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# **Exit Polls indicate upsets**

# Congress to sweep Haryana

RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI/

**¬**he exit polls have predicted a thumping majority for Congress in Haryana, after a decade. The ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) is projected to trail significantly. According to the exit polls the regional parties will have considerable losses. With this, the political landscape of Harvana is set for a dramatic shift. The voter turnout was 61.19 percent till 8 pm on Saturday. The results will be declared on October 8.

The Dainik Bhaskar poll predicted the Congress getting 44-54 seats and the BJP 15-29 seats in the 90-member Harvana Assembly. The Republic-Matrize poll put the Congress tally even higher at 55-62 seats as against the BJP's 18-24.

According to NDTV's Poll of Polls, 55-62 seats are predicted for the Congress while the ruling BJP may win 20-32 seats. The Red Mike-Datansh exit poll gave the Congress 50-55 seats in Haryana and the BJP at 20-25, while the Dhruv Research poll pegged the Congress at 50-64 seats, BIP 22-32 seats, and others 3-8 seats. Peoples' Pulse exit poll gave the Congress 49-60 seats



Voters wait in a queue to cast their votes at a polling station in Rohtak, Haryana

and the BJP 20-32 seats in

Most exit polls pegged the Indian National Lok Dal (INLD) tally higher than that of the Jannayak Janta Party (JJP), while others

Janta Party (JJP), while others were seen getting up to 10 seats. The ruling BJP is eyeing a hattrick while the Congress is hoping to make a comeback in the state after a decade. The other key contestants are Congress, JJP, INLD, Aam Aadmi Party (AAP), INLD, Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP), and Azad Samaj Party (BSP), and Azad Samaj Party (ASP). Key candidates include Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini, BJP leaders Anil Vij and OP Dhankar, Congress leaders Bhupinder Singh Hooda and Vinesh Phogat, INLD's Abhay Singh Chautala, and JJP's Singh Chautala, and JJP's Dushyant Chautala.

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# Cliffhanger in Jammu and Kashmir

**MOHIT KANDHARI JAMMU** 

 $\mathbf{I}$  f exit polls are to be believed, a hung verdict is likely in Jammu and Kashmir Assembly polls. An overall voter turnout of 63.88 percent was reported in the polls, the first after post Abrogation of Articles 370 and 35-A. The results will be declared on October 8. The pre-poll alliance partners, the

National Conference, and the Congress Party enjoy an edge over the rival Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP).

However, the exit polls differed



largest political party in the fray. The India Today-CVoter exit poll predicted that the saffron party is likely to secure between 27 and 31 seats

The opposition's INDIA Bloc (including the National

Conference, Congress, and others) may bag around 11 to 15 seats in the region and Mehbooba Mufti's People's Democratic Party (PDP) is likely to get between 0-2

In contrast, the Bhaskar Reporters poll predicted 20-25 seats for the BJP and predicted NC-Cong may get the lion's share of 35-40 seats while giving PDP 4-7 seats. According to their exit poll, 12-18 seats are likely to be bagged by the Independent

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# **INDIA** Bloc hits a rough patch in UP

BISWAJEET BANERJEE

The recent camaraderie between the Samajwadi Party (SP) and Congress, fostered through the INDIA bloc, is now under strain as the two parties wrestle over seat-sharing arrangements for the upcoming by-elections in Uttar Pradesh. Despite their shared success in the Lok Sabha electionswhere the SP-Congress coalition secured 43 out of 80 seats in the state-the upcoming contest for 10 Assembly seats has exposed tensions within the alliance over the Muslim vote bank.

The 10 seats up for by-elections-Meerapur, Ghaziabad, Khair, Kundarki, Karhal, Phulpur, Sisamau, Milkipur, Katheri, and Majhwan-were previously held by the SP (five seats), BJP (three), RLD (one), and the NISHAD Party (one) in the 2022 state elections. While the common goal of

defeating the Bharatiya Janata

Party (BJP) remains a binding factor for both SP and Congress, a growing struggle for dominance over the Muslim vote bank has created significant friction.

Muslim voters, who form a critical part of the electorate in several of these constituencies, have become the focal point of the dispute, particularly in constituencies like Meerapur in Bijnor district, Phulpur in Allahabad, and Majhwan in eastern Uttar Pradesh.

"This is an interesting turn of events, as both so-called allies are now competing for Muslim votes and eyeing constituencies Muslims are in the majority," said Manoj Bhadra, a political analyst familiar with the region.

According to Bhadra, the tussle over these key seats is threatening the fragile alliance, with each party vying for control over territories seen as potential game-changers in future elections.

Continued on page 2

## **Two terrorists** killed in Kupwara



**MOHIT KANDHARI** JAMMU

day after India decided to send External Aday after India declued to selfa East-Affairs Minister S Jaishankar to Pakistan to attend the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) summit on October 15-16, alert troops of the Indian army Saturday foiled an infiltration bid along the line of control in which two Pakistani terrorists were killed in the North Kashmir district of Kupwara.

A joint operation was launched by the Indian army along with the special operations group of the Jammu and Kashmir police in the forward areas of Gugaldhar, Kupwara based on intelligence inputs about a possible infiltration bid late Friday evening.

The troops, after noticing the suspicious movement, challenged the heavily armed group of infiltrators which resulted in a heavy exchange of firing. Two terrorists were neutralised in the ongoing operations.

Confirming the same, Srinagar-based China Corps posted on X, "The security forces have eliminated two terrorists in the ongoing Operation Gugaldhar. War-like stores have been recovered. The search of the area is underway and the operation is in progress". So far 16 terrorists have been eliminated in anti-terrorist/anti-infiltration various

operations in Kashmir valley this year. The number of active terrorists has also come down to 80 in the region.

At the same time, troops continue to remain in a state of high alert to foil infiltration bids from across the line of control as several launch pads remain active in the area.

# 11-year-old raped, killed, villagers clash with Cops

SAUGAR SENGUPTA KOLKATA

nother horrific case of Arape and murder was from Mahishmari village in South 24 Parganas district. An 11year-old school girl was murdered late on Friday night, sources said. Following this, police and villagers fought pitched battles on Saturday, leaving several people injured. The girl was allegedly picked up from around the house of the local village Pradhan, brutalised and killed. The body of the victim was found at the banks of the Hooghly River on Saturday morning leading to mass outrage. The accused was arrested early on Saturday, police said.

The villagers reacted after the village Pradhan refused to share the CCTV footage from outside his house, locals said, adding the "angry villagers then got suspicious and hundreds of them attacked and set the Kripakhali police outpost afire. They alleged that the minor, who was missing since October 4 and that police did

not act on

their



RAF and police personnel arrive after protest following an incident of alleged rape and murder of a young village woman in Kultali area of South 24 Parganas district, Saturday

complaint immediately.

Following this the police resorted to heavy lathi-charge and bursting tear gas shells to disperse the crowd, sources said adding several men were injured during the clash. The Friday incident takes place amid an ongoing protests in the RG Kar Medical College rape and murder case that took place on August 9.

"The police are taking sides of the miscreants," locals said, alleging that "a cousin of the victim had in fact been raped a few years ago and the police did nothing in that case leading to the girl to commit

suicide then."

Continued on

# PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

Ateenage girl was allegedly raped by two unidentified persons, while restrained her male friend, on a deserted stretch on the outskirts of Gujarat's Vadodara city, police said on

Vadodara (rural).

returning "They were returning through the Bhayli locality on a Scooty when at around midnight, five persons on two-wheelers intercepted them on an isolated road. the police officer said. Two of them left after some argument, while three others remained. Of these three, two individuals raped the teenage girl, while the third person restrained her male friend, he said.





The alleged crime was committed on a Navratri night when revellers come out in large numbers to participate in garba events organised throughout the city. The survivor told the police that she had gone out to meet her childhood male friend at the city's Laxmipura area at around 11 pm, said Rohan Anand, Superintendent of Police -

"As soon as the culprits left, the teens informed the





### **FIR registered 2 years** after woman alleges rape

SAUMYA SHUKLA NEW DEI HI

A First Information Report (FIR) has been registered in Southwest Delhi's RK Puram area, two years after a 42-year-old woman was allegedly raped in a five star Hyatt Regency hotel of. The woman has claimed that the accused threatened her of dire consequences with her nude pictures.

A case under section 376 (rape) and 506 (criminal intimidation) of Indian Penal Code (IPC) was registered at RK Puram police station on October 3. The accused has been

identified as Amit Malik who is also in his 40s. According to the FIR, the

victim met the accused, identified as Amit Malik, through Instagram and used to message her frequently on Facebook messenger and met him for the first time on April 21, 2022. talking started

frequently after the first meeting. We planned for dinner at Hyatt Regency hotel on April 23, 2022 but upon reaching the hotel he insisted that we check-in in room to know each other more personally," the victim claimed.

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police. Cops reached the spot, cordoned off the area and collected evidence. Teams have been formed to identify the culprits using technical surveillance and other means," Anand said. The Gujarat government has lifted restrictions on garba celebration timings for this year's Navratri festival.

recovered from the site. "It was very dark in this place at night. The victim and her friend could not recognise the faces of the accused, but they have described their style of speech and body build. This incident has nothing to do with Garba," a senior police officer said.

An investigation has been initiated based on the complaint of the victim's father. The victim's friend is studying in class 11. Five teams of district police (LCB, SOG, and city police) have been deployed to apprehend the accused.

In a similar crime, a 21-yearold woman was allegedly raped by three unidentified persons, who also tied her male friend using his clothes and belt and assaulted him. at an isolated place on the outskirts of Pune in Maharashtra on Thursday night, police had said.

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Smoke rises following Israeli bombardment in southern Lebanon as seen from

# **Hamas official killed** in north Lebanon

**AP** JERUSALEM

An Israeli strike on a refugee camp in north Lebanon has killed Hamas official Saeed Atallah Ali and his family, the militant group said Saturday. The early morning strike came a day after another Israeli airstrike cut off a main highway linking Lebanon with Syria, leaving two huge craters on either side of the road. Israel began a ground incursion Tuesday

Lebanon against Hezbollah militant group. The Israeli military said nine soldiers have died in the conflict in southern Lebanon. Israel and Hezbollah have

traded fire across the

Lebanon border almost daily since the day after Hamas' cross-border attack on October 7, 2023, which killed 1,200 Israelis and took 250 others hostage. Israel declared war on the Hamas militant group in the Gaza

Strip in response. As the Israel-Hamas war reaches the one-year mark, than more Palestinians have been killed in the territory, and just over half the dead have been women and children. according to local health officials.

Nearly 2,000 people have been killed in Lebanon since then, most of them since Sept. 23, according to the Lebanese Health Ministry.

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# Jams take the joy out of festive season

### Traffic snarls expected to rise as celebrations move into high gear

Photo: Ranian Dimri/Pionee

BY RAJESH KUMAR

That the festive season has begun in the city can now be gauged by the traffic snarls being reported from various bottleneck zones. Commuters are now facing snarls due to heavy traffic that congests routes along venues which host Navratri pandals. The situation is expected to escalate as the festivities move into high gear across the Capital.

The real time traffic data shared by TomTom showed a travel time of over 26 minutes to cover 10 kms at 6.18 pm on Saturday. Traffic jams were reported from 810 spots. October is the worst month for road users as major sales are on in the markets for the

and Durga puja pandals also come up. The latest update on Saturday said

festival season, and many navratri

from SSN Marg to Mehrauli to Wazirabad road and Rohtak Road to Maa Anandmai Marg from Crown Plaza towards Kalkaji Mandir, traffic was either jammed or moved at a very slow pace during peak hours. The reason behind the traffic jams are broken roads, construction works, heavy of traffic

volume waterlogging.
All major stretches including Britania Chowk, Azadpur Mandi, Jhandewalan temple, Hanuman Mandir, Netaji Subhash Marg, Mehrauli Badarpur road, Vikas Marg, Delhi-Gurugram road,



Due to heavy vehicular flow.

Delhi traffic police issued alerts and advised commuters to plan carefully while using such stretches. Commuters faced snarls as traffic was affected in front of 14, Ashoka Road in the carriageway from C-Hexagon towards Windsor Palace due to a damaged road. The road has been broken for the past few days and is one of the most prominent roads in the New Delhi area. Commuters faced a tough time as

towards Bhajanpura due to over

traffic was badly affected on Wazirabad Road on the foot of Khajuri Flyover in the carriageway from Khajuri Chowk

According to traffic police, a

massive jam was reported during the peak hours on GTK Road in the carriageway from Mukarba Chowk towards Azadpur due to overflow of drain water.

In another post, the traffic police said the traffic will be affected on SSN Marg in the carriageway from Satbari towards Mehrauli due to drain work being carried out by the civic agency. "Commuters are advised to plan their journey accordingly", it said. Heavy traffic was also reported from around Khalsa College. "Due to construction work being carried out by DMRC, GTK Road from Shakti Nagar Chowk towards Ghantaghar will remain Azadpur will be compulsorily diverted left towards Khalsa college. Commuters are advised to plan their journey accordingly", it said. Traffic was affected on Rohtak Road in the carriageway from

closed and traffic coming from

Nangloi towards Tikri Border and vice versa due to potholes and water logging. Heavy traffic was reported on Maa Anandmai Marg in the carriageway from Crown Plaza towards Kalkaji temple due to breakdown of a Trala containing iron rods near Nathu Sweets red light. "Commuters are advised to plan their journey accordingly," the traffic police advisory said.

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# Pan-India crackdown against JeM: NIA searches 26 locations



PNS NEW DELHI

In a massive pan-India crackdown against terror-ists' outfit Jaish-e-Mohammad (IeM), the NIA on Saturday conducted searches at 26 locations in five states and arrested one person and questioned several suspects involved in motivating youth into committing violent terror attacks across the country, according to an official statement.

Sheikh Sultan Salah Uddin Ayubi alias Ayubi was taken into custody after searches at 26 locations in Assam, Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh, Delhi and Jammu and Kashmir, it said.

The accused was arrested on account of his incriminatory

role in the conspiracy case, said the statement issued by the National Investigation Agency (NIA).

He will be produced before the NIA special court, Patiala House, New Delhi, it added. In addition, "several other suspects" have also been rounded up for questioning, the NIA said.

The suspects were engaged in radicalising individuals associated with Pakistan-based JeM and were engaged in dissemi-nating terrorist related propa-ganda, and "radicalising and recruiting youth into the Jamaat outfit" inspired by it, it said. These suspects were involved

in motivating the youth into committing violent terror attacks across India, the NIA

investigations have revealed, according to the statement. The premises searched by the NIA were located in Goalpara

(Assam), Aurangabad, Jalna Malegaon Maharashtra, Meerut and Saharanpur in Uttar Pradesh, Delhi, and Baramulla. Pulwama and Ramban in Jammu and Kashmir.

During the searches, the NIA teams seized several incriminating documents, electronic devices, pamphlets and magazines. These are being examined for further leads and evidence against the suspects whose premises were searched on Saturday, the anti-terror agency said, adding the investigations in the case are con-

# 21 cops hurt in Amravati violence over Hindu seer's remarks

T N RAGHUNATHA MUMBAI

At least 21 police personnel were injured, while ten police vans were damaged at Amravati in eastern Maharashtra, after an agitated mob hurled stones at the police demanding registration of a case against a Gaziabad-based Hindu seer Yati Narsinghanand Maharaj for his purported objection-able remarks against Prophet Mohammed

The police beefed up security in Amravati on Saturday, after a huge mob of protesters staged a violent protest on Friday night in front of the Nagpuri Gate police station, demanding registration of a against

Narsinghanand Maharaj.
The police have registered a case against 1,200 people in connection with the incident. They have identified 26 of the protesters.

The police have deployed extra forces have been deployed to maintain law and order. Talking to media persons,

Amravati Police Commissioner Navin Chandra Reddy said: "A huge mob, including members of some organisations, came to the Nagpuri Gate police sta-



tion around 2015 pm on Friday night to press for their demand of registration of a against Narsinghanand Maharaj of Ghaziabad."

"After some people circulated the video of the Hindu seer's remarks, a massive crowd of people assembled in front of the Nagpuri Gate police sta-

When our officers were trying to disperse the crowd, some people from the mob hurled stones at the police. An FIR has already been registered against those involved in the incident".

The police have, meanwhile, issued a prohibitory order under section 163 of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS) banning the assembly of five or more people in Nagpuri Gate area 'If people take law in their hands, they will be dealt with sternly," Reddy said.

# Shivaji's statue collapsed due to bad intentions of BJP: Rahul Gandhi

Averring that Chhatrapati Shivaji Mahraa's statue collapsed recently in Maharashtra because of the "bad intenbecause of the bad inten-tions" of the BJP government, Leader of the Opposition in Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi of the Congress said on Saturday that "there is no use of bowing before Shivaji Maharaj after scaring people and destroying the Constitution and institutions in the country".

Speaking at a function after unveiling a 20-feet tall statue of Shivaji Maharaj in Kasba Bawda in Kolhapur district of western Maharashtra, Rahul said: "The BJP erected Shivaji Maharaj's statue in Rajkot fort of Sindhudurg. But after a few days, it collapsed and broke. This all happened because of the BJP's bad intention. The BJP does not respect Shivaji Maharaj's ideology'

"A statue is installed only when we respect the thought of that individual. We are carrying forward the ideology Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj fought for his entire life. If we do not carry forward that ideology, there is no point in unveiling the statue," Rahul

"If you invoke the name of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj, then you must respect the Constitution and the ideology he stood for. Shivaji

Maharaj always took along people of all sections of the society...There is no use of bowing before Shivaji Maharaj after scaring people, destroying the Constitution and institutions in the country," the Congress leader said in his stinging criticism of the Narendra Modi government. Rahul said that the country

was witnessing a fight between two ideologies. "The Congress party today is fighting against the same ide-ology that Shivaji Maharaj fought against," he said.

Linking the Indian constituti0n to Shivaji, Rahul said: 'The Indian Constitution is a manifestation Shivaji Maharaj stood for. If people like Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj and Shahu Maharaj were not there, the Constitution also would not have been there." Rahul's comments should be seen in the context of the col-

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

Maharaj statue on August 26 at Rajkot fort at Malvan in Sindhudurg district of Maharashtra, within nine months after it was unveiled by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on December 4, 2023 as part of the Navy day celebra-

Later on August 30, Prime Minister Narendra Modi apol-ogised to Chhatrapati Shivaji over the collapse of his statue. 'Shivaji Maharaj is not merely a name, a revered king or a great personality but a deity, Modi said.

Meanwhile, the ruling BJP workers staged a black flag demonstration in front of the Kolhapur airport when he arrived in the western Maharashtra city to take part in various programmes. The BJP workers also staged protests in other parts of

### Cliffhanger in Jammu ...

From page 1

Peoples Pulse in its survey predicted 23-27 seats for the BJP and 46-50 seats to the NC-Congress combine, 7-11 seats for PDP and 4-6 for others. As per the Gulistan News poll survey, the National Conference and the Congress are expected to form the government in Jammu and Kashmir. The INDIA Bloc is expected to secure 37 seats in the J&K Assembly results, while the BJP is predicted to remain at 28-30 seats.

Reacting to the exit poll predictions, Chief Minister Omar Abdullah posted on X, "I'm amazed channels are bothering with exit polls, especially after the fiasco of the recent general elections. I'm ignoring all the noise on channels, social media, WhatsApp Etc because the only numbers that matter will be revealed on the 8th of Oct. The rest is just time

# Congress to sweep...

From page 1

The BJP's campaign was spearheaded by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who addressed four rallies, where he attacked the Congress on several issues and said they kept every matter important for the country entangled, including the Ram temple issue. Congress leader Rahul Gandhi also addressed many public meetings where he said a "Congress storm" is on its way in Haryana and his party would form the government, which will be one for the poor and farmers, and a "mohabbat ki dukan" will be opened in every corner of the state. In the 2019 Assembly elections, the BJP won 40 of the 90 seats, forming a coalition government with the JJP, which won 10 seats. The Congress secured 31 seats. However, JJP later broke out of the coalition. Manohar Lal Khattar served as the Chief Minister of Haryana for around 9.5 Mewar recorded voter turnout of

years. He was succeeded by Nayab Śingh Saini in March this year.

The single phase polling for 90 Assembly Constituencies in Haryana concluded largely peacefully, in more than 20,000 polling stations set up in the state, except for stray incidents of minor scuffles and stone-pelting were reported from Haryana's Nuh

The Election Commission has seized cash, drugs and liquor worth Rs. 75.72 crores in Harvana in the run up to the polls. This is four times more than the seizures worth Rs 19.3 crore, reported in 2019. Seizures have been made across all districts & cohorts, which includes Rs. 31.5 crore cash, Rs. 16.6 crore worth of liquor and 11.13 crore drugs. Ambala (Rs 11.82 crores), Faridabad (Rs 10.07 crores) and Gurugram (Rs 9.94 crores) remained the top 3 districts in terms of seizures.

percent, followed Yamunanagar 67.93 percent and Palwal (67.69 percent). Gurugram and Faridabad recorded lowest voter turnout of 49.97 percent and 51.90 percent respectively

Interestingly, BJP leader and Kurukshetra MP Naveen Jindal arrived at a polling station in Kurukshetra on a horse to cast his vote, while a groom delayed his wedding to cast his vote, and Olympians proudly flaunted their inked fingers.

'Riding a horse is considered auspicious... People ride horses while going to attend weddings. That is why came on a horse for his auspicious work," Jindal told reporters after casting his vote. On his mother Savitri Jindal contesting the polls as an Independent from Hisar, Jindal told reporters people made her contest the elections and they were quite enthusiastic about her candidature.

The EC bringing polling booths into high-rise apartment complexes was a hit among their residents who would earlier "think twice about taking out time for voting". The voters residing in many high-rise apartment complexes especially in the NCR cities of Gurugram and Faridabad said they found it convenient to cast their votes as polling stations were set up in several such residential buildings.

The Commission set up polling stations on the premises of several high-rise building premises in order to increase polling percentage and reduce congestion at polling centres. In the millennium city alone, the Commission set up 126 polling stations in high-rise buildings. Among them, nine were located in the Pataudi constituency, 71 in Badshahpur, 42 in Gurugram and

Police

commotion started afresh in

the evening. The police resorting to lathi charge in

which some Left activists and

media personnel were injured. Saturday's incident takes place

in the midst of the RG Kar

protest where the junior

morgue,

Kolkata

GHAZIABAD/AMRAVATI Controversial priest Yati Narsinghanand has been booked in another hate speech case after he allegedly made objectionable remarks against Prophet Mohammed that

**Controversial priest Yati** 

Narsinghanad booked in yet

another hate speech case

Pradesh and other states. His aides claimed on Saturday that he had been detained in Ghaziabad but there was no official word on it. A large crowd had gathered outside the Dasna Devi temple, where he presides, protesting against him on Friday night after videos of his inflammatory remarks appeared online, following which security was stepped up around the premises.

sparked protests in the

Ghaziabad district of Uttar

Police complaints were filed in Telangana where AIMIM president Asaduddin Owaisi on Saturday submitted a representation to Hyderabad police commissioner CV Anand demanding that a criminal case be registered against Narsinghanand. An FIR was registered against the priest in Maharashtra's Amravati city, which saw violent protests against his remarks outside the Nagpuri Gate police station in which 21 police personnel were injured and 10 police vans were damaged during stone pelting by a mob on Friday night, according to offi-

A case under BNS sections 299 (deliberate and malicious acts, intended to outrage religious feelings of any class by insulting

its religion or religious beliefs), 302 (intentionally uttering words to deliberately wound the religious sentiments of another person), 197 (actions that harm national integration) and others was registered against Yati Narsinghanand at Nagpuri Gate

Narsinghanand has several cases against him, including for allegedly making a hate speech at a conclave in Haridwar in bail.

police station over his alleged

objectionable remarks, the police

His close aide and general secretary of Yati Narsinghanand Saraswati Foundation Udita Tyagi claimed he has been detained over the allegations of making objectionable remarks against Prophet Mohammed during a programme held at Hindi Bhavan of Ghaziabad on September 29 and his whereabouts are not known.

When asked about it, DCP (Rural) Surendra Nath Tiwari said, "We are looking for the security of the temple and we have no idea about his deten-

been made outside the Dasna temple to avoid any untoward incident, the police said.

Heavy police deployment has

# FIR registered 2 years...

From page 1

She added that he was carrying a bottle of vodka with him and offered her a drink. "After drinking, I felt intoxicated and badly consciousness. After gaining senses, I felt terrible pain in my legs and lower abdomen and found myself without clothes. Amit Malik then started showing me my nude pictures without clothes," the FIR stated. The victim is a resident of Lajpat Nagar and lives there with her son.

She alleged that the accused has been threatening and harassing her for the past two years "He had also filmed the act of forcing

himself upon me. I started also by circulating my nude crying out of fear but he pictures," she said. She added crying out of fear but he calmed me down saying that has recorded the moments purely out of love! Amit Malik told me that he is through several disputes with his wife and plan to divorce her," she stated, adding that the accused has been sexually and emotionally abusing her. The victim stated that since she was not living with her husband, she fell for his assurances. "He kept getting intimate with me on several occasions on the pretext of marrying me. Whenever I resisted, he used to threaten me of dire consequences, of spoiling my son's future and

that she has been living in fear and has been threatened over the last two years.

A senior police officer added that the statement of the complainant was recorded and her medical examination was conducted in Safdarjung Hospital. "From the gist of the statement and MLC, offence under section 376 and 506 IPC is made out," he stated, adding that an investigation underway in the case.

Speaking to The Pioneer, an official from Hyatt Regency hotel said that they do not have any information on the case and can't comment on the

# 11-year-old raped...

From page 1

District SP PC Dhali said, "we have arrested the culprit within six hours of the victim being abducted," adding that the villagers' allegations of lax handling of the case were

unfounded. The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and Left leaders who reached Mahishmari on Saturday blocked the van carrying the body of the victim for postmortem. According to CPI(M) leader Meenakshi Mukheriee, this was done "so that an RG Kar like incident, where the body was hurriedly sent for funeral after a fake postmortem to save some big fishe can be prevented.

Meanwhile, BIP MLA Agnimitra Paul had heated exchanges with Congress MP Trinamool Pratima Mondal even as the villagers raised "go-back" slogans against her. "The victim bore injury marks similar to that of Ábhaya in RG Kar Medical College", the BJP MLA said. While Paul raised the issue of RG Kar and Sandeshkhali to say that "the law and order of Bengal has completely collapsed," Mondal resorted to countersloganeering and cited the instances of Hathras and

Even as the police were forced by the Opposition parties to bring the body of the victim to

doctors who ended their cease work late on Friday night started a sit-in demonstration at Esplanade in Kolkata giving a 24-hours' ultimatum to the State Government warning, "if the Government does not concede to our demands by removing the health secretaries and sprucing up the security infrastructure we will be forced to go for an indefinite hunger

# INDIA Bloc hits...

Sources within both the SP and Congress indicate that the battle for these seats is intensifying, with neither side willing to cede ground easily. Congress, which has begun preparing for all 10 by-election seats, is reportedly not aggressively pushing for the five seats that SP won in 2022-Karhal, Kundarki, Sisamau, Milkipur, and Katheri.

However, Congress remains insistent on contesting the five seats that were previously won by the BJP, including key constituencies such Phulpur, and Meerapur, Majhwan.

Congress media in-charge, CP Rai, explained the party's position. "Our claim is on the five seats won by the BJP. The SP can contest the seats it won last time and leave the rest to us," he told this reporter.

Meerapur, vacated after RLD MLA Chandan Chauhan won the Bijnor Lok Sabha seat, has become a flashpoint. Congress sees the seat, with its significant Muslim population, as crucial for the upcoming

2027 Assembly elections. "The demographic profile of Meerapur could be a gamechanger," explained a senior Congress leader, underscoring the strategic importance of the

The SP, however, is determined to hold onto Meerapur, seeing it as a critical piece in their bid to consolidate their hold over minority-dominated constituencies. It is also reluctant to let go of Phulpur, a seat vacated by BJP MLA Praveen Singh Patel after his victory in the Lok Sabha elections. SP leaders argue that the party has come close to winning Phulpur in the past two Assembly elections.

"The Congress is getting too ambitious," remarked a senior SP leader, speaking on condition of anonymity. "The final decision on seat-sharing will be made by the national leadership, but we're not willing to concede seats where we have a strong chance of

According to him, SP has already offered Congress the seats of Ghaziabad and Khair, but remains firm on retaining and reclaim lost ground.

Meerapur, Phulpur, and Majhwan. The stakes for both parties are

enormous. For Congress, these by-elections represent a crucial opportunity to solidify its position in Uttar Pradesh ahead of the 2027 Assembly elections, where it hopes to present a credible alternative to the BJP and SP. For SP, retaining control over key constituencies, especially those large minority populations, is essential for maintaining its position as the principal opposition party in the state.

Political observers believe that the outcome of the by-elections could serve as a bellwether for the alliance's future prospects. If SP and Congress can successfully navigate their differences and present a united front, they stand a chance of further consolidating their position

against the BJP. However, if the seat-sharing talks continue to stall, the Alliance risks unravelling, potentially opening the door for the BJP to exploit divisions

# Jams take the joy...

From page 1

Last year, a survey by the Delhi traffic police confirmed what commuters have been complaining about over the past few months - a significant increase in traffic congestion across the National Capital. The reasons, according to the vary survey,

constructions illegal encroachments, parkings to a rise in motor vehicles after the pandemic. Conducted between January and September this year, the survey has identified at least 117 road stretches and 10 flyovers as the key traffic

congestion points in Delhi. The survey states that the southern and northern part of the city top the list with 25 and traffic respectively. According to the survey, heavier volume of traffic on the roads, ongoing construction activities such as building of flyovers; widening, repair and re-carpeting of roads; encroachment; improper parking of vehicles; and unregulated pedestrian

movement are the main

reasons for congestion. The 25 traffic points identified in southern part of Delhi include areas such as Yusuf Sarai market in front of Safdarjung hospital, Rangpuri roundabout under NH-48 flyover, Andheria Mor and CDR Chowk on Mehrauli-Gurugram (MG) Road, the roads under Chirag Delhi

Road-Madanpur Khadar, Plaza-Maa Crowne Anandmayee Marg near Okhla, and both stretches of Shaheed Bijender Singh Gurjar Marg near Jaitpur. As per the survey report,

northern parts of the city that include areas in Rohini, northwest and outer-north have 27 traffic congestion points - Netaji Subhash Marg (Delhi Gate to Nukkad Faiz Bazar), outside New Delhi railway station in Paharganj and Aimeri Gate side, Rani Jhansi Road, Anand Parbat, Majnu ka Tila, in front of Tis Hazari court, and outside Red Fort on NS Marg, among

## **Teen raped,** while out celebrating...

From page 1

Last month, the fiancée of an army officer was allegedly sexually assaulted under flyover, Savitri flyover-Outer Bhubaneswar's Bharatpur police station. Narrating her Ring Road, Tara Apartment-Alaknanda Road, Mathura harrowing experience to the media, the woman said she was repeatedly kicked on her chest before a police inspector assaulted and also flashed her. As the incident triggered nationwide Odisha Police outrage, suspended five officers, including the Inspector-incharge of Bharatpur Police Station.

In the same month two young Indian Army officers were beaten up, and one of their two women friends was allegedly raped unidentified men when the four were out on a picnic in Madhya Pradesh's Indore district near Mhow-Mandleshwar road.

# Hamas official...

From page 1

cials.

Hamas said in a statement that the early Saturday strike on the Beddawi refugee camp struck the home of Saeed Atallah Ali, an official with Hamas's military wing, the Qassam Brigades. Ali's wife, Shaymaa Azzam, and their two daughters, Zeinab and Fatima - whom the statement described children - were also killed in the attack.

A military plane evacuating 97 people from Lebanon arrived in South Korea on Saturday. South Korea's Foreign Ministry said the group on the plane includes South Korean nationals and their family members. There are about 30 South Koreans left in Lebanon besides diplomats and embassy

workers who are staying. South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol instructed officials Wednesday to send military aircraft to conflict areas in the Middle East as he called a meeting to discuss the impact of the intensified fighting in the region. There are about 480 South Korean nationals living in Israel and 110 in

At a busy Tel entertainment district, diners spill into outdoor seating and

clink glasses as music fills the air. There's laughter, there's life. But all around the patrons, staring down from lampposts and shop windows, are pictures of hostages held in Gaza, stark reminders that Israel is at war and forever scarred by the deadliest attack in its history.

As Israel's war with Hamas reaches its one-year mark, it can seem on the surface that much of life in the country has returned to normal. But with many still reeling from Hamas' Öctober 7 attack, hostages remaining in captivity and a new front of war with Hezbollah in the north, many Israelis feel depressed, despondent and angry as the war stretches into its second year.

Uncertainty over the future has cast a pall over virtually every part of daily life, even as people try to maintain a sense





# Delhi Cabinet headed by Atishi approves proposal regarding re-employment of bus marshals

**STAFF REPORTER** ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Cabinet headed by Chief Minister Atishi on Saturday approved a proposal regarding re-employment of the bus marshals and sent it to the Lieutenant Governor Vinai Kumar Saxena for his approval even as the event turned out chaotic with both BJP and AAP accusing each other of creating drama.

In a dramatic event, Atishi, accompanied by BJP MLAs, also met Saxena and submitted a cabinet note to reinstate the bus marshals. However, it turned into a dramatic sequence of events with Delhi minister Saurabh Bharadwaj getting laid at BJP MLA and Leader of Opposition Vijender Gupta's feet, requesting him to accompany AAP leaders to the LG's residence to seek Saxena's approval while the Chief Minister left her car and sat in the BJP leader's car.

Reacting to the incident, Delhi BJP President Virendra Sachdeva slammed the AAP

today with the Leader of the Opposition Vijender Gupta, and BJP MLAs in the presence of the Delhi Chief Minister is proof of the anar-

chy in their party."
After the MLAs of both parties reached Saxena's house, AAP leaders accused the BJP MLAs of not asking him to sign the cabinet note, and held a protest outside the bus marshals.

leaders and said, "The kind of indecent behavior witnessed including AAP workers and Delhi Minister Saurabh

The Chief Minister was inside the LG residence when the protest happened. Atishi lashed out at the BJP after meeting with the LG, saying the party has "betrayed" the

not ready to come to meet the LG, but we managed to get them with us somehow. But even after coming here, they have not asked the LG to sign the cabinet note even a single time," she said.

Bhardwaj, who was also detained, said, "BJP-LG have betrayed 10,000 bus marshals. BJP MLAs said that if you pass the cabinet note, they will get the bus marshals reinstated from LG.But LG Sahab has not signed the cabinet note, he will be cursed by 10,000 bus marshals."

Moreover, AAP National Convenor and former Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Saturday expressed pride in the relent less efforts of the party's ministers to secure the livelihoods of bus marshals in Delhi."I am proud of my ministers who go to any extent, even laying at people's feet, to get work done for the people," Arvind Kejriwal tweeted, reacting to a photo of Minister Saurabh Bharadwaj

laying at the feet of Gupta. Further, he asked the BJP and LG to not politicise the matter and said, "I request the LG and BJP not to politicise this issue further and to immediately reinstate the bus marshals to their jobs."

Over 10,000 civil defence volunteers deployed as marshals in public transport buses were removed last year after an objection was raised by the directorate of civil defence that they were meant for disaster management duties.

Earlier in the day, the BJP MLAs met the Delhi chief minister over the issue of reinstatement of the marshals. The Chief Minister said the cabinet will meet immediately to pass a note on reinstating the bus marshals and appealed to the BJP MLAs to join a delegation to take the note to the LG for his approval approval.

AAP leaders claimed that the BJP MLAs refused to go to the LG office after the cabinet passed the note and tried to

### Sachdeva facilitates meeting of bus marshal delegation with LG, requests him to hear their case

STAFF REPORTER NEW DELHI

Delhi BJP President Virendra Sachdeva on Saturday facilitated the meeting of a delegation of bus marshals with the Lieutenant Governor Vinai Kumar Saxena and requested him to hear their

The delegation, which included Mukesh Pal Singh, Salman, ed Mukesn Pai Singii, Sainian, Chandrashekhar, Anuj Srivastava, Mahendra Singh, Kamlesh, Anita Mehra, and others, also visited the BJP state office and expressed their gratitude to Sachdeva for the meeting with Saxena. They also expressed their regret over the Delhi Minister Saurabh Bharadwaj laying on the feets of the Leader of the Opposition Vijender Gupta, and BJP

After meeting the Lieutenant Governor, the delegation issued their fellow bus marshals that the Lieutenant Governor had promised a swift resolution, and they would soon receive good news. South Delhi MP Ramvir Singh

Bidhuri stated that even in the name of restoring the jobs of the marshals, a drama is being

the marshals, a drama is being played with them.

"The proposal is passed in the assembly but when it comes to paperwork, the proposal is not even passed in the cabinet. Instead, a drama is played to get the sympathy of the marshals by lying down on the roads," he claimed.

claimed.
Bidhuri added that the BJP has been supporting the marshals very seriously from the beginning and is not only making continuous efforts for the restoration of their jobs but is also exposing all the activities of the AAP. Addressing the media in this

context, Sachdeva said, "The

that Arvind Kejriwal first appointed the bus marshals without following proper procedures and then dismissed them to avoid scrutiny. After meeting the Lieutenant Governor today, the bus marshals now understand the truth.

He alleged that his party has consistently pointed out how Arvind Kejriwal appointed the bus marshals without following due process, dismissed them to avoid an investigation, and today, after meeting the Lieutenant Governor, the bus marshals realized the truth. 'Arvind Kejriwal played with the lives of the bus marshals for an entire year, and when they felt exposed by the BJP, they hurriedly passed a cabinet note. Kejriwal and Atishi Marlena

should explain why this action

wasn't taken back in October

## DMRC completes underground tunnel on Phase-4 Golden Line

**STAFF REPORTER** ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi Metro Rail Corporation (DMRC) on Saturday completed an under-ground tunnel between Chhatarpur and Chhatarpur Mandir stations on Phase-4 Golden Line. A 97-metre-long tunnel boring machine (TBM) broke through on Saturday morning at Chhatarpur Mandir station after boring an 860metre-long tunnel. According to Delhi Metro, two

parallel circular tunnels for up and down movement have Aerocity-Tughlakabad corridor. The breakthrough on the other parallel tunnel was achieved on August 21. This new tunnel has been con-

structed at an average depth of approximately 12 metres. About 613 rings have been installed in the tunnel, with an inner diameter of 5.8 meters, DMRC Principal Executive Director Anuj Dayal said.

The tunnelling work involved numerous challenges such as shifting a 66 KV electrical high tension line. Additionally, the TBM had to cross below the existing Yellow Line viaduct without disrupting metro train operations on the line, he said. The tunnel has been built using the technology of EPBM (earth pressure balancing method)



precast tunnel rings. These tunnel rings were cast at a fully mechanised casting yard set up at Mundka. The concrete segments were cured with a steam curing system to achieve early strength, Dayal said.

All necessary safety precautions were taken during the construction of the tunnel below the existing viaduct and built-up structures. Ground movements were monitored with highly sensitive instruments fixed on nearby structures, ensuring that there was no settlement anywhere, he

As part of Phase-4 work approved so far, 40.109 kilometres of underground lines are being constructed. The Aerocity-Tughlakabad corridor has underground sections national capital, he added.

A TBM is a machine used to excavate tunnels with a circular cross-section through various soil and rock strata. They can be designed to bore through anything from hard rock to sand. TBMs have revolutionised tunneling work worldwide, enabling tunnels to be bored without disturbing buildings and other surface structures, the officials said. TBMs are particularly useful for underground tunneling work in congested urban areas. The DMRC has been using TBMs for its tunneling work since Phase-1. In Phase-3, when approximately 50 kilometres of underground sections were built, about 30 TBMs were deployed in the

# MCD House meeting adjourned amid ruckus

**STAFF REPORTER** ■ NEW DELHI

The House meeting of the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) was adjourned on Saturday amid a ruckus over the delay in appointing a Dalit Mayor of the city. The BJP councillors raised slogans and stormed into the well of the House, carrying posters and banners, and demanded that mayoral elections be Amid the commotion, sev-

eral proposals were passed by Mayor Shelly Oberoi. She then adjourned the House until the next meeting. proposals by Oberoi without the majority of the AAP councillors in the House, Leader of Opposition Raja Iqbal Singh said the passed resolutions will be considered

The meeting, scheduled to begin at 2 pm, started late when Mayor Shelly Oberoi arrived at 2:48 pm. It opened with the leaders of all three parties reading a 'shlok prastav' to mourn the death of two former councillors. Mayor Oberoi then called for a twominute silent tribute, to which all councillors complied. However, immediately after

the tribute, the house descended into chaos as AAP

and BJP councillors began

shouting slogans against each

other. BJP councillors repeat-

edly chanted "Pass" and "Adjourn" into the microphones, mocking the mayor for passing agendas without discussion and adjourning meetings amidst the ruckus. A few BJP councillors even attempted to approach the well of the house where the mayor was seated but were stopped by security personnel. Despite the commotion, within five minutes, Mayor Oberoi passed a few agendas, postponed the remaining ones, and adjourned the meeting. As she left, BJP councillors jeered with chants of "Bhaag gayi, bhaag gayi, Mayor Sahiba bhaag gayi." There were 81 AAP council-

lors present, while the BJP had a majority with 94 councillors in attendance, along with six Congress councilors. The AAP councillors, upset with the obstruction of the standing committee election, did not attend the session, the

BJP claimed. The BJP councillors demanded a vote on the resolutions, but the mayor ignored the request, Singh "According to Article 44 (1) of the rules of procedure and conduct of the MCD, if four or more members demand a vote on any proposal, the Mayor is required to conduct the vote," Singh said. He further claimed that the declining attendance among AAP councillors was a sign of internal frustration with ongoing violations of the MCD Act and delays in the

mation of the Standing Committee.

In response, AAP's Leader of the House, Mukesh Goel, defended the low turnout, attributing it to the city's traffic woes. "Some councillors were stuck in traffic for over two hours, and many only managed to reach the MCD after the meeting had already ended," Goel said.

When the proceedings began, Oberoi criticised the quick manner in which standing committee elections were held on September 26 despite her objections.

"In the previous House, the MCD standing committee elections were not able to be held. The House was adjourned until October 5 and the elections were to be

held in this meeting. But in an unconstitutional manner, the elections were held hastily on September 27," Oberoi

"After the matter was brought to the notice of the Supreme Court, it took cognizance of the issue and ordered that elections will not be held until the next hearing," she added before adjourning the meeting after passing several proposals.

The elections for the standing committee chairperson have been stalled following the Supreme Court's directive to the office of Lieutenant Saxena to not hold the polls until the next hearing, slated after two weeks.

Since the AAP took control of the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) in 2022, the ongoing power struggle between AAP and the BJP has turned the civic body into a political battleground. This conflict led to stalled discussions, even on crucial issues, leaving the MCD in a state of

paralysis. At the heart of this tussle is the battle for control of the standing committee—an 18member body that serves as the financial backbone of the corporation. No proposal exceeding rupees 5 crores can proceed without the standing committee's

# NCRTC begins trial runs between Sahibabad, Ashok Nagar RRTS stations

**STAFF REPORTER** ■ NEW DELHI

Tn a significant step towards Limplementing India's first Regional Rapid Transit System (RRTS), NCRTC has commenced trial runs on the Sahibabad-New Ashok Nagar section of the Delhi-Ghaziabad-Meerut RRTS corridor.

This marks a major milestone, as Namo Bharat trains is now entering Delhi, bringing the corridor's Delhi section closer to the already operational section from Sahibabad to Meerut South.

NCRTC MD Shalabh Goel was present on the occasion with senior officers to witness this moment. Namo Bharat train has been operated manually to check the Civil Structure compatibility in the trials

As testing advances, NCRTC will carry out comprehensive evaluations to assess the train's integrated performance and its coordination with various subsystems such as tracks, signalling, Platform Screen Doors



(PSDs), and overhead power supply systems. Extensive trial runs, including high-speed tests, are planned over the next few months.

This 12 km stretch of the corridor is going to connect Sahibabad RRTS station to New Ashok Nagar RRTS station having two RRTS stations of Anand Vihar and New Ashok Nagar. Once operational, it will offer commuters a fast and efficient travel option between New Ashok Nagar

and Meerut South RRTS station, reducing the travel time to less than 40 minutes.

Anand Vihar RRTS station is expected to become one of the busiest commuter transit hubs, with significant daily footfall due to its proximity to a Metro station serving two Metro lines, a railway station, and two ISBTs—one on the Delhi side and the other at Kaushambi, Uttar Pradesh.

NCRTC is ensuring the seamless integration of these various

transit modes to offer commuters effortless convenience and accessibility, making Anand Vihar RRTS station a model for multi-modal integration. The New Ashok Nagar RRTS station is located less than 100 meters from the New Ashok Nagar Metro Station. To integrate these two transport modes, NCRTC will provide a footbridge (FOB) connecting the concourse level of the Metro station to the concourse of the RRTS station. Additionally, two more FOBs will enhance accessibility at the

New Ashok Nagar RRTS station—one connecting Chilla Village and Mayur Vihar Extension, and the other near the Ancient Shiv Temple for easy access to New Ashok Nagar residents. All these will provide easy access to the residents of New Ashok Nagar. NCRTC recently earned top honors at the UIC Sustainability Impact Awards 2024 in Germany, winning both the Best Transit Award for Seamless Connectivity and the

prestigious Overall Winner Award, standing out among numerous global entries. Currently, Namo Bharat train services operate over a 42 km stretch from Sahibabad to Meerut South, covering nine stations of Sahibabad, Ghaziabad, Guldhar, Duhai, Duhai Depot, Muradnagar, Modi Nagar South, Modi Nagar North, and Meerut South. With the operationalization of Sahibabad to New Ashok Nagar section, the operational length will increase to 54 km with 11 RRTS stations. Delhi section has three stations of New Ashok Nagar, Anand Vihar, and Sarai Kale Khan RRTS station. The work on the rest of the section from New Ashok Nagar to Sarai Kale Khan station is in the final stage of construction and track laying activities are in progress. Once the entire 82 km corridor is completed by the targeted deadline of June 2025, passengers will be able to travel between Delhi and Meerut in less than an hour.

## Man being treated for anxiety jumps from hospital terrace, dies

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Mayor's election and the for-

63-year-old patient died A after allegedly falling from the terrace of a private hospital in Delhi's Dwarka on Friday. According to the police on Saturday, the deceased has been identified as Jai Singh Rawat, who was a patient of Mohan Garden, and had retired around three years ago. The victim, a retired Delhi High Court employee, was being treated for anxiety and stress at the hospital in Mohan Garden area.

Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP) Ankit Singh said, "As per statements, he had been ill since long and was admitted in this hospital multiple times even before. Recently, he was admitted on September 28 complaining difficulty in breathing, fever, etc. and for two to three days, remained in ICU before being shifted to a room, where he was recuperating. His wife as well



was there taking care of him in hospital." The incident, suspected to be a case of suicide. occurred around 8 pm on Friday when the man climbed onto the hospital's terrace on the fourth floor and jumped off. "At around 8:27 pm, he went to terrace on 4th floor and reportedly jumped from it and died," the DCP added.

He was taken to the emergency room, where he was declared dead, the officer said, adding that no suicide note was recovered.Further Singh stated that the CCTV footage is being

reviewed and inquest proceedings are on. "No foul play has been alleged by his family so far," he said. While there were reports of

non-payment of bills as the reason of the suicide, the police has clarified that no such angle has been found. "As per the non-payment of bills is concerned, it's not correct, as the patient being a government servant was covered under Central Government Health Scheme (CGHS) and was being given cashless treatment," Singh

# No Indo-Pak talks during SCO Summit: External Affairs Minister

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE **NEW DELHI** 

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar on Saturday said here he will not hold bilateral talks with Pakistan during his upcoming visit to Islamabad to participate in the Shanghai Co-operation Organisation (SCO) summit in mid-October. India on Friday announced that he will travel to Pakistan to attend the conclave.

"It (visit) will be for a multilateral event. I'm not going there to discuss India-Pakistan relations. I'm going there to be a good member of the SCO," he said at the sidelines of an event in the national capital. "But, you know, since I'm a courteous and civil person, I will behave myself accordingly," he

Jaishankar noted that typically the Prime Minister attends such high-level meetings with heads of state, but "it changes"

'So your question, I think, is, what am I planning for it? Of course, I'm planning to go. In my business, you plan for everything which you're going to do, and for a lot of things which you're not going to do and which could also happen. I mean, you plan for that as well," he said.

Jaishankar made these observations during an interaction with media while attending the Sardar Patel lecture on governance organised by the IC Centre for Governance.

The SCO was founded as a political union of Central Asian nations Russia, China, the Kyrgyz Republic, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan -- to discuss security and economic matters. India and Pakistan became permanent members

Jaishankar said the situation in

of concern," as Israel intensifies its attacks in Lebanon.

The Middle East is not an opportunity. The Middle Est is a cause of great concern and deep worry. The conflict is widening what we saw as a terrorist attack, then the response, then we saw what happened in Gaza. Now you are seeing it in exchange in Lebanon, between Israel and Iran. The Houthis are firing on the Red Sea. This is actually costing us. It's not that somebody is neutral and you benefit," he said.

The External Affairs Minister added, "I would say honestly today, whether it is the conflict in Ukraine or the conflict in the Middle East West Asia, these are big factors of instability, big factors of concern. I think the entire world, including us, is worried about it."

He also took a veiled dig at Pakistan, holding it responsible



for the derailment of the forward, we haven't had a SAARC initiative. "At the meeting of SAARC for a very moment SAARC is not moving simple reason -- there is one

practicing cross-border terrorism at least against one more member of SAARC, maybe

Terrorism is something which is unacceptable and despite a global view of it if one of our neighbours continues to do it there cannot be business as usual in SAARC.

That's the reason why the SAARC meeting has not happened in recent years -- but it doesn't mean that the regional activities have stopped. In fact, in the last 5-6 years, we have seen far more regional integration in the Indian subcontinent," he added. India has all along maintained

that it will not hold bilateral dialogues with Pakistan until the latter stops breeding and fostering cross-border terror-

India on Friday announced that the minister will travel to

the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) in mid-

It will be for the first time in nearly nine years that India's External Affairs Minister will travel to Pakistan even as the ties between the two neighbours remain frosty over crossborder terrorism. Pakistan is hosting the SCO Council of Heads of Government (CHG) meeting on October 15 and 16. The last Indian External Affairs Minister to visit Pakistan was Sushma Swaraj. She had travelled to Islamabad in December 2015 to attend a conference on Afghanistan.

The announcement on Jaishankar's visit was made by external affairs ministry spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal. The External Affairs Minister will lead our delegation to Pakistan to participate in the SCO summit which will be 15 and 16," he said at his weekly media briefing.

Meanwhile, speaking at the event, Jaishankar highlighted Sardar Patel's historical stance against involving the United Nations in disputes, particularly concerning Jammu and Kashmir, arguing that such actions could allow external powers to manipulate the sit-

He noted that Patel believed it was more effective to address issues directly with Pakistan rather than through international frameworks.

He highlighted that, like any other neighbour, India would like to have good relations with Pakistan but not by overlooking cross-border terrorism. Reflecting on Patel's pragmatic approach, he underscored the importance of realism as the foundation of India's foreign policy.

### India to host four-nation Malabar naval exercise

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE **NEW DELHI** 

India will host the four-nation Malabar naval exercise beginning Tuesday. The navies of India, the US, Australia and Japan will carry out a series of complex naval drills during the 'sea phase' of the mega war

game.
"Exercise Malabar 2024 is scheduled to take place from October 8 to 18, beginning with the Harbour Phase in Visakhapatnam, followed by the sea phase," the Indian Navy announced on Saturday.

The Malabar exercise, which began in 1992 as a bilateral naval drill between the US and the Indian Navy, has evolved into a key multilateral event aimed at enhancing interoperability, fostering mutual understanding and addressing shared maritime challenges in the Indian Ocean and Indo-Pacific region.

The exercise will feature the



participation of various Indian naval platforms, including guided missile destroyers, multi-purpose frigates, submarines, fighter aircraft and

"The exercise will focus on a broad range of activities designed to enhance cooperation and operational capabilities, including discussions on special operations, surface, air,

and anti-submarine warfare through a Subject Matter Expert Exchange (SMEE)," the Navy said.

"Complex maritime operations such as anti-submarine warfare, surface warfare, and air defence exercises will be conducted at sea, with an emphasis on improving situational awareness in the maritime domain,"

## DRDO conducts successful VSHORADS flight tests

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE **NEW DELHI** 

Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) successfully conducted three flight-tests of the fourth generation, technically-advanced miniaturised Very Short Range Defence System (VSHORADS) at the Pokhran Field Firing Ranges in Rajasthan on October three and four, defence ministry said here on Saturday. Giving details, officials said the

tests were carried out against high speed target, demonstrating very critical parameters of maximum range and maximum altitude interception. These development trials showcased repeatability of hit-to-kill capability of the weapon system in various target engagement scenarios covering approaching, receding and crossing modes. The development of VSHORADS missiles has been



mode. In these trials, the missiles realised through DcPPs have been successfully used, thus paving the way for early user trials and production in a short time span in line with Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi-led Government's vision of 'Aatmanirbhar Bharat'. VSHORADS is a Man Portable

Air Defence System designed and developed indigenously Research Centre Imarat

(RCI) in collaboration with other DRDO laboratories and DcPPs. The three Services have been associated with the project right from the beginning and participated during the developmental trials.

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh congratulated DRDO, Armed Forces and the Industry involved in the successful development trials. This new missile equipped with modern technologies will give further technological boost to the Armed Forces against aerial

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■

**NEW DELHI** 

group.

tion.

document.

**ICMR** to study **PCOS** 

drugs' impact on fertility

prevalence of pregnancy com-The Indian Council of plications and less favourable Medical Research (ICMR),

The drugs that have been recommended by experts for this purpose are Metformin and Inositol which are used in the treatment of PCOS, a hormonal condition that affects women of reproductive age. It's the most common endocrine

disorder in women in this age formin improved the pregnancy rate, live birth rate and ovu-A senior official from the apex lation rate in the studied pophealth research body of the ulation, the document said. Union Health Ministry said However, a Cochrane review (EOI) have been invited to three other smaller studies undertake a multi-centric ranreported that as compared with domised controlled trial for placebo, metformin may have evaluating the efficacy of only marginal benefit for live Metformin vs Inositol to birth rate outcome. improve fertility and birth out-

ited data available globally on the effectiveness of Inositol for PCOS women, especially for birth outcome and cycle regu-

and to generate evidence on the management of PCOS for improving birth outcomes in the Indian context, the current ICMR call is being proposed,"

# BJP MP Nishikant Dubey accuses Congress of defaming Government

PNS NEW DELHI

Public Accounts Committee member and BJP MP Nishikant Dubey has accused the panel's chairman and Congress member K C Venugopal of raking up nonextent issues to defame the bilise the country's financial structure and economy. Dubey wrote to Lok Sabha

Speaker Om Birla against Venugopal for allegedly misusing his position, bypassing the PAC's remit and working as part of a "tool kit" to damage the economy after reports emerged that the committee summon Chairperson Madhabi Puri Buch, who has faced allegations of professional impropriety from US-based firm Hindenburg Research. He had written to Birla against

Venugopal's "unconstitutional and disdainful" conduct on September 9. Incidentally, the PAC decided on October 4 to call Buch for deposition on



His strongly worded communication is a clear indication that the ruling BJP-led National Democratic Alliance, who are in a majority in the committee, are likely to resist further move by

Venugopal to put the regulator in a spot, signalling that its meetings over the issue will be stormy. Dubey claimed that political motivations were guiding the committee's chairperson after the Congress was "compelled" by voters to sit in

the opposition benches following the Lok Sabha polls. There was no immediate reaction from the senior Congress leader. Dubey said various countries which cannot digest the growth of India, which is on the trajectory of becoming

economy by dubbing important organisations like SEBI as and in clear violation of parcorrupt. Claiming that unverified allegations by a foreign "I request your goodself to ified allegations by a foreign company like Hindenburg restrain Mr K.C. Venugopal such a campaign, he alleged that the "India Chapter' of this toolkit has become active.

"It used its position as is presently being used by K C Venugopal in the capacity of Chairman, Public Accounts Committee, to further defame the Government and damage the financial prospects of our This time also, economy. unverified allegations have been levelled against the SEBI Chief by a foreign entity viz., Hindenburg Research, which is notorious for targeting business houses, important functionaries and financial institutions of the country," Dubey told Birla.

He also accused Venugopal of committing the "unconstitu-

the world's third-biggest econtional and disdainful act of omy, devised a "tool kit" to defame it by attacking its financial structure and the Committee", which is against the constitutional provisions

> aforementioned 'tool kit and misuse his position as Chairman of Public Accounts Committee," Dubey told the Speaker. Citing rules, the BJP MP said the sole function of the Public Accounts Committee is confined to scrutinising the appropriation accounts of the Government of India and reports of the Comptroller and Auditor General of India.

The committee, he alleged, has been made as a "surreptitious tool kit of some countries, inimical to the galloping strides which India has witnessed during the last decade under the exemplary leader-ship" of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Supreme Court dismisses electoral bonds review pleas

### oregnancy outcomes (live births, miscarriage, pregnancy rate) compared with women is mulling to conduct a study to evaluate the efficacy of two Polycystic Ovarian Syndrome without PCOS, it stated. (PĆOS) drugs in improving In contemporary practice, the fertility and birth outcomes use of Metformin and Inositol among women suffering from for the treatment of PCOS is the ovarian condition.

widespread. "However, present evidence on the efficacy of these two drugs

Moreover, PCOS women have

been found to have increased

in terms of improvement in fertility and other related outcomes is insufficient," the ICMR said in a document. A Finnish study suggested that, as compared to placebo, met-

Additionally, there is very lim-

'Evidence on the efficacy of both metformin and inositol in the Indian context is almost non-existent.

To address the knowledge gap the document said.

# Antarctica's greening signals alarming climate change effects

ARCHANA JYOTI ■ NEW DELHI

The coldest, windiest and Antarctica Peninsula, a vast territory belonging to no one nation is witnessing a dramatic greening!

Viewing this trend as a stark warning rather than a hopeful sign, climate change experts have raised alarms. Not without reasons. Vegetation, particularly moss and algae, have surged by more than tenfold over the last four decades from less than one square kilometer in 1986 to nearly 12 square kilometers by

The rapid expansion of plant life highlights the profound impacts of global warming and the potential for cascading effects on the region's ecosystems, said researchers from the universities of Exeter and Hertfordshire, along with the British Antarctic Survey after analysing satellite data to document this phenomenon.

Published in the journal Nature Geoscience, the findings revealed that vegetation cover trend accelerated by over 30 per cent in recent years (2016-2021), adding more than 400,000 square meters annually, as per the study. In a previous study that exam-

ined core samples from mossdominated ecosystems on the Antarctic Peninsula, researchers had found compelling evidence of dramatically increased plant growth rates in recent decades. Building on this base, the new study uses satellite imagery to confirm that a widespread greening trend is not only occurring but also accelerating across the Antarctic Peninsula. "The plants we find on the Antarctic Peninsula mostly

said Dr Thomas Roland, from the University of Exeter. "The landscape is still almost entirely dominated by snow, ice and rock, with only a tiny frac-

mosses grow in perhaps the

harshest conditions on Earth,"

tion colonised by plant life. "But that tiny fraction has rown dramatically showing that even this vast and isolated wilderness' is being affected by anthropogenic climate change. "As these ecosystems become more established and the climate continues to warm it's like-

ly that the extent of greening

will increase.

"Soil in Antarctica is mostly poor or non-existent, but this increase in plant life will add organic matter, and facilitate soil formation potentially paving the way for other plants to grow. "This raises the risk of non-native and invasive species arriving, possibly carried by eco-tourists, scientists or other visitors to the continent," said Dr Olly Bartlett, from the University of Hertfordshire.

The researchers emphasised the urgent need for further research to establish the specific climate and environmental mechanisms that are driving the "greening" trend.

### PTI ■ NEW DELHI The Supreme Court has dismissed a batch of pleas seeking review of its February 15 verdict, which had scrapped

the Modi government's electoral bonds scheme of anonymous political funding. A bench of Chief Justice D Y Chandrachud and Justices Sanjiv Khanna, B R Gavai, J B Pardiwala and Manoj Misra said there is no error apparent

The top court also rejected the prayer for listing the review petitions in an open court. "Having perused the review petitions, there is no error apparent on the face of the record. No case for review under Order XLVII Rule 1 of the Supreme Court Rules 2013. The review petitions are, therefore, dismissed," the bench said in its order dated

on the face of the record.

uploaded today. The review pleas filed by Mathews advocate Nedumpara and others contended that the matter related to the scheme falls in the

September 25 that was



and executive policy. 'The court failed to notice that

even assuming the issue is justiciable, the petitioners therein having not claimed any specific legal injury exclusive to them, their petition could not have been decided as if a private litigation for the enforcement of rights which are specific and exclusive to them," Nedumpara had submitted in his plea.

He had said the court failed to notice that the public opinion could be sharply divided and the majority of the people of this country could probably be in support of the scheme, brought into existence by their elected representatives, and that they too have a right to be heard as much as the peti-

The court failed to notice that, if at all it is venturing into the forbidden domain of adju-

dicating upon a matter of legislative policy, they have a duty to hear the public at large and that the proceedings ought to be converted into representative proceedings," the plea had said. Holding that the 2018 electoral

comes among PCOS women.

PCOS is a complex disorder

ranging from mild to severe

disruptions in reproductive,

endocrine and metabolic func-

tions, with key features includ-

ing irregular menstrual periods

(anovulation), hyperandro-

genism, insulin resistance and

abnormal gonadotropin secre-

The prevalence of infertility in

women with PCOS is high,

varying between 70 and 80 per

cent, the ICMR said in the EoI

bond scheme was "violative" of the constitutional right to freedom of speech and expression and right to information, a five-judge Constitution bench headed by Chief Justice of India Chandrachud had scrapped the scheme. The top court had also direct-

ed the State Bank of India (SBI), the authorised financial institution under the scheme, to submit the details of electoral bonds purchased since April 12, 2019, to the Election Commission, which was asked to publish the information on its official website. Under the electoral bonds scheme, ruling parties can coerce people and entities to contribute, the apex court had said and rejected as 'erroneous" the Centre's argument that it protects the confidentiality of the contributor which is akin to the system of

secret ballot. The electoral bonds scheme,

which was notified by the government on January 2, 2018, was pitched as an alternative to cash donations made to political parties as part of efforts to bring transparency in political funding. On March 13, the SBI told the

Supreme Court that a total of 22,217 electoral bonds were purchased and 22,030 redeemed by political parties between April 1, 2019 and February 15 this year. In a compliance affidavit filed

in the apex court, the SBI said as per the court's direction, it has made available the details of electoral bonds to the Election Commission of India before the close of business hours on March 12. The electoral bond controver-

sy had become a major poll issue during the Lok Sabha elections as the opposition alleged it was an "extortion racket", while the ruling BJP defended the scheme, saying it had a laudable objective of bringing transparency in poll

# Congress is being run by gang of urban Naxals: PM Modi

WASHIM (MAHARASHTRA)

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday alleged that the Congress is being run by a "gang of urban Naxals", and asked people to unite to defeat the "dangerous agenda" of that party. He also accused the Congress of looting the poor and not improving their condition for its selfish

pointes.
"They (Congress) think that if we all unite, then their agenda to divide the country will fail," Modi said, addressing a rally in Washim district of Maharashtra after launching various projects. "Congress only knows how to loot the poor and keep them poor for its selfish politics. It only knows how to divide people. We have to be alert and remain united. Congress is run by a gang of urban Naxals," he alleged. Everyone can see how

Everyone can see how closely Congress stands with those people who do not harbour good intentions for India, Modi said. "Drugs worth thousands of crores of rupees were seized in Delhi recently. A Congress leader is suspected to be the kingpin. Congress wants to contest elections from the money it gets by pushing the youth towards drugs," he

said.
The Indian Youth Congress had said on October 3 that Tushar Goel, the suspected



kingpin, was expelled from the organisation on October 17, 2022, for anti-party activities, soon after BJP spokesperson and MP Sudhanshu Trivedi charged the opposition party with having links with the drug

sunday pioneer

Modi alleged that Congress' thinking has been foreign from the very beginning. "Like the British rule, this Congress family also does Dalits, consider backward and tribals as their equals. They feel that India should be ruled by only one family. That is why they have always maintained derogatory attitude towards the Banjara community," he

"Saints from the Banjara community inspired culture and spiritualism. Britishers harassed the community, but

when they left, successive Congress governments continued the trend and prevented the community from coming into the the mainstream,"

alleged. The PM also accused the Congress of leaving no stone unturned to make the lives of farmers miserable.

The governments run by the Congress used the money meant for farmers and irrigation schemes for modi asked people to beware of the Congress propaganda of false assurance of farm loan waiver

"People in Telangana are still waiting for the loan waiver. In Karnataka, the Congress government stopped the irrigation schemes started by the BJP regime," he said.

the capacity to lead the country to economic progress, Modi said the state government was giving double benefit to farmers in terms of financial assistance, in addition to what the central government was

providing.
When the Maha Vikas
Aghadi (MVA) government
was in power, it put a speed
breaker in the work of the Poharadevi pilgrimage centre upgradation, which was started during the chief ministership of Devendra Fadnavis. But it has now hear completed at a cost of been completed at a cost of Rs 700 crore, he said.

As long as MVA was in power in Maharashtra, it worked with only two agendas - to stop the projects related to farmers and to commit corruption in the money of these projects. The funds sent by the Centre The funds sent by the Centre were being diverted away from the beneficiaries by government, claimed.

The prime minister, who launched various initiatives of Rs 23,3000 crore related to agriculture and animal husbandry sectors, expressed happiness over the completion of the Banjara Virasat Museum Poharadevi.

would museum introduce future generations to the ancient culture and vast heritage of the Banjara community, he said.

## Removing 50 per cent cap on resrvation necessary to protect Constitution: Rahul Gandhi

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE KOLHAPUR (MAHARASHTRA)

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Saturday said removing the existing 50 per cent cap on reservation is necessary to protect the Constitution, and asserted that the INDIA bloc will that the INDIA bloc will ensure the passage of laws to this effect in Parliament.

The Leader of the Opposition in Lok Sabha also attacked the BJP-led government, saying there was no use of bowing before Shivaji Maharaj after "scaring people, destroying the Constitution and institutions in the country". Holding a copy of the Constitution during an address in Kolhapur, Gandhi called it a symbol of Shivaji's ideas.

This is Rahul Gandhi's second visit to western Maharashtra in a month. He visited Sangli last month to unveil the statue of late Congress leader Patangrao Kadam. His party wrested the Kolhapur and Sangli Lok Sabha seats from Shiv Sena and BJP, respectively after

losing them in 2014 and 2019. Speaking at the 'Samvidhan

Samman Sammelan' here,

Gandhi said the Congress and the INDIA bloc, a coalition of over two dozen opposition parties, will also bring out laws to enable a caste-based census.

'We will ensure in Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha that the 50 per cent cap on reservation is removed and no power can stop it. Removing this 50 per cent limit is necessary to protect the Constitution," he said. Rahul said when his party talks of caste census, it wants to add two more aspects to it: to identify the population of each community and how much control they have over India's financial system. The caste-based census will

help gather data on the population of various communities. He said the doors of opportunities are being closed on 90 per cent of the country's population. Ninety top IAS officers decide India's budget but only three belong to the Other Backward Class (OBC) communities, which form at least 50 per cent of the country's population. Dalits and Adivasis (tribals) comprise 15 per cent and eight per cent, respectively, communities. He said the

eight per cent, respectively, of India's population but have only three and one such officer, according to the Congress leader. He said the caste census is

like getting an X-ray done to identify anomalies but the BJP and the RSS are opposed to it as they don't want the "truth" to come out.

The history of Dalits or OBCs was not being taught in schools, he said, alleging that efforts are now being made to erase that history.
The Congress leader said the public sector is being privatised, and stressed that it should be termed dereservation. He accused the PSS and BID of doing this for

RSS and BJP of doing this for years. He called the Agniveer scheme – for short-term induction of personnel in the Army, Navy and Air Force a ploy to snatch pension from 90 per cent of people. Earlier, speaking at an event, where Rahul unveiled a statue of Shivaji, Gandhi alleged that the warrior king's statue collapsed in the state's Sindhudurg district as

wrong. He said the intentions are visible and cannot be hidden. "They built Shivaji Maharaj's statue and in a few days, it collapsed.

the intentions and ideology of those in power were wrong. He said the

Their intentions were not right. The statue gave them the message that if you built Shivaji Maharaj's statue then you have to follow his ideals. Which is why the statue collapsed because their ideology is wrong," he said.

# Setting up Justice K Hema Committee unconstitutional: Kerala HC Lawyer

The setting up of the Justice Ke Hema Committee by the Kerala Government to study the sexual harassment faced by women artists in Malayalam film industry was an unconstitutional act, according to a highly respected lawyer in Kerala High Court.

Ramkumar,

advocate, who has fought many landmark cases including the infamous P Rajan case that shook 177 nation during the 1975-77 internal emergency days questioned the propriety of setting up a committee at the cost of the public exchequer. He also disclosed that the Government of Kerala cannot the committee's report as cinematography law was an exclusive domain of the Centre as per the 7th schedule of Indian Constitution.

sufficient "There are provisions in our judicial system to undertake investigation into sexual harassment faced by women in all sections of the society including the filmdom. The Kerala Government has spent Rs 1.55 crore on the three-member Hema Committee that probed the sexual harassment faced by female artists. It was sheer waste of time and money," the veteran lawyer told The Pioneer in an exclusive interview.

He pointed out that the Kerala Government had set up a committee under the chairmanship of Adoor Gopalakrishnan,



maker who had been honored with Dada Saheb Phalke Award for his lifelong contribution to the world of Though Gopalakrishnan

submitted his findings with ing has happened." said Ramkumar. He said the Indian Parliament itself had passed two legislations, the Vishaka

Guidelines in 1997 following a Supreme Court directive against sexual harassment at workplaces and the Sexual Harassment of Women at (Prevention, Workplace Prohibition and Redressal) Act 2013. Both these guideline and statute have sufficient powers to take on the aggressors and predators who torment women, said

Ramkumar. Kerala Government would have to answer an important question which the court is certain to ask. "The constitution of the Justice Hema Committee itself was Centre is the lone authority to enact legislation against

sexual harassment of women at workplaces, The seventh schedule of the Constitution that has enumerated the powers of the Parliament and State Legislatures under Lists 1 and 2 have made it clear that recommendations to the the Centre is the sole authority to enact laws under cinematograph films while the State is left with the responsibility of collecting entertainment tax accrued through exhibition of films," said Ramkumar.

The Hema Committee report submitted to the Government in 2020 was kept as a State Secret for four years and it was released by the State under orders from High Court in September. The report opened a floodgate of scandals and spicy reports titled Me Too and has put many leading stars on the defensive. Film actor Mukesh, who is also a CPI(M) MLA, Siddique, film actor with Congress connections, Maniyan Pillai Raju, Idavela Babu, Baburaj and Jayasoorya an act of transgression as the are running helter-skelter as a consequence of the findings

# USD 55 million needed to implement WHO strategic preparedness, response plan

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

A whopping USD 55 million will be needed to implement the World Health Organization Strategic Preparedness, Readiness, and Response Plan (SPRP) over next one year to combat the rising threat of dengue and other Aedes-borne arboviruses, now affecting at least 130 countries.

This plan aims to reduce the burden of disease, suffering, and deaths associated with these viruses, including Zika chikungunya, fostering a coordinated

global response. Currently, an estimated four billion people are at risk of projected to rise to five billion by 2050. Dengue cases have surged across all six WHO regions, with the number of reported cases nearly doubling each year since 2021. As of the end of August this year, there have been over 12.3 million dengue cases—almost double the 6.5 million cases recorded for all of 2023, as per the WHO statement.

The plan outlines priority actions to transmission and offers recommendations affected countries across various sectors, including disease surveillance, laboratory activities, vector control, community

management, and research

and development, through a

determination to build on

clinical

engagement,

whole-of-society



particularly in ast Asia, the South-East Asia, the change on disease patterns, Western Pacific, and the particularly for dengue and Americas. The situation is also critical in Africa, where She expressed concern that health challenges amid conflict and natural disasters, straining already fragile health systems. In December 2023, the

WHO classified the current global dengue upsurge as a grade 3 emergency—the highest level of alert. Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, Director-General, stated, "From maintaining clean environments to supporting vector control and seeking medical timely everyone has a role to play in the fight against dengue. This plan is a roadmap to turn the tide against this disease, protect vulnerable populations, and pave the way for a healthier future." Welcoming the WHO's GSRP plan, scientist Dr. Kavita Singh, the South Asia

Neglected Diseases Initiative (DNDi), emphasised the profound impact of climate other vector-borne illnesses. of these incidence diseases is rising globally, with new countries increasingly becoming hosts to these pathogens, which were once confined to specific regions. This shift is straining health systems, which are often ill-equipped to handle the surge in cases. Dr. Singh underscored the urgent need for coordinated global efforts to address not only the immediate threats posed by these diseases but also the underlying factors that facilitate their spread, including the escalating effects of climate change. Key factors driving the rapid spread of dengue include unplanned urbanization, inadequate water, sanitation, and hygiene practices, climate change, increased international travel, said

## Lt General Srivastava assumes charge of Srinagar based Chinar Corps



PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

General Lieutenant Prashant Srivastava Saturday assumed command of the strategic Srinagar-

Lt Gen Srivastava took charge from Lt Gen Rajiv Ghai, who command as the director of general operations at the Army headquarters, a defence spokesperson said.

assumption command, Lt-Gen Srivastava paid obeisance at the Chinar War Memorial at Badami Bagh Cantonment, Srinagar, honoring the sacrifices of the Bravehearts for the Nation. A battle-hardened soldier,

Lieutenant General Prashant Srivastava extensive experience in Counter Insurgency and Counter terrorist Óperations having served in both Jammu and Kashmir as well as the North

Ramachandran, Malayalam

radio's icon breaths his last

the Counter Insurgency Force (Victor) in South

assumed military

possesses operational East. He has commanded

Kashmir. Meanwhile, Lt Gen Rajiv Ghai remained at the helm for the last 16 months. The period witnessed a strong

facilitating peace stability in the region. It saw the conduct of two incidentfree Amarnath Yatras, the Parliamentary Elections in May 2024 and the Assembly Elections after a period of 10 years, in September to October 2024. The Corps achieved in Counter successes Infiltration Operations on the Line of Control and in Counter Operations in the valley, thereby dealing a significant

terror network The new Chinar Corps commander said that integrated efforts of the civil society and the security forces are the way forward to dismantle the infrastructure and nefarious designs of the adversary.

and crippling blow to the

# Verbal spat intensifies before UP by-elections

of the Hema Committee.

BISWAJEET BANERJEE ■ LUCKNOW

As the by-elections for 10 approach, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath and former Chief Minister Akhilesh Yadav have intensified their verbal attacks, signaling an escalating political showdown. Phrases like "kutte ki puchh (dog's tail)," "mafia," and "naak ragadna (rubbing nose)" surfaced in this exchange, marking a sharp rise in political rhetoric between the two leaders.

Yogi Adityanath, known for his aggressive campaigning style, has focused his attacks on the Samajwadi Party (SP) and its governance record. Meanwhile, Akhilesh Yadav, leveraging social media platforms like 'X' (formerly has calculated yet increasingly sharp jabs at Yogi's leadership. While Yogi



agenda and critiques the lawand-order situation under SP's rule, Akhilesh portrays the BJP Government as authoritarian, often accusing it of using police power to

stifle dissent. Akhilesh Yadav, traditionally more cautious in his attacks, has shifted to a more confrontational approach following SP's success in the 2024 Lok Sabha elections. SP secured 37 out of 80 seats in Uttar Pradesh, a significant stance reflects the party's

dropped to 33 from 62. This victory has emboldened Akhilesh, fueling his direct confrontations with Yogi Adityanath. The political landscape in

Uttar Pradesh saw a dramatic shift with these results. SP's resurgence, after years of electoral setbacks, has positioned Akhilesh as a formidable challenger for the

this momentum. Analysts predict that the verbal sparring between Yogi and Akhilesh will intensify as the 2027 assembly elections approach. Akhilesh has been rallying support through his PDA formula, aiming to consolidate Backward Classes, Dalits, and minorities into a solid voter base. Meanwhile, the BJP continues to rely on its core issues of Hindutva and nationalism, positioning Yogi as the state's face of this narrative. This is not the first time the

two leaders have clashed. During the 2022 UP assembly elections, their exchanges were rife with one-liners. Yogi had labelled ideology nation of as a "Chola combination Samajwadi" "Tamanchawadi' (gunculture politics), while

Akhilesh responded with his

sarcasm,

trademark

ridiculing Yogi's governance With the upcoming by-elections being a matter of prestige for Yogi Adityanath, the stakes are high. Following the BJP's loss of ground in the Lok Sabha elections, winning these byelections is seen as crucial for Yogi's political standing. His aggressive rhetoric mirrors his campaign style during the national elections, where he positioned SP as the main Opposition to the BJP's governance model. On the other hand, Akhilesh Yadav's growing confidence is evident in his strategies to consolidate voter support, particularly as his party eyes a larger contest in 2027.

Political analyst Manoj Bhadra notes that this kind

power but also control over

the narrative that will appeal

MR a m a c h a n d r a n , renowned news anchorperson of All India Radio is no more. He passed away at his house in Thiruvananthapuram Saturday. Ramachandran (91) was rated as the Melville de Mellow and Surajit Sen of Malayalam radio broadcasting for his diction, articulation, pronunciation and modulation

while presenting news bulletins. De Mellow and Surjit Sen were pioneers of Radio broadcasting in the country.
During the 1960s to 1990s Ramachandran was the Malayalees' window to the outside world. "Let it be of intense, personal verbal exchange is relatively new in UP's political landscape, regional, national international news, signaling not just a fight for Ramachandran had a distinct

style of presentation and this

made listeners drawn towards

his news reading," said former

**KEMAR CHELLAPPAN** ■ KOCHI

colleague, broadcaster and literary critic Dr M Rajeev Kumar. Dr Kumar said that his knowledge of Malayalam language and how to use

words, sentences and phrases in its correct perspective made him quite different from other broadcasters. Ramachandran was the brain behind Kouthuka Varthakal, a bulletin featuring persons, places and events of cultural and historical importance. "His radio news reels based on the day's important events

were a treat to the ears and

mind," reminiscences Dr Rajeev Kumar. When there were no round-the-clock TV news channels, Ramachandran and his team of broadcasters offered the listeners a birds eye view of the happenings in the world. "The election news bulletins presented by Ramachandran were held in high esteem by political leaders across the spectrum. His news bulletins were as popular as the Malayalam film songs time fan of Ramachandran.

broadcast by the stations of AIR," said M K Harikumar, Malayalam writer and a long-There were many Malayalam films in which Ramachandran's news reading was mimicked by lead stars marking his stature as an iconic figure. Ramachandran is survived by his Vijayalakshmi and children.

# **UK evacuates British nationals from Lebanon as conflict escalates**

ınday pioneer

The UK government on Saturday confirmed its final charter plane to fly British nationals out of Lebanon as the conflict between Hezbollah and Israel intensifies and tensions in the region escalate.

British Prime Minister Kein Starmer once again urged British nationals still in the country to come forward to be evacuated.

"To everybody listening who may be in that position: now is the time to leave, we have got the plans in place. So please come forward and we can make sure that they are evacuated," Starmer told reporters during a visit to Cheshire on

The Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) said after a chartered flight leaves Beirut on Sunday, there are no more scheduled flights due to a decrease in demand. However, the situation will be kept under constant review as the UK urged all remaining British nationals who want to leave Lebanon to register with the government immediately.

"The situation in Lebanon remains volatile, so I am glad that we have helped the many people who have heeded our advice to leave the country immediately," said UK Foreign Secretary David Lammy. "With demand falling and the



South Korean nationals and their family members arrive after being evacuated from Lebanon with a South Korea's military aircraft at the Seoul airport in Seongnam, South Korea, on Saturday

security situation deteriorating, there is no guarantee other options to leave quickly will become available. I urge anyone who wants to leave to register now," Lammy said.

The UK has been advising its nationals to leave Lebanon amid a deteriorating security situation: three chartered flights have left Beirut and more than 250 additional people have been able to leave the country in the last week. British nationals and their

spouse or partner, and chil- Beirut and the wider region to

dren under the age of 18 are eligible for Sunday's flight, with dependents who are not British nationals requiring a valid visa. Sunday's flight will depart from Beirut-Rafic Hariri International Airport, and British nationals who have registered their presence with the government will be sent details on how to request a

The FCDO said government officials have been working round the clock in London,

provide support to British nationals. An FCDO Rapid Deployment Team has also arrived in Lebanon to bolster the support offered by British Embassy officials.
The UK reiterated its call for

a ceasefire between Lebanese Hezbollah and Israel to provide the space necessary to find a political solution that enables civilians on both sides to return to their homes in safety amid air strikes and ground incursions as the con-

# Biden: Don't know if Israel is holding up peace deal to sway US elections

President Joe Biden had terse words for Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on Friday, and said he did not know whether the Israeli leader was holding up a Mideast peace deal in order to influence the outcome of the 2024 US presidential election.

No administration has helped Israel more than I have, none. None, none. And I think Bibi should remember that," he said, referring to the Israeli leader by his nickname. "And whether he is trying to influence the election, I do not know but I am not counting on

Biden, in a rare appearance in the White House press briefing room, was responding to comments made by one of his allies, Senator Chris Murphy, D-Conn., who told CNN this week that he was concerned Netanyahu had little interest in a peace deal in part because of US politics.

"I do not think you have to be a hopeless cynic to read some of Israel's actions, some of Prime Minister Netanyahu's actions, as connected to the American election," Murphy

Biden and Netanyahu have long managed a complicated relationship, but they are running out of space to manoeu-

vre as their views on the Gaza war diverge and their political futures hang in the balance.

For Biden, a diplomatic deal would help resolve a deep divide among Democrats over the war and shore up support for Vice President Kamala Harris, making one fewer global conflict for her to manage should she win next month. Netanyahu has his own political concerns closer to home: His far-right coalition would abandon him if he stopped the war, and he could lose power and have to face his own legal problems. And Israel has been decimating Hezbollah's leadership, so there is little incentive to stop now.

Biden has long pushed for a diplomatic deal, and he and his aides have indicated several times over the past few months that such an agreement was close. But it never seems to materialise, and in some cases, Netanyahu has publicly resisted the prospect while US and Israeli officials continue to talk in private about eking out a

Just last week, the US, France and other allies jointly called for an immediate 21-day Israel-Hezbollah cease-fire, and expected Israel to welcome if not fully endorse the plan. Instead, Netanyahu publicly rejected it, telling leaders gathered for the UN General

"I am assuming when they

Assembly that Israel would "continue degrading Hezbollah until all our objectives are

Israel has pressed forward on two fronts, killing top Hezbollah leaders and pursuing a ground incursion into Lebanon and conducting strikes in Gaza that killed dozens, including children. And the nation has vowed to retaliate for Iran's ballistic missile attack this week.

Oil prices rose 5 per cent on Thursday as concerns mounted that Israel would hit Iranian oil facilities as payback; a surge in gas prices so close to the election would be a blow to Harris, particularly after strong economic news on Friday. Biden said there had been no

decision yet on what type of response there would be toward Iran, though "I think if I were in their shoes, I would be thinking about other alternatives than striking oil fields." He pushed back against the idea that he was seeking a meeting with Netanyahu to discuss the response to Iran. He is not, he said.

make a decision on how they are going to respond, we will then have a discussion," he said. But Netanyahu has grown increasingly resistant to Biden's public charm offensives and private pleading, prompting the president's more assertive pushback. And Biden has in turn publicly held up delivery of heavy bombs to Israel and increasingly voiced concerns over an all-out war in the Middle East.

Despite their long acquaintanceship, the two are not close or particularly friendly. When Biden was visiting Israel as vice president under Barack Obama, he and other US officials were taken aback by an Israeli government announcement of new Jewish settlements in the West Bank, something the administration strongly opposed.

Nevertheless, Biden has remained consistent in his support for Israel's defence and

# European cities brace for pro-Palestinian rallies Army deployed in

Hundreds of thousands of pro-Palestinian demonstrators were expected to take to the streets across Europe on Saturday calling for a cease-fire as the first anniversary of the Hamas attacks on Israel approached. Security forces in several countries warned of heightened levels of alert in major cities, amid concerns that the escalating conflict in the Middle East could inspire new terror attacks in Europe or that some of the protests could turn violent.

Massive rallies are planned in several European cities, including London, Berlin, Paris and Rome through next week, with the largest gatherings expected from Saturday to Monday.

fighter plane on Saturday

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the date of the anniversary. By midday Saturday, thousands had gathered in central London's Russell Square amid a significant police presence. Some of the march's organizers had said they planned to target companies and institutions they claimed were "complicit in Israel's crimes," including Barclays Bank and the British

Protests are also taking place in other parts of the world. In the Philippines on Saturday, dozens of left-wing activists protested near the US Embassy in Manila, where police prevented them from getting closer to the seaside compound. On October 7 last year, Hamas

launched a surprise attack into In late September, Israel shift-Israel, killing 1,200 Israelis, ed some of its focus to citing public security con-

taking 250 people hostage and setting off a war with Israel that has shattered much of the Hamas-controlled Gaza Strip. More than 41,000 Palestinians have been killed since then in Gaza, according to the Gaza Health Ministry, which does not differentiate between fighters and civilians. It says more than half were women and chil-

> Nearly 100 Israeli hostages remain in Gaza, with fewer than 70 believed to be alive. Israelis have experienced attacks — missiles from Iran and Hezbollah, explosive drones from Yemen, fatal shootings and stabbings — as the region braces for further escalation.

> In late September, Israel shift-

Hezbollah, which holds much of the power in parts of southern Lebanon and some other areas of the country, attacking the militants with exploding pagers, airstrikes and, eventually, incursions into Lebanon. Pro-Palestinian protests calling for an immediate ceasefire have repeatedly taken place across Europe and around the globe in the past year and have often turned violent, with confrontations between demonstrators and

law enforcement officers. In Rome, a rally was planned for Saturday afternoon with about 30,000 demonstrators expected — in spite of a ban by local police chiefs who refused to authorize protests in the Italian capital,

Italian authorities believed that the timing of the planned rally risked the October 7 attack being "glorified," local media reported. Interior Minister Matteo

Piantedosi also stressed that, ahead of the key anniversary, Europe is on high alert for potential terror attacks. "This is not a normal situation ... We are already in a condition of maximum prevention," he

A large crowd was also expected to gather in central London on Saturday afternoon. Ben Jamal, director of the Palestine Solidarity Campaign in Britain, said he and others will keep organizing marches until action against Israel is taken. "We need to be out on the was high.

streets in even bigger numbers to stop this carnage and stop Britain being drawn into it," Jamal said.

In Berlin, a march is scheduled from the Brandenburg Gate to Bebelplatz on Sunday. Local media reported that security forces have warned of potential overload due to the scale of protests. German authorities pointed to

increasing antisemitic and violent incidents in recent

France was also on alert for new protests on Saturday. Earlier this week, Interior minister Bruno Retailleau warned the country's regional prefects, expressing concern about possible tensions and saying that the terrorist threat

# Islamabad, Lahore amid PTI protests

PTI ■ ISLAMABAD/LAHORE

Pakistan authorities on Saturday called in the Army in Islamabad and Lahore to prevent rallies by supporters of jailed former Prime Minister Imran Khan, amid rising ten-

The call for protest was given by the Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf (PTI) party founder who has incarcerated Rawalpindi's Adiala Jail for more than a year.

The PTI is protesting for the release of Khan, to express solidarity with the judiciary, and against inflation.

Pakistan Army troops were deployed in Islamabad to ers moved forward with plans for a protest. The army would remain in the city from October 5-17 to maintain law and order for the upcoming Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) summit. Pakistan is hosting the SCO summit on October 15-16.

The deployment came as PTI supporters led by Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur were moving ahead to reach the D-Chowk in the national capital to hold the protest. However, the convoy led by Gandapur faced intense police action as it approached Rawalpindi.

The police resorted to heavy tear gas shelling to disperse the protesters. The 72-year-old former crick-

eter-turned-politician Khan refused to postpone the protest despite calls by the government. According to the Dawn newspaper, Gandapur reached Islamabad on Saturday afternoon and was staying at the KP House. Heavy contingent of police and Rangers have entered the KP House to arrest Gandapur, it said. The authorities are taking strict

measures to stop PTI supporters from entering Islamabad or making it to the D-Chowk. All highways leading to the city

WITH ASSOCIATED WORK

E-Tender Notice No. 06 of 2024-

25. E-Tenders are invited by the

undersigned for the following works E-Tender No. N-2024-25-06-Dy

CSTE-NW. Name of work: OFC and

PIJF cabling along with associated

work at Maligaon Head Quarter area

in connection with provision of Server

Based IP EPABX system. Tender

Value: ₹30,90,292.48/-. Earnest

Money: ₹61,800/-. Date & time of

closing of tender: 15.00 hrs. of 25-

10-2024 & opening at 15.30 hrs.of

25-10-2024. The complete information

with the tender document of above

e-tender will be available in website

Sr. Signal & Telecom Engineer

NORTHEAST FRONTIER RAILWAY

Network, Maligaoi

www.ireps.gov.in

have been blocked and pillion riding has been banned, while mobile phone services remained suspended for the second consecutive day.

The authorities also imposed Section 144, banning public gatherings, political assemblies, and demonstrations in the twin cities of Rawalpindi and Islamabad to outlaw any political assembly or protest The Metro bus services linking the twin cities were also sus

nended. Police and paramilitary Rangers were also deployed to stop the protestors.

Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi on Friday warned, "Nobody will be allowed to disrupt law directing the authorities to deal with the "miscreants" with iron hands.

Meanwhile, the authorities on Saturday cut off Lahore from the rest of the country to stop PTI supporters from holding a rally at the historic Minar-i-

Pakistan. The PML-N government called in the Pakistan Army to maintain the law and order situation in Punjab province, especially in its capital Lahore. All roads leading to the ruling Sharif family's Jati Umra Raiwind Lahore residence were also

blocked. Hundreds of containers have been placed in different parts of the city and also at all entry and exit points.

A curfew-like situation is created around Minar-e-Pakistan, which is also closed for any general public entry for an indefinite period. A heavy contingent of police has also been deployed there. The government has also suspended cell phone and internet services in different parts of Lahore.

The PTI has called Saturday's protest a "do or die" situation. PTI Punjab acting president Hammad Azhar said people of Lahore will come out in droves and reject the government's "fascism".

He said the party also plans to celebrate Khan's birthday on Saturday and pass a resolution for "Haqeeqi Āzadi" (real freedom) at the Minar-i-Pakistan ground.

PUBLIC NOTICE Mr. Manohar Singh Gusain, Bhopal Singh, R/o H. No. 100-D Pocket-A, Mayur Vihar Ph-2 Delhi, has been missing since 29.05.2015. A civil suit for his death declaration has been filed by his sons, Ravindra Singh Sushil Gusain, and Sunil Gusain. The NDOH is on 28.10.2024 in the court of Sh. Fahad Uddin, Ld. Sr Civil Judge, Karkardooma Court

Avanish Mishra (Advocate) Ch. no. 79, Patiala House Courts, New Delhi

Ukraine downs Russian warplane Photos showed charred

gains in Ukraine's east. Ukrainian forces said they shot down a Russian

The Russian bomber was shot down near the city of Serhiy Kostiantynivka in

Public Notice

the

the Military

Horbunov quoted as saying by Ukraine's

Kostiantynivka Administration

WORKS IN KATIHAR DIVISION Tender Notice No.: N-2024-K-19, Date indersigned for the following work; Tender emodelling of Forbesganj station in

### SIGNAL & TELECOM

04-10-2024, E-Tender are invited by the No.: N-2024-K-19: Name of Work Signal and Telecom work for yard connection with bridge connectivity owards Narpatgani end. Tender Value ₹1,21,48,153.89/-; Earnest Money ₹2,10,800/-; Date & time of closing of ender at 15:00 hrs on 28-10-2024 For complete information with the tender locument of above e-tender will be available up to 15:00 hrs. on 28-10-2024 in the website http://www.ireps.gov.in

NORTHEAST FRONTIER RAILWAY

DRM (S&T), Katihar

Public Notice

This is to inform the general public that Mr. Shakil Almand Tamaman is the GPA Holder of Filat no. 302, Front to Back Side, second floor without Roof Right, Property Bearing no. RZ-9018, area measuring 125 Sq. Yds, out of Khasra no. 450, situated at Gulshan Apartments, Gali no. 24, Tughlakabad Extn., Delhi 110019, He is in possession through Notarized GPA, ATS & Will dated 23.01.2007 executed by Mrs. Kataria Builtech Pvt. Ltd. in favour of Mr. Shakil Ahmad Tamanna intends to transfer the ownership by way of Sale Deed of aforementioned Filat to Mrs. Heena. Subsequently, Mrs. Heena is in the process of mortgaging the said property with SMFG India Home Finance Co. Ltd., Any objections of concerns regarding this transaction should be raised within a pend of 7 days from the date of this public notice. Any objections suffered within a pend of 7 days from the cate of this public notice. Any objections suffered within a pend of 7 days from the date of this public notice. Any objections suffered within a pend of 7 days from the date of this public notice. Any objections suffered within a pend of 7 days from the cate of this public notice. Any objections suffered within a pend of 7 days period will not be considered binding with respect to the said property or the interests of our client. If anyone wishes to raise an objection, please do so within the stipulated 7-day period by contacting Law Veritas: North (Advocates & Legal Consultants) at Office N. 11, 1st Floor, Building No. A-441A, Sector-16, Nolda, Uttar Pradesh-201301; Landline(s): +910120-3101633; e-mail: accounts@/north.in

**Franch Office:** ICICI Bank Limited, 3rd Floor Shal Tower, New Rohtak Road, Karol bagh. Delhi-110005 PUBLIC NOTICE-TENDER CUM E-AUCTION FOR SALE OF SECURED ASSET

[See proviso to Rule 8(6)]
Notice for sale of immovable asset(s) E-Auction Sale Notice for the sale of immovable asset(s) under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financia Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with proviso to Rule 8 (6) of the Security Interes

(Enforcement) Rules, 2002. This notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower(s) and Guarantor(s) that the below described immovable property mortgaged/ charged to the Secured Creditor, the physical possession of which has been taken by the Authorised Officer of ICICI Bank Limited will be sold on 'As is where is', 'As is what is' and 'Whatever there is' as per the brief particulars given hereunder;

Sr. No.	Name of Borrower(s)/ Co-Borrowers/ Guarantors/ Loan Account No.	Details of the Secured asset(s) with known encumbrances, if any	Amount Outstanding	Reserve Price Earnest Money Deposit	Date and Time of Property Inspection	Date & Time of E-Auction
(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)	(F)	(G)
	Jubair- (Borrower), Anisa (Co-Borrower) Lan No. LBGUR00005769003.	Apartment No. 12, 3rd Floor (Apartment No. 312, Block- FII) Block F-II Sothend Apartment, Charmwood Village Surajkund Road, Village Lakkarpur Faridabad- 121001. Admeasuring Area:827 Sq. Ft.	Rs. 47,29,154/- as on September 30, 2024	Rs. 40,00,000/- Rs. 4,00,000/-	October 16, 2024 From 12:00 Noon to 02:00 PM	

M/s NexXen Solutions Private Limited. The Mortgagors/ Noticees are given a last chance to pay the total dues with further interest by October 28, 2024 before 05:00 PM else the secured asset(s) will be sold as per schedule. The prospective bidder(s) must submit the Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) Demand Draft (DD) (Refer Column E) at ICICI Bank Limited, 3rd Floor Shal Tower, New Rohtak Road, Karol Bagh. Delhi-110005 on or before October 28,  $2024\,before\,05:00\,PM\,The reafter, they have to submit their offer through {\color{black} {}^{\phantom{\dagger}}} the website mentioned above on or before through {\color{black} {}^{\phantom{\dagger}}} the action {\color{black} {}^{\phantom{\dagger}}} the action {\color{black} {}^{\phantom{\dagger}}} the {\color{black} {$ October 28, 2024 before 05:00 PM along with the scanned image of the Bank acknowledged DD towards proof of payment of EMD. In case the prospective bidder(s) is/ are unable to submit his/ her/ their offer through the website then the signed copy of tender documents may be submitted at ICICI Bank Limited, 3rd Floor Shal Tower, New

Rohtak Road, Karol Bagh. Delhi-110005 on or before October 28, 2024 before 05:00 PM. Earnest Money Deposit DD/PO should be from a Nationalised/Scheduled Bank in favour of 'ICICI Bank Limited' payable at Delhi

For any further clarifications in terms of inspection, Terms and Conditions of the E-Auction or submission of tenders, contact ICICI Bank Employee Phone No. 8657476284/8584874809 Please note that the Marketing agencies 1. M/s NexXen Solutions Private Limited 2. Augeo Asset Management Pvt Ltd 3. Hecta Proptech Pvt. Ltd. have also been engaged for facilitating the sale of this property. The Authorised Officer reserves the right to reject any or all the bids without furnishing any further reasons For detailed Terms and Conditions of the sale, please visit www.icicibank.com/n4p4s

Date : October 05, 2024 Place: Delhi, Faridabad Authorized Officer ICICI Bank Limited

remains of an aircraft after it landed on a house that caught

Also in the partially occupied Donetsk province, Russia's Defence Ministry claimed on Saturday that it had taken control of the village of Zhelanne Druhe.

If confirmed, the capture would come three days after Ukrainian forces said they were withdrawing from the front-line town of Vuhledar, some 33 kilometers (21 miles) Zhelanne from Druhe, following a hard-fought twovear defense.

. Although unlikely to change the course of the war, the loss of Vuhledar is indicative of Kyiv's worsening position, in part the result of Washington's refusal to grant Ukraine permission to strike targets deep inside Russian territory and preventing Kyiv from degrading Moscow's capabilities

# 6 Pak soldiers, ultras killed in gunfight

PTI PESHAWAR

Six soldiers, including an offi-cer, and as many terrorists were killed in a gunfight in Pakistan's restive Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, the military said on Saturday.

media wing Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) said the exchange of fire took place on the night between October 4-5 at Spinwam area in North Waziristan district, bordering Afghanistan, during which six soldiers, including a Lieutenant Colonel, and "six Khwarij" were killed. During the "intense fire exchange", 43-year-old Lieutenant Colonel Muhammad Ali Shoukat, who was leading the operation against the terrorists, was killed along with five other soldiers, the statement said. Meanwhile, the banned Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) has claimed responsibility for the attack.

The TTP was set up as an umbrella group of several militant outfits in 2007. Pakistan has officially declared TTP as 'Fitna al-Khawarij' and the notification by the Interior Ministry emphasises the use of the term 'kĥari-In a statement, the military's ji' (outlawed) along with the

names of such terrorists.

The Pakistani government has repeatedly accused the TTP of operating from sanctuaries in Afghanistan, a claim denied by the Afghan Taliban.

There has been an uptick in the incidents of terrorism in Pakistan since the Taliban took over the government in Kabul in 2021, dashing hopes in Islamabad that a friendly government in Afghanistan would help to tackle militancy. Relations between the two coun tries have lately become strained, largely because of the TTP but also due to frequent border skirmishes.

### Home Loan Centre, 59 Community Centre, Naraina Industrial Area Phase - 1, Near Payal PVR, New Delhi-110028 POSSESSION NOTICE (For Immovable Property under Rule 8(1))

Notice is hereby given under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets & Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of powers conferred under Section 13(12) read with Rule 9 of the Security Interes (Enforcement) Rules, 2002. The Bank issued demand notices on the date mentioned against account and amount stated hereinafter calling upon them to repay the amount within sixty days from the date of receipt of said notices. The borrower having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the borrowers, guarantors and the public in genera that the undersigned has taken possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred or him/her under section 13(4) of the said Act read with Rule 9 of the said Rules on the dates mentioned against accoun and amount below. The borrower and guarantor in particular and the public in general are hereby cautioned not to dea with the property. Any dealing with property will be subject to the charge of State Bank of India for the amount and interest thereon. Details of Property where Possession has been taken is as follow: The borrower/Guarantor attention is invited to provisions of sub section (8) of Section 13 of the Act, in respect o

time available, to redeem the secured assets.

DESCRIPTION OF THE IMMOVABLE PROPERTY

Amt. 0/s (as per Notice U/s.13(2)) Date of 13(2) Notice Date of iame of the Borrower/Guarant Description of the Mortgaged Property BORROWERS Equitable Mortgage of Built up Proper Rs.48,94,615/-10.07.2024 01.10.202 MR. PRADEEP KUMAI Bearing No.1-A Land are measuring 500 (Rupees Forty Eight Lakh Sq.Yds. with Roof Rights Upto Sky in Block H1 IINDAL AND Ninety Four Thousand Six tuated in the Revenue Estate of Village MRS, MAMTA JINDAL Hundred Fifteen Only) Malikpur Chhaoni Known as Model Town Nea as on 02.07.2024 plus Kingsway Camp at Mall Road Delhi with the future interest and other Free Hold Rights of the Land Underneath in the incidental charges name of Sh. Pradeep Kumar Jindal S/o Sh. incurred thereafter. Dinesh Chand Jindal. Boundry: less recovery North: Plot No.H-3/1 South: Plot No.H-1/1-B (if any). East: Plot No. H-1/2 West: Service Lane Sd/- Authorized Officer, (State Bank Of India) DATE: 01.10.2024 Home Loan Centre, Naraina Industrial Area, Phase-1, New Delh

# been

# INDIA LOOK TO IRON OUT COMBINATION FLAWS, REGAIN FIGHT IN CRUCIAL T20 WC GAME AGAINST PAKISTAN

India will have to regroup quickly and iron out the imbalances in team combination when they face arch-rivals Pakistan in a crucial second group A match of the Women's T20 World Cup here on Sunday.

An early 58-run defeat to New Zealand on Friday has not just dented India's chances of entering the semifinals of the ICC showpiece, but it certainly has pushed them to a tight

India's run-rate currently stands at a poor -2.99 and it makes big victories mandatory for them in the remaining three matches against Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Australia.

The Harmanpreet Kaur-led side was wretched in all three departments of the game against the Kiwis in its World Cup opener, and India now need a reversal within 24

It's tough but that is the path they have to tread against Pakistan, high on confidence after beating a strong Sri Lanka in the first match on Thursday. As a first step, India will have to sort out their combinations



ahead of the Pakistan game. They went a batter light against New Zealand to accommodate an extra pacer in Arundhati Reddy and it meant a wholescale rejigging of the

It forced the promotion of Harmanpreet to No.

Iemimah Rodrigues to No. 4 and Richa Ghosh to No.5, not the usual slots for these batters. For instance, Harmanpreet, who is a solid presence at No. 4, has never made a fifty in her previous 19 gigs at No.3 and to make her play precisely at that position in a World Cup was

The inclusion of three pacers was not wrong move on the hindsight as there was no dew and the Kiwis pacers made full use of a hard deck

But India made a hash of their three-pronged pace attack move, giving just one over to bowler in T20Is this year with 20 wickets from 16 matches.

Also, the decision to go with the pace troika cost India the presence of left-arm spinner Radha Yadav, their second most successful T20I bowler with 22 wickets from 13 matches.

So, head coach Amol Muzumdar will need to take a long look at the combination as another defeat will seriously hamper India's chances of progressing to the last-four stage from Group A.

But stats apart, India, particularly batters, looked mentally frozen against the Kiwis, evidenced by the highest individual score in their innings — a 15 by Harmanpreet.

In that context, India might just think of adding Dayalan Hemalatha to bolster the

batting. Though India have a head-tohead edge over Pakistan in T20Is, winning 12 out of 15 matches so far, they have the ammunition to stun any opposition.

Their bowling is especially formidable with the likes of experienced Nida

Iqbal leading the pack. However, Pakistan will keep a

close eye on the fitness lead pacer Diana Baig after she suffered a calf strain in the match against Sri Lanka, limping out after bowling just

### TEAMS (FROM):

India: Harmanpreet Kaur (c), Smriti Mandhana, Shafali Sharma, Verma, Deepti Jemimah Rodrigues, Richa Ghosh, Yastika Bhatia (subject to fitness), Pooja Vastrakar, Arundhati Reddy, Renuka Thakuṛ, Singh Davalan Hemalatha, Asha Sobhana, Radha Yadav, Shreyanka Patil (subject to fitness), Sajana Sajeevan

Travelling reserves: Uma Chetry (wh), Tanuja Kanwer, Saima Thakor.

Pakistan: Fatima Sana (c), Aliya Riaz, Diana Baig, Gull Feroza, Iram Javed, Muneeba Ali, Nashra Sundhu, Nida Dar, Omaima Sohail, Sadaf Shamas, Sadia Iqbal (subject to fitness), Sidra Amin, Syeda Aroob Shah, Tasmia Rubab, Tuba Hassan

Travelling reserve: Najiha Alvi



# Luis Suarez criticises Uruguay coach Bielsa for mistreating team at Copa America

**AP** ■ MONTEVIDEO (URUGUAY)

Just-retired striker Luis Suárez has criticized Uruguay coach Marcelo Bielsa for the way he treated players during the Copa America, saying the "friction" hurts.
Uruguay finished third at the Copa in July in the United States but Suárez said all was

not well behind the scenes. "There were situations at the Copa America that hurt me, but I didn't say them for the sake of coexistence," Suarez told the DSports TV channel. 'Many players held a meeting to ask the coach to at least say

good morning to us, but he didn't even say hello." The relationship between Bielsa and the players was so bad that some are considering leaving the national squad, Suárez said. He retired his 17year international career a month ago as Uruguay's all-

time leading scorer. You can see that players go with the team and are not enjoying themselves," he said. "In their (club) teams they are having fun and smiling, but

not with the national team. It hurts to see what is going on." Bielsa, who has coached Argentina and Chile, was hired by Uruguay in May 2023 to the end of the 2026 World Cup. He has Uruguay third in South

American qualifying for the World Cup, and is preparing for qualifiers against Peru next Friday and Ecuador four days

Suárez asked Uruguay supporters "not to take it out on the players if something goes wrong."

"We are arriving to a tough situation and very painful situations. The friction is going to keep happening and the players are going to reach their limit before exploding." Despite the team's success, Suárez said the atmosphere cultivated by Bielsa was not good, even at their training

"At the Celeste Complex, employees are not allowed to come in and greet us and eat with us," he said. "They have to be careful even at the door they have to enter.



## Sinner and Alcaraz breeze through Shanghai Masters openers

AP SHANGHAI

¬arlos Alcaraz and top-Cranked Jannik Sinner showed no signs of fatigue from their China Open final earlier this week to advance with comfortable straight-set victories in their opening matches of the Shanghai

Masters on Saturday. The second-ranked Alcaraz, who beat the Italian in Beijing on Wednesday for his fourth title of the year, recorded his 10th consecutive win with a 6-2, 6-2 result against 19-yearold Shang Juncheng of China.

the first nine points of the match and four of seven break points as he rushed into a third-round meeting with another Chinese player, Wu Yibing.

"I'm not used to playing against players younger than me," Alcaraz said.

"He has been playing good tennis lately, lifting his first ATP (title in Chengdu), so I'm pretty sure he's going to climb the rankings. I'm just happy to to be able to win these kinds of matches."

Sinner, who is dealing with an ongoing doping case, had a comfortable 6-1, 6-4 outing against Taro Daniel of Japan for his 250th career win.

The Italian, who won the U.S Open last month for his second major of the year, fired 12 aces and 38 winners.

"I felt quite comfortable today," said the 23-year-old Sinner, who next plays Tomas Martin

Etcheverry of Argentina.
"I feel in good shape also physically, which is very important for me. Of course I will try to improve for tomorrow's performance, but today I was serving really, really well, especially in important moments, and was moving well."

No. 65-ranked Jakub Mensik of Republic sixth-ranked Andrey Rublev seven times on his way to an upset 6-7 (7), 6-4, 6-3 victory. Yosuke Watanuki also had a surprise win, beating No. 35-ranked Brendan Nakashima 7-(4), 6-3. The Japanese qualifier plays either seventhranked Taylor Fritz of the U.S. Or French qualifier Terence Atmane next. Also, 24th-ranked Alexei Popyrin of Australia beat Miomir Kecmanovic of Serbia 6-3, 6-2. Later Saturday, third-ranked Alexander Zverev began his campaign against Italian qualifier Mattia Bellucci, while fourth-ranked Novak Djokovic faced Alex Michelsen of the United States.

## Divanshi's second gold leads India's clean sweep at ISSF Junior Worlds Suraj Sharma claimed gold with a score of

Indian pistol shooter Divanshi secured her second individual gold in the women's 25m standard pistol event, leading a remarkable clean sweep in the event at the ISSF Junior World Championship here.

India's young shooters added five more medals to their kitty, including two gold on Friday taking the tally to 21 medals to remain at the top of the standings — 13 gold, two silver and six bronze.

Norway remained a distant second with 10 medals — four gold, three silver and three bronze — while China occupied third place (3-1-0). Divanshi dominated the event with a score of 564 out of 600, finishing ahead of teammate Parisha Gupta, who shot 559 for silver.

Manvi Jain completed the Indian sweep with a bronze-winning score of 557,



marking India's first-ever clean sweep in this competition. Shikha Chaudhary narrowly missed a podium finish, placing fourth with a score of 554, just one point ahead of Estonia's Marja Kirss.

In the corresponding junior men's event,

571, edging out Poland's Ivan Rakistski, who shot 568 for silver. Mukesh Nelavalli, who already has four gold medals in the championship, shot 568 but settled for bronze after a countback.

Other notable performances included Harsimar Singh Rattha (565), Raajwardan Singh Patil (562), and Pradhyumn Singh (562), who finished seventh, eighth, and ninth respectively in the junior men's event. In the junior women's 50m rifle event. In the junior women's 50m rifle prone event, Melvina Joel Gladson was the best Indian finisher, placing 14th with a score of 617.5. Prachi Gaikwad (616.7), Khushi (615.1), Aadhya Agrawal (614.2), and Anoushka Thokur (611.9) finished 19th, 26th, 27th, and 35th, respectively. In the team competition, Melvina, Prachi, and Anoushka's combined score of 1846.1 secured a sixth-place finish for India in the

## Bangladesh cricket team doesn't visit Gwalior mosque, holds Friday prayer at hotel about 23 km and the players

PTI ■ GWALIOR (MP)

head of its T20 clash with Andia in Gwalior, the Bangladesh cricket squad did not visit the city's Moti Masjid on Friday and instead, offered prayers at their hotel, a police

official said on Saturday. "We had made elaborate security arrangements around Masjid but the Bangladesh team did not turn up. No organisation had given any call to disrupt their visit," Gwalior Zone Inspector General Arvind Saxena told PTI over the phone.

The mosque in the city's Phoolbagh area is about 3 km from the hotel where the

visitors have been put up. Security has been stepped up in the city amid a call for a 'Gwalior bandh' on match day by right-wing outfits in protest against alleged atrocities on Hindus in Bangladesh since the fall of the Sheikh Hasina government there in August.
"The decision to skip the mosque visit might have been taken at the

management level," he said.
The official confirmed that the 'Shahar Qazi' (city's top Muslim cleric) reached the hotel and led the Bangladeshi cricketers in offering Namaze-Juma' (Friday prayer) between 1 pm and 2.30 pm. e-Juma' The official said they had made



elaborate security arrangements outside the mosque where several mediapersons were also

The distance between the hotel and the Madhavrao Scindia Cricket Stadium, where the Bangladesh team has been practising since October 3, is are moving freely as per their schedule amid security cover. "Providing security to the visiting team over just 3 km

visiting team over just 3 km was never an issue from our side," the official said.

Already, over 2,500 police personnel have been deployed for Sunday's India-Bangladesh T20I in Gwalior, he said.

On Sunday, cops will be on the streets from 2 pm. They will be on duty till spectators reach home after the game is over

home after the game is over, police said.

After prohibitory orders were invoked two days ago, police are also keeping an eye on social media for inflammatory material, officials said.

four-strong group on 12 under. England's Tommy Fleetwood



**Youth Archery** PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Promising archer Vaishnavi Pawar showed impressive presence of mind to help India clinch team silver in the recurve U-18 women's category at the 2024 Asian Championship in Chinese

Vaishnavi took the first shot for the three-member Indian team, also comprising Pranjal Tholiya and Jannat, in every round and handled the pressure well as they pipped fancied South Korea in the

semifinal in a shoot-off. In the gold medal round, India found themselves in a similar situation, fighting back from a 2-4 deficit to force a shoot-off against

Taipei, Chinese ultimately prevailed.
"I am incredibly proud to represent India alongside my teammates. Beating South

Korea in the semifinals was a share the lead with Colsaerts. Home favourite David Law and first-round leader Fichardt significant milestone for us," Vaishnavi said. 'Winning silver at the Asian were in a tie for third a shot Youth Championship is a testament further back, one ahead of the

to our hard work and dedication, and it inspires me to aim even higher in the future? The Maharashtra archer finished fourth in the trials to

make it to the Asian Youth Archery Championships, also she had also reached the quarterfinals in the individual

# Indian hockey captain Harmanpreet credits HIL for personal growth

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

National men's hockey team captain and ace dragflicker Harmanpreet Singh, who has scored 205 goals in 234 international appearances, on Saturday credited the Hockey India League (HIL) for playing a pivotal role in his career development.

From being named the Upcoming Player of the Tournament in the 2017 HIL to becoming one of the world's top drag-flickers, it has been a tremendous journey for Harmanpreet who highlighted how the league has helped him grow after rubbing shoulders with some of the best

international players. "Hockey India League was a huge part of my development. The league provided me with a stage to enhance my skills by exposing me to different playing styles under different coaches," Harmanpreet said in a Hockey India (HI) release. "Playing in a League, sharing a



and ways of thinking. "All this was integral in the resurgence of Indian hockey and it certainly impacted our performance at the Tokyo Olympics where we won the bronze medal." Harmanpreet said there could be nothing better for Indian hockey than

the HIL and all the country's

players would be excited to take part in the League. "It will be a great opportunity for the youngsters as well to rub shoulders with the best dressing room with players

observe the subtle differences in the way they think, the way they play and try to inculcate the good habits that they notice," he said. HIL is slated for a return after seven years in a new avatar that will see a women's tournament for the

first time running concurrently with the men's event. The league will be played in two venues - Rourkela for men and Ranchi for women from December 28 to February . The sport's world governing body, FIH has given sanction

of 10 years for HIL. The tournament will feature players from across the globe, eight men's and six women's

The player auction for the HIL 2024-25 will be held from October 13-15 in New Delhi. Each franchise will build a 24-player squad, consisting of at least 16 Indian players (with a mandatory inclusion of four junior players) and eight international stars. "The Hockey India League will

be much bigger this time; there will also be a women's League that will run at the same time in both venues

"I am confident this experience will turn out to be invaluable for the Indian women's hockey team in their journey to be one of the best teams in the world," he said. Players will be auctioned in three categories with base prices of Rs 2 lakh, 5 lakh and 10 lakh each.

"The auction is coming up soon and I would like to wish all the best to all the players taking part. As for myself, I cannot wait to see which team will represent and begin the hockey revolution again," he

## Shubhankar, Om Prakash falter at Alfred Dunhill John, who sits 1007th on the

PTI ST. ANDREWS (SCOTLAND)

The first two rounds offered big disappointment for the Indians, as Shubhankar Sharma and Om Prakash Chouhan were placed tied 139 and 154 respectively in the Alfred Dunhill Links Championship.

Sharma shot even par rounds at Carnoustie and Kingsbarns but that saw him way down in tied 139th, while Chouhan was even further down with 71-75 and was at tied 154th.

Sharma still has his round to go, while Chouhan will play his third round at Carnoustie. Meanwhile, Nicolas Colsaerts relied on local knowledge as he

shot a stunning 65 to share the lead with Cameron John after the second round. The Belgian kicked off his campaign with a 65 at the Old Course at St Andrews and recorded the same score at the notoriously tricky Carnoustie

himself in position to seal a

his first since 2019.



Martin Gilbert lead the team event on 24 under par after two rounds.

Carnoustie paid dividends as he shot eight birdies and a single bogey, including gains at the difficult might and 17th the difficult ninth and 17th. to reach 14 under par and put fourth DP World Tour title and

Official World Golf Ranking, sandwiched a disappointing double bogey at the fifth between birdies on the fourth and sixth before closing the front nine with a 25-foot birdie from off the ninth group. from off the ninth green. A ten-foot birdie at the tenth took him to within a shot of the lead before a close-range gain on the 12th saw him join overnight leader Darren Fichardt at the top.
A series of pars followed before he holed from 22 feet at the 17th to get to 14 under and

Scottish pair Grant Forrest and Colsaerts, the 2012 Ryder Cup

star, who has mixed golf and commentary work this season, has been coming to this event for 20 years, and felt his experience of

and Tyrrell Hatton emerged as the leading pair from Kingsbarns, getting to 11 under par after rounds of 65 and 68 respectively, to sit alongside Tom Vaillant of France and Welshman James Australia's John followed up his opening 62 at Kingsbarns with a 68 on the Old Course, grabbing a share of the lead Ashfield, who is making his with his brilliant birdie at the professional debut this week.

# VVacity 08

# GET READY TO SLAY

THE COLLECTION THAT REDEFINES

STYF

The Orry x Flying Machine capsule collaboration offers a bold collection that celebrates youth, creativity and self-expression in every piece, says SAKSHI PRIYA

n an exciting development within the fashion industry, Flying Machine has teamed up with the sensational social media star Orry to launch a limited-edition capsule collection that promises to turn heads and make waves among the youth. Orry, a digital influencer renowned for his vibrant style and engaging content, has garnered a massive following on platforms like Instagram. His unique blend of charisma and fashion savvy resonates with Gen-Z consumers, making him an ideal partner for a brand like Flying Machine, which is celebrated for its edgy denim and youthful vibe.

Flying Machine, the pioneering homegrown

youthful vibe.

Flying Machine, the pioneering homegrown denim brand in India, has evolved significantly since its inception in 1980.

Known for its trendy and spontaneous designs, the brand has made a concerted effort to revamp its image and align itself with the tastes of the modern consumer.

With a renewed focus on Gen-Z, this collaboration with Orry is a strategic move to tap into the vibrant energy of young fashion enthusiasts.

to tap into the vibrant energy of young fashion enthusiasts.
The Orry x Flying Machine capsule collection embodies a perfect blend of funky colours and oversized silhouettes, catering to individuals who dare to stand out. Featuring a range of unisex items such as T-shirts, shirts, vests, caps, bucket hats, jorts, parachute pants and classic jeans, the collection captures the essence of contemporary street style. Orry's distinct aesthetic shines through each piece, encouraging wearers to express their individuality through bold fashion choices.

A standout feature of this collaboration is *Orry's* handson involvement in the design process. His creative input ensures that the collection reflects his signature style, with playful slogans like "L8R H8R" and "Can I live" adding a fun twist. This level of engagement not only enhances the authenticity of the collection but also respectes with consumers collection but also resonates with consumers

looking for genuine connections with brands. The vibrant designs and oversized fits are more than just fashion statements; they are

their identities and showcase their unique personalities.

Shailesh Chaturvedi, Managing Director and CEO of Arvind Fashions, expressed his excitement about the collaboration, highlighting the shared appreciation for Korean and Japanese fashion aesthetics. This partnership reflects a broader trend within the fashion industry, where global influences meet local sensibilities, creating a dynamic fusion that appeals to the youth. With oversized pieces and an androgynous flair, the collection exemplifies a modern approach to dressing that celebrates diversity and self-expression. personalities.



Photo: Pankaj Kumar

The Orry x Flying Machine capsule collection will be available at select Flying Machine stores throughout India, as well as on popular online platforms like Myntra and NNNOW. This accessibility ensures that young fashion lovers can easily engage with the collection and incorporate these statement pieces into their wardrobes. The Orry x Flying Machine collaboration signifies a bold new direction in youth fashion. By merging Orry's vibrant style with Flying Machine's denim legacy, this capsule collection captures the essence of modern youth culture, inviting individuals to express their identities through fashion. With its funky colours, oversized designs and engaging slogans, the collection is not just about clothing, it represents a movement towards embracing individuality and creativity in everyday style. As excitement builds around this launch, both Orry and Flying Machine are poised to make a significant impact on the fashion landscape. Flying Machine are poised to make a significant impact on the fashion landscape, paving the way for a new era that celebrates the dynamic spirit of today's yout

# EW OFFERINGS



### **CELEBRATE NAVRATRI WITH A SPECIAL THALI**

This Navratri, elevates your festive dining experience at Seasonal Tastes in The Westin Gurgaon, with a specially curated Navratri Bhog Thali. Enjoy a harmonious blend of authentic flavours, including *Sabudana Vada*, *Khata Mitha Kaddu* and *Sabudana Kheer*. Perfect for both festival observers and food enthusiasts, this thali offers a delightful journey through the essence of Navratri. Experience a soul-satisfying meal that celebrates the spirit of the season.

**DETAILS Dates:** October 3 – 12, 2024 **Location:** The Westin Gurgaon **Price:** INR 1,499 plus taxes

Availability: A-la-carte menu for lunch and dinner

**CELEBRATE SAKETOBER** Join this October for a monthlong sake celebration at *Guppy*! Indulge in specially curated sake cocktails, tasting flights and enjoy a Buy 1, Get 1 free offer on sake. Delight in options like the Sake Highball and Sake Bombs and join for Sake Sing-along karaoke nights and live music every Wednesday, Thursday and Sunday.

**DETAILS Location:** 28, Main Market, Lodhi Colony, New Delhi Timings: Lunch: 12 PM – 4 PM Dinner: 6 PM - 12 AM Price for Two: INR 3700 approx. (including cocktails) Reservations: 011 24690005

6, +91 965018500

### **CULINARY FUSION EXPERIENCE**

Indian Accent celebrates 15 years with an exclusive culinary collaboration with Nadodi. Chefs Shantanu Mehrotra and Yavhin Siriwardhana will create a 9-course menu blending inventive Indian flavours with South Indian and Sri Lankan influences. Expect an unforgettable dining experience showcasing the best of both culinary worlds.



Disclaimer: The Pioneer does not endorse or promote the consumption of alcoholic beverages.

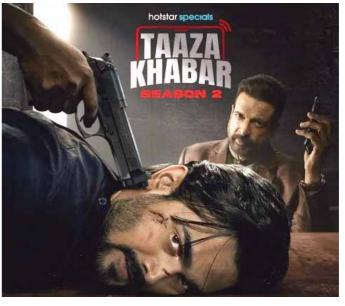
## TAAZA KHABAR CONTINUED TALE OF GREED AND REDEMPTION

With a strong cast and engaging storyline, the new season of 'Taaza Khabar' is a must-watch, says ABHI SINGHAL

aintaining high standards in the second season is a challenge but 'Taaza Khabar' continues to shine with its new season. This web series emphasises how greed can destroy lives, especially in today's fast-paced world. Directed by *Himank* Gaur, the new season retains the stellar cast from Season 1, including Bhuvan Bam as Vasant Gawde, Shriya Pilgaonkar as Madhu, Deven Bhojani as Mehboob, and Prathamesh Parab as Raja Chaturvedi. A notable addition this season is Javed Jaffrey, who plays the character of Yusuf Akhtar.

Released on *Disney Plus Hotstar*, the series offers a beautifully crafted storyline, continuing to revolve around Vasant Gawde (Bhuvan Bam) and his boon, 'Taaza Khabar.' The first three episodes are gripping, portraying Vasant's efforts to free himself from the crushing debt on his shoulders. Although the series is primarily a comedy and thriller, it connects on a deeper, emotional

connects on a deeper, emotional level by exploring themes of right and wrong. The mix of genres adds depth, keeping the audience invested throughout. In the world of filmmaking, both a strong script and excellent acting can make or break a series, and 'Taaza Khabar' excels in both the departments. The characters truly departments. The characters truly outdo themselves this season. Bhuvan Bam shines as Vasant, improving even further from the



first season with his impeccable comedic timing and reactions. Javed Jaffrey, known for his comedic roles, plays the antagonist this time. His portrayal of a villain driven by malevolence, political power, and money brings intensity to the show. *Shilpa Shukla's* character Aapa perfectly complements dark, twisted role. The addition

character brings much-needed energy to the new six-episode

Shriya Pilgaonkar (Madhu), Vasant's love interest, has fewer scenes this season, but her presence is felt at key moments. Prathamesh Parab's portrayal of Raja, Vasant's loyal friend, is heartwarming and crucial to the emotional

crucial to the emotional core of the show.

The witty dialogues, penned by *Abbas Dalal* and *Hussain Dalal*, add

layers to the characters and elevate the humour in the series. The use of foul language, reflective of the protagonist's world, adds authenticity to the setting.

However, the flashbacks intended to give depth to the characters feel dull and add very little to the characters feel dull and set of the characters feel

overall plot. These moments do not significantly enhance our understanding of *Vasant's* mental processes or the reasons behind his choices. Despite this, the overarching narrative is a reality check for the modern world, showing the rise and fall of *Vasant*, whose boon quickly turns into a curse, alienating him from his loved ones, including Madhu and his parents.

The music in 'Taaza Khabar' perfectly complements the scenes, with songs like 'Kaun Hai' by Faridkot, Rajarshi Sanyal, and IP Singh, and 'Hoke Majboor' by Mohan Kannan, Akshay, and IP Singh, adding emotional depth. The Baba theme and Kathak theme further enhance the theme further enhance the storytelling, giving the audience a rich auditory experience. Overall, '*Taaza Khabar*' is a must-

watch. Its engaging scenes and witty dialogues keep viewers on the edge of their seats, eager to see what happens next. While the show hints at a potential third season, an official confirmation would only add to the growing excitement among its fanbase.

'Rating: 4/5'

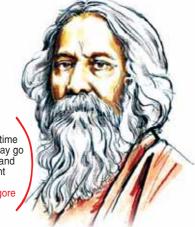
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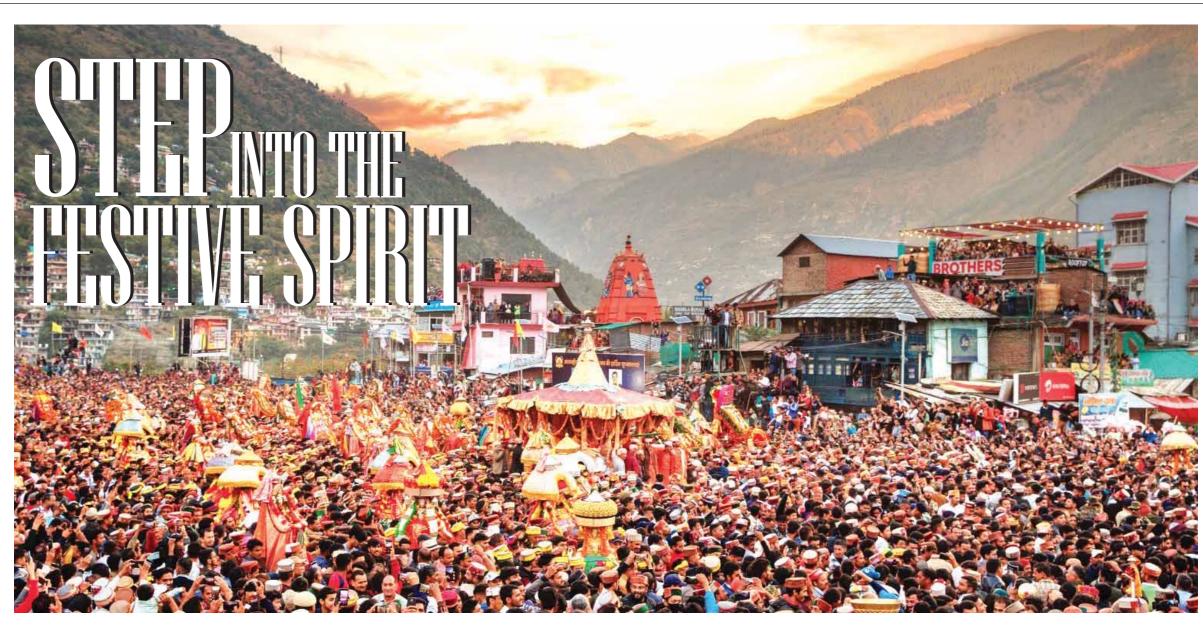
New Delhi, October 6, 2024

# the pioneer

"Now, I ask, has the time come at last when I may go in and see thy face and offer thee my silent

salutation?





a vibrant festival in Himachal Pradesh that brings the Kullu valley to life with colourful processions, traditional music. and cultural performances. Celebrated in honour of Lord Raghunath Ji, this annual event attracts visitors from all over, creating a sense of community and joy, writes **SAKSHI PRIYA** 

Kullu Dussehra is



ullu Dussehra, celebrated in the picturesque valley of Kullu in Himachal Pradesh, is a vibrant week-long ■festival that goes beyond just religious observance. It brings together centuries-old traditions, the unity of hundreds of local deities and the incredible artistic expression of the region. Kullu Dussehra has a distinctive flavour, embracing the valley's culture, history and devotion. This year, the International Kullu Dussehra Festival is set to take place from 13th to 19th October 2024, offering visitors a chance to immerse themselves in the vibrant festivities while also appreciating the breathtaking scenic beauty and natural wonders of this enchanting region. The origins of *Kullu Dussehra* date back to the 17th century when Raja Jagat Singh, a ruler of Kullu, brought the idol of Lord Raghunath Ji to the valley. From then on, Lord Raghunath Ji became the central deity of the festival and Kullu Dussehra has been celebrated in His honour ever since. What sets this festival apart is its spirit of inclusion, with over 300 local deities from surrounding villages joining the celebrations. These deities, carried on beautifully decorated palanquins, are accompanied by their devotees, musicians and dancers, creating a lively and spiritual atmosphere as they converge at Dhalpur Maidan in Kullu. The festival begins on 13th October with the grand Rath Yatra, a procession where Lord Raghunath Ji is placed in a chariot and pulled through the streets by devotees. This procession marks the beginning of a week filled with devotion, music and dance. The streets come alive with the sounds of traditional instruments, the colourful sight of waving flags and the energy of people who have come from far and wide to participate in this sacred event. The Rath Yatra is not just a religious act; it's a celebration of the unity and shared faith that binds the people of Kullu

Kullu Dussehra is not only a spiritual gathering but also a cultural festival that showcases the rich artistic heritage of the region. Every evening, the open-air auditorium at Lal Chand Prarthi Kalakendra becomes a stage for performances by local, national and international artists. From traditional Himachali folk dances like the Nati to contemporary performances, the festival offers a diverse range of cultural experiences. This year, approximately 15 international cultural troupes will participate, bringing their unique traditions and performances to Kullu. These performances reflect the universal language of art, reminding everyone of the shared human connection through

On 14th October, the Cultural Parade takes place, showcasing a vibrant display of traditional attire, music and dance from across India and the world. This parade highlights the rich diversity of cultures, where each troupe brings its own distinct flavour to the celebrations.

"Kullu Dussehra beautifully showcases our cultural richness and serves as a reminder of the bonds that unite us as a community." - Sushil Kumar Singla, **Principal Resident Commissioner of Himachal Pradesh** Sadan, New Delhi

The sight of dancers in traditional costumes, performing to the rhythmic beats of their native instruments, creates a colourful experience that celebrates unity in diversity. The Cultural Parade embodies Kullu Dussehra's inclusive spirit, welcoming different cultures to come together in celebration. A highlight of *Kullu Dussehra* is the performance of Lalhri, a traditional dance native to the Kullu Valley. Passed down through generations, Lalhri is not just a dance but a form of storytelling, where each graceful movement and musical note carries the history of the region. Watching the dancers perform in their traditional attire is like stepping back in time, where the cultural legacy of Kullu comes alive through the art of movement and music. This performance encapsulates the very essence of the festival, where tradition and heritage are celebrated and

The spiritual climax of Kullu Dussehra takes place on 19th October with the symbolic Lanka Dahan, marking the return of nearly 300 deities, or devidevatas, to their homes. This significant day begins as the Raja approaches Lord Raghunath Ji, causing all music and dance to pause. After the Raja circumambulates the chariot, the procession moves towards Lanka by the river Beas. Here, bushes and grass are set ablaze, symbolising the burning of Lanka. The flames create a captivating spectacle, while the Lanka Dahan ceremony reinforces values of justice, morality, and goodness, highlighting the festival's importance in uniting the

> The penultimate day features the



Sunder Singh Thakur CPS and Sushil Kumar Singla, Principal Resident Commissioner Government of

Muhalla ceremony, an event filled with joy, music and festivity. Villagers from across Kullu gather at Dhalpur Maidan, setting aside their daily lives to participate in this lively celebration. The deities, surrounded by flags and accompanied by traditional music, pay their respects to Lord Raghunath Ji. The Muhalla is a vibrant reflection of the community spirit that defines Kullu Dussehra, where unity and togetherness are celebrated in a colourful display of

devotion. Historically, Kullu Dussehra has also been a major commercial event. It once served as a trading hub where villagers would sell their crops, handicrafts and other goods. Traders from regions like Lahaul and Ladakh would bring products such as pashmina shawls, carpets and local herbs, creating a bustling marketplace. Today, this tradition continues with the Artisan Showcase, where award-winning artisans display their crafts, from textiles to woodwork. Visitors can purchase these handmade items, taking home a piece of Kullu's rich artistic heritage and supporting the local economy. For those who enjoy food, Kullu Dussehra is a culinary journey that showcases the flavours of Himachal Pradesh. The food courts at the festival serve traditional dishes such as siddu (a type of steamed bread) and madra (a rich chickpea curry), offering a taste of the region's culinary traditions. Alongside these local

international cuisine is also available ensuring that visitors can enjoy a wide variety of food during the festival. The culinary experience is an integral part of Kullu Dussehra, reflecting the valley's agricultural richness and its connection to the land.

This year's Kullu Dussehra will also feature the Ambassador's Meet on 18th October, presided over by Shri Sukhvinder Singh, the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Himachal Pradesh. The event will bring together resident ambassadors from various countries, promoting cultural exchange and enriching trade ties. The Ambassador's Meet reflects Kullu Dussehra's growing global recognition, where tradition meets modernity on an international stage. This blend of cultural celebration and diplomatic engagement adds a new dimension to the festival, highlighting its significance beyond the local community.

Beyond its vibrant cultural performances and religious rituals, Kullu Dussehra offers a diverse range of entertainment options for visitors of all ages. Families can enjoy amusement rides like toy trains and swings, while sports enthusiasts can engage in competitions such

volleyball, kabaddi and tug-of-war. The open-air performances continue late into the night, ensuring that the festivities are alive with music, dance and laughter. As the festival progresses, visitors will also have the opportunity to explore the natural beauty of the Kullu Valley, which offers breathtaking views of snow-capped peaks, lush green valleys, and flowing rivers. Many visitors choose to explore nearby attractions such as the Great Himalayan National Park, Bijli Mahadev Temple, and the historic Hadimba Devi Temple in Manali, combining the spiritual experience of *Kullu Dussehra* with the serene beauty of Himachal Pradesh's

natural landscape. As Kullu prepares to host this grand celebration, it's essential to reflect on the significance of festivals like Kullu Dussehra in preserving and promoting cultural heritage. The festival not only showcases the artistic traditions of Himachal Pradesh but also serves as a reminder of the unity and community spirit that festivals inspire. It brings together people from different walks of life, whether they are locals, tourists or international dignitaries, all coming together to celebrate the rich cultural legacy of the region. Kullu Dussehra is a festival that

everyone should experience at least once in their lifetime. It's not just a celebration; it's a living tradition that continues to evolve while staying deeply rooted in the values of the community. The festival's grandeur, coupled with the warm hospitality of the people of Kullu, makes it a truly unique experience. As the date approaches, excitement is building, and the town of Kullu is gearing up to welcome visitors from all

over the world. It's a time of joy, devotion and celebration, an event that leaves a lasting impression on all who attend. The International Kullu Dussehra Festival 2024 is set to be a spectacular event that will showcase the best of Himachal's culture, art and traditions. Kullu Dussehra 2024 promises to be a celebration unlike any other. From the grand Rath Yatra to the vibrant cultural performances, from

the symbolic Lanka Dahan to the bustling artisan markets, the festival offers a diverse range of experiences for all who attend. Whether visitors are drawn by the spiritual devotion, the artistic performances or the natural beauty of the valley, Kullu Dussehra is a festival that speaks to the heart, offering a unique glimpse into the soul of Himachal Pradesh. As the festival approaches, everyone is encouraged to mark their calendars and experience this remarkable celebration from 13th to 19th October 2024. It's a perfect LORD RAGHUNATH JI TO THE VALLEY. FROM THEN ON, LORD RAGHUNATH JI opportunity to enjoy the magic of Kullu BECAME THE CENTRAL DEITY OF THE FESTIVAL AND KULLU DUSSEHRA HAS Valley, where tradition, culture and community come together in a festival of life, love and joy!



THE ORIGINS OF KULLU DUSSEHRA DATE BACK TO THE 17TH CENTURY

WHEN RAJA JAGAT SINGH, A RULER OF KULLU, BROUGHT THE IDOL OF

## New Delhi, October 6, 2024



# **EXCITING RESTAURANTS** SHAPING NCR'S FOOD SCENE

Explore NCR's newest hotspots, serving up bold flavours and vibrant atmospheres for those looking to experience the best in dining and nightlife



**PAWAN SONI** Food critic and founder of the Big F Awards

The food scene in the NCR is heating up, with a host of new eateries making their mark, each worth a visit. This month, I sampled a few, and here are my impressions.

### **LITCHI BISTRO**

Nestled in the culinary hub of Malviya Nagar, Litchi Bistro offers a creative world cuisine menu alongside freshly brewed coffee from their in-house roastery. The spacious open patio outshines the indoor seating, creating a vibrant atmosphere. Two dishes I highly recommend are the Spicy Tuna Taco, served on a crisp Nori sheet with a kick from sriracha mayo and the Korean Bacon, a miso-marinated pork belly. The latter is so exceptional that I would return just for this dish.

### **AVARTANA AT ITC MAURYA**

This is easily the most intriguing restaurant I've explored this year. *Avartana* offers set-course menus ranging from 7 to 13 courses, priced from Rs. 2,950 upwards per person. The cuisine is a contemporary interpretation of South Indian ingredients, far from the traditional dishes we usually associate with the region. I'll be doing a associate with the region. I'll be doing a detailed review soon, as it's hard to choose

favourites when each dish is stellar. It's no surprise that Avartana ranks 44th among Asia's 50 best.

> 689, GURGAON Six Eighty Nine at Two

Horizon brings Quorum Club's finesse into the public domain. This Asian restaurant draws inspiration from Japanese cuisine, with a clever twist of Japanese ingredients across its offerings. A standout dish is the Flame-Kissed Avocado from the Robatayaki section. The buttery avocado, glazed with soy-mirin, perfectly balances saltiness and sharpness, with a



zing from shichimi lime. Ideal for those who enjoy Asian flavours and refined cocktails without the distraction of loud music.

### **TEPPANYAKI AT EEST, WESTIN**

Gurgaon finally has a live Teppanyaki counter. What was once

Eest's Omakase section has been revamped to accommodate a Teppanyaki grill. The sauces are fresh, the ingredients top-notch and Chef Jatin engages with diners to craft dishes tailored to their preferences. The food here is as delicious as it is healthy, ensuring my return visit soon.

### ROOM XO, AIPL JOY CENTRAL, GURGAON

The new party hub, *Room XO*, features one of the largest bars in the city, offering high-energy music, creative cocktails, massive screens and a performance bar. The food, curated by celebrity chef Sabyasachi Gorai, complements the lively atmosphere. With the same founders as Studio XO, this spot is set to be the next big thing in Gurgaon's nightlife.

### THANKS AND BEYOND, NEHRU PLACE, DELHI

Veteran nightlife impresario Priyank Sukhija's latest venture at Epicuria Mall offers three distinct zones. 'Thanks' is a casual dining space, 'And' is the outdoor area, and

'Beyond' is a high-energy bar. For a great time, I recommend the Tequila-based Picante, the Sheesha, and the Tuna on Toast.

### **PIRATES OF GRILL GRANDE,** CYBERHUB. GURGAON

Buffets just went gourmet, thanks to the famous Banga Brothers, who have redefined the concept with their Grande edition of Pirates of Grill. The quality, variety, and pricing are a revelation - priced at around Rs. 1,000 per head; the spread rivals the best à la carte restaurants. Standout items include the Benne Dosa with Podi Masala, possibly the best in the NCR and Dim Sum that would hold its own in any reputable dim sum restaurant. Don't miss the Grilled Pineapple, an old favourite or the Indianised Meatballs with shredded egg caulis and cheese, a delightful fusion.

Now that you're in the loop on the hottest dining and nightlife spots in the NCR, where are you heading tonight or later this week? Let me

pawan.soni@indianfoodfreak.com.



While Durga Puja is celebrated across the country, it is at a different level in Kolkata. The rhythm of the dhak, the vibrant atmosphere and the exquisite food transport you to another world, writes DIVYA BHATIA









Avisit to Kolkata revealed the grandeur of the festivities, showcasing stunning pandals and creating cherished moments. As a foodie, I was captivated by the culinary extravaganza, especially the traditional Bhuribhoj and Bengali Thali. The unforgettable flavours of Basanti Polao, Aloo Bhaja, Begun Bhaja, Potol Bhaja, Luchi and Chholar Dal, paired with Mishti Doi and Rasgulla, left a lasting impression. The magic of these dishes lies in the love behind their preparation. Bengalis savour their meals in small courses, enhancing the authentic flavours of their cuisine. While I've felt a festive spirit in Delhi, it cannot enchanting Kolkata's

transformation during Durga Puja. However, Delhi offers its own take on Bengali cuisine, and this year, I explored delightful recipes from young chefs, ensuring that whether you're in Kolkata or elsewhere, you can enjoy traditional Puja dishes.

### CHEF GAUTAM KUMAR'S RECIPE FOR GOBINDOBHOG GURER PAYESH

Chef Gautam Kumar, Executive Chef at Foodlink F&B Holdings (India), brings over 20 years of experience in regional Indian cuisine. He emphasises fresh, locally sourced ingredients and has held prestigious positions at top hotels like Shangri-La and Grand Hyatt Delhi. His innovative approach has garnered numerous accolades, and one of his favourite dishes is Gobindobhog Gurer Payesh.

### **GOBINDOBHOG GURER PAYESH**

Kheer, or "payesh" in Bengali, is a sweet rice and milk dish beloved in Bengali culture.
Offered to the goddess Durga as "bhog," it is shared among devotees after the puja. Made with date palm jaggery, "nolen gud kheer" is a healthier alternative to sugar, especially popular during Durga Puja. Sharing Payesh symbolizes unity and harmony among family members. Durga Puja. Sharing Payesh symbolises unity and fosters harmony among family members.



- 50 grams Gobindo bhog rice
- 150 grams nolen gur (date palm jaggery) • ¼ teaspoon salt
- ¼ teaspoon green cardamom powder • 20 grams cashew nuts
- 10 grams raisins (soaked and drained) ● 10 grams ghee

### METHOD

Soak the Rice: Soak the rice in water for 30 minutes, ensuring not to overwash it to retain as much starch as possible. After soaking, drain the rice and spread it out to dry. Coat the Rice: Coat the soaked rice

- with 1/4 teaspoon of ghee and set aside.
- Prepare the Raisins: Soak the raisins in water until swollen.
- cashews until golden. Set aside. •Boil the Milk: Boil the milk in a heavy-

•Fry Cashews: Heat ghee in a pan and fry the

- bottomed pan, simmer for 15 inutes, and add cardamom powder.
- •Cook the Rice: Add the ghee-coated rice to the milk and cook on low heat until fully cooked. The rice should be soft and mushy when mashed between your fingers, as it will firm up while cooling. Stir gently to prevent burning and release starch, which thickens the payesh.

•Thicken the Payesh: Ensure the rice is fully cooked; the payesh should be slightly thicker than desired, as the gur will thin it out. •Add Gur: Turn off the heat and mix in the gur, salt, soaked raisins, and fried cashews,

keeping the heat off to prevent curdling. Gently fold everything together, cover the pan, and let the residual heat melt the gur completely. Serve the payesh hot or cold in a bowl, garnished with fried cashews and soaked raisins.

# NARKEL NI CHINGRI

Chef Gagandeep Singh Bedi, Director of Culinary at Roseate Hotels & Resorts, specialises in reviving regional Indian cuisines and creating signature dishes at Kheer. He focuses on organic produce and minimising food waste.

### **NARKEL NI CHINGRI RECIPE**

One of his standout creations is *Narkel ni Chingri*, a delightful prawn dish cooked in coconut milk. This recipe exemplifies Chef Gagandeep's commitment to authentic flavours and sustainable practices. Here's how to make it:

### INGREDIENTS

- 500g prawns, cleaned and deveined
- 200ml fresh coconut milk 75g fresh grated coconut
- 1 large onion, finely chopped • 1 tbsp ginger paste
- 1 tbsp garlic paste 2-3 green chilies, slit
- 1/2 tsp turmeric powder
- 40ml mustard oil Salt to taste
- Fresh coriander for garnish

### **INSTRUCTIONS**

• Marinate the prawns with turmeric and salt for 15 minutes



then reduce heat. Sauté onions until golden brown, then add ginger and garlic paste.

 Add green chilies, turmeric and red chilli powder, stirring well. Add marinated prawns and cook

until pink (5-7 minutes). Pour in coconut milk and simmer for 5-10 minutes. Add roasted grated coconut and

cook for an additional 2-3 minutes. Adjust seasoning and garnish with fresh coriander and Serve hot with steamed rice for a delicious meal!





# Navratri: The essence of Satvik food

### BY **TEAM VIVA**

The festival of Navratri is here and the air is filled with a spirit of devotion and celebration. During these nine auspicious days, millions across India follow a special dietary regimen, abstaining from regular food and opting for Satvik meals. While these dishes are rooted in tradition, chefs at hotels like *Le Meridien*, New Delhi have taken

the opportunity to elevate this sacred cuisine with contemporary flavours, ensuring that even the most discerning food lovers can enjoy fasting meals with a gourmet touch. Navratri food is characterised by simplicity, with ingredients that align spiritual Common dishes consumed during this period have been improvised by Chef Setuu

- *Gupta*. Here are the dishes: ●'Kuttu ki Puri' (Buckwheat Flour Puri) – A deep-fried, gluten-free flatbread made from buckwheat flour, which is one of the staples during Navratri.
- •'Sabudana tikki' A light and flavorful dish made with soaked tapioca pearls, peanuts, and mild spices like cumin, offering a fulfilling yet easy-to-digest meal.

  •'Paneer Tikka' – Cottage
- cheese cubes marinated in yoghurt and mild spices, then grilled to perfection. Paneer dishes are popular as they provide a protein-rich option for those fasting.

  •'Samak Rice Pulao' – This
- is made from barnyard millet, often called "vrat rice," and is cooked with mild spices and





vegetables to offer a flavorful alternative to regular rice. ●'Anjeer ka Halwa' – A

dessert made from figs, slowcooked in milk and flavoured with cardamom, is a popular sweet indulgence for the fasting period. •'Makhana Curry' - A

creamy salty pudding made from foxnuts (makhana) and curd flavoured with spices and nuts for a rich taste.

• 'Kacche Kale Sabudana Tikki is a crispy snack made from raw banana, sabudana (tapioca pearls), green chilies, and spices. Shallow-fried and enjoyed during fasting periods like Navratri, it offers a flavourful and energising

•'Arbi Singara Kadhi' - is a flavourful curry made with colocasia (arbi) and water chestnuts (singhara), simmered in a spiced yoghurt-based gravy. It's thickened with singhara flour and seasoned with mustard seeds, curry leaves and chilies for a tangy, savoury dish.

Navratri food has always been about maintaining purity and simplicity, but at *Le Meridien*, New Delhi, Chef Setuu Gupta and his team have shown that fasting meals can be both humble and sophisticated. By elevating traditional dishes with innovative techniques, they ensure that guests not only honour their spiritual commitment but also indulge in a culinary journey that excites the senses. This fusion of faith and flavour is a testament to the evolving nature of India's food culture, where tradition and modernity walk hand in







# CELEBRATING NAVRATRI

# A SPECTACULAR DANCE-DRAMA EXPERIENCE

With the festive spirit of Navratri, Shriram Bharatiya Kala Kendra presents a captivating dance-drama that brings the timeless tale of the Ramayana to life, highlighting the struggle between good and evil and the victory of righteousness, says SAKSHI PRIYA

ctober marks the arrival of a magical time in India, where the festive spirit fills the air and people from all walks of life come together to celebrate the rich cultural heritage passed down for generations. Among the many stories and traditions that take centre stage during this season, none are as cherished or as timeless as the story of the Ramayana. Retold through art, music, dance and drama, the Ramayana during Navratri is more than just a mythological tale; it's a reminder of the eternal struggle between good and evil, love and loss, and the ultimate victory of righteousness. One of the most iconic ways to experience this story is through the grand production of "Shri Ram" by the *Shriram Bharatiya* Kala Kendra. For 68 years, this dancedrama has been a hallmark of Delhi's festive calendar, drawing audiences into the epic saga of the Ramayana. The Navratri festival; it's not just a performance but an experience, a journey through time and a deep dive into India's cultural and spiritual heritage.

### A GRAND STAGE AND CAPTIVATING **ATMOSPHERE**

From the moment visitors arrive at the venue, they are welcomed by an impressive stage representing ancient Ayodhya. The meticulous attention to detail in the stage design is evident, featuring intricate patterns and vibrant colours that transport the audience to the heart of the Ramayana. The lighting shifts throughout the performance, enhancing the emotional depth of each

As the performance commences, the atmosphere buzzes with excitement and anticipation. Artists in elaborate costumes fill the stage, celebrating the arrival of their lord Ram. The traditional music accompanying their movements resonates with the audience, enveloping everyone in the festive spirit. The dance-drama format allows for a seamless blend of storytelling and art; classical Indian dance forms like Kathak, Bharatnatyam and Odissi take centre stage, where each gesture and expression conveys deep emotion. The opening scene beautifully showcases themes of community, love, and unity, drawing everyone into the celebration.

### **A DIVINE BEGINNING**

and the weight of

The story begins with the birth of Lord Ram and his brothers, as the people of Ayodhya rejoice in the arrival of their beloved prince. The joy on stage is visible, reflecting the warmth and happiness of the occasion. The scenes that follow take the audience on a journey through Ram's life, from his education in scriptures and warfare to his marriage with Sita, highlighting the trials he faces along the way.

What makes this story captivating is not just Ram's destiny as a divine figure but his humanity. From a young age, Ram exemplifies virtues of humility, patience and wisdom, shaping his actions throughout his life. This sense of divine purpose, combined with Ram's ability to empathise with ordinary people, makes his character relatable and inspiring to devotees during Navratri. As "Shri Ram" beautifully portrays, Ram's early years symbolise the joys of life



" 'SHRI RAM' IS MORE THAN JUST A RETELLING OF THE RAMAYANA; IT IS AN EDUCATIONAL TÓOL, A COMMON CONNECTION BETWEEN GENERATIONS, AND A TRIBUTE TO INDIAN TALENT IN DANCE, POETRY AND DESIGN"

Photo: Pankaj Kumar



responsibility he must bear as the future ruler. The early relationships that shape him, including his bond with his brothers Lakshman, Bharata and Shatrughna, each play an essential role in the unfolding drama.

### THE JOURNEY OF LORD RAM AND HIS **BROTHERS**

As the story progresses, spectators witness the formative years of Ram alongside his brothers, training under Vishwamitra. This segment showcases the dedication and brotherly camaraderie that define their relationships, expressed through intricate choreography that highlights their commitment to duty. The physical movements and emotional expressions of the dancers capture the essence of loyalty, honour, and sacrifice, core values that resonate throughout the Ramayana. The portraval of Ram's marriage to Sita is another highlight of the performance. The ceremony is beautifully staged and thoughtfully executed, illustrating the depth of love and devotion between the two characters. Sita is depicted with grace and strength, captivating the

audience as she expresses her hopes and dreams. The artistry of this scene reflects the timeless nature of love, with each gesture drawing the audience deeper into their narrative. This portrayal captures the essence of their divine union while reminding the audience that true love involves enduring hardship and remaining steadfast in faith.

### THE RISE OF CONFLICT

The story takes a dramatic turn with the introduction of Ravana. The portrayal of Ravana brings an air of tension and complexity, masterfully performed by a talented artist whose commanding presence leaves a lasting impression. The audience feels the weight of impending conflict as the stage transforms into a realm where good clashes with evil. One of the most gripping moments comes when Ravana sends a golden deer to tempt Sita, leading to the separation of Ram and Sita. The tension during this scene is visible, as Sita's innocence and longing are powerfully conveyed. This pivotal moment marks the beginning of trials that will test Ram's love and resolve.

The fierce confrontation between Lakshman and Surpanakha highlights themes of loyalty and honour. The

choreography in this segment is intense, illustrating the raw emotions involved in defending family honour. Lakshman's decisive action in cutting off Surpanakha's nose showcases the protective instincts that run deep within the characters of the Ramayana.

### THE BATTLE OF GOOD AND EVIL

As the narrative escalates, the stage transforms into a dramatic battlefield. The choreography during these scenes is breathtaking, with performers moving in perfect synchrony to depict the chaos of war. Ram's battle against Ravana becomes the climactic moment of the performance, showcasing the bravery and determination of the forces of good. The audience is enthralled as Ram ultimately conquers Ravana, a victory resonating with the core message of the Ramayana: righteousness prevails in the face

The final scenes, where Ram returns to Ayodhya to be crowned king, are a celebration of joy and mastery. The atmosphere fills with colour and light, reflecting the happiness of the citizens of Ayodhya as they welcome their lord home. This ending serves as a poignant reminder of the importance of justice, duty, and the values that bind communities together.

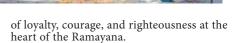
### THE SIGNIFICANCE OF "SHRI RAM"

Under the artistic direction of Padmashri Shobha Deepak Singh, the show has evolved over the years while retaining its essence. Singh, Chairperson of SBKK, beautifully articulated this sentiment when she stated, "'Shri Ram' is more than just a retelling of the Ramayana; it is an educational tool, a common connection between generations, and a tribute to Indian talent in dance, poetry, and design." Her words resonate throughout the venue, emphasising the importance of preserving and celebrating Indian culture. The entire production is a tribute to the dedication of the artists and the meticulous planning that went into its execution. Every detail, from the stunning costumes to the intricate choreography, was carefully curated to create a seamless experience for the audience. This performance not only

entertains but also

educates, providing

insights into the values



### A CELEBRATION OF CULTURE AND COMMUNITY

The performance of "Shri Ram" is not just an artistic display; it is a celebration of culture and community. The universal messages of love, sacrifice, and the struggle against adversity resonate deeply, reminding everyone of the cherished values in our lives. The lighting is masterfully used to reflect shifts in tone, from the warmth and joy of Ram and Sita's union to the ominous darkness of Ravana's plans. As the scenes transition, the stage transforms fluidly, drawing the audience deeper into the narrative. The costumes are a visual feast - rich, vibrant

and steeped in historical authenticity. Each character, from Ram and Sita in their royal attire to Hanuman and his monkey warriors, is dressed to reflect their roles and the cultural and mythological significance of their actions. The grandness of the set and costumes adds a layer of magic to the story, allowing the audience to fully immerse themselves in the spectacle.

Embracing the Spirit of Navratri The festival of Navratri is a time for reflection, devotion and celebration, beautifully captured in the performance of "Shri Ram." This production highlights the strength of unity and the importance of

standing up for what is right while encouraging a shared understanding of our cultural values. As the Navratri celebrations continue, performances like "Shri Ram" inspire us to reflect on the deeper meanings of the Ramayana and the victory of good over evil.

With performances scheduled until 26 October 2024, families have the chance to experience this iconic production together, witnessing the brilliance of Indian art and culture come to life on stage. So, as we gather with friends and family to celebrate Navratri, let us carry forward the lessons of the Ramayana in our hearts. May this festive season fill our lives with

> joy, love, and an unwavering commitment to righteousness. Wishing all readers a blessed Navratri filled with love

























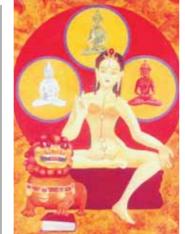




### ARIES March 21-April 19

This week begins with an international touch, whether it's receiving uplifting news from afar or having a family member travel overseas. Expect a flurry of activity, suggesting potential overseas travel for work. Stay prepared for swift movements and transitions. In legal domains, anticipate favourable outcomes that might require decisive action on your part. Health-wise, if you've been under the weather, you'll find yourself mending and returning to your usual activities. As the week concludes, joy emerges from family matters, particularly involving your children who may excel academically or bring surprising news of a potential marriage, leading to joyful wedding preparations. For those already wed, expect deepening bonds and enhanced stability in your

Lucky number 9 | Lucky colour Teal



### **LEO** July 23-Aug 22

If you're feeling the need to escape the everyday turmoil and start anew, consider reflecting on your past experiences and future aspirations. Gaining mental clarity is essential for a smoother transition, helping you shift from chaos to calm and positivity. Making conscious decisions is crucial because once actions are taken, they can't be reversed. The principle of reaping what you sow always holds true, emphasizing the importance of your choices. This week, some may find themselves connecting deeply with a special someone, experiencing a profound synergy reminiscent of two luminaries that, although bright on their own, radiate even more brilliantly together. This connection can bring significant joy and fulfillment, enhancing the journey ahead.

Lucky number 12 | Lucky colour Red Lucky day Tuesday



### **SAGITTARIUS** Nov 22-Dec 21

This week promises a series of significant shifts, especially in your professional life. You may find yourself navigating through a rapid succession of events that could reshape your career landscape favorably. However, if you've been riding a high wave recently, stay vigilant as challenges loom on the horizon. Be cautious of deceptive individuals who might be scheming behind your back, potentially leading to a loss of what you've diligently worked for, which could be quite distressing. As the week closes, your bold and dynamic nature will come to the forefront. You'll find yourself invigorated, and ready to tackle any challenge without hesitation. Your ability to make quick, effective decisions will enhance, driven by a proactive and energetic approach to life.

Lucky number 14 | Lucky colour Fuchsia Lucky day Wednesday



### **TAURUS** April 20-May 20

This week calls for patience and minimal social interactions. Embracing practices like yoga and meditation could greatly enhance your sense of peace. Reflecting on the recent challenges in both your professional and personal life, it's crucial not to let these setbacks cloud the current period. An optimistic outlook reveals promising opportunities for financial growth. Engaging in new business ventures could prove lucrative. Your natural intuition might become a useful tool in navigating straightforward scenarios, leveraging your fair and analytical disposition to transition from negativity to positivity smoothly. This approach will not only clear your mind but also deepen your understanding of financial and emotional matters, guiding you towards a more

Lucky number 131 Lucky colour Saffron Lucky day Monday



### VIRGO Aug 23-Sep 22

The week begins with notable challenges. Recent endeavors have piled on numerous obligations, making you feel overwhelmed and stuck in your current circumstances. This sense of confinement may make you hesitant to make bold moves. Additionally, there may be individuals who seem opposed to your success, adding to the strain. However, amidst these trials, remember that you possess an inherent strength capable of overcoming these hurdles. Drawing on this positive energy will be crucial as you navigate through the week. By week's end, a calming presence will replace the earlier turmoil, allowing you to distance yourself from worldly concerns. Supported by your loved ones, you'll find yourself relaxing into a state of profound contentment and joy, reinvigorated by the peace that envelops you.

Lucky number 5 | Lucky colour Maroon Lucky day Wednesday



### CAPRICORN Dec 22-Jan 19

This week, you have every reason to celebrate your achievements. A stable financial foundation brings you both security and comfort. For many, these rewards stem from diligent effort and personal commitment. Your aspirations for prosperity are now coming to fruition. Take a moment to reflect on your riches, both tangible and spiritual. The recognition of your hard work may manifest as advancements or salary increases, boosting your self-assurance. You stand as a dependable beacon for those around you, drawing everyone's focus. Your balanced perspective allows you to view situations uniquely. As the week closes, you'll find yourself deeply engaged in reflective practices, seeking to understand the depth of your

Lucky number 8 | Lucky colour Black Lucky day Friday



### **GEMINI** May 21-June 20

This week, your innate kindness, generosity, honesty, and tranquility shine through. Some individuals may embark on a budding relationship brimming with promise that could blossom into profound joy and love. This period marks a significant phase where your deepest aspirations might begin to materialize, guided by a strong internal intuition. Professionally, your tenacity, swift responses, and unwavering commitment to your objectives help you navigate challenges effortlessly. Your hard work is likely to gain recognition and commendation from your peers, affirming your efforts. This is a time to relish the rewards of previous challenges that have now been surmounted. As the week wraps up, expect to find yourself in festive spirits, celebrating recent successes with a significant gathering or a festive

Lucky number 2 | Lucky colour Mint



### LIBRA Sep 23-Oct 22

This week, be wary as envy surrounds your accomplishments, and others may attempt to tarnish your reputation. There's a possibility of encountering obstacles that could disrupt your plans dramatically. Additionally, there's a risk that your own talents could be misdirected to work against you. Remember, the primary challenge comes from within. You might face disputes and resistance at work, where your proposals could be rigorously questioned by doubters. It's crucial to maintain your composure and seek amicable resolutions when possible, while steadfastly pursuing your goals. As the week closes, you might find yourself drawn to familiar places. A trip back to places filled with memories and reuniting with loved ones could rejuvenate your spirits and restore a positive outlook

Lucky number 7 | Lucky colour Lavender **Lucky day** Saturday



### **AQUARIUS** Jan 20-Feb 18

This week, a significant emotional journey begins, characterized by an evolving intensity of feelings, culminating in a period of significant personal insight and potential fulfillment of deep-seated desires. As the days progress, you may find yourself grappling with a challenging home situation, feeling weighed down by nostalgia or a sense of loss. However, as the week draws to a close, there is a noticeable shift towards a more uplifting scenario where you may discover newfound peace and happiness. In resolving life's challenges, a change of scenery could be on the horizon, whether through a strategic move or a professional relocation. Significant figures in your professional life are likely to influence these transitions, marking a pivotal moment in vour iourney.

Lucky number 11 | Lucky colour Gold Lucky day Tuesday



### **CANCER** June 21-July 22

This week marks a phase of deep satisfaction as a longheld dream comes to fruition. You find yourself in a joyful union or embarking on a career path that fills you with pride. Riding a wave of bliss, you feel the support of a higher power enriching your journey. Recognition fo your perseverance and tenacity inspires others, while quidance from a mentor proves to be incredibly beneficial. Your commitment to a balanced and harmonious approach to life strengthens. As the week closes, your interactions are characterized by fairness and responsibility. You secure a role that promises emotional and financial rewards, brightening your prospects for the future. Your outlook is optimistic as you navigate forward, ready to embrace new opportunities with open arms.

Lucky number 4 | Lucky colour White Lucky day Sunday



### SCORPIO Oct 23-Nov 21

At the start of the week, some individuals might find themselves overwhelmed by their emotions. Minor issues, whether related to personal health or family matters, could cause tension. This period encourages the week progresses, a shift occurs, bringing a surge of enthusiasm and energy. This phase is characterized by a strong sense of leadership and commitment to responsibilities, possibly coinciding with new responsibilities or projects. The latter part of the week signals a significant period of change, marking the arrival of new professional opportunities. These changes are poised to positively influence one's future, setting the stage for lasting improvements in personal and

**\_ucky number** 3 | **Lucky colour** Turquoise Lucky day Monday

Is boredom a blessing or a curse?

you feel you are wasted, life is a failure, it's okay, never mind!



### PISCES Feb 19-March 20

Throughout this week, individuals prone to deep empathy are especially attuned to the needs of others. They naturally excel in nurturing roles, offering their support and guidance generously. Their compassion extends widely, ensuring that Known for their capability to address and manage the challenges faced by others, they blend resilience with a profound capacity to care. Not only are they mentally and physically robust, but they also possess an indomitable spirit characterized by bravery and endurance. Their unique approach to action is guided by a clear, unaffected ationale. This week, many will find themselves impressed by these intrinsic traits, strengthening bonds and forming

Lucky number 10 | Lucky colour Olive **ucky day** Thursday

Madhu Kotiya is a tarot card reader, spiritual healer, and Founder, MShezaim Institute of Tarot and Divination. Contact details: madhu@indiatarot.com, www.indiatarot.com, M: 987328333

# Sri Sri Ravi Shankar Spiritual Guru

GURUSPEA

### Take a few moments to sit down, be open to boredom, and you'll effortlessly move into a deep meditative state

# There are 365 days in a year and there are so many years in your life. If for one or two days

an ocean, the waves

keep coming non-stop, it doesn't get boring! Birds sing the same song, every morning, all their life, they don't get bored! It is only human beings who get bored! 'Oh! Once again the same thing.' And why do you get bored? It is because of memory. You remember whatever you have done before, so you get bored. Memory is both a blessing and a curse. It is because you get bored that you feel the need to look for something different, something new, and that is how creativity comes up; you look for the ultimate. Otherwise, you could have remained like an animal doing the same thing every day. But, you can't do it because you

get bored! So, in that sense, boredom is a blessing. Because you get bored, you move on, you look forward, you become a seeker and you rise higher. At the same time, boredom is also a curse because it doesn't

in one place. So your mind aimlessly keeps jumping from one place to another. Because you get bored of everything, you can't enjoy anything. There are two different paths that boredom leads you to. Boredom is a blessing when it leads you to wisdom. Boredom is a curse when it leads you to frustration and depression. Because you are bored, you can't enjoy it, and when you can't enjoy it you get depressed and frustrated. Or, because you are bored you wake up and begin with a quest. When life feels dull, there's

this magical moment where everything becomes lively. You can repeat the same thing over and over, and it won't bother you. It's like finding a spring of life. Just let go of the past, be like a carefree child, and every moment becomes priceless.

You move ahead and you look into the Self which is fresh all the



time! The Self is ever new. Because you are bored with the ephemeral, the surface, you go deep into the Self. So boredom is both a blessing and a curse. A blessing because it takes you away from the routine monotonous life, makes you aware and brings life into you.

And it is a curse because it doesn't let vou stabilise. People who are in love don't get bored. The heart knows no boredom. The head knows boredom.

In life both are essential, the heart and the head. If you are only

in the heart, it is no good. And if you are only stuck in the head, that is also no good. Balancing both is Yoga. Spirituality is balancing the heart and head together. Anyone who feels that they are a failure, just wake up! So what?! Life is eternal.

Meditation acts like a bridge connecting your head and heart. Take a few moments to sit down, be open to boredom, and you'll effortlessly move into a deep meditative state. Otherwise, that boredom might just lead you to sleep. It's a choice — either you sleep, become more sluggish, or you seize the opportunity of boredom to delve into a deep meditation.

There are 365 days in a year and there are so many years in your life. If for one or two days you feel you are wasted, life is a failure, it's okay, never mind!

On a full moon, if it is cloudy and the light cannot shine on the Earth, the moon does not get

upset. If on one full moon night, you cannot see the moon rising, so what? The moon is still there. Like that, inside you there is potential, there is divinity which is so complete. If it has not come to the surface in one day, never mind! You have all the great qualities. If some do not exhibit on a particular day, never mind.

Don't blame yourself, don't analyze yourself too much. We start analysing ourselves too much; to the extent that we feel upset and down. We are so hard on ourselves. I am saying this to those who feel bad about themselves. NEVER MIND, WAKE UP! Never mind if these many years are wasted. The future is bright and there is still so much for you to do. All regrets happen only when you are looking at the past. If you are walking and your head is turned backwards, then that is called regret. Turn your head and look forward, and you will see the future is always bright.

### Now you can write to us at agendapioneer@gmail.com