civil services or defence services, must be aware of the challenges and vulnerabilities they face, and the strengths that can help deal with such challenges," the president said.

Addressing the faculty and course members, she said technology is advancing rapidly and it is imperative to keep pace with it.

"Whether it is artificial intelligence, data science, machine language processing or blockchain, you have to be aware of these technologies and should utilise them in your departments for creating a more efficient, transparent and productive work culture," the President said.

She said innovation is another factor that will keep the officers future ready. "Each nation is guided in its actions by its national interests and objectives. Sometimes, you have to face unforeseen situations and crisis. For you to be always prepared for dealing with such situations, it is necessary to be innovative, resourceful and open to collaborations," the president said.

## HAL delivers first AL-31FP engine for Su-30MKI aircraft to IAF

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ BENGALURU



Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) has handed over the first AL-31FP Aero Engine, manufactured under the 240 engine contract, to the Indian Air Force at Koraput in Odisha. The contract for 240 AL-31FP Aero Engines for Su-30MKI aircraft was signed on September nine, Bengaluru-headquartered HAL noted in a statement on Tuesday. It also said these engines would be deliv-

ered in eight years.

The statement said Secretary (Defence Production) Sanjeev Kumar lauded HAL's efforts in delivering the first engine within weeks of signing the contract.

"This key milestone reflects HAL's aero engine manufacturing competency and dedication to support the Su-30MKI fleet of IAF. It is very heartening to see that Koraput Division has mastered cutting edge technologies of aero engine manufacturing and has set up required infra-

structure to match with the global OEMs," he said.

Chief of HAL D K Sunil said "During this entire engine manufacturing process, we aim to engage Indian industries from present level of work share from 40 per cent to more than 50 per cent in next two-three years and help in employment generation."

Sukhoi Engine Division, Koraput, was created by HAL for manufacture of engines of Su-30MKI aircraft from raw material stage to final engine, it was noted.

## BJP, Congress engage in war of words over Wangchuk's detention

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The BJP and Congress engaged in a war of words on Tuesday regarding detention of climate activist Sonam Wangchuk and several others accompanying him at the Delhi border on Monday.

While Leader of Opposition Rahul Gandhi slammed the government for the action terming it as "unacceptable," the BJP described the Congress' condemnation of the detention as "hypocrisy in extreme".

Rahul Gandhi also said Prime Minister Narendra Modi will have to listen to Ladakh's voice. Wangchuk and more than 100 people from Ladakh, who had marched to Delhi demanding that the union territory be included in the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution, were detained at the capital's border on Monday for violating prohibitory orders and taken to



different police stations. Asked about the Congress' reaction, senior BJP leader Ravi Shankar said, "I don't know the facts. I will have to check the facts."

"If Rahul Gandhi has a comment to make, why (does) he maintain a conspicuous silence when cartoonists are lifted in Kolkata and a satirist is jailed in Tamil Nadu," Shankar asked, adding that the Congress leader's reaction to Wangchuk's detention was "hypocrisy in extreme".

A Jadavpur University profes-

sor and his neighbour were arrested in West Bengal in 2012 for posting on social media a cartoon showing Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee. In 2017, a freelance cartoonist was arrested in Tamil Nadu for allegedly depicting the then chief minister K Palaniswami in an obscene manner in a caricature.

"The detention of Sonam Wangchuk ji and hundreds of Ladakhis peacefully marching for environmental and constitutional rights is unacceptable," Rahul Gandhi said in a social media post.

The former Congress chief also asked why elderly citizens were being detained at Delhi's border for standing up for Ladakh's future.

"Modi ji, like with the farmers, this 'Chakravayuh' will be broken, and so will your arrogance. You will have to listen to Ladakh's voice," Rahul Gandhi said.

## Congress leaders' families are engaged in land grab: BJP

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Amid a row over MUDA site allocation case in Karnataka, the BJP on Tuesday raised the issue of allocation of a land to a trust run by AICC president Mallikarjun Kharge's family in Bengaluru, alleging that the Congress leaders' families are engaged in "land grab".

Addressing a press conference here, senior BJP leader Ravi Shankar Prasad alleged that the Congress government in Karnataka has allocated 5 acres of land to Siddhartha Vihar Trust, run by Kharge's family, under "suspicious circumstances" and demanded a "transparent and honest" reply from the Congress president to the questions being raised on the issue.

"It's surprising that the Siddaramaiah government allocated the 5-acre land to the trust in a high-tech defence area in Bangalore for setting up an R&D facility," he said.

"And the interesting thing



do its work. But when there are so many suspicious circumstances surrounding this entire fast-track allotment, Kharge ji will have to reply. He is Congress president and also leader of the opposition in Rajya Sabha," he said. The BJP expects a transparent and honest reply from the Congress president, he added.

Prasad said the BJP does not have any problem if a land is allocated to a 'genuine trust for genuine purpose in an authentic manner'. "But the way the political leaders' families are engaging in land grab movement in the garb of trust, it is wrong. We vehemently condemn it. It's a serious issue," he said. "We

hope that action will be taken on this," he added.

The BJP leader alleged that such land deals become "rampant" in the state wherever the Congress comes to power. "Today a serious question is being raised as to why the Congress government and its leaders have great fascination for land deals," he said, adding, "Have some of their leaders become property dealers?"

On the MUDA site allocation issue, the BJP leader said the case is being investigated "honestly."

Karnataka Lokayukta police has registered a case against Siddaramaiah on the directions of a special court in connection with the alleged irregularities in the Mysuru Urban Development Authority (MUDA) site allocation. The Enforcement Directorate has also booked the chief minister, his wife Parvathi and some others in a money laundering case linked to the land allotment case, taking cognisance of the Lokayukta FIR.

## Travelers to soon share experiences at tourist hotspots using QR codes

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Soon, travelers will be able to share their experiences at popular tourist hotspots and destinations, such as monuments, by scanning strategically placed QR codes at airports and railway stations nationwide.

Aiming to actively engage the travelers in the growth of India's tourism sector, the Union Tourism Ministry is in the process of introducing such an innovative feedback mechanism.

"Feedback and ratings of experiences by travelers will be collected by enabling them to scan a QR code placed at relevant points at airports and railway stations, spending around 30 seconds to rate



their tourist experience and provide any feedback," explained an official from the Ministry.

He added that this feedback will be real-time and dynamic in nature, allowing the Ministry to address issues

proactively in collaboration with various stakeholders. This will also prove to be a rich source of data and insights for tourism development.

"By installing the QR codes provided by the Union Ministries of Tourism, Civil Aviation, and Railways, they are collaborating to set up these mechanisms at airports and railway stations across the country, so that over time, they become a reliable source of insight and information for tourism policy and strategy." Operators in the tourism industry have supported this innovative approach. Rajnish Kaistha, Senior Vice President at the Indian Association of Tour Operators (IATO), said that it will not only enhance the visitor experience but also

enable businesses and authorities to make data-driven improvements. "By actively involving tourists in the development process, the initiative is expected to foster greater collaboration between stakeholders, leading to a more responsive and dynamic tourism environment," he said.

Ritu Jain, Director of Coterie Tours Private Ltd, concurred, saying that with real-time feedback, the government can address concerns of the stakeholders swiftly, ensuring that every traveler's voice is heard. "This proactive strategy promises to enrich the tourism landscape in India, making it more appealing and accessible for both domestic and international visitors."

## Israel's move to set up shell company to send explosive pagers to Lebanon masterstroke: Army Chief

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Army Chief General Aupendra Dwivedi on Tuesday termed the move by Israel as a "masterstroke" to set up a shell company that manufactured the explosive pagers sent to Lebanon. It was aimed to derail Hezbollah.

Making this assertion here, he also said the move required years and years of preparation by Israel. Speaking at the Chanakya Defence Dialogue, the Army chief "the war does not start the day you start planning. Israel has now shifted its military focus from the Gaza Strip to its northern border



with Lebanon, where it has targeted Hezbollah and killed its chief Hassan Nasrallah and several top commanders. "Israel has done something different. Israel had decided that Hamas was their primary target. So, Israel first wiped out Hamas and then focused on the other side (Hezbollah). The shell company that was created for the pagers was

something of a masterstroke by Israel," General Dwivedi said.

Last month, multiple explosions of Hezbollah members in Lebanon killed nearly 40 and left over 3,000 injured. Asserting the need for various levels of inspection at the technological level, General Dwivedi said India needed to be "watchful" of supply chain interruptions.

"Supply chain interruption, interception is something we have to be very watchful of. We need to have various levels of inspection at the technological level as well as the manual level to make sure such things do not get repeated in our case," the Army chief said.



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PAPER WITH PASSION

## Saving Ladakh

Sonam Wangchuk's foot march highlights the urgent need for ecological protection and local autonomy of Ladakh

Ladakh, a region known for its breathtaking landscapes and unique culture, is now under threat from an ecological disaster. Climate change and unchecked development are eroding its delicate environment, pushing it towards a tipping point. In the face of this growing crisis, climate activist Sonam Wangchuk has emerged as a key figure in the fight to protect Ladakh. Recently, he, along with over 100 supporters, embarked on a foot march from Leh to New Delhi to demand concrete steps for safeguarding Ladakh's fragile ecosystem and securing the region's autonomy under the Sixth Schedule of the Indian Constitution. However, upon reaching Delhi's Singhu border, Wangchuk and his supporters were detained by the police for violating prohibitory orders. Despite this setback, the march has already sparked widespread attention and support for his demands. Ladakh's environment is one of the most sensitive in India. Nestled in the Himalayan range, the region is already witnessing alarming impacts of climate change. Melting glaciers, shrinking water sources, and unpredictable weather patterns are threatening not only the ecosystem but also the livelihoods of the local population.



The rapid melting of glaciers is particularly concerning as they are the primary source of water for the region. This has caused Ladakh to face a severe water crisis, with rivers and streams drying up at an unprecedented rate. Unchecked tourism and infrastructure development further exacerbate the issue. Waste management remains a significant challenge, and the increasing construction of roads and buildings has disrupted the natural landscape. Wangchuk, who is known for his innovative environmental solutions like the 'Ice Stupa' project, has been vocal about the need for sustainable development in Ladakh. His demands are not only about preserving the environment but also about giving the local people the power to manage their resources and protect their cultural identity. One of his primary demands is to include Ladakh under the Sixth Schedule of the Indian Constitution. The Sixth Schedule provides special protections and autonomy to certain tribal areas in India, allowing them to preserve their culture, manage their resources, and have law-making powers over local matters. Ladakh, with its predominantly tribal population and distinct cultural heritage, has been seeking similar protection. The people of Ladakh in general have expressed disappointment with the current governance structure, which is led by a Lieutenant Governor appointed by the central government. Right now the people of Ladakh have a limited say in decision making. Granting Ladakh Sixth Schedule status would empower its people to make decisions that are in line with their unique environmental and cultural needs. It would allow them to enact laws that protect their fragile ecosystem, manage resources more effectively, and ensure sustainable development. The people of Ladakh are making their voices heard. Now, it is up to the government and the rest of the nation to listen and take meaningful action.

The Chinese have invented an apple-picking machine which is yet to make its commercial debut. Here, in the fields too, John has manufactured several walking trails - the special one is along the Medway river to Tonbridge town which has everything from Marks and Spencers to Waitrose and Sainsburys to Kathmandu Valley and Dalchini restaurants to Humphrey and Bean Pub where we were privy to a brawl. There is also the Tonbridge Castle. My favourite walk though is through the Higham Woods. This I did every morning, meeting making friends with people walking their dogs. Every house here has a cat or a dog or even a horse! Almost every afternoon John and I did serious walking bringing the milemeter to roughly 120 plus miles in 12 days. In his spare time, John moves auto parts and trucks in the UK and Europe where too, Brexit means cost and time overruns. At the Labour Party annual conference, Starmer said he wants to reset relations with European Union and make Brexit work with the EU reset. The biggest applause at the conference was reserved for the Home Secretary, who decried the recent racial riots. Migrants continue to sail across the Channel and since Rwanda is a closed issue, they will be settled in Britain. I've been travelling to the UK since the 1970s and can say this: Indian or Asian or coloured are no longer looked down upon even though many of the menial jobs are still being done by them. I was horrified to learn that there is a Gorkha Cleaning Company in Kent. The Gorkhas, the Brits once worshipped in battle are all but forgotten except by the likes of Joanna Lumley. This became more evident in London where along a side lane from Whitehall Avenue resides the life-sized stone statue of the eternal Gorkha soldier. The plan to raise a third battalion of Gorkha Rifles was abandoned though three Gorkha companies were raised for the Special Forces. Aldershot is where retired Gorkhas allowed residency in Britain live, while the battalion is further south. The other battalion is in Brunei for which the Sultan pays. Sadly, very few recognise the badges of the Gorkha Regiment any more. Why blame the Brits when we have offered the poor choice of Agniveer to Nepali Gorkhas who stopped joining five years ago? The British Army is 70,000 (with a reserve of 30,000) soldiers and Infantry less than the size of our Gorkha Brigade. The Navy and Air Force together make another 70,000 warriors but all field state-of-the-art equipment including conventional and strategic forces which are the best in Europe. The military component of the Indian High Commission in Aldwych has been downsize from three officers to just one with a Naval Commodore holding the fort instead of the Army Brigadier. Returning to my trudge on the tarmac along Whitehall Avenue, the old MoD has become Raffles Hotel, RUSI next door nated and a few meters ahead are bronze statues of leaders who won fame in India: Field Marshals Slim, Auchinleck, and Allanbrooke. Another Indian famous is the Duke of Wellington honoured in Trafalgar Square and Wellington Corner. The Brits nurture the military and that's one reason they are respected. Thoughts that wafted during the walk in the woods. We must learn.

### PICTALK



A view of Humayun's Tomb, a UNESCO world heritage site, in New Delhi

# Walking through the woods in UK



ASHOK K MEHTA

Suspension of winter fuel allowances, Starmer's push to reset relations with Europe, and the forgotten legacy of the Gorkhas are echoing in the woods of the UK

Hadlow Stair is a village in Tonbridge Kent, UK, with the Old Hadlow Road leading to it. Tonbridge is a poorer cousin of the historic Tunbridge Wells but a great place for a walking-talking vacation this September when the sun broke through the clouds permitting invigorating small walks. Hadlow Stair is the perfect escape from rain-spoilt London, just 40 minutes away by train to Charing Cross in Trafalgar Square. Ordinary Brits have been stunned by the new Labour, suspending Pound 200 winter fuel allowance to pensioners, ostensibly to fill the Pound 22 bn deficit left by the Tories though inflation is below 3 per cent. In the village, most read newspapers only on the weekend: the talk is about Ukraine, Gaza and Lebanon and Prime Minister Keir Starmer and his wife accepting gifts. Former civil servant Sue Gray who sort-ed out Boris Johnson for his indiscretions during the pandemic is now the chief advisor to Starmer with a pay package of Pounds 180,000, surpassing the wages the PM gets. Modernising Britain's Continuous Sea Deterrence as well as upgrading its nuclear submarines from Vanguard to Dreadnought class is also underway. Peers in the House of Lords warned that 2.5 per cent on defence spending (at present 2.3 per cent) may not be enough to meet the challenges and fix the military.



Here too, there is a Pound 10 bn hole which is proposed to be filled up by taxes. India's spending is below 2 per cent with immeasurably bigger threats. But who cares! All this and more, John Lawson, my walking companion shares with me. Amongst all the walks the one in the undulating woods nearby is most enjoyable as John takes myriad routes and detours along the soggy earthy soil. You can do a dozen different trails here and not know they are in the same woods. Go south from Hadlow Road past the Scottish St Andrews Church across fields and through apple orchards with apples to eat and apples to cook. But there are no pickers due to Brexit, laments John.

The Chinese have invented an apple-picking machine which is yet to make its commercial debut. Here, in the fields too, John has manufactured several walking trails - the special one is along the Medway river to Tonbridge town which has everything from Marks and Spencers to Waitrose and Sainsburys to Kathmandu Valley and Dalchini restaurants to Humphrey and Bean Pub where we were privy to a brawl. There is also the Tonbridge Castle. My favourite walk though is through the Higham Woods. This I did every morning, meeting making friends with people walking their dogs. Every house here has a cat or a dog or even a horse! Almost every afternoon John and I did serious walking bringing the milemeter to roughly 120 plus miles in 12 days. In his spare time, John moves auto parts and trucks in the UK and Europe where too, Brexit means cost and time overruns. At the Labour Party annual conference, Starmer said he wants to reset relations with European Union and make Brexit work with the EU reset. The biggest applause at the conference was reserved for the Home Secretary, who decried the recent racial riots. Migrants continue to sail across the Channel and since Rwanda is a closed issue, they will be settled in Britain. I've been travelling to the UK since the 1970s and can say this: Indian or Asian or coloured are no longer looked down upon even though many of the menial jobs are still being done by them. I was horrified to learn that there is a Gorkha Cleaning Company in Kent. The Gorkhas, the Brits once worshipped in battle are all but forgotten except by the likes of Joanna Lumley. This became more evident in London where along a side lane from Whitehall Avenue resides the life-sized stone statue of the eternal Gorkha soldier. The plan to raise a third battalion of Gorkha Rifles was abandoned though three Gorkha companies were raised for the Special Forces. Aldershot is where retired Gorkhas allowed residency in Britain live, while the battalion is further south. The other battalion is in Brunei for which the Sultan pays. Sadly, very few recognise the badges of the Gorkha Regiment any more. Why blame the Brits when we have offered the poor choice of Agniveer to Nepali Gorkhas who stopped joining five years ago? The British Army is 70,000 (with a reserve of 30,000) soldiers and Infantry less than the size of our Gorkha Brigade. The Navy and Air Force together make another 70,000 warriors but all field state-of-the-art equipment including conventional and strategic forces which are the best in Europe. The military component of the Indian High Commission in Aldwych has been downsize from three officers to just one with a Naval Commodore holding the fort instead of the Army Brigadier. Returning to my trudge on the tarmac along Whitehall Avenue, the old MoD has become Raffles Hotel, RUSI next door nated and a few meters ahead are bronze statues of leaders who won fame in India: Field Marshals Slim, Auchinleck, and Allanbrooke. Another Indian famous is the Duke of Wellington honoured in Trafalgar Square and Wellington Corner. The Brits nurture the military and that's one reason they are respected. Thoughts that wafted during the walk in the woods. We must learn.



THE PLAN TO RAISE A THIRD BATTALION OF GORKHA RIFLES WAS ABANDONED THOUGH THREE GORKHA COMPANIES WERE RAISED FOR THE SPECIAL FORCES. ALDRERSHOT IS WHERE RETIRED GORKHAS ALLOWED RESIDENCY IN BRITAIN LIVE, WHILE THE BATTALION IS FURTHER SOUTH

The plan to raise a third battalion of Gorkha Rifles was abandoned though three Gorkha companies were raised for the Special Forces. Aldershot is where retired Gorkhas allowed residency in Britain live, while the battalion is further south. The other battalion is in Brunei for which the Sultan pays. Sadly, very few recognise the badges of the Gorkha Regiment any more. Why blame the Brits when we have offered the poor choice of Agniveer to Nepali Gorkhas who stopped joining five years ago? The British Army is 70,000 (with a reserve of 30,000) soldiers and Infantry less than the size of our Gorkha Brigade. The Navy and Air Force together make another 70,000 warriors but all field state-of-the-art equipment including conventional and strategic forces which are the best in Europe. The military component of the Indian High Commission in Aldwych has been downsize from three officers to just one with a Naval Commodore holding the fort instead of the Army Brigadier. Returning to my trudge on the tarmac along Whitehall Avenue, the old MoD has become Raffles Hotel, RUSI next door nated and a few meters ahead are bronze statues of leaders who won fame in India: Field Marshals Slim, Auchinleck, and Allanbrooke. Another Indian famous is the Duke of Wellington honoured in Trafalgar Square and Wellington Corner. The Brits nurture the military and that's one reason they are respected. Thoughts that wafted during the walk in the woods. We must learn.

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### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

#### WEST ASIA TURMOIL

Madam — Apropos, 'West Asia on fire' (September 30). Israel which had vowed 'enough is enough' in the aftermath of a brutal terrorist attack by Hamas on October 7 last year, has dealt a body blow to Hezbollah, the most powerful militant and political force in Lebanon, by eliminating its head Hassan Nasrallah, who had been a global figurehead of anti-Israeli resistance for decades. He had been a prime target of Israel since the last Lebanon War of 2008. Now, Hezbollah, considered the vital part of the Axis of Resistance, is leaderless and thus rudderless. However, Nasrallah's demise may only keep Hezbollah lying down for a while. It cannot be written off. Wounded but not destroyed, it may not be long before Hezbollah tries to avenge Nasrallah by raining a barrage of missiles on Israel to keep its people from returning to the northern region. Netanyahu stakes his political fortunes on this. Meanwhile, with thousands of its citizens fleeing northern Israel in wake of Hezbollah strikes, Israel's main task remains unaccomplished. Its bombarding Lebanon may go on till Netanyahu gets war-weary and domestic pressures mount or until breakthrough on the hostage issue. It is an opportune time for the international community should it desire to prevail upon Tel Aviv to agree for ceasefire. But peace is unlikely to return to Gaza till Hamas frees hostages and a ceasefire is reached.

N Sadasiva Reddy | Washington

#### NON BJP STATES WITHDRAW CBI CONSENT

Madam — Karnataka has joined the long list of states that have withdrawn general consent to the CBI to conduct investigations relating to corruption, economic offences and crime or violence in that particular state. The Delhi Special Police Establishment (DSPE) Act, 1946, under which the CBI was setup, has defined general consent and

### Women education empowers India



Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar made insightful remarks on the significance of women's education. He said that a developed India is incomplete without women's empowerment, which is a powerful reminder of the crucial role they play in our society. Women constitute a substantial portion of our

population, and their active participation in all spheres of life is essential for holistic development. By investing in women's education, we not only unlock their individual potential but also empower their families and communities. Educated women are more likely to make informed decisions regarding health, nutrition, and child-rearing, leading to healthier and more prosperous families. Moreover, women's education is a catalyst for economic growth. When women have access to education and employment opportunities, they contribute to the workforce, boost GDP, and reduce poverty. Their participation in decision-making processes ensures that diverse perspectives are considered, leading to more inclusive and equitable policies.

Fiza Fatima | Hyderabad

#### POTHLES OF CORRUPTION

Madam —No matter which party is in power, the conditions of the roads all over the nation are pathetic. It requires no rocket science to understand why this is happening. Corruption is the root cause as inferior quality materials are used due to cuts taken by everybody from top to bottom in passing tenders and clearing bills. Therefore, it is hard to be enthused about the promise of pothole free roads by the CM of Delhi Atishi Marlena. Accidents caused by bad roads have come at a great cost including injury and sometimes fatality with no accountability fixed for the loss, what is worse, it is not just potholes but literally craters the vehicles are expected to navigate. Recently, there was a container truck that was completely swallowed by the road. This despite the vehicle owners being made to pay all kinds of taxes for permission to park their vehicles on such roads!

Anthony Henriques | Mumbai

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

Ganapathi Bhat| Akola

## Remembering Gandhi: A journey of justice and simplicity

Gandhi's transformative journey, which began with racial discrimination in South Africa, helped shape his lifelong pursuit of justice, equality and nonviolence



RAJDEEP PATHAK

On September 11, 2024, Union Minister for Culture, Gajendra Singh Shekhawat, inaugurated a restored railway coach at Gandhi Darshan, Rajghat, New Delhi. This coach, donated by the Ministry of Railways and painted in brown with a "III" marking for third class, represents Mahatma Gandhi's simple lifestyle and his close relationship with the Indian railways. A life-size sculpture of Gandhi stepping off the train further emphasises his connection with the masses. Organised by the Gandhi Smriti and Darshan Samiti, the exhibition offers an immersive experience of Gandhi's rail journeys. Shekhawat, in his address, highlighted how Gandhi turned the freedom struggle into a mass movement, remarking that the coach will inspire future generations to uphold the values of justice, equality, and peace for which Gandhi stood.



A key moment occurred on June 7, 1893, in Pietermaritzburg, South Africa, when Gandhi, then a young barrister, was forcibly removed from a first-class train compartment despite having a valid ticket. This act of racial discrimination left a lasting impact on Gandhi and ignited his lifelong dedication to justice and nonviolent resistance. He often referred to this incident as the turning point that set him on the path toward becoming the Mahatma.

Gopal Krishna Gandhi, Gandhi's grandson, poignantly reflected on this moment. He wrote that when Gandhi was thrown off the train, an Indian fell, but when Gandhi rose, both India and South Africa rose with him. The experience transformed Gandhi, turning a personal

humiliation into a public cause. What began as a lawyer's indignation became a revolutionary's commitment to human justice. His later train journeys in South Africa, including those to Johannesburg and Pretoria, deepened his understanding of racial discrimination in the railway system. Gandhi confronted railway officials and managed to negotiate some concessions for Indian passengers, marking the beginning of his use of negotiation and protest as tools for change.

Upon returning to India in 1914, Gandhi's relationship with the railways grew stronger. He followed the advice of his mentor, Gopal Krishna Gokhale, by traveling in third-class compartments to stay connected with India's impoverished masses. For

Gandhi, trains were a means to engage with ordinary people and understand their struggles firsthand. The challenging conditions he faced—overcrowded compartments, unsanitary surroundings—only strengthened his resolve to fight for social justice. His decision to travel third class symbolised his commitment to egalitarianism and helped transform the freedom struggle into a mass movement that resonated with the broader population. Gandhi traveled by train from Calcutta to Delhi and stayed at Birla House where he spent the last 144 days of his life. During this time, he tirelessly worked for peace amidst the communal violence of Partition. His assassination in January 1948 ended a life devoted to nonviolence and service to humanity. As we celebrate Gandhi Jayanti today as the International Day of Nonviolence, we are reminded of Gandhi's self-sacrifice, dedication, and compassion. (The writer is Programme Executive, Gandhi Smriti and Darshan Samiti; views are personal)



## FIRST COLUMN

### SLEEP, SPIRITUALITY AND THE MODERN MIND

Reclaiming quality sleep requires reconnecting with spiritual practices



AJIT KUMAR BISHNOI

In the famous poem "Childhood", Ravindra Nath Tagore bemoans the loss of innocence as a child grows up. One thing we can all agree that to sleep like a child is a great asset. But as we grow up our minds begin to play havoc with our sleep. Before I go any further let us understand the basics of sleep. Sleep is one of the most important biological functions and inadequate sleep can cause many problems. Sleep is the time when the body rejuvenates itself. Sleep restores physical well-being and removes fatigue related to emotional activities.

Our brains are beehives of activities during sleep, including the time when one is dreaming. How much sleep is required? It depends on each individual according to age, type of activities, level of activities, etc. Lord Krishna has mentioned sleep as one of the four activities, which must be appropriate. (The Bhagavad-Geeta 6.17) We need sleep excellence. What does the modern man do? There are three types. One cuts on sleep and another cannot fall asleep and resorts to drinks and drugs.

The third sleeps too much wasting precious human life. Taking up the busy ones, they have no respect for rules made by God – the Creator of our bodies. They feel that they can do with less sleep and nothing adverse will happen. But they get harmed in many ways.

The first causality is the energy level; it goes down. Physical health is affected in many ways, but it takes a long; one feels that he is fine until hit by some serious health problem. Performance declines; cognitive ability reduces; memory consolidation is affected as does mental health. You cannot copy someone else, because, as stated earlier,



er, it is, person specific – a bodily necessity. The second group suffers no less, if anything substantially more in the long term.

One thinks that he can order the body to sleep whenever one wants. Have you tried to postpone sleep? What happens? Circadian rhythms are 24-hour cycles that are part of the body's internal clock. Its primary function is sleeping and waking.

We cannot take charge; it controls us. So what does the modern man do? He resorts to artificially induced sleep by taking drinks and drugs. We all know what drinks do to our liver. And drugs are similarly harmful to the brain. Both are habit forming. One is stuck once this is continued over some time. Why is one unable to fall asleep, when bodily and mentally tired? Because we have allowed our minds to take charge of our lives.

We have unlimited desires for a sense of enjoyment, power, fame, etc. We are being driven by emotions like lust, greed, anger, hate, etc. By the way, drinks and drugs do not stop bad and scary dreams from coming, which leave a very bad feeling upon waking up.

The third kind harms oneself in more ways than one by making sleep one's shelter. Let us come to our senses. Shelter is available in God. There are simple spiritual practices, which connect one to God. He will help us curb our wrong tendencies, as only God can. But one has to first accept that one is wrong; one has to give up overblown ego.

It is quite strange that a small, ignorant and helpless soul has such a big ego. What is the conclusion? There is only one shelter, as instructed by Lord Krishna. You will get plenty of sleep and of good quality too sans bad dreams.

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

# Transforming lives of the Indian farmers



SHIVRAJ SINGH CHOUHAN

Through modern infrastructure, expanded credit support, and sustainable farming methods, PM Modi's policies are revolutionising Indian agriculture

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's deep concern and sensitivity towards farmers is visible in the decisions, policies and plans taken for the farming community.

Transforming the lives of our food providers (Annadata) is the first and foremost goal of our Prime Minister. This is the reason why agriculture and farmers remained the top priorities in the first 100 days of the third term of the NDA government. Under his leadership, the government is making unprecedented efforts for the empowerment and upliftment of the agriculture sector. We are committed to increasing farmers' income, which is reflected in schemes such as the Agriculture Infrastructure Fund (AIF), and PM AASHA. Post-harvest losses in India are a major challenge, which threatens the production capacity of the agricultural sector and it also adversely impacts the hard work put in by lakhs of farmers. According to the latest estimates, about 16-18 per cent of the total food production is affected every year in India due to this.

These losses can be attributed to various stages of agriculture such as harvesting, threshing, storage, transportation and processing. Lack of proper storage, cold chain, inadequate processing units, and lack of efficient logistics contribute to these huge losses, as a result of which the overall food security of our country gets affected.

Keeping all these factors in mind, the Modi government is working with renewed enthusiasm towards strengthening this. Under the able leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the government is making efforts to take the research of scientists from lab to land, due to which the cost of production has reduced considerably and profits have increased for farmers. The Prime Minister with a visionary approach launched the Agriculture Infrastructure Fund (AIF) way back in July 2020 as a transformative initiative under the 'Atmanirbhar Bharat' initiative. Its objective is to increase the income of farmers and address post-harvest management issues through farm assets to reduce food wastage. These challenges have to be addressed by promoting new projects and new age technologies. Under AIF, banks provide interest subvention of 3 per cent per annum with an interest cap of 9 per cent and financial institutions will provide loans up to Rs 2 crore with credit guarantee coverage under CGTMSE (Credit Guarantee Fund Trust for Micro and Small Enterprises) for loans. Through this initiative, the government aims to not only increase production to preserve quality and quantity, but also help farmers access markets more efficiently, and as a result, their income will also increase.

Due to the able leadership of the Prime Minister, the benefits of the scheme, till August 2024, the amount sanctioned under this scheme has crossed Rs 47,500 crore. Of this, more than Rs 30,000 crore has already been disbursed for various projects. Notably, 54 per cent of the projects that were sanctioned are linked to farmers, cooperative societies, agricultural production organisations and self-help groups (SHGs), which is in line with the Prime Minister's vision. It reflects the strong participation of farmers in providing farm-gate level infrastructure. Prime Minister Modi is very committed towards strengthening farm gate infrastructure to solve the major problem post-harvest losses in agricultural produce. He prioritised the development of infra-



structure in storage (dry and cold), transportation, etc., so that farmers could be protected from such crop loss. In terms of dry storage, in comparison to food grain production, India has an infrastructure in terms of 1,740 lakh metric tonnes of storage capacity, and at present, there is a shortage of 44 per cent in the storage capacity for the overall grain production in India, which is very concerning.



THE PRIME MINISTER WITH A VISIONARY APPROACH LAUNCHED THE AGRICULTURE INFRASTRUCTURE FUND (AIF) WAY BACK IN JULY 2020 AS A TRANSFORMATIVE INITIATIVE UNDER THE 'ATMANIRBHAR BHARAT' INITIATIVE

Similarly, for horticulture produce, about 441.9 lakh metric tonnes of cold storage is available in India, while the cold chain capacity is only 15.72 per cent of the production of fruits and vegetables in the country. AIF initiative has helped bridge the storage capacity gap by approximately 500 lakh metric tonnes. Contributing to saving about Rs 5,700 crore post-harvest losses for the nation. Furthermore, under the leadership of the Prime Minister, the development of proper cold storage facilities has reduced the loss of horticulture products by 10 per cent, due to which 3.5 lakh metric tonnes of produce is being secured post harvest and about Rs 1,250 crore is being saved every year. This commitment of the Prime Minister towards the agriculture sector and farmers will not only ensure economic empowerment but also raise their standard of living. Under the guidance of the Prime Minister, the AIF is providing new impetus to the growth and development of agricultural infrastructure. As of August 2024, as many as 74,695 agriculture infrastructure-related initiatives across the country have been approved under AIF. These include 18,508 custom hiring centres, 16,238 primary processing centres, 13,702 warehouses, 3,095 sorting and grading units, 1,901 cold stores and cold chains, and 21,251 other types of infrastructure facilities. These 74,695 projects have attracted a total investment of Rs 78,702 crore in the agriculture sector since 2015, which marks significant progress in the sector. Prime Minister Modi has encouraged entrepreneurship among farmers, as approximately 50,000 new agricultural enterprises have been set up in the country. These efforts have helped create more than 8,00,000 employment opportunities, and this number will only increase in the future, even-

tually leading to the creation of 2.5 million jobs, directly or indirectly. The Prime Minister's welfare policies have brought about positive changes in the working style of farmers. The creation of advanced infrastructure on farms has facilitated farmers to sell directly to a wider consumer base, thereby enhancing price realisation and increasing their overall income. Due to modern packaging and cold storage systems, farmers can time their market sales more strategically, resulting in better value realisation.

On average, this infrastructure initiative has enabled farmers to get 11-14 per cent higher prices for their produce. Prime Minister Modi's policies will not only encourage the development of agricultural infrastructure but also reduce credit risk. Through credit guarantee support and interest subvention, lending institutions can give loans with minimal risk, thereby helping their customers. This helps in expanding their base and portfolio diversification. Significantly, this fund is involved in the creation of agricultural infrastructure in collaboration with the refinancing facility of NABARD, reducing the effective interest rate for Primary Agricultural Cooperative Societies (PACS) to 1 per cent.

This has brought significant benefits to thousands of farmers associated with such PACS. Under AIF, 9,573 PACS projects have been approved with a loan amount of Rs 2,970 crore to date by NABARD. In an important step under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the central government has approved the progressive expansion of the ambitious Agriculture Infrastructure Fund scheme, making it more inclusive and substantially more influential. The make agriculture a profitable business we have come up with a six-point strategy to increase the income of farmers, such as increasing production, reducing the cost of farming, fair prices for production, providing the appropriate amount of relief during natural disasters, diversification of agriculture and natural farming.

At present, some promising projects for agricultural asset development, such as hydroponic farming, mushroom cultivation, vertical farming,

aeroponic farming, polyhouse and greenhouse, are reserved for only farmer groups and collectives. Now by expanding the scheme coverage to include integrated processing projects, farmers will get better prices for their produce through the creation of integrated processing plants, which include both primary and secondary processing. In addition to this, component A of PM-KUSUM (Pradhan Mantri Kisan Urja Suraksha Evam Utthaan Mahabhiyan) Yojana provides the facility for the installation of solar power plants up to 2 MW on barren, fallow, cultivable, pasture or marshy lands, and it can be easily converged with the AIF scheme. This strategic convergence will help individual farmers and empower farmer groups, enhancing their role from being 'Annadata' (food givers) to 'Urdajata' (energy providers). The dedicated credit guarantee cover window, which was exclusively kept for FPOs, i.e. NAB Sanrakshan Trustee Company Private Limited, will remain open for AIF beneficiaries as well, where they will be eligible for guarantee fee reimbursement. These changes will increase processing capabilities, diversify food production, and increase and improve the quality of the yields.

They will increase the shelf life of the produce, boost transport capacity and improve rural supply by linking it to the urban demand. Additionally, these changes will help in generating rural employment opportunities. Under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the Agriculture Infrastructure Fund is making a significant contribution towards the development of the agriculture sector and empowerment of Indian farmers, by providing a sustainable solution. Due to the visionary leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, even the minutest problems faced by farmers are being resolved, intense communication and combined efforts have brought a new dawn in the context of farmers' welfare, and this will prove to be a key milestone to fulfil the dreams of a developed agriculture sector of a 'Viksit Bharat'.

(The writer is the Minister of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, Rural Development; views are personal)

## Navigating manufacturing landscape: Bridging growth, disparities, and industrial ambitions

India stands as the world's fifth-largest manufacturing powerhouse, generating nearly \$560 billion in goods annually

India is the world's fifth largest manufacturing powerhouse producing nearly 560 Billion Dollars' worth of goods per year but our share in global manufacturing output is below 3 per cent. And the share of manufacturing in India's Gross Value Added (GVA) is stuck at just 17 per cent, not far ahead of the share of agriculture. It is often stated that India seems to be transitioning directly from a primary sector-dominant economy into one dominated by the service sector.



RAJESH KUMAR SINGH

of growth poles first propounded by the French Economist Perroux along with its accompanying concepts of the inevitability of unbalanced regional growth in industrial clusters, with an agglomeration effect that will accentuate regional diversity, seems pretty close to India's development experience. Thus, even where India had set up new industrial townships in

places like Rourkela, Bokaro or even Jamshedpur in an earlier era, these do not appear to have led to broader regional development, with the nearby hinterland areas remaining under-developed for the most part.

The broader issue of regional disparities that have emerged in India has been sought to be addressed institutionally by the various Finance Commission's devolution formula which gives overwhelming weightage to per capita income and, therefore, ensures higher resource flows into backward areas.

The market, on the other hand, has responded to these disparities by the movement of migrant labour to the faster growing parts of the country, with the migrant labour being

the unsung hero of the construction and manufacturing growth in these areas. The concepts of growth poles and growth centres are now being supplemented by the phenomena of port-led industrial growth with major ports, old and new, serving as growth centres in many countries. The National Industrial Corridor Development Programme (NICDP) takes on the challenges of accelerating India's manufacturing growth, creating multiple industrial growth foci and linking industrialisation to transport nodes, head-on.

The NICDP has focused on the development of industrial townships adjacent to 11 key transport corridors. Eight such townships had been approved till the current



year, four of which are shovel-ready with the industrial plots being allotted, and four others are being implemented with trunk infrastructure being set up. As against eight projects implemented or under implementation over the last 17 years, the Government has recently approved twelve such smart industrial cities in 10 States, at one go, with a big bang approach which is characteristic of PM Modi's style which focuses on Speed and Scale.

All these sites have been validated using the geospatial data on the PM Gati Shakti National Platform to minimise disturbances to existing habitations and ecology, with prioritisation to availability of land parcels with the State Governments, covering land of relatively lesser agricultural value, with proximity to major transport modes for multi-modal connectivity.

A new aspect of using PM Gati Shakti to not only ensure the enhancement of transport infrastructure for improved connectivity but also to combine such network planning with an area planning approach by asking States to start filling social infrastructure gaps (schools, Anganwadis, ITIs, accommodation) concurrently with pro-

ject implementation, has been initiated.

This combination of transport network planning and area planning should lead to these green field industrial cities getting plug and play infrastructure and multi-modal transport links ahead of demand for the private sector and particularly for foreign investors who wish to participate in India's growth story. It may be recalled that India's Ease of Doing Business (EoDB) ranking had improved from 143 in 2014 to 63 in 2020, in the last year that such rankings were published by the World Bank. While contract compliances and improvement are linked to the broader issue of judicial reform, the NICDP programme will substantially address, along with

parallel initiatives by the States, the issues of land availability and its transparent administration, for any investors seeking industrial sites in these cities. The NICDP Programme also de-risks the investor from one key compliance burden that new investors are concerned about, the issue of environmental clearances by ensuring that full environmental clearance for the entire township is already in place and is backed up by a full spectrum of utility services like power, sewage and waste treatment, roads etc., in a smart city with state-of-the-art infrastructure and digitized grievance redressal mechanisms.

(The writer is former Secretary, DPIIT and currently OSD, Ministry of Defence; views are personal)

# I pleaded guilty to journalism for freedom: Assange

AP ■ STRASBOURG

WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange said Tuesday that he was freed after years of incarceration because he "pled guilty to journalism."



WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange and his wife Stella Assange raise their arms as they arrive at the Council of Europe in Strasbourg, eastern France, Tuesday. AP/PTI

A group of supporters, holding a banner that said "Thank you, Julian" greeted Assange as he stepped out of van smiling and raising his fist in defiance along with his wife, Stella, and WikiLeaks editor-in-chief, Kristinn Hrafnsson.

"Assange is free! We are here. The world is with you," one supporter shouted before Assange entered the Council of Europe building for his first public address since his release from

prison in June "I am not free today because the system worked," Assange said. "I am free today after years of incar-

ceration because I pled guilty to journalism."

He added: "I pled guilty to seeking information from a source. I pled guilty to obtaining information from a source. And I pled guilty to informing the public what that information was."

Assange was released in June after five years in a British prison after he pleaded guilty to obtaining and publishing US military secrets in a deal with Justice Department prosecutors that concluded a drawn-out legal saga. Prior to his time in prison, he had spent seven years in self-imposed exile in the Ecuadorian Embassy in London, where he claimed asylum on the grounds of political persecution.

The transition from years in a maximum security prison to addressing the European parliamentarians has been a "profound and a surreal shift," Assange said as he detailed the experience of isolation in a small cell. "It strips away one's sense of self,

leaving only the raw essence of existence," he said, his voice cracking while he offered an apology for his "faltering words" and an "unpolished presentation."

"I'm not yet fully equipped to speak about what I have endured — the relentless struggle to stay alive, both physically and mentally," Assange said. The Australian internet publisher was accused of receiving and publishing hundreds of thousands of war logs and diplomatic cables that included details of US military wrongdoing in Iraq and Afghanistan. His activities were celebrated by press freedom advocates, who heralded his role in bringing to light military conduct that might otherwise have been concealed.

Among the files published by WikiLeaks was a video of a 2007 Apache helicopter attack by American forces in Baghdad that killed 11 people, including two Reuters journalists. Critics say his conduct put American national security and innocent

lives — such as people who provided information to US forces in Iraq and Afghanistan — at risk, and strayed far beyond the bounds of traditional journalism duties.

The yearslong case ended with Assange entering his plea in a US district court on the Northern Mariana Islands, an American commonwealth in the Pacific. Assange pleaded guilty to an Espionage Act charge of conspiring to unlawfully obtain and disseminate classified national defence information. A judge sentenced him to the five years he had already spent behind bars in the UK fighting extradition to the United States.

Assange returned to Australia a free man in late June. At the time his wife, Stella, said he needed time to recuperate before speaking publicly. His appearance on Tuesday comes after the Council of Europe's Parliamentary Assembly published a report on Assange's detention in a high-security UK prison for five years.

# Japan's parliament elects Ishiba as PM

AP ■ TOKYO

Japan's parliament on Tuesday formally elected Shigeru Ishiba, head of the governing Liberal Democratic Party, as the country's new prime minister. Ishiba was chosen as the party's leader on Friday to replace Fumio Kishida, who then stepped down earlier on Tuesday to pave the way.



Ishiba will announce his new Cabinet later on Tuesday. Kishida took office in 2021 but left so his party could have a fresh leader after his government was dogged by scandals. Ishiba plans to call a parliamentary election for October 27.

"I believe it is important to have the new administration get the public's judgment as soon as possible," Ishiba said Monday in announcing his plan to call a snap election. Opposition parties criticised Ishiba for allowing only a short period of time for his policies to be examined and discussed in parliament before the national election.

Kishida had announced in August he would resign at the end of his three-year term. Kishida and his ministers stepped down at a Cabinet meeting on Tuesday morning. Chief Cabinet Secretary Yoshimasa Hayashi said. Kishida left his office after a brief send-off ceremony in which he was presented a bouquet of red roses and applauded by his staff and former Cabinet members.

"As we face a critical moment in and outside the country, I earnestly hope key policies that will pioneer Japan's future will be powerfully pursued by the new Cabinet," Kishida said in a statement, citing the need to bolster security amid a deepening global divide, such as Russia's war in Ukraine, while tackling a declining birthrate and population, as well as economic and political reforms at home. Ishiba earlier announced his

party's leaders ahead of naming his Cabinet. Former Environment Minister Shinjiro Koizumi, who came in third in the party leadership race, will head the party's election task force. He is expected to name defense experts Takeshi Iwaya as foreign minister and Gen Nakatani as defense chief. The majority of his Cabinet ministers, like Ishiba, are expected to be unaffiliated with factions led and controlled by party heavyweights, and none are from former Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's powerful group linked to damaging scandals.

Ishiba's lack of stable power base could also mean a fragility of his government, and "could quickly collapse" even though Ishiba hopes to build up party unity as it prepares for the upcoming election, the liberal-leaning Asahi newspaper said.

The move is also seen as revenge by Ishiba, who was largely pushed to the side during most of Abe's reign. Ishiba has proposed an Asian version of the NATO military alliance and more discussion among regional partners about the use of the US nuclear deterrence.

He also suggested a more equal Japan-US security alliance, including joint management of US bases in Japan and having Japanese Self Defense Force bases in the United States. Ishiba outlined his views in an article to the Hudson Institute last week.

# Gunmen kill 6, including local paramilitary Guard chief in Iran

AP ■ TEHRAN

Unidentified gunmen killed six people, including a local chief of the paramilitary Revolutionary Guard, in two separate attacks on Tuesday, state TV reported.



The head of a town council and two volunteer members of the Guard were also among the dead in the first attack, it said.

It occurred after the victims participated in a school ceremony in Nikshahar town, about 1,350 kilometers (840 miles) southeast of the capital, Tehran, the report said.

It identified the town council chief as Parviz Kakhodaei but provided no other details of the attack in the southeastern province of Sistan and Baluchistan. Two police officers were killed

in the second attack, which took place in Khash town in the same province, it said. No one immediately took responsibility for the attacks.

In September, gunmen killed four border guards in the province in two separate attacks. The militant group Jaish al-Adl, which seeks greater rights for the ethnic Baluch minority, claimed responsibility for one of the attacks, in which one officer

and two soldiers in the border guard were killed.

The province, bordering Afghanistan and Pakistan, has been the site of occasional deadly clashes involving militant groups, drug smugglers and Iranian security forces. It is one of the least developed parts of Iran. Relations between the predominantly Sunni Muslim residents of the region and Iran's Shiite theology have long been strained.

# UK chartered plane to fly out British nationals from Lebanon

PTI ■ LONDON

A UK government-chartered flight will on Wednesday fly out of Lebanon those British nationals who want to leave following escalating violence in the region. UK Foreign Secretary David Lammy's announcement on Monday evening comes amid growing safety concerns following the killing of Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah in Israeli airstrikes on Beirut at the weekend. Prime Minister Keir Starmer previously called on British nationals in Lebanon to "leave immediately" as tensions continue to mount in West Asia. Lammy, who described the situation in Lebanon as "volatile" and warned it could "deteriorate quickly," said in a statement: "The safety of British nationals in Lebanon continues to be our utmost priority." "That's why the

UK government is chartering a flight to help those wanting to leave. It is vital that you leave now as further evacuation may not be guaranteed," he said. According to the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO), British nationals, their spouse or partners and children under the age of 18 are eligible to be accommodated on the charter flight which is due to leave Beirut-Rafic Hariri International Airport on Wednesday. The FCDO said it has been working with partners in recent weeks to increase capacity on commercial flights to enable British nationals to leave, with the chartered flight intended to provide additional capacity. Those who have registered their presence with the FCDO will be sent details on how to request a seat. "If you are a British national in Lebanon

who has not already registered your presence, please do so immediately. Vulnerable British nationals and their spouse or partner, and children under the age of 18, will be prioritised for this flight," the FCDO said. The UK government said it would pay to charter the flight, with British nationals expected to pay a fee of GBP 350 per seat. It reiterated that no one should arrive at the airport unless they have a confirmed seat on the plane. Any non-British dependants boarding the flight will require a visa granted for at least six months to enter the UK in line with usual immigration rules and entry process, it said. Meanwhile, 700 British troops alongside Border Force and Foreign Office officials have been deployed to Cyprus to continue contingency planning for a range of scenarios in the region.

# Walz and Vance to face off in their only VP debate

AP ■ WASHINGTON

Tim Walz and JD Vance will meet for their first and possibly only vice presidential debate Tuesday, in what could be the last debate for both campaigns to argue their case before the election. The debate in New York hosted by CBS News will give Vance, a Republican freshman senator from Ohio, and Walz, a two-term Democratic governor of Minnesota, the chance to introduce themselves, make the case for their running mates, and go on the attack against the opposing ticket.



Tuesday's matchup could have an outsized impact. Polls have shown Vice President Kamala Harris and former President Donald Trump locked in a close contest, giving added weight to anything that can sway voters on the margins, including the impression left by the vice presidential candidates. It also might be the last debate of the campaign, with the Harris and Trump teams failing to agree on another meeting. The role of a presidential running mate is typically to serve as an attack dog for the person at the top of the ticket, arguing

against the opposing presidential candidate and their proxy on stage. Both Vance and Walz have embraced that role.

Vance's occasionally confrontational news interviews and appearances on the campaign trail have underscored why Trump picked him for the Republican ticket despite his past biting criticisms of the former president, including once suggesting Trump would be "America's Hitler." Walz, meanwhile, catapulted onto Harris' campaign by branding Trump and Republicans as "just weird," creating an attack line for Democrats seeking to argue Republicans are disconnected from the American people. A new AP-NORC poll found

that Walz is better liked than Vance, potentially giving the Republican an added challenge.

After a Harris-Trump debate in which Republicans complained about the ABC News moderators fact-checking Trump, Tuesday's debate will not feature any corrections from the hosts. CBS News said the onus for pointing out misstatements will be on the candidates, with moderators "facilitating those opportunities." Ahead of the debate, allies of both men were lowering expectations that their candidate will have a decisive performance. Sen. Amy Klobuchar, D-Minn., called Vance "an accomplished debater" and contrasted that

with Walz, saying he was "not a lawyer-debater type." Klobuchar said Walz spent time growing up thinking about football, not debating.

Jason Miller, a senior adviser to Trump, portrayed Walz much differently than Klobuchar. "Tim Walz is very good in debates, really good. He's been a politician for nearly 20 years. He'll be very well prepared for tomorrow night," Miller told reporters Monday. He predicted the Democratic governor of Minnesota will be much more "buttoned up" than he is on the campaign trail and ready to defend his record, but added, "That's not to say that JD Vance won't be prepared tomorrow, or that somehow he isn't up to the challenge."

Vance, speaking to reporters last week, said he didn't "have to prepare that much" for the debate because he had "well-developed views on public policy." But Vance has been doing debate prep sessions where he's been joined by his wife, Usha Vance, Miller, senior Vance aides, and Rep. Tom Emmer, R-Minn., who has played Walz, according to a person familiar with his preparations who requested

anonymity to discuss strategy. Moderating their mock debates was Monica Crowley, who served in the Trump administration, hosts a podcast and contributed to Project 2025, a conservative blueprint for remaking government that Trump claims he knows "nothing about."

"JD Vance is prepared to wipe the floor with Tim Walz and expose him for the radical liberal he is," Emmer told reporters on Monday. Walz's debate prep has included sessions hunkered down in a Minneapolis hotel, with Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg standing in for Vance, according to a person familiar with the process who requested anonymity to discuss the campaign's internal dynamics. Others helping in the preparations include Rob Friedlander and Zayn Siddique, who helped Harris prepare for her debate with Trump, along with other aides to Walz and the campaign.

Klobuchar said Walz will show the American people "a real person" who brings "buoyancy" and positivity to the debate stage that will contrast with Vance, but "he is not going to be shy about pointing out the problems."

# Suspected Yemen Houthi rebel attack targets ship in Red Sea

AP ■ DUBAI



A suspected attack Tuesday targeted a ship in the Red Sea, likely marking their first assault on commercial shipping in weeks as the Israel-Hamas war threatens to become a regional conflict.

The attack comes as Israeli ground forces entered Lebanon after days of Israeli airstrikes that killed Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah and other top leaders and the earlier explosions of sabotaged electronic devices used by the Shiite militia. The Houthis had threatened "escalating military operations" targeting Israel on Monday after they apparently shot down a US military drone flying over the country.

The attack Tuesday morning took place some 110 kilometres off the port city of Hodeida in the Red Sea, which has become a battleground for shippers since the Houthis began their campaign targeting ships travelling through a waterway that once saw USD 1 trillion a year of cargo pass through it. A captain on a ship saw four

or failed to reach their targets, which have included Western military vessels. The rebels maintain that they target ships linked to Israel, the US or the United Kingdom to force an end to Israel's campaign against Hamas in Gaza. However, many of the ships attacked have little or no connection to the conflict, including some bound for Iran. The last attack on a merchant ship by the Houthis came on September 2.

The Houthis claimed an attack targeted American warships last week. The rebels fired more than a half dozen ballistic missiles and anti-ship cruise missiles and two drones at three US ships that were travelling through the Bab el-Mandeb Strait, but all were intercepted by the Navy destroyers, a US official said Friday. The official spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss details not yet publicly released. The Houthis also continue to launch missiles targeting Israel, drawing retaliatory airstrikes from the Israelis this weekend on Hodeida.

# Congo rebel group generates \$300,000 monthly from seized mine, says UN

AP ■ DAKAR

An armed rebel group in Congo generates around USD 300,000 a month in revenue through its control of a mining area in the east of the country, the UN Security Council heard. In April, the M23 — a rebel group with alleged links to Rwanda — seized the Rubaya mining area in eastern Congo, which holds deposits of a key mineral used in the production of smartphones and computers. Over 15 per cent of the world's supply of tantalum, a rare metal extracted from coltan, comes from Rubaya, Bintou Keita, head of the UN mission in Congo, told the Security Council. "Unless international sanctions are imposed on those benefiting from this criminal trade, peace

will remain elusive and civilians will continue to suffer," Keita said. Tantalum is among the minerals that was identified earlier this year in a letter from Congo's government questioning Apple about the tech company's knowledge of "blood minerals" being smuggled in its supply chain. The decadeslong conflict in eastern Congo has produced one of the world's worst humanitarian crises, with more than 120 armed groups fighting for power, land and valuable mineral resources while others try to defend their communities. Some armed groups have been accused of mass killings, rapes and other human rights violations. The violence has displaced some 6 million people in the country's east. M23, or the March 23 Movement, is a rebel military

group mainly made up of ethnic Tutsis that broke away from the Congolese army just over a decade ago. They staged a large offensive in 2012 and took over the provincial capital of Goma near the border with Rwanda, the same city they are threatening again. Congo alleges that Rwanda has been involved in war crimes in the east and US and UN experts accuse it of giving military backing to M23. Rwanda denies the claim, but in February admitted that it has troops and missile systems in eastern Congo to safeguard its security, pointing to a buildup of Congolese forces near the border. In July, UN experts estimated that between 3,000 and 4,000 Rwandan government forces are deployed in eastern Congo alongside M23, which has been making major advances.



A man walks through a damaged street after Hurricane John passed through Coyuca de Benitez, Guerrero state, Mexico, Monday. AP/PTI

# Biden administration doubles down on asylum restrictions

Washington (AP): The Biden administration said on Monday it is making asylum restrictions at the southern border even tougher, as it's increasingly eager to show voters uneasy over immigration that it is taking a hard stance on border security. The new rules, which toughen restrictions announced in June, bar migrants from being granted asylum when US officials deem that the southern border is overwhelmed. Under the previous rules, the US could restrict asylum access when the number of migrants trying to enter the country between the official border crossings hit 2,500

per day. The daily numbers had to average below 1,500 per day for a week in order for the restrictions to be lifted. The version rolled out on Monday says the daily numbers will have to be below 1,500 for nearly a month before the restrictions can be lifted. And the administration is now counting all children toward that number, whereas previously only migrant children from Mexico were counted. These changes, which go into effect on Tuesday, will make it much more difficult to lift the restrictions and allow people entering the country between the official border crossings eventually to apply for asylum in the US.



# School bus in Bangkok catches fire, more than 20 feared dead

AP ■ BANGKOK

A bus carrying young students with their teachers caught fire in suburban Bangkok on Tuesday, with more than 20 of those on board feared dead, officials and rescuers said. The bus was carrying 44 passengers from central Uthai Thani province for a school trip in Ayutthaya and Nonthaburi provinces, Transport Minister Suriya Junggrungkit told reporters at the scene. Videos posted on social media showed the entire bus engulfed in fire with huge

plumes of black smoke pouring out as it stood on the side of the road. Bodies were still inside the bus hours after the fire. The students on the bus were reported to be in elementary and junior high school. Interior Minister Anutin Charnvirakul said officials could not yet confirm the number of fatalities because they had not finished investigating the scene. He said the driver survived but appeared to have fled and could not yet be found. Anutin had earlier said 25 were feared dead, but Piyalak Thinkaew, a rescuer of the Ruamkatanyu Foundation

told reporters later that two more survivors had been found, reducing the number of those still missing to 23 — three teachers and 20 students. Rescuers and officials were able to access the bus hours after the fire was put out. Piyalak said they were still unable to identify the bodies, most of which were found in the middle and back seats, leading them to assume that the fire started at the front of the bus. Thai media reports and rescuers said the bus was heading to Nonthaburi when the fire started around noon in Pathum Thani province, a

northern suburb of the capital. A rescuer at the scene told Suriya that the fire likely started after one of the tires exploded and the vehicle scraped against a road barrier. Prime Minister Paetongtarn Shinawatra offered her condolences in a post on social media platform X, saying the government would take care of medical expenses and compensate the victims' families. The patRangsit Hospital, which is located near the scene, said in a news conference that it admitted three young girls, one of whom suffered burns to the face, mouth and eye.

# Road ahead may be stormy, Xi warns as China celebrates 75th National Day

PTI ■ BEIJING

China celebrated its 75th National Day Tuesday, with President Xi Jinping issuing a stern warning that the road ahead for the Communist nation won't be smooth as it is weighed down by economic headwinds coupled with intensifying rivalry with the US and growing tensions with neighbours, including India. A large number of people attended the ceremonial flag hoisting at the sprawling Tiananmen Square in Beijing on Tuesday to celebrate the National Day as the country shut down for a week-long holiday. Other than this, there were no festivities nor grand military parades displaying China's military might like in the 60th and 70th anniversaries of the National Day, but a rallying call from Xi asking people to prepare for hard times. "The road ahead won't be smooth and flat, there will be difficulties and obstacles. [We] might face high winds and rough

seas, even stormy seas," Xi said at a banquet on the eve of the anniversary as China tries to regain economic momentum amid an increasingly challenging set of geopolitical headwinds. "We must be vigilant in times of peace, plan ahead, and rely closely on the entire (Communist) Party, the entire army, and people of all ethnic groups across the country," he said. "No difficulties can stop the Chinese people from moving forward," he said. Heading the

Party, the military and the Presidency, 71-year-old Xi is currently in his unprecedented third five-year term and expected to continue life-long in power. The People's Republic of China (PRC) was formed in 1949 after the Communists headed by Mao Zedong seized power in the civil war while the nationalists led by Chiang Kai-shek retreat-

ed to Taiwan, which over the years emerged as the self-governing island adhering to a democratic system. But 75 years on Taiwan's integration with the mainland continues to be an unfinished agenda for China's Communist Party, especially for Xi, who has been vowing to reunify it with China.

## Public Notice

To be known to all that, Smt. Promila Raweri wife of Late Shri Satish Kumar Raweri, R/o 4/ 63, First Floor, Ramesh Nagar, New Delhi-110015, is the absolute owner/mutah of physical possession of D.A. BUILT-UP 5F5 FLY FLO, 110015, ON FIRST FLOOR, BLOCK-06-1, SITUATED AT PASCHIM VIHAR, DELHI-110063, which has been allotted by DDA vide File No. F 66/188/83/55/1947 dated 15.01.1984 and applied for conversion from lease hold into free hold of said flat in D.D.A. The Original Allotment cum Demand Letter/Possession Letter, Possession Slip and NOC for Water & Electricity Connection and other related documents of said flat have been lost. An F.I.R. to this effect has been lodged. Any person(s) claiming any right, interest, having any objection or found in possession of original documents, may write/contact with above named person at above address/Phone No. 9818391700 within 15 days from the date of publication of this notice. The person claiming any right, interest, objections with respect to this flat can personally inform or write to Dy. Director (LAB) II or Director (H-I) Block 3rd Floor, Vika Sadan, INA, New Delhi.

## Public Notice

The General Public is hereby informed that my client Mr. Ratan Kumar Sharma S/o Sh. R. P. Sharma and his wife Mrs. Rajni Sharma R/o A-334-D, Green Apartment, Paschim Vihar, New Delhi-63 have severed all relations with their son Udit Sharma and his wife Himanshi Sethi due to her bad habits and bad conducts as well as being out of control of my clients in all manners. My above named clients have also disowned and debarred their son and his wife from their movable and immovable properties. Anybody dealing with Udit Sharma and his wife Himanshi Sethi will do so at their own risk and responsibility and my clients will not be responsible for any act, deed or dealing done by Udit Sharma and his wife Himanshi Sethi. SANJEEV DWIVEDI (ADVOCATE) 48, Gajanan Block, Tiz Hazari Courts, N-D-54

## Public Notice

The general public is hereby informed that our client, M/S Panchsheel Builders Private Limited, having their corporate office at G-34, Sector 63, Noida - 201301, is in the process of cancelling the allotment of the residential unit bearing No. 1006, Tower-C2, in the project Panchsheel Greens-II, located at Housing Plot No. GH-01A, Sector-16, Greater Noida, District Gautam Budh Nagar (U.P.), which was initially allotted to Mrs. Santosh Verma. Following her demise, the said unit was transferred to her son, Mr. Mohammad Nayil. The general public is hereby notified that our client intends to cancel the allotment of Unit No. C2-1006 at Panchsheel Greens-II, situated at Plot No. GH-01A, Sector-16, Greater Noida, District Gautam Budh Nagar (U.P.), due to the inability to trace the current address of the allottee. Several notices have been sent to the allottee, but no response has been received to date. The allottee has failed to adhere to the terms and conditions of the Builder Buyer Agreement.

## Public Notice

Be it known to all that my client Sh. Bahadur S/o Sh. Pardehi, R/o G-73, Block-G, Saurabh Vihar, Jaitpur, Badarpur, New Delhi 110044 hereby debars his son Mr. Anand Kumar from all his movable & immovable properties and has severed all his relations from them. Anybody dealing with them in any manner shall be doing so entirely at his/her cost, risk & consequences & under no circumstances my client shall be liable for their acts. T.S. VARUN (Advocate) Mob.: 9891588500

## Public Notice

TO WHOMSOEVER MAY IT CONCERN The general public is hereby informed that our client, M/S Panchsheel Builders Private Limited, having their corporate office at G-34, Sector 63, Noida - 201301, is in the process of cancelling the allotment of the residential unit bearing No. 1006, Tower-C2, in the project Panchsheel Greens-II, located at Housing Plot No. GH-01A, Sector-16, Greater Noida, District Gautam Budh Nagar (U.P.), which was initially allotted to Mrs. Santosh Verma. Following her demise, the said unit was transferred to her son, Mr. Mohammad Nayil. The general public is hereby notified that our client intends to cancel the allotment of Unit No. C2-1006 at Panchsheel Greens-II, situated at Plot No. GH-01A, Sector-16, Greater Noida, District Gautam Budh Nagar (U.P.), due to the inability to trace the current address of the allottee. Several notices have been sent to the allottee, but no response has been received to date. The allottee has failed to adhere to the terms and conditions of the Builder Buyer Agreement.

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## Public Notice

TO WHOMSOEVER MAY IT CONCERN The general public is hereby informed that our client, M/S Panchsheel Builders Private Limited, having their corporate office at G-34, Sector 63, Noida - 201301, is in the process of cancelling the allotment of the residential unit bearing No. 1902, Tower-C2, in the project Panchsheel Greens-II, located at Housing Plot No. GH-01A, Sector-16, Greater Noida, District Gautam Budh Nagar (U.P.), which was initially allotted to Mrs. Rinky Kumari and Mr. Vinod Kumar Gul. The general public is hereby notified that our client intends to cancel the allotment of Unit No. C2-1902 at Panchsheel Greens-II, situated at Plot No. GH-01A, Sector-16, Greater Noida, District Gautam Budh Nagar (U.P.), due to the inability to trace the current address of the allottee. Several notices have been sent to the allottee, but no response has been received to date. The allottee has failed to adhere to the terms and conditions of the Builder Buyer Agreement.

## Public Notice

BE IT KNOWN TO ALL THAT my client Sh. Bahadur S/o Sh. Pardehi, R/o G-73, Block-G, Saurabh Vihar, Jaitpur, Badarpur, New Delhi 110044 hereby debars his son Mr. Anand Kumar from all his movable & immovable properties and has severed all his relations from them. Anybody dealing with them in any manner shall be doing so entirely at his/her cost, risk & consequences & under no circumstances my client shall be liable for their acts. T.S. VARUN (Advocate) Mob.: 9891588500

## NOTIFIED AREA COUNCIL, PATNAGARH

Ph. No. -06658-222247 e-mail- nac\_ptg@yahoo.co.in web-site- www.nacpatnagarh.in

Letter No. ...1882/ Date: ...26/09/2024

**1<sup>st</sup> Corrigendum**  
**Financial Bid**

For providing smooth sanitation services, the Tender committee has decided that each bidder must quote his rate not less than 3.85% and not more than 7% on T & P and Contractor Profit only, unless bid shall be rejected. Also, wrong computation in finance bid will be liable for rejection.

For reference Estimate is enclosed.

Datetimate for sweeping of streets, collection of garbage, cleaning of drains & lifting of garbage from Ward No. 1 to 15 of Patnagarh NAC

Sl	Details	Required Labour	Rate	No. of Days	Cost (In Rs)
1	Sweeping of Road (Lane/By-lane) as per requirement, bush cutting and shifting of dead animals, transportation of solid waste. (Un-Skilled)	80	450.00	1	36,000.00
2	Labour (Semi-Skilled) Supervisor	4	500.00	1	2,000.00
3	Labour (Semi-Skilled) Driver	4	550.00	1	2,200.00
3	TOTAL	88			40,200.00
4	EFF (13%)				5226
5	ES (3.25%)				1306.5
6	Tools & Plants and Contractor Profit (5% + 5% = 10%)				4,020
7	Vehicle (Tractor) with driver along with fuel 4 hours. Tractor (Detained hour 8 hrs & working hours 6 hours) @ 357.55 per hour.	1			851.20
8	GRAND TOTAL (Per Day)				59,333.70
9	Annual cost			365 Days	2,16,56,801.00

Executive Officer  
NAC Patnagarh

OIPR-13102/110005/2425

# South Korea unveils its most powerful missile

AP ■ SEOUL

South Korea unveiled its most powerful ballistic missile and other weapons that could target North Korea during a massive Armed Forces Day ceremony on Tuesday, as the South's president warned the North's regime would collapse if it attempts to use nuclear weapons. South Korea's weapons displays and warning against North Korea came after its northern rival recently rose regional animosities by disclosing its uranium-enrichment facility and test-bed missiles ahead of the US presidential election in November. "If North Korea attempts to use nuclear weapons, it will face the resolute and overwhelming response of our military and the (South Korea)-US alliance,"

President Yoon Suk Yeol told thousands of troops gathered at a military airport near Seoul. "That day will be the end of the North Korean regime." "The North Korean regime must abandon the delusion that nuclear weapons will protect them," Yoon said. During the ceremony, the South Korean military displayed about 340 military equipment and weapons systems. Among them was its most powerful Hyunmoo-5 ballistic missile, which observers say is capable of carrying an 8-ton conventional warhead that can penetrate deep into the earth and destroy underground bunkers in North Korea. It was the first time for South Korea to disclose that missile. The United States flew a long-range B-1B bomber during the

ceremony in an apparent demonstration of its security commitment to its Asian ally. South Korea also flew some of its most advanced fighter jets. Later Tuesday, South Korea paraded its troops and weapons through the streets of Seoul, the country's capital, as part of efforts to boost military morale and demonstrate its deterrence capabilities against potential North Korean aggression. Since taking office in 2022, Yoon, a conservative, has put a stronger military alliance with the US and an improved trilateral Seoul-Washington-Tokyo security cooperation at the centre of his security policies to cope with North Korea's advancing nuclear programme. In recent years, North Korea has performed a provocative run of missile tests and threatened to use

nuclear weapons preemptively in potential conflicts with South Korea and the United States. Last month, concerns about North Korea's bomb programme further grew after it published photos of a secretive facility to enrich uranium for nuclear weapons. It was North Korea's first unveiling of a uranium-enrichment facility since it showed one at the country's main Yongbyon nuclear complex to visiting American scholars in 2010. South Korean officials say North Korea will likely try to further dial up tensions with high-profile weapons tests ahead of the US election to increase its leverage in future diplomacy with a new US government. Experts say North Korea likely thinks an expanded nuclear arsenal would help it win bigger US concessions like extensive sanctions relief.

## NORTHERN RAILWAY

OPEN TENDER NOTICE  
The Divisional Engineer-I, Northern Railway, DRM Office, Delhi Division, State Entry Road, New Delhi-110055, for and on behalf of the President of India invites sealed open electronic tenders for under noted work:-

S. No.	Name of Work	Approx Cost of Work	Earnest Money to be deposited	Completion period	Date of opening
01	Providing and fixing single piece spring inserted reusable seize nut for size M-25 lock nut M-25 for fish plate Bolt over D.I. Division. (Cost is inclusive of GST)	Rs 8171136.40	Rs 1,63,400	12 Months	22.10.2024

The tender is to be submitted through railway website <https://ireps.gov.in> The tenders can be submit on website up to 15:00 hrs. on 22.10.2024 and shall be opened there after. No: 128-W/SR/DEN-C/NIT-15-2024-25-WC Date:-01.10.2024

## PUBLIC NOTICE

To be known to all that we, ANJANI KUMAR BISHNOI son of SH. MADAN LAL BISHNOI and RUPA VARSHNEI wife of SH. SUNIL KUMAR VARSHNEI, have applied for conversion of H. NO. S-241, PANCHSHILA PARK, NEW DELHI from lease hold Freehold Built up Residential Plot No. LD411785/COM/18072024 in DDA. The original document i.e. PERPETUAL SUB-LEASE DEED dt. 25.03.1970 of the above said property has been lost. An NCR/IR No. 21688/85/2024 dated 01.10.2024 to this effect has been lodged in P.S. Crime Branch, Delhi. Any person(s) claiming any right, interest, having any objection or found in possession of original documents, may write/contact with above named person at above Address/Phone No. 9999257387 within 15 days from the date of publication of this notice. The person claiming any right, interest, objection with respect to this property, can personally inform or write to Deputy Director (CS)/Asst. Director (CS) or Director (Land), DDA, Vikas Sadan, New Delhi.

## PUBLIC NOTICE

My client Javed Malik and Mohd Israfil the owner of built up property bearing no. B-48/B area measuring 100 sq.yds out of Kharsa no. 442 situated at Village Ujhan Pur in the block of Gali no. 4 and 5 Kant Nagar area, Aligarh Shahdara Delhi-110051 through Registered Sale Deed Dated 22.04.2022 executed by Sh. Mahender Singh and others vide Reg. no. 36/75 at SR-IV B Delhi the above mentioned property is going to be mortgage with SDFG India Credit Co. Ltd. If any person/bank financial institution having any claim/right, lien, any objection whatsoever in regard to the above property, should notified to the undersigned/Adv. Vishal Mehan, E-713, Karkardoma Court, Delhi-110092 along with documentary evidence under address through registered within 14 days from the date of publication of this notice failing which any claim, lien or objection shall be deemed to have been waived. Adv. Vishal Mehan, E-713, Karkardoma Court, Delhi-110092, Mobile No. 9812151581

## SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE

## E-AUCTION PROGRAMME FOR THE MONTH OF OCTOBER 2024

E-Auction programme for Sale of Railway Scrap material under jurisdiction of Dy.CMM/NFR/New Jalpaiguri for the month of OCT 2024 is hereby fixed as under:

SN	Month	Date Fixed
1	OCTOBER 2024	07-10-2024

Interested bidders are advised to bid through IREPS website ([www.ireps.gov.in](http://www.ireps.gov.in)) for registration, training, participation in e-auction. Dy. CMM, New Jalpaiguri

## NORTHEAST FRONTIER RAILWAY

Serving Customers With A Smile

## GOVERNMENT OF GOA

National Vector Borne Disease Control Programme. Directorate of Health Services, Campal, Panaji, Goa 403 001. Phone: 0832-2225837, Fax 0832-2222037 Email: [nvbdegoa@gmail.com](mailto:nvbdegoa@gmail.com) No: DHS/NVBDCP/CYP/2024/25-636 Dated: 17/10/24

## TENDER NOTICE

Sealed tenders are hereby invited by National Vector Borne Disease Control Programme for supply of Cyphenothrine 5% EC (300 litres). The tender forms with terms and conditions may be purchased from the National Vector Borne Disease Control Programme, Directorate of Health Services, Campal, Panaji Goa on all working days during office hours on payment of Rs. 1000/- (Rupees one thousand only) (Non-refundable) till 03.00 pm on or before 14/10/2024. The tenders will be opened on 17/10/2024 at 3.30 pm in the office of NVBDCP- DHS. (Dr. Kalpana Mahatme) Dy. Director, NVBDCP, DHS

## ELECTRICAL TRD WORKS AT ALIPURDUA DIVISION

E-Tender Notice No. AP-EL-TRD-05-24-25-RT2. E-Tenders are invited by the undersigned for the following works: Tender No. AP-EL-TRD-05-24-25-RT2. Name of work: Electrical TRD works in connection with OHE modification work for provision of additional goods line at Dhugguri for simultaneous loading, unloading and handling and holding two rakes at a time. Tender Value: ₹90,49,521.03/- Earnest Money: ₹1,81,000.00. Date & time of closing of tender: 15.10.2024 at 21-10-2024 at DRM/Elect (TRD)/Alipurduar Jn. office. The complete information with the tender document of above e-tender will be available in website [www.ireps.gov.in](http://www.ireps.gov.in) Sr DEE/TRD, OP & GS, Alipurduar Jn.

## NORTHEAST FRONTIER RAILWAY

Serving Customers With A Smile

## PUBLIC NOTICE

To be known to all that we, ANJANI KUMAR BISHNOI son of SH. MADAN LAL BISHNOI and RUPA VARSHNEI wife of SH. SUNIL KUMAR VARSHNEI, have applied for conversion of H. NO. S-241, PANCHSHILA PARK, NEW DELHI from lease hold Freehold Built up Residential Plot No. LD411785/COM/18072024 in DDA. The original document i.e. PERPETUAL SUB-LEASE DEED dt. 25.03.1970 of the above said property has been lost. An NCR/IR No. 21688/85/2024 dated 01.10.2024 to this effect has been lodged in P.S. Crime Branch, Delhi. Any person(s) claiming any right, interest, having any objection or found in possession of original documents, may write/contact with above named person at above Address/Phone No. 9999257387 within 15 days from the date of publication of this notice. The person claiming any right, interest, objection with respect to this property, can personally inform or write to Deputy Director (CS)/Asst. Director (CS) or Director (Land), DDA, Vikas Sadan, New Delhi.

## PUBLIC NOTICE

This is to inform the Public at large that Sh. Mohit Kumar Munda along with Smt. Sushma Munda are the Title Holders in possession of 'Entire Section Five of Freehold Built up Residential Property Bearing Plot No. 4, Block No. F-13, Krishan Nagar, Shahdara, New Delhi-51' vide Sale Deed duly registered as Regn. No. 2942, Book No. 1, Vol. No. 3668, pp. 178-189 on 27.03.23 of the Office of the Sub Registrar -IV-B, Vivek Vihar, New Delhi. And Sh. Manish Kumar Munda along with Smt. Uma Munda are the Title Holders in possession of 'Entire Third Floor with Roof Terrace Rights of Freehold Built up Residential Property Bearing Plot No. 4, Block No. F-13, Krishan Nagar, Shahdara, New Delhi-51' vide Sale Deed duly registered as Regn. No. 2942, Book No. 1, Vol. No. 3668, pp. 178-189 on 27.03.23 of the Office of the Sub Registrar -IV-B, Vivek Vihar, New Delhi. And Sh. Manish Kumar Munda along with Smt. Uma Munda are the Title Holders in possession of 'Entire Third Floor with Roof Terrace Rights of Freehold Built up Residential Property Bearing Plot No. 4, Block No. F-13, Krishan Nagar, Shahdara, New Delhi-51' vide Sale Deed duly registered as Regn. No. 2942, Book No. 1, Vol. No. 3668, pp. 178-189 on 27.03.23 of the Office of the Sub Registrar -IV-B, Vivek Vihar, New Delhi. This notice is issued to the Public at large, i.e. to any Person(s), Company(ies), Authority(ies), Society(ies), Organisation(s), Financial Institution(s), Bank(s), HUFs etc. having any knowledge, custody or possession of the above mentioned land/immovable documents or otherwise having any claims, rights, title, interests, possession etc. in the Schedule Plot by way of Ownership, Succession, Inheritance, Sale/Mortgage (except for the ongoing loan with RBL Bank Ltd. of the Title Holders as mentioned herein). Exchange, Charge, Lien, Gift, Trust, Encumbrance etc., may come forward with supporting documents, to be delivered to the undersigned within 15 days from the date of this Publication, post expiration of which, any claim(s) or objection(s) if raised or received, shall be treated as null & void and as waived. Joti Kashyap, Advocate Address: Chamber No. 6, Block-E, Karkardoma Court New Delhi-110092, Contact No. 91 9976 262461

## THE PIONEER CLASSIFIEDS

## CHANGE OF NAME

I, Shivendra Pratap Singh R/o 3358/4, 3rd Floor, Narang Colony, Tri Nagar Delhi-35, Informed you the my minor son Shrawan Pratap Singh and Sarvan Pratap Singh both are the same and one person and shall hereafter be known as Shrawan Pratap Singh.

PD(816)A I, Dharam Wati W/o Sh. Govind Ram R/o VPO: Baghola, Tehsil & Distt. Palwal, Haryana-121102 declare that my name has been wrongly written in my son Ravinder Vashisth Army Service record as Dharam Vati, my correct name is Dharam Wati for all future purposes vide affidavit no. 36AA773657 dated 30 sep 2024. PD(817)C

## PUBLIC NOTICE

DECLARATION ABOUT CRIMINAL CASES (As per the judgment 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 and address of candidate: RABIA KIDWAI at 1081-P, Sector-47, Gurgaon District Gurgaon-122108 Name of political party: AAM AADMI PARTY Name of Election: Haryana Legislative Assembly Election- 2024 Name of Constituency: 79 -NUH I, RABIA KIDWAI (name of candidate), a candidate for the above mentioned election, declare for public information the following details about my criminal antecedents:

## (A) Pending criminal cases

Sl. No.	Name of Court	Case No. and dated	Status of case(s)	Section(s) of Acts concerned and brief description of offence(s)
1.	SAKET COURT DELHI INDIA	C.C No. 41418/2019	PENDING 2019	SECTION OF U/P 138 INDIAN PENAL CODE ACT

## (B) Details about cases of conviction for criminal offences

Sl. No.	Name of Court & No. date(s) of order(s)	Description of offence(s) & punishment imposed	Maximum Punishment Imposed
NA	NOT APPLICABLE	NOT APPLICABLE	NOT APPLICABLE

\*In the case of election to Council of States or election to Legislative Council by MLAs, mention the election concerned in place of name of constituency.

## verka

THE PUNJAB STATE COOPERATIVE MILK PRODUCERS FEDERATION LTD. SCO 153-155, SECTOR 34-A, CHANDIGARH-160022. EPABX No. 0172-5041812,66. Notice Inviting Tender [www.verka.coop](http://www.verka.coop)

e- Tenders are hereby invited for the purchase and supply of following items:-

Sr. No.	Name of Work/Item	Period/Tentative Qty
1.	For Verka Mohali Dairy Hiring of agency for packaging of dahi pouch/ cups/ matkas, lassi pouches, kheer cups, ghee, paneer and yoghurt packaging and recombination of white butter and reconstitution of SMP.	As per day to day requirement of Market
2.	For Verka Bathinda Dairy Supply, installation, testing and commissioning of Wifi & LAN networking infrastructure complete in all respects for Verka Bathinda Dairy.	01 complete job
3.	For Verka Ludhiana Dairy a) Hiring of passenger vehicles Innova crysta without driver for minimum running of 2000 kms per month on lump sum basis. b) Pest control service, DIET (GADVASU) and MCCs which include control of flies, mosquitoes, lizards, rodent etc. c) Transportation of LSHS/HPS (Heavy Petroleum Stock) from Panipat/ Mathura refinery to Verka Ludhiana Dairy.	01 No. Annual/One job
4.	For Verka Jalandhar Dairy a) Lifting/Sale of Paneer whey from Verka Jalandhar Dairy. b) Labour contract for loading/unloading of milk products (SMP/WMP, Dairy Whitener, White Butter, Ghee, Pio etc) and empty tins, cartons, jars etc.	Annual Annual
5.	For Verka Sangur Dairy Supply, installation, testing and commissioning of Wi-Fi, LAN networking infrastructure complete in all respects for Verka Sangur Dairy.	-
6.	For Verka Cattle Feed Plant, Bhatian (Khanna) a) Transportation of Molasses from The Budhneval and The Morinda cooperative sugar mills Ltd. to Verka cattle feed plant, Bhatian (Khanna). b) Disposal of old bardana (Jute & P.P Bags).	Annual Annual

NOTE: For complete details regarding above tender (NIT), please visit our website i.e. [www.verka.coop](http://www.verka.coop) & e Tendering portal i.e. [eproc.punjab.gov.in](http://eproc.punjab.gov.in).

2. Corrigendum, if any, will be uploaded on website only.

NA/12/25746/2023/38151 Dated CHD - 10/10/2024

Dy. General Manager (Purchase)

# India's manufacturing growth hits eight months low in September

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

India's manufacturing sector growth fell to an eight-month low in September amid softer increase in factory production, sales and new export orders, a monthly survey said on Tuesday.

The seasonally adjusted HSBC India Manufacturing Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI) fell from 57.5 in August to 56.5 in September, registering the weakest pace of growth since January.

In PMI parlance, a print above 50 means expansion, while a score below 50 denotes contraction.

"Momentum in India's manufacturing sector softened in September from the very strong growth in the summer months."

"Output and new orders grew at a slower pace, and the deceleration in export demand growth was



especially evident as the new export orders PMI was the lowest since March 2023," Pranjal Bhandari, Chief India Economist at HSBC, said.

The September PMI data revealed a mild setback in manufacturing growth across India. For the third straight month, rates of expansion in factory production and sales receded.

Morever, international orders rose at the slowest pace in a year-and-a-half.

On the price front, there were moderate increases in input costs and selling charges. As a result of rising purchasing prices, as well as greater labour costs and favourable demand conditions, Indian manufacturers marginally increased their charges in September.

According to Bhandari, input prices rose at a faster rate in September, while factory gate price inflation eased,

intensifying the compression on manufacturers' margin. "Weaker profit growth might have an impact on companies' hiring demand, as the pace of employment growth slowed for a third month," Bhandari noted.

Hiring growth also receded in September, reflecting a reduction in the number of part-time and temporary workers.

Going ahead, the overall level of business confidence fell to its lowest since April 2023. Around 23 per cent of Indian manufacturers forecast output growth in the year ahead, while the remaining firms predict no change.

The HSBC India Manufacturing PMI is compiled by S&P Global from responses to questionnaires sent to purchasing managers in a panel of around 400 manufacturers.

# Car sales fluctuate in September

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Indian automotive market has showcased a diverse performance among key players in September, reflecting varying consumer preferences and market conditions.

Talking about the stats, Mahindra & Mahindra reported a notable 24% surge in SUV sales, achieving 51,062 units compared to 41,267 units in the same month last year. The company also saw overall sales, including commercial vehicles (CVs) and three-wheelers, rise 16% year-on-year to 87,839 units.

As the festive season approaches, Mahindra is also set to launch the much-anticipated Thar RoXX on October 3.

Conversely, JSW MG Motor India experienced an 8% decline in retail sales, with only 4,588 units sold compared to 5,003 units in September 2022. The automaker noted that new energy vehicles (NEVs) accounted for 49% of their total sales, emphasizing a shift in consumer interest amidst market challenges.



Toyota Kirloskar Motor reported a 14% increase in wholesales, reaching 26,847 units, up from 23,590 units last year. The brand's success is attributed to significant growth in its SUV, MPV, and small car segments, bolstered by strategic operational improvements that reduced waiting periods for popular models.

Hyundai Motor India faced a 10% dip in total sales, down to 64,201 units from 71,641 units in the previous year. Domestic dispatches also fell by 6%, with exports down 25%. The

company noted that SUVs now comprise 70% of its overall sales and introduced new models to attract consumers during the festive season. In addition to the domestic dispatch of vehicles to dealers saw a 6 per cent dip to 51,101 units last month from 54,241 units in the year-ago period.

Finally, Maruti Suzuki India showcased a slight 2% increase in total sales, reaching 1,84,727 units, up from 1,81,343 units a year prior. Sales of compact cars, including Baleno, Celerio, Dzire, Ignis, Swift, Tour S and WagonR, however, declined to 60,480 units as compared to 68,551 units in the year-ago month.

However, domestic passenger vehicle sales declined by 4%, despite growth in utility vehicle sales. Exports showed positive momentum, rising to 27,728 units from 22,511 units last September.

Overall, the fluctuating sales figures reflect a complex landscape in the Indian automotive market, influenced by consumer trends, economic conditions, and the approaching festive season.

# Andhra Pradesh notifies new liquor policy

PTI ■ VIJAYAWADA

The Andhra Pradesh government has notified a new liquor policy, allowing private retailers to sell spirits on the lines of Haryana and others with the state expecting to rake in Rs 5,500 crore revenue.

In a complete overhaul of excise policy based on best practices from other states, Andhra Pradesh has decided retail sales of liquor through 3,736 notified private shops across the state.

The new policy will take effect from October 12, 2024, as per the notification dated September 30, 2024.

The permission to sell IMFL (Indian-made foreign liquor) and FL (foreign liquor) will be granted to private persons or entities through a selection process, the notification said.

The period of licence for



selling IMFL and FL by shops shall be from October 12, 2024 to September 30, 2026, it added.

Out of the total number of shops to be licensed in 2024-26, as many as 3,396 will be in the open category, while 340 shops will be reserved for allocation to 'Geetha Kulalu'

(a toddy tapping community) with a view to empower them and promote equity and social justice.

The selection process for granting licence will be through a draw of lots and an applicant can apply for more than one shop. There shall be no restriction on the number

of shop licences a person can hold, it added.

Applicants will have to deposit a non-refundable fee of Rs 2 lakh for each shop. As per the notification, the retail excise tax (RET) ranges from Rs 50 lakh for locality with population of 10,000 to Rs 85 lakh per annum for a

municipality or municipal corporation having population above 5 lakh during the fiscal 2024-2025. It will be increased by 10 per cent for 2025-26.

The overall exercise is estimated to result in the state government raking in Rs 5,500 crore.

The RET per annum shall be paid in six equal advance instalments as applicable for each year during the licence period 2024-26.

As per the notification, the retailer margin will be 20 per cent on issue price across all categories of IMFL and FL, including beer, wine and RTDs (ready to drink).

For the premium stores, the notification said, "In order to provide an enhanced and high-end retail experience within the state of Andhra Pradesh, a total of 12 Premium Store Licences shall be granted as a separate

category."

These premium stores shall be strategically located across major municipal corporation cities namely Vijayawada, Visakhapatnam, Rajamahendravaram, Kakinada, Guntur, Nellore, Kurnool, Kadapa, Anantapur or any other city as notified by the state government from time to time, it added.

A cabinet sub-committee of the state government had studied the excise policies of states such as Telangana, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh and also took extensive feedback from key stakeholders, before framing the latest policy.

It had assessed the performance of the existing policy with respect to public health impact and other critical metrics including revenue generation efficiency, the state government said.

# SEBI to enhance F&O regulations

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Capital markets regulator Sebi is expected to take measures regarding the Futures and Options (F&O) segment very soon, in a bid to enhance investor protection, its senior official said on Tuesday.

In addition, Sebi has urged the government to introduce tax breaks for subscribers of municipal bonds, which are crucial for funding infrastructure development.

The regulator will make a case for a tax break for municipal bonds during a meeting with the finance commission, the regulator's whole time member Ashwani Bhatia said here.

Since 1997, municipalities have raised Rs 2,700 crore through bonds for infrastructure projects.

Talking about F&O, Bhatia said, "Sebi is very soon going to do something about F&O. Study has come (recently)".

The regulator, in its consultation paper recently, proposed seven measures to tighten the rules for index derivatives-- revise the minimum contract size and require upfront collection of option premiums intra-day monitoring of position limits, rationalisation of strike prices, removal of calendar spread benefit on expiry day and increase in near contract expiry margin.

If implemented, these measures



would help in improving risk management and increase transparency in the derivatives market.

In its consultation paper, the regulator had suggested to revise the minimum contract size for index derivatives in two phases, considering market growth.

In phase 1, the minimum contract value at the time of introduction should be between Rs 15 lakh and Rs 20 lakh. After six months, phase 2 will raise the minimum value to between Rs 20 lakh and Rs 30 lakh. The current minimum contract size of Rs 5 lakh to Rs 10 lakh was last set in 2015.

A recent study by Sebi revealed that 93 per cent of over 1 crore individual F&O traders incurred average losses of around Rs 2 lakh per trader (inclusive of transaction costs) during the three years from FY22 to FY24. The aggregate losses of individual traders exceeded Rs 1.8 lakh crore over the three-year period between FY22 and FY24.

# CAG: Development of hinterland essential for India's goal of Viksit Bharat by 2047

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Without the development of hinterland, India cannot become Viksit Bharat or a developed nation by 2047, Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG) Girish Chandra Murmu said on Tuesday.

Noting that decentralisation of power has not taken to the extent it should have happened, he said, gram sabha or rural bodies are yet to get its due importance in the federal structure.

"Without the development of grassroots level at the local level, we cannot achieve

Viksit Bharat. More than 50 per cent people live in rural area, and until their governance, their development, their administration, their resources are not augmented, we will not be able to reach (Viksit Bharat goal).

As our prime minister says that if everyone take one step, we will have 1.4 billion steps... That is why Jan Bhagidari is important," he said.

There are about 2,60,000 panchayats and 7,000 urban local bodies in the country. He emphasised the need for strengthening of local bodies

so that efficiency of government schemes are achieved and the sooner it happens, the better it is for the country. Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) cannot be achieved without strengthening local bodies, he said, adding, that accounting and auditing play important roles in flow of funds to the local bodies.

With regard to urban local bodies, the CAG said, municipal corporations cannot be given permission to raise resources from market if they have not followed proper accounting norms.

# Lenders recover ₹ 3.5 lakh crore through IBC: IBBI Chairperson

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Lenders have recovered Rs 3.5 lakh crore through resolution of stressed assets under the insolvency process in the last eight years, a period during which NCLT approved 1,000 resolution plans, IBBI Chairperson Ravi Mital said on Tuesday.

The Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC) provides for a market-linked and time-bound resolution of stressed assets. The National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT) and the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India (IBBI) are key



institutions in the IBC ecosystem.

In the last two years, NCLT has cleared 450 resolution plans. This accounts for 45 per cent of the 1,000 such plans approved in the last eight years, Mital said at a function to mark the eighth foundation day of the IBBI.

According to him, Rs 3.5 lakh crore has been recovered

directly by lenders, of which Rs 1 lakh crore was in the last two years. Under the IBC, the recovery is about 84 per cent of the assets' fair value, as per official data.

Chief Economic Advisor V Anantha Nageswaran said a continuously improving and evolving bankruptcy system is important for economic growth.

# Digi Yatra to be made available in regional, international languages

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Digi Yatra, which seeks to provide seamless movement at airport check points, will be made available in regional and international languages, according to a senior official.

The facility is now available at 24 airports and is expected to be rolled out at 4-5 more airports in the coming months.

Digi Yatra Foundation CEO Suresh Khadakbhavi on Tuesday said a pilot project is likely by June next year for connecting two countries with Digi Yatra.

Under the pilot project, foreign citizens will be able to use Digi Yatra.

Speaking at the CAPA India Digital Aviation Summit in the national capital, Khadakbhavi said a campaign will be started to sensitise passengers about the facility.

While Digi Yatra is slowly gaining traction, concerns have been expressed in various quarters about the privacy of data of the passengers. He said Digi Yatra will be made



available in regional and international languages. Based on Facial Recognition Technology (FRT), Digi Yatra provides for contactless, seamless movement of passengers at various check points at airports.

A not-for-profit entity, the foundation is the nodal agency for Digi Yatra, which was introduced in December 2022. The shareholders of the foundation are Airports Authority of India (AAI), Cochin International Airport Ltd (CIAL), Bangalore International Airport Ltd (BIAL), Delhi International Airport Ltd (DIAL), Hyderabad International Airport Ltd (HIAL) and Mumbai International Airport Ltd (MIAL).

# Jet fuel prices cut, LPG hiked



PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Jet fuel, or ATF, price was on Tuesday reduced by 6.3 per cent to its lowest level this year, while the rate of commercial LPG used in hotels and restaurants was hiked by Rs 48.5 per 19-kg cylinder in the monthly revision done in line with international oil price trends.

Aviation Turbine Fuel (ATF) price was cut by Rs 5,883 per kilolitre, or 6.29 per cent, to Rs 87,597.22 per kl in the national capital, according to state-owned fuel retailers.

This is the lowest price of jet fuel this year. The price reduction, the second in a month, will help ease the burden of airlines for whom fuel makes up for almost 40 per cent of the operating cost. Prices were on September 1 cut by Rs 4,495.5 per kl, or 4.58 per cent. The ATF rate in Mumbai was reduced to Rs 81,866.13 per kl on Tuesday from Rs 87,432.78 previously. Prices differ from state to state depending on the incidence of local taxes. Alongside, oil firms increased the price of commercial LPG

# Reliance Infra approves US \$ 350 million fundraise

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Board of Directors of Reliance Infrastructure Limited (Reliance Infrastructure) on Tuesday approved raising of funds upto US\$ 350 million (INR 2,930 cr) to VFSI Holdings Pte. Limited, an affiliate of Vårde Investment Partners, LP, a leading global alternative investment firm. The FCCBs will be unsecured and will have ultra-low cost coupon of 5% p.a. with a long maturity of 10 years. The FCCBs will be convertible into Equity Shares at INR 330 per share.

The Board of Directors also approved an Employees Stock Option Scheme (ESOS) for all employees of the Company and its subsidiaries. ESOS provides for grant of upto 2,60,00,000 fully paid-up equity shares of INR 10 each, representing approximately 5% of the Company's fully diluted capital.

by Rs 48.5 to Rs 1,740 per 19-kg cylinder. This is the third straight monthly increase. Prices were hiked by Rs 6.5 per cylinder on August 1 and by Rs 39 on September 1. The three rounds of increase follow four monthly price reductions.

In four price reductions, rates were cut by Rs 148 per 19-kg cylinder and now in three rounds of increase, prices have gone up by Rs 94 per bottle.

Commercial LPG now costs Rs 1,692.50 per 19-kg cylinder in Mumbai, Rs 1,850.50 in Kolkata and Rs 1,903 in Chennai. The rate of cooking gas used in domestic households, however, remained unchanged at Rs 803 per 14.2-kg cylinder. State-owned Indian Oil Corporation (IOC), Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd (BPCL), and Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Ltd (HPCL) revise prices of ATF and cooking gas on the first of every month based on the average price of benchmark international fuel and foreign exchange rate.

# INBRIEF

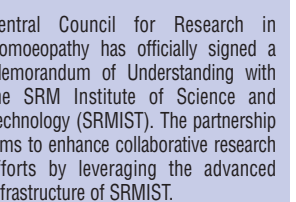
## PARAMJEET SINGH GETS WARM FAREWELL

PATIALA: Er Paramjeet Singh, Director Generation, Punjab State Power Corporation Limited was given farewell on his retirement on Monday.



## MOU BETWEEN CCRH AND SRMIST

Central Council for Research in Homeopathy has officially signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the SRM Institute of Science and Technology (SRMIST). The partnership aims to enhance collaborative research efforts by leveraging the advanced infrastructure of SRMIST.



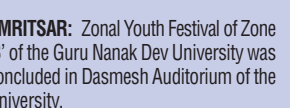
## 5000 LIGHTS TO BE INSTALLED IN NARELA

NARELA: On Sunday a ceremony was held in the Comfort Zone to commemorate the birth anniversary of martyr Bhagat Singh. The event's organizer Dheeran Maan shared that hundreds of tractors and vehicles formed a rally.



## GNDU 'B' ZONE ZONAL YOUTH FESTIVAL CONCLUDED

AMRITSAR: Zonal Youth Festival of Zone 'B' of the Guru Nanak Dev University was concluded in Dasmesh Auditorium of the University.



## REC SIGNS MOU WITH GOVERNMENT OF RAJASTHAN

NEW DELHI: REC Limited has signed MoU with Govt of Rajasthan, Department of Finance during the Rising Rajasthan Investors meet today. As per MoU, REC will provide Rs. 50,000 Crore annually to finance projects for a period of six years.



# MANE LEADS AIR RIFLE DOMINANCE WITH DOUBLE GOLD

**PTI ■ NEW DELHI**

It was double delight for Parth Rakesh Mane as he was crowned junior world champion in 10m air rifle and also claimed a team gold to lead India's impressive performance at the ongoing ISSF Junior World Championship in Lima, Peru. In a thrilling 24-shot final, the 16-year-old Mane overcame a field oozing class with consummate ease, shooting 250.7 to edge out reigning junior Asian champion Huang Liwanlin of China by 0.7 points.

Braden Peiser of the USA took the bronze medal. Paris Olympic silver medallist Victor Lindgren of Sweden was fourth while reigning double junior world champion Romain Aufrere was sixth.

Parth's own compatriots, the in-form Ajay Malik and the seasoned-at-15 Abhinav Shaw finished fifth and seventh

respectively. Ajay went down in shoot-off to Lindgren to finish with 186.7 while Abhinav bowed out in seventh with 144.2.

Mane also won the men's team event alongside Ajay Malik and Abhinav Shaw. India's third gold of the day came when Gautami Bhanot, Sambhavi Kshirsagar and Anoushka Thakur also picked up the junior women's 10m air rifle team title.

Earlier in the 62-strong qualification round, Malik secured second place with a score of 628.8, followed by Mane in fourth with 627.7, and Shaw in sixth with 627.0 after 60 shots.

Their combined total of 1883.5 easily surpassed teams from the USA (1877.6) and Germany (1873.9) to win the team gold.

Two other Indians in the fray Umamahesh Maddineni (625.5) and Talwar Singh (625.2) finished 13th and 14th respectively.

## INDIA SURGES AT LIMA JUNIOR WORLDS



Three Indians also made the junior women's air rifle final but missed out on individual medals.

Gautami Bhanot finished second in the 90-strong qualification field with a score of 634.7 as China's Wang Zifei topped with a junior world record score of 635.7.

Shambhavi Kshirsagar finished fourth (632.6) and Ojasvi Thakur (631.4) qualified in fifth place. Anoushka Thakur was 17th with 627.5, while Saumya Khedkar was 20th with 627.4.

Gautami then finished fourth in the final, going down to the bronze-winning US athlete by 0.2 after the 20th shot. She finished with a score of 209.3.

Shambhavi (188.4) was fifth and Ojasvi (146.1) bowed out in seventh place.

Gautami and Shambhavi, however, combined effectively with Anoushka Thakur to clinch the team competition, bossing USA with a junior world team record score of 1894.8.

Norway was third. Indians also competed in the junior men's and women's skeet competition at the shotgun ranges but couldn't reach the finals.

Gurfateh Singh Sandhu finished 29th with a score of 112 in qualification, while Bhavtegh Singh Gill shot the same score in the junior men's skeet to finish 31st on countback.

Harmehar Singh Lally was 44th with 107.

In junior women's skeet, Mansi Raghuvanshi was the best placed Indian in shotgun. Her score of 109 giving her 8th place as she missed out on qualification by a point.

Mufaddal Dessawala and Shivani Raikwar shot scores of 98 each to finish in 30th and 31st positions respectively.

With five gold medals till date, India continues to lead the overall medal tally at the championship.



## Ronaldo scores winner for Al-Nassr in AFC Champions League Elite

**AP ■ RIYADH**

Cristiano Ronaldo scored the winning goal as Al-Nassr of Saudi Arabia defeated Al-Rayyan of Qatar 2-1 in the AFC Champions League Elite group stage on Monday.

The five-time Ballon d'Or winner missed Al-Nassr's opening 1-1 draw against Al-Shorta of Iraq two weeks ago because of a viral infection. On Monday, he had a goal ruled out for offside, but his shot into the top corner with 14 minutes remaining in Riyadh proved to be decisive.

Former Liverpool forward Sadio Mane headed home for Al-Nassr just before the break and the points seemed secure when Ronaldo added a second.

Al-Rayyan came back in the game three minutes from the end when Roger Guedes scored from close range.

Al-Nassr, seeking a first Asian

title, hung on, however.

Riyad Mahrez scored his first goal of the season as Al-Ahli of Saudi Arabia won at Al-Wasl of the United Arab Emirates 2-0 for a second straight win.

The Algerian attacker, who joined the Jeddah club from Manchester City in 2023, had been struggling for fitness.

Mahrez opened the scoring after just three minutes. He ran on to a long pass from defender Roger Ibanez and shot home from inside the area. He returned the favor seven minutes before the break as his corner was headed home powerfully by Ibanez.

Elsewhere, Al-Sadd of Qatar defeated Esteghlal of Iran 2-0, whose Tehran rival Persepolis drew with Pakhtakor of Uzbekistan 1-1.

The 24 teams are divided into two groups of 12 - one based in the west and one in the east - with the top eight from each progressing to the round of 16.

## HI announces 40 probables for national camp to prepare for home series against Germany

**PTI ■ NEW DELHI**

Hockey India on Tuesday announced a 40-member core probable squad for the senior men's national coaching camp in Bengaluru to prepare for the upcoming two-match home series against world champions Germany.

The team for the two matches against Germany to be played at Major Dhyan Chand National Stadium here on October 23 and 24 will be selected from the camp.

The camp will run from October 1 to 19.

The team heads into this camp following their recent successes that include a second consecutive bronze medal at the Paris Olympics and a successful title defence at the Asian Champions Trophy in China.

The focus will be on honing



skills of the players and strategies during matches, a Hockey India release said.

India captain Harmanpreet Singh said the camp will help in ensuring that the team is well-prepared and in peak condition before facing Germany.

"Playing against the world champions is a tremendous opportunity for us to showcase our abilities, and having an exciting mix of players in this camp will allow us to improve our strategies and build the cohesion needed," he said.

"Each player in this core group brings unique strengths and varying levels of experience and we'll be focusing on how to harness these individual talents and help us grow as players.

"Our objective is to create an environment where everyone pushes each other and by the end of this camp, we want to be an even stronger and better coordinated team."

**THE PROBABLES:**

**Goalkeepers:** 1. Krishan Bahadur Pathak; 2. Pawan; 3. Suraj Karkera; 4. Mohith

**Defenders:** 1. Jarmanpreet Singh; 2. Amit Rohidas; 3. Harmanpreet Singh; 4. Sumit; 5. Sanjay; 6. Jugraj Singh; 7. Amandeep Lakra; 8. Nilam Sanjeev Xess; 9. Varun Kumar; 10. Yashdeep Siwach; 11. Dipsan Tirkey; 12. Mandeep Mor

**Midfielders:** 1. Rajkumar Pal; 2. Shamsheer Singh; 3. Manpreet Singh; 4. Hardik Singh; 5. Vivek Sagar Prasad; 6. Nilakanta Sharma; 7. Moirangthem Rabichandra Singh; 8. Mohammed Raheel Mauseen; 9. Vishnukant Singh; 10. Rajinder Singh; 11. Poovanna CB

**Forwards:** 1. Abhishek; 2. Sukhjeet Singh; 3. Lalit Kumar Upadhyay; 4. Mandeep Singh; 5. Gurjant Singh; 6. Angad Bir Singh; 7. Aditya Lalage; 8. Bobby Singh Dhami; 9. Sudeep Chirmako; 10. S. Karthi; 11. Maninder Singh; 12. Shilananand Lakra; 13. Dilpreet Singh.

## Mumbai City FC hope happy homecoming against high-flying Bengaluru FC

**PTI ■ MUMBAI**

Mumbai City FC would look to notch their first win in the Indian Super League (ISL) this season and move up the points table when they face high-flying Bengaluru FC in a clash between two heavyweights here on Wednesday.

Bengaluru have made a commanding start, winning all their three outings so far to sit atop the points table, while Mumbai are surprisingly placed at 11th after two away matches, with just one point.

Mumbai have found the back of the net in their previous eight matches at home and are looking to equal their longest such ISL run, having done so in nine meetings between October 2022 and February 2023.

Interestingly, they have also won their previous three matches versus Bengaluru. Bengaluru have scored one-third of their goals in the competition this year within the opening 15 minutes, the highest such rate for any team so far.

Mumbai City head coach Petr Kratky said his team needs to avoid conceding goals from set-pieces.

"We need to get better in the area where it's hurting us. And, we have to stop it as soon as possible because, in two games, we conceded five goals and four goals from set-pieces, which is unacceptable for me," he said.



"We have to keep working and keep going. We need to analyse and identify what's (going) wrong and have to find why. The 'why' is very important.

"If we know why we're conceding, why we're losing, or why we're not getting the points, then we can figure out what to fix. So, this is our and my first goal!"

On the other hand, BFC head coach Gerard Zaragoza expressed his happiness at the impressive start but admitted that they cannot afford to slow down yet.

"Let me enjoy. Three games, three wins, and we are happy. But it's too early," he noted.

"Mumbai City FC will be there, and Odisha FC will be there. We are going to Mumbai, and it will be difficult there."

The two sides have faced each other on 16 occasions in the tournament, with Mumbai winning on eight instances, as against seven victories for Bengaluru. One match ended in a draw.

Meanwhile, Bengaluru FC legend and former India captain Sunil Chhetri has netted nine times versus Mumbai City in the competition. He will be aiming to become the first Indian to score on 10 occasions against a single opponent in the ISL.



## Pegula out of China Open after a 4th round loss to Badosa

**AP ■ BEIJING**

Paula Badosa reeled off 11 of the last 12 games in a 6-4, 6-0 victory over US Open finalist Jessica Pegula at the China Open on Tuesday to reach her eighth career quarter-final at a WTA 1000-level event.

From 3-1 down in the opening set, former No. 2-ranked Badosa dominated in her first-ever win over third-ranked Pegula.

"She's one of the players I never want to face -- she's very solid, hits very flat, changes very well direction," said Badosa, who was 0-3 previously against Pegula. "I prepared myself for a battle, but I think today everything worked pretty well."

"Every point was very important for me, especially against Jessica, because she can come back at any moment."

Badosa next faces 35-year-old Chinese player Zhang Shuai, who continued her resurgence with a 6-4, 6-2 win over Magdalena Frech of Poland.

Zhang entered the China Open on a 24-match losing streak and ranked No. 595, but she's yet to drop a set in four

matches this week. That includes eliminating US Open semi-finalist Emma Navarro in straight sets for her first win over a Top 10 player in two years.

Zhang is now in her first women's tour quarter-final since Tokyo in 2022, and her first at a WTA 1000 tournament since Cincinnati in the same year.

Later Tuesday, No. 14-ranked Anna Kalinskaya was scheduled to meet Yuliia Starodubtseva of Ukraine, before the marquee women's match of the day between four-time major winner Naomi Osaka and sixth-ranked Coco Gauff.

It will be the first meeting between the two Grand Slam champions in over two years, with the head-to-head series tied at 2-2.

On the men's side, Carlos Alcaraz was playing fifth-ranked Daniil Medvedev in the first semi-final, with the Spaniard holding a 5-2 advantage in their head-to-head history.

Defending champion and top-ranked Janner Sinner was set to face No.

# Women's soccer on a high as new Asian Champions League launches

**AP ■ KUALA LUMPUR**

Women's soccer is on a high in Asia after some World Cup performances that captivated nations, raising expectations for the new AFC Champions League.

North Korea's win over Japan in the women's Under-20 World Cup last month has the women's game back in focus across the continent.

Australia's run to the semi-finals at the Women's World Cup it co-hosted last year with New Zealand drew record crowds and attention to the talent in the region.

Now, the continental club championship has been revamped and the group stage of the Women's Asian Champions League launches this week with the Urawa Red Diamond Ladies flying the flag for Japan.

The Reds defeated South

Korea's Incheon Red Angels in the final of the Women's Club Championship in May, a pilot tournament for the AFC's Women's Champions League, and would like nothing more than to repeat that success.

"To have two Asian nations in the (under-20) World Cup final is good for Asia and good for us, too, as we have rivals to compete with," Urawa coach Naoki Kusunose said.

"We are grateful for this new challenge in club soccer - and we want to move on to the next step and win the Women's AFC Champions League."

The 12-team tournament, including four teams that advanced through a preliminary stage, is divided into three groups of four.

Urawa kicks off against India's Odisha on Thursday and will go on to face Ho Chi Minh City and Taiwanese team Taichung Blue Whale.



The Group C games will take place in Vietnam as each group is played in a single venue over nine days, with the top two advancing to the quarter-finals next March along with the two best third-placed teams. The semi-finals and final will be held in May of 2025.

Australia's Melbourne City is in Group B and kicks off

against Iran's Bam Khatoon in Thailand. Melbourne City who will also face Kaya-Iloilo of the Philippines and Thailand's College of Asian Scholars.

"For women's football in general in Asia, it's a great opportunity," Melbourne City coach Michael Matricciani said.

"To be in the inaugural campaign, it's an honor for us representing Australia, and also an opportunity for silverware and to test ourselves against the best in Asia."

Incheon Red Angels are in Group A along with Sabah of Malaysia, China's Wuhan Jiangda and Abu Dhabi Country Club from the United Arab Emirates.

The Asian Football Confederation has confirmed that the champion will receive at least USD 1.3 million in prize money.

"We are confident that the

competition will empower women in Asian football, contributing to gender equality and breaking down societal barriers, to make a positive impact on the growth of the women's game," AFC president Sheikh Salman bin Ebrahim Al Khalifa said in a statement.

With varying degrees of professionalism in the women's game across the continent, going deep into the tournament can make a difference financially.

There are concerns, however, that the new tournament does not reflect the reality of women's soccer in Asia.

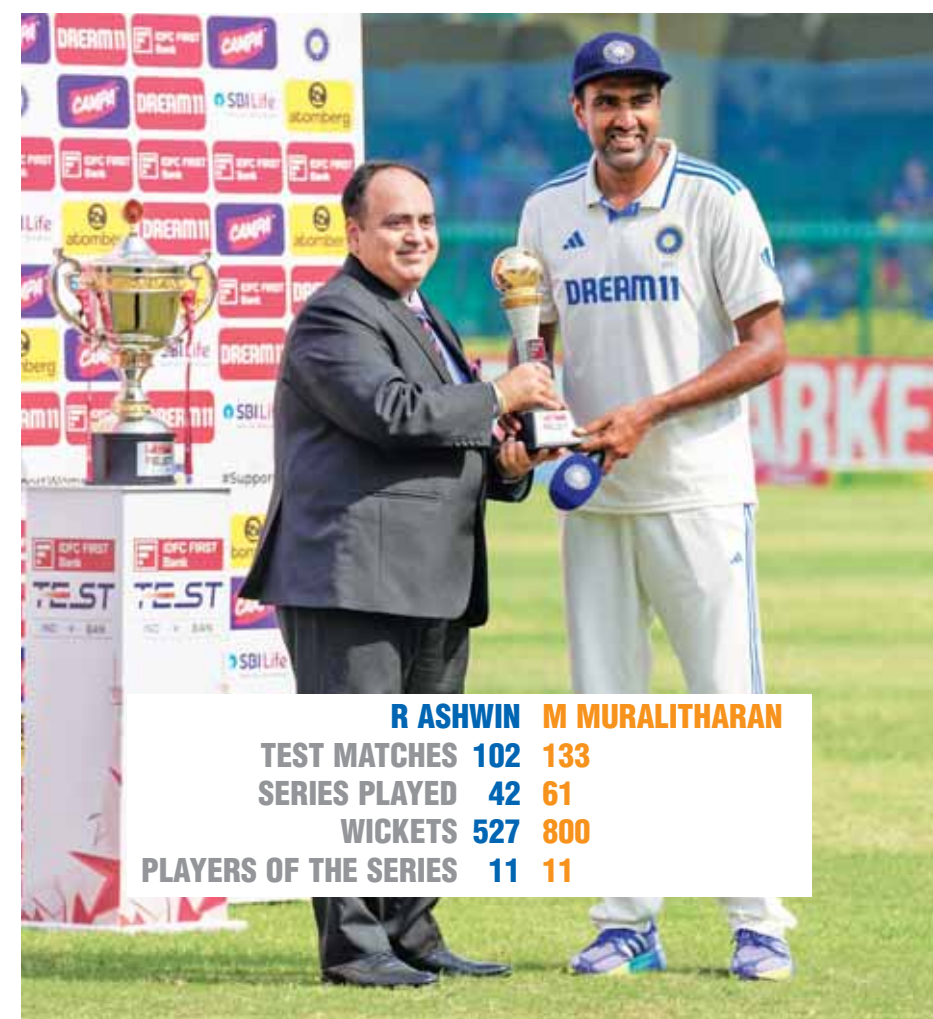
FIFPro Asia/Oceania, part of a worldwide organization representing 65,000 soccer players, compiled a report on the tournament in August based on 88 players who participated in the pilot Women's Club Championship.

It found that just 62% of players in the tournament identified as professional, less than half earned more than USD 10,000 from soccer per season and a quarter reported that the sport was not their primary income.

FIFPro wants more co-operation between the AFC and other stakeholders.

"Whilst the potential of the women's game in Asia is immense, we must ensure it is developed in a way that is responsive to the lived realities illustrated in this report," said Kathryn Gill, a FIFPro board member and former Australia international.

"This can only occur through establishing a genuine partnership between the AFC, leagues, clubs and players, and not through unilaterally overlayering regulations that are fit for men's competitions onto female competitions."



	R ASHWIN	M MURALITHARAN
TEST MATCHES	102	133
SERIES PLAYED	42	61
WICKETS	527	800
PLAYERS OF THE SERIES	11	11

# We were willing to get all out for 100: Rohit on India's boldplay in Kanpur Test

PTI ■ KANPUR

India were willing to take the risk of being bowled for 100-odd in its bold push for a result in the weather-hit second Test against Bangladesh, said Rohit Sharma after the hosts pulled off a dramatic win here on Tuesday.

India managed to win the game comfortably on day five despite two full days were lost due to wet outfield at the Green Park Stadium. Even on day one, only 35 overs possible. After bowling out Bangladesh for 233, India batted in T20 mode to smash 285 in 34.4 overs before declaring their first innings. Having lost two batters overnight, Bangladesh were bowled out in their second innings at stroke of lunch and India ended the game in the second session.

"Once we lost two and a half days, when we came on day 4 we wanted to get them out as quickly as possible and see what we can do with the bat. When they got bowled out for 230, it wasn't about the runs we



get but the overs we got at them," said Rohit at the post-match presentation.

"To make a game out of it on that pitch was a superb effort. It was a risk we were willing to take because when you're trying to bat like that, you can be bundled out for a low score. But we were ready for it even if we got bowled out for 100-120. It was India's record extending 18th series win in a row at home. Among the new players, Rohit was pleased by Akash

Deep's relentless effort. "He's been good (Akash Deep). Lot of domestic cricket he has played. When you come up through the ranks like that, there are a lot of overs in the legs. He has the quality and the skill. Good body as well - can bowl long spells. You have to make sure you prepare your bench strength," said the skipper.

It was the first Test series under new head coach Gautam Gambhir who overtook the

responsibility from Rahul Dravid. "We had a fantastic time (with Dravid) but life moves on. Gautam Gambhir, I've played with him and know what sort of mindset he comes in with," said Rohit.

Ashwin was named player of the series for his all-round show. He rated the improbable win as "massive" in the context of World Test Championship. "When we bowled them out

yesterday, it was little after lunch. Rohit was keen that we needed 80 overs to bowl at them.

"And the moment he came inside out and gave that talk where we're going to go after it even if we get out under 230. It's not only him saying it, he went out there and hit his first ball for six. He set the tone that way," said the premier spinner.

Opposition skipper Najmul Hasan Shanto said that team's batting through the two Test series let them down. "Both the Tests we didn't bat well. In these conditions we need to bat well. If you look at our batters - we played 30-40 balls and got out. It's important in a Test match, when batsmen get in, you should look to score big runs," said Shanto.

"The way Ashwin and Jaddu batted at that time (in Chennai after India were six down) - they batted really well. As a bowling unit we need to look at those moments - how we can get those wickets. That partnership cost us that game," added Shanto.

# ASHWIN TIES MURALITHARAN MAN OF THE SERIES MARK

RISHABH MALIK ■ NEW DELHI

Indian off-spinner Ravichandran Ashwin has etched his name in the records book once again, equalling the most number of Player of the Series in Test cricket's history, with his stellar performances in Bangladesh series Ashwin now stands with Sri Lankan spinner Muttiah Muralitharan.

They both now shares the 11 Player of the Series accolades. Ashwin performance in the Bangladesh series conquered many records in history of cricket. Ashwin's took 11 wickets and scored 114 runs in both the innings two Test matches.

Ashwin's performances throughout his test career gave many cherish moments for India. In first test match in Chennai his crucial knock of 113 runs gave team a fighting total and took 6 wickets in second innings for winning the Test match.

Ashwin awarded his 11th number of Player of the Series. Back from his Test debut in 2011 he has only played in 42 series so far. On the other

hand Sri Lankan legend Muralitharan featured in a total of 61 series for Sri Lanka during his 18-year-long career and won the Player of the Series award on 11 occasions. In the list of most number of Player of the Series Ashwin alongside with muralitharan tops the list followed by Jacques kallis (South Africa)-9, Imran Khan (Pakistan)-8, Richard Hadlee (New Zealand)-8, Shane Warne (Australia)-8.

For India Sachin Tendulkar and Virender Sehwag are second in the list of India players with most Player of the Series awards in Tests five number of occasions they were rewarded. Virat Kohli has three Player of the Series awards to his name in Tests, whereas Kapil Dev, Anil Kumble, Harbhajan Singh, and Rahul Dravid in their careers with four Player of the Series awards each.

Ashwin who considered as an All-rounder batting at number eight scored six centuries allowed him to match New Zealander Daniel Vettori who scored five centuries batting at lower order for their team. The 38

year old spinner currently ranks number two in ICC Test All-rounder rankings. Ashwin's heroic show in the second Test against Bangladesh has tossed him to the top of the wicket-takers list in the ongoing 2023-25 World Test Championship (WTC) cycle.

He has taken 53 wickets from 10 matches at an average of 21.18 and a strike rate of 37.30, surpassing Josh Hazlewood, who is second in the list of most wicket takers with 51 wickets.

It would be an epic battle to see in the upcoming Border Gavaskar Trophy later this year in Australia which might be his last Border Gavaskar feat in Australia currently he is second most wicket taker after Nathan Lyon in Border Gavaskar Trophy.

This achievement further highlights Ashwin's crucial role in India's Test cricket success marks as one of the greatest spinners of his generation. Ashwin's ability to adapt to different conditions and bowl effectively in all phases of the game and made him a nightmare for batsmen worldwide.

PTI ■ DUBAI

Jemimah Rodrigues feels adaptability and maintaining a team-first mentality will be key for India to achieve their dream of claiming a maiden ICC title at the T20 World Cup beginning here on Thursday.

India, who reached the finals of the women's T20 World Cup in 2020, will start their campaign in the ninth edition of the tournament against New Zealand on October 4.

"For me, it's all about assessing the conditions and playing the situation. I just want to keep it simple and do whatever it takes to help the team win and whatever the team needs," Rodrigues, who hit a 52 in the first warm-up game against West Indies, told Star Sports.

"When I put things in that perspective, it gets the best out of me and motivates me. For me, whenever it comes to the team, I go and give my life out there. That gets me more passionate, energetic, and enthusiastic. I want Team India to win. We, as a unit, want Team India to win. For me, it's all about keeping it in that perspective."

The 24-year-old from Mumbai

emphasised on the importance of playing to the situation irrespective of the bowler.

"For me, it's not about specific bowlers but about playing to the situation. Bowlers can have off days, and as a batter, I need to assess which bowler to attack and when to hold back. The satisfaction comes from playing smart and doing what's best for the team."

In other ICC events, India has reached the finals of ODI World Cups in 2005 and 2017 but never gone the distance. Harmanpreet Kaur and Co, meanwhile, made a good start by winning the first warm-up match against West Indies by 20 runs.

"For this team, it's a mix of absolute youngsters and some like me who have had experience. Richa (Ghosh) and Shafali (Verma) have also played World Cups before, so we are young but not inexperienced," Rodrigues said.

"Then we have Harman and Smriti (Mandhana), who have played more World Cups than all of us. That coming together is the strength of this team. This team is special. There's something in this team, a fire

# Whenever it comes to the team, I go and give my life out there: Rodrigues



to win, and at the same time, an energy and bond that's very special.

"We keep talking about sticking to our processes in team meetings and doing whatever it takes to help Team India win. That's the entire goal of this team."

Talking about New Zealand legend Sophie Devine, Rodrigues said: "I remember watching her hit five sixes in a row at my first Under-19 camp

at Chinnaswamy Stadium. It was incredible, and since then, I've always admired her game. We've prepared well to bowl against her, and now it's just about executing our plans."

India will face Australia in a Group A clash in Sharjah on October 13, and Rodrigues stated that execution will be key against the former champions.

"I love playing against Australia because you have to

bring your A-game. There's no other option if you want to win. The rivalry has been intense over the years, and it brings out the best in us.

"We've prepared well and put in the work. Now it's time to execute our plans."

Rodrigues lavished praise on senior colleagues - opener Mandhana and skipper Harmanpreet.

"What stands out about Smriti is her maturity. Even though she's young, she understands the game and her role so well. As the vice-captain, her inputs are invaluable, and she's developed a great understanding of players. She doesn't just tell you to do something her way; she puts herself in your shoes and offers advice that works for you."

"Harman di is a big-match player. We've seen it time and again - from her 171 in the World Cup to her performances in key matches. As a team, we know how much this World Cup means to her, and we want to win it for India and for her. If I see her lifting the trophy, I know I'll start crying."

# Associate nations might abandon 'costly' red-ball cricket: Whatmore

PTI ■ SHARJAH

World Cup-winning coach Dav Whatmore voiced concerns about the sustainability of the ICC's multi-million dollar initiative to support Test cricket suggesting that several countries, especially associate nations, may abandon the "costly" red-ball format entirely.

The International Cricket Council is mulling a dedicated fund of at least USD 15 million for Test cricket that would increase the minimum match payment for Test players and cover the cost of sending teams on overseas tours.

"Saving Test cricket is one of the challenges. The ICC is very keen to maintain some sort of status in Test match cricket. They have created a pool of money to assist countries that are struggling. A step in the right direction, but I'm not sure how sustainable that is," Whatmore told PTI on the sidelines of the Cricket Predicta Conclave here.

"There are a number of countries, particularly the Associates, which may abandon the red ball and focus on the white ball," he added.

The dedicated fund would support national boards that struggle to compete with the wages offered in global T20 competitions. "It is a very costly format of the game. A number of countries do it really well, and they're very successful at it, but there's also many who are struggling. India, Australia, and England appear to be the only three countries prioritising Test cricket, with India reaching the finals of the World Test Championship on both occasions. Whatmore attributes this success to the presence of a strong red-ball domestic calendar.

"It appears as though those three countries are very strong in their domestic red ball tournaments, and that reflects internationally," he said.



"New Zealand played in the championship not all that long ago. They're also keen to be active in that format, but they're struggling when they travel to the subcontinent. They'll be tested again when they come to India."

The 70-year-old, who coached Sri Lanka to the World Cup in 1996, lauded India for its robust domestic calendar while adding that the IPL and the under-19 program contribute significantly to accelerating player development.

"Well, it's very robust. It's a very good, strong, healthy domestic calendar that throws up very good new cricketers that come along, and then you add

IPL onto that. It really does accelerate development for a lot of youngsters.

"Add to that the Under-19 program, which is always successful. There's always been one or two boys that continue on with a very good form from every second year in the World Cup, and they've been successful in winning the World Cup too on many occasions. So all in all, it's a very good one."

While Bangladesh registered a historic Test series victory against Pakistan and host Sri Lanka defeated New Zealand, the two struggled against India and England respectively.

Whatmore, who has coached both the teams in the past, feels they need to be

more consistent.

"Sri Lanka were reasonably competitive in England, and they come back to their own conditions, which they are very familiar with and having won some very important tosses in Galle, makes it very difficult for touring teams, particularly the Western countries.

"So they're doing well, and so is Bangladesh. They did well against Pakistan, but then they had a real tough time in Chennai in the first against India.

"So overall, they're very encouraging performances, but you've got to have consistency, and that's what will separate the teams," he added.

CAD-1246 STATE POLLUTION CONTROL BOARD, ODISHA  
 [Department of Forest, Environment & Climate Change Govt. of Odisha]  
 ParibeshBhawan, A/118, Nilakanthanagar, Unit-VIII, Bhubaneswar - 751012  
 No. 15434 /IND-II-PH-1198 Date 30.09.2024

**NOTICE**

It is brought to the notice of all concerned that Sri Tausifa Tehreem (Authorized Person) for M/s Aariz Construction Pvt. Ltd. has proposed to have Environmental Assessment for Suramani Sand Bed over an area of 5.038 ha. (bearing Khata No.232, Plot No.659 and 1/1725) in village Suramani under Bellaguntha tehsil of Ganjam district to obtain Environmental Clearance from State Environment Impact Assessment Authority (SEIAA), Odisha. The proponent has applied to the State Pollution Control Board, Odisha, Bhubaneswar for a Public Hearing.

By virtue of Ministry of Environment, Forests & Climate Change, Government of India Notification No. S.O. 1533 (E) Dtd. 14.09.2006, the Board has been authorized to conduct public hearing for environmental clearance and as such invites suggestions, views, comments and objections on matters relating to environmental aspects of the proposed project from all the persons including bonafide residents, environmental groups and others located at the proposed site / sites of displacement / sites likely to be affected.

For the above purpose, a person will only mean:

- Any person who is likely to be affected by the grant of Environmental Clearance.
- Any person who owns his control over the project with respect to which an application has been submitted for environmental clearance.
- Any association of persons whether incorporated or likely to be affected by the project and / or functioning in the field of environment.
- Any local authority within any part of whose local limits is within the neighborhood, wherein the project is proposed to be located.

Persons as above who desire to submit their views, comments, objections etc. relevant to the project, may do so in writing within 30 days from the date of publication of this notice addressing the same to the Member Secretary, State Pollution Control Board, Odisha through Registered Post. Besides this, persons interested to submit their views relevant to the proposed mining project in writing or orally may also do so during the public hearing to be conducted on 07-11-2024 at 10.30 A.M Over the Govt. Land (Plot No.220, Khata No.254 (AAA), Area: Ac.3.490) at Mouza: Jatrasoni under Bellaguntha tehsil of Ganjam district.

Persons desirous of participating in the public hearing may go through the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) / Environmental Management Plan (EMP) of the said project which will be available at the following offices. Copy of the Executive Summary both in English & Odia is also available in the following offices & the same can also be downloaded from the website <https://ospcbboard.odisha.gov.in/> free of cost.

- District Collector's Office, Chatrapur, Ganjam.
- District Industries Center, Chatrapur, Ganjam
- In the office of the Chief Executive Officer, Zilla Parishad, Chatrapur, Ganjam
- In the Head office of the State Pollution Control Board, Odisha, Parivesh Bhawan, A/118, Nilakanthanagar, Unit - VIII, Bhubaneswar -12.
- Regional Office, State Pollution Control Board, Odisha, Berhampur.
- Department of Forest & Environment (Environment), Govt. of Odisha, Bhubaneswar

For any further clarification in the matter, the Regional Officer, State Pollution Control Board, Berhampur or the Member Secretary, State Pollution Control Board, Odisha at Bhubaneswar may be contacted.

By Order of the Member Secretary  
 Chief Eng. Engineer

OIPR-08012/110085/2425