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11 SPORTS

# Victory for Democracy

## Hurrah for the BJP in Haryana Jammu and Kashmir speak up

RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI/HARYANA

Quashing exit polls results that were unanimous in projecting a clean sweep by Congress, Haryana poll results presented a dramatic turnaround as Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) scored a hat trick by winning 48 seats of the 90 members' Legislative Assembly. The party improved its performance by winning seven more seats than it had in the outgoing Assembly.

Congress won 37 seats, Indian National Lok Dal (INLD) won two seats and Independents won three seats. The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) and Jannayak Janata Party (JJP) have drawn a blank. The half-way mark is 46.

The BJP's astonishing performance will reinvigorate the ruling party cadres, and could deal a debilitating blow to the Congress looking for further ascendancy after its improved show in the Lok Sabha polls.

Among prominent candidates, Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini, Congress leader Bhupinder Singh Hooda, and his new party colleague Vinesh Phogat won, as did Independent candidate Savitri Jindal. The INLD's Abhay



Haryana Chief Minister Nayab Saini greets supporters after winning the Assembly elections from Ladwa constituency, at Ladwa, in Kurukshetra district, Tuesday

### A historic win: PM



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday hailed the BJP's win in the Haryana Assembly polls as a victory of its politics of development and good governance, assuring people that the party will leave no stone unturned to

fulfil people's aspirations. Addressing the party workers at the party headquarters after the results of the Haryana and Jammu and Kashmir Assembly elections, PM Modi said that farmers in Haryana have given Congress a "befitting reply", and showed that they are with the country and with BJP.

"People of Haryana have scripted history by blossoming lotus. They have not only made the BJP win but gave the highest number of votes to the party", he said.

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Singh Chautala lost, as did JJP's Dushyant Chautala, Haryana Assembly. Speaker and BJP's Gian Chand Gupta, Haryana Lokhit Party Gopal Kanda. After the victory, Haryana Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini credited Prime Minister Narendra Modi with the BJP's hat-trick in the state where he took charge barely six months ago. "I want to thank 2.8 crore people of Haryana who have reposed faith in the policies of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. This is the victory of Haryana's farmers, the poor, women, and youth. People have voted for PM Modi's work for Haryana. It is a historic victory.

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MOHIT KANDHARI ■ JAMMU

Staging a comeback with a 'thumping' majority in his kitty, National Conference (NC) Vice President Omar Abdullah is all set to become the first Chief Minister of the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir.

In the month-long Assembly elections, held for the first time after the Abrogation of Articles 370 and 35-A, 54-year-old Omar led the alliance partners to victory winning a clear majority of 48 seats in the 90-member house.

The NC president Dr Farooq Abdullah said the verdict was proof that the people of Jammu and Kashmir were against the abrogation of Article 370.

Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), despite winning the highest tally of 29 Assembly seats in its strong bastion of Jammu, is left stranded starting at the prospect of occupying the Opposition benches. Meanwhile, J&K BJP Chief Ravindra Raina lost his seat in the Nowshera Assembly segment. He was defeated by Surinder Choudhary of the Jammu and Kashmir National Conference by a margin of over 7000 votes. The party won 10 out of 11



Supporters of Congress and National Conference (NC) celebrate as the Congress-NC alliance leads during the counting of votes of Jammu & Kashmir Assembly elections, in Srinagar, Tuesday

### Egg on the face of Exit pollsters

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

All exit polls went wrong once again as the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) is set for a third term in Haryana where counting of votes for Assembly elections 2024 took place on Tuesday, giving the BJP a comfortable lead over its top competitor, the Indian National Congress (INC). This is not the first time exit polls have gone wrong. The Lok Sabha elections 2024, Chhattisgarh assembly polls in 2023,

Results of 2015 Bihar and Delhi Assembly Elections as well as Lok Sabha polls of 2004 and 2014 are examples of how exit polls predictions went wrong. Several exit polls had predicted a Congress victory in Haryana which recorded a voter turnout of 67.90 per cent. However, the BJP claimed it will return to power for a third consecutive term by winning 48 seats. This is a massive victory for the BJP in the state.

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seats from Jammu district, five from Kathua, four each from Udhampur and Doda, three from Samba, two from Reasi, and one from Rajouri. The party, however, failed to open its account from Kashmir Valley. The party had campaigned aggressively promising a stable government with a 'Hindu' Chief Minister at the helm of affairs. The BJP's gamble to grant Scheduled Tribe status to Paharis in the region failed to improve its tally. All the candidates who joined the BJP failed to win any seat from the twin frontier districts of Rajouri and Poonch.

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## NHAI finally responds to nature's calls



The Union Minister of Road Transport and Highways, Shri Nitin Gadkari launching the 'Humsafar Policy' 2024 at The Ashok Hotel, in New Delhi

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The Centre has finally woken up to address a pressing need expressed by commuters who have nowhere to answer nature's call when commuting across the country's national highways and expressways network. The government by bringing in a policy for facilities such as clean toilets, baby care rooms etc.

Union minister Nitin Gadkari on Tuesday launched 'Humsafar Policy' which will see the introduction of facilities, such as clean toilets, baby care rooms, provisions for wheelchairs, EV charging stations, parking spaces, and dormitory services at fuel stations.

The policy will also offer

convenient, safe, and enjoyable experience for highway users, while empowering entrepreneurs, generating jobs, and enhancing livelihoods for service providers, as per the statement. The Humsafar policy shall allow commuters access to standardised, well maintained and hygienic facilities. Commuters will be able to find details of relevant service providers near their location instantly on the Rajmarg Yatra app. Commuters will be empowered to rate the service provided and the facilities, along with being able to raise issues.

Addressing the launch ceremony, Gadkari said the Humsafar brand will become synonymous with utmost safety and comfort for travellers and drivers along the nation's world-class highway network. He also emphasised on the need to deliver high quality, standardised services across

the national highways. Gadkari said the Modi government remains fully committed to delivering top-notch amenities across our highway network, ensuring a fast and seamless travel experience for all. These facilities shall provide multiple options of rest and refreshment for the highway commuters during their journey. Some of the facilities being developed at each WSA are fuel stations, food court / restaurants, dhabas, convenience stores, clean and hygienic toilet facilities, drinking water, first aid / medical room including child-care room, dedicated area for promoting local artisans, car bus/truck parking, drone landing facilities / helipad etc.

A senior National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) official said the Central road making agency has planned to introduce Humsafar policy to onboard existing and upcoming service providers along the Highways/Expressways under the purview of MoRT&H to improve services for commuters by standardising the facilities provided. This will complement the Wayside Amenities being developed by NHAI on National Highways. The policy aims to benefit all the three stakeholders namely Service Providers, NHAI/MoRT&H and commuters, added the official.

## Kolkata doctors resign en masse



SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

With the condition of eight junior doctors sitting on indefinite fast entering the third day on Tuesday — and no offer of talks coming from the side of the State Government — the senior doctors of RG Kar Medical College and Hospital tendered mass resignation warning they would go for bigger struggle should State not respond positively. To make matter worse the senior doctors of the senior doctors of Calcutta Medical College too threatened to follow in the footsteps of their RGMCH colleagues if the Government did not respond within 24 hours. Earlier in the day, 15 senior doctors also joined their

junior counterparts in a symbolic hunger strike, further demonstrating the growing unrest within the hospital. "About fifty of us senior doctors today tendered mass resignation as a mark of solidarity with our junior colleagues because they are fighting for a just cause," said a senior doctor. The doctors' resignations came on a day when junior doctors of other medical colleges observed a symbolic fast on Tuesday in support of their colleagues in Kolkata.

Eight doctors from different medical colleges of Kolkata have been on an indefinite fast in support of their ten-point demand that includes a centralised referral system, security for all the medical staff inside the hospitals, ending of the threat syndicate and related malpractices that were rampant in most of the Government medical colleges and hospitals, basic amenities like rest rooms and washrooms for doctors, installation of CCTV cameras in all the Government hospitals, real-time monitoring of bed availability, and the establishment of task forces to ensure the proper functioning of essential facilities like CCTV cameras, on-call rooms, and washrooms, etc.

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## MITHUN: FROM FAME TO GLORY



President Droupadi Murmu presents the Dadasaheb Phalke Award to veteran actor Mithun Chakraborty during the 70th National Film Award ceremony at Vigyan Bhawan, in New Delhi, Tuesday



## The multi-crore makeovers that failed

Congestion, water logging at Barapullah flyover, Mathura road, and Pragati Maidan tunnel has only intensified

BY SAUMYA SHUKLA

The multi-crore ambitious projects of Barapullah flyover, Mathura road and Pragati Maidan tunnel, which aimed at solving the traffic woes in the national Capital, and connect satellite cities around Delhi such as Noida, and Ghaziabad has not only failed to take the burden off from the city roads, it has made the situation worse with commuters sitting for hours in the jams on the stretches.

Ironically, the Barapullah Elevated Corridor, which was meant to solve traffic congestion in south Delhi, has now become among the worst stretches for people to cross at peak hours. Hundreds of vehicles are

routinely stranded in massive jams that stretch on for many kilometres on the roads leading to and from the flyover. The flyover is situated between AIIMS Flyover and the Sundial at Sarai Kale Khan over Barapullah Nallah, and is one of the crucial roads linking commuters of Ghaziabad and Noida with South Delhi, and vice versa. Each carriageway of Barapullah Flyover has three lanes. Several bottlenecks are formed on the flyover leading to vehicles barely crawling in the specific location. Basically, a traffic bottleneck is a localised disruption of vehicular traffic on a street, road, or highway. As opposed to a traffic jam, a bottleneck is a result of a specific



Representative image

physical condition, often the design of the road, badly timed traffic lights, or sharp curves. According to the Delhi Traffic Police department, as per the current traffic flow pattern, the volume of traffic coming from Ghaziabad through NE-03 (Delhi Meerut Expressway) and Noida coming through DND is very high in the morning. "The traffic coming from Ghaziabad and Noida ascends the Barapullah Flyover near Sundial. Due to heavy volume of traffic coming through in six lanes and discharging only through three lanes of Barapullah Flyover, a bottleneck is created resulting in congestion on Ring Road near Sundial. Similarly, in the evening peak hours, the traffic coming

from AIIMS and Lodhi Road merges near Hazrat Nizamuddin Basti which creates a bottleneck at the said merging point," Additional Commissioner of Police of Traffic Zone 2 Dinesh Gupta to The Pioneer stated. He added that letters have been written to the Public Works Department to increase the width of the carriageways to accommodate more vehicles and reduce the traffic woes. As per the official data accessed exclusively by The Pioneer, a total of 3,252 improper parking e-challans, 7,823 challans, 2,183 tow away challans, and 913 e-rickshaw no entry challans have been issued on the flyover till October 7 this year.

Continued on page 2

# Assembly polls will see repeat of BJP's success in Haryana: Mahayuti leaders

**TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI**

Buoyed by the BJP's return to power in Haryana, the ruling MahaYuti leaders on Tuesday expressed confidence that Maharashtra would see a repeat of Haryana's "historic" victory in the forthcoming State Assembly polls. Talking to media persons at the BJP headquarters here, State BJP president Chandrashekhar Bawankule said that the people of Haryana had rejected the Congress' efforts to project a "false narrative" and mislead the backward classes in the north-Indian state. "The Congress had misled the backward class community during the Lok Sabha polls.

Similar false propaganda carried out by the Opposition Congress during the Haryana Assembly electioneering had fallen flat on its face. The people of Haryana have supported Prime Minister Narendra Modi's positive poll plank of 'Vikasit Bharat', Bawankule said. "After hearing what all Rahul Gandhi said in the United States about reservations, the anti-reservation ace of the Congress stood exposed. The people have realized that only BJP can protest the Constitution and interests of people. The people want a double-engine government for development. The people of Maharashtra will deliver a similar verdict in the State Assembly poll," the State BJP



chief said. Expressing the BJP's commitment to take all sections of the people along with it, Bawankule said: "It is for the Congress leadership to self-introspection as far as BJP is concerned, we will not become arrogant over our victory nor will get deterred by the electoral setbacks". Meanwhile, Maharashtra Chief Minister Eknath Shinde's son and Shiv Sena MP Dr Shrikant

Shinde said that the people of Haryana had rejected Rahul Gandhi's attempt to drive a wedge in the society through caste-religion-based politics. "The voters Haryana have rejected these divisive tactics indulged in by Rahul Gandhi. Instead, they have chosen stability and progress offered by a double-engine government. Maharashtra will witness a similar outcome in the State Assembly polls". Addressing a news conference in Jalna in Marathwada during the fourth phase of the Jan Samwad Yatra, Shinde said: "Rahul Gandhi attempted to polarize votes with caste hatred wherever he went. However, the people of Haryana have responded decisively, reject-

ing this politics of division in favour of progress." Describing the BJP's electoral victory in Haryana as a "clear message to Congress and opposition parties indulging in caste politics," Shinde said: "The people had secured some seats in Lok Sabha polls through claims that the BJP, if re-elected to power, would rewrite the Constitution. However, the people rejected the Congress' 'fake narrative' used in the Haryana Assembly polls. "The people are seeing the positive impact of a double-engine government—both at the state and national levels—and I am certain that this will reflect in the upcoming Maharashtra elections," Shinde said.

# JJP witnesses fall in its electoral fortune after ending alliance with BJP

**PNS/PTI ■ CHANDIGARH**

From emerging as a king-maker in the 2019 Haryana Assembly polls to facing a potential wipeout five years later, the Jannayak Janta Party has witnessed a dramatic fall in its electoral fortune after its alliance with the BJP ended in March. Party leader and former deputy chief minister Dushyant Chautala faced a humiliating defeat in the polls as he trails in the fifth spot in the Uchana Kalan Assembly segment -- a seat that he won in 2019. In 2019, the JJP won 10 of the 90 assembly seats, but it emerged as a kingmaker and forged a post-poll alliance with the BJP, which had fallen six short of a simple majority after winning 40 seats. The Ajay Singh Chautala-led party, which was born after a vertical split in the parent outfit Indian National Lok Dal (INLD) in December 2018 owing to a family feud, saw a sudden rise in its graph and abrupt decline once its alliance with the BJP ended in March this year.

# Poll results underscored unassailable strength of BJP in Haryana: Arun Yadav

**PARVESH SHARMA ■ GURUGRAM**

Arun Yadav, state social media head of Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) said that the results of the 2024 Haryana Vidhan Sabha elections have emphatically underscored the unassailable strength of the Bharatiya Janata Party in Haryana. Defying the predictions of political pundits, strategists, and exit polls alike, the BJP has secured a historic, decisive mandate, forming the government for an unprecedented third consecutive term. "In a state notorious for its cyclical anti-incumbency and frequent power shifts, this victory stands as a testament to the faith that the people of Haryana have reposed in our governance," he said. We also extend our deepest

gratitude to Manohar Lal Khattar, whose visionary leadership over the past decade laid the foundation for this triumph. His dedication to clean governance, development, and people-centric policies has won the hearts of Haryanvis," he said. Nayan Singh Saini, who executed the vision with precision and led our party to a historic third victory. His leadership has set a new benchmark for governance in the state, and under his continued guidance, Haryana will achieve unprecedented heights of development. "The BJP's campaign stood firmly on its 10-year record of clean, corruption-free governance. Our policies for women, farmers, the poor, and Dalits, along with our commitment to transparency in government recruitment—ensuring no 'kharchi-parchi'—resonated deeply with the electorate," he added.

# Biggest lesson from Haryana is that one should not be overconfident, says Kejriwal

**STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI**

The "biggest lesson" from Haryana is that one should never be "overconfident" in the elections, AAP chief Arvind Kejriwal said on Tuesday after the Congress failed to come back to power in the assembly polls despite 10 years of anti-incumbency against the BJP. The Aam Aadmi Party and Congress failed to stitch up a pre-poll alliance due to differences over seat sharing. "While the AAP has lost all seats it contested, the Congress has also fallen well short of the majority mark in the state, and the ruling BJP is all set to form the government for the third consecutive time. "The biggest lesson of this is that one should never be overconfident in the elections," said Kejriwal while addressing a gathering of the AAP municipal councillors at an event. "No

election should be taken lightly. Each election and each seat is tough," he added. In the Lok Sabha polls this year, the AAP and the Congress fought elections together in Haryana. As part of their agreement, the Aam Aadmi Party contested only one seat, but it lost while the Congress won five out of 10 Lok Sabha seats in Haryana. Reacting to the results of Haryana Assembly polls, AAP's state chief Sushil Gupta said that outcome would have been different if there would have been an alliance like the Lok Sabha elections. Both parties were part of the opposition INDIA bloc in the Lok Sabha polls. "The outcome would have been different if the alliance (of AAP-Congress) had participated in this (Haryana's) assembly election as well..." Gupta said.

# Kerala on verge of Constitutional crisis as Chief Secretary, DGP ignore Governor's summons

**KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ KOCHI**

Kerala is on the verge of a major Constitutional crisis as the Chief Secretary and Police Chief refused to meet Governor Arif Mohammed Khan who had summoned them to Raj Bhavan to brief him about some of the sensitive political developments that hogged the limelight recently. Both the Chief Secretary and the Police Chief were asked to meet the Governor on Tuesday evening and explain to him about the recent statements made by Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan about gold smuggling and hawala cash seized in Malappuram district and the latter's volte face following the displeasure of the Islamic community in the State. The decision of the two senior officials in the State not to brief the

Governor came following instructions from Chief Minister's Office, it is reliably learnt. According to Vijayan, the Governor has no business to summon the chief secretary and the DGP over the head of the chief minister. "The Governor's action was following the refusal of Vijayan to meet him and explain the details about gold smuggling and hawala transactions reported from the Malappuram district. The Chief Minister himself had disclosed during a press meet that the district topped the table in the quantity of smuggled gold and hawala cash seized in the State. Vijayan had disclosed in the presser that out of the 147 kg smuggled gold seized in the State during the last three years Malappuram district alone accounted for 124.47 kg yellow metal.

# A historic win: PM

From page 1

Termining the BJP's victory in Haryana as historic, PM Modi expressed his gratitude to the voters for giving a clear majority to the BJP for a record third term. He also called this the "victory of the Constitution". The PM said the people of Haryana have done wonders. "Jaha doodh-dahi ka khana, waisa hai apna Haryana... Today is the sixth day of Navratri, the day of Maa Katyayani. Maa Katyayani is sitting on a lion with a lotus in her hand. She is blessing all of us. On such a holy day, lotus has bloomed in Haryana for the third time," he added. He slammed the Congress party for spreading 'hatred' and misleading the voters on different issues including that of farmers and Agniveers. "...For some time now, many conspiracies are being hatched against India. Many conspiracies are being hatched to weaken India's democracy and social fabric. International conspiracies are being hatched. National parties like Congress and their allies are involved in this game. Today Haryana has given a befitting reply to every such conspiracy. Every Indian will have to take a pledge that we will not let any such conspiracy succeed. India will not deviate from the path of development," he said. He said the Congress tried to provoke Dalits, tribals, farmers and youth in all possible ways, but people saw through its tricks and propaganda and rejected the party. The PM said farmers in Haryana gave Congress a befitting reply, showed they are with the country, with the BJP. PM Modi accused the Congress of indulging in an international conspiracy to defame the country. He alleged that the Congress has become a 'parasite' (parjeevi) that is dependent on its alliance partners and at times, ends up swallowing them.

# Hurrah for BJP in Haryana

From page 1

We have succeeded in Haryana for the third time with the blessings of Modi ji," the 54-year-old BJP leader said. Saini won the Ladwa Assembly seat by a margin of more than 16,000 votes defeating his nearest Congress rival while Hooda retained his Garhi Sampla-Kiloi seat in Rohtak district. Savitri Jindal, who contested as an Independent after failing to get BJP's nomination, won the Hisar seat. Congress's Vinesh Phogat from Julana seat, registered a victory defeating her nearest BJP rival Yogesh Kumar by a margin of 6,015 votes. Since the counting began at 8 am, the trends were dramatic. The initial swing was in Congress' favour and subsequently the BJP regained ground, and secured a massive victory. The higher voting turnout had been erroneously interpreted as a vote for change against the two decade long BJP rule in the Jat dominated state. The BJP was seen at a disadvantage owing to anti-incumbency, dissatisfaction of the Jat and the farmer communities. In this election, the Congress depended heavily on the Jats, particularly because the community was angry with the BJP over the farmers' agitation and the wrestlers' protest. The Haryana Assembly poll was supposed to be a Congress election all through. The discussion was centred on its margin of victory. But the Haryana Assembly polls have delivered a surprising result that defied political predictions, marking significant changes in

the state political landscape. Key factors included Prime Minister Narendra Modi's enduring popularity, strategic leadership change, effective management of caste votes, combating internal factionalism, and addressing local concerns over national issues. Modi's promises of corruption-free governance, combined with the central government's outreach efforts, ensured that the "Brand Modi" appeal remained intact. This helped the BJP maintain its foothold in Haryana, even as it faced challenges from the opposition and internal factionalism. The intense poll campaigns by the senior Congress leaders, including Rahul Gandhi and Priyanka Gandhi Vadra, also could not yield the desired result for the opposition party. If the results were a timely boost for the BJP ahead of elections in Maharashtra later this year, they were a massive downer for the Congress that was hoping to consolidate its gains from the Lok Sabha verdict and began the morning with enthusiastic leaders distributing sweets. Though the Congress increased its vote share by a massive 11 percentage points, its overall share of over 39 per cent was still slightly behind the 39.89 per cent of the BJP, which also made gains on its support in the 2019 polls. A stunning victory in Haryana coupled with its best-ever show in Jammu and Kashmir is bound to blunt detractors' claim that the BJP's grip was loosening over its supporters and brings into sharp focus its organisational efficiency and its leadership's keen ability to redraw strategy in line with the changing ground dynamics.

As the party prepares to fight other challenging state elections in Maharashtra and Jharkhand in a few weeks, this win will provide it much-needed momentum. It will bolster its hopes of another come-from-behind victory, more so in the western state as the opposition INDIA Bloc had inflicted a big defeat on the BJP-led alliance in the Lok Sabha elections. With Hooda's influence dominant in the state Congress and the party's other satraps like Kumari Selja pushed to the background, the BJP upped its ground game as its leaders, including poll in-charge and Union minister Dharmendra Pradhan, held meetings with various communities and successfully tapped in the state's traditional faultline of Jat versus non-Jat politics. The resentment of vocal Jats and a section of Dalits with the BJP dominated the narrative but the results demonstrated that the relatively muted majority of Other Backward Classes and poorer sections of Dalits besides the "upper castes" rallied behind the ruling party. The Congress, which managed 39.06 per cent vote share, had built its poll narrative around unemployment, farmers' demand for a legal guarantee to minimum support price, the Agnipath military recruitment scheme and inflation in order to target the BJP's 10-year tenure. However, BJP leaders including Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Home Minister Amit Shah countered the Congress party's offensive with the transparent system of providing government jobs and guaranteed and pensionable job for an Agniveer hailing from Haryana.

# Jammu and Kashmir speak...

From page 1

Despite running a high-voltage campaign led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Home Minister Amit Shah, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, BJP Chief JP Nadda, Chief Ministers of Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Uttarakhand and several other star campaigners the party also failed to achieve its desired goal of winning at least 35 Assembly seats in the region. Omar Abdullah, who tasted defeat at the hands of Sheikh Abdul Rashid, Chairman of the Awami Ittehad Party (AIP) during Lok Sabha polls, won from both the Assembly segments of Ganderbal and Budgam in Kashmir. Several old horses of the regional party namely Justice (Retd) Hasnain Masoodi, former MP, Former Finance Minister Abdul Rahim Rather, party general secretary and former cabinet minister Ali Mohd Sagar, and former speaker Mubarak Gul also won their respective seats. Salman Sagar, son of Ali Mohd Sagar also won the seat contesting on the NC ticket from the Hazratbal seat. The former Mayor of Srinagar Municipal Corporation, Junaid Azim Mattu, lost the elections from the Zadibal Assembly segment. He was defeated by Omar Abdullah's close aide Tanvir Sadiq. Mattu stood third in the tally. Chairman of the Jammu and Kashmir APNI party also lost the polls from Channpora at the hands of JKNC candidate Mushtaq Guroo. Congress, however, barely won six seats, five from the Kashmir valley and only one seat from

Rajouri in the Jammu division. Peoples Democratic Party also performed badly in the polls winning only three seats from Kashmir valley. Iltija Mufti, who contested from Srigufwara Bijbehara, was defeated by NC candidate Bashir Ahmed Shah Veeri by a margin of over 9000 votes. Party leader Waheed Ur Rehman Parra won the Pulwama Assembly segment while Rafiq Ahmed Naik won from the Tral seat. Another PDP leader Mir Mohd Fayaz defeated the Provincial President of JKNC Naseer Aslam Wani from Kupwara. Khursheed Ahmed Sheikh, brother of Sheikh Abdul Rashid won the Langate Assembly segment defeating Peoples Conference candidate Irfan Sultan Pandithpuri. A total number of three women candidates successfully contested the elections. Two JKNC candidates, Shamima Firdous from Habbakadal and Sakeena Masood from DH Pora won the polls while a BJP candidate from Kishtwar Shagun Parihar won the Kishtwar assembly segment by a margin of 521 votes. She defeated former MoS Home Sajjad Ahmed Kitchloo. The National Conference picked up seven seats from the Jammu region. Six among them were reserved for Scheduled Tribe candidates for the first time in the history of J&K Assembly polls. Meanwhile, the Aam Aadmi Party candidate Mehraj Malik also managed to win one seat of the Doda Assembly segment defeating a rival candidate of the BJP. On the other hand, Peoples

Conference Chairman Sajad Lone also managed to win a lone Assembly seat of Handwara by a wafer-thin margin of over 600 votes. CPI(M) leader Mohd Yusuf Tarigami defeated independent candidate Sayar Ahmed Reshim supported by the banned Jamaat-e-Islami from the Kulgam assembly segment. Reflecting on the Assembly poll results, National Conference President Dr. Farooq Abdullah told reporters gathered at his residence in Srinagar, "Omar Abdullah will be the chief minister". "The people have given their verdict and proven that the decisions taken on August 5, 2019 are not acceptable to them," he said. "I am thankful to everyone that the people participated in the polls and did so freely. I am grateful to God for the results." Ram Madhav, who was made in charge of Assembly polls in Jammu and Kashmir in a post on X said, "In Jammu, our cadres ensured a great victory winning the highest ever number of seats. Congratulations to NC for a big win in Kashmir while the piggybacked partner drew almost 0 in Jammu. Salute to the people for a memorable mandate". Sounding a word of caution, PDP president Mehbooba Mufti said the Centre should take a lesson from the decisive verdict of the Jammu and Kashmir Assembly polls and "not meddle" in the affairs of the upcoming National Conference government. She congratulated the National Conference leadership on its victory and said her party would play the role of a constructive

opposition. "I congratulate the NC leadership for its spectacular win. I also want to congratulate the people of J-K for voting for a stable government and not a hung assembly because the people faced several problems especially after August 5, 2019. A stable and strong government is very important for the redressal of those problems," Mufti told reporters here. The performance of the Congress leaders in the Jammu region can be gauged from the fact that most of its senior leaders, including two working presidents, Raman Bhall and Tara Chand, a former Pradesh Congress president Vikar Rasool Wani and several ministers were humbled by the BJP rivals. In the Jammu region, the Congress has managed to win only the Rajouri seat as against a total of five seats in 2014. The Congress's Iftikar Ahmed defeated his nearest rival, BJP's Vibodh Gupta, by a margin of 1,404 votes after securing 28,923 votes. The NC did not field any candidate from the constituency according to the seat-sharing agreement. However, the Congress managed to win five seats in Kashmir where former minister Peerzada Mohammad Syed defeated the PDP's Mehboob Beg by a margin of 1,686 votes and former MLA Nizam-uddin Bhat won the Bandipora seat for the party. Jammu and Kashmir Pradesh Congress president Tariq Hameed Karra (Central Shalteng), AICC general secretary G A Mir (Dooru) and Irfan Hafiz Lone (Wagoora-Kreeri) won their respective seats.

# Egg on the face...

From page 1

The key parties and alliances in the fray are the BJP, the Congress, the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP), INLD-BSP and JJP-Azad Samaj Party. However, most seats will see a direct fight between the BJP and the Congress. The exit poll by 'Dainik Bhaskar' predicted 44-54 seats for the Congress and 15-29 seats for the BJP in the 90-member Haryana Assembly. The C-Voter-India Today polls gave Congress 50-58 seats and the BJP 20-28 seats in Haryana, while the Republic Bharat-Matrise polls put the Congress tally even higher at 55-62 seats as against the BJP's 18-24.

The Red Mike-Datansh exit poll gave the Congress 50-55 seats in Haryana and the BJP at 20-25, while Dhruv Research pegged the Congress at 50-64 and the BJP at 22-32. Peoples' Pulse exit poll gave the Congress 49-60 seats and the BJP 20-32 seats in Haryana. Most exit polls pegged the INLD's tally higher than that of the JJP, while others were seen getting up to 10 seats. Similarly, most exit polls had predicted a hung assembly in Kashmir but an alliance of the main opposition Congress and the National Conference Party (NCP) are on course for a landslide in the 90-member house and poised to form a government.

# Kolkata doctors...

From page 1

The doctors have also been asking for students' body elections that had not taken for quite some time now, to be conducted in all colleges "so that students nominated by influential people from the ruling party do not get the chance to control the system and perpetrate a threat syndicate and extort lakhs of rupees from students and even subjecting them sexual exploitation," junior doctors said. One of the resigning doctors wrote on the X "Safety in the workplace is basic. If you can't ensure that, you have no right to demand services from

doctors." The doctor wrote that there was no guarantee that there won't be another RGKMCH like incident in future. "Would you want your children to work in an environment like that? Toiling away with no personal security?" one added. Meanwhile, State Chief Secretary Manoj Pant on Tuesday called an urgent meeting with Principal Health Secretary and other senior officials to review the present situation, sources said adding the Government had taken note of the deteriorating condition of the junior doctors and could soon come out with talk offers.

# The multi-crore makeovers...

From page 1

The presence of historical sites also adds to the jams even as traffic remains largely unregulated and commuters left on their own to figure it out. Additionally, people also say that they have seen ambulances stuck raising concerns about safety. "The traffic movement on Mathura Road in the area of Lajpat Nagar Traffic Circle usually remains normal. However, a number of historical places i.e. Humayun Tomb complex, Sunder Nursery and Hazrat Nizamuddin Dargah which

daily sees heavy footfall of tourists and visitors, are situated on Mathura Road at Auxiliary Route (R/A) Neela Gumbad (Sabz Burj)," a senior traffic police officer said. Commuters frequently take to social media to express their frustrations regarding the same, complaining of mismanaged and unregulated traffic bereft of police personnel. "In the past week, we have faced horrible traffic jams in Delhi while coming to Indrapuram. Once we were caught in Pragati Maidan tunnel. Then once on Barapullah road for

one hour. Then the day before, on Ashram flyover for an hour," a commuter said. According to officials, there are two traffic police personnel deployed on R/A Neela Gumbad to regulate and manage traffic and one private crane is available with the circle which keeps removing the obstructively parked vehicles. To further exacerbate the situation, the Pragati Maidan area which was redeveloped for easing a chunk of east Delhi traffic and involved building massive road infrastructure in central Delhi to decongest

Mathura Road and two key traffic intersections, is regularly choked. Security measures put in place frequently for VIPs visiting Bharat Mandapam, which was constructed for hosting big events like G20, has become a bane for commuters who are stalled in their vehicles for hours, restricting their movement. Additional CP of traffic zone 2 said, "As far as congestion of traffic near Bharat Mandapam on Mathura road is concerned, it is stated that only during VIP movement, vehicles are stopped as per VIP movement protocol."

# BJP congratulates Haryana for voting party to power for third consecutive term

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Haryana poll results on Tuesday saw Delhi BJP congratulating people of its neighbouring state for voting the party to power for the third consecutive term. However, ecstasy turned into agony for the Congress as the celebratory mood at the AICC headquarters in the morning changed into a sombre environment by noon as the trends for the Haryana assembly elections came in showing that the party was headed for a shock defeat.

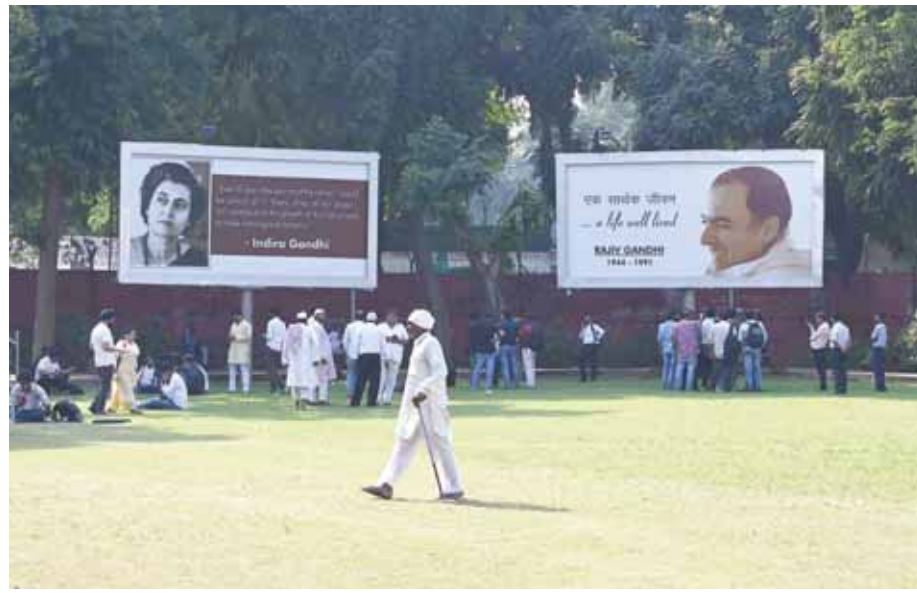
As counting began, early trends showed that the Congress seemed on track to score a big win in the Haryana polls, as predicted also by exit polls. Party workers were seen bursting crackers and distributing 'jalebis' and 'laddoos' at 24, Akbar Road, here. Drums and dholak reverbated at the grand old party's headquarters around nine am when trends showed that it was racing ahead. However, post 10 AM, as the trends showed the BJP clawing its way back into the con-



test, the headquarters bore a sombre look with the 'dhols' and sweets disappearing from the scene. Delhi BJP President Virendra Sachdeva congratulated the people of Haryana for once again choosing the BJP, which represents development, for the third time. He stated that for the past 10 years, Congress has been dreaming of winning Haryana

by associating it with a particular caste. However, the progressive people of Haryana have once again rejected Congress's caste-based politics. The people of Haryana have neither forgotten nor will they forget the corruption during the Bhupinder Singh Hooda regime ten years ago, as well as the land scam involving

Congress party leader Robert Vadra, Sachdeva said. Congress's defeat in Haryana was sealed the day Rahul Gandhi, during the election campaign, sold the dream of setting up a jalebi factory, he said. South Delhi MP Ramvir Singh Bidhuri said that this is a big example of the victory of development and public wel-



fare policies. BJP has done another miracle in the politics of the country. Bidhuri said that the people of Haryana have risen above casteism and slapped narrow politics hard. "Like Haryana, the people of Delhi will also prove that Arvind Kejriwal is a big dishonest person by not voting for him," he added. While the people of Haryana

have rejected Congress's dirty politics, they have also completely rejected Arvind Kejriwal, who is deceiving the people in the name of governance in Delhi and Punjab. On one side of Haryana is Kejriwal-governed Delhi, and on the other side is Punjab. Despite pouring the proceeds from the liquor scam and both these governments'

resources, Kejriwal still could not open the account for Aam Aadmi Party in Haryana. Kejriwal tried to sell Haryana the same false dreams of development as he did in Delhi and Punjab, but the people saw through his real face and defeated him in such a way that the result shows Kejriwal could not even compete with NOTA, Sachdeva

said. He said Haryana has given zero in 2024, and in 2025, Delhi will also bring Kejriwal to zero.

As regards Congress, its leaders were seen giving media bites at various places at the headquarters, arguing that the trends would change by one pm but it did not happen. The Congress canteen was bustling as usual but an air of disappointment was writ large on the faces of party leaders and workers there. A canteen worker lamented that they had prepared special dishes such as 'pakoris' and 'puris' but there were hardly any takers due to the turn of events in the Haryana polls. Soon, the AICC headquarters bore a deserted look with only media personnel and a few party leaders hanging around. Some party workers were heard blaming EVMs for the loss, some blamed ticket distribution while others were reeling under the imminent 'shock defeat'. "We can't believe what has happened. There was so much anti-incumbency on the ground. This is a very surprising result," a party worker said.

## Kejriwal to AAP councillors: Prioritise garbage collection, cleanliness to win polls

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Ahead of the Delhi Assembly elections, AAP supremo Arvind Kejriwal on Tuesday urged his party's councillors in the MCD to prioritise garbage collection and cleanliness of the city instead of engaging in internal conflicts. Sources in the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) said in several constituencies, some party councillors wish to contest for the MLA's post in the Delhi Assembly polls, leading to conflict with the sitting legislators. Several AAP councillors have also defected recently and joined the opposition BJP. Addressing a gathering of the AAP municipal councillors, Kejriwal expressed confidence that his party would win the

upcoming elections due in February if they maintained cleanliness in their respective wards. The former Delhi chief minister said the AAP councillors would play a crucial role in securing victory for the party. "In this election, you will play a key role. We are in the MCD and the public expects us to keep the city clean. In your respective areas, make rounds to ensure daily garbage collection and cleaning. If we can accomplish this much, I am hopeful we will win the elections. Our only target should be to win and we all need to work together," he stated. Kejriwal also cautioned the councillors against being "overconfident" and stressed the importance of taking every election seriously. In an apparent reference to the Congress party's under-



whelming performance in the Haryana Assembly elections, Kejriwal without naming anyone said, "The (Delhi assembly) elections are around the corner. The first thing to keep in mind is to not take any election lightly. Today's election results show that one should not be overconfident. Every election is difficult and challenging. Don't fight amongst

yourselves. We need to focus on the polls and work hard together." He encouraged the councillors to resist the opposition's tactics aimed at dividing the party and urged them to stay motivated despite the challenges posed by the arrests of several party leaders. "I used to read about the struggles and challenges you

faced in the newspapers while I was in jail. The past two years have been an extremely difficult phase for the Aam Aadmi Party. The attacks against us have been unprecedented. At least in the politics of the national capital, I can't remember a time when a government attacked a party to the extent of arresting all its ministers, including myself," said Kejriwal advising the councillors to exercise "patience" during this challenging period. "I thank you all for enduring this difficult time," he added. Using his party colleague Manish Sisodia as an example, Kejriwal said, "I often thought of Manish Sisodia, whose wife is in extremely poor health, yet his resolve did not waver. He was approached many times to leave me and join their party, but he did not. He inspired

me." In an attack on Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Kejriwal asserted that with God's support, the AAP had thwarted the BJP's attempts to weaken the party in both Delhi and Punjab. He termed it as a fight between "Modi ji and God," claiming that the Almighty is on the side of truth with the AAP. "I always say this. Modi ji is extremely powerful and has a lot of money, but he is not God. God is with us. Ultimately, God will prevail and he is on our side. This is a fight between him and God. Modi ji managed to get me arrested, but neither did the Delhi government collapse nor did our MLAs defect. The same happened in Punjab. Their plans to break our party were foiled," said Kejriwal.

## Over 18,000 drunken driving challans issued till September 15 this year

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Traffic Police has issued over 18,000 drunken driving challans till September 15 this year -- the highest in last three years, according to the official data. The police have issued a total of 18,478 challans for drunken driving. The numbers were 16,235 in 2023 and 2,320 in 2022. The highest numbers of challans were issued in west district 1,973 followed by southeast district 1,902, central 1,752, south 1,733, north 1,731, outer north 1,384, and east 1,382. There are 15 police districts in Delhi and the least numbers of challans were reported in Shahdara district 540, the data stated.



The police advised the commuters to obey traffic rules, specifically not to drink and drive. Driving under the influence of alcohol not only puts the driver's life at risk but also endangers the lives of pedestrians and other motorists on the roads, they said.

## Metro Red Line services hit due to technical issue

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Services on Delhi Metro's Red Line were affected between Welcome and Seelampur stations due to a technical issue on Tuesday, inconveniencing commuters during the morning rush hour. The Red Line connects Rithala in Delhi to Shaheed Stal New Bus Adda in Uttar Pradesh. Train services on the Red Line were regulated from 8.25 am to 10.55 am owing to a signalling issue between Welcome and Seelampur stations. As a result, trains were run at restricted speed on this section during this period, resulting in bunching, offi-



cial said. The signalling issue was resolved at 10.55 am and thereafter, normal services resumed on the Red Line, they said. On Monday, services on the Yellow Line were affected after some "miscreants" damaged signalling cables between Haiderpur Badli Mor and Jahangirpuri stations.

## City registers two more dengue deaths, number of cases shoots up to 2,115

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The national capital has registered two more deaths caused by dengue as the number of cases of the mosquito borne virus has significantly risen to 2,115 so far this year, according to official data. In September, Delhi registered its first dengue death of the year after a 54-year-old man succumbed to the virus at Lok Nayak Hospital on September eight. The two new deaths have been reported at the Safdarjung Hospital and Maharaja Agrasen Hospital in West Delhi's Punjabi Bagh, said a civic body official on condition of anonymity.

The official, however, did not reveal when the deaths took place and other details of the deceased. These deaths have been reported in the MCD's weekly report on vector borne diseases in the capital. According to the report, a total of three dengue deaths have been registered in the capital this year so far. Last year, Delhi reported 19 dengue deaths. Within a period of seven days between September 29 till October five, Delhi reported 485 more dengue cases, already half way round as compared to last month. The highest number of cases during this period is registered from Najafgarh zone followed by South Delhi



Zone. Last month, Delhi reported 1,052 dengue cases, highest of any month reported so far this year. The cases of malaria have also risen in the past week from September 29 to October, recording a spike of 81 cases. The total tally of malaria cases this year has surpassed last year's record by registering 511 malaria cases till October 5. Last year 426 malaria cases were reported in Delhi. Similarly, the number of Chikungunya cases has also gone up with the tally standing at 69 till October five, as against 65 record in the entire year in 2023. The Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) has taken action against over two lakh

people in the form of legal notices and challans for allowing mosquito breeding in their premises and imposed a total penalty of Rs 28 lakh till October 5, the weekly report shows. It further shows over 29.91 crore house visits have been conducted by the corporation till date and 9.26 lakh homes have been sprayed with anti-mosquito medicines. "We advise people to discard any waste articles in their homes that may accumulate water and lead to mosquito breeding later. Even as rains have subsided, residents are requested to stay vigilant and keep their surrounding clean," the official said.

## AAP celebrates party's landmark victory in J and K



STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Aam Aadmi Party on Tuesday celebrated the party's landmark victory in Jammu and Kashmir, as the AAP candidate, Mehraj Malik, secured a resounding victory in the Doda assembly constituency of Jammu and Kashmir. The party said that the victory not only expands AAP's influence into its fifth state—joining Delhi, Punjab, Gujarat, and Goa—but also signals a significant shift in the region's political landscape. AAP National Convener Arvind Kejriwal also talked to Malik via video call, praising him for his campaign against

the BJP. During the call, AAP Kejriwal said that the AAP workers in the whole country are very happy that Jammu and Kashmir has become the fifth state where AAP has an MLA. Your (Mehraj Malik) work is also commendable. When you met last time, you were doing a very good job. People are with you. AAP leader Manish Sisodia posted on his 'X' handle: "Many congratulations, Mehraj Malik. With your victory, the Aam Aadmi Party has now entered the assemblies of five states. Many congratulations also to Imran Hussain, the in-charge of Jammu and Kashmir."

## EOW arrests president of cooperative society for swindling people of ₹3 crore

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Economic Offences Wing (EOW) of Delhi Police on Tuesday said it has arrested the president of a cooperative society for allegedly swindling over Rs 3 crore from at least 45 people on the pretext of high returns from investments. Deputy Commissioner of Police (EOW) Vikram K Porwal said the accused Vinay Kumar Mishra fraudulently and dishonestly induced the victims to invest their money into the schemes of the society with the assurance of high profit in future. After getting the deposits from the public, Mishra used the duped money for his personal benefits, Porwal said. The DCP said daily wagers were the accused's target community. By showing rosy pictures to such individuals, he lured them into gaining high returns and duped many people to the tune of Rs 3.05 crore. The officer said 45 people have already come forward

with complaints against him and the number of victims might go up. The matter came to fore when a few investors approached the EOW in May. A team of EOW, arrested him last week from West Bengal's Jalpaiguri. Another officer said Mishra, a native of Muzaffarpur in Bihar, worked as a branch in-charge in a company which used to take deposits from the public on the pretext of investment into the schemes. After his tenure at the company, he started his own cooperative society. In the capacity of president of Mithila Co-operative Thrift and Credit Society, Mishra started duping individuals of crores of rupees, the officer said. Police said Mishra is being interrogated to ascertain diversion as well as usage of the funds collected from the victims, to unearth the criminal conspiracy hatched by him and his other accomplices, to recover the documents pertaining to the case.

## MCD launches statewide campaign aimed at tackling garbage, pollution

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

In a bid to ensure a cleaner and greener capital ahead of the upcoming festival season, the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) government in the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) has launched an ambitious city-wide campaign aimed at tackling garbage and pollution. Mayor Dr. Shelly Oberoi and Leader of the House Mukesh Goyal announced the launch of the campaign on Tuesday. The initiative seeks to make all 250 wards across the city free of garbage and debris, offering citizens a cleaner and more beautiful environment as festivities approach. Oberoi stated that a high-level meeting was recently held with officials in the municipal corporation, including the MCD Commissioner, Additional Commissioner (DEMS), and Additional Commissioner (Engineering). "Last year, the MCD established many Construction and Demolition sites, which were designated as JE Stores.

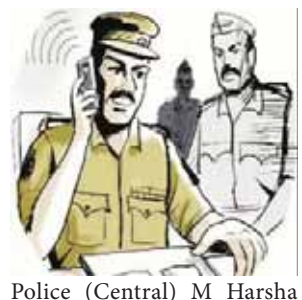


These sites were covered with long blue sheets, and as a result, tons of debris that previously could be seen on roads, back lanes, or park corners was cleared. "The public also supported this effort, and with the help of our municipal staff, many tons of debris were sent to the designated sites," the Mayor said. Appealing to the people of Delhi, the Mayor further said, "It is our collective responsibility to ensure the cleanliness of Delhi, especially during the upcoming festival season when pollution remains an issue. I urge the people of Delhi to understand their responsibility and cooperate with our staff".

## Woman arrested for kidnapping tenant's three year old son

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Police on Tuesday arrested a woman for allegedly kidnapping her tenant's 3-year-old son here for her brother and sister-in-law who wanted a male child, officials said. The minor was rescued from Amroha in Uttar Pradesh on Sunday and reunited with his family members, they added. Apart from the 35-year-old landlady, the police said they have also arrested her sister-in-law (26), her brother (32) and apprehended her 16-year-old son in the case. The matter came to fore after the child's father lodged a missing complaint at the Kamla Market police station on October 4. The complainant stated that his son was playing outside their rented accommodation and went missing under mysterious circumstances, a senior police officer said. Based on the complaint, an FIR was registered and teams began a hunt for the missing child, Deputy Commissioner of



Police (Central) M Harsha Vardhan said in a statement. On checking CCTV footage of the area, one camera was found to capture a person accompanying the child and moving towards Gandhi Market, said the statement. The person was later identified as a teenager and was apprehended. "The minor disclosed that on the instructions of his mother, he took the child to Uttar Pradesh's Amroha and handed over to his aunt," the DCP said. Upon interrogation of the teen's mother, she told police that her sister-in-law has two daughters and she desired one boy child, due to which she asked her son to take the tenant's son to the couple, he added.

# Democracy revived in Jammu and Kashmir: Amit Shah

**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■**  
NEW DELHI

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Tuesday said democracy has been revived in Jammu and Kashmir with the successful conduct of assembly election as promised by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. He also said that the massive victory of the BJP in Haryana is a victory of the unwavering faith of farmers, poor, backward, soldiers and youth in the BJP government led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.



when the Congress made a mockery of democracy by openly rigging the elections. Democracy has now been revived in the same Kashmir valley," he said in a series of social media posts in Hindi. Shah said Prime Minister Modi had promised the people of the country that peaceful and fair elections will be conducted in Jammu and Kashmir. "I am extremely happy that

for the first time since the advent of terrorism in the 1980s, the people of Jammu and Kashmir witnessed such a transparent and peaceful election and participated in the elections in large numbers. "I heartily congratulate the Election Commission, Jammu and Kashmir Administration, security forces and the people of Jammu and Kashmir for these

successful and historic elections," he said. The senior BJP leader said in Jammu and Kashmir, where under the Congress rule, there was only "reign of terror and democracy was being murdered every day," under the BJP rule, the great festival of democracy was celebrated with full pomp and gaiety. "People elected their representatives without any fear of terror and panic.

Heartfelt gratitude to Prime Minister Shri @narendramodi ji for this unprecedented change," he said. The elections to the 90-member Jammu and Kashmir assembly was held after 10 years and for the first time after the abrogation of Article 370, which gave special status to the erstwhile state. The three-phase polling was concluded on October 1 and the results were declared on Tuesday. Shah also said the people of "Veerbhoomi" Haryana have completely rejected the "negative and divisive politics" of Congress which "divides" people on the basis of caste and region. The people have chosen the 10 years track record of development and welfare of poor of BJP, he added. "Salute to the people of Veerbhoomi Haryana. This massive victory of the BJP in Haryana is a victory of the unwavering faith of farmers, the poor, the

backward, the soldiers and the youth in the BJP government led by Prime Minister Shri @narendramodi ji," he wrote in a social media post in Hindi. The home minister said Haryana, the land of farmers and soldiers, has taught a lesson to those who go abroad and insult the country for their vote bank. "I express my heartfelt gratitude to the people of Haryana for giving BJP the opportunity to serve the state for the third consecutive time," he said. Shah said the BJP government at the Centre and in the state under the leadership of Modi will fulfil all aspirations and hopes of the people of the state. The BJP is set to return to power in Haryana for the third consecutive term with an absolute majority in the 90-member assembly. The polling was held on October five and results were declared on Tuesday.

# India, Germany review defence ties



**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■**  
NEW DELHI

India and Germany on Tuesday reviewed the entire gamut of their bilateral defence ties during telephonic talks between Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and his counterpart Boris Pistorius. The two leaders also took stock of ongoing defence cooperation including exercises in the air and maritime domains, defence ministry said. The ministers also discussed ways to further strengthen the defence industrial collaboration and enhance supply chain resilience, it added. "They planned to meet in the near future to give concrete shape to the defence engagements and joint projects with an aim to transform defence as a key pillar of the India-Germany bilateral relationship," the ministry said. Rajnath also posted on social media about the talks. "Had a telephonic conversation with the German Federal Minister of Defence, Mr Boris Pistorius. We reviewed the ongoing defence cooperation activities including the exercises in air and maritime domain. We also discussed ways and means to strengthen the defence industrial collaboration and enhance supply chain resilience," he wrote on the social media platform.

activities including exercises in the air and maritime domains," the ministry said in a statement. Rajnath and Pistorius discussed ways to further strengthen the defence industrial collaboration and enhance supply chain resilience, it added. "They planned to meet in the near future to give concrete shape to the defence engagements and joint projects with an aim to transform defence as a key pillar of the India-Germany bilateral relationship," the ministry said. Rajnath also posted on social media about the talks. "Had a telephonic conversation with the German Federal Minister of Defence, Mr Boris Pistorius. We reviewed the ongoing defence cooperation activities including the exercises in air and maritime domain. We also discussed ways and means to strengthen the defence industrial collaboration and enhance supply chain resilience," he wrote on the social media platform.

# Modi to visit Laos for ASEAN, East Asia summits

**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■**  
NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will be on a two-day visit to Laos on October 10 and 11 during which he will attend the 21st Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)-India Summit and the 19th East Asia Summit, Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said on Tuesday. Laos is the current chair of ASEAN. On the invitation of his Laos counterpart Sonexay Siphandone, Prime Minister Modi will visit Vientiane on October 10-11, the MEA said in a statement. During the visit, Modi will attend the 21st ASEAN-India Summit and the 19th East Asia Summit being hosted by Laos as the current chair of ASEAN, it said. Modi is also expected to hold



bilateral meetings on the margins of the two summits, according to the MEA. "India is marking a decade of the Act East Policy this year. Relations with ASEAN are a central pillar of the Act East Policy and our Indo-Pacific vision," the MEA said. The ASEAN-India Summit will review the progress of India-ASEAN relations through "our Comprehensive

Strategic Partnership" and chart the future direction of cooperation. "The East Asia Summit, a premier leaders-led forum that contributes to building an environment of strategic trust in the region, provides an opportunity for leaders of EAS Participating Countries, including India, to exchange views on issues of regional importance," the ministry said.

# ED questions Azharuddin under PMLA

**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■**  
HYDERABAD

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) on Tuesday questioned former Indian cricket team captain and Congress leader Mohammed Azharuddin in a money laundering case linked to alleged financial irregularities in the Hyderabad Cricket Association. ED recorded his statement under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), they said. The 61-year-old former Member of Parliament was first asked to depose before the agency on October 3 but he sought deferment of the notice and asked for a fresh date. The agency subsequently issued him fresh summons to appear on October 8. The probe is



related to alleged financial irregularities in the Hyderabad Cricket Association (HCA). The ED had conducted searches in connection with the irregularities in November last year. Azharuddin's role during his tenure as the HCA president is under the scanner of the agency, the sources had said. Following the registration of a case in connection with the alleged irregularities by

Telangana Police last year, he had said that the allegations levelled against him were "false" and "motivated" and it was "just a stunt" pulled by his rivals to ruin his reputation. The money laundering case stems from three FIRs and charge sheets filed by the Telangana Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) in connection with alleged criminal misappropriation of funds of the HCA to the tune of Rs 20 crore.

# IAF should realign for present, future security needs: AP Singh

**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■**  
CHENNAI/NEW DELHI

Chief of Air Staff, Air Chief Marshal AP Singh on Tuesday highlighted the need for the Indian Air Force (IAF) to realign itself to meet the present and future requirements as the global security environment is in a state of constant flux. The ongoing conflicts have demonstrated the requirement to have a strong and capable Air Force. Therefore, there is a need for the IAF to be prepared to meet any contingency that challenges our national interest, he noted. After reviewing the Parade at the Air Force Station in Tambaram near Chennai on the occasion of 92nd Annual IAF Day celebrations, he said, "Adopting the latest technology along with innovative and out-of-the-box thinking will play a decisive role in today's multi-domain environment." Prime Minister Narendra Modi lauded Air Force

personnel for their courage and professionalism as he greeted them on the Air Force Day. The day is observed to mark the anniversary of the institution and to commemorate the sacrifices made by air warriors. Modi said in a social media post, "Air Force Day greetings to our brave air warriors. Our Air Force is admired for their courage and professionalism. Their role in protecting our nation is extremely commendable." (Potent, Powerful and Self-Reliant), IAF chief recalled that last year the Indian Air Force made a significant stride in strengthening operational capabilities, enhancing professionalism and adapting to ever-evolving challenging modern warfare. "The global security environment is in a state of constant flux. Ongoing conflicts have demonstrated the requirement to have a strong and capable air force. Therefore, there is a need for the Indian Air Force to be prepared to meet any contingency that challenges



our national interest," he said. Referring to the theme of this year's Annual Day, 'Bharatiya Vayu Sena: Saksham, Sashakt, Atmanirbhar' (Potent, Powerful and Self-Reliant), IAF chief said, "it perfectly describes our aspirations." "Over the years, we have become more empowered with better technology and achieved new levels of operational exploitation of our systems and weapons." He pointed out that the past year was very eventful and the Air Force proved its mettle on various fronts. In 2024, the IAF chief said, the Air Force expanded its participation in bilateral and multilateral exercises with Air Forces of friendly foreign countries.

"We also conducted the largest multi-national exercise Tarang Shakti on the Indian soil after a gap of 61 years with participation from Air Forces of more than 30 nations," he added. "We have been always the first responder in any calls of humanitarian assistance and disaster relief both within India and abroad. In the last one year, the Indian Air Force has been called upon to provide flood relief in many locations while fighting forest fires in some other," IAF chief said. The Indian Air Force beyond the borders, also played an important role in relief and evacuation from many countries, he added.

# India recognised for eliminating Trachoma

**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■**  
NEW DELHI

India has been recognised by the World Health Organization (WHO) for eliminating trachoma, an eye disease caused by a bacterial infection, as a public health problem, becoming the third country in the Southeast Asia region to achieve this milestone, following Nepal and Myanmar. Trachoma, which can cause infectious blindness, is linked to poor hygiene and inadequate water supply, spreading through contact with infected secretions or indirectly via flies. During a 'Public Health Awards' event at the Seventy Seventh Regional Committee Session, WHO officials highlighted the crucial roles played by India's government, ophthalmologists, and healthcare workers in effectively managing trachoma through surveillance, surgical services, and community hygiene initiatives. "India's success is due to the strong leadership of its government and the commitment of ophthalmologists and other



cadres of health-care workers. "They worked together with partners to ensure effective surveillance, diagnosis and management of active trachoma, provision of surgical services for trichiasis, and promotion of water, sanitation and hygiene, particularly facial cleanliness, among communities," said Saima Wazed, Regional Director WHO South-East Asia. The WHO also felicitated Bhutan for achieving interim targets for cervical cancer elimination, Maldives and Sri Lanka for Hepatitis B control in children, Timor-Leste for eliminating lymphatic filariasis and six countries for achieving SDG and global targets for reducing under-

Government of Bhutan is driven by strong leadership, favourable health policies, organised health systems, well-defined country priorities, motivated health workforce, and efficient coordination by the Ministry of Health. Lauding Maldives and Sri Lanka for achieving hepatitis B control, the Regional Director said that preventing hepatitis B infection in children substantially reduces chronic infections and cases of liver cancer and cirrhosis in adulthood. Bhutan was also recognised for achieving the SDG and global 2030 targets of reducing under-5 mortality and stillbirth rates while Timor-Leste was awarded for the elimination of lymphatic filariasis as a public health problem. It is the fifth country in the Region to eliminate lymphatic filariasis. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Indonesia, Maldives, Sri Lanka and Thailand were felicitated for achieving the SDG and global targets for the reduction of under-5 mortality, neonatal mortality and stillbirth rates, the statement added. "The success of the Royal

# Palliative care crisis: Only 4 per cent of needy patients in India receive support

**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■**  
NEW DELHI

After his diagnosis, 79-year-old Raghav Sharma with advanced cancer was referred to a hospital with a palliative care unit, but due to a lack of trained staff and limited resources, he experienced long wait times and inadequate pain management. While his family tried to provide care at home, they struggled to manage his symptoms without professional guidance. Palliative care is a medical approach aimed at improving the quality of life with the compassionate support for individuals with serious illnesses like third or fourth stage of cancer. However, despite the

National Health Policy's inclusion of palliative care, Sharma's experience for care reflects the broader issue where only about 4% of the estimated 10 million people needing such care in India receive it. Dr Rajagopal, founder of Pallium India, which provides pain relief and palliative care for free, laments that despite its inclusion in the National Health Policy in 2017, the MBBS curriculum in 2019, and the BSc Nursing curriculum in 2021, there remains a significant gap in palliative care. "At least 10 million people in India require palliative care, yet only 4 per cent currently receive it," he said at an event recently.

Rajagopal noted that community volunteers are essential for advancing palliative care. Dr Soumya Swaminathan, chairperson of the MS Swaminathan Research Foundation and former ICMR head, emphasised that palliative care not only addresses the physical pain of patients but also considers the broader suffering experienced by both patients and their families. Ahead of the World Hospice and Palliative Care Day on October 12, DS Negi, CEO, of Delhi-based Rajiv Gandhi Cancer Institute & Research Centre (RGCIRC) said, "Doctors and medical support staff face numerous challenges in providing comprehensive hospice and

palliative care. "Apart from the emotional resistance from family to forming support groups, the infrastructure in India is also lacking. There is an urgent need to bridge the gap between patient needs and healthcare provider practices to enhance the delivery of palliative care in India," added Negi. Doing its bit to create awareness about the importance of hospice and palliative care in the country, the RGCIRC organised a daylong event 'Hospice & Palliative Care Event 24' (HOPE'24) here recently. Discussing the need for advanced care planning (ACP) during the cancer treatment, Dr Kinshuki Jain, Head, Department of Pain

and Palliative care, RGCIRC said, "This is especially relevant for life-limiting illness eg- cancer where ACP may ensure that patients do not endure treatment that may not align with their wishes or quality of life preferences. "It's crucial to empower patients and their families to engage in these conversations early on, minimizing the occurrence of futile treatments." A recent study by doctors at AIIMS Jhajjar too has found that providing empathetic treatment to seriously ill patients can improve their quality of life. "It is an effective approach to treatment by establishing better connectivity with critically ill patients," it said.

# PM Modi pays tribute to Ram Vilas Paswan on fourth death anniversary

**PNS ■ NEW DELHI**

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday paid tribute to Lok Janshakti Party founder Ram Vilas Paswan, a prominent leader from the Dalit community, on his fourth death anniversary, praising him as an outstanding leader who was fully devoted to empowering the poor. He said in a social media post, "I pay homage to my very dear friend and one of India's tallest leaders, Shri Ram Vilas Paswan Ji on his Punya Tithi. He was an outstanding leader, fully devoted to empowering the poor and dedicated to building a strong and



developed India." The prime minister said he was fortunate to have worked with Paswan so closely over the years. "I greatly miss his insights on several issues," he said. Paswan was a member of the Modi cabinet since 2014 till his death in 2020. A grassroots politician with a

keen sense of ground pulse, the Bihar leader worked in the Cabinet of different prime ministers representing rival parties and enjoyed good equation with leaders across the aisle. His son Chirag Paswan is now heading the LJP (Ram Vilas) and is a Cabinet minister.

# Blame game in Congress after failure to come back to power in Haryana

Party high command should assess all reasons leading to disappointing results, identify people responsible: Kumari Selja

**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■**  
NEW DELHI/CHANDIGARH

A blame game began in the Congress on Tuesday after it failed in its bid to come back to power in Haryana after 10 years, with senior party leader Kumari Selja saying the party high command should assess all reasons that led to the disappointing result and identify the people responsible. On the other hand alleging a conspiracy, the Congress said it would not accept the Haryana Assembly poll result as it raises "serious questions" about the integrity of the instruments of the democratic system. Congress gen-

eral secretary Jairam Ramesh said the Haryana result is a victory of manipulations, and subverting the will of people. He also alleged that it is a defeat of the transparent and democratic processes. The knives were out in the Congress even before the declaration of final results, as party veteran Kumari Selja, who had been sulking during the election which was effectively led by former chief minister Bhupinder Singh Hooda, said that "it will not be business as usual" and called for introspection. "The Haryana poll results are disappointing and I am pained at the disappointment of the Congress workers in



the state who have worked very hard and were looking forward to forming their government after 10 years. "It will not be business as usual in Haryana and I am sure the Congress high command would identify those who negated the efforts to

bring the party to power after 10 years," she told the media. The Sirsa Lok Sabha MP and former union minister said she was sure that the Congress high command would go into all aspects that led to such results and would identify the reasons and those responsible for bringing such results. "I'm sure the party will look into all aspects that led to such results in Haryana," Selja said. She referred to factors affecting the organisation like taking everyone along and ensuring coordination among all the leaders in the state. Ramesh claimed there were "serious issues" with the counting process and the

functioning of the electronic voting machines (EVMs) in around 14 constituencies and that Congress would take up the matter with the Election Commission soon. "Results in Haryana are totally unexpected and surprising. They go against ground reality and the sentiment of the people which was for change," Ramesh said at a press conference with Congress' media and publicity department head Pawan Kherra. "Under these circumstances, it is not possible for us to accept these results (in Haryana)... There are serious issues raised by our candidates which we will raise with the EC," Ramesh said.

"Victory has been snatched from us in Haryana... The results are against the sentiment of the people which was for change. The Congress has been made to lose in Haryana and the chapter is not closed," Ramesh said. On the Jammu and Kashmir results, Ramesh said the people have defeated the "mischievous designs" of the BJP to muster a majority somewhere. "People have given a befitting reply to those who trampled upon J-K's respect by taking away its statehood. The NC-Congress government will make all efforts for the restoration of J-K's statehood," Ramesh said.

## BJP intensifies preparations for UP by-elections, finalises panel of candidates

**BISWAJEET BANERJEE ■**  
LUCKNOW

With by-elections on 10 assembly seats in Uttar Pradesh on the horizon, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) has ramped up its election preparations. It has finalised a list comprising the names of 27 candidates for 9 seats. A crucial meeting of the BJP core committee took place in Lucknow, chaired by Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath. The meeting, which included discussions on candidates for nine of the ten seats, resulted in the finalization of a panel comprising 27 names. This panel will now be sent to Delhi for approval, with the party's central leadership expected to make the final decision. Notably, it was decided to leave the Meerapur seat for the Rashtriya Lok Dal (RLD), a BJP ally, while discussions continue over the Nishad Party's claim to seats in the by-elections. No decision has been made yet on whether Nishad Party



President Sanjay Nishad will be given a seat, raising doubts about his party's allocation. The high-level meeting, held at the Chief Minister's residence, lasted over an hour and included prominent BJP leaders such as Deputy Chief Ministers Keshav Prasad Maurya and Brajesh Pathak, BJP State President Bhupendra Chaudhary, and General Secretary (Organization) Dharampal. During the meeting, discussions centered around ticket claimants for the upcoming

by-elections, campaign strategies, and efforts to bolster coordination between the party and the government. In addition to candidate selection, other critical aspects of the by-election preparations, such as the membership campaign and leader visits, were also reviewed. It was decided that ongoing consultations between the Chief Minister and the State President will help shape the party's strategy moving forward. The meeting focused on nine constituencies: Milkpur, Katehari, Majhawan, Phulpur, Khair, Kundarki, Sisamau, Karhal, and Ghaziabad, with the exception of Meerapur. The BJP's district committees had earlier forwarded a list of ten names for each of these seats. After deliberation, three names were shortlisted for each constituency, forming a panel to be sent to the central leadership for final approval. Interestingly, none of the names on the panel include Muslim candidates. With the by-election dates expected to be announced soon, the BJP is set to escalate its election campaign. Party leaders discussed campaign plans, including visits from senior figures and strategies for collecting ground-level feedback on each seat. A plan to improve coordination between the government and the organization was also discussed to ensure a smooth electoral process. Apart from election-related matters, the meeting also touched upon appointments to various government corporations, commissions, and

boards. Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has asked the party organization to finalize the list of names for the appointments and submit them for approval. However, the status of the seats sought by the Nishad Party remains uncertain. While it was confirmed that the Meerapur seat will go to RLD, the BJP has prepared panels for the Katehari and Majhawan seats, traditionally claimed by the Nishad Party. In the 2022 assembly elections, the Nishad Party contested both seats but only won Majhawan. Given the current dynamics, it remains unclear whether the Nishad Party will receive a seat allocation this time around. "The BJP's preparations for the upcoming by-elections indicate a comprehensive strategy to secure key constituencies and ensure a coordinated campaign effort. The final list of candidates is expected to shape the party's chances as the election draws near," BJP state president Bhupendra Chaudhry said.

## More voters used NOTA button in J and K than in Haryana: EC data

**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■**  
NEW DELHI

More voters in Jammu and Kashmir used the None of the above (NOTA) button against those in Haryana, latest Election Commission data shows. In elections to the 90-member Haryana assembly, out of over two crore electors, 67.90 per cent had exercised their franchise. Out of these, 0.38 per cent used the NOTA option on the voting machine. In the three-phased Jammu and Kashmir assembly polls to 90 seats, 63.88 per cent of the total electorate voted. Out of these, 1.48 per cent opted for the NOTA option. According to trends, not more than two per cent of the voters have opted for the NOTA option, indicating continued reluctance of electors in choosing the option. Introduced in 2013, the NOTA option on electronic voting machines has its own symbol — a ballot paper with a black cross across it.



After the Supreme Court order in September 2013, the Election Commission (EC) added the NOTA button on the EVMs as the last option on the voting panel. Before the apex court order, those not inclined to vote for any candidate had the option of filling what is popularly called form 49-O. But filling out the form at the polling station under Rule 49-O of the Conduct of Elections Rules, 1961, compromised the secrecy of the voter. The Supreme Court had, however, refused to direct the EC to hold fresh polls if the majority of the electorate exercised the NOTA option while voting.

Recently, former chief election commissioner O P Rawat had said, "In the present situation, NOTA has only symbolic significance and it cannot have an impact on the election result of any seat." "More than 50 per cent electors will have to once opt for NOTA in a seat to show the political community that they do not consider candidates with criminal background or other underserving ones worthy of their votes. Only after this, pressure on Parliament and the Election Commission will increase and they will have to think about changing laws to make NOTA effective on the election results," he had said.

## Haryana Assembly poll trends show Congress headed for shock defeat

**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■**  
NEW DELHI

Ecstasy turned into agony for the Congress on Tuesday as the celebratory mood at the AICC headquarters in the morning changed into a sombre environment by noon as the trends for the Haryana assembly elections came in showing that the party was headed for a shock defeat. As counting began, early trends showed that the Congress seemed on track to score a big win in the Haryana polls, as predicted also by exit polls. Party workers were seen bursting crackers and distributing 'jalebis' and 'laddoos' at the AICC headquarters at 24, Akbar Road. Drumbeats reverberated at the grand old party's headquarters around 9AM when trends showed that it was racing ahead. However, post 10 AM, as the trends showed the BJP clawing its way back into the contest, the headquarters bore a sombre look with the 'dhols' and sweets disappearing from the scene. Congress leaders were seen giving media bytes at various places at the headquarters, arguing that the trends would change by 1 PM but it did not happen. The Congress canteen was bustling as usual but an air of disappointment was writ large on the faces of party leaders and workers. A canteen worker lamented that they had prepared special dishes such as 'pakoris' and 'puris' but there were hardly any takers due to the turn of events in the Haryana polls. Soon, the AICC headquarter bore a deserted look with only media personnel and a few party leaders hanging around. Some party workers were heard blaming EVMs for the loss, some blamed ticket distribution while others were reeling under the imminent 'shock defeat'. "We can't believe what has happened. There was so much anti-incumbency on the ground. This is a very surprising result," a party worker said. As votes were counted for



assembly elections held last month, it was a mixed bag for the Congress and the BJP - the saffron party headed for defeat in Jammu and Kashmir but bucked early morning trends to move ahead of the Congress in the nail biting Haryana contest. If the trends hold, the Congress may well have to settle for a loss in the heartland state and a 'second partner win' in the union territory. At 2PM, the ruling BJP had crossed the majority mark in the Haryana assembly and was leading or had won 47 seats, while the Congress was ahead or had won 38 seats, according to the trends available on the Election Commission website. Several exit polls had predicted a big Congress victory in Haryana. What started as buoyant result in Jammu and Kashmir also seemed headed for a disappointing turn in Jammu and Kashmir for the Congress as though its alliance with the National Conference seemed set for majority, the Mallikarjun Kharge-led party was leading or had won only six seats. The Congress also raised with the Election Commission the issue of an "unexplained slowdown" in updating of results of Haryana elections on the poll watchdog's website and urged it to direct officials to update accurate figures so that "false news and malicious narratives" can be countered immediately. In a letter to the Chief Election Commissioner and Election Commissioners, Congress general secretary Jairam Ramesh said that between 9 and 11 am there was an "unexplained slowdown" in updating of results on the ECI's website.

## Nothing on record to substantiate slowdown in update of Haryana poll results: EC tells Ramesh

**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■**  
NEW DELHI

The Election Commission (EC) on Tuesday told Congress leader Jairam Ramesh that there was nothing on record to substantiate his "ill-founded allegation" of slowdown in updating of Haryana poll results. The poll panel also dubbed his allegations as an attempt to "surreptitiously give credence to irresponsible, unfounded and uncorroborated mala fide narratives".

Earlier in the day, the Congress had raised with the Election Commission the issue of an "unexplained slowdown" in updating of results of Haryana elections on the poll watchdog's website and urged it to direct officials to update accurate figures so that "false news and malicious narratives" can be countered immediately. In a letter to the Chief Election Commissioner and Election Commissioners, Congress general secretary in-charge communications Ramesh said between nine and 11 am, there



has been an "unexplained slowdown" in updating of results on the ECI's website. In its response, the poll authority said counting of votes is being carried out according to Rule 60 of Conduct of Election Rules at the designated counting centres and by the designated authorities following statutory and regulatory regime. The EC said the entire counting process in Haryana and Jammu and Kashmir is unfolding in the presence of candidates, observers and micro-

observers as per rules. "There is nothing on record to substantiate your ill-founded allegation of slowdown in updating of results. Your memorandum also does not bring out any contrary facts as to the delay at any of the constituencies in Haryana or J-K," it told Ramesh. The EC underlined that approximately 25 rounds across all the constituencies are being updated every five minutes, which testifies dissemination of counting process in a speedy manner.

## Haryana's political ripple: Congress loses bargaining power in UP post Haryana polls

**BISWAJEET BANERJEE ■**  
LUCKNOW

As political results unfold in Haryana, their ripple effects are likely to shape the future of political alliances in Uttar Pradesh (UP), particularly the dynamics between the Congress and the Samajwadi Party (SP). Political analysts say that the outcome could weaken Congress's bargaining position in its alliance with SP, with direct implications for the upcoming by-elections for 10 crucial seats in UP. These by-elections will serve as a litmus test for the effectiveness of the opposition's INDIA alliance, raising questions about Congress's role and influence in the state. A senior Samajwadi Party leader told this reporter that the Haryana election results clearly indicate Congress is rapidly losing its base. The leader urged Congress to reconsider its rigid stance on seat-sharing and accept the offer made by the SP. "The reality is that Congress lacks strong candidates to contest elections," the leader said, adding, "Even in Jammu and Kashmir, Congress can claim it won, but in truth, it secured only 6 out of the 49 seats won by the alliance. A similar situation unfolded in Uttar Pradesh as well." According to political analyst Rajesh N Bajpayee, the Congress has historically struggled to make a signifi-



cant impact in UP. In the last state elections, Congress won just six seats, largely because it contested as an ally of SP. Without that partnership, Congress risks becoming a minor player in the state's political landscape. "The outcome in Haryana is pivotal because it reflects Congress's ability - or inability - to stand on its own. Failing to form Government, the Congress has now lost the bargaining power," feels political analyst. The upcoming by-elections in UP are not just a regional political contest; they hold national significance as a test for the opposition's INDIA alliance. Formed to counter the dominance of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), the alliance includes Congress, SP, and other regional parties. But the internal dynamics of this coalition are already strained by seat-sharing disputes, and the by-elections will test whether the alliance can present a united front.

Congress is reportedly eyeing five of the 10 seats in the upcoming by-elections, with a focus on Muslim-dominated constituencies. However, SP leader Akhilesh Yadav is inclined to grant Congress only two. This tug-of-war over seat allocation underlines Congress's diminishing leverage in UP, which is expected to decline further after the Haryana results. Yogi Adityanath's future tied to by-elections. The by-elections are also critical for Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, whose future political trajectory hinges on the outcome. Having firmly positioned himself as a headline Hindutva leader, Yogi faces the challenge of retaining his grip on power in the face of a rejuvenated opposition. A strong performance by the INDIA alliance could signal a shift in the political winds, putting pressure on the BJP Government in the lead-up to the 2024 general elections. Yogi's Government has faced criticism over issues like law and order, unemployment, and communal tensions. The by-elections will serve as a referendum on his governance, and a poor showing by the BJP could embolden the opposition. While Yogi retains strong support among the BJP base, cracks could emerge if the party fails to perform well, especially in the context of rising discontent among key voter groups.

## Haryana Assembly poll outcome a blow to AAP as it fails to make its mark

**STAFF REPORTER ■**  
NEW DELHI/CHANDIGARH

The Haryana Assembly poll outcome has come as a blow to the Arvind Kejriwal-led Aam Aadmi Party (AAP), which hoped to make a mark in the elections. The party drew a blank so far with its senior vice president of the state unit Anurag Dhanda is among those set to suffer a big defeat. Dhanda, who contested from the Kalayat seat in the Kaithal district, was at the seventh position with Congress' Vikas Saharan leading by a margin of 13,419 votes. No AAP nominee was in the contest in any of the 90 assembly seats and it has managed only 1.79 percent vote share. AAP, which has governments in Delhi and Punjab, did not have any electoral success in the Lok Sabha polls earlier this year. AAP contested the assembly polls solo after talks with the Congress for stitching an alliance could not fructify. During his poll campaigns,

party national convener Arvind Kejriwal said that he had been released from jail three to four months back, his party would have formed its government in the state after the polls. "Whatever government is formed in Haryana, it will be formed with the support of the Aam Aadmi Party," he claimed. Kejriwal was released from Tihar jail on September 13 after he was granted bail by the Supreme Court in the CBI case linked to the alleged excise policy scam. He remained in jail for five months. In the 2024 Lok Sabha polls, the Kejriwal-led outfit, which was part of the INDIA bloc, contested in alliance with the Congress from the Kurukshetra parliamentary constituency. But its nominee Sushil Gupta, the party's state unit president and its 'best bet', lost to BJP's Naveen Jindal by around 29,000 votes. In Haryana where caste equations play a key role in the electoral success of a political party, AAP asked people to give it a chance in the assembly polls as they have

elected all major political parties one by one. The party projected Kejriwal as 'Haryana ka laal' (son of Haryana) and sought votes in his name. The party had announced several "guarantees", including free and round-the-clock electricity for domestic consumers, transformation of government schools and hospitals, free and good education, setting up of 'mohalla' clinics, and Rs 1,000 to women every month. Though AAP was trying its luck in the 2024 assembly polls, its past poll record shows its dismal performance in Haryana. In the 2014 Lok Sabha polls, it had unsuccessfully contested all the 10 parliamentary seats in the state. In the 2019 parliamentary polls, AAP joined hands with the Jannayak Janta Party and fielded candidates from three seats -- Faridabad, Karnal and Ambala -- and they too lost. In 2019 assembly polls, AAP contested 46 assembly seats and failed to register victory.

## Victory of struggle: Vinesh Phogat on maiden electoral win

**PNS ■** CHANDIGARH

Congress candidate and wrestler Vinesh Phogat on Tuesday called her maiden electoral win from the Julana assembly seat in Haryana as "victory of struggle" and "victory of truth". Phogat defeated her nearest rival and BJP nominee



Yogesh Kumar by a margin of 6,015 votes, according to the Election Commission. Phogat polled 65,080 votes while BJP's Kumar secured 59,065 votes. Speaking to reporters after the poll outcome, 30-year-old Phogat said, "It is a victory of 'sangharh' (struggle) and victory of truth."



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PAPER WITH PASSION

## One year of Gaza war

With no clear end in sight, the war in Gaza risks becoming a protracted conflict that destabilises the entire West Asia

As the Gaza war enters its second year, the devastation continues to deepen, turning a political and military confrontation into a full-blown humanitarian crisis. The conflict, which began as a violent flare-up between Israel and Palestinian militants, has now drawn in regional players like Lebanon and Iran, making the prospects for peace even more elusive. The war's impact has rippled across borders, leaving countless civilians trapped in a spiral of violence, displacement and suffering. One year into the war, Gaza's population bears the brunt of the ongoing violence. Entire neighbourhoods have been reduced to rubble, essential infrastructure is in ruins, and thousands of lives have been lost. With over two million people crammed into a strip of land roughly 140 square miles, Gaza was already grappling with poverty, unemployment and limited access to basic services. The war has exacerbated these challenges to catastrophic levels. Hospitals are overwhelmed, clean water is scarce and electricity is available for just a few hours a day. The United Nations has described the situation as a humanitarian disaster. Around half of Gaza's population is now displaced, living in overcrowded shelters or temporary camps, with limited access to aid. The ongoing blockade of the strip has further restricted the entry of essential supplies, worsening the plight of ordinary citizens. Children, in particular, are facing the harshest consequences, with many losing access to education and mental health support, which adds another layer to the enduring trauma of the war.

What began as a localised conflict between Israel and Hamas has now escalated into a broader regional confrontation, with Lebanon's Hezbollah and Iran's proxy forces becoming increasingly involved. Hezbollah, the powerful Shia militant group based in Lebanon, has launched attacks on northern Israel, adding a new front to the war. This has drawn in Israeli forces, threatening to destabilise Lebanon, a country already grappling with its own internal crises. Iran's involvement, through its support of Hezbollah and various Palestinian factions, has further complicated the conflict. Tehran's backing of these groups is part of a broader regional strategy, aimed at countering Israeli and the US influence in the West Asia. As Iran's involvement grows, so does the risk of a wider regional war. The US and other global powers have expressed concern over the possibility of an all-out confrontation between Israel and Iran. Diplomatic efforts have been ineffective so far, with talks breaking down repeatedly. The involvement of Hezbollah and Iran signals that the war is no longer confined to Israel and Gaza but is part of a larger geopolitical struggle, further complicating any peace process. In Gaza, the humanitarian situation will continue to deteriorate unless there is an immediate intervention. The conflict has reached a point where military solutions alone cannot resolve the underlying issues. The time is running out, the UN must intervene to avert a crisis that could snowball into a regional catastrophe.

### PICTALK



Devotees carry an idol of Goddess Durga to a puja venue, in Nadia

# Sports: A catalyst for social change and unity



SANTOSH KUMAR BISWAL

Sports have long transcended mere competition, emerging as a profound social force capable of uniting diverse communities and inspiring meaningful change

Nelson Mandela, a Black nationalist and the first Black president of South Africa, once asserted, "Sport has the power to change the world. It has the power to inspire. It has the power to unite people in a way that little else does. It is more powerful than governments in breaking down racial barriers. It laughs in the face of all types of discrimination." This sentiment underscores the profound influence sports can have on society. Recently, Indian shooter Manu Bhaker, the first female athlete from her country to win an Olympic medal in shooting, echoed this sentiment, emphasising that one does not have to pursue conventional careers like medicine or engineering. She expressed that "sports life is a beautiful life," showcasing how sports can be a fulfilling and empowering path. The release of the Ga-Mashie Boxing Heritage photobook and video in Ghana highlights the socio-cultural dimensions of sports, suggesting that these occurrences should not be viewed in isolation but rather as part of a broader sociological and anthropological landscape. Throughout history, from ancient traditions to contemporary contexts, sports have blurred the lines between sociology and anthropology, influencing everything from local culture to global events.

**Breaking Down Barriers** Sports possess a unique ability to dismantle barriers related to race, gender and disability. Historically, they have served as a battleground for challenging exclusionary practices and promoting inclusivity. In ancient Greece, for instance, Spartan girls participated in physical training and competed in sports, an early testament to gender equality in athletics. Ghana, renowned for producing world-class boxers, has long viewed the sport as a symbol of hope and resilience. Racial integration in sports has often signified broader societal changes. A landmark moment in American history was Jackie Robinson's breaking of Major League Baseball's colour barrier in 1947. His courage in facing racial hostility while excelling on



the field not only inspired future generations of athletes but also set the stage for the Civil Rights Movement. **Catalyst for Social Change** Beyond unification, sports have historically acted as powerful catalysts for social change. Athletes often leverage their platforms to advocate for justice and equality, using their visibility to challenge societal norms and highlight injustices. The Paralympic Games, which began in 1960, have been instrumental in promoting inclusion and accessibility for athletes with disabilities. Sports icons like Muhammad Ali, Jackie Robinson, and Billie Jean King have used their influence to push for racial and gender equality. Ali's refusal to be drafted into the Vietnam War due to his opposition to racial injustice is one of the most significant acts of protest in sports history. The 1968 Olympics in Mexico City became a global stage for protest when American sprinters Tommie Smith and John Carlos raised their fists in a Black Power salute during the medal ceremony, drawing attention to the struggles of African Americans and other marginalised groups. Moreover, sports diplomacy has been a strategy for nations to ease tensions. A notable example is the 1971 "Ping-Pong Diplomacy" between the United States and China, where a simple table tennis match opened the door to diplomatic relations between



THE 1971 'PING-PONG DIPLOMACY' BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES AND CHINA IS A PRIME EXAMPLE, WHERE A SIMPLE TABLE TENNIS MATCH OPENED THE DOORS TO DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS BETWEEN TWO SUPERPOWERS

the two superpowers. **Community Development** Sports play a crucial role in community development, especially in underserved areas. Youth sports programmes provide numerous benefits, including improved physical health, enhanced social skills, and academic achievement. For many, these programmes serve as a safe haven, offering structure, mentorship, and opportunities that might otherwise be unavailable. At the community level, sports unite people around common goals. Local teams often foster a sense of pride and identity, bringing communities together to support their athletes. This sense of unity not only strengthens social bonds but also helps reduce crime rates and enhance community cohesion. **Cultural Dimensions of Sports** The sociological and anthropological impact of sports is undeniable. In India, for instance, sports reflect a complex interplay of caste, community, gender, and sexuality. Historical traditions such as 'Mallakhamb', an ancient Indian martial art that blends yoga and exercise, illustrate how sports can embody cultural heritage. Similarly, traditional games like 'Kabaddi' in Odisha and 'Jallikattu' in Tamil Nadu showcase the socio-cultural significance of sports in various regions. Sports events and local traditions can serve as powerful

tools for social change, transforming communities and promoting inclusivity. The 1995 Rugby World Cup in South Africa is a prominent example, where sports helped bridge the divide between black and white South Africans during Mandela's presidency. **A Continuing Legacy** The stories of athletes who have championed justice, the communities transformed by sports initiatives, and the barriers dismantled through athletic achievement illustrate the transformative power of sports. The recent resurgence of movements like Black Lives Matter has reemphasised the social power of sports. Athletes across various leagues have taken stands against racial injustice, using actions like taking a knee during the national anthem to raise awareness. Major sports organisations have embraced these movements, reflecting a growing recognition of the role sports play in advancing social justice. As we look to the future, it is evident that sports will continue to be a powerful force for good, uniting people, inspiring change, and contributing to a better world. The power of sports to foster connection and advocate for justice is more important than ever. (The writer is associate professor and head, Journalism and Mass Communication, Rama Devi Women's University, Bhubaneswar; views are personal)

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### IS 'MAKE IN INDIA' JUST A SLOGAN

Madam — This refers to the write-up on Make in India (October 7). Make in India is more a slogan than a solution. This is because the investments made in the production sector come from FDIs, FII or FPIs which are basically known as butterfly capital that tend to fly away anytime for little more benefit offered elsewhere. They are coming in without any conditionality like increasing employment, exports, or tax income. China utilised the system of foreign capital coming into China by imposing conditions like employing the locals, ensuring exports, bringing in new technology, etc. With such conditions, the country could transform itself from Make in China to Made in China and is able to threaten even the most advanced economies. The Indian model is functioning under 'Ease of doing business' where land, power, tax benefits and cheap labour are offered with the least monitoring, control or regulatory system in vogue or muted. The example of Samsung is to explain this. The management is facing a prolonged strike by the workers on basic demands like a hike in wage and the right to form a union of their choice. The government is neither able to convince the management nor compel them to respect the law of the land. All under the fear of losing future investments. Therefore, Make in India is a slogan but not a solution, as even after some decades the country will have no scope under the present system to transform to Make in India.

AG Rajmohan | Anantapur

### OBAMA BACKS KAMALA HARRIS

Madam — That former President of the United States (US), Barack Obama, is all set to undertake a 27-day campaign for Democratic Party presidential candidate Kamala Harris should be music to the latter's ears. Obama came to power in 2009 with high expectations, riding on the catchy "yes, we can" slogan, and

## Antarctica turning green



Images of some regions of Antarctica's ice landscape turning green definitely ring an alarm bell to the whole globe and give a grim message alerting mankind to watch where we are heading to. This dramatic transformation, with its icy landscape increasingly turning green, reveals that the rate of this change has accelerated by over 30 per cent in recent

years. Scientists and environmentalists say that this "greening" of the Antarctic Peninsula, highlights the urgent consequences of a warming period and the ten-fold rise underscores the significant impact of climate change. A study made between 1986 and 2021 by researchers has revealed that an increase in the vegetation cover across the Antarctic Peninsula has soared from less than one square kilometre to nearly 12 square kilometres within a period of 35 years, which according to the global clock is a short period. Global players, heads and the whole global community must come together and chalk out urgent measures to check this because if this is kept unchecked and ignored it will only end up in disaster resulting in an apocalypse. M Pradyu | Kannur

### STAMPEDE AT AIR SHOW

Madam — Stampede is an expected incident in mass gatherings. The Air show at Marina Beach was a much-awaited event for the nation to inspire youth to be a part of the armed forces. Events like this must be planned meticulously by the state government to create an enthusiasm amongst the youth to be a part of the armed forces. Unfortunately, the stampede and deaths of five civilians during the show have left a void in the magnificent showcase of Indian Air Force power. Hopefully the venue, climatic condition and safety of the viewers are kept in mind while the state government plans such brilliant airshows. The magnitude of the event was such that the roaring Chennai shore saw the best of the showcase by the air warriors and the applause by the audience was one of immense enthusiasm.

Mythili Vinod | Secunderabad

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

## The rich heritage of Indian astrology and its global Influences



PARAPPANANGADI U PANIKAR

Indian astrology, deeply rooted in the Vedic traditions, has a history that intertwines spirituality, mathematics and cosmic wisdom

Indian astrology has a long and rich history. It all starts with the Vedas. The Yaga rituals prescribed in the Rigveda demanded accuracy in all respects. The Yagasalai — the tent where the rituals are performed — had to be built with precise measurements. The means and methods to compute these measurements later evolved into Vastu or Indian architecture. The Yaga rituals were to begin at an auspicious time, when planetary positions aligned in a certain order. The methods to compute such auspicious times — Muhurta, in Sanskrit — paved the way to the development of astronomy and astrology in India. Indian astronomy has a long and strong association with scholars from the other ancient civilisations. Suryasiddhanta, one of the ancient Indian treatises on astronomy, begins with the author's prayer to the Sun God asking Him to reveal the secrets of the universe. The Sun God then appears and advises the seeker to go and meet Turamaya in the Romaka country to learn more about cosmological systems and their calculations.



Experts in the field, including Dr Ebenezer Burgess who translated the text to English, opine that Turamaya mentioned in the text is the great astronomer Ptolemy, and Romaka stands for Roman Egypt. Indian predictive astrology too has a strong bond with Greece. One of the very first texts on predictive astrology, which is still widely used by Indian astrologers, is the Yavana-Jataka, or the Greek Horoscopy, authored by Spujiddhvaja Yavaneswara. The word Yavana derives from Ionian, and broadly means Greece. Another text of the same lineage is the Vriddha-Yavana-Jataka, or the Great Greek Horoscopy. The ancient astrological texts often mention the Greek astrologers and astronomers with reverence and respect. Indian astrology made its mark through Varahamihira, who is considered as the fore-

most authority of ancient times. His text, the Horasastra is the most widely used astrological text. Varahamihira was a Maga-Brahmin, Priestly class of Hindus who worshipped Sun. It should be noted that his book on the lives of philosophers, Diogenes Laertius writes that the great Democritus learned from Magi-Priests. This could be the class of Varahamihira. It should be noted that Varahamihira was also a great mathematician and an astronomer who authored detailed treatises on these subjects. Indian kings and the elite class had their own team of astrologers, who advised them on the military strategies. Astrology was one of the chief components of Indian knowledge system and was metaphorically mentioned as the eye of the Veda. Under this branch, many subjects were developed including astronomy and mathematics. Later, when the Mughal invaders tried to attack this knowledge system in the northern part of India, the center of Indian intellectual debates and studies shifted to the south of India. Astrology to Mathematics thrived in south

India. At the south they developed their own system of horary astrology, a detailed method of predicting the future, and named it Ashtamangala Prashna. In the field of Mathematics, the great Madhava of Samgamagrama independently discovered Infinite Series for the Trigonometric Functions, which is known today as the "Madhava-Gregory-Leibniz Series." India and Indian Astrology contributed heavily towards the development of science — specifically in the fields of astronomy, astrology, and mathematics. We always appreciated and respected scholars from civilisations and cultures foreign to us. In the Veda, there is a line "Yatra Viswam Bhavatyeka Needam" which means, here the world becomes a single nest. In the arena of knowledge systems, we lived up to it. The world was a single and simple nest to us. Many birds, scholars and intellectuals, from many trees, many countries, resided in that nest harmoniously. (The writer is a vedic scholar based in Kerala; views are personal)

## FIRST COLUMN

NAVIGATING THE  
WORLD OF EXTREMES

Yoga meditation, combined with values, is our best hope for navigating these turbulent times



RAJYOGI BRAHMA KUMAR NIKUNJ JI

The world we live in today is full of extremists who seek to exert control over humanity. Unfortunately, a large part of the population is now influenced by factions that adopt agitative approaches to fulfil their social, economic, political, or religious demands. They are termed extremists because they abandon moderation, resorting to over-activism, and in many cases, extreme violence. These groups are willing to go to any lengths to ensure their voices are heard and their demands met by the authorities. They disrupt public peace, and their activities reflect over-assertiveness, rigid attitudes, and a lack of appreciation for the views and interests of other communities or groups. In the process, what often gets sacrificed is any possibility of dialogue or mutual understanding, leading to a cycle of retaliation and resentment.

A closer look at society today reveals that, to some extent, we are all extremists in one way or another. Science and technology are racing toward their extremes. Trade, commerce, and consumerism have adopted a global, expansive form, becoming multinational and mega-scale. The world's largest corporations have achieved levels of influence and control that were once unimaginable. Corporate expansion and monopolistic behaviour continue to push the boundaries of ethics, often leaving smaller businesses struggling to survive.

Environmental pollution has reached disastrous proportions due to unchecked industrial expansion and the selfishness of a few. Entire ecosystems are being pushed to the brink, and climate change is now a pressing global crisis. A small number of individuals and corporations continue to profit at the expense of the planet's future. The increasing use of the internet is contributing to an overwhelming flood of information.



The rapid expansion of cities and transportation networks, have also brought their share of chaos. While these extremes might be seen as signs of development, they come with significant trade-offs, including the erosion of quality of life, mental well-being, and social cohesion. However, amidst all these extremes, the most concerning trend is the rise of anger, jealousy, hatred, violence, greed, and lust. These emotions are spinning out of control, leading to a breakdown in family structures and social harmony. Consumerism, commercialism, and materialism are shaping the very fabric of society, convincing people that their worth is tied to what they own rather than who they are. This pursuit of material success has left many spiritually impoverished, disconnected from their inner selves, and chasing superficial goals that do little to provide lasting fulfillment.

The current trends give us cause for concern, as we witness increasing divisions, social unrest, and the degradation of our environment. The question now becomes: how long can we continue down this path before we reach a breaking point? In such times, when self-control and moderation have all but vanished, and extremism has become the norm, we must learn how to restore our inner calm and balance. Yoga meditation, combined with values, is our best hope for navigating these turbulent times. Meditation can help us return to a state of self-control, calmness, and equilibrium. It purifies the mind and quenches our deep thirst for peace. Through meditation and the cultivation of moral and spiritual values, individuals can learn to be fully engaged in life yet detached from material cravings. They can contribute to the world without succumbing to greed and excess, achieving a balance between material success and spiritual well-being. So, let us make yoga and meditation a daily practice, not just for physical health but to combat the extremism we face within ourselves and in the world around us. Only through this inner journey can we reclaim the purity and peace that seem so elusive in today's fast-paced, hyper-connected world.

(Writer is a spiritual educator & popular columnist; views are personal)

## Ten years of Swachh Bharat: The road ahead



B K SINGH

From improved groundwater quality to managing solid and liquid waste, the mission's impact has been substantial, but the journey towards a cleaner India must continue



Swachh Bharat Abhiyan was launched by PM Narendra Modi on the occasion of Gandhi Jayanti in 2014. The mission has completed ten years and during this period 120 million families have been provided access to safe sanitation at their homes. The rural household latrines have transformed the lives of the masses, especially about human health and well-being. It has cut open defecation and UNICEF's report in 2018 indicates that there is a saving of 5.2 per cent of GDP in a year on this count. The other observed benefits are preventing pollution of groundwater, less infant mortality and better attendance for girl children in schools. Though nearly 4000 cities are certified to have maintained hygiene and cleanliness, the challenge for users and managers is to keep it all functional and used continuously.

The golden decade of Indian sanitation is being celebrated this year starting from 17th September 2024 (PM's birthday) to 2nd October 2024, Gandhi Jayanti. Let me examine in this piece as to what are the hits and misses of the mission and also indicate the possible roadmap for the future. Civic agencies and local bodies have done their bit for the success of the mission. The annual ranking of city corporations on this front has made them highly competitive. Cities like Indore, Mysuru and Lucknow and several others have secured high ranks, which has induced other city corporations to do more work for better ranks. The segregation of solid wastes into wet and dry has taken a big leap. The processing of urban wastes which used to be 18 per cent in 2014 has gone up to 80 per cent today. The management of solid waste disposal sites has remained a challenge. The generation of electricity and biofuel from dry wastes has not picked up as yet. However, use of the wet wastes to generate compost and biogas is relatively better performing. More innovation, use of technolo-



THE INTRODUCTION OF BIO-LATRINES IN TRAINS HAS BEEN QUITE A REVOLUTION. BEFORE 2014 TRAIN TRACKS EVEN ABETTING THE PLATFORMS USED TO BE FILLED WITH HUMAN EXCRETA, A REPULSIVE SITE THAT NO ONE LIKES TO LOOK AT. THIS HAS BEEN OVERCOME THROUGH WONDERFUL INNOVATION

gy and investment can be a game changer. The bigger problem is the management of nearly 220 million tonnes of waste in the landfills around many cities. Mountains of garbage at Ghazipur, Okhala, Bhalswa and Bandhwari in and around the national capital have been engaging the attention of governments, experts and Courts for quite some time, but no workable solution has been found. Liquid wastes are a more serious problem. The civic agencies allowing sewage to flow through open drains have to ensure that all such drains are concealed, lest the sewage mixes with the flood water and can find its way into urban water bodies. Further, the sewer lines carrying household sewage and the soak pits are to be periodically checked and repaired so that no leakage takes place and underground aquifers are not contaminated. A sewage treatment plant (STP) provided at the inlet point of a water body should be functional and no untreated sewage should be allowed to ingress into the water body without treatment. Local bodies and municipalities must ensure that individual houses do not connect their sewer line to stormwater drains, which often happens in thickly populated slums. The water flowing in stormwater drains ends up in the water body directly without going through any treatment. The mixing of sewage in the stormwater drains can be quite harmful and must be prevented at all costs. Bengaluru's city corporation used to generate 1400 Million litres per day (MLD) of sewage in 2005-06 and 2006-07, however, less than 400 MLD used to go through STP. Going through STP does not mean that

the said quantity was treated; often the managers of STP switched off power mischievously to save on cost. At present 1700 MLD sewage is generated, and nearly three-quarters of it goes through STP. The story in other metropolitan cities is similar. STP capacity has to be increased across the country to prevent the contamination of groundwater, which is otherwise the source of many water-borne diseases. Further, there should be stricter vigilance on the management so that these do not malfunction. Plastics and polythene have become the parts of our lives.

It has its share of impacting our health and also that of wild animals and livestock. Especially single-use plastics are thrown haphazardly and find their way either into the mountain of garbage or into the water bodies. It is also directly consumed by livestock, wild animals as well as aquatic life, some of which suffocate and die. Imagine fishes feeding on it and our non-vegetarian friends relishing fishes. Microplastics are in all our blood and are a very big health hazard. The introduction of bio-latrines in trains has been quite a revolution. Before 2014 train tracks even abetting the platforms used to be filled with human excreta, a repulsive site that no one likes to look at. This has been overcome through wonderful innovation. However, as the trains pass through the outskirts of big cities, the dumps containing plastics and polythene are seen on either side. It is often very painful to watch. We need to make changes in our behaviour and ensure that the uses are brought to a minimum. We must honour the ban on single-use plastics imposed by the

central government. Education and awareness campaigns must be run this fortnight when we are celebrating the golden decade of Indian sanitation. Burning of debris is often found to be an easy method in the dry season to get rid of weeds and garbage. Punjab and Haryana farmers after harvesting the paddy are in the habit of burning the stubble to prepare the field for growing wheat. Unfortunately, the season of stubble burning coincides with a weather system that has practically no vertical circulation of air and oxides of nitrogen and carbon emitted during burning do not escape into the upper atmosphere resulting in smog all around big cities.

This causes difficulties in breathing and is a serious health hazard for the citizens. Most aware citizens have been preventing any burning of weeds and garbage in their neighbourhood. This fortnight provides an opportunity to conduct many education and awareness campaigns. When plastics and polythene are burnt along with garbage and weeds, more obnoxious gases are emitted and it may be very difficult to stay around. All such emissions are greenhouse gases and find a place in the upper atmosphere when the weather pattern is favourable. Among these gases, carbon dioxide is a nonreactive compound and it stays in the atmosphere for hundreds of years. It accelerates the temperature rise. We are already facing adverse consequences in the warming world. We must bring changes in our behaviour.

(The writer is Retired Principal Chief Conservator of Forests, Head of Forest Force, Karnataka; views are personal)

## How shared decision-making and digital solutions are transforming healthcare

Digital innovations like the Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission offer hope for improving communication and fostering patient autonomy in healthcare decisions

In the evolving landscape of healthcare, patient satisfaction and engagement as equal partners in their care journey have become pivotal. The quality of the patient experience—how well they feel cared for—greatly influences their perception of healthcare services. Many countries, such as the United Kingdom and Australia, have recognised this and introduced standards that emphasize active patient involvement to improve care outcomes. Shared decision-making (SDM) has gained significant global traction as a means to promote patient autonomy and foster truly patient-centered care.



SHUCHIN BAJAJ

process where patients and healthcare professionals work together to make informed decisions about treatment plans. This collaboration spans various aspects, from immediate treatment needs to long-term care plans, such as advance care planning. Healthcare providers play a crucial role in facilitating this process by offering clear information and supporting patient

deliberation, empowering individuals to make decisions based on their preferences, values, and informed consent. Engaging patients in the decision-making process is essential to improving healthcare outcomes and experiences. When patients are confident and well-informed, they are more likely to choose treatments that align with their personal beliefs and preferences. This also increases health literacy, leading to better long-term decisions and greater satisfaction. Active patient participation can result in faster recovery times, reduced anxiety, and improved adherence to treatment plans. Patients who are actively involved in their care tend to have better outcomes, including improved overall well-being and quick-

er recovery from illness or surgery. Moreover, patients who feel respected and valued in the decision-making process tend to develop stronger relationships with their healthcare providers. This trust benefits both the patient and the provider, often leading to better treatment outcomes and reducing the risk of medical litigation. In today's healthcare environment, where patient-centered care is increasingly prioritized, the active participation of patients is key to achieving meaningful and lasting improvements. From a business perspective, higher patient satisfaction can lead to more returning patients, better reviews, and an increase in foot traffic for healthcare providers.

## Challenges of Patient Engagement in India:

In India, the desire for more patient involvement in healthcare decisions is growing, but significant barriers remain. Many patients report feeling inadequately informed about treatment plans even after consenting to surgery, often seeking external sources of information. A study conducted at a tertiary hospital revealed that although all patients were aware of their diagnosis, less than one-third knew about the risks of their treatment or alternative options. Consequently, many sought answers outside their treating doctor, demonstrating a gap in communication between patients and providers. Patient involvement in treat-

ment decisions is largely limited to high-end healthcare institutions such as tertiary care centers, academic hospitals, or high-cost therapies. Overworked clinical staff in India often lack the time to engage patients meaningfully in the decision-making process. Leveraging Digital Solutions for Better Patient Care: Digital technologies offer significant hope for improving patient engagement. These innovations enhance patient deliberation, promote self-responsibility, and strengthen patient-provider interactions. For resource-limited, overburdened healthcare systems like India's, digital solutions can save clinicians' time while boosting patient engagement, making them especially suit-

able for low-resource environments. India's Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission (ABDM) aims to create an interoperable ecosystem that engages all healthcare stakeholders, providing tools to promote patient autonomy and facilitate patient-centered care. The convergence of global discourse, national policies, rising patient demand for participation, and available digital solutions presents an excellent opportunity to mainstream this approach across India. One of the significant ways digital solutions enhance patient engagement is by providing patients with access to comprehensive health records. When patients have control over their health information,

they can make better-informed decisions, improving their involvement in the care process. For clinicians, access to long-term records enables more personalized treatment options. Through the ABDM, patient records are linked by a unique 14-digit Ayushman Bharat Health Account (ABHA), ensuring that all health data—from diagnostics to treatment histories—are stored in one place. This enables providers to help patients make informed decisions based on accurate, comprehensive histories, while patients can participate actively by accessing their records at any time.

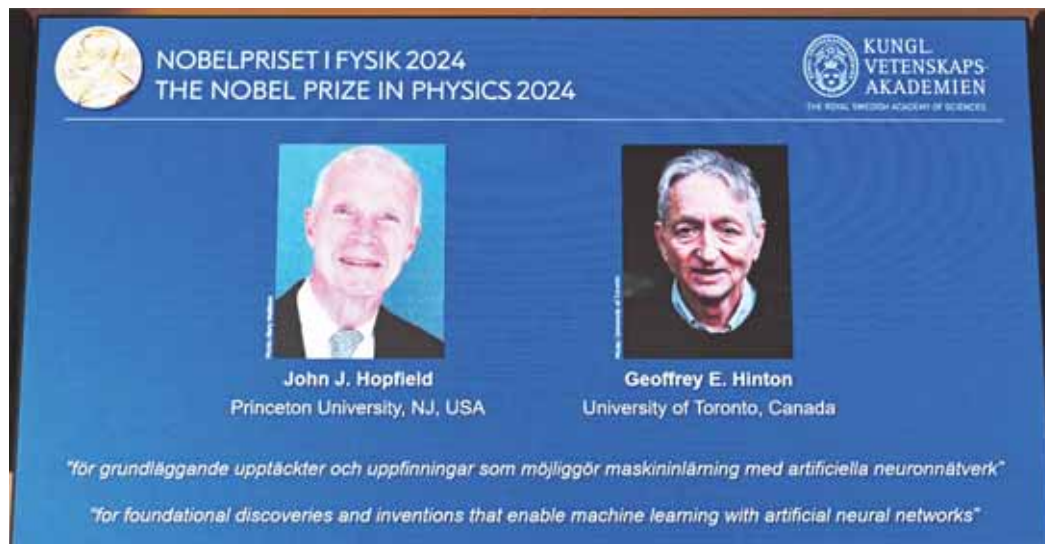
(The writer is Founder & Director - Ujala Cygnus Healthcare Services; views are personal)

# 2 scientists get Nobel for discoveries that enabled artificial intelligence

AP ■ STOCKHOLM

Two pioneers of artificial intelligence – John Hopfield and Geoffrey Hinton – won the Nobel Prize in physics Tuesday for helping create the building blocks of machine learning that is revolutionising the way we work and live but also creates new threats to humanity, one of the winners said. Hinton, who is known as the Godfather of artificial intelligence, is a citizen of Canada and Britain who works at the University of Toronto and Hopfield is an American working at Princeton.

Nobel committee at the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences, said the two laureates “used fundamental concepts from statistical physics to design artificial neural networks that function as associative memories and find patterns in large data sets.” She said that such networks have been used to advance research in physics and “have also become part of our daily lives, for instance in facial recognition and language translation.” While the committee honoured the science behind machine learning and AI, Moons also mentioned its flipside, saying that “while machine learning has enormous benefits, its rapid development has also raised concerns about our future. Collectively, humans carry the responsibility for using this new technology in a safe and ethical way for the greatest benefit of humankind.”



Hinton shares those concerns. He quit a role at Google so he could more freely speak about the dangers of the technology he helped create. On Tuesday, he said he was shocked at the honour. “I’m flabbergasted. I had no idea this would happen,” he said when reached by the Nobel committee

on the phone. Hinton predicted that AI will end up having a “huge influence” on civilization, bringing improvements in productivity and health care. “It would be comparable with the Industrial Revolution,” he said in the open call with reporters and the officials from the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences. “Instead of exceeding people in physical strength, it’s going to exceed people in intellectual ability. We have no experience of what it’s like to have things smarter than us. And it’s going to be wonderful in many respects,” Hinton said. “But we also have to worry about a number of possible bad consequences, particularly the threat of these things getting out of control.” Six days of Nobel announcements opened Monday with Americans Victor Ambros and Gary Ruvkun winning the medicine prize for

their discovery of tiny bits of genetic material that serve as on and off switches inside cells that help control what the cells do and when they do it. If scientists can better understand how they work and how to manipulate them, it could one day lead to powerful treatments for diseases like cancer. The physics prize carries a cash award of 11 million Swedish Kronor (USD 1 million) from a bequest left by the award’s creator, Swedish inventor Alfred Nobel. The laureates are invited to receive their awards at ceremonies on December 10, the anniversary of Nobel’s death. Nobel announcements will continue with the chemistry physics prize on Wednesday and literature on Thursday. The Nobel Peace Prize will be announced Friday and the economics award on October 14.

# UK sanctions Russia for use of ‘inhumane’ chemical weapons

PTI ■ LONDON

The UK government has said new sanctions have been imposed against Russian troops involved in the use of “inhumane” chemical weapons on the battlefield in Ukraine, in flagrant disregard for the Chemical Weapons Convention and serious violation of international law. The UK government imposed the sanctions on Tuesday. Among those sanctioned include the Radiological, Chemical and Biological Defence (RCBD) Troops of the Russian Armed Forces and its leader Igor Kirillov, responsible for helping deploy the “barbaric weapons”.

## Russia, Iran are behind ‘staggering’ rise in deadly plots: MI5 chief

AP ■ LONDON

Britain is facing a “staggering rise” in assassination attempts on UK soil by Russia and Iran, as the hostile states recruit criminals to “do their dirty work” for them, the head of the UK’s domestic intelligence agency said Tuesday. MI5 director Ken McCallum said his agents and police have tackled 20 Tehran-backed plots since 2022 and warned that Iran could expand its targets in the UK if Israel attacks in response to Iran’s missile barrage. The spy chief said the widening conflicts in the Middle East raise the risk “of an increase in – or broadening of – Iranian state aggression in the UK.” In a rare public speech setting out the major threats to the UK from both hostile states

and terror groups, McCallum said there also is a risk that Israel’s conflicts with Iran-backed militant groups — Hamas in Gaza, Hezbollah in Lebanon and the Houthis in Yemen — could trigger terror attacks in the UK. The Middle East crisis has not translated “at scale into terrorist violence” in Britain, he said, but hostile states, individual attackers and a revived Islamic State group combine to create “the most complex and interconnected threat environment we’ve ever seen.” The number of state-threat investigations undertaken by MI5 has risen by 48% in the past year, with Iran, Russia and, China the main perpetrators, McCallum told journalists at the UK’s counterterrorism command center in London.

nowhere left to hide. We will continue to use sanctions to directly target and counter the Kremlin’s attempts to sow fear, division and disorder,” he said. The FCDO said Russian forces have openly admitted to using hazardous chemical weapons on the battlefield, with widespread use of riot control agents and multiple reports of the use of the toxic choking agent chloropicrin – first deployed on the battlefields of the First World War. The UK also accused agents of “Putin’s mafia state” of being responsible for deploying the deadly nerve agent Novichok on the streets of Salisbury in England in 2018, and against Opposition leader Alexei Navalny in 2020. “Our message to Putin and his

regime is clear: you cannot break international law without facing the consequences. We will not allow such blatant violations of the Chemical Weapons Convention and rules-based international order to go unpunished,” said UK Defence Secretary John Healey. “The UK is cracking down on those responsible for these horrific chemical attacks in Ukraine. Our support for Ukraine is ironclad and will continue for as long as it takes,” he said. Two Russian Ministry of Defence laboratories have also been sanctioned by the UK this week for providing support for the development and deployment of inhumane weapons for use on the frontlines. The FCDO reiterated the UK’s commitment

to deliver GBP 3 billion of military aid to Ukraine every year for “as long as they need.” “The UK’s military, financial, diplomatic and political support for Ukraine is iron-clad. We cannot and will not let aggressors like Putin succeed,” it added. The sanctions come as the UK delivered a statement to the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) Executive Council laying out the country’s commitment to the Chemical Weapons Convention and the OPCW in the face of those who act to undermine it. The latest set of Russian targets has been designated under the UK’s Chemical Weapons (Sanctions) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019.

# Vigils, protests around world mark anniversary of Hamas attack on Israel

AP ■ NEW YORK

Commemorations and protests unfolded across the world on Monday to mark the anniversary of the October 7 Hamas attack on Israel, an assault that sparked a war that has devastated the Hamas-ruled Gaza strip, fuelled bloodshed in other Mideast lands and stirred protests and divisions far away. Those divisions were visible in New York, where a crowd gathered for an evening remembrance ceremony in Central Park even as pro-Palestinian protesters converged on a corner of the park less than a mile away. Hamas militants’ surprise cross-border attack last year killed about 1,200 people. Another 250 were taken hostage; around 100 remain in captivity, with many of them feared dead. The attack, on a major Jewish holiday, shattered Israelis’ sense of security and left the world facing the prospect of a major conflict in the Middle East. “The unfathomable horrors I experienced that morning have transformed me, along with every single Israeli and every single Jew,” Natalie Sanandaji, a survivor from a music festival where the attackers killed hundreds, told the audience in Central Park. Israel responded to the attack by waging a war against Hamas in Gaza, where the fighting has killed over 41,000 people and displaced around 1.9 million. The conflict has spread in the region, where Israel also is fighting Hezbollah militants in Lebanon, facing escalating threats from Yemen’s Houthi rebels and contending with a mounting

conflict with Iran, which backs Hamas, Hezbollah and the Houthis. In New York, protesters spread a large Palestinian flag on a street near the New York Stock Exchange early Monday afternoon, while a smaller group of counterprotesters held an Israeli flag. The pro-Palestinian group grew to a blocks-long column as it marched through Manhattan streets, at one point holding a banner that read “war begets war” on the steps of the New York

Jersey high school group viewed an exhibition about the Tribe of Nova music festival in Reim, Israel, where over 360 people were killed. “I feel like that really could have been me there,” said student Ellie Solomon. Many festivalgoers were close to her age, she noted. “It’s important for us to remember them and honour them because they didn’t deserve anything that happened to them,” she added. In an echo of campus protests



Public Library. Associated Press journalists saw several people being taken into police custody at various points in the march. Police said multiple arrests were made; no further information was immediately available. While the protesters paused to conduct a Muslim evening prayer at the southwestern corner of Central Park, the parents of American-Israeli hostage Omer Neutra shared their anguish from the park’s SummerStage venue. At Philadelphia’s Weitzman National Museum of American Jewish History, a New

across the US last spring, activists gathered again at colleges Monday. About 200 pro-Palestinian protesters chanted and held banners and flags at the University of California, Los Angeles, while a few other demonstrators held Israeli flags. In Europe, where countries have sought to tamp down antisemitic and anti-Muslim sentiment, German Chancellor Olaf Scholz said in Hamburg that “we stand beside” Israelis, and he also pointed to the suffering of Palestinians in Gaza. The chancellery in Berlin has

adorned with a yellow ribbon commemorating Israeli hostages, and the names of people killed and kidnapped were read out at the Brandenburg Gate. In Italy, Premier Giorgia Meloni visited Rome’s main synagogue and reaffirmed Israel’s right to defend itself, while lamenting the devastation unleashed by Israeli forces in Gaza. French President Emmanuel Macron met in Paris with relatives of hostages and of the dead. French Foreign Minister Jean-Noël Barrot attended a memorial service at the Nova festival site. The Vatican took up a collection for the people of Gaza and published a letter expressing Pope Francis’ solidarity. In the Polish capital of Warsaw, the Jewish community paid tribute to Alex Dancyg, a Polish-born Holocaust educator who was abducted from the Nir Oz kibbutz on October 7. Israel believes he died in captivity. In Australia, thousands of people attended vigils in Sydney and Melbourne, with Prime Minister Anthony Albanese joining the latter event. A day after thousands of pro-Palestinian demonstrators rallied across Australia’s cities, hundreds gathered amid a heavy police presence at Sydney town hall to remember Palestinians killed in the conflict. In Pakistan’s largest city, Karachi, schoolchildren took part in a pro-Palestinian rally organised by the Pakistan Markazi Muslim League party. Japanese officials demanded the immediate release of all hostages and expressed condolences to Israelis who lost relatives.

# India gives relief material to Nepal

PTI ■ KATHMANDU

The Indian Embassy here handed over the first consignment of emergency relief materials, including sleeping bags, blankets and tarpaulin sheets, to authorities in flood-struck Nepal, according to an official statement. The 4.2 tonnes of aid supplies handed over on Monday were for families affected by the recent inundation in Nepal, the Indian Embassy said in a press release. Transported to Nepalgunj from India, the consignment was handed over by Second Secretary Narayan Singh on behalf of the Indian government to the Chief District Officer of Banke, Khagendra Prasad Rijal, the press release said. It comprised tarpaulins, sleeping bags, blankets, Chlorine tablets and water bottles.



Russian President Vladimir Putin (left) and Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev enter the hall during a meeting of the heads of state of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) at the Kremlin in Moscow, Russia, on Tuesday. AP/PTI

# Harris calls Trump ‘irresponsible’ for spreading misinformation about hurricane response

AP ■ WASHINGTON

Vice President Kamala Harris on Monday called former President Donald Trump “incredibly irresponsible” for spreading falsehoods about the federal response to Hurricane Helene’s destruction, offering especially sharp words as a new storm bears down on Florida with just weeks until Election Day. “There’s a lot of mis- and disinformation being pushed out there by the former president about what is available, particularly to the survivors of Helene,” Harris told reporters before boarding Air Force Two to fly to New York. “It’s extraordinarily irresponsible. It’s about him. It’s not about you.”

Helene has killed more than 220 people in six states, and Category 5 Hurricane Milton is on a path toward Florida’s Gulf Coast. Trump has made a series of false claims in the wake of Helene, including saying incorrectly that the federal government is intentionally withholding aid to Republican disaster victims. He also falsely claimed the Federal Emergency Management Agency had run out of money because all of it had gone to programmes for immigrants in the country illegally. Harris said “the reality is that FEMA has so many resources that are available to folks who desperately need them now, and resources that are about

helping people get back on their feet and rebuild and have places to go.” “People are entitled to these resources, and it is critically important that people apply for the help that is there to support,” the vice president added. “All those resources were created for just these types of moments, in an emergency situation, knowing that folks are entitled to have the relief that they so rightly need.” Trump also said during a visit that President Joe Biden was “sleeping” and not responding to calls from Georgia Gov. Brian Kemp. Biden had, in fact, spoken with Kemp and said of Trump, “He’s lying, and the governor told him he was

lying.” Harris also criticised another high-profile Republican, Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis, suggesting he’s “playing political games” and engaging in “political gamesmanship” in Helene’s wake. Harris office says the vice president reached out to DeSantis last week in the storm’s aftermath. DeSantis said Monday that he “didn’t know that she had called” and “they didn’t call me.” “It wasn’t anything anybody in my office did in saying that it was political,” DeSantis said. But Harris, asked about DeSantis, said “people are in desperate need of support right now and playing political games at this moment in these crisis situations ... is utterly irresponsible.”

# Abortion ban to stay in Texas as Supreme Court declines Biden’s appeal

AP ■ WASHINGTON

A court order that says hospitals cannot federally be required to provide pregnancy terminations when they violate a Texas abortion ban will stay for now, the Supreme Court said on Monday. The decision is another setback for opponents of Texas’ abortion ban, which for two years has withstood multiple legal challenges, including from women who had serious pregnancy complications and have been turned away by doctors. It left Texas as the only state where the Biden administration is unable to enforce its interpretation of a federal law in an effort to ensure women still have access to emergency abortions when their health or life

is at risk. The justices did not detail their reasoning for keeping in place a lower court order, and there were no publicly noted dissents. Texas had asked the justices to leave the order in place while the Biden administration had asked the justices to throw it out. Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton called the decision “a major victory.” The Biden administration argues that a federal law, called the Emergency Medical Treatment and Labor Act, or EMTALA, requires emergency rooms to provide abortions if a pregnant patient’s health or life is at serious risk, even in states where the procedure is banned. The law only applies to emergency rooms that receive Medicare funding, which most

hospitals do. The Supreme Court decision comes weeks before a presidential election in which Democratic nominee Kamala Harris has put abortion at the centre of her campaign, attacking Republican challenger Donald Trump for appointing judges to the high court who overturned nationwide abortion rights in 2022. “I will never stop fighting for a woman’s right to emergency medical care — and to restore the protections of Roe v. Wade so that women in every state have access to the care they need,” Harris said on social media on Monday evening. Texas’ abortion ban has also been a centrepiece of Democratic US Rep. Colin Allred’s challenge against Republican US Sen. Ted Cruz

for his seat. At a campaign event over the weekend in Fort Worth, Texas, hundreds of Allred’s supporters broke out in raucous applause when he vowed to protect a woman’s right to an abortion. “When I’m in the Senate, we’re going to restore Roe v. Wade,” Allred said. At a separate event the same day, in a nearby suburb, Cruz outlined a litany of criticisms against Allred, but didn’t bring up the abortion law. Katie Glenn Daniel, the state policy director of SBA Pro-Life America, applauded the Supreme Court decision and pointed to data showing Texas doctors have been able to provide an average of about five abortions per month to save a patient’s life or health.

Still, complaints of pregnant women in medical distress being turned away from emergency rooms in Texas and elsewhere have spiked as hospitals grapple with whether standard care could violate strict state laws against abortion. Several Texas women have lodged complaints against hospitals for not terminating their failing and dangerous pregnancies because of the state’s ban. In some cases, women lost reproductive organs. In asking the Supreme Court to toss out the lower court decision, the administration pointed to a similar case from Idaho earlier this year in which the justices narrowly allowed emergency abortions to resume while a lawsuit continues. At the time the Idaho case began,

the state had an exception for the life, but not the health, of a woman. Texas said its case is different, however, because the law provides some exceptions if a pregnant patient’s health is at risk. Texas pointed to a state Supreme Court ruling that said doctors do not have to wait until a woman’s life is in immediate danger to provide an abortion legally. Doctors, though, have said the Texas law is dangerously vague, and a medical board has refused to list all the conditions that qualify for an exception. Marc Hearron, an attorney for the Centre for Reproductive Rights, said doctors in Texas got no clarity from the Supreme Court on Monday. “The health care crisis is ongo-

ing,” Hearron said. “Patients are going to continue to suffer.” Mary Ziegler, a law professor at the University of California at Davis who has written extensively about abortion, said there remains much uncertainty for doctors in Texas, who could risk life in prison for performing abortions. “I think we’re going to continue to see physicians turning away patients, even patients who could qualify under the state’s exceptions, because the consequences of guessing wrong are so severe and the laws are not that clear,” Ziegler said. The Texas case started after the Supreme Court overturned Roe v. Wade in 2022, leading to abortion restrictions in many Republican-controlled states. The Biden

administration issued guidance saying hospitals still needed to provide abortions in emergency situations under a health care law that requires most hospitals to treat any patients in medical distress. Texas sued over that guidance, arguing that hospitals cannot be required to provide abortions that would violate its ban. The 5th US Circuit Court of Appeals sided with the state, ruling in January that the administration had overstepped its authority. Health and Human Services Secretary Xavier Becerra said in a post on X, “Reproductive rights are under assault in this country and women’s health and lives remain in danger from the chaos and confusion caused by overturning Roe.”



Bangladesh-India ties should be 'very close' despite regime change: Yunus

PTI ■ DHAKA Bangladesh interim government's Chief Adviser Muhammad Yunus has said that Dhaka-Delhi relations should be "very close" despite the recent regime change in the country, asserting that it is in the interest of both countries.

dents in Bangladesh might have "disheartened" India and "they were not pleased with the changes." He did not mention the incidents. It will be difficult for us to move along without each other. It is only natural that we have close ties and good relations in every sphere," he said.

same time, strengthening SAARC (South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation). Yunus said Delhi must forge good relations with Bangladesh not because "we are forcing them" but because this was "necessary in their own interest" as well.

Lankan minister defends govt of arrival of Chinese military ship

PTI ■ COLOMBO Sri Lanka's newly-appointed Foreign Minister Vijitha Herath on Tuesday defended the government's move to allow a Chinese military training ship to arrive in Colombo, saying the decision falls within the framework of the country's diplomatic engagements and such visits "pose no threat".

exchanges with other countries," said a statement. Herath, also the Cabinet Spokesman, said Sri Lanka maintains balanced diplomatic relations with all countries. He said the government's decision to allow the Chinese military training vessel to visit Sri Lanka falls within the framework of the country's diplomatic engagements.

Lanka. Herath's predecessor Ali Sabry in July said that Sri Lanka was to review the moratorium to decide if to continue with it or lift it. India had repeatedly raised concerns over several Chinese research vessels in the Sri Lankan waters.

between the two navies, crew members of the ship are set to participate in a series of programmes organized by the Sri Lanka Navy, according to an official statement. In addition, crew members of the ship will explore some of the tourist attractions of the country, during their stay in Colombo.

Six injured at Little India shophouses following blast

PTI ■ SINGAPORE Six people were injured on Tuesday following a partial collapse of two shophouses at Little India, a popular shopping arcade for Indian tourists, prompting neighbouring hotels to evacuate guests.

minor injuries, declined to go to the hospital. This is the first blast incident damaging property in the usually crowded area of the Little India precincts. An Indian vegetarian restaurant named Paakashala Singapore is located at 84 Syed Alwi Road, while No 85 houses Nirja Mega Mart, which retails food and grocery products.

away from the affected site, evacuated around 60 of its guests, and they were allowed to return to their rooms only at 5 am. It was a similar case for the Arianna Hotel, which is located just next door to 84 Syed Alwi Road.

French govt faces no-trust vote

AP ■ PARIS the choice of Barnier as prime minister as they were not given a chance to form a minority government, despite securing the most seats at the National Assembly.

France's minority government is expected to survive a no-confidence vote on Tuesday in a test for new conservative Prime Minister Michel Barnier, forced to rely on the far right's goodwill to be able to stay in power.

It is to inform to the public at large that Mrs. Sangeta Chaudhary and Mr. Abhishek Chaudhary had acquired First Floor, built on property bearing no. B-220, area measuring 440 Sq. yds., situated at Chitrangan Park New Delhi wide Reinforcement Deed Dt. 20/09/2024 executed by Mrs. Shreyasi Chaudhary, Mrs. Sangeta Chaudhary and Mr. Abhishek Chaudhary are the undisputed owners of the said property and said property is free from any charge/mortgage/encumbrance.

Any person/firm/institution/company having any claim or right in respect of the said property by way of inheritance, share, sale, agreement, lease, license, gift, possession, legal heirs, partners or encumbrance whatsoever or otherwise is hereby required to intimate in writing to the undersigned within 07 days from the date of publication of this notice of his/her share or claim, if any, with all supporting documents at below mentioned address. After expiration of notice period, the claims, if any, of such person shall be treated null and void and also treated as waived and not binding on our client.

THE PIONEER CLASSIFIEDS

THANKSGIVING Thank you holly spirit for all the blessings Celine. PD(837)C

CHANGE OF NAME I, Kamal Singh, S/o Shri Puran Singh, R/o D-108, Vishnu Garden, New Delhi-110018, that I, have changed my name from Kamal to Kamal Singh for all future purposes. PD(938)C

China attaches 'importance' to President Murmu's greetings

PTI ■ BEIJING China on Tuesday said it attaches "importance" to President Droupadi Murmu's letter to her Chinese counterpart Xi Jinping on the 75th Anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China (PRC), asserting that Beijing stands ready to jointly promote the sound and steady development of bilateral ties.

eral ties. In the letter dated September 27 to Xi on the 75th Anniversary of the founding of the PRC, Murmu said, "It is important that we work towards peaceful and stable relations between our two countries."

on the China-India relations. "We express our appreciation" for President Murmu's letter, Mao told a media briefing replying to a question. "We stand ready to enhance communication with India, increase mutual trust and jointly promote the sound and steady development of China-India relations," Mao said.

India border is currently stable on the whole, she said, adding that "at the recent 31st meeting of the Working Mechanism for Consultation and Coordination on China-India Border Affairs (WMCC), the two sides further narrowed down differences, expanded common understandings and agreed to find early resolution to the situation on the border."

UPGRADATION OF GOODS YARD FACILITIES AT KATIHAH DIVISION

E-Tender Notice No. KIR/GSU/17 of 2024 Dated: 04-10-2024. E-Tenders are invited by the undersigned for the following works: SN.1. Brief Description of work: Adina: Upgradation of goods yard facilities like CCTV, lighting arrangement, circulating area development and drainage along with other ancillary works.

सार्वजनिक सूचना

इस, मेसर्स सोनित फार्मनेस लिमिटेड, रजिस्टर्ड ऑफिस, सिट्टर फ्लोर, देविका टावर, 6 नेहरू प्लेस, नई दिल्ली-110019, द्वारा यह सूचना प्रकाशित जाता है कि जॉर्ज कुमार, पुत्र श्री जॉर्ज सिंह, निवासी सी-13/39, पी-3-6 प्रथम तल, मली संख्या 2, बौंदरा गंज, नई दिल्ली-110058, द्वारा अपने आवासीय प्रोजेक्ट देविका कम्प्लेक्स, राब नगर, गांधीनगर में प्लॉट संख्या 1203, कम्प्लेक्स 3 कुच काया गया था। यह कि कुच नारा पांचावा के बावजूद आपके द्वारा कोई भी चर्चे बैंक एवं कर्मियों को नहीं किया गया है...

TRACK PROTECTION WORKS

Tender Notice No.-GMW-082024-MLG. Date: 04-10-2024. E-Tender are invited by the undersigned for the following work: Tender No.: GMW-082024-MLG. Name of work: Providing and Erecting Metal W-beam crash barrier safety fencing along the track in connection to stop cattle crossing.

S&T WORK

E-Tender No. SNT-31-LMG-2024-25; Dated: 05-10-2024. E-tenders are invited by the undersigned for the following work: Name of work & Place: Associate S&T work for provision of IP-based Integrated passenger Information system (IPIS) as per RDSO/SPN/TC/108/2019 with digital announcement system in connection with the renovation and re-development work in Agartala station (Phase-1).

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is to inform the general public that Ms. Ruchi Singh, Director, and Mr. Omprakash Singh, former General Manager - Operations, are no longer authorized to represent or act on behalf of Tesuto Labs Pvt. Ltd. in any capacity.

FORM NO.5 DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL

600/1, University Road near Hanuman Setu Mandir, Lucknow (Areas of Jurisdiction: Part of Uttar Pradesh) SUMMONS FOR FILING REPLY & APPEARANCE THROUGH PUBLICATION O.A.No.882 OF 2023 DATE:-05.04.2024 (Summons to defendant under Section 19(4) of the Recovery of Debts Due to Banks and Financial Institution Act 1993 read with rules 12 and 13 of the Debts Recovery Tribunal Procedure Rules 1993)

PUBLIC NOTICE

It is to inform to the public at large that M/s. Shrikant Verma through its proprietor Mr. Shrikant Verma had acquired Flat no. 001 on Ground Floor on Plot No. 1, Kharsa No. 692, at Village: Haldhansi, Parpara & Tehsil Dadrli, Distt. Gauram Budh Nagar, U.P. vide Sale Deed Dt. 08.11.2023 executed by Mr. Yateendra Singh Kasana prop. of Adman Builders as attorney of Mrs. Rajni, Now M/s. Shikant Verma through its prop. Mr. Shrikant Verma is the undisputed owner of the said property.

SYMBOLIC POSSESSION NOTICE

The Authorised ICICI Bank Officer under the Securitisation, Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of the powers conferred under section 13(12) read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002, issued Demand Notices to the borrower(s) mentioned below, to repay the amount mentioned in the Notice within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said Notice.

Table with 5 columns: Sr. No., Name of the Borrower(s)/ Loan Account Number, Description of Property/ Date of Symbolic Possession, Date of Demand Notice/ Amount in Demand Notice (Rs), Name of Branch. Row 1: Mohd Mohi Uddin/ Divya Katyal/ TBDEL00006742008/ LBDEL00006746614, Flat No 13133, 13th Floor Block A, Tower-9 Crosshangers Republik, Situated at Plot No 7 Dudsahera Ghaaziabad- 201016/ October 7, 2024, June 25, 2024 Rs. 52,67,278/-, Delhi/ NCR/ Moradabad

SYMBOLIC POSSESSION NOTICE

The above-mentioned borrowers(s)/guarantors(s) is/are hereby issued a 30 day Notice to repay the amount, else the mortgaged properties will be sold after 30 days from the date of publishing this Notice, as per the provisions under Rules 8 and 9 of Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002.

Table with 5 columns: Sr. No., Name of the Borrower(s)/ Loan Account Number, Description of Property/ Date of Symbolic Possession, Date of Demand Notice/ Amount in Demand Notice (Rs), Name of Branch. Row 1: Ashish Engineers/ Sunita Saini/ Rohul Saini/ 73200550066, Property Bearing Entire Second Floor (Without Roof Rights), Part of Freehold Built Up Property Bearing Plot No. A-35, Block-A, Measuring Covered area 139.45 Sq. Mtrs. Vide With Relinquishment Deed Registration No. B434, Dated 08/09/2021, Situated At Pushpanjali Enclave, Pitampura Residential Scheme, Delhi/ October 05, 2024, June 19, 2024 Rs. 2,28,77,146.00/-, Delhi

JM FINANCIAL

JM Financial Asset Reconstruction Company Limited Corporate Identity Number : U67190MH2007PLC4287 Registered Office Address : 7th Floor, Appasaheb Marathe Park, Prabhadevi, Mumbai 400025 T: +91 22 6630 3030 F: +911 22 6630 3233 www.jmfinancialcar.org

DEMAND NOTICE

Table with 3 columns: Name of the Borrower(s)/ Guarantor(s)/ Loan Code, Demand Notice Date and Amount with NPA date, PROPERTY ADDRESS. Rows include details for various borrowers and their respective demand notices and property addresses.

PUNE MUNICIPAL CORPORATION CHIEF ENGINEER DEPARTMENT NOTICE INVITING TENDERS (N.I.T) YEAR 2022-23

Tender Sale Date:- 09-10-2024 10:00 AM to Date 04-11-2024 upto 15:00 PM Pre Bid Meeting-22/10/2024, 15:00PM Bid Submission Start & End Date:- 09-10-2024 10:00 AM to Date 04-11-2024 upto 15:00 PM Technical Envelope Opening Date:- 05-11-2024 15:00 PM

Table with 7 columns: Tender No., Name of Department, Name of Work, Cost of Tender Document (Rs.), Estimated Cost (Rs.), EMD Amount Rs., Work Period, Concern Contact Person. Row 1: PMC/DRAINAGE/2024/155, Drainage, महेश सोसायटी ने गंस गोडाऊन पर्यंत नाला बंदिस करणे, Rs. 29679/-, Rs. 110493824/-, Rs. 552469/-, 12, Atul Kadu 9767433438

A) All details of Terms & Conditions of above works are incorporated in tender documents which is available on website www.mahatenders.gov.in Sale & acceptance is available by online system only. Tender needs to be submit in two envelope format. B) If sales or submission not been available on last day also & it is not been submitted will be sole responsibility of tenderer. C) Online tender process information will be available at Drainage, Pune Municipal Corporation. D) As per office order No. 32, dated 22/04/2016 EMD deposit amount will be acceptable through ECS/RTGS/NEFT Online Banking only. Advt No. 03/848 DT: 08/10/2024

# Tamil Nadu Government urges Samsung workers to resume work

PTI ■ CHENNAI

The Tamil Nadu government on Tuesday urged the agitating workers of the Samsung India Electronics factory near here to return to work immediately, considering the welfare of other employees and their families. Minister for Industries TRB Rajaa, who held talks with the management and workers, separately over the last two days to resolve the issues, wondered if it was fair on the part of the employees to continue their protest just because they were unable to get Centre of Indian Trade Unions-backed Union registered by the labour department. "We all know that the issue of union recognition is subjudice. We cannot discuss it now. The government is with you, Chief Minister M K Stalin is with you and considering all these factors, they should return to work immediately," Rajaa said while addressing reporters at the Secretariat. Pressing for various demands including wage revision, better working conditions and recognition of the Union backed by CITU, about 1,100 employees of the total 1,750 workforce of Samsung India went on strike since



September 9 at Sriperumbudur near here. Rajaa said that the employees have listed nearly 14 demands, which include better amenities at the factory. In response to this, the management promised to address it. Noting that Chief Minister Stalin has always made well being of workers his top priority, Rajaa recalled that whenever companies were invited to set up shop in the state, he was keen to know about the number of jobs that would be created in the state. "... When we have Chief Minister M K Stalin why should they worry. They (employees) should return to work immediately," he said. As per the instructions of the Chief Minister, Rajaa said he met Samsung India Electronics Ltd officials along with this cabinet colleague T M Anbarasan (MSME) and C V Ganesan (Labour) and held talks with the agitating workers, CITU officials and even those who are currently working at the Sriperumbudur plant. "When we met the employees working at the factory, they expressed apprehension of losing their jobs because of the ongoing strike," he said.

With the extension of the strike, Rajaa said workers may tend to lose their salaries by continuing the agitation and keeping the forthcoming festive season and their families in mind, they should call off the strike and return to work immediately. "Most of the workers are newly married and some have just started their career. Some of them are already paid salaries ranging between Rs 30,000 to Rs 60,000," he said. Meanwhile, Samsung India Electronics said the company on Monday signed an agreement with the workers committee of the factory in Chennai. "Both parties agreed on collaborative efforts to make the Chennai factory a great place to work. We will engage with workmen directly to address the difficulties faced by them. We will also work with them for the development of the community in Chennai as a responsible company," a company spokesperson said in an update. On the Tamil Nadu government's efforts to end the stir, Samsung said they are thankful to the authorities for their constant support. "We reiterate that we comply with all laws and regulations of the country," the spokesperson added.

# SpiceJet to add ten new aircrafts by next month



PTI ■ MUMBAI

Domestic carrier SpiceJet on Tuesday said it will enhance its fleet by another 10 aircraft by next month with the first plane set to be inducted on October 10. Seven of these aircraft will be acquired on lease, while three previously grounded ones are being reintroduced, SpiceJet said in a release. The Gurugram-headquartered airline has only 19 aircraft in operations while as many as 36 planes were on grounded as of October 8 according to the live aircraft fleet tracking website, Planespotters.net. The announcement comes on the back of SpiceJet securing Rs 3,000 crore fresh capital infusion through QIP late last month. The airline will receive an additional Rs 736 crore from a previous funding round, further bolstering its financial stability and growth trajectory. SpiceJet said it has already signed agreements for the leased aircraft, with the full induction of all seven planes expected by November 15. Two of these leased aircraft have already arrived in India and are scheduled for immediate induction, the airline said, adding that it will also operationalise its grounded planes in phases, with the first three set to re-enter service before the end of November. "This addition (of 10 aircraft) is crucial as we continue to meet the growing demand for air travel while strengthening our operational capabilities," SpiceJet Chairman and Managing Director Ajay Singh said.



# Tea exports rise despite price decline

PTI ■ KOLKATA

Tea exports between January and July this year have touched 144.50 million kilograms, up by 23.79 per cent from the year-ago period, Tea Board said. The country had shipped out 116.73 million kilograms in the corresponding period of the 2023 calendar year. Unit price realisation, however, has declined to Rs 256.37 per kilogram during the first seven months of 2024 as against Rs 264.96 per kilogram in the previous corresponding period. Meanwhile, the commerce ministry has approved a scheme for development and promotion of the tea industry, involving an outlay of Rs 664.09 crore, a Tea Board official said. The amount would be spent during the remaining period of the 15th Finance Commission cycle from the 2023-24 financial year to 2025-26 under the Tea Development and Promotion Scheme. The approval covers major components such as plantation development and quality up gradation, promotion and market support, technological intervention, research and development and welfare and capacity-building measures.

# BYD launches new electric MPV

**eMAX 7 starts at ₹ 26.9 lakh**

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Chinese electric carmaker BYD has launched its latest product, the eMAX 7 in the Indian market. This Multi-Person Vehicle (MPV) that will replace the e6 in India. One of the vehicle's notable changes over the outgoing model is the integration of the 8-in-1 electric powertrain from BYD's highly acclaimed e-platform 3.0 and two seating options of 6 or 7 seats. The vehicle comes in two variants, Superior and Premium, with 6- and 7-seater options for both. While the Superior variant comes with a battery pack of 71.8 kWh, the Premium variant packs a 55.4 kWh battery pack, returning 530 km and 420 km of range according to European testing standards. Prices for the vehicle start at 26.9 lakh and go up to 29.9 lakh.



The largest Chinese New Energy Vehicle (NEV) carmaker, BYD recently sold its 9 millionth vehicle worldwide and is on the cusp of reaching the 10 million mark. Rajeev Chauhan, Head of Electric Passenger Vehicles, BYD India, said, "The launch of the BYD eMAX 7 is testament to our unwavering commitment to innovation and sustainability. This electric MPV is not just a

# Top eight housing markets see annual sales dip in September

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Housing sales declined 5 per cent in the July-September quarter across the top eight cities due to a fall in new supply and sharp appreciation in prices, according to PropTiger. Real estate brokerage platform PropTiger.Com, which is part of Australia's REA group that owns Housing.Com, on Tuesday, released its report 'Real Insight' on India's residential market. A total of 96,544 units were sold in July-September, down 5 per cent from 1,01,221 units sold during the same period in 2023. The number of new residential units launched in the top 8 markets fell 25 per cent to 91,863 units from 1,23,080 units. PropTiger pointed out that a sharp increase in home prices, averaging a nearly 20 per cent increase across the top eight cities, impacted affordability. As per the data, housing sales rose only in Delhi-NCR and declined in the other seven



major cities. Delhi-NCR saw a 29 per cent growth in sales to 10,098 units during July-September from 7,800 units in the year-ago period. However, the sales declined 9 per cent in Ahmedabad to 9,352 units from 10,305 units. Bengaluru witnessed an 11 per cent fall in sales to 11,160 units from 12,588 units. Housing sales in Chennai dropped 8 per cent to 3,560 units from 3,874 units. Hyderabad registered a 19 per

cent decline in sales to 11,564 units from 14,191 units, while Kolkata saw a 22 per cent dip to 2,796 units from 3,607 units. Sales of residential properties in the Mumbai Metropolitan Region dipped 1 per cent to 30,010 units from 30,299 units. In Pune, the housing sales decreased 3 per cent to 18,004 units during July-September this year from 18,557 units in the year-ago period. Vikas Wadhawan, CFO of REA India and Business Head of PropTiger.Com said, "The year-on-year decline in both sales and new launches reflects the market's response to rising prices." He further added, "We are observing a healthy moderation in market activity, which is beneficial for end-users as it brings about sustainable growth. Over the last few quarters, prices have increased by 3 per cent to as much as 50 per cent in some prime localities of key markets, affecting immediate buying decisions." However, Wadhawan expects buyers to gradually adjust to the new price realities. "With the festive season kicking off with Navratri, renewed buyer interest and a spike in sales activity are anticipated. The market frenzy has slowed, creating a more stable environment for end-users." Developers, particularly in Hyderabad and Pune, have also recalibrated their supply strategies to align with shifting demand patterns.

# Airtel identifies 51 million spam calls through AI

PTI ■ JAIPUR

Bharti Airtel through its AI-powered spam detection solution identified 51 million potential spam calls and 1.6 million spam SMSes in Rajasthan in the last 10 days since its launch, a company official said on Tuesday. The solution alerts customers to malicious links received via SMS. "For this, Airtel has built a centralised database of blacklisted URLs, and every SMS is scanned in real-time by a state-of-the-art AI algorithm to caution users from accidentally clicking on suspicious links," Marut Dilawari, Chief Executive Officer, Rajasthan, Bharti Airtel, said. Further, he added that the system is a first-of-its-kind solution by a telecom service provider. The solution has been auto-activated at no cost for all Airtel customers.

# Sunsilk campaigns on Kolkata's trams for Durga Puja



PNS ■ KOLKATA

Sunsilk launched a unique campaign in Kolkata, using the city's beloved trams not just as a mode of transportation, but as a celebration of beauty and tradition. From September 27th to October 2nd, the trams have been transformed into vibrant SunsilK showcases as part of the milestone #SunsilkShineTram activation, celebrating SunsilK's Super Shine Hair

Serum during Durga Puja. Kolkata's trams, an intrinsic part of the city's culture might not run for much longer, SunsilK, in a very unique way paid tribute to these historic symbols while highlighting the beauty and strength of women during Durga Puja. Much like the trams that have carried generations, SunsilK carries forward a tradition of care and beauty, blending modern needs with the city's deep-rooted culture.

# Airtel-Nokia 'Green 5G' initiative to cut carbon emissions



PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Telco major Bharti Airtel and Finnish telecom and IT company Nokia on Tuesday said their collaboration to launch the 'Green 5G' initiative is aimed at improving energy efficiency on Airtel's mobile network and reduce its carbon emissions by 143,413 metric tons of CO2 annually. The project will focus on enhancing energy efficiency across Airtel's extensive 4G/5G Radio Access Network (RAN) by leveraging technologies like artificial intelligence and machine learning, as well as a suite of advanced software features and innovative solutions, a joint statement said. "The comprehensive solution is expected to enhance energy efficiency during peak and off-peak

hours and is projected to reduce Airtel's carbon emissions by an estimated 143,413 metric tons of CO2 annually," it said. The partnership will focus on 'zero-traffic, zero-watt operation', reducing the radio network's power consumption during periods of no traffic, thereby conserving power and optimising energy management. "Nokia has committed to reaching net zero greenhouse gas emissions globally by 2040. Our innovative technologies will not only enhance the overall performance of communications networks but also significantly help reduce their energy consumption, contributing to the energy efficiency targets of our customers," Tarun Chhabra, Head of Mobile Networks at Nokia,

India, said. Airtel and Nokia have also trialled advanced digital design tools to optimise cell configurations for lower transmitted power. This positively impacts the CO2 footprint and energy bills without compromising the network performance or user experience, the statement said. Bharti Airtel CTO Randeep Sekhon said the partnership will enable a significant reduction in carbon footprint and further Airtel's environmental objectives. As part of its sustainability effort, Airtel has so far deployed solar-powered systems in around 25,000 sites up to now and substantially increased the renewable energy usage at its data centres, sourced 220,541 MWh through green power wheeling agreements.

# India's potential to produce 8-10 million tonnes of sustainable aviation fuel by 2040: Report

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

India has the potential to produce 8-10 million tonnes of Sustainable Aviation Fuel (SAF) by 2040, and investments worth USD 70-85 billion will be required to achieve the projected production, according to a report. In the report released on Tuesday, leading consultancy Deloitte India said the 8-10 million tonnes production of SAF would surpass the country's estimated domestic demand of 4.5 million tonnes for a 15 per cent blending mandate in 2040 across all flights. The expected scenario could also position India as a leading SAF exporter serving global markets. "Investments worth Rs 6-7 lakh crore (USD 70-85 billion) would be required to realise the projected SAF production capacity. It will give impetus to the aviation sector's decarbonisation efforts, reducing carbon emissions to 20-25 million tonnes annually," the report said. India is one of the world's fastest-growing civil aviation markets, and efforts are going on to decarbonise the sector. According to the report, the projected capital investment of



Rs 6-7 lakh crore will also help create 1.1-1.4 million jobs across the value chain and reduce crude oil import bills by USD 5-7 billion annually. "Further, SAF production can boost farmers' income by 10-15 per cent by using agricultural residue as feedstock, providing a sustainable alternative to the current practice of burning crop waste," it added. The country's estimated surplus of 230 million tonnes of agricultural residue will be a crucial resource for producing SAF. It will serve as a vital feedstock for ethanol (2G) production, a key component in the Alcohol-to-Jet (ATJ) technology pathway for SAF manufacturing. Ethanol (2G or second generation) is produced from other non-food feedstock apart from molasses. At the same time, the report said, the ATJ route with ethanol (1G) produced from sugar and grain can provide an initial boost until the

technology fully matures. "Municipal Solid Waste (MSW) and Used Cooking Oil (UCO) will contribute to the overall potential. Alternate feedstock such as sweet sorghum, seaweed and industrial waste can give further impetus to SAF potential with technological maturity," it noted. Prashanth Nutula, Partner at Deloitte India, said the drive to produce SAF is quickly becoming a reality globally and in India. With a 2-3 per cent share in the global ATF market, India is favourably positioned in the global aviation fuel market, including SAF. Moreover, India also emerges as a competitive geography due to its proximity to airline hubs in the Middle East and Europe and favourable cost structures. As a result, India is poised to play a pivotal role as global demand for SAF surges, Prashanth Nutula, Partner at Deloitte India, said.

# HIL can transform Indian hockey's landscape, feels Salima Tete

PTI ■ BENGALURU

Indian women's team captain Salima Tete can't wait for the upcoming Hockey India League as she feels that the event will help shape the careers of young players and build a strong bench strength for the national team. The HIL is all set to return after seven years in December this year. The revamped league will feature the first standalone women's hockey league in the country that will run concurrently with the men's competition to be held from December 28 to February 1 at two venues Ranchi (women) and Rourkela (men). The men's event will feature eight teams, while the women's competition will comprise six sides. "I am very excited for HIL, it is restarting after seven years and with a women's league this time. The whole team has been discussing what a great opportunity this is for



us the last few days. We will get to mingle with players from different nationalities, play with them, play against them and improve as players," Salima said. "It will give youngsters who aren't a part of the senior

team a chance to see the daily routines of Indian players and foreign players up close. And being in a high-performance, professional environment early in their career will do wonders for their development. "I expect the HIL will be

beneficial for players who have been out of the team as well, giving them an opportunity to compete at the highest level and keep themselves sharp," she added. The women's League will conclude on January 26 next year in Ranchi, while the

men's final is slated for February 1 in Rourkela. The players' auction for the league will be held from October 13 to 15. 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. Players will be divided into three slabs with base prices of Rs 10 lakh, Rs five lakh, and Rs 10 lakh each. "The auction is coming up soon and there is a buzz around the camp. Since it is the first edition, I would have liked nothing more than to play for the Ranchi team. Hopefully, one of the two remaining women's team is based out of there," said Salima. "It is going to be a great experience to play a full-fledged league nevertheless. It will be our first time playing for a completely new team, new coach, new teammates and I cannot wait for the Hockey India League to begin," she signed off.

# Title holders India to open women's ACT campaign against Malaysia



PTI ■ KUALA LUMPUR

Two-time champions India will open their title defence against Malaysia in the Women's Asian Champions Trophy hockey tournament beginning in Bihar on November 11. The tournament will feature six teams -- hosts and defending champions India, China, three-time winners Korea, two-time champions Japan, Malaysia and Thailand. According to the official schedule announced by the Asian Hockey Federation (AHF) on Tuesday, the tournament, to be played in

Rajgir, will conclude on November 20. India won the tournament in 2016 in Singapore before reclaiming the title in Ranchi last year. After Malaysia, the Indian women will take on Korea on November 12, followed by matches against Thailand (November 14), China (November 16) and Japan (November 17). The top four teams after the round robin format will qualify for the semifinals to be held on November 19, followed by the summit clash on November 20. "The Rajgir Hockey Stadium

stands as a symbol of the region's commitment to fostering world-class sports, and we are confident that it will provide an exceptional experience for players and fans," AHF president Dato Fumio Ogura said in a statement. Hockey India president Dilip Tirkey said it will be a historic occasion for the state of Bihar. "The newly constructed Rajgir Hockey Stadium will serve as the perfect stage for this prestigious tournament, and we are excited to see India defend their title against some of the best teams in Asia," he said.

# Tsitsipas sets up Medvedev clash in Shanghai Masters

AP ■ SHANGHAI

Stefanos Tsitsipas' rivalry with Daniil Medvedev will add another chapter after the Greek player beat Alexandre Muller 6-3 7-5 at the Shanghai Masters here on Tuesday. The 12th-ranked Tsitsipas and the Russian former US Open champion will meet for a 14th time, and first in nearly a year. The fifth-ranked Medvedev has a commanding 9-4 lead in the head-to-head series, which has spilled over into a war of words off the court in the past. "I consider him someone that I respect on the tour, much more than I did before," Tsitsipas said. "We've had some heated things on the court in the past, but I think those things have resolved themselves over time, and we also had the time to speak about those things and have a common understanding of why these things happen."



put away Roberto Carballes Baena 6-3 6-4, firing eight aces and 24 winners to line up top seed Jannik Sinner in the fourth round. Seventh-ranked Taylor Fritz also advanced with ease, beating Japan's Yosuke Watanuki 6-3 6-4, while Grigor Dimitrov, playing in his 100th Masters event, beat Alexei Popyrin 7-6(5) 6-3. Gael Monfils upset 15th-ranked Ugo Humbert 7-6(7) 2-6 6-1 in an all-French match-up. The 38-year-old Monfils, ranked 46th, is the second oldest player to reach the Shanghai fourth round in Shanghai, behind only Roger Federer (also 38) in 2019. "It's never easy to play Ugo, he's really aggressive, playing

fast off both wings and takes a lot of time from you," said Monfils, who plays second-ranked Carlos Alcaraz next. "Carlos is in a confident mood (having) just won a tournament (China Open), so that's going to be a tough one for sure." Also, Tomas Machac, who made the semifinals in Tokyo, eased past Australian Alexander Vukic 6-4 6-2 and next faces No. 13-ranked Tommy Paul in the third round. Later on Tuesday, four-time champion Novak Djokovic plays his third-round match against Flavio Cobolli, bidding to capture his 100th tour-level title. Third-ranked Alexander Zverev faces Tallon Griekspoor of the

Netherlands in a night match. Wuhan Open Katerina Siniakova had a comfortable 6-3 6-1 victory over Alexandra Eala of the Philippines to set up a second-round match against defending champion Aryna Sabalenka. Second-ranked Sabalenka, who won the title the last time it was played in 2019, needs only to make the quarterfinals at Wuhan to regain top spot in the rankings from Iga Swiatek, who withdrew from the women's Asian swing citing fatigue and personal reasons. Swiatek recently split with coach Tomasz Wiktorowski. Magda Linette of Poland routed No. 23-ranked Liudmila Samsonova 6-2 6-2, and Ekaterina Alexandrova beat former Australian Open champion Sofia Kenin of the US 6-1 4-6 6-4. Other winners included Britain's Katie Boulter, American Amanda Anisimova, Bulgaria's Viktoriya Tomova and Romania's Jaqueline Cristian, who has Paris Olympics gold medalist Zheng Qinwen next. After snapping a 24-match losing streak at the China Open last week, Zhang Shuai's change of fortune turned in Wuhan as she lost to Yulia Putintseva of Kazakhstan 6-4 6-4 in the first round. The top eight seeds, including Sabalenka and China Open champion Coco Gauff, received a first-round bye.

# Young Indian sailors bag seven medals at Mussanah Race Week in Oman

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Young Indian sailors dished out an impressive show, returning with a rich haul of seven medals, including one gold, four silver and two bronze at the Mussanah Race Week in Oman, an international regatta for youth sailors. India ruled the Optimist Girls U-15 category, with Shreya Krishna Lakshminarayanan and Kommaravelly Lahari securing the top-two spots. Shreya clinched the gold medal with a net score of 28 points. She put up strong performances, finishing second and third in her first and fifth races respectively. Across six races, her other finishes were ninth, sixth, eighth, and 24th in her final race, which was discarded as her worst result following the scoring system where the worst finish is dropped. Her overall score was 52 points, but after the discard her net score stood at 28, securing her the gold medal. Kommaravelly followed with a silver, finishing with 50 net points, while Singapore's Tong Xuan Ya claimed bronze. In the ILCA-4 U-16 category, India's Shashank Batham and Akshat Kumar Dohare claimed silver and bronze respectively. Shashank finished just two points behind Oman's Abdulatif Ziyad Al Qasim, who topped three of the seven races (second, third, and fourth) and won with 12 net points.



Shashank won two races (first and sixth) but finished ninth in the second race, which hurt his chances for gold. His worst race was discarded, leaving him with a total of 14 net points. Akshat secured bronze with a score of 29 net points after seven races. In the ILCA-4 girls U-16 category, India's Soumya Singh Patel and Shagun Jha took second and third places respectively. Soumya accumulated 39 net points, while Shagun finished with 49 points.

UAE's Marwa Al Hammadi claimed gold with 31.5 net points. In the ILCA-6 girls U-19 category, Maanya Reddy narrowly missed out on gold, finishing second with 74 net points, just behind the UAE's Camelia Al Qubaisi, who secured gold with 77 points. A total of 106 sailors from Oman, UAE, Qatar, Kuwait, Thailand, Singapore and India competed in the three-day annual age-group sailing event from October 4-7, which featured races in the Optimist boys and girls ILCA

4, ILCA 6, ILCA 7 and RS Venture classes. The Optimist Class is a one-design dinghy class for young sailors, typically aged 8-15, with a scoring system that drops the worst finish from a sailor's total points to calculate the net score. The ILCA (Laser) Class is a single-handed dinghy class featuring different rig sizes (ILCA-4, ILCA-6, ILCA-7) for different age groups, using a similar net point scoring format. It's popular for its competitiveness and Olympic status.

# Reinforced Barcelona targets third straight Women's Champions League title

AP ■ MADRID

Barcelona will go for its third straight Women's Champions League title with a squad boosted by Poland star striker Ewa Pajor and with Aitana Bonmati and Alexia Putellas on new contracts. The group stage begins on Tuesday and the Catalan side is trying to become only the second team after Lyon to win three straight titles or reach five straight finals. Barcelona beat Lyon in last season's final, when Ballon d'Or winners Bonmati and Putellas each scored. Both had their club contracts extended. Pajor, who joined from Wolfsburg, was the competition's top scorer in 2022-23 as the German club reached a final that it lost to Barcelona despite a goal by her. In her nine seasons with Wolfsburg, Pajor won 14 titles and scored 136 times despite a series of injuries. She was not able to win a Champions League even though she played in three finals and was part of a run to another.

Barcelona has also added Kika Nazareth from Portuguese club Benfica. Their first game is on Wednesday against Group D rival Manchester City in a rematch of the 2020-21 quarterfinals, where Barcelona triumphed after a 4-2 first-leg win and a 2-1 second-leg defeat in what was its only loss that campaign. Barcelona's squad also includes former City players Keira Walsh and Ellie Roebuck. "It's the first time I've been back to Manchester since I left," Walsh said on Monday. "I know I have a professional job to do and it won't be an easy game, but it will be nice to have all my friends and family in the stands." Lyon's firepower takes on Galatasaray. It could prove a busy night on Tuesday for Galatasaray's defense and goalkeeper Gamze Yaman. Group A opponent Lyon boasts the all-time top scorer in the Women's Champions League, Ada Hegerberg, who has two seasons of 50-plus goals during her 10-year spell



at the club. The Norway striker, who won the first women's Ballon d'Or, has 64 competition goals, while teammate Eugénie Le

Sommer, third on the all-time list, needs two to reach 50. They form the spine of the team with captain Wendie Renard, the Women's

Champions League record-holder for appearances with 116. Lyon has been in good scoring touch so far, netting

16 goals in its first three French league games, with American midfielder Lindsey Horan getting five and France striker Kadidiatou Diani scoring two. Two-time champion Wolfsburg begins its Group A campaign on Tuesday at Italian champion Roma, which drew with the German club on its last visit two years ago. Both teams will want to make a good start with Lyon and Galatasaray the other group teams. Wolfsburg warmed up by routing Leipzig 5-0 in the Bundesliga on Friday, when Alexandra Popp set up three goals. Popp announced her international retirement last week, meaning her focus is fully on leading Wolfsburg to more honors. She is just two games away from becoming the second player to reach 100 Champions League appearances, after Wendie Renard. Wolfsburg is unbeaten in five away meetings against Italian sides, but Roma is unbeaten in 14 home games in all competitions. Chelsea without Hayes Life after Emma Hayes has started well for Chelsea.

Hayes left to take over the United States women's team in the offseason and carried on her winning ways by taking gold at the Paris Olympics. After 14 major titles, she left big shoes for her replacement Bompastor to fill, but it has been an impressive start for the former Lyon coach. Chelsea opened its Super League campaign by beating Aston Villa 1-0 followed by routing Crystal Palace 7-0. First up for the Blues in Group B is a home game on Tuesday with Real Madrid, which has made a perfect start in the Spanish league, winning five out of five to trail leader Barcelona on goal difference. Bayern's momentum One-time champion Arsenal faces a tough opening Group C match on Wednesday at two-time defending German champion Bayern, which has made a seven-game winning start to the season, including a 1-0 victory over Wolfsburg in the German Supercup. A 1-0 win over Cologne on Saturday stretched Bayern's unbeaten run in the Bundesliga to 44 games.

# India look to fix batting woes, bolster NRR against Sri Lanka in Women's T20 WC

**PTI ■ DUBAI**  
On a sticky wicket after a mixed start to the campaign, India will look to fix their batting woes to bolster their net run rate when they take on bottom-placed Sri Lanka in their third and penultimate Group A match of the T20 Women's World Cup here on Wednesday. It has not been smooth sailing for the Indians in the showpiece event so far, having lost to New Zealand by 58 runs in their tournament-opener and then scampering home in 18.5 overs against arch-rivals Pakistan while chasing a modest 105. India's main problem in the tournament so far is the performance of their batters, especially the explosive opening combination of Shafali Verma and vice-captain Smriti Mandhana.

While Shafali scored just 2 and 32 in the first two games, Mandhana also fared poorly managing 12 and 7 runs. And it's time the duo fires in unison to ease the pressure on the middle-order. To make matters worse for India, skipper Harmanpreet Kaur, who scored 15 and 29 retired hurt, is doubtful for the match against Sri Lanka after suffering a neck injury while batting against Pakistan. The likes of Jemimah Rodrigues, Deepti Sharma and Richa Ghosh too need to step up with the bat and share the burden of responsibility. While medium pacer Arundhati Reddy sparked against Pakistan with the ball, returning with figures of 3/19, she would look for more support from the likes of fellow pace colleagues Renuka Singh and Pooja Vastrakar, who didn't play the previous game because of an injury.



The Indian team relies heavily on Deepti Sharma in the spin department but she hasn't quite managed to hit her strides in the tournament so far. Young off-spinner Shreyanka

Patil and leg-spinner Asha Sobhana have done a decent job, picking up a few wickets. The Indians will need to lift themselves in all departments of the game as in Australia a strong opponent awaits them

in their last group match. India will not only need to win but record a victory big enough against Sri Lanka to boost their Net Run Rate (NRR) before the do-or-die league game against defending

champions Australia on October 13. Sri Lanka might have lost both their opening matches, but the islanders won't be an easy opponent for India, especially after the win in the Asia Cup final in

August. India opener Shafali admitted that Sri Lanka are no longer only dependent on their skipper Chamari Athapaththu. "There was a time when Chamari was the one scoring most of the runs and taking wickets, but in the Asia Cup, her entire team performed well. They've improved a lot, which is why they won the cup," Shafali has said. "Chamari carries the pressure of being a key player, and it's inspiring to see how she handles it and performs for her country." India pacer Renuka also knows how important it is to dismiss the Sri Lankan skipper cheaply as she can take the game away in a flash with her audacious strokeplay. "Chamari Athapaththu is very interesting. She's the only one from Sri Lanka who takes the team to the other side. I try to get her out as soon as possible

because if she is set, she can take over the match. So I have a plan on how to get her out," Renuka has said. **Teams (From):**  
**India:** Harmanpreet Kaur (c), Smriti Mandhana, Shafali Verma, Deepti Sharma, Jemimah Rodrigues, Richa Ghosh (wk), Yastika Bhatia, Pooja Vastrakar, Arundhati Reddy, Renuka Singh Thakur, Dayalan Hemalatha, Asha Sobhana, Radha Yadav, Shreyanka Patil, Sajana Sajeevan  
**Sri Lanka:** Vishmi Gunaratne, Harshitha Samarawickrama, Hasini Perera, Anushka Sanjeevani (wk), Nilakshika Silva, Chamari Athapaththu (c), Kavisha Dilhari, Ama Kanachana, Inoshi Priyadarshani, Shashini Gimhani, Achini Kulasuriya, Sugandika Kumari, Sachini Nisansala, Udeshika Prabodhani, Inoka Ranaweera.

## India's T20 marauders eye another big win; Bangladesh hope for turnaround



**PTI ■ NEW DELHI**  
An India so dominant that Bangladesh is admittedly clueless about how to match the "skills and mentality" of Suryakumar Yadav's men. The script is not expected to deviate much when the two sides clash in the second T20 International here on Wednesday with the home team's young mavericks proving more than a handful for the full-strength visitors. Bangladesh have hardly looked like the plucky opponents that they are hyped to be but India have looked every bit the marauding force that loves to intimidate on home turf. So, even with key players such as Rishabh Pant, Axar Patel, and Jasprit Bumrah rested, India's remarkable depth in white-ball cricket shone through in a comfortable seven-wicket victory in the opening game in Gwalior. One man who made a strong statement of intent in that game on Sunday was Sanju Samson. Confirmed by Suryakumar as an opener for the series, Samson has been in and out of the national set up since his debut in 2015 and his lack of consistency has been a major contributing factor. In the series-opener in Gwalior, the keeper-batter, who usually comes in the middle order, revelled in his new role as opener and played some delightful strokes in his 19-ball 29, showcasing his ability to play freely in the powerplay. However, he couldn't convert his promising start, much like his opening partner Abhishek

Sharma, who showcased sheer power before running himself out. With first choice openers Yashasvi Jaiswal and Shubman Gill rested for this series, both Samson and Sharma would be keen to prove they can go beyond mere cameos. The duo would look to seize this opportunity here and get a big score on Wednesday night in front of, what is likely to be a sellout crowd. The stakes are higher for the 29-year-old Samson, who is aiming to solidify his position as wicketkeeper in the absence of Pant. With the T20 World Cup still two years away, a series of consistent performances as both opener and wicketkeeper could make him a strong contender for future selections in the white-ball formats. The hosts are unlikely to tinker with their playing XI after everything went India's way in the opener. Debutant Mayank Yadav dazzled with his fiery pace, while fellow first-timer Nitish Kumar Reddy made a mark as a seam-bowling all-rounder, a rarity in Indian cricket. Arshdeep Singh capably led the pace attack and mystery spinner Varun Chakaravarty made a striking comeback after staying away from the national team for three years. He will be eyeing the spin all-rounder's spot left vacant by Ravindra Jadeja as will Washington Sundar. On the other hand, the tourists will have to regroup quickly if they want to fashion a turnaround and stay alive in the three-match

series. Bangladesh, who went with more or less than same side they fielded at the World Cup earlier this year, have the advantage of experience but the side has just not been able to crack the T20 format. "I wouldn't say we played badly. We are a better team than this. We haven't done well in this format for a long time, but I don't believe we are such a bad team," captain Najmul Hossain Shanto conceded in Gwalior. Batting continues to remain their weak link and it wasn't a surprise to see the side struggle against India's disciplined bowling attack. Senior players like Liton Das and Mahmudullah have to get their act together. The Bangladesh bowlers have the ability to spice up things but against India's formidable lineup, they would need plenty of runs on the board. **Squads:**  
**India:** Suryakumar Yadav (C), Abhishek Sharma, Sanju Samson (wk), Rinku Singh, Hardik Pandya, Riyan Parag, Nitish Kumar Reddy, Tilak Varma, Washington Sundar, Ravi Bishnoi, Varun Chakaravarty, Jitesh Sharma (wk), Arshdeep Singh, Harshit Rana, Mayank Yadav.  
**Bangladesh:** Najmul Hossain Shanto (C), Tanzid Hasan Tamim, Parvez Hossain Emon, Tawhid Hridoy, Mahmud Ullah, Litton Kumer Das, Jaker Ali Anik, Mehidy Hassan Miraz, Shak Mahedi Hasan, Rishad Hossain, Mustafizur Rahman, Taskin Ahmed, Shoriful Islam, Tanzim Hasan Sakib, Rakibul Hasan.

## Jaiswal can play in any conditions, needs mental adjustment for Australia tour: Lara

**PTI ■ MUMBAI**  
India opener Yashasvi Jaiswal is equipped to "play in any conditions" but will need to make some mental adjustments for the upcoming tour of Australia, the legendary Brian Lara said here on Tuesday. Jaiswal has established himself as a vital cog in the Test side with 929 runs in only eight matches this year at 66.35, his two centuries and six fifties putting him as the leading run-scorer for India in 2024. "He has got the ability to play in any conditions. I saw him in the Caribbean. Obviously, the pitches in Australia are slightly different, but if you take that sort of strength that you have, you're going to play good cricket in any conditions. "I expect to see him do well," Lara told the media during the launch of the International Masters League. The West Indies great said Jaiswal will need to make some mental adjustments to continue his success Down



Under. "I think the adjustment is upstairs," said Lara, pointing towards his head when asked if the Indian opener will have to make any adjustments. "The adjustment is your ability to back your talent in whatever conditions. I say this with a pinch of salt because conditions in India have changed. "With the IPL you've got international players coming. You are feeding your players a different level of competition, which is great, so I don't think there's much that he has to do

technically," he added. "I just think, mentally, travelling away from home, playing against Australia on their shores is a different beast. But I believe that the Indian team that I've seen going to Australia over the last couple of occasions, are very capable of winning," he said. Lara picked Jaiswal and another southpaw Abhishek Sharma as the "two most exciting Indian batters" right now. "Jaiswal and Abhishek Sharma. First of all, they're left-handers. They're very young. They play

the game in a style, very attacking and very stylish," he said. "Of course the relationship I have had with them over the last couple of years has been very special. It's great to see them go from strength to strength," he added. Lara said having a "good plan" will be crucial for India's success in the Border-Gavaskar Trophy, which will comprise five Tests for the first time. "You have got to have a plan. And your plan has to be something that when it comes to fruition, you get the success," he said. "When you're coming up against Australia, you've got to have a damn good plan, and you've got to be able to soak in pressure because they're going to apply a lot of pressure." "From an Indian scenario, they've got to play good cricket. They've got to believe in themselves and they've got to play each session at a time. They can't think way beyond that," he added. While the former West Indies

captain praised India's aggressive approach to force a result in the rain-hit Kanpur Test against Bangladesh to try and earn World Test Championship points, Lara said such an outcome is not possible every time. "(It was) not just (about) the points. It's a situation where India knows that they have the advantage in terms of being the better playing team against Bangladesh, and they've got to put themselves," he said. "They've got to give themselves the opportunity. I love the way that they went about it in such a short space of time to put Bangladesh under pressure. The performance by India with the bat was always to put Bangladesh under pressure." "Test cricket is about attrition. Not every single day you're going to have 2-3 days washed out. I want to see a lot of games going into the fourth and the fifth day. I want to see batters holding on, battling if they have to battle. Bowlers being as disciplined as possible."

## England off to brisk start after Agha century propels Pakistan to 556 in 1st test

**AP ■ MULTAN (PAKISTAN)**  
England chipped at Pakistan's massive 556, three-centuries total by reaching 96-1 at stumps on day two Tuesday of the first test. Pakistan started the day on 328-4 and was spearheaded by Salman Ali Agha's unbeaten 104 and Saud Shakeel's 82. On a pitch which still looks good for batting with little help for fast bowlers or spinners, England raced at nearly five-runs-per-over as Zac Crawley smashed 11 fours in his unbeaten 64. Joe Root was not out on 32.

England lost stand-in captain Ollie Pope without scoring in the second over to a stunning one-handed catch by a diving Aamer Jamal at midwicket off Naseem Shah. England trails Pakistan by 460 runs. Pope had to open the innings after Ben Duckett injured his left thumb while grabbing a sharp chest-high catch of No. 11 Abrar Ahmed in the slips that finally ended England's heat-sapping 5 1/2 sessions on the field at Multan Stadium. Whether Duckett bats was yet to be determined. England's Jack Leach took 3-160 and Shoaib Bashir 1-124



but Pakistan dominated both spinners. Brydon Carse's long wait for his first wicket in his debut test came on Tuesday, which he finished with 2-74. Gus Atkinson (2-99) and Chris Woakes (1-69) toiled without finding any reverse swing on the green square. England did well in the first session and allowed Pakistan only 69 runs with Carse breaking the resistance of nightwatchman Naseem, who gloved a legside catch after scoring his test-best 33. Naseem denied England a breakthrough for 1 1/2 hours and braved a couple of blows. He got a knock on the back of his helmet when he was

struck hard by an Atkinson short ball and also received brief treatment when Carse struck the batter's right thumb off another short ball before round-the-wicket worked for the right arm fast bowler. Leach had Mohammad Rizwan caught at mid-off for a 12-ball duck. Shakeel, who began the day on 35, showed plenty of resistance and raised his half-century with a swept boundary off Bashir. Shakeel was undone by the off-spinner after lunch and feathered a low catch to Root in the slips. Agha took charge with meticulous drives and

sweeps. His third test century followed tons by captain Shan Masood (151) and Abdullah Shafique (102) on day one. Agha gave Pakistan an ideal finish on the benign pitch. In the company of Shaheen Shah Afridi (26), Agha hit 10 boundaries and three sixes in his 119-ball knock to propel Pakistan past 550. England was scratchy late in Pakistan's innings as wicketkeeper Jamie Smith missed an easy stumping of Abrar, and Atkinson couldn't judge a catch over his shoulder before Root folded the innings.