

OPINION 6

**WHY 'MAKE IN INDIA' CAN
BE A GAME CHANGER**

WORLD 8

**THOUSANDS JOIN
PRO-PALESTINIAN RALLIES**

MONEY 10

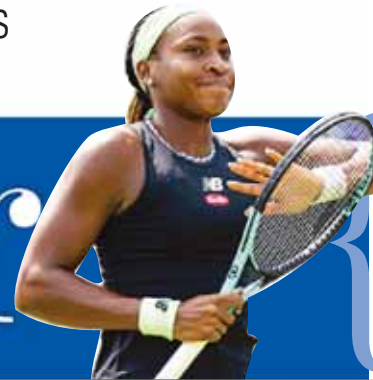
**AMUL SET TO ENTER EUROPEAN
MARKET AFTER US SUCCESS**

DEHRADUN, MONDAY OCTOBER 7, 2024; PAGES 12 ₹3

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**GAUFF RALLIES
TO REACH CHINA
OPEN FINAL
12 SPORTS**

Team India lifts the World Cup Time for Mahisasura Mardini

RISHABH MALIK ■ NEW DELHI

The air crackled with anticipation of India and Pakistan cricket match. Once again in the ICC tournament India beat Pakistan in Women's T20 World Cup group stage match by 6 wickets. India chased down the target of 105 in 18.5 overs, after losing the toss. Indian bowlers gave a much needed start by taking the wicket of Gul Feroza in the first over of the match. India's bowling outclassed the batting line-up of the opposition in this crucial match after they got beaten in the heavy match against New Zealand in the first game by 58 runs on the slow track. Indian star bowler Shreyanka Patil ended her spell with 2 wickets in the bank with one maiden over and Anurdhati Reddy put the Pakistan innings on hold with 3 wickets and an economical spell in the match. For Pakistan, Nida Dar was the highest run scorer of the team who managed to lead the team total across the mark of 100, she came in the middle order to anchor the innings after the failure of



India's Renuka Singh, second left, celebrates the wicket of Pakistan's Gull Feroza with her teammates during the ICC Women's T20 World Cup 2024 match between Pakistan and India at Dubai International Stadium, United Arab Emirates, Sunday

top order in high voltage game. Chasing the target, India came hard on Pakistan. Opening duo Shafali Verma and Smriti Mandhana start their partnership where Shafali's attacking innings of 32 was the highest individual score for the team after she losing her partner Mandhana early in the innings. Shafali Verma couldn't lead the team for long in the run chase. Middle order batter Jemimah Rodrigues and Captain Harmanpreet Kaur's

steady partnership gave the team solidity in successfully chasing the target. Pakistan is still in the league with upcoming match against defending champions Australia on Friday. India managed to win this

match keeping 6 wickets after a slow start in power play without hitting a boundary. India made their mark with first win of the tournament and will go from here to face Sri Lanka on Wednesday and try to enter the semi final stage.

Parties seek recognition in Jammu and Kashmir

PIONEER NEWS SERC ■ JAMMU/ NEW DELHI/ CHANDIGARH



Haryana and Jammu Kashmir assembly 2024 polls

With Haryana and Jammu and Kashmir polls becoming crucial and a matter of prestige for both the major political parties — BJP and Congress — the duo soon after the Exit Poll predictions huddled for the Government formation in both the places with 90 members of Assembly each. While Congress exuded confidence and rallied behind the exit polls saying they shall better the mark even more, BJP which is in power in Haryana for last 10 years rejected exit poll predictions. BJP, Congress, the INLD-BSP and the JJP-Azad Samaj Party alliances, and the Aam Aadmi Party are the key poll contestants. However, a direct fight between the ruling BJP and Congress was expected in most seats. Haryana Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini claimed his party BJP will form the Government in the state with full majority for a third time when the results are announced on October 8. Congress will blame the Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs) for their defeat, he said, attacking the opposition party, which is ahead in the race, according to most exit polls. Former Haryana Chief Minister Bhupinder Singh Hooda said he was expecting a

comfortable majority for the Congress and cited the exit polls reports. Congress stalwarts Hooda, Kumari Selja and Randeep Singh Surjewala, who also exercised their right to vote, said their party would form the next Government. Post the exit poll results the political parties in Jammu and Kashmir were not enthused with the predictions and are now waiting for the 'janta ka report card' on October 8. Various exit polls have predicted a hung assembly in Jammu and Kashmir, with the National Conference-Congress alliance expected to come closer to the halfway mark in the 95-member house. The Independent candidates from both regions are expected to play the crucial role of 'Kingmakers'. BJP J and State Unit Chief Ravinder Raina, who has contested from the Nowshera Assembly segment, claimed the BJP will emerge as the single largest political party winning close to 35 seats. Raina also clarified the party will not join hands with the Sheikh Abdul Rashid-led Awami Ittehad Party (AIP) or Independent candidates supported by the banned Jamaat-e-Islami. Senior party leaders also took stock of the situation and briefed the central leadership. BJP national General Secretary Tarun Chugh on Sunday said that his party will form the Government in both Haryana and Jammu and Kashmir in the recently concluded Assembly elections, adding that BJP will get the blessings of the people. In Srinagar, former Chief Minister and Vice President of the Jammu and Kashmir National Conference Omar Abdullah reacted along the expected lines. He labelled the exit poll a 'time pass'. JKPC Chief Tariq Hamid Karra said, "We are eagerly waiting for the actual results on October 8. A PDP candidate from the Lal Chowk Assembly segment Zuhaib Yousuf Mir hinted that they can join the National Conference-Congress alliance to keep the BJP out of power.

Artist collapses at Ram Leela performance



SAUMYA SHUKLA ■ NEW DELHI

In yet another alarming case of death due to sudden heart attack, a 56-year-old man died after he suffered a heart attack on stage while performing the role of Lord Rama at a Ramlila in Vishwakarma Nagar of Shahdara on Sunday. According to police, the deceased, identified as Sushil Kaushik, was a property dealer who became unconscious while performing in Ramlila. DCP Shahdara Surendra Chaudhary said that following the incident, he was shifted to Kailash Deepak Hospital in Anand Vihar. Reacting to the incident on social media, Delhi Health

Minister Saurabh Bharadwaj said the death could be linked with COVID vaccine. "It is a common discussion that after the COVID-19 vaccine, such cases are continuously appearing in India, where young people are dying of heart attacks while walking," he said on X. A video of the incident is being widely circulated on social media where Sushil can be seen performing the scene and then rushing backstage with visible discomfort. According to the family, Sushil, who is survived by his wife and two children, experienced the discomfort around 1 pm. Rahul Kaushik, a relative of the deceased, stated that Sushil was one of the founding members of the "Jai Shri Ramlila" committee. "Uncle had been performing the role of Raja Ram since 1987. He also used to sing," he said. His wife and son, present there, rushed him to a nearby hospital, where he was put on a ventilator and was declared dead after one hour. A person known to the deceased described him as a man who was healthy, happy and humorous and claimed that he had no prior health conditions that could explain the sudden cardiac pulmonary arrest.

Rape and murder find more voice in Bengal

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KULTALI/JOYNAGAR



Representative file photo

Der lokkho taka nin ar kete porun (Have Rs 1.5 lakh and get lost). That is what the parents of a rape victim was told by the cops of Narendrapur Police Station in South 24 Parganas after the girl committed suicide failing to bear the ignominy and harassment of her parents who ran from pillar to post spending Rs 9 lakh for two years to get justice. All this while, the rapists who roamed freely — after obtaining bail — threatened the victims' family and even got her house robbed when they did not withdraw their complaints. The police simply looked the other way. The teenager was raped in 2020 and she ended her life in 2022 as her parents failed to get her justice. The incident — dating back two years — that was nearly dead and forgotten suddenly rematerialised on Saturday after an 11-year-old girl was raped and murdered at Mahishmari village in Joynagar sub-division once again in South 24 Parganas district. Not wholly out of coincidence perhaps, the Saturday's victim and the previous one who committed suicide happened to be first cousins. "We have no security ... is this the price of being born a girl in

Bengal ... you get out of your house to be seized, consumed and scythed by the wild beasts and you have nowhere to go ... because the police are all bought over ... I have been knocking every possible door but in vain ... I lost my daughter ... a hard-earned Rs 9 lakh and an additional punishment by way of my house getting robbed for not withdrawing the case," said Amrita (name changed) insisting "today no woman is safe. There tends to be one similarity between the rape that took place at Narendrapur and the one at RG Kar Medical College and Hospital where a lady doctor was raped and murdered

on August 9. In both the cases the police offered money to hush up the case. While in the RG Kar case a senior IPS officer had offered a fat packet stuffed with notes to the father of the victim, in the Narendrapur incident the mother of the victim was offered Rs 1.5 lakhs. "As though everything can be sold ... even honour or life ... the police officers told me to get lost taking Rs 1.5 lakhs ... I know because we are poor we will not get justice ... and now brother's daughter is dead ... Why would not they take me ... I would have gone with them ... why would they tear my daughter off and eat her," she wailed at the heavens.

UN out of sync with reality: India

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar on Sunday described United Nations as an old company that does not entirely keep up with the market but occupies space. Citing many examples of inactions, he said that UN does not step up on key issues around the world. Jaishankar was speaking at the third Kautilya Economic Conclave, here. Jaishankar also drew symmetry between companies and that into the market and see countries, giving an example of the UN being an old company, not keeping up with the markets but occupying space for the same. "In a way, the UN is like an old company, not entirely keeping up with the market but occupying the space. When it's behind times, in this world to have start-ups, and innovations, different people start doing their own things," said Jaishankar in the conclave. The External Affairs Minister also highlighted the United Nations' global function, even though the organisation may function sub-optimally, "it is still the only multilateral game in town," he said. "So, what you have today, is yes there is an UN at the end of the day, however suboptimal it is in functioning, it is still

the only multilateral game in town but when it does not step up on key issues, countries figure out their own ways of doing it," said Jaishankar. He also highlighted that when the United Nations is behind, it is time to have start-ups and innovations, the people start to do their own things. Jaishankar highlighted the UN's goal to mainstream principal players with the market trends, in the situation when they are not, he said that countries like companies start doing their own thing. "Now, they would like to mainstream that into the market and see that the principal players are in-tune with these trends, but when they are not, I think countries, as companies do, start doing their own things," said the External Affairs Minister. He also highlighted the organisations' lack of action during global events such as the COVID-19 pandemic. "Think about what the UN did on COVID. I think the answer is not very much," he said. The Minister said that countries had to come up with their own initiatives, like COVAX. "I think increasingly you find combinations of countries who come together and say, let's agree on this and let's go and do it...the UN will continue, but increasingly there's a non-UN space," said Jaishankar.

Not only administration, roads users too be blamed Fear of traffic chaos spoils the festive season fun

BY KUSHAN MITRA

With the beginning of Navratri last week which also kick-starts the festive season that goes on for about two months leaving people in a joyous mood. However, that mood is tempered by the knowledge that across India, there will be traffic chaos on the streets, which now also affects the smaller cities as they are perhaps led by the 'example' set by major cities like Delhi, Mumbai, Bengaluru, Kolkatta, Ahmedabad, Hyderabad amongst others. Millions will have to spend hours in the traffic, stuck on the roads breathing noxious fumes that could otherwise have been spent with their families. Despite large investments in public transport

across India, poor traffic management especially in commercial areas have made matters worse. And this is not just the fault of the traffic police, lack of proper zoning regulations and enforcement have led to commercial areas being built up in the middle of residential zones. And then there is also the lack of civic sense, as people will happily block traffic for their own convenience. In fact, it is the last factor that is completely in our own control and many of us blithely ignore it. However, as the Biblical saying goes, 'Let he who has not sinned, cast the first stone', and I will admit that I have also been guilty of infractions in the past, even if it



Photo: Ranjan Dimri/Pioneer

was for a few minutes. While there are many factors that can be improved from the quality of city roads and the availability of parking areas, the first step can be made by ourselves by not only increasing usage of public transport but also being better citizens. The authorities will have to step up also, better planning for parking is a must. While some multi-storey parking lots have been established in Delhi and Mumbai, many more need to be built. The traffic police will need to manage traffic better and clamp down on illegal parking. And of course, municipalities and public works departments will need to fix the roads. We have to make the festive season an

occasion to celebrate, not an occasion to be stuck in a car or motorcycle. Traffic, transport and road experts says that wrongful parking too creates a traffic menace and the problem augments during the festive season. Markets and the peripheral localities are choked due to the vehicle chaos. "We have been imposing heavy penalty on wrong parking on the roads still vehicle users need to understand first that they should be responsible. Chandni Chowk area used to be full of chaos. Now a systematic plan is in place for last couple of years as no vehicles are allowed in the main arterial roads," said a senior Delhi Traffic Police official.





GUEST COLUMN

The importance of rain and the threat of drought



GS Rajwar

In the current climate change scenario in India why a single drop of water is so precious and why doesn't a drought end when it rains? The answer to such questions lies in solving the problem of drinking water and water scarcity by facilitating rainwater infiltration into the soil for rejuvenation and recharge of the groundwater.

varies from year to year, but the average quantity is fairly constant over the years. A drought may be defined as a period of drier-than-normal conditions that results in water-related or water scarcity problems.



much more severe heat waves in the future. This study also found that if the world warms to two degrees Celsius above pre industrial levels, there would be a significant shift in summer weather conditions from the patterns we know today.

termines the beginning of a drought. Several weeks, months, or even years might pass before people know that a drought is to happen. The first evidence of drought is usually seen in rainfall records and secondly, when the amount of moisture in soil begins to decrease.

the River Brahmaputra and also with Bangladesh. Over the past 50 years, policies have allowed what amounts to a free-for-all in groundwater development and, as the crisis has grown it has been met with continued neglect, mismanagement and overall indifference.

ecosystems, agriculture and the economy. The consecutive days of heavy rain would likely cause severe flooding. The climate models show a systematic weakening of the large-scale summer atmospheric circulation.

dependence on agriculture in India, the water crisis has far-reaching consequences. The bright spots in the current environment are the rivers Narmada and Chambal, which run clean with water fit for consumption.

The traditional and innovative solutions are urgently required to solve the problem of water shortage, especially drinking water. Rainwater harvesting, efficient irrigation techniques, and water recycling can contribute to sustainable water management.

power the groundwater pumping, the water table has seen a drop of up to four metres in some parts of the country. With the aggressive pumping, particularly in rural areas, where agriculture provides the livelihood for upwards of 600 million Indians, Mother Nature has been devastated.

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(The author is professor emeritus of Sparsh Himalaya University, Dehradun and a fellow, Linnean Society of London. Views expressed are personal)

Weapon display & firing exercise held in Kazind-2024

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

Weapon and equipment display along with firing exercises were held by the troops of Indian and Kazakhstan armies on Sunday during the ongoing Kazind -2024, the joint military exercise of India and Kazakhstan at Auli in Chamoli district.

sessions of weapon handling and different types of tactical firing positions.

"Exercise Kazind -2024 is focused on achieving operational synergy, bolstering interoperability and ensuring tactical precision in close quarter engagements," a communiqué from the Indian Army said. The exer-

khstan. The last edition of the exercise was conducted in Kazakhstan in July 2023. The Indian contingent in the exercise has 120 personnel represented primarily by 5th battalion of the Kumaon regiment and Indian Air Force. The Kazakh contingent comprises 60 personnel drawn from the country's



wards operational readiness was on display. The exercise entailed intense training

cise is an annual training event conducted alternatively in India and Kaza-

land forces, air defence forces and airborne assault troopers.

Temperatures remain above normal after monsoon withdrawal

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

With the monsoon having withdrawn from Uttarakhand, temperatures are rising above normal in both the plains and mountainous regions of the State.

plains and mountains regions of the State on Sunday. According to the meteorological centre, the maximum and minimum temperatures recorded in various places on Sunday were 33 degrees Celsius and 21.2 degrees Celsius respectively in Dehradun.



to be about 33 degrees Celsius and 20 degrees Celsius respectively in Dehradun today.

imum and minimum temperatures were three and two degrees Celsius above normal respectively in Dehradun. The maximum and minimum temperatures were both two degrees above normal in Pantnagar while the maximum temperature was three degrees above normal in Mukteshwar.

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मेरी पुत्री के शैक्षिक व अन्य अभिलेखों में मेरी पुत्री का नाम वैष्णवी (VAISHNAVI) दर्ज है, जबकि उसका वास्तविक नाम वैष्णवी थपलियाल (VAISHNAVI THAPLIYAL) है। भविष्य में उसे इसी नाम से जाना, समझा और पढ़ा जाए। गोपाल कृष्ण पुत्र स्व. श्री बालकृष्ण निवासी- 27 ई. शेरबाग रोड, गढ़ी कैंट, देहरादून, उत्तराखंड।

NAME CHANGE. I, Smt Anjana, spouse of Name Manohari Lal resident of Lane No 03, Street 13, Police Station Rishikesh, Post Office Satyanarayan Mandir, Tehsil Rishikesh, District-Dehradun, State Uttarakhand PIN-249204 have changed my name from Smt Anjana to Anjana Rayal vide affidavit dated 05.10.2024 before notary MR. RAJENDRA SINGH NEGI DEHRADUN UTTARAKHAND

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Two arrests within 48 hours, Govt clampdown on corruption continues

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

The Vigilance Establishment has arrested two corrupt public servants red handed while accepting bribes within 48 hours. Officials said that acting on chief minister Pushkar Singh Dhama's policy of zero tolerance for corruption, two corrupt government officials-one in Chamoli and the other in Pauri- were arrested in the act of accepting bribes.



was accepting a bribe of Rs 15,000. On the next day on Sunday, excise inspector Jaibeer Singh was arrested while accepting Rs 30,000 in bribe in the Karnprayag area of Chamoli district. The officials claimed that these two major arrests within 48 hours have given an impetus to the

anti-corruption drive of the State government.

Since assuming office, Dhama had issued a stern warning to those with corrupt intentions. An application has been launched to enable the citizens to complain about corruption in the State. Posters of the corruption-free app 1064 have been displayed in most government offices to raise public awareness on this issue. More than 980 Vigilance and non-Vigilance complaints have been registered through this app so far. According to

official sources, about 30 corrupt public servants were sent to jail during the past nine months with the latest arrests raising the number to 32. The Vigilance Establishment has ensured that the court sent 70 corrupt persons to jail during the past three years.

The chief minister has stressed that strict action will be taken in the future too against government employees who harass the public and indulge in corruption. Strict action will be taken against any person who indulges in corruption. The Vigilance Establishment will be empowered further to take effective and stern action to curb corruption, Dhama emphasised.

सेंट्रल बैंक ऑफ इंडिया Central Bank of India Regional Office Astley Hall, Rajpur Road, Dehradun. Appendix IV (See Rule 8(1) POSSESSION NOTICE (For Immovable Property). Where as, the undersigned being the authorised officer of the Central Bank of India, under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 (Act 54 of 2002) and in exercise of Powers conferred under section 13 (12) read with rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued a demand notice as mentioned against account stated here in to repay the amount mentioned in the notice within 60 days from the date of the said notices.



Women climbers stranded at Chaukhamba rescued on third day

American and British climbers rescued from mountain at 18,500 feet altitude

PNS ■ JYOTIRMATH

Two foreign nationals stranded while climbing Chaukhamba III peak in Chamoli district were safely rescued by the authorities on Sunday. A woman from the USA and another from UK were lost during mountaineering on October 3. Rescue efforts to trace them were on since the day they were reported to be lost. Indian Air Force helicopters were also used in the efforts to

Manners from the UK and Michelle Devcak from the USA got stranded while climbing Chaukhamba III. They stated after being rescued that a rope breaking during the climb put them in a difficult situation.

It is pertinent to mention here that in the initial phases after the climbers were reported missing, the authorities searched for

located at an altitude of 4,900 metres. The SDRF team was dropped by helicopter and on Sunday morning the team members trekked and conducted the search operation in the area.

SDRF inspector general Riddhim Agrawal said, "The SDRF team worked in very difficult conditions to execute the rescue operation. In the face of less oxygen and tough routes in such a location, the team undertook the search operation. Rescuing lost trekkers safely is our top priority and we undertake all possible efforts for this purpose," she said.



trace them. After three days of extensive search, both the mountaineers were rescued by IAF choppers from Chaukhamba peak III located at an altitude of 18,500 feet. According to officials, Fay

them by helicopter. However, considering the challenges in such a remote and high altitude area, the State Disaster Response Force (SDRF) sent a four-member team to the advance base camp

The SDRF commandant Arpan Yaduvanshi that the force's rescue team which was conducted the search operation ahead of the base camp was also transported by helicopter to Jyotirmath.

Dhami reaffirms commitment to stringent land law for protecting interests of U'khand's people

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

Chief minister Pushkar Singh Dhami has reiterated the commitment of his government to bring a stringent land law in Uttarakhand. Addressing Lakhpati Didi Abhiyan- Shakti Ko Samman programme at Agastyamuni in Rudraprayag district on Sunday, the CM said a stringent land law will soon be implemented in the interests of the people of the State.

He averred that the land of those who have illegally bought and sold land will be taken back from them and will be vested in the government. Dhami said that Uttarakhand has become the first State in the country where Uniform Civil Code (UCC) will be implemented. Hitting out at the opposition, the CM said that some people are trying to spread canard, the CM said that the people of the State understand the designs of such people. He said that the Kedarnath Dham is unique and no temple will be allowed to be built using the names of the four Dhams of Uttarakhand at any place in the country.

The CM said that the local products of Kedar valley will be prepared and marketed by creating a Kedar brand in the country and abroad and it will be a major step in the direction of improving the livelihood of women. Along with the religious identity of Kedar valley, the state government will work to give a new identity to the valley, he averred.

Dhami said that on July 31 this year heavy rains caused heavy damage in the area due to which roads and bridge paths were closed. The CM said that about 15,000 pilgrims stranded on the Yatra route were rescued in record time. He was rescued safely. He added that the bridge path was also made operational in 15 days



CM Pushkar Singh Dhami unveils a foundation stone for development works in Agastyamuni along with BJP State president Mahendra Bhatt and others on Sunday **Pioneer photo**

and the pilgrimage was restored within a month. The CM also thanked the local people for extending help in the rescue operation and resuming the Yatra.

He said that women power is playing a very important role in giving a new identity to the state. Thousands of women associated with hundreds of women self-help groups across the state are engaged in making world class products. Dhami said that the State government has formed the House of Himalayas company and is working to strengthen the women power by rebranding the state's products. He said that more than 4,000 women in

Rudraprayag district have been successful in becoming Lakhpati Didi.

The CM inaugurated and laid the foundation stone of 141 projects of about Rs 195 crore on the occasion.

Rajya Sabha MP and BJP State president Mahendra Bhatt, Tourism minister Satpal Maharaj, Forest minister Subodh Uniyal, Animal Husbandry minister Saurabh Bahuguna, district Panchayat president Amardeji Shah, Rudraprayag MLA Bharat Singh Chaudhary, president of BJP Mahila Morcha Asha Nautiyal and others were present on the occasion.

CM pays tributes to Shaila Rani Rawat

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

Chief minister Pushkar Singh Dhami virtually started the campaign of the ruling BJP in the election bound Kedarnath Assembly constituency from Agastyamuni. The by-election in Kedarnath Assembly constituency is likely to be held in November-December. In the programme the CM paid glowing tributes to the late Shaila

Rani Rawat, who expired while serving as the MLA from the area. Striking an emotional chord, the CM said that he has taken a resolve to take the responsibility of the constituency on the death of Shaila Rani Rawat. He said that the ministers and senior officers of the State administration are working hard for development of the area.

Vidhan Sabha select committee clears confusion on ULB elections in Uttarakhand

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

With the select committee of Uttarakhand Vidhan Sabha on Other Backward Castes (OBC) reservation recommending holding of the elections of urban local bodies on the basis of the census of 2011, the path is now clear for holding the elections in 102 urban local bodies (ULB) of the State. In the meeting of the select committee held in Vidhan Sabha on Saturday, the members agreed that the one month tenure of the committee should be extended as the issue of OBC reservation requires intensive and in-depth discussion. The chairman of the committee and parliamentary affairs minister Premchand Agarwal said that the committee has recommended that the ULB elections can be held on the basis of the 2011 census. He said that the notification of the ULB elections will be released

till November 10 and the process of the elections will be completed before December 25. It is pertinent to mention that the State government had submitted an affidavit in Uttarakhand High Court which was hearing a public interest litigation on the issue -mentioning its resolve to complete the process of ULB election before December 25 this year. The five year term of the elected boards in all the ULBs of the State ended on December 1, 2023. Since the State government could not conduct the elections last year due to the pending report of the Supreme Court constituted one-member dedicated commission on OBC reservation in the ULBs, it deployed administrators in all the bodies by an order dated November 30, 2023. This tenure of the administrators

was further extended to a period of three months on June 2, 2024. With the end of this extension on August 31 the government again extended the tenure of the administrators till the constitution of new boards by elections. The government intended to give constitutional status to the report of dedicated commission on OBC reservation by the passage of the Uttarakhand (Uttar Pradesh Municipal corporation 1959) Amendment Bill 2024 in the recent Monsoon session of the State assembly at Bharadisin, Gairsain. However some of the MLAs of ruling party led by Vikasnagar MLA Munna Singh Chauhan raised objections to the recommendations of the one member commission on OBC reservations and demanded sending the bill to the select committee for further scrutiny and dis-

ussion following which the speaker Ritu Bhushan Khanduri sent the bill to the select committee. The speaker directed the select committee to submit its report before October 9. This created a situation of constitutional logjam and confusion over the holding of the ULB elections. The select committee however has now cleared the logjam by recommending that the ULB elections can be held on the basis of the census of 2011.

It is pertinent to mention here that there are 102 ULBs in the State and the elections for 99 ULBs (barring Kedarnath, Badrinath and Gangotri Nagar Panchayats) will be held. The term of the ULBs in the State had ended in December 2023 after which administrators were appointed in the ULBs.

Government failure exposed by cyber attack: PCC president

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

The Pradesh Congress Committee (PCC) president Karan Mahara has said that it is unfortunate that the State government has failed to restore its cyber system even after three days of a massive cyber attack on its official websites and software. He said that the government has also failed to identify the reasons for the failure of the cyber system of the State. Mahara claimed that the people of the State are bearing the brunt of the cyber attack as almost every work such as patient registration in hospitals, distribution of ration and registering of FIR in the police stations has been affected.

He said that though the BJP governments at the Centre and State boast about making the country

and the State number one in every sector but the fact is the cyber system of the State has become so frail due to shortage of the experts that anyone can attack it. Taking a dig at the State government, the PCC president said that not only the cyber system but all systems of the Dhami government have failed.

"The ever increasing cases of rapes and crime against women indicate that the system of law and order in the State has failed. The long queue of the unemployed shows that the system of employment and policies of the government for youth have failed. Similarly the health system has failed due to lack of doctors and the education system too has failed," he said.

Uttarakhand Congress launches intellectual outreach campaign

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

The intellectual cell of the Uttarakhand Congress has decided to add 14,300 intellectuals such as teachers, scientists, scholars and retired employees with the organization of the party in one year. The president of the cell Pradeep Joshi said that a meeting of the cell was organized in the State headquarters of the party on Sunday and in it the state level outreach campaign of the cell was launched. He said that in the campaign, the cell will try to bring the basic principles of the Indian constitution, freedom struggle and Indian national Congress into the social discourse. Joshi said that the cell has made an appeal to the intellectuals to take part in the endeavor to strengthen the concept of

Indian nationalism. "The cell will keep the six fundamental principles of Indian National Congress- national unity, democracy, socialism, secularism, inclusive development and social justice- at the center of its discourse. We will work on the principle of 'think globally and act locally' and encourage retired scientists, teachers, ex-servicemen and others to join the Congress party. The motto of our outreach programme will be 'when good people unite, democracy thrives,' he said.

The meeting was attended by Prem Baukhandi, Sujata Paul, Kuldeep Jakhmola, Anand Bahuguna, R K Singh Baghel, HB Pant, Paritosh and others.



Locals in attire while staging a Ramleela being organised by Nav Sanskritik Satsang Samiti in Nainital **Pioneer photo**

Mahara's statement sign of Congress' frustration, people aware of reality: BJP

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

Reacting to Pradesh Congress Committee president Karan Mahara stating that the cyber disruption is a sign of governmental failure, the Bharatiya Janata Party has said that the statement is a sign of the Congress' frustration. Stating the Congress lacks even a basic system, the BJP State media in-charge Manveer Singh Chauhan said that the cyber issue is a temporary matter and that it will be sorted out in a few hours. He said, "Experts are involved in ascertaining the gap and resolving it while the CM helpline and some other governmental websites have already been restored. The experts have assured that the entire system will be back in place by Monday.

However, the Congress is viewing this situation as a political opportunity and simply criticising the government, which yet again exposes its mentality. The entire digital network was established when the BJP governments were in office and it is this system which is enabling citizens to access facilities conveniently. All government services and facilities are online now while the Congress was unable to make even documents online as it lacked the vision and the intention. Instead of facilitating transparency, the Congress maintained a distance from high technology, which encouraged corruption which the Congress considers suitable," Chauhan said.

He said that the allegation levelled by Mahara is illogical when he says that the law and order system and other important works have been affected by the cyber disruption. The general public is being listened to as usual in the police stations and posts while the CM helpline is also functioning. "CM Dhami's tenure in office so far has been an example of providing employment to the unemployed.

The youth and women are also benefiting from income generation opportunities in the non-governmental sector and through self employment. The people of Uttarakhand believe that the State is moving ahead faster on the devel-

opmental path under Prime Minister Narendra Modi's guidance and Dhami's leadership. The Congress is that party which had a chief and a former chief minister who claimed they were right without giving any account of their actions and the PCC president now is also taking the same path. The Dhami government has enacted various historic laws in the interests of the State and its people and now a law is awaited for protecting the cultural heritage of Uttarakhand. The Congress is still pretending to be unaware though lakhs of women and youth of the State are aware of the ground reality," the BJP State media in-charge added.

Maldivian President visits India for bilateral talks amid strained ties

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Maldivian President Mohamed Muizzu arrived here on Sunday for a four-day bilateral visit to India. The First Lady of the Maldives, Sajidha Mohamed, accompanied Muizzu. This is Muizzu's second state visit to India in four months and his first bilateral visit.

During his visit to India, from October six to ten, Muizzu will meet President Droupadi Murmu and hold discussions with Prime Minister Narendra Modi on bilateral, regional, and international issues of mutual interest, according to the Ministry of External Affairs. The Maldivian President will also visit Mumbai and Bengaluru, where he will be attending business events, it said. "Maldives is India's key maritime neighbour in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR) and holds a special place in Prime



Minister's vision of 'SAGAR' (Security and Growth for All in the Region) and India's 'Neighbourhood First Policy,' the Ministry said in a statement. The Maldivian President visited New Delhi in June to attend Modi's swearing-in ceremony. The ties between India and the Maldives got strained after Muizzu became the President

of the Maldives. Notably, Muizzu rose to power based on his 'India Out' where he demanded the withdrawal of Indian troops and support staff from the Maldives. The diplomatic row further intensified after some ministers in the Muizzu cabinet used derogatory language against Prime Minister Modi after he posted pictures of his trip to

Lakshadweep. While the said ministers were removed from the cabinet, tourism in the Maldives took a hit as tourist footfall decreased from India. However, both sides tried to repair ties after the Maldives underlined India's pivotal role in its economic development, security and infrastructure projects.

CBI warns against 'digital arrest' scams



PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The CBI, police, customs, ED or judges do not arrest people through video calls, the Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre (I4C) said in a public advisory issued in view of the rising cases of 'digital arrest' crimes in the country. Terming it a scam, the federal cyber security agency cautioned people against falling victim to such crimes committed using the Internet. "Don't Panic, Stay Alert. CBI/Police/Custom/ED/Judges DO NOT arrest you on video call," stated the advisory issued on Sunday. The advisory depicted the logos of social media platforms like WhatsApp and Skype to showcase that calls for such scams

are made using such platforms. These social media platforms have said in the past that they are coordinating with cyber security agencies of the government to provide users enhanced safety against such crimes. The I4C urged people to report such crimes at the central helpline number 1930 or the website www.Cybercrime.Gov.In. Digital arrest is the name given to a cyber crime technique where fraudsters send an SMS or make video calls to a person posing as law enforcement agency officials fraudulently claiming that the individual or his close family members have been caught by a government investigative agency in a criminal activity like drugs trafficking or money laundering.

Rajnath Singh to inaugurate DefConnect 4.0 to showcase India's defence innovation

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Monday will inaugurate DefConnect here, a significant step towards advancing indigenous innovation and celebrating the growing defence ecosystem of the country, defence ministry said on Sunday. Giving details, officials said the event is being organised by Innovations for Defence Excellence - Defence Innovation Organisation (iDEX-DIO), under Department of Defence Production, Ministry of Defence. DefConnect 4.0 marks a milestone in India's defence innovation journey, bringing together the Armed Forces, Defence Public Sector Undertakings (DPSUs), industry leaders, innovators, start-ups and MSMEs, academia, incubators, investors and policymakers. The event will feature an exciting Technology Showcase, presenting iDEX innovators with a unique opportunity to exhibit their cutting-edge technologies,

advanced capabilities and ground-breaking products. This showcase is designed to engage a diverse audience of stakeholders, fostering collaboration and sparking dialogue that drives innovation forward with focus on forging powerful collaborations.

DefConnect 4.0 will feature launches and announcements by the defence minister, alongside interactive and engaging sessions featuring industry leaders and defence stalwarts. The event will also include a themed session focusing on recent budget announcements, key takeaways for the defence innovation ecosystem, and the latest initiatives in the semiconductor domain. Till date, iDEX has launched 11 editions of Defence India Start-up Challenges, and has garnered over 9,000 applications. It is currently collaborating with more than 450 start-ups/MSMEs on important projects. Launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in 2018, iDEX continues to provide a unified platform for various stakeholders in the defence and aerospace sectors.



SC: Removal of elected women representative can't be treated lightly

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Removal of an elected public representative should not be treated so lightly, especially when it concerns women belonging to rural areas. The bench was dealing with a plea of Manish Ravindra Panpatil, an elected sarpanch of gram panchayat, Vichkheda situated in Jalgaon district of Maharashtra. She was ordered to be removed from her post after a complaint by fellow villagers that she was allegedly residing with her mother-in-law in a house constructed on government land.

The allegation was denied by Panpatil, who claimed she does not reside in that particular dwelling, and that she lives separately with her husband and children in a rented accommodation. However, without appropriately verifying these facts and on the basis of "bald statements," the Collector concerned passed an order disqualifying her from continuing as sarpanch. "This order was thereafter confirmed by the divisional commissioner. Subsequently, the high court vide the impugned order, dismissed the appellant's writ petition against the commissioner's order on a technical ground, thus putting a seal of approval on her removal from office," the bench noted. The bench noted that the villagers grasped at straws in their bid to evict Panpatil from her position and their cause was perhaps aided by the mechanical and summary orders passed by government authorities at

various levels. "These orders were passed in a lackadaisical manner, without making any effort towards conducting a fact-finding exercise, so as to confirm whether the allegations levied by the private respondents were sufficiently made out. There is nothing on record to suggest that any objection of the appellant's family having encroached upon government land was ever raised when she filed her nomination papers," the bench said. While noting that the vagaries of the present factual matrix is far from unique and is unfortunately somewhat of a norm, the bench said there is no doubt that the private respondents (villagers) may have operated in a discriminatory manner. It said what is more worrying is the casual approach adopted by government authorities in summarily removing an elected representative. "This is all the more concerning when the representative in question is a woman and elected in the reservation quota, thereby indicating a systemic pattern of prejudicial treatment, permeating through all levels of administrative functioning," it said. The top court said having regard to the facts and circumstances of the case at hand, it sees no credible and convincing material on record to substantiate the allegations of encroachment of government land by Panpatil before or post her election as sarpanch.

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Three dark clouds still loom over the Indian economy: Jairam Ramesh

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Asserting that the last 10 years have seen "highly detrimental economic trends," the Congress on Sunday said the monsoon has receded but at least "three dark clouds" of languishing private sector investment, stagnating manufacturing and decline in real wages and productivity for labourers, still loom over the Indian economy. Congress general secretary in-charge communications Jairam Ramesh said bombastic claims on the economy are being made by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his drumbeaters but what these claims conceal are the choke points that will strangle growth in the years to come if not taken seriously now, in a spirit of humility. "The monsoon has receded. But new evidence has shown that at least three dark clouds still loom over the Indian economy," Ramesh said in a

statement. "First, after a brief surge in private sector investment during 2022-23 on the back of the COVID-19 recovery, investment has returned to an unsteady path," he said. New project announcements by the private sector fell by 21 per cent between FY23 and FY24, he pointed out. "This reflects a lack of investor confidence in India's consumer markets, and the uncertain investment climate generated by the Government's inconsistent policy making and Raid Raj," he said. In this context, rather than grow their businesses, companies are using profits to reduce debt burdens, he claimed. "We are witnessing a growing financialisation of the Indian economy, with India Inc - perhaps taking its cue from the government - focusing on stock market valuations rather than top-line revenue growth," Ramesh said. This bodes poorly for the medium- and long-term future of the Indian economy, as the



growth engine of the economy - private sector investment - continues to languish, he said. "Second, ten years after the Government's flagship Make in India scheme was launched, India's manufacturing is stagnating. As share of GDP, manufacturing is the same as it was ten years ago," the Congress leader said. Ramesh pointed out that as a share of total employment, manufacturing has marginally declined. India's share in global merchandise exports has also largely stagnated, and

exports are falling as a share of India's GDP, he said. "In fact, growth in India's share of global exports grew much faster in the 2005-15 period, largely corresponding to Dr. Manmohan Singh's tenure as Prime Minister. In labour-intensive sectors like garments, exports have fallen from USD 15 billion in 2013-14 to USD 14.5 billion in 2023-24," he said. This shrinking of manufacturing is largely attributable to the PM's inexplicable trade policy - where it disincentivizes participation in global value chains (GVCs) through high tariffs while silently permitting Chinese dumping of mass imports, Ramesh alleged. "Third, the latest Annual Survey of Industries (ASI) for 2022-2023 has revealed a decline in real wages and productivity for India's labourers. The growth in GVA per worker (a measure of labour productivity) slowed from 6.6% in 2014-15 to 0.6% by 2018-19," he said.

After Covid era statistical irregularity, worker productivity contracted in FY23 again, Ramesh said, adding that this decrease in labour productivity has impacted real wage growth, especially amidst rising inflation. As real wages stagnate, consumption will remain weak - resulting in the low investment that has been a consistent restraint on India's growth, he said. "These are merely the issues that have surfaced in the past few weeks but the last ten years have seen other highly detrimental economic trends, including rising oligopolisation, mass unemployment, and high inflation," he said. "Bombastic claims on the economy are being made by the non-biological PM and his drumbeaters. But what these claims conceal are the choke points that will strangle growth in the years to come if not taken seriously now, in a spirit of humility," Ramesh said in his statement.

Indian naval ships arrive in Oman for joint exercise



PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Signifying close defence ties between the two countries, Indian naval ships Tir, Shardul and

Indian Coast Guard Ship Veera of First Training Squadron (ITS) of the Indian Navy on long range training deployment arrived at Muscat, Oman on Saturday, navy said here on Sunday.

Giving details, officials said during the visit from October five to nine, the Indian Navy will engage with Royal Navy of Oman on various aspects of maritime security and interoperability, including harbour interactions and joint exercises. The deployment will also focus on training exchanges, professional interactions and friendly sports fixtures between the two Navies. In the last ten years, this is the third visit of ITS to Muscat, Oman. These interactions play a key role in consolidating gains in Naval cooperation and keeping the existing partnerships between both the Navies. Coinciding with the visit of ITS, Vice Admiral V Srinivas, Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Southern Naval Command will be on an official visit to Sultanate of Oman from October six and nine. During the visit, FOCINC South will hold bilateral discussions with Vice Admiral Abdullah bin Khamis Al Raisi, Chief of Staff of Sultan's Armed Forces (COS- SAF) and Rear Admiral Saif bin Nasser bin Mohsen Al -Rahbi, Commander of Royal Navy of Oman (CRNO). He will also visit key defence and training installations in Oman. Indian Navy and Royal Navy of Oman engage with each other on avenues of operations, training and collaborative efforts in various fields. Recently, the sixth edition of Indian Navy and Royal Navy of Oman Staff talks were held in June at New Delhi. The visit of ITS and the CinC, SNC further cement bilateral relations between the two friendly nations.

RaGa advocates for increased women's participation in politics

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Flagging inequality in leadership roles in Parliament and state assemblies, Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi on Sunday said for true equality, more and more women's participation is necessary in these institutions. The former Congress chief urged women to participate in his party's 'Shakti Abhiyan,' which aims to create an equal space for 'women's interests' in politics.



"For true equality, more and more women's participation in these places is necessary," Rahul said. "With the thought of 'Aadhi Abadi, Poora Haq,' we are dedicated to this goal.

If you too are ready to bring this change, then join 'Shakti Abhiyan,' the Congress leader said. "Your participation is very important to bring real change by strengthening the organi-

sation at the grassroots level," he said. "Let us become participants of this change, from the village to the nation," Gandhi said and shared a link to register for 'Shakti Abhiyan.' The Indian Youth Congress Shakti Abhiyan initiative aims to create an equal space for 'women's interests' in politics and decision-making, driven by the representation of women by women at all levels of governance local bodies, legislative assemblies and Parliament. The Indira Fellowship is an initiative in honour of former prime minister Indira Gandhi to amplify the voices of women in the political arena and drive a much-needed transformation in our society.

Haryana CM confident of BJP majority despite exit polls

PTI ■ CHANDIGARH

Rejecting exit poll predictions, Haryana Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini on Sunday claimed his party BJP will form the government in the state with full majority for a third time when the results are announced on October 8. The Congress will blame the Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs) for their defeat, he said, attacking the opposition party, which is ahead in the race, according to most exit polls. Replying to a question about the exit polls predicting a Congress win, Saini said, "On October 8, we are going to form the government." He said, "8 tareekh ko janata degi jawab, aur yeh (Congress)



kahenge EVM hai kharab (People will have their say on October 8, and they Congress will blame the EVMs)." Asked how many seats the BJP will win in the 90-strong assembly, Saini said, "I have said we will form the govern-

ment with full majority." The BJP will form the government on the basis of works done in the state, he added. The BJP worked for every section without any discrimination and on the basis of this work, the party will form the government with full majori-

ty, he further said. Commenting further on the exit poll predictions for Haryana, he said they forecast a Congress victory in Chhattisgarh and showed the party ahead in Uttarakhand as well. "The exit polls have their own theory and they have their own system, but we work on ground. Our leaders are directly connected with people. The people of Haryana want the BJP to come to power for a third time. We are forming the government for a third time," he said. The Haryana assembly elections on Saturday saw a turnout of nearly 67 per cent, with several exit polls predicting a clear majority for the Congress, which is eyeing a comeback after a decade.

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PAPER WITH PASSION

Change on the cards

Exit polls predict change in Haryana and a hung assembly in J and K; if true, would indicate Indian politics is in transition

Exit polls from the state elections in Haryana and Jammu and Kashmir are indicating a decisive win for the Congress in Haryana and a hung assembly in Jammu and Kashmir. As these predictions dominate political discourse, they offer a glimpse into possible power shifts in these two critical regions. In Haryana, the exit polls suggest that the Congress is set to reclaim power, ousting the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)-led government, which has been in office since 2014. If these predictions hold true, it would also underscore the growing discontent among Haryana's electorate, particularly farmers and rural voters, who have been dissatisfied with the BJP's handling of agricultural reforms and the aftermath of the 2020 farmers' protests. The Congress, capitalising on this unrest, appears to have successfully mobilised voters, especially in the rural areas and among the Jat community. Meanwhile, in Jammu and Kashmir, exit polls point towards a hung assembly, signaling the challenges of forming a stable government in the Union Territory. With no single party projected to secure a majority, political maneuvering and coalition-building will become crucial in the coming weeks.

The fractured verdict reflects the complexity of the region's political landscape post the revocation of Article 370 in 2019. The People's Alliance for Gupkar Declaration (PAGD) is expected to emerge as a significant player, but the BJP has also made inroads, particularly in the Jammu region. So not only numbers but post-result alliances would decide the formation of the government. Indeed, a hung assembly could lead to prolonged negotiations and possibly a fragile coalition, underscoring the political uncertainty that has

plagued the region in recent years.

A Congress victory in Haryana could be a defining moment in national politics. It would signal that the BJP's stronghold in the Hindi heartland is weakening and Jats (who have significant presence in western UP) are returning to Congress fold and non-Jats — upper castes — the traditional BJP voters are also have also splitted. Congress couldn't be happier as it could also galvanise Congress supporters across other northern states, particularly Rajasthan and Punjab, where state elections are due soon. But it would have a daunting task of keeping the rebels happy as they could turn the tables. In contrast, the outcome in Jammu and Kashmir-if a hung assembly materializes-could deepen political instability in the Union Territory. A coalition government would have to balance the diverse and often conflicting interests of Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh, complicating governance. Moreover, this result could prompt national parties, particularly the BJP, to reassess their strategies in sensitive regions like Jammu and Kashmir, where identity politics and security concerns dominate. However, as with all exit polls, it's important to approach these predictions with skepticism, given how they have been inaccurate in past elections.

PICTALK



Artists take part in 'Garba', in Ahmedabad

Why 'Make in India' can be a game changer



ANURAG SAXENA

By fostering indigenous innovation and cutting-edge technology, India is challenging long-held economic paradigms and rewriting its own narrative on the world stage

For centuries, Western nations have reaped the rewards of their focus on innovation, intellectual property (IP), and the relentless pursuit of technological advancement. By glorifying creation, often over manufacturing and service, these nations have not only monetised their inventions but also exported their ideas globally, establishing themselves as economic powerhouses.

The United States, for instance, transformed industries through disruptive technologies like the internet, pharmaceuticals, and aerospace, creating global demand for their products and services. Similarly, European nations have led in sectors like infrastructure (think about the economic advantage of railroads), automotive engineering and luxury goods, where innovation and IP are at the core of their global dominance. In contrast, economies like India and China historically anchored their growth on manufacturing and services—both positioned lower on the value-addition spectrum.

This approach, while effective for driving industrialisation and job creation, did not prioritise innovation or IP creation, the intellectual asset that is monetizable, leaving these nations as consumers rather than creators of advanced technologies. China, however, has broken away from this model in recent years, making massive investments in innovation, intellectual property, and tech platforms. The country has developed cutting-edge technologies in fields like telecommunications, social media, and gaming, exemplified by global giants such as Huawei, TikTok, and Tencent. These efforts have not only strengthened China's domestic economy, positioned it as a formidable global exporter, and given it access to priceless data from across the world. India, on the other hand, followed a different trajectory. Instead of focusing on production and technology creation, India became synonymous with contact centres, Global Capability Centers



(GCCs), and IT services. This positioning earned India the moniker of the “backroom of the world,” a role that, while economically beneficial, left the nation lagging in terms of innovation and high-value technology creation. While India excelled in providing services, it often supported the innovation and product development efforts of other nations rather than leading them. However, the past decade has witnessed a significant shift in India's global stance. India has emerged as a geopolitical force, flexing its muscles in various domains. Diplomatically, India has taken a more assertive position on the global stage, engaging in strategic partnerships with major powers while maintaining its autonomy in international affairs.

In the geopolitical arena, India has strengthened its defence capabilities and has been pivotal in initiatives like the Quad, countering China's influence in the Indo-Pacific region. On the trade front, India has renegotiated trade deals and is increasingly seen as a critical player in global supply chains, particularly in the wake of global disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. This newfound



INDIA HAS EMERGED AS A GEOPOLITICAL FORCE, FLEXING ITS MUSCLES IN VARIOUS DOMAINS. DIPLOMATICALLY, INDIA HAS TAKEN A MORE ASSERTIVE POSITION ON THE GLOBAL STAGE, ENGAGING IN STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS WITH MAJOR POWERS WHILE MAINTAINING ITS AUTONOMY IN INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

assertiveness underscores why India's current focus on “Create in India” is both timely and strategically crucial. By fostering a culture of innovation and supporting the development of indigenous technologies, India is positioning itself to dominate the next century, both economically and in terms of soft power. Economically, a focus on creation will enable India to move up the value chain, generating higher returns on its intellectual assets and reducing its dependency on foreign technologies. In terms of soft power, leading in fields such as media and entertainment will allow India to shape its narrative, instead of continually reacting to distorted Western narratives. When PM Narendra Modi made the call, “Let us together start a ‘Create in India’ movement,” not everyone understood its second and third-order effects, especially the ramifications on narrative-correction, and exporting our civilizational ideas globally.

The “technologies” of Eastman colour and vinyl records helped America prop its heroes and rockstars. The era of XR and gaming will help India prop ours. The Ministry of Information and

Broadcasting recently announced the ‘Create in India Challenge’ under the aegis of World Audio Visual & Entertainment Summit (WAVES) 2025; a first-of-its-kind event showcasing the future of our AVGC sector to the world. This broad-spectrum challenge showcases the best of our talent across 25 types of content and games. India needs more of these visible celebrations. It's time the world saw our creativity and our ambition. However, to fully unlock this potential, India must also invest heavily. The AVGC sector represents the future of digital interaction and entertainment. Unlocking this future needs skill development, investment pipelines, platforms that scale, a progressive regulatory regime, and much more. It is indeed a tall order, but by establishing the Gangotri here, India can ensure its leadership in the global economy and narrative for years to come.

(The writer is a policy affairs expert. He is a nominated member of the National Tourism Advisory Council, Govt. of India and Board Member, Centre for Insolvency and Financial Laws; views are personal)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

SECULAR CREDENTIALS INTACT

Madam — Apropos of the editorial ‘How secular in India’ (October 5) based on the report of the US Commission on International Religious Freedom, certain ground realities of the present circumstances emanating from Israel-Hamas war wrapping Lebanon, Iran and Syria, extremist groups of Pakistan operating in India, terrorist attacks from across the border and coup in Bangladesh, which are directly boiling the Indian Muslims against Israel, US etc, can't be factored for any judgment by a US group.

It is true that there are serious violations of human rights and religious freedom in the US. India has very peculiar problems relating to religious issues. The Waqf Act has embroiled the sentiments on possession of their lands and temples, the insurgency from Bangladesh and Myanmar have changed the demography of the North East, Bengal and other bordering states. Our neighbourhood has been troubled with army coups, dictatorships, religious violence against Hindus and anti-India governments. Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Myanmar are failing in economies with unstable governments. Hindus are restive not against Muslims and minorities but against indiscriminate appeasement politics.

These aspects have not been factored in the report of USCIRF. It is surprising & unfortunate, highly biased and discriminatory that such organisations don't carry out similar investigations and publish reports on Pakistan, Bangladesh, Myanmar, Maldives, Afghanistan, Iran, Syria and China. However, such extraneous reports are mostly inconsequential in Indian politics. Such reports don't help Muslims too. US should also denounce and discredit such organisations and their reports. Such reports violate diplomatic relations and mutual cooperation.

Vinod Johri | Delhi

Address the demands of Ladakh



The people of Ladakh are deeply concerned about pressing environmental issues, regional affairs, and the lack of essential services, all of which continue to plague the region. The key issues they are raising include the demand for tribal status under the Sixth Schedule of the Indian Constitution, full-fledged statehood, separate parliamentary constituencies for Leh and Kargil, and the establishment of a Public Service Commission. Sadly, even as they did 21

JUSTICE RESTORED

Madam— The recent Supreme Court decision against prejudice based on caste in jails is a major step towards ensuring that everyone is treated with dignity and equality. But how can we make sure that every state implements these changes in an effective way? Concerns regarding the extent of social injustice are raised by the practices from the colonial past that remain present in jail manuals. What steps will be implemented to monitor compliance and permanently end this prejudiced conduct as we work towards a more equal system? The Court's order is an important first step, but more work needs to be done.

Anshu Bharti | Begusarai

A BETRAYAL OF TRUST

Madam — I am writing to express my deep concern regarding the adulteration of Tirupati laddus. The Supreme Court's decision to form a five-member independent SIT is a commendable step. Any allegations of adulteration or misusing of any ingredients in the Tirumala

days fasting protest, getting no results they began another Delhi Chalo Padyatra for their rightful claims, despite being totally peaceful protest, were detained by the Delhi police, sparking outrage across the country.

It is alarming to see the government's apathy and the Indian media's strange silence on such critical matters. Ladakh is an integral part of India, and its people deserve to be treated with the same respect and consideration as any other citizens. Their development is India's development, and their issues must be addressed without further delay. I urge the government to fulfill the demands of the people of Ladakh promptly and work towards ensuring their welfare and dignity. Jakir Hussain, Kanpur.

Jakir Hussain | Kanpur

Tirupati laddus are disrespectful to the sentiments of crores of devotees. It also questions about the quality control and the safety standard that is being maintained by the Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams (TTD). I urge the SIT to conduct an impartial investigation turning no stone unturned. The findings of the investigation should be made public which would restore the faith of devotees in the TTD and also prevent such incidents from happening in future. The investigation must be done in such a manner that it does not become a political issue as Tirupati laddus is connected to crores of people and their beliefs, it deals with the sentiments of devotees. I urge the SIT to conduct an impartial investigation which would not just resolve this issue but also ensure that next time such thing doesn't happen by ensuring regular maintenance and laboratory tests are done.

Fiza Fatima | Hyderabad

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

Overcoming Phobia: A Journey of inner strength and inspiration

Resilience and determination can help us overcome even the toughest challenges. All you need is a spark to ignite your spirit

I had a phobia of speaking in public. It is quite surprising given that I was good at debates during school and college. I was also a successful manager as I traversed my professional journey. I dealt with hundreds of staff since I joined the railways as a young officer.

I also interacted confidently with my peers and the seniors. However, I would break out in a sweat and lose my sleep each time I had to be on stage. I was envious of those who could spontaneously break into a joke or recite a poem. I decided to do something about it. I started preparing notes days in advance.

I would keep memorising the lines by rote till they were branded in my memory. I would even repeat them standing in front of the mirror watching intently my facial expressions. This was the best that I could do. I realised in later years that my handicap was nothing when compared to the challenges faced by many. Recently, I watched The King's Speech, a movie on the life of King George



VI, who found himself on the throne after his older brother, King Edward VIII abdicated. The film largely dealt with King George's determination to overcome his stutter with the help of a speech therapist. I understood that the will to beat the odds comes from within. No therapy can help an unwilling person. There are many instances of people overcoming their handicaps to pursue their dreams. We have all heard of Stephen Hawking. He was diagnosed with motor neuron disease at age 21 and was not expected to live more than a couple of years. He survived the odds but the disease paralysed him over decades. After he lost his speech, he communicat-

ed through a hand-held speech-generating device, and then through a cheek muscle. Helen Keller was an American author. Medical science was much less advanced than what we know today.

An unknown illness, when she was only 19 months old, left her permanently blind and deaf. She painstakingly learned to recognise words through hand movements. We, who are blessed, cannot even fathom the hard work that would have gone into her transformation to be the voice that she became. The famous Bharatnatyam danseuse Sudha Chandran underwent amputation of her right leg at the age of 18 due to a road accident.

Many would have lost hope and might have ended up wallowing in self-pity. The lady regained her mobility with the help of a prosthetic. She also pushed herself to accomplish the unthinkable. One need not look up to only the famous to witness these stories of human courage and conviction. My maternal grandfather was comatose for a few

months after a botched-up surgery. The doctors were not even certain about his coming out of the coma. He was paralyzed on his right side. He worked painstakingly to lead as normal a life as he could, he even developed writing skills with his left hand. Many in our country are differently abled but do not have the means to pursue their dreams.

On the other hand, we have big business houses that do not even bat an eyelid before spending more than the GDP of a small country on lavish events. We, many other individuals, and the business houses have the means to make a difference in the lives of others. Stephen Hawking said, “Concentrate on the abilities your disability doesn't hinder and don't dwell on the things it interferes with. Be disabled physically, not in spirit.” We need to be the spark that ignites the spirit.

(The author is an electrical engineer with the Indian Railways and conducts classes in creative writing; views are personal)



SANJAY CHANDRA



FIRST COLUMN

LEADERSHIP AND MENTAL HEALTH OF EMPLOYEES

Supportive leadership can reduce stress and enhance job satisfaction



SAKSHI SETHI

In today's dynamic workplace, the mental health of employees has become a focal point for organisations aiming to foster a productive and harmonious environment. One of the most significant factors influencing employee's mental health is the role of leadership. Bosses and managers possess the power to shape workplace culture, influence employee satisfaction and directly impact mental well-being. Leaders hold a unique position of authority that can significantly affect an employee's perception of their work environment. The tone set by leaders creates the foundational culture of an organisation. It is undeniable to say that a positive, encouraging atmosphere promotes employee engagement and satisfaction, whereas a toxic environment leads to stress and anxiety. Several research indicates that employees who feel supported by their leaders are more likely to experience lower levels of stress and higher levels of job satisfaction. Studies also indicate that transformational and supportive leadership styles co-relate with better employee mental health outcomes. Leaders who provide emotional support and recognition can significantly reduce stress levels among employees. Conversely, authoritarian leadership styles often result in increased employee anxiety and decreased morale. Flexible work arrangements such as remote work, and flexible hours positively impact mental health by allowing employees to manage personal responsibilities alongside work demands. One of the most crucial aspects of effective leadership is the ability to provide support and recognition. There is no denying the fact that employees thrive when their contributions are acknowledged and valued. A boss who regularly provides constructive feedback and celebrates achievements fosters a sense



of belonging and motivation. This recognition can enhance employees' self-esteem and reinforce their commitment to the organisation. On the other hand, a lack of recognition can lead to feelings of inadequacy and disillusionment, ultimately affecting mental health negatively.

The interplay between workplace factors and employee mental health is complex but increasingly recognised as critical to organisational success. By fostering supportive leadership, promoting a positive work culture and prioritising employee well-being, organisations can enhance mental health outcomes and overall productivity. Continued research in this area is essential for developing effective strategies to support mental health in the workplace. The impact of leadership on employee mental health is profound and multifaceted. Bosses have the authority to shape the workplace culture, provide support and recognition, communicate effectively, manage workloads, resolve conflicts and model healthy behaviours. Understanding the importance of these factors can help organisations create healthier work environments where employees feel valued and supported.

As businesses continue to navigate the complexities of the modern workplace, prioritising mental health through effective leadership is not just beneficial for employees but is also essential for fostering a productive and engaged workforce. The interplay between workplace factors and employee mental health is not only complex but also increasingly recognised as critical to organisational success. By fostering supportive leadership, promoting a positive work culture and prioritising employee well-being, organisations can enhance mental health outcomes and overall productivity. Continued research in this area is essential for developing effective strategies to support mental health in the workplace.

(The writer is an educator; views are personal)

Elevate wellness experts as industry leaders

Backed by government initiatives and vocational training programmes, this sector offers global placements, entrepreneurial opportunities and job openings in small towns



DINESH SOOD



Beauty, wellness and grooming are indispensable aspects of life, particularly for young professionals striving for financial success and a luxurious lifestyle. It's crucial to recognise that a professionally trained hairdresser can earn more than an engineer or a doctor, dispelling the outdated notion that community-based hairdressers only fulfil basic needs. Their workplaces also serve as vibrant community centres where people gather, exchange ideas and foster belonging and bonding while waiting for a haircut. Therefore, it's imperative to rebrand the skills and professionals in the beauty and wellness sector as 'Beauty Architects' or 'Glam Gurus', elevating their profession's status and attracting more talent to this lucrative industry.

Our country's beauty and wellness industry presents unparalleled employment opportunities and global placements. Recognising this, the government has initiated various measures to create pertinent content, curricula, information databases, and delivery systems, standardise accreditation and certification processes, and establish industry-aligned infrastructure. These efforts aim to equip young individuals to perceive beauty and wellness as a promising profession. The beauty and wellness sector should streamline its curricula to emphasise industry exposure. As the industry transitions towards more excellent organisations, professionals must be educated on adhering to professional service standards, obtaining industry-specific qualifications and certifications from reputable organisations, and enhancing their existing qualifications through access to higher education and research. Integrating extensive internship, apprenticeship, and on-the-job training opportunities will provide candidates with practical work experience and a comprehensive understanding of the industry. The absence of employer-led apprenticeship standards and career pathways leads to limited internship opportunities, depriving numerous students of valuable learning experiences. Early introduction of beauty and wellness

courses in schools is essential. Our current education systems prioritise knowledge-oriented training through rote learning, neglecting practical, experiential learning crucial for real-world application. Therefore, orienting students towards vocational education as an alternative career choice is imperative.



OUR COUNTRY'S BEAUTY AND WELLNESS INDUSTRY PRESENTS UNPARALLELED EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES AND GLOBAL PLACEMENTS. RECOGNISING THIS, THE GOVERNMENT HAS INITIATED VARIOUS MEASURES TO CREATE PERTINENT CONTENT, CURRICULA AND INFORMATION DATABASES,

Notably, beauty and wellness skill courses have been part of the curriculum in Delhi Government schools for over a decade. Early exposure to such vocational education can aid students, parents, and guardians in considering alternative career paths and foster a positive outlook on the workforce's dignity in the beauty and wellness industry. The vocational education sector has tried mainstream vocational courses such as BVoc, MVoc, BSc, and MSc in Beauty and Wellness. However, these programs have seen low enrollment due to a need for more awareness about career opportunities and limited seats.

There is a need to design more BVoc and MVoc courses with multiple entry and exit points, focusing on practical application in areas such as Beauty Culture, Cosmetology, Yoga, Ayurveda Dietetics, Sports Nutrition, Physiotherapy, Salon

Management, Beauty Therapy, Aesthetics, Aesthetic Dermatology, Hair Dressing, Makeup, and Spa Therapy, rather than just theoretical knowledge.

Additional focus is also required in the areas of human psychology, stress management, mental well-being, nutrition and diet, reflexology, alternate therapies etc. An alternative pathway to a bachelor's degree is completing a one-year ITI program and gaining a year of industry experience. Expanding training capacities in the Beauty and Wellness sector within ITIs is crucial, as the current short-term training programs are insufficient to meet industry standards and demand.

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is essential for informal workers with significant industry experience. Despite possessing valuable skills, many informal workers in the Beauty and Wellness industry need more formal education and training.

RPL can help them gain formal certification based on their industry experience. Additionally, there is a need to support entrepreneurship in the Beauty and Wellness sector. More than 50 per cent of vocational graduates in this sector opt for self-employment, and there is a growing trend of industry workers starting their enterprises.

A robust support system is required to support these entrepreneurs and foster innovation and employment.

The Indian beauty and personal care market is experiencing rapid growth in tier-II and tier-III towns, with a substantial value of \$22 billion and projected to expand at a rate of 10-12 per cent to reach \$34 billion by 2028, as per the Nykaa Beauty Trends Report. This surge in

tier-II and tier-III cities is not surprising, given the global trend. In India, approximately 38 per cent of the demand for beauty and wellness products and services, particularly direct-to-customer (D2C) offerings, originates from these cities, making them highly lucrative markets.

Despite being underdeveloped, tier-II and tier-III cities hold significant potential in the beauty and wellness sector. Research indicates that professionals in these cities are well-versed in domestic and international trends, products, and hair services. Social media's influence has been pivotal in driving lifestyle changes, especially among the younger population. Young customers and professionals in tier-II and tier-III towns are eager to explore new trends and various beauty and wellness services.

In contrast to metropolitan cities, recruiting a skilled workforce in these smaller cities is more accessible, as a motivated and trainable young workforce is readily available. Beauty, wellness, and grooming have become integral to everyone's lifestyle, regardless of whether they reside in metropolitan cities or smaller towns across India.

People increasingly seek professionals to help them achieve their desired makeovers, so it's time to adopt an inclusive approach to rebrand the traditional workforce as professionals in the beauty and wellness sector.

(The writer is co-founder and MD of Orane International, a training partner of the National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) and a network Member of India International Skills Centres, an initiative of GoI; The views are personal)

Mobilising climate finance in India: Uncovering alternative routes

Blended finance models, carbon pricing and strategically aligned CSR funds could be the key to unlocking the private sector's investment potential

India's changing dynamics with the geopolitical powers of the world coupled with its accelerating economy have put us in a unique spot—one that allows it to be the voice of the Global South. India's position on climate change commitments attracted global attention during the 26th Conference of Parties (COP26) in Glasgow, during which Prime Minister Modi committed to India achieving net-zero emissions by 2070. This ambitious pledge, unprecedented for a developing nation, was a point that speaks of a profound shift in India's climate policy. The country's newfound authority was further solidified after last year's G20 Presidency.



KAVIM KUMAR KANDASAMY

Among the many deliberations that India helmed with the other delegations, there was also a renewed global focus on the urgency of climate action. The Urgency of Mobilising Capital in the Global South, while the impacts of climate change are global and far-reaching, the impacts of this Research shows that 55 vulnerable countries have suffered \$525 billion combined cli-

mate crisis-fueled losses in the last 20 years. The number is estimated to reach \$580 billion per year by 2030. This is because large-scale investments are required for mitigation or adapting to the consequences. The Loss & Damage Fund, proposed at COP27 and operationalised at COP28, was a move India with the rest of Global South welcomed.

Though it is receiving initial contributions from developed nations, these fall short of what many developing countries deem necessary. Further, a recent study by CEEW found that the developed world, which is responsible for three-fourths of existing carbon emissions in the world—will end up emitting 38 per cent more carbon in 2030 than they

have committed, if one were to look at the current trajectories. 83 per cent of this overshoot will be caused by the European Union, Russia and the United States. It is critical to ensure the rescue and rehabilitation of countries facing the cascading effects of this global issue disproportionately. India has held the Global North accountable—not just as the voice of the Global South but owing to its vulnerability.

Understanding India's Stance around 619 million persons in India bore the brunt of climate change-induced extreme heat between June 16 and June 24. This is more than any other country in the world. These incidents are not just environmental, but also economic and health-related. Cities grind to a halt under the force of



extreme weather, leaving economic scars and jeopardising the marginalised.

Creating a resilient and sustainable future for India necessitates a just transition, which in turn requires significant financial investment. India faces a substantial climate financing shortfall of USD 3.5 trillion. To address this, we need investment support amounting to USD 1.4 trillion

by 2070, translating to an average annual requirement of USD 28 billion over the next five decades. While international support is undoubtedly crucial, harnessing the potential of domestic mechanisms like carbon pricing and blended finance models is crucial for long-term sustainability.

Novel mechanisms of blended finance can not only help bridge the financing gap to fulfil India's needs but can also unlock significantly higher investment from the private sector. This will also help in reducing overdependence on external climate capital as the primary instrument for climate capital. Strategic Alignment of CSR Funds Corporate India makes substantial expenditures as part of their Corporate

Social Responsibility. We have an opportunity here to strategically align these CSR funds in a manner that accelerates our efforts of achieving SDGs. According to provisional data from the Ministry of Corporate Affairs (MCA), spending on health reached Rs 9,987 crore in FY22, compared to Rs 8,382 crore on education. In contrast, spending on the environment was Rs 2,837 crore in FY22, which is double the Rs 1,337 crore spent in FY21. There is a major scope for increasing the quantum of CSR funds being streamlined towards carbon projects. This notion reverberates further in the Reserve Bank of India's report on currency and finance, wherein equitable CSR funding is listed as the crucial policy alternative to

mitigate climate risk. While energy and mitigation have received the most amount of climate financing for India, more investments should be directed towards nature-based solutions and environment ecosystems that crosscut both mitigation and adaptation in India. This will help create permanence in carbon removals that will help mitigate the effects of climate change. The flexible nature of CSR provides businesses in the country a significant chance to foster positive transformation and marry socio-economic advancement by finding environmental solutions. Yet, these dual benefits are attainable only with a committed long-term vision and detailed planning.

(The writer is CEO, ProClimate; views are personal)

Amul set to enter European market after US success

PTI ■ JAMSHEDPUR

Managing Director of AMUL and Gujarat Co-operative Milk Marketing Federation Ltd (GCMMF) Jayen Mehta said AMUL's recent launch of milk in the US has been "highly successful" and they are now ready to enter the European market, which would mark a historic moment for the brand. Delivering the 11th Dr Verghese Kurien Memorial Oration on "AMUL Model: Transforming Lives of Million" organised by a private business management institute here on Saturday, Mehta said "India is now the largest milk producer in the world and is set to produce one-third of the world's total milk in the coming years", XLRI in a statement said. "Dairy isn't just a business-it's a lifeline for rural India," he said. Talking about Amul's recent launch of milk in the US, Mehta said it has been "highly successful", and they are now ready to enter the European market for the first time.



To stay relevant, Amul focuses on offering protein-rich, organic, and chemical-free products that customers trust, while continuously expanding their capacity and infrastructure, he said while praising the ecosystem developed by Dr Kurien, founder of AMUL. Mehta said "If India could offer a gift to the world, it would be the cooperative working system-a gift Dr Kurien gave us. His belief in

cooperation has sparked a new revolution in India." Amul collects over 310 lakh litres of milk daily, with 107 dairy plants across India and over 50 products, Mehta said, adding that 22 billion packs are sold annually. Amul has a turnover of Rs 80,000 crore and is now ranked as the strongest dairy and food brand globally, owned by 36 lakh farmers, he claimed. Addressing the gathering,

Nirmala Kurien - daughter of Dr Verghese Kurien, said more than half a century ago her father dared to dream that a milk-deficient country could one day become self-sufficient. Today, India stands as the world's largest producer of milk, she added. Director of XLRI Jamshedpur Fr S George said Dr Verghese Kurien's life was characterized by a commitment to making a difference.

Himachal processes record 1,545 mt apple juice: Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu

PTI ■ JAMSHEDPUR

The Himachal Pradesh Horticultural Produce Marketing and Processing Corporation has processed a record 1,545 metric tonnes of apple juice concentrate across its three plants this year so far, Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu said on Sunday. "It includes 814 metric tonnes (MT) from the Parala plant in Shimla district, 653 MT from the Parwanoo plant in Solan district, and 78 MT from the Jarol plant in Mandi district," he added. He said the Himachal Pradesh Horticultural Produce Marketing and Processing Corporation (HPMC) is crushing nearly all apples procured, with minimal fruit being sold through auctions. "92 per cent of the apples procured this season are being processed, due to strict adherence to procurement standards," he noted. The chief minister said that under the MIS this year, a total of 29,200 MT of apples have been procured in the state. Of this, 19,437 MT were purchased through 206 procurement centres of HPMC, while 9,764 MT were procured through 109 centres of Himfed.



"The apple season in the state is ongoing, and procurement under the Market Intervention Scheme (MIS) continues, with processing expected to increase as procurement grows. In an effort to enhance the quality of apple procurement under the MIS, HPMC has piloted the purchase of 1,219 MT of apples from farmers using crates. For the first time, apple procurement has also begun in the remote area of Pangi in Chamba district," he said. HPMC has introduced an online portal to improve the MIS.

"Procurement is now managed through this online system, which provides real-time data on procurement, transportation, crushing at processing plants, auction of fruit, booking of CA stores and direct bank transfer linkage, which is ensuring transparency and efficiency in services provided to apple growers," the chief minister said. "HPMC has enhanced its processing capacity, with this year's crushing capacity increasing from 21,000 MT to 39,000 MT compared to the previous year. Additionally, the grading and packaging line capacity has been

enhanced from 15,900 MT to 33,900 MT. The wine units at Parala and Jarol have a combined annual capacity of 1.50 lakh litres." A new vinegar unit at Parala has an annual capacity of 50,000 litres, while a new pectin unit at Parala can produce 1.2 metric tons per day, and the ready-to-serve juice unit now has a daily capacity of 20,000 litres, he noted. HPMC has also expanded its market presence by engaging pan-India distributors and opening new retail outlets at Delhi Metro stations and other prominent locations across the country.

High GST rates hinder growth of India's carbonated soft drinks market

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Carbonated soft drinks segment in India is unable to reach its potential in terms of scale expansion due to barriers such as high taxation under the GST regime despite government's initiatives like 'Make in India' and 'Aatmanirbhar Bharat', according to a report by economic think tank ICRIER. The cross-country comparative data on sugar-sweetened beverages (SSB) collated by the World Bank shows that India has one of the highest tax rates for carbonated soft drinks (CSDs) at a total tax rate of 40 per cent as of 2023. Over 90 per cent of countries that tax SSBs have a lower tax rate than India, as per the report titled 'Carbonated Beverages Industry in India: Tax Policy to Promote Growth, Innovation and Investment'. Consumers, globally and in

India, are shifting towards low-sugar and no-added sugar varieties of beverages amid heightened health awareness. "The CSD market is also changing from its traditional high sugar carbonated beverages to low-sugar and fruit-based and/or flavoured carbonated drinks to zero-sugar aerated water, catering to changes in consumers' choice for healthier options and government policies like layered-sugar-based taxes," the report said. Producers, across the globe, are reformulating their products to meet consumer demand, and these are supported through government policies and both fiscal and non-fiscal incentives. In India too, producers are re-examining their product portfolios and coming up with products like zero-calorie, low/no sugar content. "However, despite



government initiatives like 'Make in India' and 'Aatmanirbhar Bharat', the CSD segment is unable to reach its potential in terms of scale expansion due to barriers such as the high tax brackets and compensation cess under the GST regime, implemented since 2017," it said. Currently, carbonated or aerated beverages are placed

in the highest GST slab of 28 per cent with a compensation cess of 12 per cent, irrespective of their sugar or fruit content. "The high tax of 40 per cent, irrespective of sugar content, is making it difficult for innovative firms to come up with low-sugar varieties and scale up and existing firms to invest in product reformulation," the ICRIER report said. Citing cross-country comparative data on SSB taxes collated by the World Bank, the report said India has one of the highest tax rates for CSDs at a total tax rate of 40 per cent as of 2023. Over 90 per cent of countries that tax SSBs have a lower tax rate than India. The Indian CSDs market is relatively small. It generated revenue worth USD 18.25 billion in 2022, and grew at a CAGR of 19.8 per cent between 2017 and 2022. Pointing out that India is one

of the largest global producers of fruits such as mango, banana, guava, papaya, sapota, pomegranate, and lime, and sugar, which in some cases are used in the CSD category, the report said, "It has the potential to be used in greater capacity, if the right policies promote their uses in CSDs." "While the Indian consumer wants to experiment with different products such as low-sugar CSDs or fruit-based CSDs, and startups are trying to come up with new products, investment, product varieties and innovation is much lower in CSDs in India," it said. "This is primarily because of treatment of this sector as a high tax revenue earner previously by the states through their state excise and now by the Goods and Services Tax (GST) Council, which has recommended a high tax and cess on CSDs," the report said.

Hindalco, JSW Steel bid for Jharkhand copper mines

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Aditya Birla Group firm Hindalco Industries and Sajjan Jindal-led JSW Steel are in the race for two copper mines in Jharkhand which will be put on sale this month, sources said. Both mines have a combined capacity of three million tonnes per annum. Hindalco Industries and JSW Steel will be vying for state-owned Hindustan Copper Ltd's two copper mines in Jharkhand, sources said. The auction of both the mines is likely to take place in the month of October. While one of these blocks is virgin, the other one is closed for the past 20 years. Hindustan Copper had earlier invited applications for appointment of mine developer-cum-operator (MDO) for re-opening and expansion of Rakha Copper Mine and development and operations of underground



Mine at Chapri. Hindustan Copper had said in its recent report that Rakha Mining Lease expired in 2021 and extension of mining lease period is under progress with the Jharkhand government. Further, the application for grant of stage one forest clearance over remaining forest area within mining lease has been accepted by Project Screening Committee. The site inspection by various authorities of State Forest department has been completed. Hindustan Copper is

implementing expansion projects to increase mine production capacity to 12.2 million tonne per annum, its CMD Ghanshyam Sharma had recently said. The move will boost domestic production of copper and reduce dependence on imports. The company achieved ore production of 3.78 million tonne in FY24 against 3.35 MT in FY23, registering a rise of 13 per cent. The ongoing capacity expansion project i.e. Development of underground mine below the existing open cast mine at Malanjkhanda Copper Project (MCP) will augment the ore production capacity from 2.5 MTPA to 5 MTPA. The ore production from the open cast mine has now been exhausted and the underground mine is operating below the existing open cast mine leaving some barrier pillars.

Auto industry expects robust sale during festive season

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Auto industry players are eyeing a robust performance in the ongoing festive period to lift overall consumer sentiment and set the tone for the rest of the year amid slowing demand. The festive season usually commences with Onam and ends with Diwali every year. Kia India National Head of Sales and Marketing Hardeep Singh Brar told PTI that the last 3-4 months were not good for the industry as sales declined compared to the same period last year. "With pent-up demand of the last few months there and government investment starting to flow in, we feel things should start improving from here onwards," he noted. Brar said the booking momentum in September was good, which is a strong indication for October. "And this time, all festivals are in October. We expect about 5-10 per cent sales growth during the period as compared to last year," he added. Brar said that in the January-April period, the passenger vehicle industry witnessed a growth of 7 per cent, but in May-September, there was a dip of about 2-3 per cent, leading to the buildup of inventory. Nissan Motor India Managing Director Saurabh Vatsa said the entire industry is looking at the festive season to bring some cheer after witnessing tough three months. "I think it has been a challenging period. The festive period will define the



quarter, and the third quarter will define what happens in the remaining part of the year," he said. Everybody is looking forward to the festive seasons, especially from the industry, he added. Toyota Kirloskar Motor Vice President, Sales-Service-Used Car Business, Sabari Manohar said the company is witnessing enhanced footfalls and enquiries. "Key to meeting this rising demand has been our strategic operational improvements, such as the introduction of a third shift. This has significantly optimised our supply chain, particularly for high-demand models like the Urban Cruiser HyRyder, where waiting periods have been reduced," he said. Additionally, there is a clear shift in sentiment, with an increasing embrace of eco-friendly technologies, not only in urban areas but also

in Tier II and Tier III markets, Manohar said. Maruti Suzuki India Senior Executive Officer (Marketing and Sales) Partho Banerjee said the company is trying to increase its sales by bringing in some limited edition models. He noted that during Ganesh Chaturthi and Janmashtami, the company witnessed good traction in sales and has been able to generate volumes as per the business requirements. Tata Motors Passenger Vehicles MD Shailesh Chandra said in its monthly sales statement that registrations have picked up pace towards the end of the month (September), which augurs well for the festive period ahead. "We remain focused on driving up consumer preference for our exciting range of vehicles while maintaining the health of our dealer network," he added.

Livguard unveils high-frequency solar inverters

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Livguard has launched their new line of High-Frequency Solar Inverters at the 17th Renewable Energy India Expo (REI) 2024. These products were unveiled at the India Expo Center, Greater Noida during the ceremony led by Mr. Alankar Mittal, President Business Unit Head, Solar & Exports. The REI Expo is Asia's leading B2B platform for renewable energy, attracting over 800 exhibitors and 40,000 visitors, including industry experts. These newly launched Hybrid Series and Off-Grid Series inverters are designed for higher efficiency with transformer-less technology, making them more reliable and compact. Compatible with both Lead Acid and



Lithium Batteries, they also feature built-in Wi-Fi for easy performance tracking via smartphones. Their UPS function ensures uninterrupted power for PCs and household appliances. The brand also launched other groundbreaking products like cutting-edge lithium-based ESS, high-efficiency Bi-facial panels, and high-efficiency DCR Panels.

These products add to Livguard's range of solar solutions catering to residential and small business needs. Livguard's wide range of solar solutions like Off Grid solutions, On Grid Solutions, Hybrid solutions and Lithium ESS offer multiple mode operation for battery and grid preference, higher ROI and un-interrupted use of solar energy for savings and backup respectively. With Livguard's Livmonitor 360 app, you can monitor solar generation through an easy one-click step! "Livguard Solar and Livfast Solar continue to lead the way with innovations that are transforming India's energy landscape," said Mr. Alankar Mittal, President Business Unit Head, Solar & International Business.

Mcap of nine of top-10 most valued firms erodes

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Nine of the top-10 most valued firms together lost a whopping Rs 4,74,906.18 crore in market valuation last week, with Reliance Industries and HDFC Bank taking the steepest hit, in line with weak trends in equities. Markets faced heavy drubbing last week amid worsening tensions in the Middle East and foreign fund outflows. In a holiday-shortened week, the BSE benchmark plummeted 3,883.4 points, or 4.53 per cent. The valuation of Reliance Industries declined Rs 1,88,479.36 crore to Rs 18,76,718.24 crore.



HDFC Bank's market valuation slumped Rs 72,919.58 crore to Rs 12,64,267.35 crore. Bharti Airtel's valuation plunged Rs 53,800.31 crore to Rs 9,34,104.32 crore and that of ICICI Bank tumbled Rs 47,461.13 crore to Rs 8,73,059.59 crore. The valuation of Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) plummeted Rs 33,490.86 crore to Rs 6,14,125.65 crore and that of Hindustan Unilever

tanked Rs 27,525.46 crore to Rs 6,69,363.31 crore. The market capitalisation (mcap) of ITC dropped Rs 24,139.66 crore to Rs 6,29,695.06 crore and that of Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) eroded by Rs 21,690.43 crore to Rs 15,37,361.57 crore. State Bank of India's valuation went lower by Rs 5,399.39 crore to Rs 7,10,934.59 crore. However, the mcap of Infosys climbed Rs 4,629.64 crore to Rs 7,96,527.08 crore. Reliance Industries retained the title of the most-valued firm, followed by TCS, HDFC Bank, Bharti Airtel, ICICI Bank, Infosys, State Bank of India, Hindustan Unilever, ITC, and LIC.

IDFC FIRST bank goes live on GST portal

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

IDFC FIRST Bank on Saturday announced its integration with the Goods and Services Tax (GST) portal, enabling seamless GST payments. Customers will now benefit from an intuitive, hassle-free payment experience, with instant payment confirmations and easy access to downloadable challans. This new integration will allow IDFC FIRST Bank customers to pay GST through a variety of digital channels, including the Bank's user-friendly Retail and Corporate Internet Banking platforms and its nationwide branch network. Mr. Chinmay Dhole, Head - Retail Liabilities and Branch

Banking, IDFC FIRST Bank, said, "As a customer-first bank, we are committed to providing seamless, easy-to-use solutions to our customers. This integration with the GST portal is another step in our mission to offer universal banking solutions. Our aim is to ensure a quick, simple, and efficient tax payment experience. We encourage our customers to use this facility to easily pay their GST through IDFC FIRST Bank's online and branch channels". IDFC FIRST Bank is one of the select Scheduled Private Sector Banks to be authorised for GST collections, further underscoring the Bank's commitment to providing comprehensive financial services to its clients.

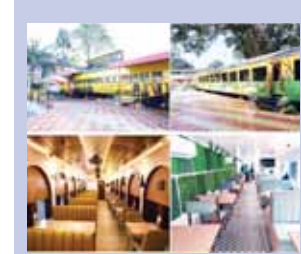
INBRIEF

LECTURE SERIES HELD AT GNDU

AMRITSAR: Jallianwala Bagh Chair of the Guru Nanak Dev University has started the lecture series on the Jallianwala Bagh Massacre. Recently, it organized its first lecture on the theme "Kuln Varg di Jallianwala Bagh de Katleam bare drishtikon di charcha".



16 RAIL COACH RESTAURANTS OPERATIONAL ACROSS NFR



MALIGAON: N. F. Railway has opened Rail Coach Restaurants across its major stations. These restaurants have been opened strategically at vacant space in the circulating area providing dining opportunity to both the rail passengers as well as general public. N. F. Railway has modified some of its discontinued coaches, which are not fit for train operation, into coach restaurants.

CLIMATE CHANGE

A SILENT HEALTH CRISIS

Climate change highlights urgent need for action writes
ABHI SINGHAL

When we talk about health and wellness of ones health, the obvious fact that is associated and should be adjoined with are the surroundings and the climate. The climate has been adversely been affected from the past many years, in turn affecting our health and increasing the threats. Climate needs to be addressed as a serious issue which needs to be looked into as soon as possible. To address all these issues Partnership for Impact have launched Voices for Impact. Their agenda for the discussion was Addressing Climate Change as a Threat Multiplier. This issue what discussed and had a panel discussion with Ms. Vini Mahajan, Secretary, Department of Drinking Water and Sanitation, Government of India; Dr Aditya Bahadur, Director, Red Cross Red Crescent Climate Centre and Dr Shagun Sabarwal, Asian Regional Director, Co-Impact. The panel discussion was not just about explaining climate change but also finding a solution to the problem, understand it better, and looking at a partnership which can really have a solid impact. The discussion was more about the awareness that the climate change is a threat to health in ways people wouldn't know and it has a lot of barriers and layers which need to be solved for getting the solution to the same. The discussion also got a moment on gender inequalities and came forward was the fact that women and children who have no role to play in the climate change policy are affected the most by it. Natasha Godinho, Vice President of GHS, moderating the conversation said, "Climate change is not just a health crisis or water crisis or a whole food crisis, it's so much more, and women and children just happen to be the face of this crisis. Years of inequitable social structures and patriarchal systems have left women in a worse position than men, and the lack of access to financial resources, land ownership and property rights have meant that women are far older than men." The future of the country and if India is ready

to embrace the change in climate Vini Mahajan said, "I think we will do it when it becomes a crisis. India is great at dealing with crisis." It is important for everyone to have the knowledge of how the climate change each day with every passing heatwave, every passing disaster is affecting us and majorly our health and wellness. The panel also had a serious exchange of words to into the issue of water, water sanitation and air pollution in Delhi (being a major affect to health). Climate change was connected to many possible outcomes and solutions in the discussion. It meant that when it comes to climate, rather than thinking only about new things, we have to see that how can climate responses be integrated into current systems. So our social protection systems, are designed to target the most vulnerable. They have a huge reach in India. Can we start to integrate them is a question. Dr Shagun Sabarwal took an emphasis on AI and the big learning models, and their usage of a lot of water to keep them cool, or even the minerals that are needed. She addressed this as one of the major concerns saying that, "So to me, it's like we solve one problem and then have another problem." The significance of localisation was explained in the same regard which made the conversation even more insightful. "I feel like India's Social Protection Program also demonstrates how you can localize effectively, where funds from MGNREGA (Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act) are effectively controlled by local institutions, and there are moves to integrate climate risk in MGNREGA, which I'm confident in the years to come will be delivered. So I would say localization is a very important solution" explained Dr Aditya Bahadur on talking about policies and their effectiveness in ways. The overall conversation gave a jist about differently raised problems due to climate and the importance of speaking about the same publically to curate answers and implementing solutions.

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The Perfect Health Partner in Daily Wellness

BY **JYOTI SINGH**

In today's fast-paced world, finding balance between work, personal life, and self-care can be a daunting task. Yoga, an age-old discipline that brings harmony to the mind, body, and spirit, provides an effective way to find balance. But how do we incorporate this timeless discipline into our modern, busy lives? Here are some practical advice and guidance for integrating yoga into daily routines. How accessible and transformative yoga can be for anyone, whether you're a seasoned practitioner or a curious beginner. Yoga can fit seamlessly into your day, helping you achieve not only physical wellness but also mental clarity and peace. Yoga is not just a physical practice but a complete lifestyle. In today's world, where stress, anxiety, and physical discomfort from sedentary lifestyles are rampant, yoga offers a way to counteract these challenges. Yoga helps in developing mindfulness, building strength, and improving flexibility, but more importantly, it teaches us to breathe, be present, and balance our inner and outer worlds. Incorporating yoga into your daily life doesn't just keep you fit, it helps you handle daily stresses with more ease and grace. It all begins with intention and small steps. Start by dedicating just 10-15 minutes of your day to yoga. Even a brief yoga session can yield significant results. You don't need to carve out a large block of time; yoga can fit into your morning before work, during lunch breaks, or even in the evening to wind down. I often advise people to start with simple breathing exercises, stretches, or Surya Namaskar (Sun Salutations), which engage the whole body. If time is tight, I suggest breaking it into chunks. Morning could be for deep breathing and basic stretches, while the evening could focus on a few asanas (poses) to release tension. Gradually, you can expand the time and variety of your practice. For beginners, starting with simple, yet effective poses is a key. A few asanas that I recommend include:

- **Tadasana (Mountain Pose):** A foundational standing pose that helps improve posture, balance, and concentration.
- **Bhujangasana (Cobra Pose):** This pose strengthens the back and opens up the chest, which can relieve tension from long hours at a desk.
- **Adho Mukha Svanasana (Downward-Facing Dog):** A great full-body stretch that works on the hamstrings, shoulders, and back, and also calms the mind.
- **Balāsana (Child's Pose):** A restorative pose that's excellent for relaxation and mindfulness.
- **Anulom Vilom (Alternate Nostril Breathing):** A breathing technique that soothes the mind and helps balance internal energy.

What makes yoga so accessible is that it requires no fancy equipment. Just a mat and a small, quiet space at home is enough to get started. Yoga is a holistic practice that impacts both the mind and body. Many people think of yoga only as a physical exercise, but its mental health benefits are equally, if not more, important. Regular practice of asanas combined with pranayama (breathing exercises) and meditation helps reduce stress, anxiety, and symptoms of depression. Breathing exercises like **Anulom Vilom** and **Bhramari Pranayama** activate the parasympathetic nervous system, helping your body and mind relax. By focusing on breath and movement, yoga also fosters mindfulness, teaching us to stay present. This can prevent overthinking and help manage the pressures of daily life. Over time, yoga trains your mind to be more resilient and positive. Consistency is a key in yoga, but it's not about perfection. Life can be unpredictable, and it's natural to miss a day or two. The key is to stay motivated and not lose heart. I always advise my students to set achievable goals. Even practicing for 10 minutes a day is better than an intense 1-hour session once a week. Make it part of your routine - like brushing your teeth - so it becomes a habit, not a task. One tip that works for many people is to create a dedicated yoga space at home, however small. When you associate a certain area with yoga, it becomes easier to get into the mindset to practice. Also, try practicing at the same time every day, whether it's early morning or before bedtime. I deeply believe that every person is unique, and their yoga journey should reflect that. I don't believe in a one-size-fits-all approach. Different people come with different physical challenges, like back pain or arthritis, while others might be looking to enhance their mental health or manage stress. It takes the time to understand their goals, limitations, and lifestyle before they can design a program. For example, corporate professionals who sit at a desk all day need a practice that targets back and neck pain and helps them relax after a long day. On the other hand, an athlete might need a more rigorous, dynamic practice to build strength and flexibility. This customization ensures that yoga becomes an integral part of each individual's life, addressing their specific needs. Incorporating yoga into your daily routine is simpler than it may seem, with benefits that reach far beyond just physical well-being. By beginning with small steps, maintaining consistency, and embracing both the mental and physical advantages, you can seamlessly integrate yoga into your life and experience its transformative power. As I emphasize, "Yoga is a journey, not a destination. Begin where you are, and grow from there."

The author is a PG Diploma, MA in Yog Science and founder of Sparsh Yog.

AYURVEDA

The Source of Holistic Wellness

BY **SHAHNAZ HUSAIN**

Achieving perfect health and skin cannot be done by quick fix solutions. I have observed that today's youth are obsessed with an easy to do skincare regime and quick resolution to their skin or hair related issues. However, often I like to emphasise on the importance of Ayurveda and its principles. For instance, when you have a skin concern, it is deep rooted in the imbalance and toxins within the body. Over the time when someone keeps using chemical-based products, they are prone to accumulate toxins due to the presence of harmful chemicals in the products and makeup they use. I always advocate against the use of chemical products. Redirecting the scenario to the current situation where the majority of people are using chemical laden products, I always bring their notice to our natural products based on ancient principles of Ayurveda. The nature or the internal-set up of an individual is all about the individual topology, it requires proper care. However, with prolonged use of chemical products, adverse effects are seen that damage hair and skin. It is all due to reaction to certain harmful substances. For instance, I was approached by a client for skin concern where she suffered pigmentation, I could see that it is the effect of prolonged use of chemical cosmetics that caused her skin tone to become uneven. Providing the right solution based on care and cure just like Shahnaz Husain Group products, I suggested her to use our pigmentation gel and cream. Our products are purely based on ancient principles of Ayurveda and are infused with herbs, plant extracts, essential oils and Vitamins that ensure product efficacy and safe use for any age and both the genders.

FOR EVERY SKIN AND HAIR ISSUE, THERE IS A PERFECT SOLUTION IN NATURE, IT IS AYURVEDA.

AYURVEDA FOR CARE AND CURE

After watching firsthand experience of chemical-based products, I began looking for solutions, thus began my journey with Ayurveda skincare. The ancient Indian practice of this incredible wellness Ayurveda is something that I introduced to the world,



being a pioneer in Ayurveda based skincare products, people began realising how miraculous it is. Another notable fact is that Ayurveda provides us with daily life care and cures that are relevant to all the individual's needs and their unique requirements as per their tendencies. Ayurveda can truly transform your life when you apply it.

AYURVEDA IS THE NATURAL SKINCARE

The ancient principles of Ayurveda believe that the bodily ailments are the result of accumulated toxins in our body that hinder the proper flow of Prana or the life source that is connected to our bodily movements. It highly impacts the individual on emotional, cellular, psychological and conscious levels.

AYURVEDA FOR HEALTHY SKIN

I am a firm preacher and believer that healthy skin is beautiful skin, having said that I would like to add that Ayurveda is always at the helm of providing unique solutions to all the skin related ailments. The foundation of Shahnaz Husain Group is Ayurveda principles, the



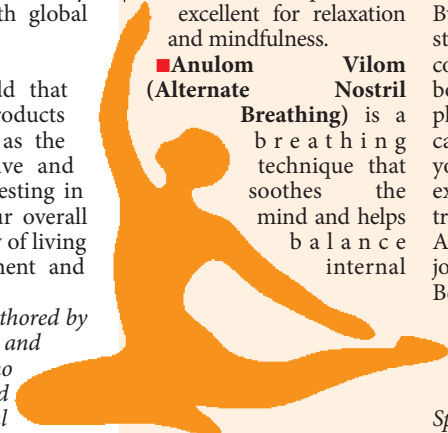
products that we formulate at our state-of-the-art R&D units. Our products are based on the ancient Ayurveda principles and formulations that increase the potency and efficacy of skin care products, providing care and cure. We optimise the formulations with plant extracts, exotic herbs, essential oils and Vitamin extracts that are sourced ethically in the purest form capturing the essence. I like to mention that today when people are looking for quick invasive anti-ageing solutions, I have come up with a plant based natural anti-ageing solution, our entire range of Plant Stem Cell contains plant extracts, renewing the supportive tissues, restoring the youthful properties of the skin.

KEY BENEFITS OF USING AYURVEDA SKINCARE

- Ayurveda helps in eliminating accumulated toxins.
- Naturally restores the skin beauty and radiance.
- Addresses the root cause of any issue related to skin and body.
- Improves the skin quality and texture.
- Natural organic ingredients such as honey, aloe vera, and shea butter, etc. promote healthy skin and smooth texture.
- Ayurveda products are cruelty-free and ethically sourced.
- Natural skincare and cure products by Shahnaz Husain are on par with global sustainable beauty standards.

In conclusion I would like to add that Ayurveda skincare and haircare products are more like treatment products, as the principle itself is all about curative and preventive measures of healing. Investing in natural skincare is essential for your overall wellness and is the best holistic way of living in harmony with the environment and yourself.

This article is authored by **SHAHNAZ HUSAIN**, a pioneer and leader of Ayurvedic beauty care, who has achieved unprecedented international acclaim for her practical application of Ayurveda.



England aims to challenge struggling Pakistan in 1st test

AP ■ MULTAN
England is aiming to challenge struggling Pakistan with a new-look pace attack in the opening test of a three-match series, starting in the searing heat of Multan on Monday. Fast bowler Brydon Carse will make his test debut with Gus Atkinson set to play his first overseas test after his impressive home season against the West Indies and Sri Lanka. All-rounder Chris Woakes was penciled in to the starting XI after Ben Stokes was ruled out for the fourth successive test match due to ongoing rehabilitation on his injured hamstring. Woakes will be playing his first match in two-and-a-half years and it will be his first test in Asia since 2016. Carse's pace gave him the edge over Ollie Pope and Matthew Potts for the tour of Pakistan and England hopes the Durham pace bowler will challenge the batters by regularly clocking over

90mph. England will be led by Ollie Pope, who guided the team to a 2-1 home series against Sri Lanka in the absence of the injured Stokes. The England captain sustained his hamstring injury during the Hundred and might return to lead the side in the second test, also in Multan. "I was kind of just learning on the job," Pope said. "Obviously my first time captain abroad. Ben's going to be around as well... so I can listen to the voices around me but still keep doing things in my way." England flattened Pakistan 3-0 through its high-risk, high-reward "Bazball" approach during the 2022 tour when it played at Multan, Karachi and Rawalpindi. They were scheduled to play at the same venues this time around, but renovation work at the National Bank Stadium in Karachi for next year's Champions Trophy forced the Pakistan Cricket Board to organize back-to-back tests at Multan with Rawalpindi set to



host the third test from Oct. 24. England also named spinners Jack Leach and Shoaib Bashir in the playing XI in anticipation of the pitch flattening out in temperatures of 40 degrees Celsius that are expected over the next week in Multan. Leach was the second highest wicket-taker in the last series in Pakistan with 15 wickets. "Everyone's so happy to have Leach in and around the squad for this series," Pope said. "We obviously saw how well he bowled last time here on pitches that (are) always offering a great deal... And he's worked closely with Shoaib Bashir throughout his Somerset career and those guys go really well." Pakistan has strengthened its batting line-up by including all-rounder Aamer Jamal for the first test after being routed 2-0 by Bangladesh at home in the last series. Shan Masood has lost all five test matches since he was elevated to red-ball captain. Masood lost 3-0 to Australia in

his debut series as test skipper when Jamal took 18 wickets and came in handy as a batter down the order. Jamal missed the series against Bangladesh because he was undergoing rehabilitation on a back injury. "We have got an edge with the return of Aamer Jamal," Masood said. "He also bats down the order and picked up 18 wickets. We have (leg-spinner) Abrar and (off-spinner) Salman to give us spin options." Pakistan has a woeof record in home test matches and hasn't won at home since beating South Africa 2-0 in early 2021, while losing to England, Australia and Bangladesh. New Zealand also came close, but Pakistan managed to draw the series 0-0. Pakistan had its moments to beat England when both teams last met at Multan two years ago. Leg-spinner Abrar Ahmed made an impressive debut by grabbing 11 wickets before Pakistan narrowly lost by 26 runs when Mark Wood, missing in this series due to

injury, claimed the key wicket of Saud Shakeel. "It was my dream debut and last time we lost quite close," Abrar said on the eve of the first test. "I hope to give a match-winning performance this time around and bring some happy moments." Pakistan's top-order batters have long been struggling and premier batter Babar Azam hasn't scored a half-century in his last 16 test innings. Opener Abdullah Shafique also struggled against Bangladesh while Masood couldn't convert starts into big scores with only one half-century in four innings. But Masood insisted Pakistan needed to give its struggling batters a longer run as he searched to win key moments and find momentum in the series against aggressive England. "We came close to winning last time, but we let the matches slip away," Masood said. "We know how they play, but at the end of the day we have to see how to tackle it."

Gauff rallies to reach China Open final

AP ■ BEIJING
Coco Gauff rallied from a set down for the third consecutive match as she beat Paula Badosa 4-6, 6-4, 6-2 to reach the China Open final on Saturday. The sixth-ranked Gauff will play Karolina Muchova of the Czech Republic in Sunday's final. Muchova defeated Olympic gold medalist Zheng Qinwen 6-3, 6-4 in the other semifinal. Gauff, who has a 7-1 record in tour finals, has made a habit of slow starts in Beijing this week and the script played out again as the No. 19-ranked Badosa took a tight opening set, saving 10 of 11 break points. The Spaniard then built a 3-1 lead in the second set before 2023 U.S. Open champion Gauff shifting the momentum by saving four break points and then breaking back to level at 4-4. Gauff held for 5-4 and broke Badosa again to force a deciding set. "I felt like I was playing the right way the whole time, just a couple of unforced errors, she was playing well too," Gauff said on court. "I was trying to stay focused. Mentally, I just tried to reset. I got down a couple of times, and I tried to bounce back." With all the momentum, Gauff broke Badosa three more times - for the loss of one of her own - as she clinched the match in 2 hours, 20 minutes. Gauff also lost the first set to Naomi Osaka in the fourth round before winning by walkover and against No. 115-ranked Yuliia Starodubtseva in the quarterfinals. "I've had tough opponents the whole tournament," Gauff said. Shanghai Masters Carlos Alcaraz and top-ranked Jannik Sinner showed no



signs of fatigue from their second major of the year, fired 12 aces and 38 winners. "I felt quite comfortable today," said Sinner, who next plays Tomas Martin Etcheverry of Argentina. "I feel in good shape, which is very important for me. I was serving really, really well, especially in important moments, and was moving well." Third-ranked Alexander Zverev began with a 6-4, 6-2 win over Italian qualifier Mattia Bellucci, while fourth-ranked Novak Djokovic had a tougher task prevailing 7-6 (3), 7-6 (9) over Alex Michelsen of the United States. No. 65-ranked Jakub Mensik of the Czech Republic broke sixth-ranked Andrey Rublev seven times on his way to an upset 6-7 (7), 6-4, 6-3 victory. Yosuke Watanuki also surprised by beating No. 35-ranked Brendan Nakashima 7-6 (4), 6-3. The Japanese qualifier next plays seventh-ranked Taylor Fritz of the U.S. Global Chess League: Alaskan Knights stay unbeaten; Ganges break losing streak

losing the second to Ganges Grandmasters. Triveni remained in second place with six match points and 43 game points, just six behind the leaders. Alpine Sg Pipers also impressed, defeating UpGrad Mumba Masters 12-4. They now sit in third place with six match points, though their 27 game points from three matches leave them behind Triveni. UpGrad Mumba Masters, in fourth place, have only one win from four matches and 29 game points after losing to the Pipers. Big upset The final match saw the surprise of the day with Ganges Grandmasters, led by former World Champion Vishawanathan Anand,

Global Chess League: Alaskan Knights stay unbeaten; Ganges break losing streak

PTI ■ LONDON
PBS Alaskan Knights continued their unbeaten run, while Ganges Grandmasters secured their first win in a dramatic day three of the Tech Mahindra Global Chess League here. The PBS Alaskan Knights extended their lead with a dominant 12-3 win over the Ganges Grandmasters, maintaining a perfect record with four consecutive victories, earning them 12 match points and 49 game points. Defending champions Triveni Continental Kings played two matches on Saturday -- winning the first 15-3 against American Gambits, where Alireza Firouzja defeated world number two Hikaru Nakamura, but narrowly

finally breaking their losing streak with a 10-8 win over Triveni. With one win and 24 game points from four matches, they now sit in fifth place. Hikaru Nakamura's American Gambits are in last place, with only one match victory and 16 game points from three matches, having been dismantled 15-3 by Triveni. Anand's team, desperate for their first victory after three crushing defeats, was under immense pressure. Already reeling from an earlier loss in the day, Anand had to rally his team, using his authority as a former world champion to lift their spirits. But no pep talk could help on the board, where players had to prove they could outmanoeuvre their

opponents. After the coin toss, Triveni played with the white pieces, putting Anand on the back foot as Black against Alireza Firouzja. The young French star steadily built-up pressure, and by move 22, had a winning position. Despite Anand's best efforts to resist, he eventually had to concede defeat, giving the lead to Triveni. Firouzja's stellar form continued, having defeated three giants -- Carlsen, Anand, and Nakamura -- over the past two days. Meanwhile, Ganges' Arjun Erigaisi settled for a fourth consecutive draw, splitting the point with Wei Yi, a further sign of his struggling form. Triveni extended their lead when Alexandra Kosteniuk

beat Vaishali Rameshbabu. However, Parham Maghsoodloo, who had blundered a winning position in the previous match, redeemed himself with a key victory over Teimour Radjabov, keeping Ganges in the fight. With the junior board ending in a draw, the fate of the match rested on Valentina Gunina and Nurgul Salimova. In a drawn position, Gunina pushed too hard despite her team being ahead. She eventually lost on time, handing Ganges the crucial four points they needed to pull off their first win of the tournament. The final score of the match was 10-8, for Ganges.

Amir Ali to lead Indian Jr hockey team in Sreejesh's coaching debut

PTI ■ BENGALURU
Amir Ali has been named captain, with Rohit as his deputy, in the 18-member junior hockey squad for the Sultan of Johor Cup that will mark the first assignment for head coach PR Sreejesh in Malaysia from October 19. India will begin their campaign against Japan on October 19, followed by matches against Great Britain (October 20), hosts Malaysia (Oct 22), Australia (Oct 23) and New Zealand (Oct 25). The top two teams will make the final slated for October 26. Defender Amir Ali and forward Gurjot Singh were part of the senior team that defended their title at the Asian Champions Trophy in Moqi, China. Amir seamlessly filled in for the injured defender Sanjay during the tournament, while Gurjot led the forward line, showcasing immense potential. "The Sultan of Johor Cup is



an important tournament in our calendar as always. The tournament will serve as a litmus test for the team

ahead of the Men's Junior Asia Cup Muscat 2024 in November this year," captain Ali stated in a Hockey India

Vice-captain Rohit expressed enthusiasm at being coached by Sreejesh, saying, "We have an Indian hockey legend taking charge of the team, the whole team is raring to go. PR Sreejesh is one of the most experienced players to play for India, and we look forward to making him proud in our first tournament. "The mood in the camp has been excellent and we want to capitalise on this by showcasing our potential at the Sultan of Johor Cup." Squad: Goalkeepers: Bikramjit Singh, Ali Khan Defenders: Amir Ali (C), Talem Priyobarta, Shardanand Tiwari, Sukhvinder, Anmol Ekka, Rohit (VC) Midfielders: Ankit Pal, Manmeet Singh, Rosan Kujur, Mukesh Toppo, Chandan Yadav Forwards: Gurjot Singh, Sourabh Anand Kushwaha, Dilraj Singh, Arshdeep Singh, Mohd. Konain Dad.

Underdogs strike as Bayern rivals Leverkusen and Dortmund drop points in Bundesliga

AP ■ Berlin
Bayern Munich won without playing on Saturday as Bundesliga rivals Bayer Leverkusen and Borussia Dortmund dropped points to modest opponents. Dortmund slumped at Union Berlin to a 2-1 defeat without injured forward Karim Adeyemi, who starred in the team's 7-1 rout of Celtic in the Champions League on Tuesday. Defending champion Leverkusen squandered an early two-goal lead over promoted Holstein Kiel and drew 2-2. It was only Kiel's second point in its debut top-flight season. Leverkusen played in a special black jersey with red trim to commemorate the club's 120th anniversary, and for Xabi Alonso it was

also a special occasion - the Spanish coach took over exactly two years before. Leverkusen fans didn't have to wait long to celebrate after Victor Boniface opened the scoring in the fourth minute and Jonas Hofmann made it 2-0 four minutes after that. Leverkusen looked set for a rout. But the home team failed to make more of its dominance - Boniface had another goal ruled out for offside and Kiel secured a lifeline before the break when Max Geschwil scored after a corner. Fiete Arp scored an unlikely equalizer from the penalty spot in the 69th. "I wouldn't say arrogance, but I'd say there's a bit of complacency. We need to stay concentrated, because we want to be a better team," Alonso said.



"We could win a few games, and not win a few games, up and down, but that's not our goal. Today we didn't have the best competitive mindset." Dortmund disappoints Union illustrated early on against Dortmund why it's the club with one of the most ineffective forward lines in the league. The Kopenick-based team had only four goals from its opening five games. Former Union player Nico Schlotterbeck offered assistance by conceding a penalty with a foul on the lively Benedict Hollerbach, and Kevin Vogt duly scored the opener from the spot in the 25th. The home team kept pushing and got its due reward before the break when Yorbe Vertessen let fly

through a host of players for 2-0. Early in the second half, masked Union ultras displayed an array of Dortmund scarves and banners presumably confiscated from their rivals before the game. They hung the tattered flags on the railings behind one of the goals and raised their fists, goading the Dortmund fans far away on the other side. Former Union player Julien Ryerson responded on the field in the 62nd by firing inside the far post for 2-1, set up by Julian Brandt after a period of pressure from the visitors but it wasn't enough. Also, Freiburg won at Werder Bremen 1-0, and Wolfsburg enjoyed a 3-1 win in Wolfsburg.